Coping with a Policy of Non-Recognition: Israeli Negev Bedouin Housing Practices

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Israeli housing policy in the Negev Bedouin sector is highly charged, politicized, and controversial. More than half of the population of about 200,000 former nomads have been resettled and now reside in "proper" stone homes in planned towns, most (though not all) enjoying the accoutrements of modern living standards. More than a third of the population, conversely, resist resettlement and continue to reside in informal settlements, unrecognized by the State, where basic provisions are largely lacking. Housing stock is irregularly designed, constructed and managed; similarly, transportation and communication networks to and from these settlements, and within them, are haphazardly designed, constructed, and maintained. This paper considers the State's ongoing initiative to resettle the Bedouin community in a rational, organized, logical, and planned manner. Such policies at the level of the individual domicile stem from an overall effort by the State to rationalize and develop the Bedouin community as a whole. At the same time, the ways in which families utilize and respond to the domestic realm whether formalized or informal, irregular spaces is discussed. It is argued that attitudes toward housing layout, design, and structure provide but one example of how social and political relations with the State are actualized and contested. Thus, it is concluded that State's housing policy among the Bedouin of the Negev contains a variety of elements worthy of study and analysis. For in the Bedouin case, the abode has taken on political significances which may belie the existence of four simple stone walls.

Keywords: *Negev Bedouin, Segev Shalom, resettlement, contested space.*

Israeli housing policy for the Bedouin residents of the Negev desert is a highly charged topic. In large part, this stems from the fact that is difficult - if not, impossible - to divorce Bedouin residence, housing type, and related factors from other broader issues such as conflicting land claims, Bedouin resettlement, service planning and development, and the like. As a result, the discussion of housing is obscured by related, albeit external issues. In other words, the macro level discussion, as important as it quite obviously is, overshadows some of the smaller-scale, more

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localized aspects of Negev Bedouin communal life and development. This paper seeks in part to serve as a corrective to this omission in the literature.

It is the contention here that Israeli State housing policy is by definition informed by a political narrative and agenda, and that the Bedouin community, in turn, is responding to this set of external "threats" through its use of built form. The imposition of formalized housing is, as will be contended below, contested space upon which and through which the State, on the one hand, seeks to further perpetuate its domestic policy objectives vis à vis this Arab Muslim minority. In turn, the Bedouin response, one of social, economic and political resistance, similarly is being carried out in large part via the built form of the domiciles its community members now design, construct, and reside in.

In order to situate State housing policy and Bedouin community response as it presently exists in the early part of the 21st century, it is first necessary to briefly revisit the history of the Bedouin resettlement initiative. The basic elements of this Israeli policy have been told and retold numerous times. Often if not always, the discussion has taken place at the macro level (see Dinero, 2010; Falah, 1989; Krakover, 1999; Meir, 1997), that is to say, by looking at the resettlement initiative and the ensuing conflict between the Bedouin and the State from the perspective of two relatively monolithic blocs or entities squaring off against one another (see also Abu-Saad, 2008; Yiftachel, 2003). Such an approach does not always recognize internal divisions or differences which can be found, most especially, between and among various factions within the Bedouin community.

That said, depending upon the authors and their orientation, most can agree on the basic elements of the issue. First, most observers certainly acknowledge that the Bedouin were initially concentrated with limited freedom of movement into a siyag, a defined geographic region in the northern Negev desert, soon after Israel's independence in 1948. Governed by a military administration, this resettlement was implemented, the State contended, due to security concerns. The Bedouin community was further concentrated into seven towns planned and built by the State, beginning with the creation of the first, Tel Sheva, in 1965.

During this same period, residing outside of the planned town in what was now an "unrecognized" settlement was deemed illegal (Rangwala, 2011).The State argued that permanent planned towns were needed in order to provide the Bedouin with essential services; the Bedouin saw the issue differently, viewing the policy as nothing short of a "land grab" which forced them off of traditional lands and into even more limited geographic spaces which lacked economic opportunities, and suffered from a variety of social ills including increasing reports of family violence and petty crime (Dinero, 1997; 2010). In recent years, twelve additional unrecognized settlements also have been recognized, adding to the first seven that were built from the ground up. Still, 60,000-70,000 Bedouin continue to live in unrecognized settlements, due, it is argued, to the fear of losing historic land rights if they relocate.

The issue of land ownership is not easily unraveled. It is widely known that the State owns about 93 percent of the land in the country (ILA, 2012). That said, the Bedouin contend that they have land rights claims which, they believe, supersede the State's claims. As Kressel (2003) explains, much of the debate is centered upon interpretations of the Ottoman mawat land law of 1858, and laws established in Palestine for a century thereafter. In any case, the need to officially register one's land was crucial to maintaining ownership. Some Bedouin complied, only for documentation to have gone missing since; many others failed to register altogether, either due to ignorance, resistance to government dictate, or other explanations. Be that as it may, efforts to now validate longstanding tribal ownership of lands which, from the State's perspective, are publicly owned, have proven largely futile, as recent efforts in the courts to legitimize Bedouin claims reveal (Jerusalem Post, 2012).

While the land debate narrative is correct as far as it goes, it does not adequately allow for a full rendering of the true nature of the conflict which the Bedouin community is now experiencing, or has historically experienced, with the State. For while the conflict has often been presented and understood as one of ownership of land resources (Falah,1989; Abu-Saad, 2008; Yiftachel, 2003; Dinero, 2010), the actual manner through which the "battle" has been and continues to be contested is found at the nexus of two concerns and not just one.

Control of the land is of course the central issue which well-informs what some view as Israel's "Judaization" policies in the Negev (Yiftachel, 1999) and what keeps the Bedouin from relocating despite its obvious benefits (Dinero, 2010). But the operational mechanism through which and by which this policy has been implemented is in truth one of the most basic of all human-built structures - the family home. Relocating or not relocating then is not merely a question of geographic mobility or housing preference, but further, stands as a fundamental expression of Bedouin pride, identity, internal values - and so much more. These two perspectives, that of modern housing provision as a transformative, developmental process (that is, pursuing an evolutionary discourse) and that of housing destruction and forced relocation (that is, the discourse of domicide), will be addressed below.

BEDOUIN HOUSING FROM THE STATE'S PERSPECTIVE - AN EVOLUTIONARY DISCOURSE

The utilization of housing and its role within the Bedouin town environment as a mechanism of modernization and development became apparent soon after the first housing in Tel Sheva was erected by the State in the mid-1960s. The imposition of the stone home in the planned towns as the new alternative housing model was controversial from the outset. The planning goal, as has been well documented previously by Horner-Frenkel (1982), for example, claimed to take Bedouin culture into account, yet sought to re-spatialize, organize, rationalize and formalize Bedouin liv-

ing environments inside the confines of cubical, sharp-edged structures. This meant, by definition, not only a process of concentration, delineation and demarcation of psychic borders and boundaries as was the case with the super-imposition of the *si-yag*, but also the further immobilization of Bedouin social and economic life as well.

Land lots (*migrashim*, Heb.) were 500 m^2 in size, upon which were built 70 m^2 housing units. Spaces for gardening and holding a few animals were provided; walls were built between the houses for purposes of privacy. Indeed, the planners made some attempts to conform to Bedouin values as Horner-Frenkel notes: "the house design is analogous to the Bedouin tent in so far as two entrances are provided, one leading into the kitchen and central open space from the garden and the other allowing access from the street to the sitting room" (Horner-Frenkel 1982). Privacy and climate also engendered the creation of small shuttered windows on these houses which opened away from the public view.

Not surprisingly, such housing was poorly received within the Bedouin community. The size of the houses was inadequate for immediate Bedouin family members; in turn, the extended nature of the Bedouin community required that several family members live in relatively close proximity to one another, but not *too* close, and certainly not in small, prison-like environments with poor natural lighting and limited fresh air flow. The early Tel Sheva housing design features did not allow for conditions conducive to the desires of the population. Later planning in Tel Sheva in the 1970s to allow greater flexibility suggested that the government had learned from the "failures" of the early planning process (Horner-Frenkel, 1982), for example, doubling lot size to 1000 m^2 and moving to a self-build housing initiative rather than government-built housing, reflected an understanding that the initial model was not succeeding.

The introduction of the modern house was seen as a final end point on the modernization spectrum, yet with little if any economic base to underpin this innovation or employment provisions to address this deficit. While it was acknowledged by observers at the time that both stone and informal housing existed in the planned towns, the belief was, and is, that this was a temporary phenomenon and that in time and as the generations pass, the "traditional" dwelling would give way to the modern. Stern and Gradus in their observations in Rahat during its early development suggest (1978: 228):

> A systematic mixture of temporary structures and modern buildings is found throughout the developing neighborhoods. The fact that the means and pacing of the construction have remained in the hands of each tribesman is visible in each lot. While the houses are being constructed families live in either traditional tents or other temporary structures. In large families, the parents remain living in the traditional tent and the married sons usually live in the attached cabins or in tin shacks. The progression of dwellings, tent to tin shack to modern building under construction, is found in almost every lot being developed.

This evolutionary, Rostovian sense (1960) of Bedouin housing development was taken up most recently by Dezuari (2009). He identifies three formal housing types in the planned Bedouin towns today following the initial failures at Tel Sheva: the "standard house" initiated in the 1970s, the "catalog house" initiated in the 1980s, and the "individualized house" of more recent years (Dezuari, 2009). He argues that the shacks first built by the Bedouin in town "imitated" the tent. The standard house then was but a stone version of this same social expression, "identical" to one another as they reproduced their "traditional lifestyles."

At the next "stage of development" (to use Rostow's verbiage, 1960), the Bedouin used a catalogue from which they chose a model of home that might differ from their neighbors. In this regard, Dezuari asserts, individual identity and social status was now expressed via housing choice. In the final stage, housing design has recently been adapted to individual family needs and desires, lending to further uniqueness and specificity. When comparing the traditional tent with modern housing, for example, he notes that tents did not allow for this ability to indicate social ranking through housing style (2009).

In summary Dezuari, like his predecessors, places the Bedouin housing issue on an evolutionary, developmental, traditionalism/modernism trajectory. He notes, for example that those opting for the catalogue house tend to be young people who simply have less need now for "traditional" elements in their housing styles; those opting for the individualized house are more "developed" still, seeking a more modern "sober" style (Dezuari, 2009).

I do not intend to scrutinize the motivations for choosing one housing type or another - let alone the decision to live in a temporary house despite the fact that one lives inside of a planned town. Dezuari contends that the same psychology used in advertising is used in the marketing of Bedouin town housing, whereby the primary force which pushes the Bedouin to move from one housing type to another is the desire to consume (2009); his belief is that the competitive nature of Bedouin society pushes them to seek better, more impressive housing options than their neighbors (see Figure 1).

Such a model, a Bedouin version of keeping up with the Joneses, (or what I have referred to previously as "keeping up with the Hamamdis" (Dinero, 2010), has its merits. But as I also argued, such a development strategy is based upon the presumed belief that the Bedouin are inherently jealous of and competitive with one another, an assumption which, though central to Neoclassical economics, is not born out historically among communities in which cooperation, sharing, and mutual support are emphasized (see, for example, Coelho, 1985). But further, the model also requires the State to provide environments within which the Bedouin can actually succeed in pursuing their desired objectives. Municipal taxes in the towns for those residing in proper housing are perceived to be excessive (Dinero, 2010); many cannot afford them, fall behind in their payments, and some have reached the point of defaulting on their payments altogether, risking the loss of the home.

Figure 1: The latest in single family Negev Bedouin housing, Segev Shalom, 2010.



Source: Photo by the author.

More to the point, however, this evolutionary, binary-based model "from tent to town" and from the "traditional" to the "modern" does not reflect the reality on the ground. Just as there are political, social and economic aspects to the State's imposition of a modern housing strategy, so too can one discern social and economic aspects to the role of formality (and informality) in Bedouin housing and settlement design. Further, there is no doubt that informality takes on political relevance as well; informal housing - its structure, design, placement, indeed, its very existence - has come to represent and signify a family's or community's political stand vis à vis the State apparatus. But before I turn to the issue of communal response, I first turn to the issue of "recognition," and the role it plays in Israeli Bedouin housing discourse.

ISRAELI HOUSING POLICY IN THE BEDOUIN COMMUNITY - RECOGNITION OR *DOMICIDE?*

Critical scholars contend that the history of housing in the Bedouin community, formalized, designed and implemented by a number of government agencies including the Israel Land Authority, the Bedouin Development Authority, and the Ministry of Housing, among others, cannot be divorced from the concept of official State recognition. The 1965 Planning and Building Law created the concept of recognition, subjecting unlicensed construction, primarily housing, to demolition. As human rights lawyer Rangwala explains, "while ownership is often not disputed, the law created a scheme whereby the whole community as well as each individual

home and building [in the unrecognized settlements] instantaneously became illegal" (Rangwala, 2011: 442).

The communities which are recognized by the State (Tel Sheva, Rahat, Kseifa, Ar'ara ba-Negev, Segev Shalom, Hura, Laqiya and the Abu Basma localities (see below), are legal entities; in turn, the homes within such communities (which have gone through the State-sanctioned approval and permit process, of course) also are legal and therefore recognized by the State. And yet, given that the informal settlements are *unrecognized*, they do not, metaphysically speaking at least, exist. If existence may be measured in terms of permanence, stability, safety, security - that is, those aspects and accoutrements of life typically associated with one's house and home, then one's existence if not reality itself hinges upon one's location in the Negev Bedouin community today. In theory, the stone house, and the government-planned streets, cul-de-sacs, and avenues which connect the planned town to the rest of modern Jewish Israel, dictate whether one exists or not. As will be seen below, what matters to the State is not *how* one lives (i.e. what type of house one resides in), but *where* (that is, in a location designated by the State as a legal dwelling space); a tin-sided home in an unrecognized settlement does not exist from the State's perspective insofar as it is not recognized as a legal entity deserving of all services due a legal municipality, such as running water, sewage, drainage, garbage removal and the like, whereas a soft-sided unit (for example, a tent) erected *inside* a planned town, *does*.

In truth, residents of the informal settlements are socially, economically, and politically connected to and a part of Israel in a multitude of ways similar to their formalized, planned-town counterparts. And yet the unpaved, off-the-grid nature of the settlements in which they reside is not only a distinction of urban fabric, but of social, economic, and political distinction as well. Since the unrecognized communities do not formally exist, the housing units found therein are not recognized by the State as valid, actual homes. In turn, therefore, it can be said that those who reside in such homes do not formally exist, at least insofar as they lack the most basic element required through which the State of Israel will recognize their existence: an address (Swirski and Hasson, 2006).

Thus, the approximately forty settlements that comprise this sector are self-designed and structured, not unlike informal squatter housing found today throughout the developing world, drawing parallels to favelas, *gecekondular* (Turkey), and other examples of urban informality found globally. As unrecognized communities, they are illegal and thus, to reside in one is to live "unlawfully" (Krakover, 1999). In effect, those living in informal settlements are "criminals" (Rangwala, 2011).

The criminalization of the Bedouin of the unrecognized settlements - as trespassers, intruders and the like - serves to stigmatize the entire Bedouin population while further alienating them from the Jewish mainstream. The Israel Lands Authority's perspective (ILA, 2012) well represents this attitude in its official literature by explaining that

> *Israel's duty is to protect and defend its citizens* [emphasis in the original]. Israel cannot tolerate callous lawbreakers whose behavior is harmful to the law-abiding community. It is the state's duty to evict squatters and restore the land to the citizens who leased it.

In this context, the Bedouin are referred to as "illegal squatters" who "steal agricultural land" and who wish to "gain control of 900,000 dunams of agricultural land" - that is, "600,000 dunams in addition to the 300,000 dunams that they already rent on a seasonal basis…[or roughly], 12 times the area of Tel Aviv!" (ILA, 2012).

The discourse of criminality and lawlessness has additional practical ramifications as well. The 1965 law also prohibits utility companies from providing service infrastructure in unrecognized settlements (Rangwala, 2011). In so doing, only planned, recognized settlements (at least in theory, see Dinero, 2010) enjoy running water, electricity, a full set of healthcare facilities, K-12 educational facilities, and social welfare provisions. In reality, all informal settlements have uneven access to some or all of these services, albeit not to the same degree or extent. Moreover, as I have shown elsewhere (see Dinero, 1996; 1998; 2010), not all residents of the planned communities have access to these services to the degree which the State has promised, let alone the extent to which the Jewish communities enjoy.

Last, however, the most controversial aspect of this situation is demonstrated by a policy which allows for and encourages housing demolitions within the unrecognized settlements. It has been argued that the destruction of Bedouin housing in the Negev is an example of *domicide*, a global movement which, alongside colonization, seeks to erase if not eradicate a people from the land through the destruction of the family home (Porteous and Smith, 2001). Although this policy has existed for some years, the issue took on global interest when the demolition of the village of al-Araqib became a *cause célèbre* in the summer of 2010, covered extensively in the western press (BBC Worldwide Monitoring, 2010) The community was destroyed more than 50 times between the summer of 2010 and 2013 in a test of wills and public relations. But at the center of the symbolism of State efforts to force al-Araqib residents off the land and into one of the planned towns (most likely Rahat) was the family home.

In questioning whether housing for the Bedouin should not be viewed as a right according to the UN Declaration on Human Rights, Rangwala contends that since 1965, housing demolitions have become a "cornerstone" of Israeli planning policy in the Bedouin sector (Rangwala, 2011). This approach, he argues, is the final step in the process of forced eviction. "Each time a Bedouin family moves out of an unrecognized village because it has been made uninhabitable by the state, it is a forced eviction in that they are being removed from their dwellings through state coercion. The denial of basic services, the denial of traditional forms of employment, and the unavailability of any modern conveniences enjoyed by other citizens of the state all contribute to the forced eviction process" (Rangwala, 2011:465). In an ironic twist,

it is incumbent upon the Bedouin to carry out their own demolitions - that is, to destroy their own homes and livelihoods before the State does (Rangwala, 2011).

Over 1,200 buildings were demolished by the State during the years 1992-98 and the equivalent of over $200,000 in fines were paid due to "illegal" building in the informal sector (Abu-Saad, 2008). To be sure, such figures pale when compared to recent statistics, however. In 2002 there were 113 demolitions, 157 in 2003, and 67 in 2004. And yet, by 2009, the figure jumped to 254 housing demolitions (NCFCE, 2012). Indeed in 2011 alone, 1,000 houses were demolished, more than double the number in 2010, NCFCE, 2011). This follows a policy that prohibits additions, improvements or changes to what already exists in the informal sector. This of course does not stop residents from constantly building, changing, and planting. Many are caught, many others are not. It is a game of chicken, a risky business, but, in the words of one resident of an informal settlement of Abu-Kweider concerning a truck repair garage that he had recently completed in 2009, "I know that [this garage] is too large, that they won't like it, but I built it anyway. But it's done now. Let them come and say something about it."

Absurd as it may appear that one cannot simply build a garage, outbuilding, storage shed or house to suit one's needs without worrying about government reprisal that such might be viewed as a political act of aggression, Bedouin families living in the informal sector confront the restraints imposed by the State on a regular basis, sometimes with anger, though often with good humor and a sense of resistance. The sense of victimization, oppression, and weakness expressed in the literature (Abu-Saad 2008), however, is not, in this author's experience at least, typically encountered in the field.

In 2008, the "Committee for a Policy Proposal for Regulating Bedouin Settlement in the Negev" (known as the "Goldberg Committee" as it was presided over by Justice Eliezer Goldberg) was convened in order to address the demolitions and other numerous problems found in the Bedouin community, and to draw up a plan of action to address future concerns (Ministry of Construction and Housing, 2009). Abu Ras writes that one of its findings, published in December of that year, called for the recognition of informal settlements, which would enable more legal building and expansion within the cramped quarters of such communities, allowing residents to circumvent the onerous challenges and constant demands for building permits. As he notes, "The committee recommended that recognition be granted to most of the unrecognized villages and that the illegal structures that exist 'within the area of a current [Be'er Sheva metropolitan] master plan, which do not hinder the implementation of the plan,' should be recognized as 'gray' - a definition that would pave the way for their recognition" (Abu Ras, 2011: 3). The Committee also called for an end to the "common practice" of house demolitions, a practice carried out with some regularity in the informal sector in response to what the State perceives as illegal building (Shmueli and Khamaisi, 2011).

In particular, the Committee sought to bring greater resolution to the ongoing challenges stemming from *recognition* for it is this principle around which Bedouin community planning, development, and freedom to reside safely and securely in a home of one's own choosing, is based. And yet, planners Shmueli and Khamaisi (2011) note that while the State accepted the Committee report and its findings in January 2009, housing demolitions continued and even increased.

In late March 2011, the findings of yet another committee, chaired by Ehud Prawer, the Director of Planning Policy in the Office of the Prime Minister, were discussed by the Israeli Knesset, which included its own recommendations with regard to recognition of Bedouin settlement beyond the present status quo. The "Prawer Report for Implementing the Goldberg Committee Recommendations for Resolution of Bedouin Settlement in the Negev" (Prime Minister Office, 2011) was far less sympathetic to Bedouin land claims and informal housing than previous reports such as Goldberg, but seeks, rather, to force several tens of thousands of those now living in unrecognized settlements into "recognized" towns by all means necessary while offering limited financial compensation for lost land holdings (Abu Ras, 2011).

The report has been controversial from the outset, as Bedouin community members were not included in the discussions (Abu Ras, 2011). More than this, however, the document presents an increasingly discriminatory tone as compared to previous reports written in recent years to address Bedouin concerns. As Abu Ras (2011: 6) contends:

> The recommendations … discriminate between Jewish and Arab citizens living in proximity of each other by specifying planning principles of "size, density, contiguity, and capacity," that are not applied in small Jewish localities. In addition, the report rejects the principle of freezing the demolition of homes and legalizing Arab Bedouin homes, and instead prepares public opinion for mass demolitions. At the same time, it legalizes single-family farms for Jews in the Negev.

The release of the details of the Prawer Report in the late spring of 2011 (followed soon thereafter by a delay in a full hearing of its findings) and the announced call by the Netanyahu Government for the relocation of 30,000 Bedouin to recognized towns (*Haaretz*,, 2011) creates additional uncertainty within the Bedouin community about the future. That said, there are considerable differences between those Bedouin communities which already enjoy ongoing, formal recognition of the State, and those which remain in a state of limbo, unrecognized, lacking a variety of services and needs which are found, to a greater degree, in the planned towns. I turn to these distinctions below.

HOUSING AS A BEDOUIN COMMUNAL RESPONSE - IDENTITY AND INTERPRETATION

Anyone who spends time in a planned Bedouin town quickly sees that informal structures similar to those self-builds in the informal settlements dot the planned town landscape as well (see Figure 2). In a household survey that I conducted in one planned town, for example (see below), 80 percent of those households sampled randomly resided in part or in whole in a stone house, whereas 20 percent resided in a "temporary" dwelling comparable to those found in the unrecognized settlements. While this is certainly an improvement when compared to data gathered in the early 1990s when only 70 percent resided in a stone home, the financial challenges identified with housing construction twenty years ago appear to remain constant to the present day (Dinero, 1996).

Figure 2: Mixed housing types are found throughout the planned towns.



Source: Photo by the author.

Historically, vernacular Bedouin architecture, (that is, the tent), was by definition temporary in both design and location, organic in the materials which comprised it, the verbiage used to describe it, and ways in which its physical design was presented (Dezuari, 2009). It was both a feminine and a masculine space, although its materials, design, construction, and maintenance and management heavily oriented toward the woman/women of the household. The Bedouin "*bayt*" connoted, by definition, both the physical structure, as well as the family which resided within it (Na'amneh, et al., 2008). It was largely accessible, a coarse but permeable mechanism through which social, economic and political dynamics were negotiated and resolved (Marx, 1967).

Na'amneh, et al. (2008) have argued that the black Bedouin tent historically served three main functions of separation and identity, that is, helping define in- and out-groups (see also Dinero, 2004). They note that this definition takes place through the creation of private/public space (separating and defining familial relations), male/female space (separating and defining acceptable gender relations) and

insider/outsider space (separating and defining collective identity at the sub-tribal and national levels).

Significantly, such divisions were reified in the planned towns of the Negev as well. Ben-David (1993) notes that the first towns that were built, Tel Sheva and Rahat, developed with little direction, and that their growth and evolution largely resulted as a product of the "natural growth" of various peasant and other sub-tribes that essentially reconstituted themselves in the settled urban environment.

Still, what is notable here is that separation at the *individual* level was largely unknown; not only were the materials and traditional housing design not conducive to individual distinction of expression, but furthermore, social values of egalitarianism and communalism encouraged the aforementioned *group* identities and levels of distinction, not individual or family identities. Individual identity, expression, and behavior outside the norm was not only uncommon, but was grounds for expulsion from the group, or worse (Ginat, 1983). Only with changes in land usage in the 1940s, primarily with the dissection of tribal territories, did the Bedouin begin to adapt to the ideals of privatization and to a "new capitalistic, individualistic experience" (Kressel, et al., 1991). More to the point, these values and attitudes can and have been reproduced and incorporated into the new lifestyles and housing types of Bedouin communities in recent years (Na'amneh et al., 2008).

The adoption and incorporation of formalized, hard-sided housing in the unrecognized settlements in response to the threat of relocation or, once resettled in town, in response to political, social, and economic (market) pressures, may be seen as a direct result of and reaction to the State initiative. Socio-economically the permanent home, unlike the informal, self-built house, is designed as a space of agglomeration and consumption; while the mobile tent (or even the tin shack) is hardly conducive to capital accumulation, the ownership of the single family home as elsewhere in the world is by its very definition a demand-generator for consumer goods, products and services. As a result, Bedouin housing has been masculinized, not only in terms of they who are now most responsible for its design and furnishing (see Dezuari, 2009; Meir and Gekker, 2011), but further, by the very nature of the built form itself.

In part, this is due to the changing roles of women within Bedouin society. New power dynamics between men and women is both an expression of the creation of the new residential spaces within which the Bedouin now reside (see Dinero, 1997), as well as a facilitator of the creation of new spatial designs and configurations (Meir and Gekker, 2011). The internal design and accoutrements of the Bedouin home increasingly reflect the values of consumption and settlement, rather than mobility and nomadism. This stands in sharp contrast to the past; although housing interiors were emphasized more than exteriors with the interior spaces being considered the realm of the woman (Marx, 1967), owning possessions (other than the tent itself) was considered burdensome and, as a result, was uncommon.

Politically speaking, a shift to harder materials both within the planned towns and even more so within the unrecognized communities reflects an increasingly defensive posture *vis à vis* one's relations with the outside world. One's house has become one's fortress; the protective structure becomes the anchor through which one stakes his family's claim to that immediate space, and, to the degree possible, whatever surrounding land is most easily accessed and, by extension, defended. In both the planned towns and the informal settlements, the hard-sided house provides a "fact-on-the-ground," a marker on the game board that proclaims a sense of ownership and permanence for all to see (Dinero, 2010).

While scholars may agree that the Bedouin use housing as an outward expression of their identity (Dezuari, 2009; Na'amneh et. al, 2008), the meaning of what is being expressed, based upon where housing is built (and, as seen above, re-built), out of what materials, using what designs, and by what designers, is open to discussion. Based upon the discussion above, it is the contention here that the increasing size and "in-your-face" presentation of ever larger and more extravagant designs of Negev Bedouin housing is one way of stating, through built form, that the Bedouin are a permanent presence in the Negev, and will not be pushed out (Dinero, 2010).

Clearly this contestation of space is manifest in both the planned and the informal settlements as well. But within the planned towns, housing both reflects and is a reflection of conflicting political stands in relation to the willingness to accept State planning policies and demands. Housing performs a primary role in expressing a political stand of both submission to the rule of law, to the power of the State, and to its demands, while at the same time staking a claim to the pride, values, and attitudes that have informed Bedouin life and culture for millennia.

Life in the informal settlements means time is similar, but quite different from life in the planned towns. But what factors distinguish the environments beyond the nature of their housing, none of which in theory at least is of a permanent design in the informal settlements? In order to make such comparisons, I undertook a household survey in 2007, the fourth in a series initiated in 1992 (Dinero, 2010). Unlike previous surveys, however, I sought in this case to gather information both about social and economic change within the planned town of Segev Shalom, as well as to compare the town with changes and attitudes taking place among those living in informal housing (Dinero, 2010). The findings appear in the following section.

The Informal Housing Sector: Self-builds, Self-actualization, Self-respect?

The 2007 Segev Shalom household survey was completed at the end of March, and all data were entered into a spreadsheet soon thereafter. Two hundred thirty-six opinion surveys were completed, which amounted to 21 percent of all existing, recognized households in the town at the time. The survey was carried out with the assistance of 12 bilingual students; 90 percent of the opinion surveys were completed using Arabic, while the remaining 10 percent, which I completed, were conducted in Hebrew. The implementation of the survey followed a random sampling process,

implemented in a manner similar in design to previous household surveys used for this body of research since the early 1990s (Dinero, 2010). In May of the same year, I also initiated a small comparative survey in neighboring unrecognized settlements near Segev Shalom. Eight surveyors randomly sampled 45 households total in these areas. Given that there are thousands of households in the unrecognized settlements, the results of this sample may be viewed as a snapshot of conditions in these environments (Dinero, 2010).

Using Chi-square analysis, I sought to answer two questions: 1. How, if at all, does one's residence (planned town vs. informal, unplanned) correlate with a number of social, economic and political conditions? and, 2. How, if at all, does one's type of housing *within* the planned environment correlate with socio-economic or political factors? The purpose in seeking this data was to try to determine how and if, overall, where one lives, as well as the form of housing one has access to, plays any significant role in one's political, social or economic circumstances, positions, or attitudes.

My findings confirm that, with some noted exceptions, *where* one lives at the macro, town level (i.e. recognized vs. unrecognized settlement) is *less* important than *how* one lives and with what accoutrements - that is, what type of dwelling one resides in. In other words, as will be seen below, while significant differences can be detected between the lives and attributes of Bedouin residents residing in the two environments, so too can significant differences be identified between those in a town residing in a stone/permanent house and those residing in "temporary" dwellings including tin shacks, tents, and the like.

Numerous statistical correlations comparing the responses of residents living in one planned town, Segev Shalom, with Bedouin residents of surrounding informal settlements bear out this contention (Dinero, 2010). In terms of the ownership of durable goods, for example, those living in the planned town predictably were more likely to own more consumer goods than those living in the unrecognized settlements. This was true of VCR/DVD players (p=.02), refrigerators (.00), videogame players (.00) and personal computers (.00). In part, ownership of these goods relates to other aspects of Bedouin life. For example, those in town were more likely to be connected to the formal electrical grid (p=.00) and to rate this service in a positive way (.00). The urbanized Bedouin were more likely to be connected to the formal water service (.00) and to rate it positively as well (.00).

While both of these services are site specific, medical services are not; that said, those living in town still were more likely than those living outside of town to use private medical services in addition to the publicly provided services (p=.00). This is likely explained by social and economic factors. Despite the fact that auto ownership was not found to vary between the two environments, access to such doctors should not face geographic barriers. In truth, transportation and communication networks are poor in both environments. Roads inside the planned towns are poor, and public transportation is non-existent in most communities (Swirski

and Hasson, 2006) though in recent days, some very limited bus service now serves Rahat. Private, relatively inexpensive taxis which follow no particular schedule shuttle irregularly between all of the towns and Be'er Sheva, however. As for the informal settlements, no such access exists.

Other social and economic indicators further distinguished those residing in the housing of the informal settlement sector from those residing in the planned town. Those in town were less likely to own animals for purposes of herding or husbandry (p=.00) or to raise any sort of crops or agricultural products (p=.00; 45 percent of town households raise crops). While it could be contended that this is only logical, and that those electing to follow the law and relocate to town might be less prone to hold herds, what is also true is that once in town, it is far more difficult logistically to do so.

Those residing in town were less likely to be polygynous (p=.04), and more likely to claim an identity as "Arab" or "Muslim," whereas those in the informal settlements identified as Bedouin or, to a far lesser degree, "Israeli" (.01). Similarly, those in town were found to attend mosque more regularly than those living outside of town (.05).

Lastly, there is also a political aspect to the planned/informal settlement divide. Though more active in mosque attendance, those residing in town were *less* likely to express confidence in the potential success of the Islamic parties in Israel in improving Bedouin communal social and economic conditions (p=.00).

Overall, those residing in town were more likely to vote in support of one of the Jewish/Zionist parties (for example, Labor, Mertz, Shas), or to state that "none of the parties in this country are any good." Those living in the unrecognized settlements were more likely to state that their recent votes had been cast either for one of the Arab or Islamic parties (p=.00). That said, those living in the planned sector were generally more likely to state that they felt that they were treated equally with Jewish Israelis, while those in the informal sector were less likely to express this sentiment (.00). And yet, in the final analysis, *those living in the planned town were generally more critical of the present political situation in the country and of the present government* (.01) despite - or perhaps because of - the life they had been forced to opt for in the planned environment.

What is one to make of these findings? It will come as no great surprise that there is a considerable difference between the socio-economic and political reactions and responses of those Bedouin living in informal housing in the unrecognized settlements with those living in a planned Bedouin town. However, it is the contention here, long-ago stated in previous works (see Dinero, 1996) that *within* the planned Bedouin towns, not all residents reside in what the State considers to be proper, stone homes, and this housing issue is both a reflection of and a cause for a growing frustration among the resettled Bedouin population. The 20-30 percent of families that do not reside in "proper" stone homes remains a consistent figure which has

barely fluctuated over time (Dinero, 1998: 72), despite evolutionary arguments to the contrary (Dezuari et al., 2009; Krakover, 1999).

Similar to the differences between the residents of the recognized and unrecognized settlements, several correlations were found concerning those residing in temporary housing and those who reside in permanent housing. Those living in a stone house rather than a temporary, soft-sided dwelling, for example, were more likely to own a personal computer (p=.00), VCR/DVD player, (.00), refrigerator (.00), videogame player (.00), (paralleling the situation noted above) as well as a telephone (.00), a television (.00), a clothes washing machine (.00), a TV satellite dish (.00), and a car (.00).

Economic and social factors once again play a direct role in explaining these differences. Those living in stone houses are more literate overall (p=.01) and enjoy higher incomes (.01). They are less likely than those living in temporary dwellings to raise animals for husbandry purposes (.00). But the parallels with those living in informal housing outside of the planned town do not end there. Those living in temporary dwellings in town are less likely to be connected to the formal electrical grid (p=.00); in turn, they are more critical (that is, more likely to express dissatisfaction on the opinion survey) with the electrical services in town than those living in stone homes (.00). They are also less likely to be connected to the centralized water system (.00) and more likely to be critical of this service (.00). Indeed overall, those living in formal housing were significantly more likely to rate the medical services higher as well (.02; likely due to the ease of access which these services may be acquired when compared to those in the unrecognized settlements), and to rate all town services in general more highly than those living in temporary housing (.05; again, given that there are virtually no proper services in the unrecognized villages, this makes a great deal of sense).

Lastly, two political indices revealed significant correlations. First, those living in permanent housing were more likely than their neighbors to have voted in the most recent election (i.e. in 2006; p=.03). And yet, as proved to be the case when comparing the town with the informal/unrecognized settlement, those living in proper, recognized, modern housing expressed greater dissatisfaction overall with the present Israeli government, and with its ability and/or willingness to support and pursue the interests and needs of the general Bedouin community (.03).

DWELLING IN PEACE AND CONFLICT: FUTURE CONSIDERATIONS

It is well recognized that the planned town, despite its favor among State planners, challenges cultural concerns, values, and attitudes among many in the Negev Bedouin community. Public and private space is reorganized and reinterpreted in ways which render it less "Bedouin space," and more as a new "third space" which

is neither Jewish nor Bedouin, neither Arab nor western, neither the past nor the future, but all of these and more – simultaneously.

The nature of the State's housing agenda further muddies this situation. For on the one hand, the argument has long been put forward that the purpose of Bedouin resettlement is one of modernization and service provision. Simply put, the Bedouin of the Negev can no longer be allowed to live as their ancestors did; the State is responsible for their welfare now, and the best, most efficient, rational and logical way to foster social and economic development is within the planned new town environment (Dinero, 2010).

And yet to date, the degree to which such towns can be viewed as "successes" is questionable at best. While some observers tout, say, the number of in-migrants to the towns as a barometer of the towns' attractive qualities (Krakover, 1999) without taking into account the governmental policies and housing demolitions (and concomitant anger and humiliation that accompanies such activities) which coerce these movements, the picture is far more complex. True, many Bedouin town residents have now begun to enjoy some of the services, provisions and opportunities promised by the State - as Figure 2 well illustrates. At the same time however, a consistent 20-30 percent live lives not unlike those of their brethren in the unrecognized settlements. Perhaps that which is the greatest difference between the two populations is that one need no longer live in fear of the daily threat of the bulldozer.

Increasingly, the difference between the recognized and the unrecognized towns is becoming blurred. As additional settlements are recognized, the threat of their destruction is eliminated. An example of this is the village of Abu Tlool, a community due east of Segev Shalom. Once an unrecognized, informal settlement, the village was scheduled to be incorporated into the Abu Basma Regional Council in the spring of 2011 (Shmueli and Khamaisi, 2011). The Council is unique, insofar as it is the single municipal body which governs a series of newly recognized communities which at one time were unrecognized, illegal settlements.

And yet, once a settlement is recognized, the community looks virtually no different from before, insofar as infrastructural changes will be slow in coming. Its status will change, but not the reality on the ground. Planned improvements come at a snail's pace, as has been the case in other Abu Basma villages such as Beir Haddaj, a sprawling community of tents and shacks located nearly 20 km south of Be'er Sheva which was recognized in the early 2000s and remains unchanged to the present day.

This is not to speak against the recognition of this and future informal settlements. On the contrary, such recognition is essential, and is long overdue. And yet, one must wonder if, at the end of the day, the State of Israel's modernization and development policies for its Bedouin population are in truth rooted in such policy elements as recognition alone.

For, over fifty years after the first housing unit was constructed at Tel Sheva, a considerable percentage of the Negev Bedouin community yet lives in an environment which differs greatly from that of modern day Jewish Israel. Many enjoy mod-

ern amenities and consumer goods; many others do not. Many are employed; many are not. The same goes for education and so on. But what is clear is that where one lives, be it in a planned town or an unplanned settlement, improves one's lot to a lesser degree than one might imagine, especially when housing is considered. What distinguishes the two realms the most significantly is that in one, the residents are considered outlaws, illegal squatters. To a surprising degree, much, though not all, of the differences ends there.

Negev Bedouin housing, as has been noted, cannot be separated from the larger political conflicts that exist between the State and the Bedouin community today. To a certain degree, it is the "canary in the coal mine." From the community's perspective, the acquisition of the permanent house has come to signify the successful migration into one of the planned towns. Once one finally *completes* the building of the permanent stone home, then and only then can the family move have any hope or sense of true achievement.

Only when the State realizes that *this* is the point of potential "take off" for those living in the planned towns (Rostow, 1960) - and not the point when the family departs from its lands of origin for the town - can the resettlement policy actually begin to enjoy the fruits of success. Otherwise, the charges that the Negev Bedouin resettlement agenda was (and is) merely a land grab will continue to be made - and with good reason.

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