

## Statisticians' Ambition: Governmentality, Modernity and National Legibility

**M**OST WORK ON THE HISTORY of statistics has located statistics as a tool of the state and has shown how the tool is used to invent society. My case study shows this happening, but it also shows something of the reverse process as well—how the state is used by the discipline of statistics. In fact, paradoxically, my case shows how the Central Bureau of Statistics contributed to the emergence of a statistical scientific community that could present itself as dissociated from politics. The empirical focus of the paper is on the establishment of the Israeli Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS) and on its first major operation—the first census and the general registry of the population; and deals with the social and political implications of central services of national statistics in the context of Israeli society. In that context, three groups went through a significant transformation: Most Palestinians were excluded from the new Israeli citizenry; Beduin-Arabs were subjugated to the jurisdiction of the state, while *Mizrakhim*—Jews from Muslim countries—were grouped as the Simmelian “stranger” of Israeli society. These implications resulted, though not solely, from the way the statistical gaze was applied in those days.

The time is 1948, a year in which the State of Israel was established as the modern nation-state of the Jewish people. A few months prior to that event, a state agency for the centralized production of national statistics was created. Called the “Central Bureau of Statistics,” the agency, following its name, centralized all the statistical activities of the state under its roof and administered to the needs of the emerging public administration. The first major project undertaken by CBS was the population census, which was conducted in November 1948. The characteristics of this census were as follows: It was conducted during the height of the War of Independence. During seven hours of curfew, military and security personnel proceeded

to canvass every Israeli household and register all its citizens. The census was carried out jointly with the General Registry of the Population, which was authorized to create files containing personal details on all the residents of the country. These files have been consistently used by the CBS for their statistical analyses of Israeli society since 1948, and have regularly been updated ever since by the Ministry of the Interior. As a result of the census, the collected demographic data were gathered into one central database. Based on that information, all the residents in Israel were issued identity cards that they were required to have on their person at all times. Each card had its own identity number and identifying photograph. It became the document required for participating in numerous civil activities, such as voting in the first general elections and receiving the compulsory food ration slips, which were distributed in 1948.

The centralization of statistical activities, the way the first census was conducted, and the constant scrutiny of Israeli citizens contradict the fact that the first census and the statistical measurements in general have almost never been disputed since the formation and activation of the CBS. Not only that, as I will show later, even critical accounts of Israeli society have overlooked the role of the CBS in its structuring. These observations raise several questions: What were the conditions that enabled the CBS to gain such power and status? What were the conditions through which the CBS gained, in the words of Latour, the status of a system of water pipes that functions as a vehicle, as a means of transportation from “society” (the natural phenomenon) to the public discourse; a status that could silence the existence of controversies and by which statistical facts are no longer driven by people, but by their inner inertia to move?<sup>1</sup> The answer to these questions is based on the conjunction between the uniqueness of the Israeli case and the role statistics plays in processes of nation-building- and state-formation. In the following section I will argue that statistics, in general, has three faces—modernity, Governmentality, and national legibility. It is also important, however, to say that these claims relate mostly to the Israeli case, as will be introduced in the empirical part of this paper, and not necessarily to other cases. The question—whether these claims can be applied to other countries and, therefore, can serve as a general statement about the nature of the relationship between statistics and the state—is empirical and requires additional research, which is beyond the scope of this paper.

### THREE FACES OF ONE DISCIPLINE—MODERNITY, GOVERNMENTALITY, AND NATIONAL LEGIBILITY

#### *STATISTICS AS A PROJECT OF MODERNITY*

Statistics in its nineteenth-century form was a liberal thought and was associated with hopefulness for improvement. It reflected a liberal spirit and a search for social reforms that thrived in that period.<sup>2</sup> Statistics: (1) was mostly associated with progress due to its capability of describing comprehensive social reforms toward modernity<sup>3</sup>; (2) signified the distinction between traditional and modern society<sup>4</sup>; and, (3) replaced the old social order with a new one by giving people new and equal positions in the social configuration.<sup>5</sup> The last point refers to its identification with values such as democracy and equality. Statistical measurements transform human beings into homogeneous units with a common denominator. Each unit (individual) is equal to others, and hence cannot have privileges over others. By signifying the individual with numbers, he or she becomes unmarked and has the same social importance as others from different classes.<sup>6</sup> This apparent equality—which has replaced the old social statuses, such as class, family, and religion, with objective and scientific categorization—has simultaneously permitted the measurement of deviant groups that behave differently from the “average man” or the “statistical man.” Those individuals that were identified as equal were regrouped and redefined scientifically as a “social problem.”<sup>7</sup> Thus, the modern method of classification has become a legitimate method of labeling.<sup>8</sup> In the Israeli case, as will be introduced in the empirical part of the paper, statistics wasn't only means of labeling; it was also a means of establishing inequality.

#### *GOVERNMENTALITY AND THE CREATION OF THE “POPULATION”*

Statistics has dual meanings. In addition to being embedded within enlightened thought, statistics has also become associated with government and the aspiration of the state to have control over its subjects. The literature on the history of statistics analyzes the early phase of the discipline's development as a mechanism of political domination, as reflected by its initial name: *Political Arithmetic*.<sup>9</sup> Modern statistics, however, was divorced from this political context and became a reflection of “society” rather than “politics.” With Pearson's work at the end of the nineteenth century, it gained its current status as the mathematical method of the science of society. Foucault describes this process from a different angle in his work *Governmentality*<sup>10</sup> by connecting it to the transition from political control (i.e., “sovereignty”), which is based on territory and the family,

to the development of the “art of government,” which is now based on the constitution of the subject and the population.<sup>11</sup>

Delimiting the “population” as a target of investigation, argues Foucault, is an essential task for exercising Governmentality; thus, procedures, calculations, and analyses allow the operation of a very specific form of power on a particular population.<sup>12</sup> How does the problem of population enable the art of government? Foucault’s answer is anchored in the ability of statistics to gradually reveal a population’s regularities, making it possible to quantify these specific phenomena of population. Statistics also allows a process of individuation and the elimination of the family. The second consequence of counting the population is the creation of a new type of power—bio-power. Foucault’s association of bio-power with the emergence of demography suggests that demography is a discipline that defines the modern subject through statistical inquiry and categories, such as fertility, hygiene, patterns of diet, and habitation.

#### *STATISTICS AS A TOOL FOR LEGIBILITY*

Censuses define not only the “population,” but also the boundaries of a collective. Moreover, argues Benedict Anderson,<sup>13</sup> censuses are part of varied mechanisms by which people imagine themselves as a distinct nation. While demarcating the boundaries of the collective, however, statistics is also deconstructing the boundaries of communities within this collective and making them a commensurate population; that is, members of a chain of unmarked individuals. As a consequence, these individuals, who were protected by the boundaries of their own communities, are now seen directly by the state. This is not to say that these communities disappear; only that the members of the old groups are regrouped in accordance to categories that matter to the state and its technocrats. This is again a process of individualization; however, it isn’t just a consequence of liberal ideology; it is a target of its own, since it transforms the population into legible, a central task in statecraft.<sup>14</sup> The standardization of measures, surveys, and censuses were part of a larger emancipatory simplification, as was argued in the first theoretical claim; but it simultaneously “undercut[s] the intermediary structures between the state and the citizen and [gives] the state, for the first time, direct access to its subjects.”<sup>15</sup>

While Scott reifies the state and gives it the status of an agent, the assumption at the core of this paper is that statistics was not a “tool” in the hands of the “state.” The story being told in the paper isn’t one of a political abuse of science, but one of scientists and their political patrons, as well as a story of politicians and their scientific patrons. The first statisticians

had to have the legitimate power of the state not only to increase their credibility as scientists, but also, or mainly, to enable them to create data bases for their scientific practices; while, politicians used the credibility of the first statisticians to rationalize and legitimize the new state with its institutional practices. This theoretical assumption about how scientific practices are embedded with the social and the political is based on various attempts in the discipline of Science Studies to remove the separation between “science” and “politics,”<sup>16</sup> and to reject the reification of the state as a substantial and coherent entity.<sup>17</sup> The empirical case establishes the argument that practices such as statistics objectify the “state” as a solid and distinct body.

My empirical case therefore deals firstly with a group of statisticians; entrepreneurs who allied themselves with politicians as their patrons and used the power of the state and its legitimacy as the way to demarcate statistics as “science” and to strength their jurisdiction. In a sense, this paper is about a professional group; however, the uniqueness of the case is mostly due to the idiosyncratic conjunction between statisticians’ efforts for professionalization and the moment of the birth of a new state. This reveals a paradox within the development of official statistics in Israel—it was institutionalized as a scientific and objective practice through the power of the state.

#### STATISTICIANS—PROPHETS OF MODERNITY:

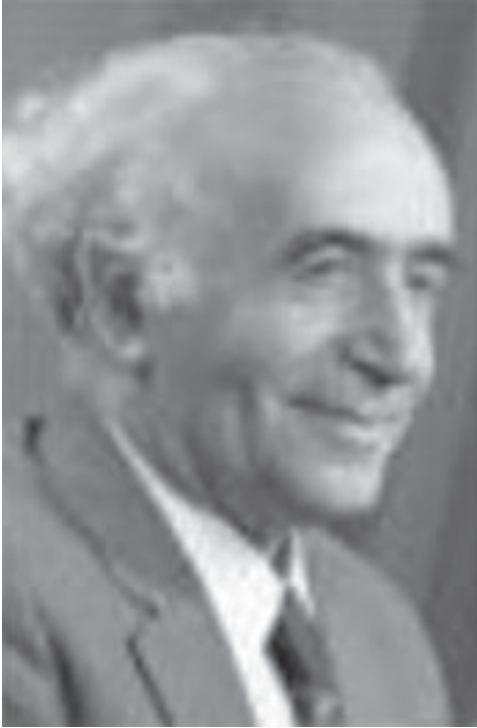
What were the special characteristics of the development of statistics in Israel? From the end of the nineteenth century up to 1948 the Jewish population increased gradually due to migration from Europe. This period of the pre-state Jewish society in Palestine, was called the *Yishuv*.<sup>18</sup> The major political, economic and social institutions of the *Yishuv*, established at the time, continued to provide institutional infrastructure to the new state and were dominant many years later. Hence, this period was conceived by sociologists and historians such as Shapiro<sup>19</sup> and Horowitz and Lissak<sup>20</sup> as a formative period that shaped the political, economic and social structure of the Israeli society after the establishment of the state. Kimmerling argues, however, that the transition from a society organized on voluntary institutions to a state with formal bureaucracy was a significant turning point in the history of the Israeli society: while the *Yishuv* was composed mostly of Eastern European Jews, and was relatively homogenous, the new society became very heterogeneous and included, in addition to the *Yishuv*

population, also Palestinians, ultra-orthodox Jews and *Mizrakhim*—the classification for Jewish immigrants from Muslim countries.<sup>21</sup>

The argument about discontinuity rather than continuity is supported by the processes to establish a new bureaucracy of the Israeli state based on “universal” values rather than partisan interests.<sup>22</sup> David Ben Gurion, the first Prime Minister, aimed to establish in the new state a regime based on universal principles, and he initiated an ideology known as *Mamlachtiyut* [kingdomship]. According to this universalistic ideology, the Israeli state, as distinct from the pre-state period, was to be based on uniform rules for all its citizens. This policy was intended to serve all the state’s citizens and to turn down partisan demands to be given stakes in the new governmental bureaucracy.<sup>23</sup> Though this ideology has been perceived as an instrument in the hands of Ben-Gurion to promote,<sup>24</sup> or to gain legitimacy,<sup>25</sup> for his own party, others argue that Ben-Gurion’s aim was not to politicize the state apparatus, but to prevent people within his own party from taking over positions in the new apparatus<sup>26</sup>; it was due to his desire to reduce their power inside his own party.<sup>27</sup> One indication of the validity of this argument was the allocation of governmental positions to people who weren’t necessarily part of the Jewish institutions. This discontinuity also had an institutional aspect—many offices were based on the structure of those of the Mandate, rather than on the Jewish Agency departments.<sup>28</sup>

The transition from the statistical services of the *Yishuv* to a central state bureau following the establishment of the state was also dramatic. Statistical activity in the pre-state period was very intensive and is well documented in secondary literature on the establishment of the Israeli state. The debate about the relative numbers of each national group—Palestinians and Jews—reflected, and was part of, the political struggle over Palestine. The first context of the statistical activity was a controversy over the number of Jewish immigrants. The British Mandate had to be able to scrutinized population movements; they also put special effort into developing statistics for determining the economic capacity of the country.<sup>29</sup> England, which had made a significant contribution to the development of statistics, especially in its colonies,<sup>30</sup> conducted two censuses in 1922 and 1931. While the first was part of the routine of the British institutions to better facilitate their governance, the second census was conducted after the 1929 riots and was carried out in order to determine the exact ethnic composition of the country and the size of the two national groups.<sup>31</sup>

The second context of statistical activity involved Zionist organizations, which used surveys of different kinds to estimate the number of their members. For example, Histadrut counted workers in order to define



Prof. Roberto Bachi

the working classes, as well as to regulate the flow of workers from city to city<sup>32</sup>; Histadrut also reported strikes in detail as a means of indicating its power over employers and to increase its political power and involvement in the Jewish community in Palestine.

The third context for using statistics was “Jewish demography”—the enumeration of Jews in Palestine and all over the world. This was a discipline in itself, and was even an autonomous academic unit at The Hebrew University of Jerusalem. The pursuit of Jewish demography was perceived as crucial to the existence of the Jewish “nation,” as well as to Zionist goals; hence, its practices were also part of the processes of nation-building. Pre-state demography, then, had a major political significance in determining the boundaries of the Jewish population by conducting constant counting of all Jews in the Yishuv, and especially those in the geographical periphery of Palestine.<sup>33</sup> The importance of this activity was not only political-instrumental, but was also symbolic: Numbers were used to introduce the size of the nation to the western world as a justification for the establishment of a national home.<sup>34</sup> For the Jewish pre-state society, the number of the Jewish

population was also a moral indication of the strength of the “nation.” In the introduction to the census, for example, which was conducted in 1918 by the *World Zionist Organization*, the editors were almost apologetic for the Jewish minority in Palestine: “thousands of Jews migrated to other countries; suffered from illness and died of hunger; hence, these numbers are only an expression of [a] remnant of refugees.”<sup>35</sup>

These contexts of the statistical and demographic uses were associated overtly with national and political goals; thus, statistics was not an autonomous scientific discipline, but a tool for national, political, and organizational domination. In the transition from a voluntary society to a state, however, the association of statistics with political goals was in contradiction with the universalistic ambition of the first Prime Minister, Ben Gurion, for *Mamlachtiyut*. Indeed, the establishment of the CBS was a clear case of this ideology—its leading personnel were neither from the Jewish agency, nor from Ben-Gurion’s party, in spite of the statistical activity of both institutions. A distinguished statistician, Prof. Roberto Bachi—who was the Mandate’s statistician, but who was also specialized in Jewish demography—was chosen to establish a central bureau of statistics and to be its head scientist and manager. His immediate associate, Dr. Pinchas Hamburger, also worked for the British Mandate government.

This selection was contrary to the demands of Zionist organizations to dominate the new bureaucracy. The fact that Bachi and Hamburger were selected to be at the top of the organization for the production of national statistics raised many objections.<sup>36</sup> Opponents argued that such a sensitive position could not be held by people who were more committed to science than they were to Zionist goals or to the party’s interests: Hamburger was specifically suspected of not being Zionist enough on these grounds. In addition, “as an indication of his character and behavior, we can see . . . that the language spoken in his home is English while Hebrew is totally negated.” In a period when reviving the Hebrew language as part of the nationalist project was a priority, this in itself was enough to challenge Hamburger’s Zionist commitment. Hence, claimed the speaker, “I believe and I am convinced that he does not deserve to hold a national and Zionist position in the preparation of [establishing] the state after thousands of years.”<sup>37</sup> Bachi was also suspected because of his political affiliation—he was not part of Labor Settlement Movement, which was the dominant political party of that time,—and so, argued another speaker, this selection was dangerous to the public and to the national security of *Eretz Israel*. It was not only that someone who did not have the proper political affiliation might give the list of voters to other political groups, but he might

also bias the scientific and technical activities, such as the transformation of the geographical distribution of the country into statistical districts as a preparation for the first elections.<sup>38</sup> The conflict, then, was between two different claims of legitimation to the selection of governmental technocrats—between politicizing and nationalizing science versus “scientisizing” and rationalizing state affairs.<sup>39</sup>

The process of selecting Bachi and Hamburger is interesting, not only because of Ben-Gurion's determination to construct his leadership as indisputable, but also—or perhaps mostly—because of the interaction between Ben-Gurion's interests and the strategies that statistical entrepreneurs used in order to convince him to allow a centralized bureau of statistics rather than decentralized services of statistics. This reading follows Latour's conceptualization on how scientific practices gain their status as facts. In order for practices conducted by scientists (statisticians) in the laboratory (the CBS) to be distributed as facts, an alliance with patrons (politicians) should be made. At the core of the action of making allies is the practice of translation, in which scientists translate their interests according to the patrons' worldview, language, and concerns, while, at the same time, keeping their scientific goals disconnected from political interests. When such strategies of recruitment succeed, scientists gain high prestige for not abusing their science in exchange for political benefits.<sup>40</sup>

Prior to the decision on the structure of the statistical system of the state and who would manage it, Bachi—with the assistance of two other statisticians from the Mandate government—wrote several documents in which he portrayed his concept of the nature of governmental services of statistics.<sup>41</sup> The main recommendation, he wrote, was to centralize statistical services and to position them under the direct authority of the Prime Minister. Decentralized services would mean that each governmental office would have its own statistics unit (as happens in the US), and would be under the direct supervision of each minister. The concept of centralization was well received by Ben-Gurion and his allies. Centralization permitted the creation of a uniform voice that left little doubt as to the meaning of the statistical representations published by the government, while decentralized services could be associated with attempts by different politicians to intervene, and even control, statistical output.<sup>42</sup> Bachi's recommendation was not a direct one, however; it was the conclusion drawn from a long detour in which he and his colleagues, as statistical entrepreneurs, translated the different interests of the politicians into the “needs” of statistics as a scientific discipline.<sup>43</sup> They “scientifically” authorized the craving for centralization of their political patrons (Ben-Gurion and his staff) by

locating the issue of centralization within the wider context of Israeli society and its structure. Thus statisticians explained the centralization of statistical services as a “ministration of curative knowledge”<sup>44</sup>; i.e., statistics was presented as capable of providing cures for society’s ills. In the following quotations, we can see how the justification for centralized services was built on the analysis of society’s problems:

The “natural” and main difficulty of the statistical work in the land of Israel results from the “orientalist” nature of the Arabic population; from its undercultured nature; and from the fact that this population doesn’t understand statistical research. This lack of understanding is expressed by its resistance to provide accurate statistical information.<sup>45</sup>

Therefore, Bachi argued, in the land of Israel it was necessary to have a careful examination of the data, including how it was collected and the ways in which it was rationalized. Moreover,

The data [about Palestinians] during the twenty years before 1948 were collected according to procedures that are justified neither scientifically nor practically, and were published with data about Jews without any distinction [between the categories that measured both groups—Jews and Palestinians]. The political fiction of a unified “Palestinian” population creates a complete data on Jews and faulty material on Arabs.<sup>46</sup>

Being careful wasn’t the only necessary approach; *Mizrakhim*—Jews who emigrated from Muslim countries—needed special statistical treatment as well:

Extra flexibility in inventing ways to collect data is required in relation to the Hebrew population, a population with multiple colors, languages and problems.<sup>47</sup>

Palestinians and Jews resisted statistical inquiry not only because of their “orientalist” nature, but also because they were hostile toward any governmental activity undertaken by the British Mandate:

The poisoned political atmosphere in our country has had a damaging influence on the regularity of the statistical work . . . The general understandable distrust in the politics of the [British] government is also manifested, of course, in a baseless distrust toward enterprises that have no political intention or technical defect.<sup>48</sup>

Bachi claimed that most of the administrative difficulties would stop automatically after the establishment of the state. He predicted, however, that the natural barriers that resulted from the characteristics of both populations would not disappear, and the new state would not be able to accomplish its goals without statistics:

It was clear that, just as every advanced country must track this kind of normal phenomena, in Israel, which is on the road to being an advanced country, it was inconceivable to carry out everything that the state had taken upon itself, without basic statistical information.<sup>49</sup>

It was therefore obvious that a deep organic and comprehensive reform was required if they wanted the statistical work of the state to be at a level that could satisfy its internal needs and its duties in the international field of statistics.<sup>50</sup>

What can we learn from these formative texts? First, natural difficulties were ascribed to the orientalist elements of the population—a view that was based on perceiving the Orient as part of Nature. Second, the segregation between the two ethnic groups in the statistical inquiry (because of the fragmented statistical services in Palestine) created a political fiction of a unified “Palestinian” population, while the reality was that there were only fragmented Arabs groups; the formative text individualized Palestinians, thus denationalizing them. Third, the text implied that the Hebrew population was going to become extremely diversified because of a massive immigration from Muslim countries—an operation in which Bachi himself was involved in planning. Hence, concluded Bachi and his colleagues, we need to change the structure of the statistical services from fragmented to centralized.

These teleological statements portray Israeli society as modern and as part of the modern world. At the same time, it is seen as a unique society because of the presence of cultural and political “others.” The recommendation for centralization in the text was based on dual legitimization: a) Western Enlightenment is employed to justify centralization, since there were local problems, such as *Mizrakhim* and Arabs, that needed rectifying by modern means (i.e., by science); and, b) On the other hand, these local problems justified deviation from bureaucratic norms that were common in western countries at that time and explained the need for special operations, such as the first census that was made during the first years of the Israeli state.

CENTRALITY OF STATISTICAL SERVICES,  
CENTRALITY OF THE STATE:

The proposal for a central bureau of statistics wasn't the only step to gain professional exclusivity. After Bachi's proposal was approved, statisticians took a number of steps to expand their discipline's jurisdiction and to exert their monopolization over the means of statistical production. They (1) eliminated competing statistics departments<sup>51</sup>; (2) Appropriated control over each stage of production of governmental statistics and made them subject to the bureau<sup>52</sup>; (3) prevented any publication of statistical materials by other government offices and demanded exclusivity in publications<sup>53</sup>; and, (4) determined the conditions for academic qualification of professional statisticians.<sup>54</sup>

As mentioned above, their first significant operation was a census, which was combined with a general registration of the population. Compared to standard censuses in the western world, the first census was unique: it was conducted during a war; a complete curfew of seven hours was imposed while military and security officers canvassed the entire population; residents were required by law to respond to personal questions such as religion, nationality, country of origin, occupation, place of work, and language spoken at home; and some of these items would appear on the identity cards citizens would be obliged to carry at all times.<sup>55</sup> The census was carried out jointly with the General Registry of the Population, which was authorized to create files containing personal details on all the country's residents. The Registry's files—which have been updated regularly ever since by the Ministry of the Interior<sup>56</sup>—have been consistently used since 1948 by the CBS for their statistical analyses of Israeli society.

One can mistakenly assume that the political leadership initiated that particular census with its unique characteristics. In fact, it was initiated by Prof. Bachi, who proposed that the census should be conducted under conditions of curfew:

During the discussion [with the Interior Minister about the census], several strange proposals were brought up. Finally Roberto Bachi, the exact opposite of the absent-minded professor . . . threw out an amazing idea: Let's impose a curfew, a full and general curfew! Then we'll be able to catch the whole population and to carry out our mission. The immediate reaction to this unusual proposal was an unambiguous and determined "No!" But it quickly became clear that no one could raise a more reasonable and efficient solution. The opposition quieted down and the Interior Minister said: "A curfew? Why not?"<sup>57</sup>

Prime Minister Ben-Gurion agreed to the plan only after he was convinced that this extreme proposal was also a reasonable one. Moreover, Bachi strove to unify the census with the general registration of the population and to mark all the citizens with ID numbers (these numbers made it possible for government offices to inspect all citizens from birth to death).<sup>58</sup> Consequently, the agency became the exclusive government office for gathering, analyzing, and publishing official statistics from all government offices.

The characteristics of the first census didn't inspire any debate among the public and/or the political leadership (except for the definition of nationality in terms of religious affiliation),<sup>59</sup> As Prof. Bachi put it:

It was fortunate that we succeeded in seizing the right moment. Something like this, under different circumstances, would have raised suspicions that it was a police operation, or a means of imposing authority on people. Very few countries have an identification number [for all their citizens].<sup>60</sup>

According to Bachi, the subsequent consent to the census was a matter of fortune. It was, however, achieved as a result of a public campaign led by Bachi, who was now heading the CBS, to legitimate the census. The census was related to value-free statistical needs.<sup>61</sup> In his approach to the public, he presented statistics as an autonomous discipline with its own needs.<sup>62</sup> Bachi, in fact, utilized the separation of the political from the scientific sphere to neutralize the perceived meaning of such an intense invasion of privacy by the state.

As to why it was so urgent for the statisticians to conduct a census at that particular time, with these controversial characteristics, Bachi later said in an interview:

It was very difficult. Our first problem [of the bureau] was that we had to carry out a census. That is the foundation of the whole business [national statistics]—without knowing how many residents there are; their occupations; where they live; it is impossible to do statistics. At the same time there was also a need to register the residents for the purposes of Knesset elections and distribution of rations. There was a need to establish an institution that would be responsible for registering the residents. The CBS took upon itself the task of conducting the census.<sup>63</sup>

Knowing that the population distrusted statistical institutions, Bachi concluded that, without full registration, the statistical measurements would be constantly disputed. A complete database of the population

and an ultimate ability to control demographic movement would create the desired objectivity of the CBS.<sup>64</sup> In addition, the rapid changes in the population threatened the ability of the CBS to objectively represent reality:

With the establishment of the state of Israel (May 1948), it was necessary to begin statistical activities from almost nothing . . . The state had important functions that required a great deal of statistical information: While the country was still in a state of war there took place a tremendous process of population movement. On one hand there was a mass exodus and flight of Arab residents from most of their areas of settlement in the country, and on the other hand each day a mass Jewish immigration arrived from across the sea.<sup>65</sup>

The establishment of a central bureau of statistics with extended jurisdiction was, paradoxically, a means to make the work conducted by the CBS invisible. The legitimacy of the state to exercise power over its citizens helped to construct the CBS as a “gray” institution, divorced from politics; a center of calculation that reflects “society” without influencing or constructing the social world it describes.<sup>66</sup> Fragmented services could have created controversies over numbers that would have violated the necessary silence surrounding the fabrication of statistical measurements and classifications.

#### INCLUDING BEDUIN, EXCLUDING PALESTINIANS, AND STRUCTURING “SOCIETY”

There are several implications of this centrality. First, the transformation of the mixed ethnic and national groups into one commensurate population defined the boundaries of “society” and strengthened the Governmentality of the “state.” Second, this transformation through the application of the statistical gaze was based on several processes: the exclusion of the majority of Palestinians, the inclusion of the Beduin-Arabs, and the stratification of *Mizrakhim*. (1) The constitution of the category of “present/absentees” enabled and legalized the appropriation of assets and lands of Palestinians who were not present during the seven-hour curfew of the first census. (2) Censuses, as the central mechanism for statistical mapping, create a virtual reality in which each body has its place; however, the desire to

map all inhabitants at the moment of statehood, and to transform them into a “population” encountered “topographic anomalies”—ethnic and religious groups such as Palestinians, Beduin, and *Neturei Karta* [the ultra-orthodox], refused to be counted by the state and challenged its authority. (3) Statistical mapping, therefore, may not be a reflection of “society”; rather, it is the process by which society is defined. In order to demarcate the whole population, the statistical mapping required the creation of new categories. Consequently, new ethnic grouping were invented, in the case of Palestinians, and institutionalized, in the case of *Mizrakhim*.

*LIBERAL DISCOURSE SERVES ETHNO-NATIONAL PRACTICES*

As a result of the census and the general registry, being part of a national database and being registered according to categories of ethnicity and religion would become essential dimensions of Israeli citizenship and Israeli subjecthood. Following Nikolas Rose,<sup>67</sup> such registration is an obligatory access point for participating in cycles of civility. Thus, a resident could not legally exist in the newborn state without being registered and numbered. The census was not only an obligatory access point; it was also a rite of demarcating those belonging within the boundaries of the collective and of those who were left out of the collective; a formal and active procedure of “un-counting” non-citizens, as well as counting and marking potential citizens. Moreover, it was a practice that materially stratified the population through the nationalization of lands, assets, and homes.

A government regulation determined that residents not found at their homes when the census was taken would not be counted and registered:

The principle that guided the census takers in their work left no room for argument or error: “list and get signatures from what is there!” Meaning, no replacements, no “in the name of,” no tricks. The wife of a husband who does not manage to return home by the start of the curfew is not authorized to sign for him; the census taker is forbidden, under any circumstance, to leave the registration form with anyone, in order to obtain the appropriate signature “afterwards.” In short—you list and gather signatures only for those who are actually there in front of you.<sup>68</sup>

This seemingly bureaucratic and neutral regulation was actually applied only to Palestinians who were not present. Jewish men and women who were out of their homes as well, due to more prosaic reasons, were registered in a late registration. Because of the intensive battles fought at the time, a substantial proportion of the Palestinian population had either fled or been

driven out of their homes. Some of them were hiding in the *wadis* (ravines) near their villages; others crossed the borders into adjacent Arab countries to wait out the fighting.<sup>69</sup> Therefore, careful attention was given to prevent Palestinian attempts to register relatives who were absent:

In the neighborhoods of Haifa, for example, the census takers encountered the residents' attempts to list the names of relatives who had fled in April [1948] to Lebanon and Syria, in order to obtain Israeli identity cards for the absentees and to eventually allow for their return to the country.<sup>70</sup>

If we bear in mind the fact that Bachi himself admitted in public that “from a purely scientific point of view, it would be better to wait with the census until the end of the war,”<sup>71</sup> the question of why statisticians pushed to conduct a census and general registration when the demographic situation was so unstable becomes even more important. In fact, this particular timing was a deliberate effort of the first census to serve as a “snapshot” of a unique and unrepresentative moment in the history of Israeli society—after the massive exodus of Palestinians and before the massive immigration of Jews from Arab countries<sup>72</sup> (one might say, a picture of society that was momentarily “pure” from all its “others”) Furthermore, explained Gertz, one of the first managers of the CBS, it was in a particular demographic moment due to the need to institutionalize and legalize a particular situation: “. . . we cannot consider this option [the combined census and full registry] without creating the appropriate legal conditions . . . so that we can legally force the population (especially the Arab population) to participate in the census.”<sup>73</sup>

The instruction not to register all those not present at their homes came also at a time when concerns regarding a Jewish majority and Jewish territorial control were of central importance. The policy of the Israeli government was to deepen its control over the lands of Palestinian absentees and to weaken Palestinian rights over the vast majority of lands in Palestine.<sup>74</sup> International pressure was put on the Israeli government to decide about the right of Palestinians to return to their lands, but Israel needed legitimate practices to legalize the appropriation of Palestinian assets and the nationalization of their lands. By changing the ownership of these lands from private to public, and by establishing new settlements on destroyed villages, the Israeli government was able to prevent Palestinians from returning to their lands.

This was only one mechanism that explains the policies and actions of different state institutions. The census, which was personal, was the specific practice that enabled the state to legally appropriate lands from Palestinian

residents. Moreover, many Palestinians were absent during the census, not only were their goods, property, and lands nationalized by the state, but they were also individually denied citizenship. In October 1948, Greenberg, the Interior Minister, officially distinguished between Palestinians and Jews in terms of citizenship, and that Palestinian citizenship was conditional upon each individual's presence on the day of the census.<sup>75</sup> A statistical category of "present/absentees"—which defined Palestinian residents whose citizenship and property rights were denied—came into being. This category would receive legal recognition two years later, in 1950, when the law of Absentees Property was enacted.<sup>76</sup>

The anatomy of the Palestinian exodus during the year 1948 is documented in great detail in contemporary accounts of the origins of the Palestinian-Jewish conflict; these works present different estimates of the numbers of refugees<sup>77</sup> and the present/absentees.<sup>78</sup> Whether we accept the minimal or the maximal estimations, they are enough to demonstrate the significance of this census in creating the particular category—present/absentees—which did not exist prior to the first census:<sup>79</sup> *Palestinians before the war*—860,000; *Palestinians counted by the census*—69,000; *a year later*—160,000; *Present/absentees*—91,000; *Refugees*—700,000.

It is clear that the justification for denying one of the most basic components of citizenship to a particular subgroup of citizens rests ultimately on the 1948 census. Nevertheless, the role of the census is absent from sociological and historical analyses of Israeli society. Morris, in his path-breaking book on the birth of the Palestinian refugee problem, describes the mechanism of exiling Palestinians in detail.<sup>80</sup> The actual appropriation of Palestinian lands, its legalization, and its implications are also well described in the historiography of the conflict.<sup>81</sup> But how did it happen? What was the practice that created the infrastructure for legalizing the most salient theme of the conflict? What were the "certain conditions stipulated in the Nationality Law of 1952," as described in the following quotation? The role of statisticians in this historical moment is missing from this literature.<sup>82</sup> Even the most thorough account of Israeli citizenship<sup>83</sup>—which classifies Palestinians as third-class citizens—overlooks the actual mechanism that enabled the legitimation of the sweeping nationalization of lands and assets in 1948 and the stratification of the Israeli citizenry:

Of the 150,000 Palestinians who had remained in the territory of the state of Israel at the conclusion of the 1948 war, about 60,000 were granted immediate Israeli citizenship, and the rest were entitled to it if they met certain conditions stipulated in the Nationality Law of 1952. These conditions

prevented many Palestinians from becoming citizens until the Nationality Law was amended in 1980 . . . But the very fact of granting citizenship to Palestinians . . . was in accord with the liberal discourse of citizenship, and mitigated somewhat the exclusionary effects of the republican and ethno-national ones.<sup>84</sup>

Emphasizing the absence of the role of the CBS in the historical accounts on the exclusion of Palestinians is not a criticism on these works. Rather, it is to support the argument that the relationship between “science” and the “state” in the establishment of the new Israeli state was silent and dominant at the same time. It is to support the argument that the CBS was institutionalized as an invisible and neutral institution to the extent that its significant role was imperceptible.

Whether intentionally or unintentionally, the first census legalized the nationalization of Palestinian property through the instruction to count only those who were present in their homes at the time of the census, which later became the infrastructure of bureaucratizing the Palestinian exodus and legitimizing it for international public opinion. This makes the relationship between the liberal and the ethno-national practices of Israeli citizenship instrumental: the liberal discourse of statistics legitimated the ethno-national discourse of citizenship.

Elsewhere<sup>85</sup> we have argued that conducting the census at that particular time enabled the new state to set the citizenry within a dual dimension: territory, and time. The territorial criteria for citizenship distinguishes not only between those who belong to the territory and those who do not, but also distinguishes between those who have the right to claim territory and those who do not. The second dimension is time: the social closure is based on temporal boundaries as well. The census called for a temporal accounting of the presence or absence of competing groups in the territory. Posing a clear temporal accounting constructs the allocation of citizenship, and its exclusions, as universal and allows the state to proceed without apparently selectively favoring any subgroups.

#### *FULL REGISTRATION IN THE SERVICE OF LEGIBILITY*

As already argued in the first part of this paper, statistics is a means for legibility, meaning that this legibility eliminates intermediate institutions that stand between the state and a particular ethnic group. But while Scott speaks about the “will” of the state for legibility,<sup>86</sup> the first Israeli census was statisticians’ enterprise; they were its initiators, architects, and justifiers. Through statistical practices such as the first census, the boundaries

of the various groups were opened and state institutions such as the CBS had direct access to the members of the groups. The following are several interesting examples of the role of statisticians in founding this legibility:

Though Bachi and the daily newspaper reported that the registration and the census, performed under the seven-hour curfew, went without special interruption, there were several areas of resistance that merit attention: A few Jewish immigrant families refused to open their doors to the census takers; ultra-orthodox Jews (the *Neturey Carta*) refused to cooperate as well<sup>87</sup>; and finally, people from foreign embassies objected to being part of the census.<sup>88</sup> Bachi described these enclaves of resistance as local and minor. However, these were manifestations of a refusal to accept the new Zionist-national project through classification and enumeration. The ultra-orthodox Jews, for example—especially the *Neturey Carta*—still do not see themselves, even today, as Israeli citizens or Zionists.

It was not the first time the statisticians had to face anomalous enclaves. Some of them had worked for the British Mandate government and, in their attempts to collect data on the inhabitants, had encountered difficulties with Palestinians. It was those attempts to collect data on the inhabitants for the Mandate<sup>89</sup> that later provided Bachi and his colleagues with significant justification for the recommendation for a detailed census combined with general registration. The way Palestinians had reported their demographic changes to the Mandate government was through the head of each village—the *Muchtar*. Since the village received money for every birth of a child, and lost money for every death, the statisticians who had worked for the British office were suspicious about Palestinian reports and thought they did not represent the real demographic picture.<sup>90</sup> Bachi expressed this concern again and again in documents he offered to justify a central bureau of statistics, and he strove to deny the right of the *Muchtar* to register the demographic movements within Palestinian villages.<sup>91</sup> The *Muchtar* also functioned as a mediator between the state and members of the village. This responsibility not only gave him the opportunity to manufacture knowledge on the Palestinian population, but also created—as Bachi said in his description of statistical services during the *Yishuv*—a fiction of a unified “Palestinian” population. Thus the *Muchtar* could facilitate a process of self-determination, while the main concern of the political institutions of the new state was to control Palestinians by fragmenting them and subordinating them to a military regime (which was imposed by Israel on its Palestinian citizens until 1966).

Statisticians had the same problem with the Beduin. Bachi and the British statisticians were creative in solving this problem:

We succeeded in convincing the leaders of the Beduin to participate in the census [conducted in 1945]. Each tribal chief provided us with a full list of the respective members of his tribe. When we summarized these numbers, we found out that they were enormous in comparison with the actual size of the population. Hence, with the assistance of the British head statistician, [and the pre-state secret services], officers sampled several tents of each of the Bedouin tribes and then, pictures of all the tents were taken from an airplane by a special photographer. This is how we calculated the real number of Beduin.<sup>92</sup>

Both the Beduin and Palestinians functioned as what Benedict Anderson<sup>93</sup> has called “topographic anomalies”—groups of natives who preserve their own communal institutions and are able to prevent direct mapping efforts of the state. Such groups are statistical or demographic anomalies in the way of statisticians’ efforts to define the “population,” draw its boundaries, and make it commensurable. The first Israeli census was planned to solve these kinds of barriers, which could challenge the authority of the state as well as the validity of statistical investigation. Allowing such anomalies would have reduced the ability of the CBS to produce authoritative representation of “society”;—their “scientific forestry,” in James Scott’s words<sup>94</sup>—the mapping of the population—could not have been completed.

*MIZRAKHIM—THE INVENTION OF A NEW CATEGORY*

If Beduin-Arabs and Palestinians were ethnic and religious groups that avoided the gaze of the state, the category *Mizrakhi* didn’t even exist as a clear social entity before 1948, nor did it represent any distinct cultural or ethnic group at that time. The definition of *Mizrakhi*—Jews originating from Muslim countries—disguised the plurality of the groups that were included within this category; people were classified as *Mizrakhim* even though they immigrated from such different countries as Bulgaria, Turkey, Syria, Morocco, Greece, Iraq, Iran, part of Yugoslavia, etc., in which the similarity in neither language nor religion of the country of origin were the reason for this statistical category. Nonetheless, the category *Mizrakhim* came into being and became an a-historical category and a solid social, political, and cultural phenomenon.

The *Mizrakhi* category does not only have a statistical manifestation. Recent critical studies of Israeli society discuss how various disciplines such as sociology, anthropology, geography, and even literature, have constructed *Mizrakhim* not only as an essential phenomenon, but also as “the” problem of Israeli society.<sup>95</sup> Without these different manifestations, this category wouldn’t have been objectified, institutionalized, or been codified

as a-historical. My argument here is not, therefore, about causality. At the same time, the statistical inquiry of *Mizrakhim* as a unified group was one of the earliest manifestations (in 1945) of defining them as a problem and providing the technology for doing so.

The formative documents of the first statisticians—especially those that Bachi wrote—created the conceptual infrastructure for the objectification of this category.<sup>96</sup> These documents are based on dichotomies that mostly place East and West in opposition. “Society” is presented as a problem, due to its problematic groups; the solution to this is to make all aspects of “society” visible through statistics. The first statisticians offered a technology for making these groups knowable and docile. In a lecture on the “demographic problem” a month before the statisticians’ proposal for the CBS was discussed, Bachi told an audience:

A few years ago, in a time when the Jewish birth rates of our community were low, I calculated what the demographic consequences would be of the natural reproduction of two extreme groups of *Mizrakhim* and Ashkenazim. For example, if we compare between Austrian and Yemeni women, we would get the following: 100 Austrian mothers will have 60 daughters . . . and 100 Yemeni mothers will give birth to 300 daughters who will take their place in the next generation. We could calculate what the consequences would be of their natural reproduction in the generation of their granddaughters—100 Yemeni women will have 900 granddaughters, while the Austrians will have only 33. These are, of course, extreme groups.<sup>97</sup>

This paragraph reveals Bachi’s eugenic attitude in that he describes two particular groups (Austrian and *Mizrakhim*), but at the same time the text is also prescriptive and expresses Bachi’s will to keep the two groups homogeneous and separated. Opposing one group to the other as two extreme groups is to set the Great Divide between the two pure and opposite types of social groups of Israeli-Jewish society. Bachi also implies that statistics and mainly probability have the ability to anticipate demographic tendencies and to give a sense of control to a wild growth of *Mizrakhim* in the future. In another text, Bachi argues that the differences between the two ethnic groups are more comprehensive than birth rates, and therefore it identifies the *Mizrakhim* as the major object of statistical inquiry, as well as of other disciplines. Here is an example how the statistical logic operates:

While Ashkenazim have one bed per person on average, the Kurds and Sephardim have one bed for 2.5 persons on average. Ashkenazim have on average a window per person, the Persians and Kurds have one window per

four persons . . . Sephardim have 54% of good hygiene, while Ashkenazim have 98%.<sup>98</sup>

The same goes with the possession of bathtub, water, and electricity—*Mizrakhi* households were measured in comparison with Ashkenazim. What is interesting in this technology of quantification is that the Ashkenazim weren't really measured. They only signified the relationship between the normal and the deviant. "It is clear," argued Bachi, "that if we want to have any idea of the sociological profile of our community in the next few years, we have to have a special interest in the social problems of the Oriental Ethnic Group [*Edot Hamizrakh*], of *Mizrakhim*"<sup>99</sup>

Measuring *Mizrakhim* was based on the same rhetoric as used in the nineteenth-century at a time when Quetelet's normal distribution was an expression of a moral measuring of the deviance of groups from the normal.<sup>100</sup> Revealing statistical regularities was not only for knowing "society"; it was necessary for the intervention of the "benevolent class":

We obtain data about a governed class . . . and then attempt to alter what we guess are relevant conditions of that class in order to change the laws of statistics that the class obeys. This is the essence of the style of government that in the United States is called "liberal" . . . The *we* who know best change the statistical laws that affect *them*.<sup>101</sup>

By discovering the statistical laws that govern conditions under which crimes and disease appear, statisticians could gain a tool for improvement. Since the nineteenth century, the statistical gaze has focused on the "inferior" classes and has constituted them as *the* object of inquiry; statistical observation has functioned as the modern power that subjugates its object of intervention.

## CONCLUSIONS

The subject of this paper is national statistics and the conditions in which a governmental agency in charge of the production of national statistics was constituted as an a-political organization. Three themes were central to this paper: the ambition of statisticians for centrality; the first census; and, the implication of the centralized practices of the CBS. The case of the Israeli CBS illustrates the paradoxical nature of the relationship between national statistics and state institutions—the alliance of the first statisticians with

the political leadership strengthened their scientific authority and their disciplinary jurisdiction. Moreover, we can claim that, in the Israeli case, the credibility of statistics is based on the power of the “state”—that the control over a complete data base of the Israeli population and the absence of alternative statistical institutions paradoxically enabled the impartiality of the CBS. This centrality built the credibility of statisticians as scientists and dissociated them from the political context.

The way in which the American bureaux of statistics are organized supports the argument about the connection between centrality and the absence of statistical controversies. The fact that the American ethnic categorization is constantly disputed by the public is related to the fragmented structure of the American system of statistics. The United States is a unique case in which disputes over official statistics are very common. The American apparatus “. . . has never experienced the integration and legitimacy that its France, British, and German counterparts—though in different forms—have managed to acquire.”<sup>102</sup> The present paper has established how the first years of the CBS were years of achieving this particular integration and legitimacy. In theoretical terms, the case challenges the constituted separation between politics and science by indicating how, in the case of statistics, its credibility is inherently intertwined with political institutions.

The constitution of the CBS as an impartial and objective institution was based on liberal and democratic discourse. With the legitimacy of a scientific and objective institution, it functioned as one of the most exclusive institutions of civil rights. The first census demonstrates how statisticians' ambition for organizational centrality played an important role in structuring Israeli society, objectifying its conflicts, and legitimizing its inequalities. The clearest case is the new category of “present/absentees,” which has deeper implications in the context of Israeli society than just being a statistical category. It was constituted on the backdrop of the Jewish-Palestinian conflict, but its importance has been in its creation of the infrastructure for legitimately distinguishing between those who had the right to become citizens and those who did not. Thus, it universalized an ethno-national discourse.

It is less clear that, in the case of the Beduin-Arabs and *Mizrakhim*, statistics was a technology of power. A tendency to enumerate everything that had to do with human lives was very intensive during the 1940s and 1950s. People were classified and ordered according to new categories, and these constituted the composition of the new “society.” It makes no sense to argue that “Israeli society” was an invention of the statistical imagination,

or that statistics only represented those groups that already existed prior to the statistical enumeration. Rather, it is important to trace the conditions in which the statistical knowledge was produced; how the consolidation of “society” required the operation of several practices: that of forcing Beduin tribes to be counted, and thereby making them known to the state as well as to the social sciences; removing the boundaries of internal institutions, such as the *Muchtar*, in the case of Palestinians; and, grouping *Mizrakhim* as a unified entity and quantifying them according to what was perceived in those times to be the relevant dimensions of the *Mizrakhi* character. All three practices, whether conducted with overt power or not, were practices that began the subjugation of populations to social sciences disciplines.

## NOTES

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1. Bruno Latour, *Science in Action* (Cambridge, MA, 1987) 132.

2. M. Theodore Porter, *The Rise of Statistical Thinking 1820–1900* (Princeton, NJ, 1986) 25–7.

3. M. Theodore Porter, “Lawless Society: Social Science and the Reinterpretation of Statistics in Germany, 1850–1880,” in Lorenz Kruger, Lorraine J. Daston and Michael Heidelberger (eds), *The Probabilistic Revolution* (Cambridge, MA, 1987) 351–76.

4. Alain Desrosières, *The Politics of Large Numbers: A History of Statistical Reasoning* (Cambridge, MA, 1998) 31–2.

5. Karl H. Metz, “Paupers and Numbers: The Statistical Argument for Social Reform in Britain during the Period of Industrialization,” in Kruger, Daston, and Heidelberger (eds), *The Probabilistic Revolution*, 337–50.

6. Porter, *The Rise of Statistical Thinking*, 25; M. Stephen Stigler, “The Measurement of Uncertainty in Nineteenth-Century Social Science,” in Kruger, Daston, and Heidelberger (eds), *The Probabilistic Revolution*, 287–93.

7. Ian Hacking, *The Taming of Chance* (Cambridge, UK, 1990) 118–19.
8. Alain Desrosières, “How to Make Things which Hold Together: Social Science, Statistics and the State,” in Peter Wagner, Bjorn Wittrock and Richard Whitley (eds), *Discourses on Society: The Shaping of the Social Sciences* (Dordrecht, NL, 1991) 195–218.
9. John W. Kendrick, “The Historical Development of National-Income Accounts,” *History of Political Economy*, 2, 1970, 284–315; Porter, *The Rise of Statistical Thinking*, 22–23.
10. Michel Foucault, “Governmentality,” in Graham Burchell, Colin Gordon, and Peter Miller (eds), *The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governmentality* (London, 1991).
11. *Ibid.*, 93. See also, pp. 118–119 in Foucault, “Truth and Power,” in Colin Gordon (ed), *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings 1972–1977* (New York, 1980) 109–33.
12. *Ibid.*, p. 102
13. Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities* (Tel-Aviv, 1999) 199–206 [Hebrew].
14. C. James Scott, *Seeing Like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed* (New Haven, CT, 1998).
15. *Ibid.*, p. 365.
16. Steven Epstein, *Impure Science: Aids, Activism, and the Politics of Knowledge* (Berkeley, CA, 1996); Chandra Mukerji, *Territorial Ambitions and the Gardens of Versailles* (Cambridge, UK, 1997); Bruno Latour, *We Have Never Been Modern* (Cambridge, MA, 1995); Steven Shapin and Simon Schaffer, *Leviathan and the Air-Pump: Hobbes, Boyle, and the Experimental Life* (Princeton, NJ, 1985).
17. Daniel Breslau, “The State’s Scientific Instruments: The Politics of Measurement in U.S. Labor Market Policy,” *Theory and Society*, 26, 1997, 869–902; Timothy Mitchell, “The Limits of the State: Beyond Statist Approaches and Their Critics,” *American Political Science Review*, 85.1, 1991, 84–96; Mitchell, *Rule of Experts: Egypt, Techno-Politics, Modernity* (Berkeley, CA, 2002).
18. The *Yishuv* was the name given to the settlement that was created by Eastern European Jewish immigrants between the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and 1948. The Labor Settlement Movement (LSM) was the dominant political party before 1948 and for many years afterwards. The Histadrut was the major labor organization associated with the dominant labor movement parties of the period. It represented the pre-1948 alternative to a state administration but basically it was LSM’s labor union. The Jewish Agency was a parallel organization that took care of Jewish affairs in the Yishuv without regard for one’s political affiliation. Its structure represented a pre-state government. People from LSM were massively represented at the Jewish Agency. The British Mandate was another important institution that played a significant role in the formation of the state. Its role ended in 1948. David Ben-Gurion was the first Prime Minister of the Israeli state. Prior to assuming this position, he was Chairman of the Jewish Agency

and the unchallenged political leader of the LSM. Histadrut Haovdim Haivriyim Be'erez-Yisrael. *Hama'ania Hamerkazit: Tots'ot Mifkad Ha'ovdim* [Labor Census Results] (Jerusalem, 1923) [Hebrew].

19. Yonathan Shapiro, *Hedemocratia BeYisra'el* [Democracy in Israel] (Ramat-Gan, 1977) 134–44.

20. Dan Horowitz and Moshe Lissak, *Meyeshuv Lemedina: Yehudey Eretz-Yisrael Bitkufat Hamandat Habrity Kekehila Politit* [From *Yishuv* to Statehood: Jews in the Land of Israel During the British Mandate] (Tel-Aviv, 1977) 275 [Hebrew].

21. Baruch Kimmerling, "Sociology, Ideology, and National Building: The Palestinians and Their Meaning in the Israeli Sociology," *American Sociological Review*, 57, 1992, 446–60; Kimmerling, "State Building, State Autonomy and the Identity of Society: The Case of the Israeli State," *Journal of Historical Sociology*, 6.4, 1993, 396–429.; see also Uri Ram, *The Changing Agenda of Israeli Sociology* (New York, 1995) 36–7, 60.

22. Peter Y. Medding, *The Founding of Israeli Democracy, 1948–1967* (New York & Oxford, 1990) 173.

23. *Ibid.*, 134–5; Also Natan Yanay, "Hatfisa Hamamlachtit Shel Ben-Gurion" [Ben-Gurion's Statist Perception, *Cathedra*, 45, 1987, 169–89 [Hebrew].

24. G. Goldberg, Leshachot Ha'avoda Kemachshir Polity Behevra Mitpatachat [Employment Agencies as a Political Apparatus in Developing Society] Unpublished MA thesis, Tel-Aviv University (Tel-Aviv, 1975) 72, 114; Gad Yatziv, "Habasis Hama'amadi Lezika Miflagtit—Yisrael Ledugma" [The Class Base to Partisan Affinity: The Case of Israel] Memorandum. The Hebrew University of Jerusalem (Jerusalem, 1979) 140–7; Asher Arian, *Politics and Administrative Aspects of Welfare Policy in Israel*, a Research Report (Tel-Aviv, 1978) 42; Dan Horowitz and Moshe Lissak, *Metzuket Bautopia: Hevra Yisraelit Be'omes Yeter* [Trouble in Utopia: The Overburdened Polity of Israel] (Tel-Aviv, 1990) 60.

25. Yoav Peled, "Ethnic Democracy and Legal Construction of Citizenship: Arab Citizens and the Jewish State," *American Political Science Review*, 6(2) (1992) 432–43; Pp. 210–21 in Baruch Kimmerling, "State Building, State Autonomy and the Identity of Society," in Yagil Levi, "Mediniyut Milchamtit, Yachasim Ben Adatiyim Vehitpashtut Pnimit Shel Hamedina: Yisrael 1948–1956" [Warlike Policy, Ethnic Relations and the internal expansion of the State: Israel 1948–1956] *Teorya Vebikoret*, 8, 1996, 203–24 [Hebrew].

26. Michael Bar-Zohar, *Ben-Gurion: A Biography* (Jerusalem, 1980) 801, 812–13 [Hebrew]; Uri Ben-Eliezer, *Derech Hakavenet: Hivatizruto Shel Hamilitarism Hayisraeli, 1936–1956* [The Making of Israeli Militarism] (Tel-Aviv, 1995) 280–82 [Hebrew].

27. Ben-Eliezer, *Derech Hakavenet*, 242.

28. Y. Reuveni, *Mimshal Hamandat Be'erez Yisrael, 1929–1948: Nituach History-Medini* [The British Mandate in Israel: An Historical-Political Analysis] (Ramat-Gan, 1993) [Hebrew].

29. *Ibid.*, 205–6.
30. Hacking, *The Taming of Chance*, 16–17.
31. B. Eliav, *Hayeshuv Biyemey Habait Haleumi* [The Jewish Settlement] (Jerusalem, 1976) 48 [Hebrew]; S. Dotan, *Hama'avak Al Eratz-Yisrael* [The Struggle Over the Land of Israel] (Tel-Aviv, 1981) 99 [Hebrew]. The Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics has a similar controversy with the state of Israel over the estimation of the Palestinian population. The Palestinian Bureau argues that the number of Palestinian residents is larger than the official Israeli estimation. The Bureau's first publication was to give its own estimation of the population; see Elia T. Zureik, *The Palestinians in Israel: A Study in Internal Colonialism* (London, 1979).
32. David De-Vris, *Tnuat Hapoalim Beheifa Bashanim 1919–29: Mechkar Bahistoria Shel Poalim Ironiyim Be'ereetz Yisrael Hamandatorit* [Labor Movement in the Years 1919–29: An historical Study of Urban Workers in the Land of Israel during the British Mandate]. Ph.D. Dissertation, Tel-Aviv University (Tel-Aviv, 1992) [Hebrew].
33. Israel State Archives (hereafter: ISA): rg 41/107/18 January 1948.
34. David Ben-Gurion, *Medinat Yisrael Hamechudesbet* [The Renewal Israeli State] (Tel-Aviv, 1969) 57 [Hebrew].
35. World Zionist Organization, 1918.
36. ISA: rg 41/112/12 February 1948; rg 41/117/37 March 1948.
37. ISA: rg 41/107/3 June 1948.
38. ISA: rg 43/5460/1902/v.
39. Even if one disagrees with the definition of statistics as science, in the debate over the governmental positions, it was considered as science. In their documents, the first statisticians also defined statistics as science and in opposition with political interests.
40. Latour, *Science in Action*, 116.
41. CZA S25/9686, January 1948: Hahachanot liysud hamedina [Preparation for Establishing the State] ISA: rg 10/111/3560 February 1948.
42. The concerns Ben-Gurion and Teddy Kollek had about the intervention of politicians were expressed a decade later as justification for a centralized bureau; see ISA: rg 94/3552/2 January 1963; rg 43/5458/29; rg 43/5459/2 February 1956.
43. Latour, *Science in Action*, 132.
44. Shapin and Schaffer, *Leviathan and the Air-Pump*, 299.
45. CZA S25/9686, January 1948, 2.
46. *Ibid.*, p. 3.
47. *Ibid.*
48. *Ibid.*, 4.
49. Personal interview with Bachi, March 1992.
50. CZA S25/9686, January 1948, 7.
51. *Ibid.*, 8.
52. ISA: rg 43/5458/29

53. ISA: rg 43/5458/29; rg 43/5459/2; rg 94/3562/4
54. CZA S25/9686, January 1948, 16.
55. Personal interview with Bachi, March 1992; ISA/rg 41/107/18 January 1948.
56. *Ibid.*; *ibid.*
57. Pinchas Yurman, "Otzer—Velo Begzirat Habritim: Perek Bechevley Hahityatzvut shel Hamedina" [Curfew and not Due a British Command: A Chapter on the Stabilization of the State],. *Hauma*, 70–1, 1983, 90–101 [Hebrew].
58. ISA: rg 41/107/18 January 1948
59. *Davar*, 11 September 1948; *Ha'aretz*, 9 August 1948, 11 September 1948.
60. Personal interview with Bachi, March 1992
61. *Davar*, 11 January 1948.
62. *Davar*, 9 August 1948; *Ha'aretz*, 9 August 1948.
63. Personal interview with Bachi, March 1992
64. ISA: rg 41/107/18 January 1948, 10.
65. *Ibid.*
66. Latour, *Science in Action*.
67. Nikolas Rose, *Powers of Freedom: Reframing Political Thought*. Cambridge, UK, 1999) 234.
68. Yurman, "Otzer—Velo Begzirat Habritim."
69. David Grossman *Nochachim Nifkadim* [Present/Absentees] (Tel-Aviv, 1992) 64–5 [Hebrew].
70. Yurman, "Otzer—Velo Begzirat Habritim."
71. *Davar*, 9 August 1948, quoting Bachi.
72. CBS, Special Publication No 36: Rishum Hatoshavim, Hayishuvim Vaha'ezorim.
73. ISA: rg 41/119/37 January 48
74. Ian Lustick, *Aravim Bimдина Yehudit* [Arabs in a Jewish State] (Haifa, 1985) 55–7, 60 [Hebrew]; Benny Morris, *The Birth of the Palestinian Refugee Problem, 1947–1949* (Cambridge, UK, 1987), 132–4.
75. ISA: rg 41/117/33, October 1948.
76. Lustick, *Arabs in a Jewish State*, 177; Morris, *The Birth of the Palestinian Refugee Problem*, 174.
77. In his *The Birth of the Palestinian Refugee Problem*, Morris presents various sources for different estimations of the number of refugees after the end of the war in 1949. The official Israeli CBS estimate was 577,000. UNRWA's estimate was 726,000. The British tended not to accept the accuracy of either number; hence, their estimate was "between 600,000 and 760,000" (pp. 297–8).
78. Based on several sources, authors present varied estimations of the number of present-absentees: Grossman gives an estimation of 81,000 (pp. 64–5 in *Nochachim Nifkadim*. Other estimations included those by Gershon Shafrir and Yoav Peled- 90,000 (pp. 110–11 in *Being Israeli: The Dynamics of Multiple Citizenship* (Cambridge, UK, 1985), and Lustick- 75,000 (pp. 64–72 in *Arabs in a Jewish State*).

79. CBS, Special Publication No 36: Rishum Hatoshavim, Hayishuvim Veba'ezorim.
80. Morris, *The Birth of the Palestinian Refugee Problem*.
81. See Lustick, *Arabs in a Jewish State*; Grossman, *Nochachim Nifkadim*; Zureik, *The Palestinians in Israel*.
82. Grossman does make the connection between being present at the first census and the legal category "present-absentees" (Grossman, *Nochachim Nifkadim*, 64–5).
83. Shafir and Peled, *Being Israeli*.
84. *Ibid.*, 110–111.
85. Anat E. Leibler and Daniel Breslau, "The Uncounted Citizenship: Citizenship and Exclusion in the Israeli Census of 1984." *Racial and Ethnic Studies*, Forthcoming.
86. Scott, *Seeing Like a State*, 1–2.
87. Bachi, personal interview, March 1992; *Ha'aretz*, 11 September 1948; Davar, September 1948.
88. Yurman, "Otzer—Velo Begzirat Habritim."
89. Principally made by Bachi and Hamburger.
90. ISA: rg 41/107/18 January 1948
91. *Ibid.*
92. Bachi, personal interview, March 1992
93. Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 200–06
94. James Scott's words; see Scott, *Seeing Like a State*.
95. See Hannan Hever, Yehouda Shenhav, and Pnina Mutzafi-Haller (eds), *Mizrahim in Israel: A critical observation into Israel's Ethnicity*, Van Leer Jerusalem Institute (Jerusalem, 2002); Yehouda Shenhav, *The Arab-Jews: Nationalism, Religion and Ethnicity* (Tel-Aviv: 2003).
96. CZA S25/9686, January 1948, p. 2;
97. ISA: rg 94/3558/8, December 1947, p. 1
98. *Ibid.*, p. 4
99. *Ibid.*, p. 5.
100. Desrosières, "How to Make Things which Hold Together."
101. Hacking, *The Taming of Chance*, 119.
102. Desrosières, *The Politics of Large Numbers*, 189.