

“GO UP (AGAIN) TO JERUSALEM IN JUDAH”: THE SETTLER-COLONIAL  
MYTHOLOGY OF “RETURN” AND “RESTORATION” IN EZRA 1–6

by

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**Thesis**

Presented to the Faculty of the

Brite Divinity School

in partial fulfillment of the requirements  
for the degree of

Master of Theology in Biblical Interpretation

Fort Worth, TX

April 2017

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*For Dad (1958–1985)*

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The list of people to whom I am indebted for the completion of this project exceeds far beyond what space allows. I am particularly thankful to my director and mentor Claudia V. Camp, who taught me what good scholarship is by challenging me intellectually and fostering my research interests. I am particularly thankful for the countless hours she devoted to reviewing and commenting on my work. Her guidance and support has profoundly influenced me as a scholar and as a human being. I am honored to have been her student. I am also thankful to David M. Gunn for his willingness to serve as a reader for this project. His insight and support proved to be invaluable. I also wish to thank Lorenzo Veracini, Patricia Lorcin, and Tamara Eskenazi who all provided helpful feedback. I would also like to thank the many teachers who helped shape my understanding of the world, particularly Warren Carter, Toni Craven, Steve Sprinkle, and Elaine Robinson. I also wish to thank David Grua, who first introduced me to settler colonial studies, Miles Davison, who provided support and countless hours of stimulating conversation, as well as Joe & Caroline McDonald, our family away from family.

I am also thankful to the institutions that have provided me with this experience, including Brite Divinity School and the TCU Department of Religion for allowing me six years of teaching experience. I also wish to thank the TCU Women & Gender Studies program for providing me a venue to learn and explore new ideas.

Above all, I am forever indebted to my family, to our two daughters Anna and Alix, and especially to my best friend and life-partner Brooke Chaston Naegle, whose love and support knew no bounds for the duration of this journey, O.

## ABBREVIATIONS

ApOTC	Apollos Old Testament Commentary
<i>CulGeo</i>	<i>Cultural Geographies</i>
BDB	<i>A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament</i>
BibW	BibleWorld
BICSUL	Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies of the University of London
<i>BTB</i>	<i>Biblical Theology Bulletin</i>
BZAW	Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft
<i>CStSH</i>	<i>Comparative Studies in Society and History</i>
<i>ChristC</i>	<i>Christianity and Crisis</i>
CIS	Copenhagen International Seminar
<i>CurrAnthro</i>	<i>Current Anthropology</i>
<i>CurBR</i>	<i>Currents in Biblical Research</i>
CLWDHLS	The Cambridge Edition of the Letters and Works of D.H. Lawrence Series
<i>DCH</i>	<i>Dictionary of Classical Hebrew</i>
DRCSLAS	The David Rockefeller Center Series on Latin American Studies
E <sup>1-6</sup>	Ezra 1–6
E <sup>7-10</sup>	Ezra 7–10
EN	Ezra-Nehemiah
<i>EncJud</i>	<i>Encyclopedia Judaica</i>
<i>ERSt</i>	<i>Ethnic and Racial Studies</i>
ESHM	European Seminar in Historical Methodology
<i>FHistSt</i>	<i>French Historical Studies</i>
GPBS	Global Perspectives on Biblical Scholarship
HoW	History of Warfare
<i>HALOT</i>	<i>The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament</i>
IDFA	The Israel Defense Forces and Defense Establishment Archives
<i>IJMES</i>	<i>International Journal of Middle East Studies</i>
JHC	Journal History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints
<i>JPSt</i>	<i>Journal of Palestine Studies</i>
<i>JRelSoc</i>	<i>Journal of Religion &amp; Society</i>
JSJSup	Supplements to the Journal for the Study of Judaism
<i>JSOT</i>	<i>Journal for the Study of the Old Testament</i>
JSOTSup	Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplement Series
<i>JSS</i>	<i>Journal of Semitic Studies</i>
LHBOTS	Library of Hebrew Bible and Old Testament Studies
LSTS	The Library of Second Temple Studies
<i>MEQ</i>	<i>Middle East Quarterly</i>
<i>MESSt</i>	<i>Middle Eastern Studies</i>
NCBC	New Century Bible Commentary

<i>NZJH</i>	<i>New Zealand Journal of History</i>
<i>OLP</i>	<i>Orientalia lovaniensia periodica</i>
OTL	Old Testament Library
OTM	Old Testament Message
OTR	Old Testament Readings
OtSt	Oudtestamentische Studiën
<i>PastP</i>	<i>Past and Present</i>
<i>PolPsy</i>	<i>Political Psychology</i>
<i>RB</i>	<i>Revue Biblique</i>
<i>SCSt</i>	<i>Settler Colonial Studies</i>
SBLAIL	Society of Biblical Literature and Its Literature
SBLMS	Society of Biblical Literature Monograph Series
SBLStBL	Society of Biblical Literature Studies in Biblical Literature
SOFSup	Symbolae Osloenses Fasciculus Suppletorius
<i>SR</i>	<i>Studies in Religion</i>
SSJHC	Stanford Studies in Jewish History and Culture
TBP	The Bible and Postcolonialism
<i>TRHS</i>	<i>Transactions of the Royal Historical Society</i>
<i>TynBul</i>	<i>Tyndale Bulletin</i>
<i>UF</i>	<i>Ugarit-Forschungen</i>
VSI	Very Short Introductions
<i>VT</i>	<i>Vetus Testamentum</i>
WBC	Word Biblical Commentary
YHP	Yale Historical Publications
<i>ZAW</i>	<i>Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft</i>

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## INTRODUCTION

Within Ezra 1–6 (E<sup>1-6</sup>) resides a story, a narrative of related events, ostensibly in historical sequence. While this may sound simple enough—so much so that many have assumed that the story/narrative in E<sup>1-6</sup> is synonymous with the actual events of the past—postmodern scholarship has argued convincingly that narratives are far from simple. Rather than an objective account, the narrative in E<sup>1-6</sup> reflects what Foucault described as “discourse,” a particular set of ideas, beliefs, practices, and biases—an ideology—that conditions how an author constructs the subjects and the world of the narrative. E<sup>1-6</sup> is a story driven by a view of the world whose purpose is to draw the reader/hearer into this particular ideology. E<sup>1-6</sup> is one particular representation of certain events told in hopes of persuading people that this “history” is real history, and that it is theirs. There is, in other words, a mythic quality to this historicizing discourse.

This current study is an attempt to explain part of the discourse embedded in E<sup>1-6</sup> by utilizing the theoretical framework found in settler colonial studies, a relatively new field that attempts to understand and explain how settler societies function differently than, but also within the context of a larger colonial enterprise. This of course implies that E<sup>1-6</sup> is a settler colonial discourse, a question that is not beyond debate; nevertheless, I hope to show during the course of this study that E<sup>1-6</sup> shares a number of common elements, as well as a number of key differences, with other situations and events that have been identified by scholars as settler colonial in nature. Furthermore, I hope to show that such a project is useful in understanding certain aspects of the E<sup>1-6</sup> narrative in that what appears to be a historical report—and was long taken by scholars to be so—in fact communicates a myth of settlement. The central issue in this case is not, however,



whether or not E<sup>1-6</sup> faithfully recounts a historical, Persian-funded, גולן (*gôlâh*) community-led, settler colonial endeavor, complete with the (re)construction of a temple. As noted, I see E<sup>1-6</sup> as something other than reported history. That is not to say that E<sup>1-6</sup> is not historical; I take E<sup>1-6</sup> to be an historical and cultural product that came together at some (later) point in order to propagate certain ideas about settlement. The question I ask is that of how it achieved its goals.

This study, one of the first of its kind, uses settler colonial theory to read and analyze the narrative that is found in E<sup>1-6</sup>, specifically the closely related themes of returning and restoring. It is an exercise in interdisciplinary discovery because of its use of both biblical studies and settler colonial theory. My ideas about settler colonialism are primarily informed by the work of Lorenzo Veracini, a scholar who, like the vast majority of settler colonial scholars, is primarily concerned with modern settler colonial endeavors. Because of this focus on the modern, my undertaking to read E<sup>1-6</sup>'s story as an ideological myth of settlement will necessarily be informed by two modern stories of settlement: Israel/Palestine<sup>1</sup> and French Algeria.<sup>2</sup> Through such comparison I hope to provide a fresh avenue for understanding not only how the concepts of return and restoration function within a settler narrative like E<sup>1-6</sup>, but also how they contribute to the on-going rhetorical power of this sort of historicizing discourse, infusing the narrative with the cultural identity-shaping capacity of myth.

In undertaking this endeavor my first section will offer a brief sketch of relevant contributions within biblical studies that have influenced and shaped my work and which provide

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1. Israel/Palestine is an attempt at a neutral term for referring to this land. The reason Israel precedes Palestine is due merely to alphabetical order (following Lorenzo Veracini, *Israel and Settler Society* [London: Pluto, 2006], 1).

2. Many other settler colonization efforts could be considered. Among others, Caroline Elkins's and Susan Pedersen's edited volume contains chapters on Aotearoa-New Zealand, Australia, Korea, Libya, Mozambique, Portugal, South Africa, and the United States; however, with the exception of an occasional reference, space and time will allow for only two modern examples. For examples, see Caroline Elkins and Susan Pedersen, eds., *Settler Colonialism in the Twentieth Century: Projects, Practices, Legacies* (New York: Routledge, 2005).

a context for this study. I will focus particularly on scholarly views on “the return,” particularly how these views have shifted from considering Ezra-Nehemiah (EN) to be reliable history to viewing it more as ideology. Section two will provide a brief introduction to settler colonial studies and the theoretical premises it rests upon. I will define settler colonialism within the context of postcolonial studies, describe the key distinguishing markers between colonialism and settler colonialism, and discuss the settler concept of transfer. I will conclude the section with a description of how return functions in colonial contexts, as opposed to its more mythic function in settler colonial contexts. Section three will then examine these key elements in E<sup>1-6</sup>, with a particular focus on the motifs of return and restoration. Section four will follow by providing a similar analysis using the modern examples of Zionist settlement of Israel/Palestine and nineteenth- and twentieth-century French constructions of Algeria. Section five, the concluding section of this work, will then discuss the similarities and differences between the E<sup>1-6</sup> narrative and the two modern narratives, as well as offer up several observations related to examining E<sup>1-6</sup> as ideology, including how this ideological myth of return is contributing to the overall agenda of E<sup>1-6</sup>.

## 1. RETURN OR NO RETURN: WHAT DO SCHOLARS SAY?

While critical studies concerned with the Neo-Babylonian and early Persian periods are standard fare in today's academic milieu, such has not always been the case.<sup>3</sup> With regard to the Neo-Babylonian period, or what has traditionally been called the "exilic period," Megan Bishop Moore and Brad Kelle point out that, "most modern historians writing before the last three decades [1980–2010] virtually ignored this era."<sup>4</sup> Though interest in the Persian period exceeded that of the Neo-Babylonian period, it did not do so by much. Joseph Blenkinsopp, for example,

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3. The terminology used to identify different historical periods comes with a fair amount of baggage attached. Traditionally, the temporal designators "exilic-period" and "post-exilic period" (also spelled "postexilic period") have been used frequently (and tellingly) to speak of the historical periods occurring between 586–539 BCE and post-539 BCE, respectively. In my thinking, to order chronology according to "the exile" (historical, constructed, or both) is to favor one particular group out of a number of different groups active (and affected) at the time. Also pertinent to this discussion is archeological and textual evidence that suggests only a small number of Judahites were actually exiled, that the exile happened gradually, and that the return was gradual and much smaller than usually assumed in the biblical narrative. In light of these methodological flaws, I have chosen to designate time periods by the ruling empire at that time, e.g. the "Persian Period," which describes the time between 539–333 BCE. In doing so, I follow a number of predecessors including: Robert P. Carroll, "Exile! What Exile? Deportation and the Discourses of Diaspora," in Lester L. Grabbe, ed., *Leading Captivity Captive: The 'Exile' as History and Ideology*, JSOTSup 278; ESHM 2 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1998), 62–79; Philip R. Davies, "Exile? What Exile? Whose Exile?," in Grabbe, ed., *Leading Captivity Captive*, 128–138; Knud Jeppesen, "Exile a Period—Exile a Myth," in Grabbe, ed., *Leading Captivity Captive*, 139–145; Bob Becking, "'We All Returned as One!': Critical Notes on the Myth of the Mass Return," in *Judah and the Judeans in the Persian Period*, ed. Oded Lipschits and Manfred Oeming (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2006), 3–18; "A Fragmented History of the Exile," in *Interpreting Exile: Displacement and Deportation in Biblical and Modern Contexts*, ed. Brad E. Kelle, Frank Ritzel Ames, and Jacob L. Wright, SBLAIL 10 (Atlanta: SBL Press, 2011), 151–172. Another alternative is "templeless period," although this seems to run into essentially the same problem. See Jill Middlemas, *The Troubles of a Templeless Judah*, OTM (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 1; *The Templeless Age: An Introduction to the History, Literature, and Theology of the "Exile"* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2007), 3–6; "Going Beyond the Myth of the Empty Land," in *Exile and Restoration Revisited: Essays on the Babylonian and Persian Periods in Memory of Peter R. Ackroyd*, ed. Gary N. Knoppers, Lester L. Grabbe, and Deirdre N. Fulton; LSTS 73 (London: T&T Clark, 2009), 174–177.

4. Megan Bishop Moore and Brad E. Kelle, *Biblical History and Israel's Past: The Changing Study of the Bible and History* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2011), 337. Interestingly, they suggest that, "[t]o a large extent, this neglect may stem from the Bible, which, for all intents and purposes, presents this era as little more than an unfortunate parenthesis in the ongoing story of Israel that proceeds almost directly from the destruction of Jerusalem (586) to the return of exiled groups and the rebuilding of the temple (after 539)" (335).

laments in his 1988 commentary that, while Ezra-Nehemiah (EN) is “the most important” biblical text of the Persian period, it “is not one of the more popular biblical books.”<sup>5</sup> This picture has changed drastically in the last 35 years. The Neo-Babylonian and the Persian periods “have moved from being virtually ignored to occupying the center of attention in the discipline of Israelite history.”<sup>6</sup> Scholarly interest in these periods has produced what Tamara Eskenazi has called a “surfeit of riches.”<sup>7</sup> From, “‘the myth of the empty land’ [and] the date of the construction of the temple, [to] the demographic pattern of the return,” studies surrounding the so-called “exilic” and “post-exilic” periods now abound.<sup>8</sup> This study seeks to add to this “surfeit of riches” by using settler colonial theory to examine how the concepts of *returning* and *restoration* function within E<sup>1-6</sup>’s portrayal of the once-exiled גּוּלָּהּ community returning to their homeland.

Following recent scholarship, this study takes the narratives of return, restoration, and exile in E<sup>1-6</sup> as something other than a straightforward historical report. E<sup>1-6</sup> certainly contains traditions of a return, including struggle, overcoming challenges, and success in “inheriting” a land thought to be divinely appointed to a specific group of people; but it does so for reasons other than the preservation of history. Its story of a specific group of people returning from exile

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5. Joseph Blenkinsopp, *Ezra-Nehemiah: A Commentary*, OTL (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1988), 35. Just five years later, Tamara Eskenazi concurred, stating: “During most of the modern era Ezra-Nehemiah had been neglected and denigrated.” (Tamara C. Eskenazi, “Current Perspectives on Ezra-Nehemiah and the Persian Period,” *CurBR* 1 [1993]: 59–86 [59].

6. Moore and Kelle, *Biblical History*, 337.

7. Tamara Cohn Eskenazi, “From *Exile and Restoration* to Exile and Reconstruction,” in *Exile and Restoration Revisited*, ed. Knoppers and Grabbe, 78–93 (79). She uses this same expression in her 1993 survey of the field (Eskenazi, “Current Perspectives,” 59). A statement like David Carr’s—“The exile is the central point of ancient Israelite history, the period around which all others are oriented” (David M. Carr, *An Introduction to the Old Testament: Sacred Texts and Imperial Contexts of the Hebrew Bible* [Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010], 166)—along with the near consensus that the Persian period provides the setting for the writing and/or the creation of the “final form” of many (most?) of the biblical texts bear witness to the effects of this burgeoning interest. Rainer Albertz, for example, suggested that “approximately half of the material” in the HB comes from the Persian period (*Israel in Exile: The History and Literature of the Sixth Century B.C.E.*, SBLStBL 3 [Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2003], ix).

8. Eskenazi, “From *Exile and Restoration*,” 80.

is not the story of just one group. As evidenced by the text, beneath the story of a divinely appointed group of exiles is also the story of groups that were displaced at the hands of the returning **גולה** community.<sup>9</sup> In any case, this study's view of E<sup>1-6</sup> as more ideological than historical in its telling of settlement, imperial power, and displacement warrants a review of the long held assumption of E<sup>1-6</sup>'s historical reliability and biblical scholarship's move away from this assumption.

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The question of an actual return of exiles from Babylon (as well as the Babylonian exile itself) has been, particularly in the last 4 decades, an important one among biblical scholars and historians, with views increasingly moving away from an assumption of the biblical record's accuracy. While the general consensus among scholars indeed supports the idea of an historical return to the land, the degree to which the return portrayed in the narrative resembles its historical equivalent is quite another matter.<sup>10</sup> Commenting on past scholarly attempts to grapple with questions of historicity, Moore and Kelle state: "the Bible at first provided the bulk of the information historians used to write about it. Then, over time, questions about the veracity of [the biblical] account arose, leading to new approaches."<sup>11</sup>

This generalization fairly characterizes all the historical periods [up through the Neo-Babylonian era], and it also describes the progression of scholarship on the Persian period. However, though early- and mid-twentieth-century historians broadly trusted that the Bible could provide historical information about the Persian period, they recognized

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9. Several recent works have begun to consider issues of displacement and settlement within the tradition of a "returning" group of "exiles" from various perspectives. See for example, John J. Ahn, *Exile as Forced Migration: A Sociological, Literary, and Theological Approach on the Displacement and Resettlement of the Southern Kingdom of Judah*, BZAW 417 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2010); Ehud Ben Zvi and Christoph Levin, eds., *The Concept of Exile in Ancient Israel*, BZAW 404 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2010); Ehud Ben Zvi, "Reconstructing the Intellectual Discourse in Ancient Yehud," *SR* 39 (2010): 7–23; Kelle, Ames, and Wright, eds., *Interpreting Exile*; John J. Ahn and Jill Middlemas, eds., *By the Irrigation Canals of Babylon: Approaches to the Study of Exile*, LHBOTS 526 (London: T&T Clark, 2012).

10. For an excellent collection of essays dealing with the historicity of the "exile" and the "return," see Grabbe, ed., *Leading Captivity Captive*.

11. Moore and Kelle, *Biblical History and Israel's Past*, 400–401.

that properly appreciating and understanding this information required some critical investigation.<sup>12</sup>

Martin Noth's *Geschichte Israels* (1950)<sup>13</sup> and John Bright's *A History of Israel* (1959)<sup>14</sup> serve as good examples of pre-1980s historiographical practices with reference to the Persian period.<sup>15</sup> Noth and Bright were not amateur historians; they were aware of the difficulties involved in reconstructing the Persian period, such as the anachronisms in the biblical reports and the authenticity of the supposed source material in EN. This critical awareness, however, does not govern their published histories. For example, in their respective works, Noth and Bright both assumed historicity of key figures like Nehemiah and Ezra,<sup>16</sup> assumed a more-or-less authentic nature of the Persian documents in EN,<sup>17</sup> spoke of the noble character of Cyrus as well as other Persian kings,<sup>18</sup> and wrote of a very large and very real exile and return of the people of Judah. The majority of historians of the time largely followed Noth and Bright in more-or-less taking the biblical narrative as historically reliable.

Beginning in the 1980s, a gradual transition away from Bright and Noth's 1950s style of historiography began to occur. By that time, archeological works such as Paul Lapp's article on

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12. Moore and Kelle, *Biblical History*, 400.

13. Martin Noth, *The History of Israel* (New York: Harper, 1958), translated from the German original, Martin Noth, *Geschichte Israels* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1950)

14. John Bright, *A History of Israel*, 4th ed. (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2000), originally published as, John Bright, *A History of Israel* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1959).

15. Points on Noth and Bright are from Bishop and Kelle, *Biblical History and Israel's Past*, 400–404.

16. Though Noth argued that the information about Nehemiah is more easily attained than that of Ezra (*The History of Israel*, 318). For a discussion about Ezra and Nehemiah in which basic historicity is assumed, see Bright, *A History of Israel*, 391–402.

17. Bright, *A History of Israel*, 361.

18. Noth claimed that Cyrus held the religions of conquered territories in high regard speculating that Jews in Cyrus's court helped orchestrate Cyrus's command to return and rebuild (*The History of Israel*, 304–308). This idea persists today. One scholar has called Cyrus the "the inventor of 'human rights'" (Pierre Briant, *From Cyrus to Alexander: A History of the Persian Empire*, trans. Peter T. Daniels [Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2002], 47), while some have regarded the Cyrus Cylinder as "the world's first charter of human rights" (Shapour Ghasemi, "The Great Cyrus Cylinder," from *Iran Chamber Society*, 19 December 2013, Accessed 19 December 2013, [http://www.iranchamber.com/history/cyrus/cyrus\\_charter.php](http://www.iranchamber.com/history/cyrus/cyrus_charter.php)).

Persian era pottery (1970),<sup>19</sup> Ephraim Stern's survey of biblical archeology during the Persian era (1973),<sup>20</sup> and Kathleen Kenyon's report of her excavations at Jerusalem (1974),<sup>21</sup> provided rich archeological data for biblical scholars. As early as 1977, Geo Widengren's treatment of Persian era history (1977)<sup>22</sup> shows more familiarity with archeological evidence than Noth or Bright, even if Widengren's ultimately followed them in his conclusions.<sup>23</sup> Archeological evidence influenced how biblical scholars viewed the Persian period by opening up questions about what was historical.

Scholars also began to shift in how they read and interpreted biblical texts, especially EN, thought to contain historical evidence. Scholars continued the long-time practice of examining how the different sections of EN related to one another, including the supposed sources utilized by EN, in order to better understand authorship and compositional issues which, in turn could help in reconstructing historical events.<sup>24</sup> Though scholars consistently considered these questions, the sections of EN that could potentially call into question the historicity of Ezra and/or Nehemiah—the Nehemiah Memoir, the Aramaic documents in Ezra 4–7, and the Ezra Memoir (Ezra 7–10; Neh 8)—were never seriously challenged, a view upheld by Hugh Williamson,<sup>25</sup>

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19. Paul W. Lapp, "The Pottery of Palestine in the Persian Period," in *Archäologie und Altes Testament: Festschrift für Kurt Galling zum 8. Januar 1970*, ed. Arnulf Kuschke and Ernst Kutsch (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1970), 179–197.

20. Ephraim Stern, *The Material Culture of the Land of the Bible in the Persian Period, 538–332 B. C. E.* (Warminster, U.K.: Aris & Phillips, 1982), translated from the 1973 Hebrew original: **332–538**, בתקופה הפרסית, ארץ-ישראל (Jerusalem: Bialik Institute/Israel Exploration Society, 1973).

21. Kathleen M. Kenyon, *Digging Up Jerusalem* (New York: Praeger, 1974).

22. Geo Widengren, "The Persian Period," in *Israelite and Judaeon History*, ed. John H. Hayes and J. Maxwell Miller (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1977), 489–538.

23. Moore and Kelle, *Biblical History*, 404.

24. For example, Sara Japhet's 1968 article (though not appreciated until the 1980s) called into question the common authorship of Chronicles and EN. (Sara Japhet, "The Supposed Common Authorship of Chronicles and Ezra-Nehemiah," *VT* 18 [1968]: 330–371). Sara Japhet, "Sheshbazzar and Zerubbabel: Against the Background of the Historical and Religious Tendencies of Ezra-Nehemiah," *ZAW* 94 (1982): 66–98.

25. H. G. M. Williamson, *Ezra, Nehemiah* (WBC 16; Waco, TX: Word Books, 1985).

David Clines,<sup>26</sup> and Joseph Blenkinsopp,<sup>27</sup> in their respective commentaries.<sup>28</sup> Even Eskenazi's important literary work on EN still implicitly assumed the historicity of Nehemiah and Ezra.<sup>29</sup>

By the early 1990s, many scholars were questioning the veracity of the narrative of EN more than ever. Many scholars still considered Ezra and Nehemiah to be historical; others, however, were becoming more and more skeptical about EN's portrayal of Nehemiah and Ezra. For example, Gösta Ahlström claimed that, "The presentation of Ezra is less 'historical' than that of Nehemiah" (though also confirming that Ezra was an important figure during the Persian period).<sup>30</sup> Mary Joan Leith also showed signs of reserved skepticism in claiming that Nehemiah was more important than Ezra for understanding the Persian period.<sup>31</sup> Lester Grabbe's skepticism was less reserved. In his 1992 historical survey of the Persian period, Grabbe suggested that, "the apparent historical account of events in the narrative sections [of EN] is illusory. Not only did the author(s) write long after the events occurred, but they also had particular objectives that resulted in a rather tendentious account."<sup>32</sup> Rather than history, "the details of events [in EN] are

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26. David J. A. Clines, *Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther*, NCBC (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1984).

27. Joseph Blenkinsopp, *Ezra-Nehemiah: A Commentary*, OTL (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1988).

28. See Lester L. Grabbe, "Reconstructing History from the Book of Ezra," in *Second Temple Studies 1: The Persian Period*, ed. Philip R. Davies, JSOTSup 117 (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1991).

29. Tamara Cohn Eskenazi, *In An Age of Prose: A Literary Approach to Ezra-Nehemiah*, SBLMS 36 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1988).

30. Gösta Ahlström, *The History of Ancient Palestine* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1993), 887.

31. Mary Joan Winn Leith, "Israel Among the Nations: The Persian Period," in *The Oxford History of the Biblical World*, ed. Michael D. Coogan (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 276–316 (306–309); A similar view is taken in Alberto Soggin, *An Introduction to the History of Israel and Judah*, 3rd ed. (London: SCM, 1998), 310.

32. Lester L. Grabbe, *Judaism from Cyrus to Hadrian*, vol. 1, *The Persian and Greek Periods* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1992), 31.



deductions or inventions and mislead rather than help.”<sup>33</sup> He would later write in his 1998

commentary on EN:

[EN’s] message is primarily an ideological one. ... A dispassionate description of events or a mere chronicle of what happened is clearly not the primary purpose of the author/editor. Any record of events is secondary to the theological clarification of what it all meant. ... [The authors/editors] gave a version of events which suited their ideology, regardless of whether it would match the rigorous critical criteria required by historians.<sup>34</sup>

Grabbe is as a good example in showing that many scholars had shifted towards viewing EN as more ideological and less historical, but his ideas were just part of this larger movement that extended beyond just EN.<sup>35</sup> Scholars like Robert Carroll<sup>36</sup> and Hans Barstad<sup>37</sup> made a similar interpretive move in how they were talking about not just EN, but the exile and return. Though certain biblical accounts portray the land of Judah as empty, Carroll and Barstad, relying on archeological and textual evidence, suggest that the land of Judah remained populated during and

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33. Grabbe, *Judaism from Cyrus to Hadrian*, 32. Grabbe also called into question the historical sources thought to be embedded within EN. For thorough treatments of the historical documents thought to be embedded in EN, see Lester L. Grabbe, “The ‘Persian Documents’ in the Book of Ezra: Are They Authentic?” in Lipschits and Oeming, eds., *Judah and the Judeans in the Persian Period*, 531–570; *A History of the Jews and Judaism in the Second Temple Period*, vol. 1, *Yehud: A History of the Persian Province of Judah*, LSTS 47 (London: T&T Clark, 2004), 76–78; *Judaism*, 32–36; Diana V. Edelman, *The Origins of the “Second” Temple: Persian Imperial Policy and the Rebuilding of Jerusalem*, BibW (London: Equinox, 2005), 180–201. For views that see the documents as basically authentic, see David J. A. Clines, *Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther*, NCBC (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1984), 7–9; Williamson, *Ezra, Nehemiah*, xxiii–xxiv. Similar but more nuanced is Blenkinsopp, *Ezra-Nehemiah*, 41–47.

34. Lester L. Grabbe, *Ezra-Nehemiah*, OTR (London: Routledge, 1998), 125–126.

35. For a helpful sampling of the kinds of issues scholars were addressing in the 1990s, see Philip R. Davies, ed., *Second Temple Studies 1: The Persian Period*, JSOTSup 117 (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1991); Tamara C. Eskenazi and Kent H. Richards, eds., *Second Temple Studies 2: Temple Community in the Persian Period*. JSOTSup 175 (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1994); Philip R. Davies and John M. Halligan, eds., *Second Temple Studies III: Studies in Politics, Class and Material Culture*, JSOTSup 340 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 2002).

36. Robert P. Carroll, “The Myth of the Empty Land,” in *Ideological Criticism of Biblical Texts*, ed. David Jobling and Tina Pippin, Semeia 59 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1992), 79–93.

37. Hans M. Barstad, “On the History and Archaeology of Judah During the Exilic Period,” *OLP* 19 (1988): 25–36; *The Myth of the Empty Land: A Study in the History and Archaeology of Judah During the “Exilic” Period*, SOFSup 28 (Oslo: Scandinavian University Press, 1996); “After the “Myth of the Empty Land”: Major Challenges in the Study of Neo-Babylonian Judah,” in *Judah and the Judeans in the Neo-Babylonian Period*, ed. Oded Lipschits and Joseph Blenkinsopp (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2003), 3–20.

after the Neo-Babylonian exile.<sup>38</sup> According to this view, “the exile” was in reality a series of exiles that only affected a small group of elites. Similarly, the return was not a large-scale, unified event, but rather a number of small, gradual migrations. Because the majority of the Judean population continued to inhabit Judah during the Neo-Babylonian period, the view portrayed in certain parts of the biblical narrative, the “myth of the empty land” as it has come to be called, was shown to be more of an ideological construct than a description of actual events. A majority of scholars agree with Barstad and Carroll on the point that the land never was completely emptied; however, some have called into question, using archeological and textual evidence, the idea that life in Judah basically continued on as normal after Nebuchadnezzar’s 586 BCE conquest.<sup>39</sup> Questions about the “myth of the empty land” and Babylonian deportation

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38. My reading lands in the middle of an ongoing question about whether or not EN presents an “empty land” view upon the *הַגּוֹל*’s return. By viewing EN as a settler colonial narrative (arguments of historicity aside), the *הַגּוֹל* behave in true settler fashion by struggling to uphold an “empty land” picture of the land while at the same time admitting to having to deal with “the people of the land.” Just to cite a few examples in the ongoing debate, Hans Barstad argues that Chronicles makes “the claim that the whole country lay desolate for seventy years, a view strongly related to the one we find in the books of Ezra and Nehemiah” (Hans M. Barstad, *The Myth of the Empty Land: A Study in the History and Archaeology of Judah During the “Exilic” Period*, Symbolae Osloenses Fasciculus Suppletorius 28 [Oslo: Scandinavian University Press, 1996], 39). Similarly, Lester Grabbe argues that at least Ezra 2 “is firmly in the tradition of ‘the myth of the empty land’” (Lester L. Grabbe, *Ezra–Nehemiah*, OTR [London: Routledge, 1998], 13). Compare Becking who states that “it is generally held that the book of Ezra gives details on the string of events called ‘exile’ that does not occur elsewhere; for instance, the fact that the area surrounding Jerusalem remained populated during the period under consideration” (Bob Becking, “Ezra’s Re-enactment of the Exile,” in *Leading Captivity Captive*, ed. Grabbe, 40–61 [41]).

39. Bustenay Oded has sharply critiqued Barstad and Carroll (as well as Philip R. Davies, Niels Peter Lemche, Thomas L. Thompson, and Keith W. Whitelam), saying that they are “mythographers [who] have failed to present real, clear, unequivocal documentary evidence ... Although they cannot prove it, for them it is a fact to be invented. Indications and remains based on dubious interpretation are not evidence or proof” (Bustenay Oded, “Where Is the ‘Myth of the Empty Land’ To Be Found? History versus Myth,” in *Judah and Judeans in the Neo-Babylonian Period*, 55–74). Similarly, Zev Farver has critiqued Blenkinsopp (*Judaism, The First Phase: The Place of Ezra and Nehemiah in the Origins of Judaism* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009], 44–46; “The Bible, Archaeology and Politics; or The Empty Land Revisited,” *JSOT* 27 [2002]: 169–187) for similar reasons (Zev Farber, review of *Judaism, The First Phase: The Place of Ezra and Nehemiah in the Origins of Judaism*, by Joseph Blenkinsopp, *JSS* 57 [2012]: 176–177.). More recently, Don Moffat has called into question the idea that life went on as normal after 586 BCE, suggesting that, “[Yehud] was substantially smaller than the old state of Judah” (Donald P. Moffat, *Ezra’s Social Drama: Identity Formation, Marriage and Social Conflict in Ezra 9 and 10*, LHBOTS 579 [London: Bloomsbury, 2014], 50). Most influential for Moffat’s argument are: Charles E. Carter, *The Emergence of Yehud in the Persian Period: A Social and Demographic Study*, JSOTSup 294 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1999); Oded Lipschits, *The Fall and Rise of Jerusalem: Judah Under Babylonian Rule* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2005); Avraham Faust, *Judah in the Neo-Babylonian Period: The Archaeology of Desolation*, ABS 18 (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2012).

practices are no doubt important (and hotly contested); nevertheless, I am talking about the exile and return as discourse, empty land or not. Yehud does not have to be empty for myth to function.

This move to thinking of EN, as well as the events surrounding the exile and return, in ideological terms has continued influencing scholars up to the present.<sup>40</sup> Moving away from viewing sources like EN as history has allowed for a number of new proposals. For example, Diana Edelman in her 2005 reconstruction of Persian events places the rebuilding of the temple in the time of Artaxerxes I (464–424 BCE) rather than the traditional view based on a particular reading of EN, that the temple was built in the time of Darius I (521–485 BCE). EN, she argues, came together “under the Seleucids,”<sup>41</sup> long after any of the events described, a time when a completely different set of “changing historical and cultural circumstances” would have heavily influenced how the return and restoration was recounted.<sup>42</sup> Jacob Wright’s 2004 monograph on the so-called “Nehemiah Memoir” also takes a similarly critical view, attempting to show the literary stages of the NM’s growth and development spanning from the Persian period to well into the Hellenistic period. Wright argues that the “Nehemiah-Memoir has gradually developed from a short building report into an account of Judah’s Restoration, which in turn provided the theological impulses for the literary maturation of Ezra–Neh.”<sup>43</sup>

Though I have only provided a cursory survey of scholarly opinion here, ideas of a completely literal exile and return as presented in certain biblical texts are waning within biblical scholarship, though there are some notable exceptions. There has also been a shift towards

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40. Interestingly, Charles Torrey critiqued the idea of a mass exile and return in 1910: “The destruction of the temple [rather than the exile] was the turning-point, . . . it was this catastrophe, not the exile, which constituted the dividing line between the two eras. The terms “exilic,” “pre-exilic,” and “post-exilic” ought to be banished forever from usage, for they are merely misleading, and correspond to nothing that is real in Hebrew literature and life (Charles C. Torrey, *Ezra Studies* [Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1910], 289). Though ignored for decades, Torrey’s ideas have come to be highly praised among certain scholars.

41. Edelman, *The Origins of the “Second” Temple*, 158.

42. Edelman, *The Origins of the “Second” Temple*, 12.

43. Jacob L. Wright, *Rebuilding Identities: The Nehemiah-Memoir and its Earliest Readers*, BZAW 348 (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2004), vii.

viewing EN as ideology cast as history, rather than a simple reporting of the past. Both of these shifts characterize well much of the work that has been done in the last thirty-five years.

Rather than history in the modern sense then, E<sup>1-6</sup> might be better described as something akin to what historian Eric Hobsbawm has called “invented tradition.”<sup>44</sup> Hobsbawm’s description fits well E<sup>1-6</sup>’s narrative: “Traditions which appear or claim to be old are often quite recent in origin and sometimes invented” in an “attempt to establish continuity with a suitable historic past.”<sup>45</sup> This survey of recent scholarship leads now to the main issue at hand in this study; namely, how the concepts of return and restoration function within ideological discourse in communities that have a tradition of settler colonialism.

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44. Eric Hobsbawm, “Introduction: Inventing Traditions,” in *The Invention of Tradition*, ed. Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 1–14 (1).

45. Hobsbawm, “Inventing Traditions,” 1.

## 2. SETTLER COLONIAL THEORY: A BRIEF PRIMER

The practice of sending “citizens to distant lands,” in order to create “new iterations ... of life in distant settlements,” has been a feature throughout much of the last 2,500 years.<sup>46</sup> References to colonization and settlement abound in ancient inscriptions and literature.<sup>47</sup> The 5th century BCE Greek historian Thucydides, for example, reports that, “the Peloponnesians settled the greater part of Italy and Sicily and some parts of the rest of Greece.”<sup>48</sup> Some three centuries later, the Roman Republic’s *lex agraria* of 111 BCE stipulates: “to whichever colonies (*colonia*) or towns (*municipia*), [or] any equivalents of towns or colonies [(there may be) of Roman citizens] or of the Latin name, land [has been] granted by the people or by a decree of the Senate to exploit.”<sup>49</sup> With a long history comes a long list of ways in which colonialism and settlement have been conceived, carried out, and studied. This study adds to that list by employing settler colonial theory to examine E<sup>1-6</sup>.

### Defining Settler Colonialism

#### Locating Settler Colonial Studies Within Postcolonial Studies

The emerging field of settler colonial studies joins an already vast number of approaches classified as postcolonial studies. Postcolonial studies—along with other critical perspectives

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46. Melvin E Page, ed., *Colonialism: An International, Social, Cultural, and Political Encyclopedia*, 3 vols (Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO, 2003), 1:xxi-xxii (xxi).

47. See A. J. Graham, *Colony and Mother City in Ancient Greece* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1964); Guy Bradley and John-Paul Wilson, eds., *Greek and Roman Colonization: Origins, Ideologies and Interactions* (Swansea, Wales: The Classical Press of Wales, 2006).

48. Thucydides, *History of the Peloponnesian War* 1.12. “Ἰταλίας δὲ καὶ Σικελίας τὸ πλεῖστον Πελοποννήσιοι τῆς τε ἄλλης Ἑλλάδος ἔστιν ἅ χωρία.”

49. Quoted in Michael H. Crawford, ed., *Roman Statutes* (BICSUL 64; London: Institute of Classical Studies, 1996), 1:145. “[quibus colonieis seive moi]nicipeis, seive quae pro moinicipieis colo[nieisve, ceivium Rom.] nominisve Latini, poplice deve senati sentential ager fruendus datus.”

such as feminist, Marxist, and ideological criticism—has, over the last several decades, sought to decenter and destabilize various systems of power through questioning and critiquing their precepts. More specific to postcolonial criticism is the questioning and critique of colonial expansion and domination and the lasting effects that colonialism and imperialism have on people and institutions now or formerly under the rule of empire.

Postcolonial approaches have become a major area of interest for biblical scholars,<sup>50</sup> particularly those who examine and critique colonial interpretations of texts as well as those interested in how formerly colonized groups interpret texts within their cultural contexts.<sup>51</sup> Less common, particularly in the HB, are postcolonial methods that demonstrate what R. S. Sugirtharajah has described as a “scrutiny of biblical documents for their colonial entanglements.”<sup>52</sup> Biblical texts, he points out, “came out of various colonial contexts—Egyptian, Persian, Assyrian, Hellenistic and Roman,” and need to be “reconsidered ... not as a series of

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50. For a helpful collection of essays that engages historical critical methodologies from different feminist and/or postcolonial perspectives, see Caroline Vander Stichele and Todd C. Penner, eds., *Her Master's Tools?: Feminist and Postcolonial Engagements of Historical-Critical Discourse*, GPBS 9 (Leiden: Brill, 2005). On postcolonial theory and biblical studies, see R. S. Sugirtharajah, ed., *The Postcolonial Bible*, TBP 1 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1998); *Postcolonial Criticism and Biblical Interpretation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001); Stephen D. Moore and Fernando F. Segovia, eds., *Postcolonial and Biblical Criticism: Interdisciplinary Intersections*, TBP 6 (New York: T&T Clark, 2005); Stephen D. Moore, “‘And So We Came to Rome’: Mapping Postcolonial Biblical Criticism,” in Stephen D. Moore, ed., *Empire and Apocalypse: Postcolonialism and the New Testament* (Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix, 2006), 3–23.

51. My classification of postcolonial work done on biblical texts is informed by R. S. Sugirtharajah and Fernando Segovia who have suggested in heuristic fashion three main methods of incorporating postcolonial studies into biblical studies: (1) through the interrogation of modern empires’ uses of biblical texts, (2) by previously colonized peoples producing their own cultural readings of biblical texts, and (3) by examining colonial situations within the biblical texts themselves. See R. S. Sugirtharajah, *The Bible and the Third World: Precolonial, Colonial, and Postcolonial Encounters* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 250–259; *Postcolonial Criticism and Biblical Interpretation*, 251–55; Fernando F. Segovia, “Biblical Criticism and Postcolonial Studies: Toward a Postcolonial Optic,” in *The Postcolonial Bible*, ed. R. S. Sugirtharajah, 49–65; Bradley L. Crowell, “Postcolonial Studies and the Hebrew Bible,” *CurBR* 7.2 (2009): 217–244 (220).

52. Sugirtharajah, *The Bible and the Third World*, 251. Though not as common, work like that described by Sugirtharajah is being done. See, for example, Leo G. Perdue and Warren Carter, *Israel and Empire: A Postcolonial History of Israel and Early Judaism*, ed. Coleman A. Baker (London: Bloomsbury, 2015).

divinely guided incidents or reports about divine-human encounters, but as emanating from colonial contacts.”<sup>53</sup> This type of postcolonial approach should

scour the biblical pages for how colonial intentions and assumptions informed and influenced the production of the texts[,] ... [and] attempt to resurrect lost voices and causes which are distorted or silenced in the canonized text[, as well as] address issues such as nationalism, ethnicity, deterritorialization and identity, which arise in the wake of colonialism.<sup>54</sup>

Analyses of biblical texts using settler colonial approaches are a rare find,<sup>55</sup> and yet it is precisely this kind of scholarship that answers Sugirtharajah’s call to examine the “colonial entanglements” within the ancient contexts of biblical texts.

### Settler Colonial Theory v. Colonial Theory

The main tenets of settler colonial theory are most easily explained by reference to the more familiar and established field of colonial studies. Settler colonial theory was born out of a perceived shortcoming of colonial studies to fully account for all of the various ways that colonization affects different groups, particularly settlers (and by extension, those affected by

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53. Sugirtharajah, *The Bible and the Third World*, 251.

54. Sugirtharajah, *The Bible and the Third World*, 251.

55. In part, this likely has to do with the relative newness of settler colonial studies. Pekka Pitkänen’s work makes up the overwhelming majority (if not sum) of research done on settler colonial readings of biblical texts: Pekka Pitkänen, “Reading Genesis–Joshua as a Unified Document from an Early Date: A Settler Colonial Perspective,” *BTB* 45.1 (2015): 3–33; “Pentateuch–Joshua: A Settler-Colonial Document of a Supplanting Society,” *SCSt* 4 (2014): 245–276; “Ancient Israel and Settler Colonialism,” *SCSt* 4 (2014): 64–81; “Reading Genesis–Joshua as a Settler Colonial Document” (paper presented at the Oxford Old Testament Seminar, University of Oxford, Oxford, UK, 24 February 2014); “Ancient Israel and Philistia: Settler Colonialism and Ethnocultural Interaction,” *UF* 45 (2014): 233–263; *Joshua*, ApOTC 6 (Downers Grove, IL: Inter Varsity Press, 2010); “Ethnicity, Assimilation, and the Israelite Settlement,” *TynBul* 55 (2004): 161–182. In a 2012 article, Grabbe explores what applying terms like “migrants,” “settlers,” and “pioneers” to the returnees might do for our understanding. He even compares the returnees with several modern examples of migrants. His study, however, is only meant to spur thinking in this direction and thus does not attempt to distinguish between his proposed terms, nor does he attempt to draw any substantial conclusions (Grabbe, “‘They Never Returned’: Were the Babylonians Jewish Settlers Exiles or Pioneers?,” in *By the Irrigation Canals of Babylon*, ed. Ahn and Middlemas, 158–72).

settlement).<sup>56</sup> Settler colonial theorists see models like the traditional colonizer-colonized model as too simplistic to account for settlers whose experiences, like many groups caught in the middle of colonizing enterprises, are not fully understood by appeal to such a dichotomy.

A full-length treatment of settler colonial theory is beyond the scope of this project; but I will provide discussion here of three major points. I will begin by laying out the case for settler colonial theory being a discipline in its own right. This discussion will provide a basic picture of how scholars describe the process by which settlers construct not only their own identities, but also those of indigenous groups and the metropole. My primary guide in doing so will be Lorenzo Veracini's work, *Settler Colonialism: A Theoretical Overview*.<sup>57</sup> I will then discuss the primary means by which settlers make their constructed world a reality, namely, the concept of transfer. The final part of this section will deal with return. I will make note of two distinct uses of the idea of return, and conclude by focusing on one particular use of return, namely how settlers use return in a mythic sense to lend power to their discourse of settlement.

### The Case for Settler Colonial Studies

Before attempting to distinguish settler colonialism from colonialism, a discussion of terminology is helpful. Settler colonial theory did not develop *ex nihilo*; several works by

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56. An objection could be made concerning the focus of settler colonial studies on settlers. It is certainly the case that settlers, and those who wield power, have traditionally been the subjects of historical inquiry and that only recently has scholarship begun to consider at length indigenous groups within settler contexts. Nevertheless, as Lorenzo Veracini points out, "there are also risks intrinsic in focusing primarily on indigenous peoples and their experience" (Lorenzo Veracini, *Settler Colonialism: A Theoretical Overview* [London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010], 15). In a different context, but as an analogous dynamic, Ava Baron keenly notes that if scholarship only focuses only on women, "'man' remains the universal subject against which women are defined in their particularity." See Ava Baron, "On Looking at Men: Masculinity and the Making of a Gendered Working Class History," in *Feminists Revision History*, ed. Ann-Louise Shapiro (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1994), 146–171 (150). Ruth Frankenberg speaks of studying whiteness in a similar way as well (Ruth Frankenberg, "Local Whitenesses, Localizing Whiteness," in Ruth Frankenberg, ed. *Displacing Whiteness: Essays in Social and Cultural Criticism* [Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1997], 1–34 [1, 3]).

57. Lorenzo Veracini, *Settler Colonialism: A Theoretical Overview* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010). To a much lesser degree, I am also relying on Patrick Wolfe, *Settler Colonialism and the Transformation of Anthropology: The Politics and Poetics of an Ethnographic Event* (London: Cassell, 1999).



colonial theorists were influential in the creation of settler colonial theory.<sup>58</sup> These influential works saw no need for a separate field of colonialism that focused on settlers, but they did note certain differences among colonial endeavors. This recognition of different types of colonialism became the catalyst for settler colonial theory. It became evident to settler colonial theorists that colonialism and settler colonialism parted ways in how they each constructed indigenous (and exogenous) entities. These differences in constructing identities can be explained as the result of the main goals of each kind of endeavor. Settlers tend to frame any indigenous presence as a problem that must be eliminated, because land is the end game; after all, settlers are interested in new land, not returning to the old land. Colonial agents, on the other hand, do plan on returning home, one reason being to bring back the spoils that they had acquired on their journey. Because colonialism is mainly concerned with a land's resources, and not land itself, colonialism does not generally view an indigenous presence as a problem to eradicate, but rather as free labor, yet another natural resource to be exploited. Exploitation, rather than eradication, is the name of the game when it comes to colonialism. Such "exploitative colonialism" or what perhaps could be called "metropolitan-centered colonialism" is what I am referring to when I use the term colonialism (e.g., settler colonialism versus colonialism).

In attempting to delineate between settler colonial theory and colonial theory, it is most helpful to begin by defining colonialism. In his 1997 work, *Colonialism: A Theoretical Overview*, Jürgen Osterhammel provides this description:

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58. Scholars of colonialism have long recognized and attempted to account for different varieties of colonialism, including the phenomenon of settling. For example, Ronald Horvath suggests in a 1972 article that the act of settling is what distinguishes "imperialism" from "colonialism" (Ronald J. Horvath, "A Definition of Colonialism," *CurrAnthro* 13 [1972]: 45–57 [46]). Moses Finley, writing just a few years later, suggests doing away completely with the term "colony" when referring to acts of settlement (Moses I. Finley, "Colonies—An Attempt at a Typology," *TRHS* 26 [1976]: 167–88). Jürgen Osterhammel identifies a particular type of colonization that he calls the "New England Type" in order to account for settling. Nevertheless colonial scholarship has not seen settling as constituting enough of a difference to warrant an entirely new model as in the case of settler colonial studies (Jürgen Osterhammel, *Colonialism: A Theoretical Overview* [Princeton: Markus Wiener Publishers, 1997], 7).

[Colonialism is] a relationship of domination between an indigenous (or forcibly imported) majority and a minority of foreign invaders. The fundamental decisions affecting the lives of the colonized people are made and implemented by the colonial rulers in pursuit of interests that are often defined in a distant metropolis.<sup>59</sup>

Osterhammel suggests three qualifications for a situation to be deemed colonial:

- (1) The presence of (only) two groups: a “foreign,” or exogenous “colonizer” from a distant metropolis,<sup>60</sup> and the native, or indigenous “colonized” group.
- (2) An imbalance of power between the two groups.
- (3) An outnumbering of the exogenous group by the indigenous group.

These qualifications are not original to Osterhammel (though his particular rendering of the definition is often quoted).<sup>61</sup>

Concerning the first part of Osterhammel’s definition, while his colonizer–colonized dyad is useful in examining a particular kind of colonialism, it fails to fully recognize the distinctiveness that settlement brings to a colonial situation. A new framework is needed to think about settlers, a framework that disrupts the simple binary, colonizer–colonized, in order to highlight the situation of the settler.<sup>62</sup> Anna Johnston and Alan Lawson, in speaking specifically about European settlement, detail the theoretical shift that moves from a colonizer–colonized dyad to a triad:

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59. Osterhammel, *Colonialism: A Theoretical Overview*, 16–17.

60. The term “metropolis” (along with its synonym “metropole”) comes from the Greek μητρόπολις, *mêtropolis*, meaning “mother city.” The term is used to signify the political center of power from which settlers have come.

61. For example, George Balandier, in a 1951 article, described a “colonial situation” as the “domination imposed by a foreign minority ... on an indigenous population constituting a numerical majority” (George Balandier, “The Colonial Situation: A Theoretical Approach,” in *Social Change: The Colonial Situation*, ed. Immanuel Wallerstein [New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1966], 34–61 [54]; Originally published as: “La Situation Coloniale: Approche Théorique,” *Cahiers Internationaux de Sociologie* 11 [1951]: 44–79). Likewise, British historian A. G. Hopkins’ work also assumes a more powerful minority group dominating a majority group: colonialism includes the phenomenon of “white settlers bec[oming] numerically pre-dominant,” while in places where colonialism had not taken over, “indigenous societies remained the basis of government” (A. G. Hopkins, “Back to the Future: From National History to Imperial History,” *PastP* 164 [1999]: 198–243 [215]). D. K. Fieldhouse also relies upon demography in describing the different kinds of colonies: (1) “mixed” colonies, including “occupation” colonies, were those in which “a substantial minority of white settlers created societies as similar to [their own],” using indigenous workers, (2) “plantation” colonies where settlers relied on a forced migrant workforce, and (3) “pure” colonies where white settlers had eliminated or marginalized the indigenous population (*The Colonial Empires: A Comparative Study from the Eighteenth Century* [London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1966], 11–13).

62. Anna Johnston and Alan Lawson, “Settler Colonies,” in *A Companion to Postcolonial Studies*, ed. Henry Schwarz and Sangeeta Ray (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2000), 360–376 (363).

The crucial theoretical move to be made [in examining settler endeavors] is to see the ‘settler’ as uneasily occupying a place caught between two First Worlds, two origins of authority and authenticity. One of these is the originating world of Europe, the Imperium—the source of its principal cultural authority. Its ‘other’ First World is that of the First Nations<sup>63</sup> whose authority they not only replaced and effaced but also desired.<sup>64</sup>

Envisioning settler environments using a triangular framework helps to carve out the notable place of the settler. In this configuration, the “corners” of the triangle are: the settlers, the groups that are indigenous to the land, and all other exogenous entities. While the metropole (or “homeland”) often makes up the largest part of this third group this group, it also includes other exogenous groups that are not necessarily associated with the metropole (e.g., exiles, refugees, and/or other forced migrants).<sup>65</sup>

Concerning Osterhammel’s second condition, he is correct when he states that a key component of colonialism is “a relationship of domination” of an exogenous group over an indigenous group.<sup>66</sup> Settler colonialism, however, requires that more be said concerning the “foreign invaders,” for it is the particular dynamics of this form of invasion and domination that give rise to the term.

Settler colonial movement is unlike the movement of colonial agents (e.g., military personnel) who return home: settlers, as the term implies, settle on a permanent basis.<sup>67</sup> And, yet not all permanent movements are settler movements. As Veracini notes:

Both migrants and settlers move across space and often end up permanently residing in a new locale. Settlers, however, are unique migrants ... Settlers are founders of political

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63. Johnston’s and Lawson’s terminology (“First World”) comes from Canadian Native peoples insisting on being called *First Nations* as a response to the wording in the Canadian Constitution that refers to France and England as “founding nations.” Johnston and Lawson, “Settler Colonies,” 370.

64. Johnston and Lawson, “Settler Colonies,” 370.

65. Veracini, *Settler Colonialism*, 16. Ekins and Pedersen suggest a “four-sided structure,” which consists of “an imperial metropole where sovereignty formally resides, a local administration charged with maintaining order and authority, an indigenous population significant enough in size and tenacity to make its presence felt, and an often demanding and well-connected settler community” (Caroline Ekins and Susan Pedersen, “Introduction: Settler Colonialism: A Concept and Its Uses,” in *Settler Colonialism in the Twentieth Century: Projects, Practices, Legacies*, 1–20 [4]).

66. Osterhammel, *Colonialism*, 16.

67. Veracini, *Settler Colonialism*, 6.

orders and carry their sovereignty with them. ... Migrants, by definition, move to another country and lead diasporic lives, settlers, on the contrary, move (indeed, as I suggest below, “return”) to their country. A diaspora is not an ingathering.<sup>68</sup>

Migrants (including refugees), then, may, like settlers, permanently move from one locale to another; nevertheless, they may lack any endowed political power that would make it possible for them to dominate others, thus disqualifying them from being settler colonizers. As historian James Belich states: “an emigrant joined someone else’s society, a settler or colonist remade his own.”<sup>69</sup>

Similarly, not all types of domination are settler colonial in nature. Elites do not necessarily have to have come from elsewhere in order to dominate. Social, political, and financial inequalities may arise within a single polity, though the notion of an “internal colonialism,” as Robert Hind has suggested, implies at least some hierarchical distinction of locale within a single group.<sup>70</sup> Settler colonialism, then, refers to contexts in which settlers both have moved permanently and have brought with them political power sufficient to dominate the indigenous population.<sup>71</sup> As Mahmood Mamdani eloquently summarized, settlers “are made by conquest, not just by immigration.”<sup>72</sup>

Osterhammel’s final defining point, though popular among scholars of colonialism, needs further explanation. While this characteristic may be descriptive of the initial stages of a (settler)

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68. Veracini, *Settler Colonialism*, 3.

69. James Belich, “The Rise of the Angloworld: Settlement in North America and Australasia, 1784–1918,” in *Rediscovering the British World*, ed. Phillip Buckner and R. Douglas Francis (Calgary: University of Calgary Press, 2005), 39–57 (53).

70. Robert J. Hind, “The Internal Colonial Concept,” *CStSH* 26 (1984): 543–568.

71. Veracini points out that “settler colonialism,” by definition, requires that both of these elements be present: (1) an exogenous agency moving into and settling a “new” land (settler) and, (2) the domination of one group over another (colonialism). Lorenzo Veracini, “Introducing Settler Colonial Studies,” *SCSt* 1 (2011): 1–12 (1).

72. Mahmood Mamdani, “When Does a Settler Become a Native? Reflections of the Colonial Roots of Citizenship in Equatorial and South Africa,” Lecture given at University of Cape Town, May 13, 1998 (quoted in Veracini, *Settler Colonialism*, 3).

colonial situation, a definition based on demography ultimately falls short. Veracini succinctly describes the issue:

According to these characterisations, colonisers cease being colonisers if and when they become the majority of the population. Conversely, and even more perplexing, indigenous people only need to become a minority in order to cease being colonised.<sup>73</sup>

Thus, the use of demography in measuring and/or defining (settler) colonialism requires more precision than Osterhammel has provided.

Settler colonialism, by definition, highlights the settler, whether in examining the relationship structures, power, or demography involved in a settler situation. Highlighting the settler in this way demonstrates just how different settler colonialism is from colonialism. To dominate from afar, to send in military power which will then return home, to send missionaries to convert, but who then return, constitutes a much different (though not unrelated) set of circumstances from that of a group that traverses space in order to permanently settle in an already inhabited land. Settler colonialism then, requires a different set of interpretive categories than that of colonialism.

### **Getting (Forced) From Here to There: Settler Colonial Transfer**

Having moved to a new location with both the intent to permanently remain as well as the power to do so, settlers must then navigate the presence of other groups living upon “their land.” This can come as some surprise as settlers often imagine the land to which they are going as empty, as awaiting their arrival. The presence of indigenous (and sometimes also exogenous) Others is a “problem” that settlers must face if they are to make their land their own. This is where settler colonial theory’s concept of transfer comes into play.<sup>74</sup> While there are other motifs that settlers

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73. Veracini, *Settler Colonialism*, 5.

74. James Belich’s discussion of what he calls “mass transfer” has been crucial in settler colonial scholars understanding and theorizing about transfer. See James Belich, *Replenishing the Earth: The Settler Revolution and the Rise of the Anglo-World, 1783–1939* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), especially 21–220.

utilize in making and taking land—for example, marking the land and envisioning themselves as victims—the physical, and also discursive, movement or “transfer” of different groups within the settler’s perceived world is perhaps the most vital part of the settler endeavor. Strategies for transferring populations are numerous, operate in a myriad of ways, and can overlap one with another: “[s]ome operate discursively, others operate at the level of practice; indeed, some are way less offensive than others. At times, they complement each other and are deployed concomitantly. ... Indeed, different strategies can become activated at different times.”<sup>75</sup> Furthermore, while it is the case that many strategies do involve a physical forced migration (“ethnic transfer”) or even genocidal action (“necropolitical transfer”), “transfer does not exclusively apply to bodies pushed across borders.”<sup>76</sup>

Less explicit tactics can operate just as effectively. With “perception transfer,” for example, native peoples’ presence is ignored by perceiving them as part of the landscape; they “are not seen, they lurk in thickets.” John Smith’s 1614 report, meant to enlist settlers for what would become the Plymouth Colony, enlists the language of perception transfer:

And surely by reason of those sandy cliffes and cliffes of rocks, both which we saw so planted with Gardens and Corne fields, and so well inhabited with a goodly, strong and well proportioned people. ... [W]ho can but appro[v]e this a most excellent place ... of all the foure parts of the world that I haue yet seene not inhabited.

A similar sentiment can be seen in George Washington’s 1783 assertion that, “the gradual extension of our settlements will as certainly cause the savage, as the wolf, to retire; both being beasts of prey, tho’ they differ in shape.”<sup>77</sup>

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75. Veracini, *Settler Colonialism*, 34. For a fairly comprehensive list of different types of transfer, see Veracini, *Settler Colonialism*, 35–51.

76. Veracini, *Settler Colonialism*, 34.

77. George Washington to James Duane, 7 September 1783, *Founders Online*, National Archives, <http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Washington/99-01-02-11798>.

Different kinds of transfer often work in tandem and/or lead to subsequent forms of transfer; thus, when previously indigenous groups who had previously been “erased” or “ignored” by means of “perception transfer” do enter the scope of settler perception (despite always having been present), settlers can then move to enact “transfer by conceptual displacement.” This form of transfer occurs when indigenous groups are constructed as exogenous others. Whether in the form of refugees or migrants, natives are framed as having entered the land at a particular point in time (even if that time was before the settler arrived). This makes indigenous claims to the land no more binding than those of the settler.

Another form of transfer is “narrative transfer,” which settlers use to represent native people “as hopelessly backward, as [an] unchanging specimen of a primitive form of humanity inhabiting pockets of past surrounded by contemporaneity,” or to “deny legitimacy to ongoing indigenous presences and grievances, ... focus[ing] on indigenous discontinuity with the past, and typically express[ing] regret for the *inevitable* ‘vanishing’ of indigenous people.”<sup>78</sup> Transfer can also happen by means of “repressing authenticity.” Wolfe describes this type of transfer, when “‘authentic’ indigeneity is ‘constructed as a frozen precontact essence, a quantity of such radical historical instability that its primary effect is to provide a formula for disqualification.’”<sup>79</sup> This type of transfer constructs a romanticized, and impossible to maintain, identity for indigenous peoples and in the process ensures that actual native peoples are reconstructed as “inauthentic,” or not being indigenous enough.<sup>80</sup>

Closely resembling displacement by conception, “civilization transfer” reconstructs indigenous peoples as belonging to the incoming settler collective. Constructing indigenes as

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78. Veracini, *Settler Colonialism*, 41.

79. Patrick Wolfe, *Settler Colonialism and the Transformation of Anthropology: The Politics and Poetics of an Ethnographic Event* (London: Cassell, 1999), 204.

80. Veracini, *Settler Colonialism*, 40–41.

fellow settlers allows actual exogenous settlers to claim that “we,” that is the natives, have been here the whole time. One example of this kind of transfer is the way in which Australian aborigines have sometimes been constructed as having left the European continent to settle upon the Australian continent. Such thinking surely influenced researchers such as Alfred Russel Wallace, the British anthropologist and biologist, who, “observed a resemblance between Aboriginal Australians and ‘the coarser and more sensual types of western Europeans.’” Thus, Wallace suggested that the native people were in actuality of European ancestry, “even if they were the lowest and most primitive of this noble breed.”<sup>81</sup> Similarly, late nineteenth-century British settlers envisioned the Maori people as “Aryan.”<sup>82</sup> More recently, elements of civilization transfer can be seen in the cultural misappropriation seen in people of European ancestry leading “Indian war chants” at a Florida State football game.<sup>83</sup> Settlers are here to stay; thus, the ability to effectively transfer different groups (literally and/or figuratively) into, out of, and within their established settler colonial framework is essential.

Having laid out how settler colonialism differs from colonialism and provided a description of transfer—the means by which settlers empty and maintain their land (whether physically or discursively) in order to win what Patrick Wolfe has called the zero-sum game of settlement<sup>84</sup>—I now turn to concepts of return.

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81. Warwick Anderson, *The Cultivation of Whiteness: Science, Health, and Racial Destiny in Australia* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2006), 200.

82. See James Belich, “Myth, Race and Identity in New Zealand,” *NZJH* 31 (1997): 6–22.

83. See C. Richard King and Charles Fruehling Springwood, “The Best Offense . . . : Dissociation, Desire, and the Defense of the Florida State University Seminoles,” in *Team Spirits: The Native American Mascots Controversy*, ed. C. Richard King and Charles Fruehling Springwood (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2001), 129–156; Walter L. Hixson, “Adaptation, Resistance and Representation in the Modern US Settler State,” in *The Routledge Handbook of the History of Settler Colonialism*, ed. Edward Cavanaugh and Lorenzo Veracini (London: Routledge, 2017), 169–183.

84. Wolfe, *Settler Colonialism*, 3.



## The Myth of Return in Settler Colonialism

### Colonial Return v. Settler Return

Two different usages of the term return are relevant to this study, what I am calling “colonial return” and “settler return.” By colonial return I mean a colonizer’s literal returning back to the metropolitan center after having gone to a distant land. Whether or not one returns, in this literal sense, is key for Veracini in differentiating between colonists and settlers. Columbus “went [to Trinidad] in the name of the Holy Trinity, and returned [to Spain] very quickly.”<sup>85</sup> Colonial agents’ marching orders eventually culminate in a return trip home (or four trips home in the case of Columbus). Settlers, on the other hand, as the term implies, settle. They stay put rather than returning home.

Colonial return is crucial in distinguishing between colonial and settler colonial ventures, but it is the second usage of return (“settler return”) that is this study’s primary concern. Colonial return constitutes the act of literally returning, and while settlers might not return to the metropole, they do nonetheless often see themselves as returning, though settler return functions in a more mythic sense and, as I will show, on a couple of different levels.

In one sense, all settlers envision themselves as returning to a land in the sense that they are reviving or restoring the land back to its “proper” state. This may include returning the land to its empty state before it was run over by indigenous populations that now inhabit it. Veracini speaks of this first sense of settler return in stating that, “settlers construe their very movement forward as a ‘return’ to something that was irretrievably lost: a return to the land, but also a return to an Edenic condition . . . to a Golden Age of unsundered freedoms.”<sup>86</sup> This first kind

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85. Christopher Columbus to Queen Isabella I and King Ferdinand II, 14 Oct 1498, as reported in Bartolomé de las Casas, *Historia de las Indias*, ed. André Saint-Lu (Caracas, VE: Biblioteca Ayacucho, 1986), 507. My translation from the Spanish.

86. Veracini, *Settler Colonialism*, 99.

of settler return language can be seen in most settler colonial narratives. In Manifest Destiny America, for example, language channeling Genesis's Garden of Eden story was often used in speaking of a westward expansion that was to "replenish" and "restore" the sullied and fallen (native) land.<sup>87</sup> A "fall" from Eden, after all, implied a needed return to the way things should be. Influential were words like those of U.S. Senator Thomas Hart Benton, who said in a 1846 session of congress that, the "[white race] alone received the divine command to subdue and *replenish* the earth: for it is the only race that ... hunts out new and distant lands, and even a New World, to subdue and *replenish*."<sup>88</sup>

In addition to this first sense of settler return—constructing the land as being in need of return, a characteristic of most settler colonial endeavors—some settler colonial movements construct an "historical" narrative of settler return. These narratives frame the settlers themselves as actually returning to the land; this, despite the fact that for most settlers, this is their first trip to the land. This second mode of settler return, which involves the construction of an "historical" return narrative, is less common than the first, though in the case of this study all three groups being examined make use of a "historical" narrative.<sup>89</sup>

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87. Carolyn Merchant, "Reinventing Eden: Western Culture as a Recovery Narrative," in *Uncommon Ground: Rethinking the Human Place in Nature*, ed. William Cronon (New York: Norton, 1996), 132–159 (142–143). Since settler colonizers often envision native bodies to be nothing more than part of the land, mere scenery, similar language among US government leaders can be found in speaking of the native peoples. President Andrew Jackson, for example, during an address to the House and Senate outlining his Indian removal policy, proclaimed: "Toward the aborigines of the country no one can indulge a more friendly feeling than myself, or would go further in attempting to *reclaim* them from their wandering habits, and make them a happy and prosperous people" (my emphasis; *Senate Journal*. 21st Cong., 2nd sess., 7 December 1830, 23).

88. Thomas Hart Benton, Cong. Globe, 29th Cong., 1st Sess. 917–918 (1846).

89. Theoretically speaking, I am using "historical" to mean the historic past, what one might call real, physical, literal, etc. By "mythic" I mean the elements that come to make up the story of an event whether the event is historical or not, what might be deemed imagined or metaphorical. I take have taken this model from Dale B. Martin, *Pedagogy and the Bible: An Analysis and Proposal* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2008), 40–42; "Introduction: The Myth of Textual Agency," in *Sex and the Single Savior: Gender and Sexuality in Biblical Interpretation* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2006), 1–16. See also Becking, "Ezra's Re-enactment," 40–42; Elizabeth A. Clark, *History, Theory, Text: Historians and the Linguistic Turn* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2004), 156–157.

While I have, for the sake of argument, made fairly clear-cut distinctions in describing different ways of thinking about return, reality is inevitably more complex than any reconstruction or reading can express. To be sure, some returns might be considered more historical; nevertheless, all returns can function in a mythic sense.

### The “Indigenous” Settler

The process of settling is complex; as settlers seek to gain land, identities—both of the indigene and the settler—are being constructed and reconstructed in order to best suit the objective of the settler. While particulars vary from case to case, some general observations can be made. Settlers occupy space on a theoretical spectrum; on one end of the spectrum is indigeneity and on the other, exogeneity. These two ends sit in dialectical opposition to each other creating an ambiguous space in which settlers view themselves as both exogenous and indigenous.<sup>90</sup>

Veracini describes it this way: “as [the settler collective] is coming from elsewhere *and* as it sees itself as permanently situated, the settler collective is indigenous *and* exogenous at the same time.”<sup>91</sup> Anna Johnston and Alan Lawson further describe this inherent ambiguity: “The typical settler narrative, then, has a doubled goal. It is concerned to act out the suppression or effacement of the indigene; it is also concerned to perform the concomitant indigenization of the settler.”<sup>92</sup> The compound nature of the term “settler colonialism” carries with it some degree of this ambiguity, for while “settler” implies a permanent move out of the metropole and into

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90. Veracini further notes how this ambiguity serves the settler goal: “Assimilation is generally understood as a process whereby indigenous people end up conforming to variously constructed notions of settler racial, cultural, or behavioural normativity. The term ‘assimilation’, however, also means “absorption” (in some contexts “absorption” is indeed interchangeable with “assimilation”): it is the settler body politic that needs to be able to absorb the indigenous people that have been transformed by assimilation (in some contexts, assimilation is referred to as ‘incorporation’, which confirms a bodily metaphor). But absorption and assimilation are not the same: one focuses on the settler entity, the other on the indigenous collective. One consequence of this unresolved ambiguity is that successful assimilation is never dependent on indigenous performance” (*Settler Colonialism*, 38).

91. Veracini, *Settler Colonialism*, 20.

92. Johnston and Lawson, “Settler Colonies,” 369.

another land, a “colonizer” leaves from the homeland, but the absence is only temporary.<sup>93</sup> Even terminology for the space itself—the frontier, the outback, the backblocks—is replete with ambiguity. As historian Edward Chamberlin notes:

The frontier has always been ambivalent. It has been a gateway to new opportunities and old challenges, a threshold offering spiritual as well as material transformation, a door to both peril and possibility ... The frontier opens out to the future and into the past, inviting us both forward and backward.<sup>94</sup>

“Perhaps,” Chamberlin suggests, “the frontier should be imagined as a hinge rather than a door.”<sup>95</sup> In 1922, D. H. Lawrence recognized this element at work in American (settler) identity. Reading Melville’s *Moby Dick* as an allegory for American identity, he commented that Americans were “not so much bound by havens ahead, as rushing from all havens astern.”<sup>96</sup> A history of this ambiguous indigenous-exogenous space of the American settler is the subject of Philip Deloria’s *Playing Indian*.<sup>97</sup> Deloria explores the long (and ongoing) history of white Americans dressing up as “Indians.” He notes that in the last 200 years, “white Americans molded narratives of national identity around the rejection of an older European consciousness and an almost mystical imperative to become new.”<sup>98</sup> Restating Lawrence’s observation, Deloria observes that Americans have “been haunted by the fatal dilemma of ... wanting to savor both

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93. Veracini, *Settler Colonialism*, 3.

94. J. Edward Chamberlin, “Homeland and Frontier,” in *Manifest Destinies and Indigenous Peoples*, ed. David Maybury-Lewis, Theodore Macdonald, and Biorn Maybury-Lewis, DRCSLAS (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2009), 171–202 (171).

95. Chamberlin, “Homeland and Frontier,” 171.

96. D. H. Lawrence, *Studies in Classic American Literature*, The Cambridge Edition of the Letters and Works of D. H. Lawrence Series (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 143.

97. Philip J. Deloria, *Playing Indian*, YHP (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998).

98. Deloria, *Playing Indian*, 2.

civilized order and savage freedom at the same time.”<sup>99</sup> Becoming indigenous to a land that one has arrived at is a tricky and often confusing business.<sup>100</sup>

### The “Indigenous” Returnee

The indigenous-exogenous identity of the settler is not the only ambiguous aspect of settler colonialism. As part of “indigenizing” an exogenous settler collective, the notion of settlers returning likewise adds to the ambiguity and complexity of a situation. As noted, colonial agents such as “administrators, missionaries, military personnel, entrepreneurs, and adventurers,” eventually return to the metropolitan center from which they came, whereas settler colonizers do not return, at least in any physical sense.<sup>101</sup> Nevertheless, “to return” serves as a key part of a number of settler narratives.

While the language of return shows up in most settler colonial endeavors (such as the language of restoration and return in Manifest Destiny), some settler endeavors—including the endeavors focused upon in this study—take the idea of return a step further by constructing an entire “historical” narrative of return. Such settler ventures have envisioned their return in a far more explicit manner, relying on history-like stories of return that cast the settlers in the role of actual returnees and heirs to the land. A fully constructed “historical” narrative moves beyond abstract ideas of return and restoration in helping to further legitimate a newly arrived settler’s

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99. Deloria, *Playing Indian*, 3.

100. Similar points can be found for a number of other settler projects. Regarding Australia, see Anthony Moran, “As Australia Decolonizes: Indigenizing settler Nationalism and the Challenges of Settler/Indigenous Relations,” *ERSt* 25 (2002): 1013–1042; see particularly comments such as: “Obviously the ethnic lands of origin of settlers are elsewhere, and yet the nation as an abstract community of belonging has mythic zones of origin [for the settlers] within the Australian continent” (1028). Regarding Aotearoa-New Zealand, see Michèle D. Dominy, “Hearing Grass, Thinking Grass: Postcolonialism and Ecology in Aotearoa-New Zealand,” *CulGeo* 9 (2002): 15–34, in which she examines how “ancestral roots” elsewhere are a common element in settler narratives. On the ambiguity involved in trying to trace down one’s “roots,” see Catharine Nash, “Setting Roots in Motion: Genealogy, Geography and Identity,” in *Disputed Territories: Land, Culture and Identity in Settler Societies*, ed. David S. Trigger and Gareth Griffiths (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2003), 29–52. In particular, she looks at the intersection between nationality and identity when put together in effort towards genealogical work in Ireland.

101. Veracini, *Settler Colonialism*, 6.

claim to the land despite the presence of inhabitants.<sup>102</sup> Prime examples can be seen in Zionist ideas regarding Israel/Palestine,<sup>103</sup> in the case of French constructions of Algeria,<sup>104</sup> as well as in Italian representations of Libya.<sup>105</sup> Settlers stand to gain much by gathering around a common myth of return. As Veracini explains, “settlers see themselves as returning as well as moving forward,” moving forward in the sense that they move from an “old world” to a “new world”; from an “old identity,” part of the exogenous metropole, to a “new identity,” a group of (newly self-minted) “indigenous” inhabitants of a land independent from metropolitan power.<sup>106</sup> Settlers irrupt into a newly discovered land that is interpreted as their “*pre-ordained*” home. They envision themselves as “restoring” the land to its appropriate order and “going back” (forcibly if needs be) to an Edenic and civilized time, akin to U.S. Senator Benton’s “replenished” land, a “golden age” that existed *before* the deteriorated, wild, and mindless wanderings of the indigenous (soon to be “exogenous”) Other. Settlers return to the land even as they cause the land to be returned to them.

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102. Veracini, *Settler Colonialism*, 18.

103. See Sand, *The Invention of the Jewish People*, 129–189.

104. See Patricia Lorcin, “Rome and France in Africa: Recovering Colonial Algeria’s Latin Past,” *FHistSt* 25.2 (2002): 295–329.

105. See Stephen L. Dyson, *In Pursuit of Ancient Pasts: A History of Classical Archaeology in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006), particularly 172–213; Stefan Altekamp, “Italian Colonial Archaeology in Libya 1912-1942,” in *Archaeology Under Dictatorship*, ed. Michael L. Galaty and Charles Watkinson (New York City: Springer, 2006), 55–72; Massimiliano Munzi, “Italian Archaeology in Libya: From Colonial Romanità to Decolonization of the Past,” in *Archaeology Under Dictatorship*, 73–108. Because of space an examination of Italian Libya will have to wait for a future study.

106. Veracini, *Settler Colonialism*, 123.

### 3. RETURNING AND RESTORING IN EZRA 1–6

Having discussed the themes of return and restoration as they relate to settler colonialism, I now turn to an analysis of E<sup>1-6</sup>, a narrative that utilizes the language of returning and restoring in order to bolster its claim that the גֵּרֵלְהָהּ are the rightful heirs to the land of Yehud.<sup>107</sup> I begin this section by discussing the place of invasions within settler colonial narratives. While invasions are part of some settler endeavors, I will show that invasions are neither a key component of, nor even common in most settler narratives. While an invasion might seem like the easiest way to claim land, and has been shown to be effective in many cases, settler colonialism often relies on more subtle strategies of elimination. I will next move my attention to E<sup>1-6</sup>'s telling of the גֵּרֵלְהָהּ's story. I will begin by discussing how E<sup>1-6</sup>'s portrayal of the גֵּרֵלְהָהּ as returnees differentiates this group from other groups that change locations within settler colonial contexts (e.g., migrants). Following this, I will highlight a number of similarities between E<sup>1-6</sup> and other settler colonial narratives, particularly those where E<sup>1-6</sup> utilizes themes of return and restoration, including: the

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107. I use the Aramaic toponym Yehud (יְהוּדָא) to refer to the area of Judah specifically during the Persian period. The Hebrew toponym Judah (יְהוּדָה) is used for the territory or province of any period (following Lester L. Grabbe, *A History of the Jews and Judaism in the Second Temple Period, Volume 1: Yehud: A History of the Persian Province of Judah*, LSTS 47 [London: T & T Clark, 2004], 20). Geographic boundaries of course varied from period to period; for example, Oded Lipschits has shown that Persian Yehud was geographically smaller than Neo-Babylonian Judah during the time of Josiah's reign. During the last decades of the 7th century, cities such as Lachish, Beersheba, and Arad were all within the borders of Judah. By the 5th century the province of Yehud only went as far as Beth-Shemesh and Azekah to the West, and Beth-Zur (just north of Hebron) and En-Gedi to the South. The northern boundary, which took in Jericho, Bethel, and Gibeon, remained essentially intact during this time period. See Oded Lipschits, *The Fall and Rise of Jerusalem: Judah Under Babylonian Rule* (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2005), 134–184, especially 181–184. For a more conservative estimate of Yehud's boundaries see Israel Finkelstein, "The Territorial Extent and Demography of Yehud/Judea in the Persian and Early Hellenistic Periods," *RB* 117 (2010): 39–54, especially 40–46.

use of a return myth (dependent on an exile myth), the building of a monument (temple) as a major sign of restoration, and added elements of persecution and trial that dramatize and legitimize the גִּוּלָּהּ's mission of return and restore.

### Invasions in Settler Colonialism

Though colonialism and settler colonialism push towards different (though not unrelated) ends, both involve the subduing of those deemed Other, whether in the form of exploitation (colonialism) or elimination by means of various modes of transfer (settler colonialism). That settlers seek to eliminate might lead to the assumption that an invasion is a necessary part of a successful settler endeavor; and while settler narratives do at times make use of invasions, most seek to eliminate by more subtle measures.

In his work, *Conquest: How Societies Overwhelm Others*, historian David Day discusses at length the process of one group subjugating another.<sup>108</sup> Though Day does not employ the term “settler colonialism,” his description of what he calls “supplanting societies” sounds very similar to settler colonialism.<sup>109</sup> “[C]olonialism,” Day argues, “refers solely to the relationship between a metropolitan power and a colony ... [and] is concerned primarily with the political control of a distant territory and its people in a way that may not necessarily involve the peopling and occupation of their lands.”<sup>110</sup> A “supplanting society,” he continues, is

a society that moves onto the land of another with the intention of making that land its own. ... [T]he initial movement or invasion gives rise to a prolonged process by which

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108. David Day, *Conquest: How Societies Overwhelm Others* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008). Pekka Pitkänen has used Day's model to analyze the Joshua conquest narrative as a settler colonial narrative (as well as a historical settler colonial endeavor).

109. Pitkänen sees enough similarity between these processes to state that, “In terms of terminology, Day essentially labels settler-colonial societies as supplanting societies, a description which fits well with the idea that one society is ‘taking over’ another and through various processes ‘erases’ the other society from existence” (“Pentateuch-Joshua,” 250; see also “Reading Genesis–Joshua,” 11; “Ancient Israel and settler colonialism,” 70).

110. Day, *Conquest*, 5–6.



the supplanting society tries to make its claim to that land superior to the claim of the pre-existing people.<sup>111</sup>

Day's description of a supplanting society does not assume an invasion, but rather speaks of an "initial movement or invasion."<sup>112</sup> While an initial invasion might seem a logical first step in supplanting a society, and at times is in fact carried out, the majority of settler colonial endeavors do not contain an invasion.

E<sup>1-6</sup>, like most settler colonial events, does not provide a narrative of military conquest; rather, various modes of transfer are employed in order to eliminate the Other. A perusal of Veracini's list of what he calls "modes of transfer," by which settler colonization takes effect—not altogether different from Day's described processes—reveals that only two of the modes are of a more explicit militaristic nature.<sup>113</sup> These include: "Necropolitical transfer," "when the indigenous communities are militarily liquidated,"<sup>114</sup> and "Ethnic transfer," "when indigenous communities are forcibly deported," such as the removing of Cherokees from Georgia.<sup>115</sup> There is far more to settler colonialism than a military invasion.

To be sure, martial force can accompany settler colonial efforts; however, most modes of transfer do not involve physical force. Johnston and Lawson pick up on this point in describing transfer, or what they call displacement:

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111. Day, *Conquest*, 6.

112. Day, *Conquest*, 6.

113. Day provides 10 processes that he sees within supplanting societies: (1) staking a legal claim on the land, (2) exploring and mapping the land, (3) naming the land along with its geographic features, (4) supplanting the indigenous peoples of the land, (5) justifying the supplanting of indigenes, (6) defending land that has been claimed, (7) the use of foundational myths, (8) tilling the soil, (9) resorting to genocide if needed, and (10) peopling the land. According to Day, "this prolonged process of supplanting ... will be seen to involve three stages, often overlapping ... Firstly, it must establish a legal or *de jure* claim to the land ... [then] must proceed to the next stage of the process by making a claim of effective or *de facto* proprietorship over the territory ... [and finally] establish a claim of moral proprietorship" (Day, *Conquest*, 7–9).

114. Genocide and ethnic cleansing have come to the forefront of U.S. consciousness in the last 20 years. Links between settler colonial phenomena and such events involving mass murder are now being established. See Michael Mann, "Genocidal Democracies in the New World," in *The Dark Side of Democracy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 70–110.

115. See Walter L. Hixson, *American Settler Colonialism: A History* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 81–84. For the list of different kinds of transfer, see Veracini, *Settler Colonialism*, 35–50.

It was physical, geographical, spiritual, cultural, and symbolic. Indigenous peoples were characteristically moved from their traditional lands onto less desirable tracts of country: this happened in the history of settlement of the United States, New Zealand, South Africa, Canada, Argentina, and Australia. These movements of native peoples from their lands have often been memorialized and even celebrated in both popular culture (the “Western”) and high culture (in historical fictions of the physical arrival of the European into alien physical and cultural space and their hard-earned sense of spiritual belonging). This helps us to remember that the displacement was, almost as importantly, cultural and symbolic as well as physical. It is in the translation from experience to its textual representation that the settler subject can be seen working out a complicated politics of representation, working through the settler’s anxieties and obsessions in textual form.<sup>116</sup>

Even the very term *post*-colonial speaks of a process far bigger than an initial invasion.

Historian Robert Blecher provides one such example of settlement in which invasion is absent. In speaking of the Israel-Palestine situation, Blecher states: “Transfer ... does not necessarily denote a single event of cataclysmic finality but rather a set of ongoing practices that have progressively marginalized the Arab community. The term, in other words, has also come to mean differential inclusion *within*—not only expulsion *beyond*—the borders of the state.”<sup>117</sup>

Although invasions do at times occur as part of some settler colonial endeavors, the majority of settler colonial situations, including E<sup>1-6</sup>, lack any sort of physical military invasion. Rather, settlers accomplish their work through more subtle, but equally effective, modes of transfer. It is towards E<sup>1-6</sup>’s invasion-less narrative that I now turn.<sup>118</sup>

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116. Johnston and Lawson, “Settler Colonies,” 363.

117. Robert Blecher, “Citizens without Sovereignty: Transfer and Ethnic Cleansing in Israel,” *CStSH* 47 (2005), 725–754 (728).

118. Some scholars have seen a connection between Ezra’s return narrative and the conquest narrative of Joshua, which of course does include an element of invasion. This is as close as Ezra gets to an invasion narrative. See Klaus Koch, “Ezra and the Origins of Judaism,” *JSS* 19 (1974): 173–197; Philippe Abadie, “Le livre d’Esdras: un midrash de l’Exode?,” *Transeuphratène* 14 (1998): 19–31. Roberto Piani, “The return from the exile in Ezra-Nehemiah: a second exodus, a re-conquest or a reestablishment of the status quo ante?” (paper presented at the SBL International Meeting, Amsterdam, NL, 24 July 2012); “The Return from exile in Ezra-Nehemiah,” in *Myths of Exile: History and Metaphor in the Hebrew Bible*, ed. Anne Katrine de Hemmer Gudme and Ingrid Hjelm, Copenhagen International Seminar (London: Routledge, 2015), 150–161.

### Migrations and Returns

Movement from one space into another by an exogenous collective is at the very core of settler colonial endeavors, and it is precisely this kind of movement that makes up the primary component of the narrative presented in E<sup>1-6</sup>. Though E<sup>1-6</sup> mentions a number of toponyms, only two, we are told, are especially significant for its purposes: Persia and its province of Yehud, the place of departure and the place of arrival. The opening line, “In the first year of King Cyrus of Persia” (Ezra 1:1), calls to mind for the reader/hearer Cyrus and the empire he reigns over, perhaps not surprising given that Cyrus of Persia is the very power that makes the story possible. Likewise, the next locale mentioned (by Cyrus in v. 2), Jerusalem, lets the reader/hearer make no mistake about where this story is headed. These are the two spaces the גּוֹלָהּ will travel between and no time is wasted in identifying and emphasizing the importance of each of these locales.

E<sup>1-6</sup>'s focus on an exogenous group's movement from one space into another has the makings of a settler colonial narrative in basic terms, but E<sup>1-6</sup> contains other similarities to settler colonial models beyond just the broadest observations. Like a number of other settler narratives, an integral part of E<sup>1-6</sup>'s brand of settler colonialism includes the construction of and reliance upon an “historical” myth of return. Framing this migration as a return gives the reader/hearer some sense of the motive behind the narrative and differentiates E<sup>1-6</sup>'s גּוֹלָהּ from other sorts of migrants.

In E<sup>1-6</sup>'s myth of return, the גּוֹלָהּ, playing the part of the returnees, may have been forced out of Judah but they are now returning, and in style; after all, this myth has the regal and divine stamp not just of approval, but command. More is going on here than a simple move from one place to another.

## Ezra 1–6’s Returning Settlers

Cyrus’s first act (as portrayed by E<sup>1-6</sup>) comes in the form of the king issuing a proclamation “throughout all his kingdom” (Ezra 1:1b). “Any of those among you who are of [YHWH’s] people ... are now permitted to go up to Jerusalem in Yehud, and rebuild the house of YHWH, the God of Israel” (Ezra 1:3). It is perhaps no coincidence that YHWH’s people are to “go up” in returning to Jerusalem; after all, this is a narrative of settler return, and to settle is often to move upwards rather than downwards. Such descriptors, what George Lakoff and Mark Johnson call “orientational metaphors,” are what Veracini is referring to when he notes that, “When settlers claim land, it is recurrently in the context of a language that refers to ‘higher use’.”<sup>119</sup> Even the people who inhabit the land being settled (and often they are seen as nothing more than part of the land) are referred to in the same way, as “policies are recurrently designed to ‘uplift,’ ‘elevate,’ and ‘raise’ indigenous communities.”<sup>120</sup> Of the 10 times the word עלה, “to go up,” occurs in E<sup>1-6</sup>, 7 are describing travel to Jerusalem, as when “Sheshbazzar brought up (העלה) [the vessels of the temple], when the exiles (גולה) were brought up (העלה) from Babylonia to Jerusalem” (Ezra 1:11). Moving forward and upward is part of settling and returning, and E<sup>1-6</sup>’s narrative reflects this characteristic.

Tamara Cohn Eskenazi also notices the importance of the theme of return in her influential study *In An Age of Prose*.<sup>121</sup> In this work she sets out to “illustrate Ezra-Nehemiah’s distinctive emphases by examining the literary markings and the book’s internal dynamics and

119. George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980), 14–21; Veracini, *Settler Colonialism*, 20.

120. Veracini, *Settler Colonialism*, 20. The modern Zionist language of referring to Jewish immigrants as “going up” to *HaEretz Yisrael* (compare the modern Hebrew word עלה) while emigrants leaving Israel are spoken of as “going down” (ירידה) is a case in point. See Gershom Gorenberg, *The Accidental Empire: Israel and the Birth of the Settlements, 1967–1977* (New York: Holt, 2006), 65. Compare similarly functioning terms such as: “backwoods,” “out West,” “the backcountry,” “the backblocks,” and “the outback.”

121. Tamara C. Eskenazi, *In An Age of Prose: A Literary Approach to Ezra-Nehemiah*, SBLMS 36 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1988).

by delineating how the book conveys its ... basic themes.”<sup>122</sup> She does so by making use of structuralist theory, particularly the work of French narratologist Claude Bremond.<sup>123</sup> She concludes, among other things, that “[t]he opening verses of the book [of EN], that is, the edict of Cyrus and the response to it (Ezra 1:1–6), encapsulate the major themes [in EN].”<sup>124</sup> Thus, less than 125 words (in Hebrew) into E<sup>1-6</sup>’s narrative, the main plot is divulged and the prime real estate on which it will play out is revealed. So much then for suspense; however, there is too much at stake (for E<sup>1-6</sup>) to allow for the possibility of anyone misunderstanding the plan. This story is not meant to surprise; on the contrary, it is meant to quietly assume its place as (part of) the world that has always existed, including the return of the גּוֹלָהּ.

Upon a cursory reading, E<sup>1-6</sup>’s (apparently) persuasive plan appears fairly (perhaps suspiciously?) straightforward. As the reader/hearer joins the story in progress, Cyrus, the Persian king, has just defeated the Neo-Babylonian Empire. As the new imperial monarch, Cyrus issues a decree that allows for any of “[YHWH’s] people” (a reference to the גּוֹלָהּ; see Ezra 1:11) to leave their exilic conditions after having endured some 70 years of exile at the hands of the Neo-Babylonians.<sup>125</sup> As the (soon to be former) exiles prepare for return, just as has been commanded by Cyrus (as well as YHWH), further instructions concerning the logistics of the return are provided: assistance is to come from within and without. Any of YHWH’s people, the decree states, who choose to remain behind in Babylon (בְּלִי-הַנְּאֻשָׁר) are to provide (יִנְשְׂאוּ)

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122. Eskenazi, *In An Age of Prose*, 2. For Eskenazi, EN contains “three basic themes” (2).

123. Eskenazi, *In An Age of Prose*, 38.

124. Eskenazi, *In An Age of Prose*, 37.

125. Seventy years is what E<sup>1-6</sup> leads the reader/hearer to believe in v. 1, if the “the word of YHWH by the mouth of Jeremiah” in 1:1 refers to the prophecy in Jer 25, “a widely cited ch in other [Second Temple period] books” (from Hindy Najman’s study notes for Ezra 1:1 in Adele Berlin and Marc Zvi Brettler, eds., *The Jewish Study Bible* [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004], 1671).

those returning “with silver, gold, goods (כֶּרֶשׁ<sup>126</sup>), and livestock” (Ezra 1:4).<sup>127</sup> Not only is the return trip to be made possible by donations from those living among the returnees, Cyrus himself brings the “vessels of the house of YHWH” out of storage and gives them to Sheshbazzar, a figure identified as “the Prince of Yehud” (Ezra 1:7–8).<sup>128</sup> Thus, according to E<sup>1-6</sup>, the return is not a “Yehudites on your own” affair; it is a Persian-funded operation.<sup>129</sup> Immediately following the גִּלְגָּל הַיְהוּדָה being “brought up from Babylonia to Jerusalem” (Ezra 1:11), the names of “the people of the province who came from those captive exiles” (Ezra 2:1) are provided. A list by nature

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126. Most translations opt to render this word in broad terms: “goods.” This may be the best option, though it is interesting to note that the root from which the noun כֶּרֶשׁ likely derives (כֶּרַשׁ) carries the basic meaning of “that which is acquired” or “something acquired” (*HALOT*). Thus, כֶּרֶשׁ can be taken to specifically refer to household items such as furniture and culinary utensils, as well as land or property (i.e. the payment received from a sale). See discussion in *HALOT*.

127. I have rendered the niph'al participle נִשְׁאָר as “[those] who ... remain behind,” meaning those remaining in Babylon rather than returning to Judah. Nevertheless, נִשְׁאָר has historically been somewhat ambiguous among interpreters as to which group of people this term is referencing (those helping or those being helped). *HALOT*, and to a lesser degree BDB, provide for either meaning: “remaining of,” as I have used (and the only meaning provided by *DCH*), and “surviving from,” from which the NRSV’s “survivors” derives. Rendering נִשְׁאָר as “survivors” seems to imply that the term references those receiving aid in returning (i.e., the גִּלְגָּל). Such a translation seems less likely for at least two reasons. First, as the NRSV demonstrates, this translation choice must then go on to translate נִשְׁאָרֵיהֶם (NRSV: “let all survivors ... be assisted by the people”) in the passive voice despite the (usually active) piel form of the verb. Second, as Williamson has pointed out, if נִשְׁאָר does refer to the returnees, “the progression of thought from v. 3 to v. 4. would be harsh” (Williamson, *Ezra, Nehemiah*, 14). Thus I suggest that נִשְׁאָר refers to those choosing to stay in Babylon rather than “return” to Judah. Another issue has arisen as result from reading נִשְׁאָר as relating “remnant” theology. While the theological theme of the remnant is certainly present in other HB writings, including Ezra 7–10 (9:8, 14, 15), I find no justification for assuming a theological connotation for the participle נִשְׁאָר in 1:4. E<sup>1-6</sup> does speak of “the rest (remnant?) of the people” along with Zerubbabel and Jeshua in Ezra 3:8; however, E<sup>1-6</sup> also refers to “the rest” of Shimshai’s and Rehum’s associates. Thus, a secular meaning for the word seems just as likely and fits better within the overall context of E<sup>1-6</sup>.

128. While theories abound, the term behind the translation “prince” (נָשִׂיא) is likely a title given to Sheshbazzar by the author (later he is identified as a פַּחַח, “governor”). One explanation for the use of נָשִׂיא is that the author is “presenting the return as a ‘second Exodus,’” a possible source of influence being several lists of the נְשֵׁי אֱלֹהִים of the various tribes found in Num 2:3–31; 7:1–83; 34:18–28. Interestingly, Num 7:84–86 associates these נְשֵׁי אֱלֹהִים with “gold and silver vessels given for the dedication of the altar, which may well have attracted our author’s attention in the context of his own comparable source” (Williamson, *Ezra, Nehemiah*, 18). Patterning Ezra’s return as a “second Exodus” would strengthen the hypothesis that the concept of return plays a key role in E<sup>1-6</sup>. For another scholar who views EN as patterned after the Exodus, though with some nuance to Williamson’s view, see Blenkinsopp, *Ezra–Nehemiah*, 36–37.

129. Concerning “The command to provide material support,” Blenkinsopp again sees shadows of the exodus, suggesting that, “Most likely the author has in mind the exodus theme of despoiling the Egyptians.” See Blenkinsopp, *Ezra–Nehemiah*, 75. While I do see Exodus themes at play in the E<sup>1-6</sup> narrative, it seems to me that a reference to the despoiling of the Egyptians, if present, is very implicit. It seems clear that the major power in the story willingly assists the exiles in their departure rather than attempts to quash their efforts.

excludes at the same time as it includes, and so it is established that to be part of the group that returned from exile is to be part of the “in” crowd.

Beyond lists, E<sup>1-6</sup> is careful not to miss an opportunity to exclude. After Cyrus’s decree and preparations (ch. 1), followed by the inclusion of a list of returnees (ch. 2), E<sup>1-6</sup>’s narrative continues with a dramatic account of the struggle to rebuild the temple against the efforts of the already inhabiting “people of the land.” This struggle is brought to its fullest expression as both sides seek aid from the metropolitan authority, but ultimately it is the returnees who prevail in this story. This part of E<sup>1-6</sup> story contains elements of two settler tropes that occur in other settler narratives: the marking of the land by the settler and the settler as victim.<sup>130</sup>

Settlers’ first and ultimate desire is for land, and, for E<sup>1-6</sup>, one way to claim the land is to have the returnees mark their land by constructing a temple to YHWH in a centralized location for all to see. This edifice stands as a constant reminder as to who really owns of the land. The historical date and/or mode of establishment for the Second Temple (and/or its foundation) lies outside the realm of how I am reading E<sup>1-6</sup>; nevertheless, E<sup>1-6</sup> uses the mythic story of the Second Temple to further buttress its argument about establishing the **גֵּרֵי הָאֶרֶץ** as the rightful owners of Persian Yehud, historical or not.

E<sup>1-6</sup> is also careful to point out that the establishment of the temple was not, however, an easy process. How much more persuasive the accomplishment if struggles, obstacles, and persecution stand in the way of “divine destiny”! Thus, E<sup>1-6</sup> frames the settlers as the persecuted

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130. One modern example of settlers framing themselves as the victims of the indigenous populations can be seen in Mormon reports about their relations with the various groups of Native Americans they encountered in settling what would become Utah. One 1853 report speaks of “43 Indians ... taking 50 bushels of wheat” and having “killed 30 pigs the day before” (JHC, 8 September 1853, Church History Library, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City, Utah). Another 1861 report in a local Mormon-run newspaper speaks of “Shoshone diggers ... prowling around and driving off stock ... together with some of the Gosh-Utes that have been known to be mischievous” (JHC, 10 February 1861, Church History Library, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City, Utah).

victims who must overcome opposition in order to build a house to their god on their land.<sup>131</sup> It is at this point that E<sup>1-6</sup> finally allows the reader/hearer to meet the opposition, the dreaded “people of the land.”<sup>132</sup>

The first words in E<sup>1-6</sup> regarding any other people in the land are far from a formal introduction; rather, the “peoples of the lands” are an assumed entity of which the גּוֹלֵהּ community is “in dread” (בַּאֲמֹתָהּ) (Ezra 3:3). The same word for “dread” is used in Joshua, a settler conquest narrative in its own right.<sup>133</sup> Rahab, a native of Canaanite Jericho, in speaking to the two spies who were sent ahead of the main group describes the looming campaigns which were about to flood Canaan: “I know that YHWH has given you the land, and that dread of you (אִי־מִתְרַכֵּם) has fallen on us” (Josh 2:9).<sup>134</sup> Once again, dread; however, E<sup>1-6</sup> puts a slight twist on things. Unlike in Joshua, where the dread is a product of the invader, E<sup>1-6</sup> portrays the indigenes as the source of the dread. Meanwhile, the גּוֹלֵהּ has taken on the role of “being discouraged”

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131. The way in which E<sup>1-6</sup> presents the returnees is somewhat different from many settler narratives. Settlers often continue to disregard exogenous presence by framing their opposition as a struggle to “tame” the “wilderness,” to “lift up” or “elevate” the “frontier,” rather than recognize a native presence as the opposition. References to opposition are absent in the first two chapters of E<sup>1-6</sup>.

132. For some settler narratives, the metropole is seen as making up the opposition. Margaret Jacobs describes “the standard settler colonial narrative of U.S. history,” focusing “on a persecuted European religious minority who founded a colony in the American wilderness. . . . The popular chronicle of early America culminates in the American Revolution, emphasizing how Britain wronged its American colonists and the oppressed Americans revolted against their British masters” (Margaret D. Jacobs, *White Mother to a Dark Race: Settler Colonialism, Maternalism, and the Removal of Indigenous Children in the American West and Australia, 1880–1940* [Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 2009], 5). Likewise, Carole Shammas, notes this phenomenon at play in U.S. settler narratives: “Having practically destroyed the aboriginal population and enslaved the Africans, the white inhabitants of English America began to conceive of themselves as the victims, not the agents, of Old World colonialism” (Carole Shammas, “English-Born and Creole Elites in Turn-of-the-Century Virginia,” in *The Chesapeake in the Seventeenth Century: Essays on Anglo-American Society and Politics*, ed. Thad Tate and David Ammerman [New York: Norton, 1979], 274; Quoted in Patricia Nelson Limerick, *Legacy of Conquest: The Unbroken Past of the American West* [New York: Norton, 1987], 48).

133. On Joshua as a settler colonial narrative see the works by Pitkänen above.

134. For postcolonial readings of the Joshua narrative, see Musa W. Dube, “Rahab Says Hello to Judith: A Decolonizing Feminist Reading,” in *The Postcolonial Biblical Reader*, ed. R.S. Sugitharajah (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2006), 142–158; Robert Allen Warrior, “Canaanites, Cowboys, and Indians: Deliverance, Conquest, and Liberation Theology Today,” *ChristC* 49 (1989): 261–265, also published as “A Native American Perspective: Canaanites, Cowboys, and Indians,” in *Voices from the Margin: Interpreting the Bible in the Third World*, ed. R.S. Sugitharajah (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2006), 235–241; Charles William Miller, “Negotiating Boundaries: Israelites and Canaanites Receive Help from a Russian,” *JRelSoc* 12 (2010): 1–12.



(גַּרְפִּים; literally, “to slacken the hands [of another]”) and “afraid to build” on account of “the people of the land” (4:4). Curiously, however, these people, who are also described as “the enemies of Judah and Benjamin” (4:1), first approach the returnees with an offer to join them in rebuilding the temple, citing their own worship of the same God but also, tellingly, the foreign origin of their ancestors, who were brought to the land in the days of Esar-haddon of Assyria (4:2; cf. 4:10, which attributes this resettlement to Osnapper [Ashurbanipal]). Thus the underlying message of E<sup>1-6</sup> about these variously-coded Others, all of whom showed up *after* building had commenced (“we were here building [first!], *then* they showed up”) is that those once native to the land are now the intruders, troublemakers, a problem to overcome (even if they are willing to help rebuild the temple); it is the גּוֹלֵה community who are (have become?) the real victims here, and also the natural inhabitants.

Disputes between the גּוֹלֵה and “the people of the land” eventually crystalize in the form of an account of several purported written appeals to several Persian (metropolitan) kings (4:6–6:12). The “people of the land” act first by dispatching a letter to Artaxerxes warning him that if the “rebellious and wicked city” of Jerusalem is completed, the גּוֹלֵה community will stop paying tribute and that the king will lose his holdings in the province of “Beyond the River” (עֵבֶר נְהַרָא; Ezra 4:13). Upon receiving this warning Artaxerxes quickly responds, again by letter, informing the writers of the first letter (Rehum and Shimshai, 4:8, presumably on behalf of others named in 4:7: “Bishlam, Mithredath, Tabeel, and the rest of their associates” ) that a search of royal records has confirmed the reality of their warning. Accordingly, the king charges Rehum, Shimshai, and “the rest of their associates who live in Samaria,” to “issue an order that these people [the גּוֹלֵה] be made to cease, and that [Jerusalem] not be rebuilt” (Ezra 4:17, 21).

Obediently, “they hurried to the Yehudites in Jerusalem and by force and power made them cease” (Ezra 4:23). It is interesting that while the  $\text{הַגּוֹלִים}$ ’s initial perceived enemy was the “people of the land,”  $E^{1-6}$  is now slyly adding several other groups into the indigenous Other category, though the distinctions among them are sometimes left blurred (compare 4:2,4 with 4:9-10; 4:17 with 5:3). The text is void of any emphatic markers signaling the introduction of additional characters into the narrative. These other groups of “foreigners” simply show up (not unlike the “people of the land” in 3:3), as the fuller picture of the returnees navigating more than just a single group slowly dawns.<sup>135</sup> Besides the “people of the land” (ch. 3), Rehum Shimshai and their associates from Samaria (ch. 4), as well as Tattenai the governor of Beyond-the-River and Shethar-Bozenai (chs. 5-6), make an appearance as stand-ins for the non- $\text{הַגּוֹלִים}$  population. While the nature of the supposed documents is suspect (for example, the Aramaic “Decree of Cyrus” in 6:2-5), it is interesting to note the importance that the written word is seemingly afforded in  $E^{1-6}$ ’s account. Being able to point to ink on parchment emphasizes the impossible odds that the  $\text{הַגּוֹלִים}$  were up against when the first decree by Artaxerxes went against them, making victory over the opposition all the more impressive and convincing.  $E^{1-6}$  leaves no question concerning who got the final word on the matter: each of the Persian kings eventually sides with the former exiles (and yes, they got that in writing; 6:14).

Return and restore seems to be the order of the day for  $E^{1-6}$  as evidenced by: (1) the initial command to return and restore in 1:1–4, (2) preparations for a return and restoration described in 1:5–11a, (3) the return proper briefly narrated in 1:11b (though the actual event is more assumed than narrated), and (4) the *rebuilding* and restoration of the Jerusalem temple, perhaps the most

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135. Worth noting is the composite nature of EN. The different groups represented in these various “struggle then triumph” scenes could suggest an editor compiling several similar accounts into a collection of events for the  $E^{1-6}$  narrative.

powerful monumental reminder of a return and restoration.<sup>136</sup> Conflict and persecution, as well as the ensuing victory over each, is added to this myth of return and restoration. For E<sup>1-6</sup>, there is scarcely a more important theme than the *הגולה*'s “returning home” to a land that has stood in need of restoration for 70 years. Only through the return of its people, customs, and “correct” form of worship may the land be restored from the chaos brought about by the Neo-Babylonians of the 6<sup>th</sup> century BCE. This is the story that E<sup>1-6</sup> is selling.

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136. The manner in which the Second Temple came about has been the subject of a number of inquiries; for example, see Diana Edelman, *The Origins of the “Second” Temple: Persian Imperial Policy and the Rebuilding of the Jerusalem*, BibW (London: Equinox, 2005); Peter R. Bedford, *Temple Restoration in Early Achaemenid Judah*, JSJSup 65 (Leiden: Brill, 2001); Anthony Gelston, “The Foundations of the Second Temple,” *VT* 16 (1966): 232–235. Two particular terms are of particular importance: *בנה* (“to build, rebuild”) and *סד* (“to found, establish, lay”). Both *בנה* and *סד* can be translated several ways, heavily predicated on one's views of 6th century historical matters. For example, the verb *בנה* can be translated as “to build” (the preference of JPS, ASV, NET, NJB, NIV, KJV) as well as “to rebuild” (as found in the NRSV, RSV, ESV, NASB). While “rebuild” nicely emphasizes my argument of the restore and return theme in E<sup>1-6</sup>, in reality it hardly matters whether the temple was said to be “built” or “rebuilt.” In either case, the establishment of such a symbolic structure serves as one more point of emphasis that Yehud is being restored back to the way it should be (see for example Ezra 3:10 where the foundation of the temple was established/laid “according to the directions of King David of Israel”). In using the temple narrative in this manner, the settler dialectic of the “new” and the “old” (see above) come together as E<sup>1-6</sup> seeks to both establish a new (and better) society while at the same time holding on to the golden age. On continuity, see Peter R. Ackroyd, “The Temple Vessels: A Continuity Theme,” in *Studies in the Religious Traditions of the Old Testament*, ed. Peter R. Ackroyd (London: SCM, 1987), 46–60; Bob Becking and Marjo C.A. Korpel, ed., *The Crisis of Israelite Religion: Transformation of Religious Tradition in Exilic and Post Exilic Times*, OtSt (Leiden: Brill, 1999).

#### 4. RETURN AND RESTORATION IN ISRAEL-PALESTINE AND FRENCH ALGERIA

I have laid out how the exile, return, and restoration are emphasized in E<sup>1-6</sup>, as well as commented on some of the scholarly views on the historical questions they entail. Regardless of the historicity of a mass return (and by implication, a mass exile), ideas of a return rest at the very center of E<sup>1-6</sup>. This discourse of return fits well with Veracini's observation that one typical feature of settler colonial contexts is the fact that "settlers see themselves as 'returning,'"<sup>137</sup> whether or not that perception is based in an actual experience of geographical migration. Just as the modes of transfer that settlers dispatch against indigenes are ideological as often as they are physical, so too is the story of return by which they identify themselves.

In this section I will show how myths of return have functioned for both Zionist and French settlers. I will first call attention to a key difference between these two examples that is related to the previous section: the level of historicity that is generally ascribed to each narrative. This discussion will be followed by a brief excursus on the constructed nature of the identities involved in the current Israel/Palestine conflict. I make this pause because of the complexity involved in talking about history that still isn't over. While I have chosen the context of Zionism for this discussion, the same principles of constructed identity also hold true for France and Algeria. Indeed, all identities are of a constructed nature. I will then examine the two case studies with a particular focus on how the motif of return (and related concepts) functions in each.

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137. Veracini, *Settler Colonialism*, 88.

### The Same, But Different

Settler colonial undertakings involve a group of settlers moving from the metropole to a “new” land, and, as discussed above, often see settlers constructing themselves as returning in the sense that they are restoring and replenishing the land. There are some settler movements, however, in which restoring the land is

complicated by settler claims to an “historical” right to the land, as in Zionism as a settler colonial project, or in the case of French constructions of Algeria and Italian imaginings of Libya as a locale destined to be transformed into settler colonial space. In these cases, settlers think of themselves as indigenous *ex abrupto*.<sup>138</sup>

The importance that ideas like exile, forced migration, and diaspora have for many Zionists is generally recognized today; however, much less is known and much more is misunderstood about the Zionist movement that began in the mid-nineteenth century.<sup>139</sup> If there is one particular idea that is often understood to be at the heart of Zionism, even if the historical details behind such a relationship are not, it is the phenomenon of return. This popular understanding is common enough that Zionist views are often assumed of most (if not all) people of Jewish heritage. Much like E<sup>1-6</sup>, Zionism not only upholds strong connections to uprooting and deportation, but also finds deep meaning in the concept of returning to *Eretz Yisrael*. Less known is a similar theme of return found in the French narrative of the nineteenth-century (settler) colonization of the North African nation of Algeria (formerly the Ottoman territory of the Regency of Algiers). French politicians, military leaders, and settlers found meaning in the idea that they were “returning” to a land that their ancestors were forced to leave long ago. This

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138. Veracini, *Settler Colonialism*, 18. The Latin phrase *ex abrupto* translates to “without preparation,” as in “suddenly” or “out of no where.” Veracini is using it in the sense that when settlers create a history to back their claims, they instantaneously see themselves as indigenous since their history shows that they have “always” been indigenous.

139. Though I use the term “Zionism” and “Zionist” in the collective it is only for the purpose of being able to speak in general about the movement. In reality there are, like any group identifier or title, a wide spectrum of people, opinions, thoughts, and ideas (e.g. “Islam,” “the Church,” “Republicans,” et al.) all with a group that is referenced by the same identifier.

created for French colonists a narrative around which they could gather their collective political powers, military might, and imaginations.

Though the Zionist movement and French constructions of Algeria share some common threads, it would be a mistake not to take into account the differences between these two contexts (not to mention those found in E<sup>1-6</sup>). “A comparative approach,” Veracini writes, “... is interested precisely in highlighting corresponding developments in the context of obviously different circumstances.”<sup>140</sup> One particular difference between the situation in Israel/Palestine and that of French Algeria calls for a slightly different approach when inquiring of each respective setting.

For many adherents of Zionism (and even for many who are not),<sup>141</sup> the idea of a return of the Jewish people to Israel is more than a guiding myth or metaphor. It is a literal and historical return brought about to reverse the effects of an equally historic diaspora.<sup>142</sup> This question about historicity proves a very different case when examining the France-Algeria situation. With less at stake theologically and politically, the historicity of a French settler return is more likely to be questioned: how could the French settlers of the nineteenth-century return to

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140. Lorenzo Veracini, *Israel and Settler Society* (London: Pluto, 2006), 18.

141. Zionist ideas of return do not only spawn from those who consider themselves Zionist and/or Jewish. Certain Christianites, for example, hold the apocalyptic view that all those of Jewish descent will return to the land of Israel. Examples can be found across the spectrum. For example, during the 1946 Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry meeting, theologian Reinhold Niebuhr stated: “Christians are committed to democracy as the only safeguard of the sacredness of human personality... The opposition to a Jewish Palestine is partly based on the opposition of Arabs to democracy, western culture, education and economic freedom. To support Arab opposition is but supporting feudalism and Fascism in the world at the expense of democratic rights and justice” (quoted in Paul C. Merkley, *The Politics of Christian Zionism: 1891–1948* [London: Routledge, 1998], 171). Likewise, the tenth “Article of Faith” of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (often referred to as the Mormon church) states: “We believe in the literal gathering of Israel and in the restoration of the Ten Tribes” (“The Articles of Faith” in *The Pearl of Great Price* [Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1981]).

142. While there is little doubt that, historically speaking, bodies were driven out of the land of Israel during the Roman period (as well as in previous centuries), the details—the who, when, and in what manner—are far more controversial.

an area that they had not previously been to?<sup>143</sup> The current political scene affects greatly the general perception of each of these settler endeavors. The French “return” is for the most part assumed to be invented myth unless proven otherwise; however, Zionism is perceived in an almost opposite manner. For the Zionist “return,” historicity is generally assumed and is considered fact until proven otherwise. For the purposes of this study, however, questions about historicity are not crucial since I am interested in how the story of Zionist return, historical or not, functions on a mythic level.

#### Excursus: The Constructed Nature of Palestinian and Zionist Identities

As of 2017, the situation in Israel/Palestine is still playing out. Any historical examination of Palestine/Israel is bound to catch up with current events, blurring the line between history and the evening news. This makes any discussion regarding Israel/Palestine inherently more political and prone to controversy. For this reason, taking a brief pause to consider the constructed nature of both Palestinian and Zionist identities seems beneficial, and is a crucial part of the conflict to understand. While my aim in this work is to examine Zionist settler colonialism, a phenomenon that I view as producing a plethora of injustices, I do so with the understanding that Palestinians are not the only recipients of injustice, nor do all people who identify as Jewish, Israeli, or even Zionist uphold oppressive ideas and/or policies. In fact, the situation is complex, and the constructed nature of identities is a major factor in that complexity. Consider the terms “Palestine” and “Palestinian,” for example. I have chosen to use these terms as a helpful way to identify a geographic region and its people; however, both of them are technically anachronisms. Prior to the First World War, “Palestine” did not exist as such. All of that changed with the

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143. I try to be mindful of these views in describing both narratives. As a result, my examination of the Zionist narrative can’t help but bring up questions regarding events assumed to be historical while my analysis of the French narrative inevitably describes how an assumed ahistorical narrative became “historical.”

British occupation of the Ottoman territories of Acre, Nablus, and Jerusalem (note the absence of the term “Palestine”) during the first part of the twentieth century. Britain’s taking control over what I shall call Israel/Palestine was the first in a line of events that would help to forge a national identity among the Palestinian people. The ensuing indigenous resistance to British Empire and Zionist settlement would further frame what it is to be Palestinian.<sup>144</sup>

Unfortunately, this historical-political perspective has led many twentieth-century political leaders and commentators to deny that Palestinian people have ever existed. Former U.S. Speaker of the House and presidential hopeful Newt Gingrich expressed such ideas in an interview with journalist Steven I. Weiss during the 2012 election season:

[R]emember there was no Palestine as a state. It was part of the Ottoman Empire. And I think that we’ve had an invented Palestinian people, who are in fact Arabs, and were historically part of the Arab community. And they had a chance to go many places. ... For a variety of political reasons we have sustained this war against Israel since the 1940s, and I think it’s tragic.<sup>145</sup>

Gingrich went on to defend this position a month later at the GOP presidential debate.<sup>146</sup>

I stated above that the terms “Palestine” and “Palestinian” are *technically* anachronistic, and Gingrich, among others, certainly seems to have taken these terms in the most technical way possible. However, I say “technically,” because the idea that Palestine and Palestinians didn’t exist prior to World War I is only true if one defines what it is to exist in a particular way.

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144. Bunton, *Palestinian–Israeli Conflict*, 12.

145. In a December 9, 2011 interview with Steven I. Weiss of The Jewish Channel. Full transcript of the interview online at: “Newt Gingrich interview with Jewish Channel (Transcript),” *Washington Post*, December 9, 2011, [http://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/newt-gingrich-interview-with-jewish-channel-transcript/2011/12/09/gIQAOWXriO\\_story.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/newt-gingrich-interview-with-jewish-channel-transcript/2011/12/09/gIQAOWXriO_story.html). See also Amy Gardner and Philip Rucker, “Gingrich: Palestinians an “Invented” People: Foreign Policy Experts, Republicans Criticize TV Interview Remarks,” *The Washington Post*, December 10, 2011, Politics & The Nation section, final edition, A4.

146. In responding to debate moderator Wolf Blitzer questioning Gingrich’s comments, Gingrich reiterated that the Palestinian people were “technically an invention of the late 1970s, and it was clearly so. Prior to that, they were Arabs. Many of them were either Syrian, Lebanese, or Egyptian, or Jordanian.” Full transcript of debate can be found online at the University of California, Santa Barbara’s “American Presidency Project” (“Republican Candidates Debate in Jacksonville, Florida,” January 26, 2012, <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=99075>) and on CNN’s website (“Full Transcript of CNN Florida Republican Presidential Debate,” January 26, 2012. <http://archives.cnn.com/TRANSCRIPTS/1201/26/se.05.html>).



Palestine and people living in Palestine have histories that predate WWI by thousands of years. It is, for example, within the writings of the 5<sup>th</sup> century BCE Greek historian Herodotus that the first clear use of the word “Palestine” is used to refer to the land between Egypt and Phoenicia.

References that predate Herodotus are less clear but remain plausible. It has been pointed out that references like those of Herodotus may only be geographical markers; however, it has more recently been shown that people living in the region of Palestine during the 17<sup>th</sup> century (and possibly earlier) conceived of their identity in a more complex manner than is commonly understood. As pointed out by Haim Gerber: “Though the all-inclusive identity of Middle Eastern Muslims under the Ottomans was Islamic and Ottoman first, territorial identities existed beneath them and these territorial communities are commensurate with the modern Middle Eastern states.”<sup>147</sup> Gerber goes on to examine the writings of Palestinian Mufti Khayr al-Din al-Ramli (1585–1670), who “on many occasions mentions the concepts *Filasṭīn*, *bilādunā* (our country), *al-Shām* (Syria), *Miṣr* (Egypt), and *diyār* (country), in senses that go far beyond ‘mere’ objective geography.” It is of no small significance how people define for themselves what it is to exist.

Just as Palestinian identity came about as a result of historical circumstances, Zionism, too (really Zionisms), was created from lived experience. Zionist identity, in fact, like that of modern Palestinians, was created in part as a reaction to oppression. Zionists were a small and divided minority of Jews who took up the Zionist cause in the late 1800s as part of forging a new identity for themselves. What it meant to be a Zionist, in many ways, was worked out in light of the ongoing persecution of Jews in much of Europe and Russian due to wide spread anti-Jewish

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147. Haim Gerber, “‘Palestine’ and Other Territorial Concepts in the 17<sup>th</sup> Century,” *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 30 (1998): 563–572 (563). See also the more recent monograph by Haim Gerber, *Remembering and Imagining Palestine: Identity and Nationalism from the Crusades to the Present* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008).

ideas (later culminating most clearly in the events of the Shoah, or Holocaust, brought about by the genocidal efforts of the German Third Reich).<sup>148</sup> Hayyim Hissin, one of the first Zionist migrants from Russia to Palestine writes of this phenomenon in his journal:

The recent pogroms have violently awakened the complacent Jews from their sweet slumbers. Until now, I was uninterested in my origin. I saw myself as a faithful son of Russia which was to me my *raison d'être* and the very air that I breathed. Each new discovery by a Russian scientist, every classical literary work, every victory of the Russian Empire would fill my heart with pride. I wanted to devote my whole strength to the good of my homeland, and happily do my duty. Suddenly they come and show us the door and openly declare that we are free to leave for the West.<sup>149</sup>

Whether it is Zionism, Palestine, or the גולה, all identities are forged by experience and circumstance. The heated and often hostile debates concerning Israel/Palestine are built on the foundation of questions dealing with identity: What does it mean to be Jewish? To be Palestinian? To be an Israeli?

### **Zionist Settlers and the Discourse of Return and Restore**

In the summer of 1969, just two years after the 1967 “Six Day War,” Golda Meir, the fourth Prime Minister of Israel, (in)famously stated in an interview with British Journalist Frank Giles (long before the likes of Newt Gingrich):

There were no such thing as Palestinians. When was there an independent Palestinian people with a Palestinian state? ... It was not as though there was a Palestinian people in Palestine considering itself as a Palestinian people and we came and threw them out and took their country away from them. They did not exist.<sup>150</sup>

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148. Bunton, *Palestinian–Israeli Conflict*, 13.

149. Chaim Hissin, “מיומן אחד הבילויים” (“From the Diary of One of the Bilu Members,” Tel Aviv, 1925), quoted in Getzel Kressel, “BILU,” *EncJud* 3:700; Colin Shindler, *Israel and the European Left: Between Solidarity and Delegitimization* (New York: Continuum, 2012), 8; “The Origins of Zionism,” in *The Routledge Handbook on the Israeli–Palestinian Conflict*, ed. Joel Peters and David Newman, Routledge Handbooks (London: Routledge, 2013), 11–20 (17).

150. *The Sunday Times*, London, 15 June 1969. It was republished as: “Golda Meir Scorns Soviets: Israeli Premier Explains Stand on Big-4 Talks, Security” and “Mrs. Meir Bars Any ‘Deal’ for Israel’s Security” in the *Washington Post*, 16 June 1969, A1, A15.

Similar to the way in which E<sup>1-6</sup> carefully constructs the introduction to the indigenous “people of the land,” Meir’s words show a strategy of “perception transfer.” This kind of transfer occurs when the “actual presence [of an indigenous population] is not registered.”<sup>151</sup> This kind of thinking is of interest in examining the phenomenon of return because it feeds into the larger “myth of the empty land” discourse since, not surprisingly, returnees usually prefer to “return” to a land free of “problems.” E<sup>1-6</sup> creates this mythic reality by “not registering” any sort of indigenous presence until it is firmly established to whom the land really belongs, while Meir does it by defining “Palestinian existence” so narrowly as to eliminate it. Settler perception of natives is not the only stratagem at work here, however. Settler colonial endeavors are rarely limited to only one form of transfer. Veracini notes that, “at times, they are premised on the successful enactment of previous transfers.”<sup>152</sup>

Perception transfer is a crucial prerequisite to other forms of transfer; for example, it is crucial in allowing the successive activation of transfer by conceptual displacement. One of its consequences is that when really existing indigenous people enter the field of settler perception, they are deemed to have entered the settler space and can therefore be considered exogenous.<sup>153</sup>

Again, this strategy is at play in E<sup>1-6</sup>. By the time the indigenous Other is introduced, the reader/hearer has already been prepared to perceive that the *גּוֹלֵה* are alone. The rhetorical effect is that, when the “people of the land” suddenly appear, it is as if they are invading *גּוֹלֵה* territory. Meir’s words, though not the first to declare that there’s “no such thing as Palestinians,” function similarly. Nearly a century of forerunners, both knowingly and unknowingly, had created a context in which such a thing could be said and taken seriously. Once the perception that *Eretz Yisrael* was empty upon arrival was successfully disseminated, it then became easier to take it

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151. Veracini, *Settler Colonialism*, 37.

152. Veracini, *Settler Colonialism*, 34.

153. Veracini, *Settler Colonialism*, 34.

one step further. Now was it not only the case that the land was empty, but more than that, outsiders have now showed up to take our land. All of these ideas bolstered the ultimate goal of settlement through the rhetoric of return and restoration of the Promised Land. Whether it be the beginnings of Zionism in the late nineteenth century, Meir's words in the late 1960s, or even the current day, the discourse of settler return was and is alive and well.<sup>154</sup>

### Herzl's Zionism: Before Natives Existed

In August of 1897 Theodor Herzl, the man who eventually became the face for modern Zionism, convened the first Zionist Congress in the Swiss city of Basel.<sup>155</sup> Though not the first to use the term "Zionism," the views expressed at the Basel meeting would shape the entire history of the Zionist movement.<sup>156</sup> The summary declaration of the congress ("The Basel Declaration") stated: "Zionism seeks for the Jewish people, the establishment of a legally secured home in Palestine."<sup>157</sup> The adjective "empty" could have well been added to describe Palestine, for that is exactly how it was perceived (not just by Jews, but Europeans in general).<sup>158</sup> Not one reference to the Palestinian people then living in Palestine is made throughout the entirety of the declaration. Indeed, just four years later British author and playwright Israel Zangwill would pen

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154. I am indebted to a number of works that present a more robust history of the pertinent groups and concepts (Palestine, Israel, Zionism, etc.) that fall within the scope of this study. My focus centers on the identities of Zionist settlers and Palestinians as they relate to settler colonialism and the discourse of return. I have relied on the following works for a more general history of the Israel/Palestinian conflict: Peters and Newman, eds., *The Routledge Handbook on the Israeli–Palestinian Conflict*; Bunton, *Palestinian–Israeli Conflict*; Ian J. Bickerton and Carla L. Klausner, *A History of the Arab–Israeli Conflict*, 6th ed. (Boston: Prentice Hall, 2010); Charles D. Smith, *Palestine and the Arab–Israeli Conflict: A History with Documents*, 7th ed. (Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2010); Michael Prior, *Zionism and the State of Israel: A Moral Inquiry* (London: Routledge, 1999).

155. Smith, *Palestine*, 30–31.

156. Austrian writer Nathan Birnbaum probably first coined the term in an article published in 1886 (Bickerton and Klausner, *A History*, 21–22).

157. Basel Program, 1897, The Central Zionist Archive. My translation from the German: "Der Zionismus erstrebt für das jüdische Volk die Schaffung einer rechtlich gesicherten Heimstätte in Palastina."

158. Bunton, *Palestinian–Israeli Conflict*, 1–2.

the line: “Palestine is a country without a people; the Jews are a people without a country.”<sup>159</sup>

Not unlike Ezra, where the empty state of Yehud is assumed until 3:3 (*after* the גִּוְלֵי הָאָרֶץ had settled),

the “the myth of the empty land” was a key element in early (and later) conceptions of Zionism’s

return. Nearly 30 years later, Moshe Smilansky, a “First Aliyah” migrant, reminisced how,

“From the inception of the Zionist idea, Zionist propaganda described the country for which we

were headed as a desolate and largely neglected land, waiting eagerly for its redeemers.”<sup>160</sup>

Herzl’s vision, like much of Zionist thought, was one of an “empty land,” a *Terra nullius*

awaiting its rightful owners and restorers, whether it was in Palestine, Uganda, Cyprus, or

Argentina.<sup>161</sup> Herzl’s influence, however, reached far beyond his conception of an empty land.

Most of Herzl’s ideas were not original to him, but he is the figure whom many Zionist successors would hold up as an ensign of Zionism. Herzl’s skills were manifest in his ability to organize and put ideas into motion. “More than any other person,” Herzl, “has been identified with the emergence of modern Zionism,” and “his life has acquired legendary proportions.”<sup>162</sup>

Zion as an empty land is not the only idea attributed to Herzl that has greatly influenced the

159. The phrase is quoted in several different ways: “a land without a people for a people without a land” (Bunton, *Palestinian–Israeli Conflict*, 2; Edward W. Said, *The Question of Palestine* [New York: Vintage, 1980], 9), “the claim of the people without a land to the land without a people” (Sand, *Invention*, 188), “a land without a nation for a nation without a land” (Diana Muir, “A Land Without a People for a People Without a Land,” *MEQ* 15 [2008]: 55–62). Scholars are very much divided over the phrase’s origins: Adam Garfinkle argues that Zangwill was merely paraphrasing the British noble Lord Shaftesbury (Adam M. Garfinkle, “On the Origin, Meaning, Use and Abuse of a Phrase,” *MESJ* 27 [1991]: 542–543). Edward Said claims that the phrase did originate with Zangwill (Said, *The Question*, 9). Diana Muir contends that neither Zangwill nor Shaftesbury were responsible; rather she argues that the phrase was not original to Jewish Zionists at all but instead to mid-nineteenth-century Christian writers; she quotes Church of Scotland clergyman Alexander Keith as saying in 1843: “[the Jews are] a people without a country; even as their own land, as subsequently to be shown, is in a great measure a country without a people” (Muir, “A Land Without,” 55–62). Anita Shapira asserts that the phrase was original to the Zionist movement and was popular at the end of the nineteenth century into the early part of the twentieth century (Anita Shapira, *Land and Power: The Zionist Resort to Force, 1881–1948*, trans. William Templar, SSJHC [Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1999], 42).

160. Quoted in Benny Morris, *Righteous Victims: A History of the Zionist–Arab Conflict, 1881–2001* (New York: Vintage, 2001), 42.

161. Bickerton and Klausner, *A History*, 24; Argentina was proposed a possible place for Jewish immigration by Herzl (Theodor Herzl, *Der Judenstaat: Versuch einer modernen Lösung der Judenfrage* [Leipzig: M. Breitenstein’s Verlags-buchhandlung, 1896], 3).

162. Bickerton and Klausner, *A History*, 22.

Zionist settler movement. In his most influential work, *Der Judenstaat*, written in 1896, Herzl weaves together a number of ideas that to this day bolster the narrative of *return* and *restoration*. He states in preface that, “The idea which I have developed in this pamphlet is an ancient one: It is the restoration of the Jewish State.”<sup>163</sup> Herzl’s words here are similar to those that would be drafted three years later in the Basel Declaration; however, *Der Judenstaat* provides a fuller picture. Words like “restoration” and “ancient” suggested not only a return, but a return with plenty of precedent. Herzl emphasizes again and again the ancient nature of the Zionist cause. He notes for example, “Palestine is our unforgettable historic homeland,” a rightful inheritance after having living through “what were for us eighteen centuries of affliction.”<sup>164</sup> Not only did Herzl present all Jews living during his time as a unified whole (a perception that has never correlated with reality), his perception broke through any temporal divisions as well. “We are a people—one people,” he boldly proclaims.<sup>165</sup> Though Ezra does not appear to have been a text Herzl utilized, his attempt to portray the modern Zionist return as a large mass exodus does sound familiar. The גלג returnees of E<sup>1-6</sup> are also portrayed as a mass exodus of people (49,897 according to the list of “the people of the province who came from those captive exiles” in ch. 2). But Herzl had his own favorite ancient prototype to hold up. In the concluding words of *Der Judenstaat*, he continues with themes of return by mentioning a sort of “golden age” of the land:

Therefore I believe that a wondrous generation of Jews will spring into existence. The Maccabeans will rise again. Let me repeat once more my opening words: The Jews who wish for a State will have it. We shall live at last as free men on our own soil, and die peacefully in our own homes.<sup>166</sup>

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163. Herzl, *Der Judenstaat*, 3.

164. Herzl, *Der Judenstaat*, 29.

165. Herzl, *Der Judenstaat*, 11.

166. Herzl, *Der Judenstaat*, 85–86.

All of this, Herzl argued, was “for the good of humanity.”<sup>167</sup>

Though some 10,000 Jews would immigrate to Palestine prior to Herzl’s the “Jewish Question,”<sup>168</sup> Herzl would never fully realize the success that Zionism would ultimately obtain. This point was not lost on Zangwill who at Herzl’s burial compared Herzl to Moses, the man who got to see but not enter the promised land of Canaan. Zangwill nevertheless assured all that Herzl “has laid his hands upon the head of more than one Joshua,” a fitting reference to the children of Israel who set the precedent for “returning” to a land promised to them by YHWH.<sup>169</sup>

#### Into the Twentieth Century: Where Did All These Natives Come From?

Zionism of course did not die with Herzl in 1904, nor did the idea that a home for the Jewish population of the world lay empty, dormant, and in wait for the return of its rightful inhabitants. Against resilient opposition, immigration continued with the creation of organizations like the Jewish National Fund (JNF), established in 1903, which sought to fund those of Jewish descent wanting to migrate to Palestine, many of whom were escaping persecution. The JNF emphasized the Jewish return by focusing more than ever on reclaiming the soil. For Menachem Ussishkin, the first president of the JNF, this meant owning the land:<sup>170</sup>

In order to establish autonomous Jewish community life—or, to be more precise, a Jewish state, in Eretz Israel, it is necessary, first of all, that all, or at least most, of Eretz Israel’s lands will be the property of the Jewish people. Without ownership of the land,

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167. Herzl, *Der Judenstaat*, 86. Herzl is not the only settler colonizer to suggest that settlement will benefit even groups being removed from their land. Jackson, for example, offered a similar sentiment in removing native peoples from their land: “I beg of you [interpreter John Pitchlynn] to say to [the choctaws west of the Mississippi], that their interest happiness peace and prosperity depend upon their removal” (Andrew Jackson to John Pitchlynn, 5 August 1830, Andrew Jackson Papers, Library of Congress); “The consequences of a speedy removal will be important to the United States, to individual States, and to the Indians themselves” (*Senate Journal*. 21st Cong., 2nd sess., 7 December 1830, 23).

168. Bickerton and Klausner, *A History*, 25. The majority of these immigrants (during the years 1883–1903) were assisted by (largely non-Zionist) individuals that saw their funding efforts not only as a good deed but also as an investment of land such as the wealthy French philanthropist Baron Edmond de Rothschild.

169. Israel Zangwill, *Speeches, Articles and Letters of Israel Zangwill*, ed. Maurice Smith (London: Soncino, 1937), 131–132. Quoted in Prior, *Zionism*, 8.

170. Zionist settlers during this time often evoked the faux-religious language of “redeeming” the land of Israel. Bunton, *Palestine–Israeli Conflict*, 5.

Eretz Israel will never become Jewish, be the number of Jews whatever it may be in the towns and even in the villages, and Jews will remain in the very same abnormal situation which characterizes them in the diaspora.<sup>171</sup>

While the 1897 Basel Declaration was completely void of any Palestinian references,

Ussishkin's 1903 remarks show that a native presence had begun to enter the perceived world of the settler.<sup>172</sup>

By the start of World War I, due largely to the efforts of the JNF, the total population of Jews residing in Palestine had climbed to 65,000 (around 13% of the total population) of whom about 35,000 had immigrated within the last three decades.<sup>173</sup> Growing resistance towards Zionist migration now forced settlers to acknowledge a native presence; however, as we have seen in settler colonialism acknowledgement came only after the perception of the land being empty.<sup>174</sup> The result was that when really existing indigenous people appeared within the scope of settler perception, they were thought of as having entered settler space and (since it was empty when the "first" settlers arrived) deemed exogenous. The construction of an identity for these "outsiders" then ensued. Second generation Zionist settler Avshalom Feinberg said of Arabs:

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171. Quoted in Gershon Shafir, "Settler Citizenship in the Jewish Colonization of Palestine," in Elkins and Pedersen, eds., *Settler Colonialism in the Twentieth Century*, 41–57 (42). Originally from the Hebrew work: Menachem Ussishkin, [ליובל השבים] ספר אוסישקין (Jerusalem: n.p., 1964), 105.

172. Of the three options Ussishkin considered for acquiring Eretz Israel, purchase was his recommended mode, the other two being "robbing the land" and "expropriation via governmental authority." Shafir, "Settler Citizenship," 42. Shafir also notes that while Ussishkin ruled out stealing the land by military force because it was "totally ungodly," it may be telling that he added "we are too weak for it."

173. Though I suggest 65,000, a precise population estimate concerning the number of Jewish settlers living in Palestine as well as the total number of Jews living in Palestine during this time (1904–1914) is difficult to establish (estimates range from 35,000 to 85,000; Prior, *Zionism*, 12). Besides ideological biases (see Joan Peters, *From Time Immemorial: The Origins of the Arab–Jewish Conflict over Palestine* [New York: Harper & Row, 1984], 221–233, which argues that the number of Arab immigrants equaled that of Jewish immigrants), it seems that questions of total population, number of immigrants, and/or number of immigrants who didn't stay (not all Jewish immigrants to Palestine stayed in Palestine due to the "inhospitable climate and conditions" [Bickerton and Klausner, *A History*, 26]) are not always distinguished, spelled out, and/or considered. This could play some part in why the range of estimates is so broad. Bunton (*Palestinian–Israeli Conflict*, 4) and Smith (*Palestine*, 33) place the number at 85,000 and 80,000 respectively while Bickerton and Klausner suggest 60,000 (*A History*, 26). Prior never comes down on a number and Justin McCarthy's demographic study (*The Population of Palestine: Population Statistics of the Late Ottoman Period and the Mandate* [New York: Columbia University Press, 1990] suggests 38,000, an estimate he has upheld as recently as 2005 ("Population," in *Encyclopedia of the Palestinians*, ed. Philip Mattar, rev. ed. (New York: Facts on File, 2005), 394.

174. Veracini, *Settler Colonialism*, 37.



“There is no more cowardly, hypocritical and false race than this race.”<sup>175</sup> Even the more moderate Moshe Smilansky, a well-known proponent of peaceful Jewish-Arab relations in mandated Palestine remarked:

We must not forget that we are dealing here with a semi-savage people, which has extremely primitive concepts. And this is his nature: If he senses in you power—he will submit and will hide his hatred for you. And if he senses weakness—he will dominate you. ... the base values [of the Arab] are not common among other primitive people ... [these base values include] to lie, to cheat, to harbor grave (unfounded) suspicions and to tell tales ... and a hidden hatred for the Jews. These Semites—they are anti-Semites.<sup>176</sup>

A similar fear of indigenous peoples, including an attempt to construct indigenous identity as dangerous, can be found in E<sup>1-6</sup>. Before the reader/hearer knows anything of a native presence E<sup>1-6</sup> makes the reader/hearer aware that these people are scary, explaining that the גולה’s motive for “set[ing] up the altar on its foundation,” was, “because they were in dread of the neighboring peoples” (כי באימה עליהם מעמי הארצות; Ezra 3:3a; NRSV).<sup>177</sup> A chapter later the assumed “enemies of Judah and Benjamin” are portrayed as introducing themselves by telling the גולה that, “we worship your God as you do, and we have been sacrificing to him ever since the days of King Esar-haddon of Assyria who brought us here” (Ezra 4:2). E<sup>1-6</sup> may start by noting a similarity in worship, but there is no doubt where the problem lies. These people are not part of the group that was commanded by Cyrus and YHWH to build a house to YHWH, they are actually settlers themselves (i.e., non-native). Why northerners felt compelled to rebuild YHWH’s house in Jerusalem remains a question, unless they represent E<sup>1-6</sup>’s way of acknowledging native presence for the express purpose of quickly writing them out of the “true” and “original” group of

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175. Yosef Gorny, “The Roots of the Consciousness of the Jewish–Arab National Conflict and Its Reflection in the Hebrew Press in the Years 1900–18,” *Zionism* 4 (1976): 72–143 (89) (Hebrew); English translation from Morris, *Righteous Victims*, 43–44.

176. Gorny, “Jewish–Arab National Conflict,” 89 (Morris, *Righteous Victims*, 43–44).

177. A more literal translation of the Hebrew, “because terror [was] upon them from the people of the lands,” helps to recognize that the “people of the land” are being referenced.

inhabitants. The fact that these “enemies” claim the same religious tradition shows just how narrowly the in-group line is being drawn.

Unlike E<sup>1-6</sup>, the story of modern Zionism contains a number of counter voices. Some, like Yitzhak Epstein, a Palestinian Jew and Zionist, argued against the wholly negative portrayals of Arabs and tried to educate people about the “empty land” not being so empty. “While we feel a deep love for the land of our forefathers,” Epstein writes, “we forget that the nation who lives in it today has a sensitive heart and a loving soul. The Arab, like every man, is tied to his native land with strong bonds.”<sup>178</sup> Similarly, Zionist leader Hillel Zeitlin’s ideas included “a blunt discussion of the fact that there were half a million Arabs living in Palestine.”<sup>179</sup> He openly criticized “the attempt to circumnavigate the problem of Arab inhabitants ... not just because he considered it unrealistic but also because he viewed it as immoral,” suggesting instead that Zionists gather to a less controversial location.<sup>180</sup> Nevertheless, settler colonial ideas, like those written by Smilansky in a direct response to Epstein in the Zionist journal *Hapoel Hatzair*, carried the day:

Either the Land of Israel belongs in the national sense to those Arabs who settled there in recent times ... [Or] if the Land of Israel belongs to us, to the Jewish people, then our national interests come before all else.... It is not possible for one country to serve as the homeland of two peoples.<sup>181</sup>

Smilansky’s framing of the native population as those “who settled there in recent times” shows to what extent the indigenous had become the exogenous, and this coming from someone who understood that certain Zionist ideas had fostered much of the Jewish contempt towards the

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178. Gorny, “Jewish–Arab National Conflict,” 76 (Morris, *Righteous Victims*, 57).

179. Shapira, *Land and Power*, 47.

180. Shapira, *Land and Power*, 47.

181. Eliezer Be’eri, *The Beginning of the Israeli–Arab Conflict, 1882–1911* (Haifa: Haifa University Press, 1985 (Hebrew); English translation from Morris, *Righteous Victims*, 58.

Arabs of Palestine.<sup>182</sup> Framing the indigenous as exogenous (and vice versa) helped to further the overarching discourse of return and restoration; an empty land is far easier to return to and restore (even if it's not actually empty). While talk of redeeming the *land* almost always came first in Zionist discourse, the people living on the land were also viewed as being in need of some uplifting; in fact, for settler colonists indigenes are often just another part of the landscape.<sup>183</sup>

Veracini's "transfer by conceptual displacement" can show up in still more forms. As natives are framed as exogenous, "local indigenous peoples can then be collapsed into an unspecified wider 'native' category."<sup>184</sup>

Indigenous South Africans could therefore become "foreign natives" and "Africans." Similarly, Palestinians and Algerians could become "Arabs". As this wider category inhabits borderlands *outside* of the territory claimed by the settler entity, this type of transfer allows for the possibility of discursively displacing indigenous people to the exterior of the settler locale.<sup>185</sup>

This renaming, and thus relocating, is readily apparent in Revisionist Zionist leader Ze'ev Jabotinsky's writings. The Jewish poet and author noted of the conflict:

This matter is not ... an issue between the Jewish people and the Arab inhabitants of Palestine, but between the Jewish people and the Arab people. The latter, numbering 35 million, has [territory equal to] half of Europe, while the Jewish people, numbering ten million and wandering the earth, hasn't got a stone. ... Will the Arab people stand opposed? Will it resist? [Will it insist] that ... they ... shall have it [all] for ever and ever, while he who has nothing shall forever have nothing?<sup>186</sup>

Similarly, Zangwill suggested to fellow Zionists in 1919 that

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182. Anita Shapira, relying on Smilansky's descriptions, not only explains how an attitude of entitlement came to be among Zionist settlers, but also points out the gendered language that accompanied it. "This attitude," she explains, "created a 'feeling of certainty that Palestine was a virgin country.' It was the same feeling of certainty (or, as I prefer to describe it, of ownership) that, according to Smilansky, led to an 'attitude of contempt' on the part of the first colonists toward the local Arab inhabitants." See Shapira, *Land and Power*, 58; quoting Moshe Smilansky, "Our Deeds Will Bring Both Fraternization and Alienation," *HaOlam*, January 29, 1914 (Hebrew).

183. Veracini, *Settler Colonialism*, 37.

184. Veracini, *Settler Colonialism*, 35.

185. Veracini, *Settler Colonialism*, 35.

186. Ze'ev Jabotinsky, *Ne'umim (1905–1926)* (Tel Aviv, 1947), 117 (Hebrew); quoted in Neil Caplan, *Palestine Jewry and the Palestine Question 1917–1925* [London: Frank Cass, 1978], 26–27.

We cannot allow the Arabs to block so valuable a piece of historic reconstruction. ... And therefore we must gently persuade them to 'trek.' After all, they have all Arabia with its million square miles. ... There is no particular reason for the Arabs to cling to these few kilometers. "To fold their tents and silently steal away" is their proverbial habit: Let them exemplify it now.<sup>187</sup>

With this fantasy of a physical transfer, Zangwill conceptually redefines Palestinians as part of a much larger group. Also apparent is the settler notion that natives don't really live anywhere. As

Veracini again notes:

Transfer by conceptual displacement works equally in situations where indigenous people are perceived to be coming in from somewhere else and when they are perceived to be coming from nowhere in particular. Ubiquitous representations of indigenous people as pathologically mobile and "nomadic", constantly engaged in unpredictable and periodical migrations, "traversing" but not occupying the land, "roaming", "overrunning", "skulking", "wandering", and so on, fall within this category of transfer.<sup>188</sup>

#### Who's Native Now? The Creation of Israel as a State

As events moved towards the founding of Israel in 1948, settler rhetoric persisted both among Zionist settlers as well as British leaders. One Zionist leader, Chaim Weizmann, described the scene in 1936: "On one side, the forces of destruction, the forces of the desert, have risen, and on the other stand firm the forces of civilization and building. It is the old war of the desert against civilization."<sup>189</sup> Weizmann was speaking of the constant conflicts over land purchases, farming, immigration, and leadership that plagued mandated Palestine at the time. The settler rhetoric of natives perpetually in desperate need for others to show them the ways of civilization (and, in the process, the way out the door) looms large in Weizmann's description; however, Zionists were far from the only source from which settler logic flowed. In attempting to figure out the best way to proceed with mandated Palestine, Britain commissioned a group of officials, led by Lord

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187. Quoted in Nur Masalha, *Expulsion of the Palestinians: The Concept of "Transfer" in Zionist Political Thought, 1882-1948* (Washington, D.C.: Institute for Palestine Studies, 1992), 14.

188. Veracini, *Settler Colonialism*, 35-36.

189. Quoted in Philip Mattar, *The Mufti of Jerusalem: Al-Hajj Amin al-Husayni and the Palestinian National Movement* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1988), 73; also quoted in Morris, *Righteous Victims*, 135.

William Robert Peel, to investigate. This fact-finding mission culminated in the more than 400 page long “Palestine Royal Commission Report of 1937” (often referred to as the “Peel Commission Report”). Though not a Zionist source, the report perpetuates Zionist settler ideals, both in maintaining the Jews’ historical right of the land and in framing Palestinians as having tarnished the once great land of Israel: “In the twelve centuries and more that had passed since the Arab conquest Palestine had virtually dropped out of history.”<sup>190</sup> The opening section of the report rightly points out that, “The present problem of Palestine, indeed, is unintelligible without a knowledge of the history that lies behind it.”<sup>191</sup> The report then goes on to provide just such a history. Though showing occasional signs that its writers were somewhat aware of the critical biblical scholarship going on at the time, it is apparent that the biblical record is the main source behind the Peel Commission Report’s narrative. In summing up the two respective stories, the report says of “Arab Palestine” that after twelve hundred years of rule, “One chapter only is remembered—the not very noble romance of the Crusades. In economics as in politics Palestine lay outside the main stream of the world’s life. In the realm of thought, in science or in letters, it made no contribution to modern civilization.”<sup>192</sup>

Compare this with the report’s description of “Jewish Palestine”:

The history of Jewish Palestine, thus ended, had been enacted for the most part in a country about the size of Wales: but it constitutes one of the great chapters in the story of mankind. By two primary achievements—the development of the first crude worship of Jehovah into a highly spiritual monotheism, and the embodiment of this faith and of the social and political ideals it inspired in immortal prose and poetry—the gift of Hebraism in ancient Palestine to the modern world must rank with the gifts of ancient Greece and Rome.<sup>193</sup>

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190. Palestine Royal Commission Report of 1937, I.6; all quotations from Smith, *Palestine*.

191. Palestine Royal Commission Report of 1937, I.2.

192. Palestine Royal Commission Report of 1937, I.7.

193. Palestine Royal Commission Report of 1937, I.7.

British bias towards Zionist ideas is clear; and yet, Britain was still an empire that at the end of the day had as its priority the empire's interests. Even the anti-Jewish sentiment that the report reproves is ironically inscribed on its own pages: "Popular instinct draws away from what is strange and the Jews—foreigners, foreign-looking, keeping to themselves, clinging to their peculiar faith—were strange."<sup>194</sup>

The Peel commission's ultimate recommendation was a separation of both land and people.<sup>195</sup> Feelings concerning the 1937 partition were mixed at best. Some British leaders saw Peel's proposed partition as the only way in which to create two states, noting that a mandate could never work. Others, however, had reservations about the commission's proposed partition that would have required the forced transfer of over 200,000 native Arabs from the northern hill and coastal plains regions (the area being proposed for a new Jewish state).<sup>196</sup> Jewish opinion was no less mixed. Refusing to settle for anything less than the whole of Palestine *and* Transjordan, Zionist Revisionists, led by Ze'ev Jabotinsky, rejected *in toto* Peel's proposed partition. David Ben-Gurion took a different approach, choosing to support the partition, not because it represented the fulfillment of his Zionist dream, but in the interest of a larger vision of

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194. Palestine Royal Commission Report of 1937, I.16.

195. Interestingly, the Peel report uses the term transfer. Speaking of Palestinians, the Peel Commission report states: "They would, it is believed, strongly object to a compulsory transfer, even from one part to another of the comparatively limited area envisaged in a scheme of this kind" (Palestine Royal Commission Report of 1937, IX.87).

196. Bunton, *Palestine-Israeli Conflict*, 39. Note that the partition reflects earlier Zionist ideals concerning what specific areas were the most important parts of *Eretz Yisrael*. The Zionist infatuation with the "lands of the Bible" would not take hold until after the 1967 Six-Day War.

the future of *Eretz Israel*.<sup>197</sup> He says as much in a letter to his son dated July of 1937: “[W]e never wanted to dispossess the Arabs. But since England is giving part of the country promised to us—for an Arab state, it is only fair that the Arabs in our state be transferred to the Arab area.”<sup>198</sup> Though mass transfers of Palestinians had not yet begun, Ben-Gurion’s words foreshadowed the quickly approaching war of 1948.

The combined efforts of Zionist settlers and the British Empire saw a major Zionist goal met with the 1948 creation of the state of Israel. As the ultimate stamp of legitimacy, the founding document, declared on May 14, told the very story that Zionists had worked so hard to uphold: “after being forcibly exiled from their land,” the Jewish people, “impelled by historic and traditional attachment” to the land, “strove in every successive generation to re-establish themselves in their ancient homeland.” The “Ingathering of the Exiles” had begun; “they made deserts bloom.”<sup>199</sup> Though the declaration promised “complete equality of social and political rights to all its inhabitants irrespective of religion,” this great Return and Restoration only led to further forms of transfer carried out against Palestinian inhabitants.

Veracini notes that transferist approaches at times can “complement each other,” as well as be “deployed concomitantly.”<sup>200</sup> More discursive modes of transfer never ceased in the Zionist settlers efforts to erase Palestinian presence; however, far more physical modes of transfer were

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197. Even before the Peel Commission had arrived in Palestine, Ben-Gurion was already envisioning a mass transfer of natives out of Palestine to make way for Jewish settlement. Ben Gurion was not alone in his thinking. Menachem Ussishkin told journalists in April of 1930 that: “We must continually raise the demand that our land be returned to our possession. . . . If there are other inhabitants there, they must be transferred to some other place. We must take over the land. We have a greater and nobler ideal than preserving several hundred thousands of Arab fellahin” (*Doar Hayom* [Jerusalem], 29 April 1930; quoted in Masalha, *Expulsion of the Palestinians*, 37). In March of 1936, fellow Mapai member Moshe Beilinson proposed that Britain be sought out for “extensive aid for a large development plan, which would enable the evacuation of large Arab tracts of land for our colonization, through an agreement with the *fellahin*” (Yosef Heller, *Bama ’vak Lemedinah: Hamediniyut Hatzionit Bashanim 1936–1948* [The Struggle for the State: The Zionist Policy 1936–1948] (Jerusalem, 1984), 117; quoted in Masalha, *Expulsion of the Palestinians*, 50).

198. David Ben-Gurion to Amos Ben-Gurion, 27–28 July 1937, IDFA, Ben-Gurion Correspondence; Quoted in Morris, *Righteous Victims*, 139.

199. Israeli Declaration of Statehood, May 14, 1948.

200. Veracini, *Settler Colonialism*, 34.

used in the immediate aftermath of Israel's declaration of statehood. Arab forces—made up of Egyptian, Lebanese, Iraqi, and Syrian armies—invaded the day after Ben-Gurion had announced Israel's statehood, leaving many Palestinians directly in the path of destruction. By the end of the first Arab-Israeli war (or, as some refer to it, the Israeli War of Independence), settler transfer had taken a devastating toll on the Palestinian population, particularly in the form of what Veracini terms “ethnic transfer,” that is, “when indigenous communities are forcibly deported, either within or without the territory claimed or controlled by the settler entity.”<sup>201</sup> When the war ceased in early 1949, some 800,000<sup>202</sup> Palestinians had fled from their homes in Israeli-controlled territories, many having been forcibly expelled. Palestinians had been remade as refugees, whether inside or outside Palestine. In fact, as Veracini notes:

Settler colonial projects are specifically interested in turning indigenous peoples into refugees: refugees, even more so peoples that have been repeatedly forced to abandon their homes, are by definition indigenous to somewhere else—the very opposite of “Aboriginal.”<sup>203</sup>

Those once indigenous were now exogenous, and those once exogenous were indigenous. For Zionist settlers the desert was now rejoicing and blossoming (Isa 35:1).<sup>204</sup>

### The Use of Force in Ezra 7–10

Physical transfer resembling anything like that experienced by Palestinians in 1948–1949 is not to be found among the different modes of transfer that the **גזל** carry out in E<sup>1-6</sup>. This is not altogether true of Ezra 7–10 (E<sup>7-10</sup>). A thorough analysis will have to wait for another study;

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201. Veracini, *Settler Colonialism*, 35. Another example of this kind of transfer would be the forced removal of Cherokees from Georgia in the 1830s under Andrew Jackson's presidency.

202. Ilan Pappé, *The Ethnic Cleansing of Palestine* (Oxford: Oneworld, 2006), xiii.

203. Veracini, *Settler Colonialism*, 35.

204. A further mode of transfer that have been carried out against the Palestinian people since 1948 is “administrative transfer,” “when the administrative borders of the settler polity are redrawn and indigenous people lose entitlements they had retained in the context of previous arrangements” (Veracini, *Settler Colonialism*, 44). For an overview of this phenomenon that focuses on post-1948 means of transferring Palestinians, see Pappé, *Ethnic Cleansing*, 127–247.



however, in the interest of pointing out potential future studies, I pause briefly to note one example of how E<sup>7-10</sup> resembles, and differs, from E<sup>1-6</sup> with regard to modes of transfer they describe.

Ezra 9 opens with a concern being expressed to Ezra that, “The people of Israel, the priests, and the Levites have not separated themselves from the peoples of the lands (הַאֲרָצוֹת) (מעמי)” (Ezra 9:1). As in E<sup>1-6</sup>, “the people of the land” seems like an appropriate title for a group that is just that, people who are (already) in the land; however, like E<sup>1-6</sup>, E<sup>7-10</sup> makes use of the term to mean the very opposite. “The people of the land” is something of a stock phrase in the HB most often used to refer to the people of Judah and/or Israel;<sup>205</sup> however, the author(s) of the Deuteronomistic History (DH) employ the term to refer to indigenous enemies. Moses tells Israel that, as they enter Canaan, a land that they will shortly empty of all non-Israelites, “all the peoples of the land (עַמֵּי הָאֲרֶזֶן) shall see that you are called by the name of YHWH, and they shall be afraid of you” (Deut 28:10; cf. Josh 4:24; 1 Kgs 8:43; 8:53, 60). Similarly, Ezra is “appalled” at Israel’s failure to separate themselves from the abominations (תועבת) (later identified as “foreign” women and daughters) of “the people of the land,” whose own abominations are like those of “the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Jebusites, the Ammonites, the Moabites, the Egyptians, and the Amorites” (9:1-3). This kind of framing by naming of the “people of the land” is not an accident; the author has taken the lists of traditional foreign enemies found in Deut 7:1 and Deut 23:3-6 and used the old to name the new.<sup>206</sup> While E<sup>7-10</sup> follows E<sup>1-6</sup> in using settler transfer to re-define what it is to be “people of the land,” E<sup>7-10</sup>

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205. For example, see Lev 4:27; 20:2; Jer 1:18; 44:21; Ezek 7:27; 12:19; Zech 7:5; Dan 9:6; 1 Chr 33:25; 36:1. There are other examples of the term being used to describe “foreigners” (Gen 23:7; 23:12), but these references largely lack the hostility towards foreigners seen in the DH and EN.

206. Williamson, *Ezra, Nehemiah*, 131; Blenkinsopp, *Ezra–Nehemiah*, 175.

goes further in its call for a separation. While the  $\eta$   $\eta$  of E<sup>1-6</sup> do not enact physical transfer, E<sup>7-</sup><sup>10</sup> does, at least in narrative form.

### **French Settlers and the Discourse of Return and Restore**

On May 16, 1830, the French military commander Louis Auguste Victor de Bourmont led a fleet of five hundred ships to the city of Algiers on the North African coast. By July 5 the dey of Algiers, overwhelmed by the French invasion, formally signed an act of surrender, and the French (settler) colonization of the land began.<sup>207</sup> A “beginning,” however, was not how a number of nineteenth-century French historians would soon describe the events of the French arrival in Algeria; rather, this “beginning” was in reality a return; a return with the intent of re-establishing claim over what originally belonged to the French.

This section examines the themes of return and restoration in the discourses constructed and utilized by French settlers during their occupation of Algeria from 1830 to 1962, a time I refer to as French Algeria. Following the invaluable work by Patricia Lorcin on this subject,<sup>208</sup> I will begin with a brief description of the narrative itself, which a number of influential nineteenth-century French historian-settlers helped to foster. Settler perceptions of French identity and, in particular, that identity’s relation to ancient Rome played a key role in producing and upholding a national story that envisioned France not only as entering and settling the land of Algeria, but also as returning to and restoring a land that had fallen out of the stewardship of its rightful owners. Next, I will discuss two important factors that helped to create an atmosphere in which such a founding myth could be constructed: scholarship and education. I will conclude

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207. Benjamin Stora, *Algeria 1830–2000: A Short History*, trans. Jane Marie Todd (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2001), 1–3.

208. Patricia M. E. Lorcin, “Rome and France in Africa: Recovering Algeria’s Latin Past,” *French Historical Studies* 25.2 (2002): 295–329.

this section by examining some of the larger historical factors that helped to create a socio-political milieu in which the settler idea of return and restore could flourish.

### Choosing Your Family: The French as Descendants of Ancient Rome

In 1895, some 65 years after the initial invasion of Algeria by French forces, French author, historian, and settler Louis Bertrand provided a telling description of the French settler colonization process. He wrote:

“In returning to Africa, we have recovered a lost Latin province. . . . Simply bringing light to this idea, I have returned the titles both of nobility and of the first inhabitants to our settlers. Heirs of Rome, we invoke rights anterior to Islam. In the face of the usurping Arab and even the indigenous people, subjugated and refashioned by them, we represent the descendants of the fugitives, the true masters of the soil, who disembarked in Gaul with their reliquaries and Church archives.”<sup>209</sup>

By the term “fugitives,” Bertrand was referring to those who had once lived in North Africa during its days of Augustinian and Cyprian glory.<sup>210</sup> These groups of “original” inhabitants, in Bertrand’s thinking, were forced to flee during barbarian invasions, taking their Christian traditions, library, and relics with them. Bertrand, however, along with these “heirs of Rome,” had now returned in order to restore the holy traditions of their ancestors to Christian North Africa. Part of Bertrand’s claim rested on “[t]he notion of the ‘Latins of Africa,’ a new race formed of the intermingling of the peoples of the northern shores of the Mediterranean.”<sup>211</sup> This kind of ideological indigenizing of French settlers was already part of the cultural landscape by

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209. Louis Bertrand, *Les villes d’or: Algérie et Tunisie romaines* (Paris, 1921), 8–9. French reads: “En reentrant en Afrique, nous n’avons fait que récupérer une province perdue de la Latinité. . . . Simplement pour avoir mis cette idée en lumière, j’ai restitué à nos colons leurs titres de noblesse et de premiers occupants. Héritiers de Rome, nous invoquons des droits antérieurs à l’Islam. En face de l’Arabe usurpateur et meme de l’Indigène asservi et refaçonné par lui, nous représentons les descendants des fugitifs, des vrais maîtres du sol, qui débarquèrent en Gaule avec leurs reliquaries et les archives de leurs églises.” Beginning with “Heirs of Rome,” translation from Christine Margerrison, “*Ces forces obscures de l’âme*”: *Women, Race and Origins in the Writings of Albert Camus* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2008), 69.

210. Unlike the criminal connotation that the word “fugitive” often carries in colloquial speech, Bertrand’s use of “fugitives” here (fugitifs) carries a connotation more closely aligned to the word’s etymological origins; from the Latin verb *fugit*, meaning “to flee” or “to abscond.”

211. Lorcin, “Rome and France,” 312.

the time Bertrand began to publish his works, having already been suggested by anthropologists as early as 1873.<sup>212</sup> “The concept,” however, “was to find its ideological champion,” in Bertrand who arrived in Algeria in 1891.<sup>213</sup> Just as Herzl’s ideas were a new presentation of the ideas of earlier thinkers, however, Bertrand likewise was hardly the first to compare (or even equate) France with ancient Rome.

Just two decades after the initial 1830 landing of France’s colonizing fleet, the French archeologist Adolphe Dureau de la Malle was already seeking to boost morale among those frustrated by the slow progress of occupying Algeria by appealing to the connection between France and Rome. He counseled French forces to remember that it took Rome 252 years to finally establish Roman rule in Africa.<sup>214</sup> France, it seems, was well ahead of the curve. “Let the experiences of past centuries guide us and instruct us,” de la Malle urged. “May the motto, *Perseverando vincit*,<sup>215</sup> which sums up the wonder of the power of Rome and England, be inscribed on our flags, our public buildings, and upon the African colony.”<sup>216</sup> While Rome and England persevered, however, France would persevere even more.

For France, the link with ancient Rome made Rome into what Lorcin calls “a cultural idiom for French domination.”<sup>217</sup> This cultural idiom not only provided France with a great power from the past to emulate, it also was the key element in the ideological myth of identity that would follow. Not only would France be thought of as being *like* Rome, several historical events would serve as a catalyst for the idea that France *is* Rome, or at least its descendants. This

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212. Louis Faidherbe and Paul Topinard, “Instructions sur l’anthropologie de l’Algérie,” *Bulletin de la société d’anthropologie de Paris* 8 (1873): 603–65 (654), as cited in Lorcin, “Rome and France,” 312.

213. Lorcin, “Rome and France,” 312.

214. Dureau de la Malle, *Histoire des guerres des Romains, des Byzantins et des Vandales: accompagnée d’examens sur les moyens employés anciennement pour la conquête et la soumission de la portion de l’Afrique septentrionale nommée aujourd’hui l’Algérie* (Paris: Frères imprimeur de l’institut, 1852), xiii.

215. Latin: “perseverance conquers”

216. de la Malle, *Histoire*, x.

217. Lorcin, “Rome and France,” 295.

mythology made it possible, as the ideological claim went, to view Algeria as a land to return to, a land to recover, a land to restore to its original standards of Franco-Roman high civilization.

### How the French Became Ancient Romans

Similar elements of the rhetoric of return used in Israel/Palestine and in Ezra also show up in French Algeria, including the idea of restoring life to a culturally diseased/deceased land and people. “The myth of a deserted Algeria and the theory of progress versus stagnation were essential to the justificatory canon of French imperial activity.”<sup>218</sup> This rhetoric of empty land and restoration, together with an act of invasion (absent in the other settler narratives examined above), were both essential to a successful French conquest and settlement; nevertheless, “the process was more complex.”

Justifying a French presence in Algeria by attempting to shrug off Islam was one thing, but binding the settlers spiritually to the soil of the land as a regional extension of France required more than heroes of conquest and images of Arab “ineptitude” in the face of modernity<sup>219</sup>

The solution came in the form of constructing a founding myth of French Algeria, one in which the French were in reality returning to reclaim their inherited properties. By the turn of the twentieth century this myth of return and restore would be fully manifest, but its foundation lies in events more than a century earlier and revolves around two major issues: scholarship and education.

### ***Scholarship***

One of the key events underlying the idea of a Franco-Roman return was Napoleon’s 1789–1800 expedition to Egypt, a time when the western world became enamored with all things ancient, a

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218. Lorcin, “Rome and France,” 297.

219. Lorcin, “Rome and France,” 297.

phenomenon Edward Said calls “orientalism.”<sup>220</sup> The Napoleonic expedition was no exception. Fueled by the fervor of orientalism, Napoléon’s excursion served as a catalyst for French domination. As Lorcin points out, “Napoléon believed that an in-depth understanding of the area [of Egypt] would lead to better governance. In the process, [the expedition] set a precedent for the connection of scholarship and reconnaissance that was replicated in Algeria.”<sup>221</sup>

Initially, the question of what to do with Algeria loomed large. Beginning with the 1830 invasion, Algeria was governed under military rule, a system viewed as absolutely necessary by many, including the Governor-General of Algeria, Thomas Robert Bugeaud.<sup>222</sup> Others, however, including the French government, saw the potential profits that settlers stood to gain by fully colonizing Algeria. Debates about what to do with Algeria did not stop Napoleonic scholarship and reconnaissance from moving forward; in fact, it was the French government that commissioned the Académie des Inscriptions et Belles Lettres to send teams to Algeria to conduct archeological surveys of the land. Inscriptions, in particular, were regarded as important, as is shown by the thousands of ancient inscriptions listed in the logs and academic journals of the time. The first work on this subject alone, published in 1858, included 4,417 such inscriptions.<sup>223</sup> “The task of exploring Algeria,” Lorcin notes, “was an ongoing project that was integral to France’s civilizing mission.”<sup>224</sup> Nevertheless, inscriptions were not the only remains that served to bolster France’s settler colonial efforts. All of the scholarship-reconnaissance

had immediate significance in that it furnished details of what remained of the infrastructure of Roman settlements. The ruins of Roman roads and garrisons provided the French with the material wherewithal for advancing across the area, which they used

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220. Edward Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage, 1978).

221. Lorcin, “Rome and France,” 298.

222. Lorcin, “Rome and France,” 307.

223. Lorcin, “Rome and France,” 302. The work published was Léon Renier, *Inscriptions romaines de l’Algérie* (Paris, 1858).

224. Lorcin, “Rome and France,” 305.

to their advantage, and an ideological rallying point. Recent research indicates that French use of Roman roads, forts, cisterns, and aqueducts was widespread.<sup>225</sup>

Whether for physical or ideological purposes, Roman ruins played no small part.

By 1850, pro-settlement proponents won out over those who favored martial rule. Algeria was divided into three French departments with an aim “to ensure the absolute and complete subjugation of the population to the needs and interests of colonization.”<sup>226</sup> Deciding the question of whether or not to settle and colonize Algeria produced even more expeditions and academic projects; experts (along with no small number of less than trained “scholars”) continued to be “called on to examine and record the land, inhabitants, culture, and history” of Algeria.<sup>227</sup> French leadership also continued to carry out numerous archeological digs, searching out and unearthing every piece of material evidence they could find. It is perhaps no accident that ruins and artifacts interested these appointed scholars more than the people inhabiting the land. This focus on land rather than on natives partially fits Veracini’s description of “perception transfer,” which, he explains, “can happen, for example, when indigenous people are understood as part of the landscape”; this does not, however, fully describe French perceptions of natives.<sup>228</sup>

Like E<sup>1-6</sup> and Zionist Israel/Palestine, French settlers initially seemed to ignore native presence; however, French settlers did not view the land as empty in the same sense as the land is viewed in the Israel/Palestine and E<sup>1-6</sup> narratives. Lorcin points out that, “During the colonial period the French were inclined to overlook [the] diversity [that made up Algeria] and ... to view the population as a dichotomy of Arabs and the Berbers.”<sup>229</sup> Rather than a myth of empty land, the French invented their own myth: the myth of the Kabyle. Berbers were grouped in with

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225. Lorcin, “Rome and France,” 301.

226. Stora, *Algeria*, 6.

227. Lorcin, “Rome and France,” 298.

228. Veracini, *Settler Colonialism*, 37.

229. Lorcin, *Imperial Identities*, 2.

Kabyles (a smaller group within the larger group of native Berbers) and looked upon as more intelligent, more civilized, and better behaved (i.e. easier to assimilate), while Arabs were seen as far less desirable.<sup>230</sup> Lorcin describes that,

In the process, Algeria's immediate Islamic past receded in importance as earlier pasts [of the Kabyles] were reclaimed and exposed as evidence of an area destined for colonization. The substitution of a remote Western past for a recent Islamic one and the institutionalization of Algeria as spatially French were important steps in marginalizing the presence and culture of the Arabs and Berbers.<sup>231</sup>

This “myth of a divided land” sets French Algeria apart from E<sup>1-6</sup> and Zionist settlers.

### ***Education***

Scholarship was not the only influence that helped forge the French myth of return. Equally influential was the curriculum being taught in French schools of secondary education. “The basis of French secondary education was the classics. With rare exceptions, the officers who undertook research in Algeria were better versed in Latin and Greek texts than they were in Arabic ones.”<sup>232</sup> This included classic Greek and Roman philosophers, historians, and geographers such as Stabo, Polybius, Sallust, Tacitus, and Livy. Classical sources became one of the main sources of information not only about the land being sought after, but also the different groups that inhabited this not so empty land. One of the reasons for this was that works by authors writing in Arabic were not accessible—Khaldun's *The Muqaddimah* did not appear in French translation until 1852—nevertheless, reliance on the Greeks and the Romans seems to

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230. Thus, the French forces enacted the strategy of transfer by conceptual displacement with regard to both groups in two separate forms: the Berbers, in that conceptual displacement transfer is “when indigenous peoples are not considered indigenous to the land and are therefore perceived as exogenous Others who have entered the settler space at some point in time and preferably after the arrival of the settler collective,” and Arabs, in that “A complementary corollary to this type of transfer is that local indigenous peoples can then be collapsed into an unspecified wider ‘native’ category. Indigenous South Africans could therefore become ‘foreign natives’ and ‘Africans’. Similarly, Palestinians and Algerians could become ‘Arabs’. As this wider category inhabits borderlands outside of the territory claimed by the settler entity, this type of transfer allows for the possibility of discursively displacing indigenous people to the exterior of the settler locale.” See Veracini, *Settler Colonialism*, 35.

231. Lorcin, “Rome and France,” 307–308.

232. Lorcin, “Rome and France,” 298.



have been just as much about preference.<sup>233</sup> Speaking in 1931, University of Algiers professor Émile-Félix Gautier, while praising the works of North African historian Muhammad ibn Khaldūn al-Hadramī, nevertheless noted not only that they were dated (a claim with no small amount of irony), but that “While [ibn Khaldūn] may be brilliant, he had an oriental brain which does not function like ours. He cannot be read like Titus-Livius or Polybius, or even Procopius. He has to be interpreted.”<sup>234</sup> Works of such an Other nature would not suffice. Without any “proper” contemporary works, the French turned to the curriculum that had been instilled during their schooling years; Livy’s account of Masinissa’s resistance to Syphax and Sallust’s Jurgurtha’s war with the Romans became blueprints for success.<sup>235</sup>

French military leader Edouard Lapène reports of a letter from the French king written in 1833 intended to incite morale amongst French forces. Just prior to the fall of the Kabyle city of Béjaïa (shortly thereafter re-named Bougie), the letter encouraged troops “to complete the conquest of Algeria in order to *return* to the civilized world the bank of the Mediterranean, which had been in the grips of anarchy and barbaric methods since the fall of the Roman Empire.”<sup>236</sup> Such a connection between ancient Rome and French settlers made it possible to not only speak of a conquest, but of a return in order to conquer.

Such connections did not fade with time. Nearly 60 years later, discussion about Algeria persisted, as did the rhetoric of return. The French classicist Gaston Boissier, after a visit to Algeria “in the company of a group of deputies and senators,” authored a work meant to draw upon the parallels between France and ancient Rome. In the introduction to his work he writes:

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233. Lorcin, “Rome and France,” 298.

234. Émile-Félix Gautier, “Le cadre géographique de l’histoire en Algérie,” in *Histoire et historiens de l’Algérie*, ed. J. Alazard et al. (Paris, 1931), 19. Cited in Lorcin, “Roman and France,” 298.

235. Lorcin, “Rome and France,” 299.

236. Edouard Lapène, *Vingt-six mois à Bougie ou collections de mémoires sur sa conquête, son occupation, et son avenir: Notice historique, morale, politique, et militaire sur les Kabâiles* (Paris, 1838), 197. Quoted and translated in Lorcin, “Rome and France,” 300 (my emphasis).

In order to know the future of our African possessions, and to understand the true condition of their prosperity, is it sufficient to enquire into the present? I think not. It seems to me that the past also has the right to be heard. We are not the first who came from the countries of the North to settle in Africa; we have had, on this soil, illustrious predecessors, who conquered it, as we did, and governed it with glory for more than five centuries.<sup>237</sup>

Boissier was of course referencing the Roman occupation of North Africa from just after the Third Punic War in the middle of the second century BCE to the beginning of the fifth century CE when the area fell to the Vandals.<sup>238</sup> Like the letter reported by Lapène, Boissier's classical education allowed for him to frame the French occupation of Algeria as a sort of homecoming. Despite recognizing that "we are not the first," a reference to France coming to Algeria much later in history than Rome, Boissier nevertheless telescopes history in order to speak of a connection between France and Rome not bound by chronological concerns. "We have had, on this soil, illustrious predecessors" implies the "we" as both France and Rome. France would have a difficult time returning to Algeria, but Franco-Romans proved to be a different story.

#### Algeria: A New/Old French Territory

Many factors contributed to the idea that French settlers were actually returning to a land that originally (or at least earlier) belonged to their ancient Roman ancestors. As I've noted, invading military units appear to have utilized ancient Roman ruins.<sup>239</sup> Ancient forts, roads, cisterns, and aqueducts served not only as infrastructure for French invaders but also as an ideological

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237. Gaston Boissier, *Roman Africa: Archaeological Walks in Algeria and Tunis*, trans. Arabella Ward (New York: Putnam, 1899), vi. Originally published as *L'Afrique romaine: promenades archéologiques en Algérie et en Tunisie* in 1895.

238. Stora, *Algeria*, 2; Ammar Mahjoubi and Pierre Salama, "The Roman and Post-Roman Period in North Africa," in *Ancient Civilizations of Africa*, ed. G. Mokhtar, vol. 2 in *General History of Africa*, ed. UNESCO International Scientific Committee for the Drafting of a General History of Africa (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), 465–512 (465).

239. Among other things, the work of Michael Greenhalgh, an art historian at the Australian National University, has investigated the re-use of materials from classical antiquities in building later edifices. See Michael Greenhalgh, *Constantinople to Córdoba: Dismantling Ancient Architecture in the East, North Africa and Islamic Spain* (Boston: Brill, 2012); *Military and Colonial Destruction of the Roman Landscape of North Africa, 1830–1900*, HoW 98 (Leiden: Brill, 2014).

standard that settlers could look to in celebrating the architectural feats of their new found relatives.<sup>240</sup> In the wake of military invasion, archeologists and scholars framed their examinations of these ruins as an uncovering French history. Education, specifically the preference for the classical texts of French education in exploring a new frontier, also played an important part in helping these disparate components of a “new” part of France come together. A new “Old France” had been born/found; thus it was that Bertrand could claim: “In returning to Africa, we have recovered a lost Latin province.”

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240. Lorcin, “Rome and France,” 301.

## 5. CONCLUSION

The study has examined the concepts of return and restoration to further understand the power of ideological discourse within communities that have a tradition of settler colonialism. With settler colonial theory as my guide, I have focused on three settler colonial narratives—E<sup>1-6</sup>, Zionist discourse regarding settlement of Israel/Palestine, and French discourse regarding their settlement of Algeria—all of which rely on a mythic story of return. While many, if not all, settler colonial endeavors frame settlers as returning in the sense that they are returning the land to its proper state, a kind of restoring of the land, far fewer contain a “historical” account of return.

Mythic claims of returning, even when a group of settlers has never been to a land, help to legitimate their ultimate claim as inheritors and/or rightful heirs over that land. While scholars of settler colonialism widely regard French Algeria and the Zionist settlement of Israel/Palestine as settler endeavors, this has not been suggested of E<sup>1-6</sup>. This study proposes that reading E<sup>1-6</sup> as settler colonial discourse helps shed light on several places in the text, particularly the ongoing struggle within the narrative to both ignore and erase the presence of “the people of the land,” while at the same time constructing “the people of the land” as enemies to YHWH’s plan

Though any comparative study of this sort is not without its problems, methodological or otherwise, comparing and contrasting E<sup>1-6</sup> with Israel/Palestine and French Algeria does provide some worthwhile points to consider. In this final section, I will first point to some of the more significant points of comparison between E<sup>1-6</sup>, French Algeria, and Zionist Israel/Palestine. I will then provide some final reflections on the project.

### Settler Return in **הגלל** Israel, Zionist Israel, and Roman Algeria

In attempting to highlight a number of settler colonial traits in E<sup>1-6</sup>, as well as the stories of settler colonial Zionism and the French (settler) colonization of Algeria, several points of interest have arisen.<sup>241</sup> I began by discussing invasion narratives, or rather, the absence in most settler colonial narratives. While E<sup>1-6</sup> and the Zionist settlement resembled most settler colonial endeavors in not containing an explicit invasion narrative, invasion was a key event in the French settling of Algeria and is still remembered as such. Several other settler traits appear in two of the narratives but not the third. E<sup>1-6</sup> and French Algeria, for example, have obvious metropolitan centers; however, identifying one particular power that served as a metropolitan center for Zionist settlers is far more complex. Early on, persecution against Jewish groups was the primary force behind Jews migrating from a number of locations including Russia and Eastern Europe to Israel/Palestine. Closely related is the issue of metropolitan assistance. This is apparent in the cases of French Algeria and E<sup>1-6</sup>, but not in the case of Jewish emigrants. Zionist immigration was of course heavily funded, but not by a metropolitan power. Despite these differences, there were a number of settler return themes that did appear in all three of the narratives examined.

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241. A note on myth, history, and whether one needs to distinguish between the two when looking at themes within a text: As noted above, each of these narratives contains both historical and mythical elements. Eskenazi (Currents article) has rightly noted that each statement one makes about a text or historical event depends heavily on one's views about another element of the same object of inquiry: for example, how one views the composition of EN is inherently connected to when one dates EN. Each affects the other. I don't make an attempt to address the questions of dating, composition, and historicity here except to say that despite a good number of scholars assuming E<sup>1-6</sup>'s account of return as basically historical, though of course with a number of nuanced views concerning what is meant by "historical," I view E<sup>1-6</sup> as being far removed from any sort of historical return (whatever that may have looked like) and rather reflecting the context from which it was produced (or attained its "final form"), perhaps the late Hellenistic or Hasmonean period. Proposing a date for E<sup>1-6</sup> inevitably raises questions about why one would date E<sup>1-6</sup> as such. I do not attempt an explanation at present but do address this issue in a later chapter. For the purpose of this chapter, the degree to which E<sup>1-6</sup> represents historical events is not as important as the representation itself: the theme of return in settler colonial narratives is the main emphasis here.

### Inventing the Returnee

As discussed above, the construction of a myth that casts the settlers as the returnees, particularly by using a mythic narrative of return, is perhaps the most vital characteristic that sets these three narratives apart from other settler narratives. While settlers often see themselves as returning, the narratives of E<sup>1-6</sup>, Zionist settlers, and French settlers utilize the concept of returning in a far more explicit way: by treating myth as fact. This kind of historicizing strengthens the resolve of a French soldier or a Zionist settler who now, as a returnee, is not taking away but taking back. Ben-Gurion recognized the power in claiming the title returnee as well as the importance of maintaining who would be allowed to claim return. Just after the expulsion of some 800,000 Palestinians from the newly created state of Israel, he wrote: “We must do everything to ensure they never do return.”<sup>242</sup>

This phenomenon is also seen among French settlers. Relying on their classical educations, scholars, historians, and the like, the French created a link between nineteenth-century France and ancient Rome. The classical education of the French not only led them to see themselves as ancient Romans, but the material remains of their “ancestors” further fused the connection between Rome and France in their minds. Within weeks of France’s invading Algeria, hundreds of Roman inscriptions and archeological artifacts were being catalogued. French leaders even found “that the material from the Roman ruins could be used as the cornerstones and archways for the permanent structures and buildings that France would soon build.”<sup>243</sup> This transformation of nineteenth-century French identity into descendants of ancient Romans made possible the idea that the French were returning to what originally belonged to their ancestors.

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242. David Ben-Gurion, diary, 18 July 1948. Quoted in Michael Bar-Zohar, *The Armed Prophet: A Biography of Ben-Gurion* (London: Barker, 1967), 158.

243. Lorcin, “Rome and France,” 304.

In addition to casting settlers as returnees, the E<sup>1-6</sup> and Zionist narratives also fuse a strong element of persecution together with the story of restoring and returning. In E<sup>1-6</sup>, this comes in the form of various groups seeking to stop the construction of the temple. This theme of resistance and persecution is equally present in Zionist narratives, which in many cases has its origins in the very real persecution and suffering experienced at the hands of Russian and European anti-Jewish thought and policy. Persecution does not play as much of a role in the French narrative though there are times, particularly when military forces were bogged down in fighting, that French settlers envisioned themselves as having to overcome great struggles.

### Inventing the Land

Another element that plays an integral part in a number of return narratives is how settlers construct the land they are settling. In some cases, this takes the form of the “myth of the empty land.” Settlers employ this myth in order to construct the current state of the land to which they are returning as being vacant. E<sup>1-6</sup> and Zionist settlers can be seen to employ a “myth of the empty land” to some degree; French Algeria is somewhat different on this point than the other two narratives. This myth is explicitly evoked at times; but, more often than not, elements of it show up in the language of settler discourse.

E<sup>1-6</sup> and Zionist settlers construct an empty land by erasing any sign of (other) life, at least initially, by remaining silent on the subject, pretending that any native presence isn't there. E<sup>1-6</sup> allows the reader/hearer to assume that the גֵּוְלֵהּ are the only people in the land long enough that by the time the presence of others is recognized (in Ezra 3:3 and then not again until 4:1) it's too late; the land seems as if it has already been settled. Likewise, descriptions of the land amongst early Zionist settlers and their supporters remain silent about any other presence in the

land. Herzl, for example, spoke of Palestine (the name he most frequently used) often but very rarely did he mention inhabitants.

Once emptied of its former inhabitants, many Zionists found strong symbolic connections to the land through their working of the soil. Zionists, past and present, not only seem to be interested in living on the land, but they are also interested in farming the land, which in many cases was done by proxy, the former inhabitants of the land doing the actual farming while the new owners looked on. French Algerian discourse never envisioned the land as empty of inhabitants, but those settlers did view Algeria as being empty of intellect, civilization, and (true) religion (all things that needed to return).<sup>244</sup>

### Inventing the Native

Common to all three narratives was the occurrence of settlers constructing their own identities as indigenous while at the same time constructing those of indigenous peoples as exogenous.<sup>245</sup>

One of the more glaring examples of settler identity being fashioned in E<sup>1-6</sup> is the presumptive language of ownership that consistently shows up. The very next verse after the return is narrated states: “Now these are the sons *of the province* who ... returned to Jerusalem and Judah, each man to *his own town*” (Ezra 2:1; my emphasis). Who inhabits Jerusalem and the province are foregone conclusions. The existence of any other group or people will not be revealed until the returnees are firmly in *their* place, a strategy that works to construct the identity of both the settler and the indigene.

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244. A similar phenomenon can be seen among nineteenth-century biblical scholars who often saw “late Judaism” as being defunct and in need of rejuvenation (the rejuvenating power to come of course being Christianity). To take one example of many, German biblicist Wilhelm M. L. de Wette spoke of “Second Temple” Judaism as lacking any *Gefühl* (“feeling” or “soul”) and as “ein Chaos welches eine neue Schöpfung erwartet” (“a chaos that awaits a new creation”) in Wilhelm Martin Leberecht de Wette, *Biblische Dogmatik Alten und Neuen Testaments, oder kritische Darstellung der Religionslehre des Hebraismus, des Judenthums und Urchristenthums : zum Gebrauch akademischer Vorlesungen*, 3rd ed. (Berlin: Reimer, 1831), 139.

245. Though note above how settlers don’t want to be too native; thus, the struggle between being indigenous (i.e. owning the land) and exogenous (i.e. possessing the civility of the metropole).



In E<sup>1-6</sup>, indigenous identity is not only constructed through silence, but also in how it portrays indigenes once their presence is recognized. The first mention is an allusive one. Ezra 3 states that when “the seventh month came ... all the people gathered in Jerusalem” to watch Jeshua and Zerubbabel “set up the altar on its place” (Ezra 3:1–3). No reason or justification seems necessary for such an event given the tide of the narrative thus far; nevertheless, E<sup>1-6</sup> introduces the reason for setting up the altar: “because fear was upon [the people (הָעָם in v. 1)] from the people of the land (מֵעַמֵּי הָאֲרָצוּת).” (Ezra 3:3). That this group evokes fear is the sole descriptor given. Just as fast as this enigmatic group appears, they then disappear (every settler’s fantasy) for the remainder of Ezra 3. When they are again introduced in Ezra 4:1, they once again enter the story abruptly, this time spoken of as “the enemies of Judah,” but this time the text reports that the “enemies” want to help build the temple so that they can worship the God of the settlers! This offer is ignored as quickly as it is mentioned: not only does E<sup>1-6</sup> suppress this group’s existence, but also the fact that they offer to assist. Half-way through E<sup>1-6</sup>, all the reader/hearer knows about a group of people (whose existence wasn’t known at all in the first two chapters) is that they are to be feared and that they are the enemy, an enemy so feared that not even their offer to assist should be accepted, a clever strategy of both hiding and framing the “problem.”

Similarly, many Zionist settler accounts initially remain silent concerning any native presence. As these narratives do gradually acknowledge indigenous groups they immediately construct the “newly discovered” indigenous people to best suit their desires. As was shown, even official reports, such as the Royal Peel Commission, used Zionist language that sought to erase native presence—“Since the Arab conquest, Palestine had virtually dropped out of history. ... In the realm of thought, in science or in letters, it made no contribution to modern

civilization”—even as it sought to debase their character, calling them “an outstanding example” of “lethargy and maladministration.”<sup>246</sup> Such sentiment paved the way for future ideas that are similar in content but far less nuanced in their delivery. Even today, the settler attitudes of the past century persist. As recent as the early to mid 2000s, the phrase “אין ערבים אין פיגועים” (“No Arabs, No Terrorist Attacks”) is a popular slogan (and bumper sticker) among some Israelis.<sup>247</sup>

As in E<sup>1-6</sup> and settler Zionism, the constructing of identities plays a large, if somewhat different, role in French constructions of Algeria. Part of the French settlement of Algeria included the reconstruction not only of the Berber population but also that of the Arabs. This included the invention of the myth of the Kabyle that emphasized, in contradistinction to the Arabs, the “independence, sedentarism, secularism, and democratic [character]” of the Kabyle people.<sup>248</sup> By grouping together all the “well-behaved” natives and constructing them as civilized and democratic (according to Western ideals of course), erasure of the Other was more easily achieved. Such a perception can be seen in writers such as Tocqueville:

Among the Kabyles, the form of property and the organization of government are as democratic as you can imagine; in Kabylia, the tribes are small, restless, less fanatical than the Arab tribes, but much fonder of their independence. ... If you wanted to find a

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246. Palestine Royal Commission Report of 1937, I.6.

247. These years correspond with the Second Intifada, a time that saw an enormous change in how Arabs/Palestinians were perceived. According to one public opinion poll taken in August of 2002, over 70% of Jewish citizens indicated that they felt Arab citizens were a “danger to state security” (Nadim N. Rouhana and Nimer Sultany, “Redrawing the Boundaries of Citizenship: Israel's New Hegemony,” *Journal of Palestine Studies* 33.1 [2003]: 5–22 [15]), a jump from 23% in January 2000 (Michal Shamir and Tammy Sagiv-Schifter, “Conflict, Identity, and Tolerance: Israel in the *Al-Aqsa* Intifada,” *PolPsy* 27.4 [2006]: 569–595 [578]). On the slogan that appeared as graffiti and on bumper stickers among other places, see Ilan Peleg and Dov Waxman, *Israel's Palestinians: The Conflict Within* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 116; Ilan Pappé, *The Forgotten Palestinians: A History of the Palestinians in Israel* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2011), 172.

248. Veracini, *Settler Colonialism*, 36. See also, Sessions, *By Sword and Plow*, 192–193 where she notes that French military officers “supposed [Kabyles] to be more dexterous, hardworking, and reliable than Arabs,” citing Lorcin, *Imperial Identities*, 46–47.

point of comparison in Europe, you might say that the inhabitants of Kabylia are like the Swiss of the small cantons of the Middle Ages.<sup>249</sup>

Indeed, according to the French settler thought, the Kabyles were “indigenous *unlike* the invading Arabs,” and “exogenous *like* the incoming French.”<sup>250</sup> Not only were French settlers envisioning themselves becoming native in the form of ancient Rome’s descendants, “Kabyle particularism” led to a myth in which “the Kabyles were held to be descendants of the Gauls(!),” at least the “well-behaved” ones.<sup>251</sup>

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Reading E<sup>1-6</sup> through the lens of settler colonial theory by way of two modern settler colonial narratives, has raised several points for consideration. To begin, this study has shown, by virtue of the similarities, significant structural parallels between the discourse of E<sup>1-6</sup> and that of other settler colonial endeavors, in particular Zionist Israel/Palestine and French Algeria. Reading E<sup>1-6</sup> as a settler colonial narrative has helped to show how the rhetoric of E<sup>1-6</sup> has constructed the identities of both settler and indigene. Along the way, the variegated notion of “settler transfer” has also helped in understanding how the overall rhetoric of this material works as a whole, including shifts in perspective that are otherwise hard to understand. In particular, the shift from viewing land as “empty” (Ezra 1–2) to “not empty” (Ezra 3–6), as well as the shift from the absence of indigenes to the “problem” of indigenes. As in the Zionist and French settler narratives, different modes of transfer are functioning, often in tandem, within the narrative of E<sup>1-6</sup>. Within E<sup>1-6</sup>, a literary text with a particular ideological agenda, these modes of transfer may

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249. Alexis de Tocqueville, “First Report on Algeria (1847),” in *Writings on Empire and Slavery*, ed. and trans. Jennifer Pitts (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2001), 129–173 (172).

250. Veracini, *Settler Colonialism*, 36.

251. Charles Robert Ageron, *Modern Algeria: A History from 1830 to the Present*, trans. and ed. Michael Brett (London: Hurst, 1991), 72. Quoted in Veracini, *Settler Colonialism*, 36. See also Lorcin, *Imperial Identities*, 69–70; Sessions, *By Sword and Plow*, 12–13.

then be either emphasized—as is the case in Ezra 1–2, where a clear case of “perception transfer,” the act of ignoring native presence, is at play—or suppressed.

The findings of this study produce a myriad of further questions to explore, not the least of which has to do with the question of history. Do these similarities between E<sup>1-6</sup> and Zionist and French settler narratives suggest that the composition of E<sup>1-6</sup> might be closer to the events that are narrated than has been supposed among many EN scholars? Or, following recent work done on the composition of EN, do the events described in E<sup>1-6</sup> in reality correlate to a settler context long after Persian period Yehud? And what would a settler colonial reading of Nehemiah or E<sup>7-10</sup> look like? Settler colonial theory may help in further answering these questions.

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