



The Legacy of Muscular Judaism: Jewish-Israeli Identity through Sport

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This thesis examines how Israel's identity as a Jewish state is expressed through sport, using both archival and historical sources and ethnographic fieldwork. My primary contribution to the literature builds upon the history of muscular Judaism in order to develop a longitudinal perspective demonstrating how the body continues to provide a source of social and political capital, both reflecting and confronting identity. I show how sport is a platform for identity negotiation, a position which necessarily confronts certain other issues, including ethnoreligious divisions, Jewish sectarianism, nationalism and Israeli control of the Palestinian territories. Consequently, a second focus is the degree to which sport may be used for normalising relationships within Israel, primarily, secular Jewish-Israeli and Palestinian-Israeli relationships.

I explore the nexus of sport and identity within Israel through three ethnographic chapters, each exploring different themes through expanding but interconnecting perspectives within local, national and international spheres respectively. In the first ethnographic chapter (4), I show how community-based sport fits within the greater normalisation debate, viewing its successes and failures in response to the prevailing Jewish state. As professional football has had an integral role in modern Israeli history, Chapter 5 takes a fresh perspective on football culture, primarily seeing fans as a form of scaffolding upholding state institutions. The final ethnographic chapter (6) looks beyond Israel's borders, adopting the perspective of the state to see how athletes legitimise and broker Jewish identity on an international scale.

Ultimately, I find that, akin to Nordau's concept of muscular Judaism, sport continues to be productive for negotiating identity within Israel. Sport, however, reflects underlying socio-political patterns, and as such, the different areas of sport explored in the respective chapters have complementary strengths and spheres of influence for confronting and brokering Jewish-Israeli identity with the Diaspora, the Arab Middle East and recursively with itself.

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Finally, in an expression of gratitude and awe to all of those, around the world, who have shared their lives with me, inspired me, and enabled me to reach this day, I leave you with a quote from one of my favourite ethnographers, Thor Heyerdahl:

“Borders? I have never seen one. But I have heard they exist in the minds of some people”
(Permanent exhibit. The Kon-Tiki Museum, Oslo).

Thank you.

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Chapter 1. Introduction

This thesis sets out to examine some of the ways in which contemporary Israel's identity as a Jewish state is expressed through sport. I show that, in addition to being a mode through which identity is expressed, sport is a platform for identity negotiation, which invariably involves additional issues. In this case, these additional issues include ethnoreligious divisions, Jewish sectarianism and the Israeli control of Palestinian territory, all of which are leitmotifs within contemporary Israeli anthropology.¹ Consequently, a second concern is the degree to which sport may be used in attempts to “normalise” relationships within Israel, an idea I explore further below. Although modern Israel is home to numerous ethno-national and religious groups, all of which have some relationship with sport, and many of which are included in some of the activities I pursue in the following chapters, in relation to this additional concern I have chosen to focus on the normalisation of relations between Jewish-Israelis and Palestinian-Israelis. While not denying the agency of others, the overwhelming rhetoric of “Jewish” and “Palestinian” subsumes other identities, which can then be internally debated. This thesis looks at these issues through three interdependent channels of Israeli sport: participation, support networks and the role of the state. Each of these perspectives, loosely associated with increasingly expansive local, national and international scales respectively, approaches sport and identity from different, but connected angles. Occupying an ethnographic chapter each, these three channels or positions offer

¹ A re-write of her 2005 doctoral dissertation, Israeli anthropologist Orit Abuhav's *In the Company of Others: The Development of Anthropology in Israel* (2010) provides a substantive overview of anthropology within Israel, including its development and current state of practice (see especially Abuhav 2010: Ch. 4).

different lessons and ideas, while also showing how, at certain points, they inform one another. The boundaries between them are therefore not firm.

Although the questions addressed in this thesis focus on the contemporary period, in order to bring out the historical background, I approach them through a combination of historical and ethnographic materials. There are practical reasons for this decision, including disruptions to my fieldwork, discussed in Chapter 3. However, the decision is also justifiable intellectually because the genesis of the link between Jewish identity and sport extends back to the late nineteenth century. Movements such as so-called “muscular Judaism”, as well as the Zionists’ appropriation of sport in the political and national developments that were put in place in the first half of this period, continue to inform how Israeli sport is organised and performed today.

The development of a Jewish identity through sport

Initially attested in the mid-eighteenth century, the “Jewish Question”, regarding the appropriate treatment of Jews in society, had become a fundamental issue throughout Europe by the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. As part of the Jewish Enlightenment and the rise of Jewish nationalism, the civil, legal, political, religious and national rights of the European Jewish minority were debated among philosophers, politicians, authors, economists and religious authorities. Although many Jews had left the ghetto and had become considerably assimilated into mainstream European society, anti-Jewish persecution, which, while not new, was on the rise, and the ability of Jews to live as a collective free from persecution were among the most pressing considerations (e.g. Bruno Bauer’s 1843 essay on the emancipation of Jews and the 1844 response by Karl Marx). One movement born out of debates on Jewish

emancipation in the late nineteenth century was Zionism. Unlike earlier proposals, such as those by the Hegelians, Bauer and Marx, which sought to achieve Jewish political liberation within Europe (specifically Prussia for the first two), Zionism involved the desire to establish a Jewish homeland in the historical Land of Israel, then part of the Ottoman Empire. An additional element in what was both a visual and a practical aspect of the emancipation and nationhood associated with Zionism was the creation of the New Jew. This New Jew would be physically and mentally strong (Zimmerman 2006: 13). Sport provided the means to accomplish this.

The notion of Semites, a concatenation of Jews and Arabs drawn in opposition to nineteenth-century Aryanism, is explored in a series of essays by Gil Anidjar (2008). Anidjar, a religious studies professor at Columbia University, explores the brief life of Semitism in terms of its conceptualisation, its contribution toward contemporary concepts of race and religion, and its lingering socio-political implications. Despite the existence of anti-Semitism,² which now referred exclusively to Jewish populations and did not enter the lexicon until 1879 (Marr 1879), the concept was alive much earlier. Scapegoating and stereotyping of Jews can be traced back to the beginning of the Diaspora,³ which began around the Assyrian captivity of the Kingdom of Samaria (733 BCE) and the later Babylonian exile (609-539 BCE) (Rea 2008). Targeted anti-Jewish behaviour akin to modern anti-Semitism did not begin in earnest until the third century BCE, when Jews in Greece, preferring to maintain their allegiance to Jerusalem, did not assimilate to local religious and social practices (Flannery 2004: 10).⁴ The early Jews in Greece sought to strengthen their

² Throughout this thesis, I will refer to both anti-Semitism and anti-Judaism. While the two have differences in meaning (anti-Semitism refers to an aversion to Jewish ethnicity whereas anti-Judaism specifically targets the religion; Langmuir 1971, Abulafia (ed.) 1998), both appear within this text honouring subtle differences in meaning.

³ Derived from the Greek verb, *διασπορά* (dispersion), Diaspora (2015) is the “settling of scattered colonies of Jews outside Palestine after the Babylonian exile.” I capitalise it when used in its nominal form without modifiers or as an adjective of a proper noun.

⁴ Specifically targeting those of Jewish ethnicity/faith rather than all Semitic people (Richard Rubenstein and John Roth 2003: 30), anti-Semitism entered the popular lexicon in Germany in 1873 to encompass *Judenhass*,

ethnic distinctiveness under the threat of assimilation but, by doing so against convention, made themselves vulnerable. Following the subsequent destruction of the Second Temple in 70 CE, the Diaspora became increasingly associated with statelessness and being in exile, and it is productive as such within the intellectual discourse (Adelman and Barkan 2011: 159). This notion of exile is thus a fundamental concept in Jewish Zionism and is explored extensively in the diasporic literature by authors such as Yerushalmi (1982), Valensi (1986), Funkenstein (1989) and Raz-Krakotzkin (2007a, 2007b). Exploring anti-Judaism through a transcontinental collection of primary and secondary sources spanning 3000 years from its initial appearance in Egypt, its use by St. Jerome and St. Augustine in understanding fourth-century Christian theology, Martin Luther's desire to de-Judaize the Medieval Church, Shakespeare's sixteenth-century testimony to Judaism's commercial role in *The Merchant of Venice* and finally Joseph Goebbels' influential propaganda in the early-mid twentieth century, the thirteen chapters of Nirenberg's *Anti-Judaism* (2013) explore concepts and ideas of anti-Judaism that have enlivened three millennia of Western debates.

Deviating from some of his earlier work, such as *Communities of Violence: Persecution of Minorities in the Middle Ages* (1996), the conceptual interest of Nirenberg's later work (e.g. 2013) consists in not using anti-Judaism to explain the first century CE riots in Alexandria, medieval massacres or the Holocaust, but in undertaking a novel challenge by examining how opposition to Judaism became a fundamental thread defining the West's socio-cultural, political and even Christian heritage.

While some anti-Jewish acts may have reflected negative constructions of Christianity and European identity (see also Anidjar 2003), they are also directly linked to late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Zionism through their generation of feelings of Jewish statelessness and exile throughout the Diaspora. Among the events associated with

literally "hatred of Jews" (Bein 1990: 595). Jackson (1869: 337) suggests that this emerged out of a functionalist project interested in securing the superiority of the Caucasian race at a time when west Europeans classed societies along gradients of savageness.

statelessness are the pogroms before the First Crusade in 1096, riots in England and the subsequent 1290 Edict of Expulsion (enforced for nearly 400 years until Cromwell invited the Jews to return in 1657; Sigal 1986: 164), the Spanish massacres of 1391 and the expulsions following the Spanish conquest of Granada in 1492, the Ukrainian Cossack massacres between 1648 and 1657, the French Dreyfus Affair from 1894 to 1906 and the Nazi regime's Holocaust from 1941 to 1944. The most common alleged crime blamed upon collective Jewry is the charge of their murder of Jesus, developed in the Gospel of Matthew, possibly authored in the latter half of the first century CE (Duling 2010: 298).⁵ The conviction of deicide led to medieval Christian depictions of Jews as horn-wearing, cloven-hoofed, anti-Christ, satanic consorts (Wistrich 1999: 54). The association with evil justified anti-Judaism, and many further social problems were attributed to the Jews as a result (e.g. instigating the Black Death epidemic by poisoning well water; R. Levy 2005: 763). By the time of the Jewish Enlightenment and Zionism, Jews were stereotyped within Christian Europe as craven, weak, neurotic and excessively intellectual cowards. Along with seeking a homeland, the Zionists sought to disprove these hackneyed images by creating a Jewish personhood to which they could not be applied. A main component of this trend became known as *Muskeljudentum*, or “muscular Judaism”.

The greatest stimulus of east European Zionism was the Jewish persecutions in the Russian Empire, home to more than half of the world's Jewry by the 1880s (Ettinger 1976a: 790, 792).⁶ Prior to the Decembrist Revolt (1825), Jews were excluded from certain

⁵ “When Pilate saw that he could prevail nothing, but that rather a tumult was made, he took water, and washed his hands before the multitude, saying, I am innocent of the blood of this just person: see ye to it. Then answered all the people, and said, His blood be on us, and on our children” (Matthew 27: 24-25, King James Version).

⁶ Ettinger counts seven and a half million Jews in the world at the start of the 1880s, of whom seven million resided in Europe (1976: 790). In addition to including four million Jews in Russia, he also cites notable populations of one and a half million in the Austro-Hungarian Empire, 550,000 in Germany and 300,000 in the Ottoman Empire (792-793). There was a rapid rise in the population of European Jews, especially in eastern Europe, compared with Jews in other parts of the world. Ettinger attributes this sudden rise to improved sanitation, medical treatment and community development (790). Sephardic Jews in Asia and Africa, who had

nationalist activities, such as serving in the Russian army (they were taxed additionally in exchange for not serving), and they were confined to the resource-limited Pale of Settlement (see Kandel 1988: Ch. 9, Ch. 11). The czars of Imperial Russia (1721-1917), who were also Supreme Defenders of the (Orthodox) Church, also restricted the practice of Judaism. After the Revolt, new philosophies, namely socialism, Marxism, liberalism and nihilism, which had been incorporated into the Jewish Enlightenment, began to influence the czarist regime as well. Along with these new patterns of thought, Jews became increasingly assimilated into Russian culture, adopting its language, educational patterns and intellectual traditions. Following Berdjaev (1923), Solzhenitsyn (2001-2002) and Haberer (2004), one could also see Zionism as a movement of religious consciousness in reaction to Russian and later Soviet ideology.⁷ However, pogroms continued throughout the later years of Imperial Russia, notably with a resurgence following the 1881 assassination of Alexander II, which some blamed on the Jews.⁸ According to Ettinger (1976b: 881ff.), the pogroms went unchallenged by the police, who saw them as diffusing anti-czarist pressures.

Muscular Judaism

Max Nordau introduced the concept of muscular Judaism at the Second Zionist Congress of the [World] Zionist Organisation (WZO) in Basle in 1898. Inspired by muscular Christianity, a proselytising movement popular in the Victorian era, muscular Judaism also

comprised 20% of the world's Jewish population at the start of the nineteenth century, only accounted for 10% of the total Jewish population by the 1880s (791).

⁷ These patterns would continue, and by the 1930s, Arad suggests (2010: 133), Jews were well established within Russian intellectualism, perhaps contributing to the reinforcement of the Ashkenazi elite. While Jews remained a small minority in Soviet Russia at 1.8% of the general population, they comprised 12-15% of the university population. Delving into topics regarding Jewish involvement in Russian culture, Pinkus (1990), Mikhail Epstein (1994), Overy (2004) and Gartner (2010) look at patterns of both assimilation and rejection through the interaction between Soviet and Jewish patterns of belief, primarily in the time of Stalin.

⁸ The main assassin has been identified as Ignacy Hryniewiecki, a member of the nineteenth-century populist revolutionary movement, People's Freedom, in the Russian Empire (Massie 1967: 16).

saw the strengthening of the physical body as spiritually fortifying.⁹ Nordau believed the movement could use sport to develop the physical strength and mental tenacity to further the Zionist agenda and solve the Jewish Question (Foer 2004: 68). Nordau, a physician, was likely to have been well aware of medical literature espousing the benefits of physical fitness in building strong bodies and minds. Following the American Civil War (1861-1865) and the Franco-Prussian War (1870-1871), competitive games and sport that, according to Young (1872), developed physicality and the values associated with muscular Christianity were prescribed as an antidote to increasingly common diagnoses of hysteria and neurasthenia in [male] soldiers (see Park 2012).¹⁰ Although Nordau portrayed the movement as an empowering attempt at self-emancipation within the confines of his surrounding anti-Semitic, but liberal bourgeois German society, others have framed it as one of self-defence (see Presner 2003: 269-296; Stanislawski 2001: 74-79) or as rooted in opposition to prejudice (Kasten 2012: 275). In this capacity, one might argue that the transformation is somewhat paradoxical given that the creation of the New Jew necessarily involved the internalisation of anti-Semitic stereotypes. Zionism, for Nordau, was not an end in itself but the only viable response to world anti-Semitism.

According to Nordau, eastern European Jews had accepted a fate as apathetic and oppressed *Luftmenschen*, while western European Jews had lost touch with their Jewish heritage through assimilation to their Christian neighbours. If a Jew were to engage in gymnastics, he would become the antithesis of the depressed, desperate and panicky Ghetto Jew of European anti-Semitic stereotypes (Nordau 1898: 25; cf. Zimmerman 2006: 13ff.).

⁹ Nordau saw the body as integral to Zionism, and such ideas may now be mainstream following anthropology's corporal turn. However, body politics have not been a universal aspect of Zionist thought (cf. e.g. Adolf Böhm's *Die Zionistische Bewegung* (1921), an intellectual history of Zionism through 1925, and Nahum Sokolow's *History of Zionism 1600-1918* (1919), which has an introduction by Balfour).

¹⁰ Beyond Judaism, muscular religions and cultures gained traction around the world, largely due to colonial perceptions of the effeminacy of non-Western men. In relation to British colonialism, this is comprehensively explored in Sinha (1995). Banerjee (2005) and Farooq and Parker (2009) explore muscular Hinduism and Islam respectively, mainly seeing muscularity as a remnant of colonialism and a current means of values transmission.

Effeminate physical bodies had become a metaphor for the Jewish incapacity to have a strong political body. Therefore, the making of corporally and morally strong Jewish men would symbolise a new concept of Jewish masculinity that would extend beyond physical bodies to impact on political bodies (Kasten 2012: 268).¹¹ The athletic focus was also an answer to the notion of the excessively intellectual rabbinical Jew, because, while already mentally strong, the rabbi was seen as having become atrophied from years of pursuing the esoteric and the ephemeral and therefore having become physically and perhaps emotionally delicate. Muscular Judaism would therefore produce a transformation of *Luftvolk* into *Nationalvolk*.

Beyond shaping an idealised person, once in Palestine the Zionists saw sport as integral to the security and legitimacy of their developing nation-state. In the early twentieth century, one of the most visual ways through which athletes became involved in the development of the Jewish state was by being charged with its defence. Physical prowess propelled athletes to the front lines to fend off any invasion and to secure the interior of their territories. Although written more than twenty years after the founding of Israel, a passage from a 1969 book marketed by the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) to American soldiers encapsulates the Zionist nexus between the body and the nation:

The Israeli Army is producing a new type of man in this young, energetic Middle Eastern country. By means of tough, well-planned physical training, the army is contributing to the change in the physiognomy of the modern Israeli and to the transforming of the immigrants from seventy different countries into one, homogenous type. The “traditional Jew” of Eastern Europe was known, in the past, for his capability to bear mental sufferings and moral tortures and for his physical weakness. Subjected to racial discriminations, the Jew of Eastern Europe was not conscripted into the army, nor did he engage in manual work. His main activity was in commerce and the educational field. This had resulted in the Jew having weak arms and soft back and belly muscles... But with the new Israel it is quite different. The citizen is taller, he has broad shoulders and his muscles are stronger. The physical fitness of the average Israeli was one of the most important elements which led to the lightning victory of the Israeli army in the Six-Day War of June 1967. (Lurie and Segev 1969: 13)

¹¹ Women’s liberation had not yet penetrated Europe at the start of the Zionist project, though women had full participatory and voting rights as of 1898 (Halperin-Kaddari and Yadgar 2010: 17). However, feminism had little impact practically. Despite claims of gender equity, journals of women in early Zionism are redolent with expressions of gender imbalances (Izraeli 1981, Bernstein 1987, Almog 2000).

The forthcoming chapters will explore how, following the initial stages of the muscular movement, sport would continue to inform the development of Zionism as a national identity within Mandate Palestine and later within the State of Israel.

An introduction to normalisation

As indicated above, the use of sport for the purposes of normalisation is another theme that will recur throughout the thesis. I have selected normalisation as an area of interest as it allows me to engage with several motifs encountered during my fieldwork, such as peace and political relevance, and it is also one of the fields in which sport is pursued directly in relation to identity. Normalisation has several interpretations within the social sciences, appearing first in the form of Tönnies' *Normaltyp* (1887) and later as Foucault's institutionalised patterns of idealised conduct as introduced in *Discipline and Punish* (1975: Parts II and III). In looking at international relations, however, we need a third definition. Throughout this thesis, I understand normalisation to constitute the various social and political processes through which concepts are considered "normal" in unremarkable daily life (e.g. Kuriansky 2007, Tamari 2013: 48).¹² In this sense, parallels can be drawn with other social phenomena, such as the perception of grief as a "normal" emotional response to the death of a close friend or relative and the belief that integrity is a "normal" characteristic of a positive role model. One contemporary example of an on-going normalisation movement in the United States is breastfeeding in public. Following slim approvals in the Idaho and Utah legislatures earlier in 2018, breastfeeding is now legal throughout the country. Despite its

¹² As will be discussed in Chapter 2, this understanding of normalisation contrasts with that articulated by Azzam (2016), which accepts inequalities between oppressed and oppressor as unquestioned. While productive in politics (see Salem 2005), Azzam's definition offers sport less agency in respect to its alleged normalising capacity. This is discussed directly as such in the ethnographic chapters below.

legally protected status, however, it is still not seen by everyone as a socially acceptable behaviour. Thus, those who believe that it should be a typical or prosaic part of child-rearing continue to fight for its acceptance—or normalisation.

This same definition of normalisation as being what is unremarkable in daily life is applicable within the context of Israel-Palestine, where normalisation is a salient topic in peace-making and diplomatic relations. Normalcy, according to Palestinian sociologist Salim Tamari (2013: 48), means Palestinians seeking freedom from the occupation, whereas Israelis yearn for a west European, ethnically-based nation in which they constitute a non-marginalised majority.

Social projects in Israel, including sport, have generated some momentum for the normalisation of relations outside the political sphere. Outside Israel-Palestine, sport has contributed to various normalisation efforts over the past one hundred years. Two such examples to which I refer later in this thesis are Khrushchev's de-Stalinisation plan and the Cuban Thaw between Cuba and the United States under President Obama. After Stalin's death in 1953, Khrushchev believed sport could contribute to the ambience of peaceful coexistence and open up channels for international exchange. Graduates of newly instituted sport universities adopted administrative roles in international sport federations and prepared early proposals for the 1980 Olympics in Moscow (decided in 1974 under Brezhnev), which would invite foreign athletes to celebrate the Soviet Union (Parks 2017: xvii-xviii). While baseball's history in Cuba extends back to the 1860s, it developed a recurrent role (see footnote 78) throughout the Cuban Thaw (*deshielo Cubano*), eventually leading Cuban and American presidents, Raúl Castro and Barack Obama, to restore bilateral diplomatic relations formally in 2015.

I will make the case for focusing on normalisation in this thesis in the second half of Chapter 2. I will discuss some of its practicalities and the at times, contradictory demands put forward by both Israel and Palestine as requisites for any normalising activity. As a corollary, having different interpretations of normalcy, as well as different needs, means that each side emphasises different aspects of the conflict. Additionally, I will consider some of the issues surrounding normalisation. This includes the rising anti-normalisation movement, predominantly driven by Palestinians, stemming from decades of subversion and mistrust, that threatens the normalisation prospects of even a child's football game against Jewish-Israelis. Normalisation and anti-normalisation efforts are developed at all levels, from small, community organisations to state governments, and are not inherently tied to any political, social or religious doctrine. Despite contrastive normalisation and anti-normalisation movements, normalisation remains a productive means of analysis because it enables some of the stipulations for negotiations put forward by both sides to be deconstructed. This in its turn enables us to begin to understand the motivations underlying such requests, while also seeing how they can be seen as contrarian.

In Chapter 2, I will show how western traditions of sport have become inseparable from civilising and normalising processes, even when normalisation is not an explicit aim (e.g. Bourdieu 1990, Elias and Dunning 1986, Jarvie 2006, among others). For example, Kirk et al. (1996: Ch. 22) discuss how, around the time of the Industrial Revolution, sport became a source of moral guidance in Britain and also how it diffused this morality throughout other parts of Europe. The Frenchman Pierre de Coubertin, considered to be the father of the modern Olympic Games, was a utopian idealist allegedly inspired by the ethos of British sport (Kirk et al. 1996: 135; MacAloon 2008: xviii; Kidd 2006: 706). While the British valued sportsmanship for its ability to generate national unity, de Coubertin looked beyond national borders and saw the potential of sport to achieve international rapprochement and

world peace (Mangan 2010: 155-156). Through my own research, I describe how Israelis (and Palestinians) use sport to support and, at times, reject normalisation. Although most obviously targeting the Israeli-Palestinian relationship, sport is also harnessed to navigate social patterns of intrastate sectarian hegemony and international recognition that contribute to so-called normal relations.

One of the assumptions underlying normalisation is that it is, in fact, possible. While there are examples of successful normalisation efforts, not all attempts are successful. Earlier this year Armenia officially annulled the 2009 Zurich Protocols, which sought to restore diplomatic relations with Turkey. Nearly a decade after the protocols were initially brokered, neither country had ratified the agreements, citing a failure to agree over key issues, such as the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. Normalisation has also been a key topic within the Northern Ireland peace process, especially following the 1998 Good Friday Agreement, when the focus shifted to devolution and power-sharing between the republicans and the unionists (see Blackbourn 2015). Despite early political successes that met many of the principles within the framework of the Good Friday Agreement, the consociationalist Northern Ireland Executive has been in a deadlock since January 2017 (as of June 2018) after allegations of clientelism and corruption. Both examples highlight the dynamic nature and temporality of normalisation as an on-going process.

Like Northern Ireland, Israel-Palestine has been described as a conflict that is both immortal and intractable, the result of the decades of unrest. Whether one pinpoints the conflict as having started in 1948, the 1880s or with the Assyrian captivity in remote antiquity, it has long surpassed the collective memory of the populations involved. Thus, even looking back seven decades to the UN's partition of Palestine in 1947, what was proposed as a temporary solution has become known to the majority as the permanent status quo. The extended duration and the differing needs of Israel and Palestine have caused the

conflict to be defined as a zero-sum game. While heavily biased and edited by an outspoken pro-expansionist Zionist whose personal beliefs are central to his book, I only highlight Arie Stav's volume (2001) on this theme as it discusses the zero-sum nature of the conflict through an impressive range of arguments, including foreign policy, irredentism and geopolitics. Nets-Zehngut and Bar-Tal (2017) and Bar-Tal and Tiechman (2005) contribute a steadier academic approach to the zero-sum notion, as does Haramati (2016), albeit through a more popular style of literature.

Israel: A Jewish and democratic state?

One of the premises of normalisation in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is the degree to which Israel meets the needs of all of its citizens. While my fieldwork suggests that, in practice, the state prioritises its Jewish interests, the state's constitutional Basic Laws¹³ define the country as both "Jewish and democratic", implying that it at least has a commitment *de jure* to its non-Jewish residents (see Chapter 4).¹⁴ However, what exactly constitutes the meanings of *Jewish* and *democratic* is not clearly defined constitutionally. Judaism is stated to be a core Israeli value in the original 1948 proclamation of the state,¹⁵ but the word *democratic* was not added to the Basic Laws until 1985 (Amendment 9, clause 7A).¹⁶ While some early Zionists were religious, the majority were secular, preferring to express their Jewish identity through nationalist, cultural and historical means, rather than through

¹³ The Basic Laws of Israel are the compilation of the state's constitutional law.

¹⁴ The Knesset (n.d.). "Constitution and Basic Laws". Accessed 13 March 2016 from http://main.knesset.gov.il/About/Lexicon/Pages/heb_mimshal_hoka.aspx [Hebrew].

¹⁵ The Provisional Government of Israel (1948, May 14). "The Declaration of the Establishment of the State of Israel". Accessed 13 January 2017 from https://www.knesset.gov.il/docs/eng/megilat_eng.htm.

¹⁶ Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs ([1958, February 12] 2003, January). "Basic Law: The Knesset" (1958). Accessed 10 October 2017 from www.mfa.gov.il/mfa/mfa-archive/1950-1959/pages/basic%20law-%20the%20knesset%20-1958-%20-%20updated%20translatio.aspx.

religious ones. In part for this reason, this thesis focuses on Judaism as a national rather than a religious identity. In addition to seeking continuity with the muscular Judaism movement, the majority of Israeli Jews today identify as secular (44%) or “not very religious” (24%), choosing to express their identity through non-religious means (Central Bureau of Statistics 2017: 2). Additionally, those who identify as Ultra-Orthodox Haredim (9%; *ibid*) often have little interaction with national institutions, and some reject the state outright (e.g. Efron 2003, Batnitzky 2011: 184-185; Ashly 2018).¹⁷ With a menorah as its emblem, Hebrew as the official language and only *kosher* options in government cafeterias, contemporary Jewish-Israeli identity continues to connote an ethnoreligious identity that is as much concerned with association and personhood as with religious doctrine (Halperin-Kaddari and Yadgar 2010: 10).

While I prefer to focus on Judaism in terms of its nationalist productivity, some interesting current literature has explored Judaism as a religious, divine, or even racial, identity. Stepping outside the confines of the Israeli state to examine examples from Paris, New York and north-east India may enable a more dynamic conversation about constructions of Jewish personhood. Anthropologist Kimberly Arkin (2014) looks at Parisian Sephardi youth, determining that, although her informants ardently self-identify exclusively as Jewish, post-colonial French culture coerces them into a Jewish-Arab amalgam. For Arkin, this coalescence of externally imposed identities appears to reactively reinforce a sense of religion-as-race that makes France’s multi-religious and multi-ethnic nation threatening.

Such externally framed identities are also salient in Goldschmidt’s (2006) study of Jewish-Black identity in a Brooklyn, New York neighbourhood. Resulting from two years of fieldwork in Crown Heights, an area of central Brooklyn that has been at the epicentre of periodic antagonism between its Lubavitch Hasidic and Afro-Caribbean communities,

¹⁷ From a practical perspective this means they typically form their own communities and are less involved in sport (see footnote 108).

Goldschmidt discovered that the Jewish, West Indian and African American populations have different parameters for understanding and constructing identity. Hasidic Jews, Goldschmidt concludes, see the Jewish-Black division as a religious divide (Jewish-Gentile), whereas the West Indians and African Americans see it as one of race (Black-White), and the wider community sees it as one of culture. Superseding these divisions, the Jews also see themselves as a “Chosen People”, which tests the boundaries of an American system of multiculturalism that is accustomed to ethno-racial categories, not divine ones. Race and religion are also confronted, this time as co-producers of Jewish identity, in a 2015 article by Yulia Egorova. Egorova’s anthropological study examines the immigration of the Bene Menashe, a traditionally Christian Indian ethnolinguistic group from the Indo-Burmese border, to Israel. Having been converted to Christianity in the nineteenth century by missionaries, the Bene Menashe later claimed descent from the Lost Tribes of Israel and began to practise Judaism (Samra 1992, Weil 2004). Egorova (2015: 495) finds that, in order to counteract being perceived by Israelis as racially different and be accepted as bona fide national subjects, the Bene Menashe need to exaggerate their religious identity. While there are various ways to identify oneself profitably as Jewish, according to Sartre (1948), part of Judaism’s strength as an identity stems from millennia of perceived persecution that created an international solidarity accessible to all self-identifying individuals, regardless of specific religious adherence.

While there is a direct link between Israel and Judaism, the state’s identification as democratic is more uncertain.¹⁸ While its principle of inclusion seeks to reinforce the equality of all its citizens, the degree to which this is accomplished is contested.¹⁹ Only the Jewish

¹⁸ Upon being asked about the status of Israel as democratic during fieldwork (2014), several Jewish-Israeli informants felt the term could be interpreted as extending core Jewish values (e.g. including human dignity and justice) into the social and political spheres rather than the religious.

¹⁹ In a public opinion poll, 74.8% of Jewish-Israelis believe the country succeeds as both a Jewish and a democratic state (Hermann et al. 2013: 8), whereas a nearly equal percentage (72%) of Palestinian-Israelis disagree (ibid.: 3).

calendar is recognised by the state, and most non-Jews cannot serve in the IDF, meaning that they miss out on the housing, social and educational benefits associated with service packages. Furthermore, a preliminary study by Israel's Courts Administration and the Israel Bar Association shows that Palestinian-Israelis charged with crimes are more likely to be convicted and receive longer sentences than Jewish-Israelis accused of the same crimes (Zarchin 2011). In July 2018, the Knesset approved a bill defining Israel constitutionally as “a ‘Nation-State’ for the Jewish People”,²⁰ formally removing Arabic’s status as an official language, claiming an indivisible Jerusalem as Israel’s capital, and providing a pro-Jewish foundation for other bills, e.g. the “Muezzin Law”, which would silence evening calls to worship by Islamic institutions.

Social hierarchies and Palestinian citizenship

As the above account indicates, society in Israel is deeply divided along ethnic, religious and national lines. Leo Kuper (1978: xiv) consolidates these divisions into a four-level hierarchy with which he aims to account for the different experiences of the various groups in Israeli society. The top two strata are Jewish, the first filled by the eastern European Ashkenazim (largely the sect associated with Labour Zionism), the second by the Sephardi/Mizrahi majority and other Jewish sects. The lower tiers are occupied first by Palestinian (and other non-Jewish) citizens of Israel, followed by non-citizen Palestinian residents. Largely overlapping with this hierarchy, Kuper demonstrates the further complexities of identity in Israel by highlighting five contested sub-hierarchies, the first two of which are the focus of this thesis: Ashkenazi and Sephardi/Mizrahi Jews; Jewish-Israelis and Palestinian-Israelis in Israel; secular and religious Jews; Jewish-Israelis and Arab-

²⁰ Ministry of Justice (26 July, 2018). “Basic Law: Israel - The Nation State of the Jewish People”. Accessed September 14 from <http://main.knesset.gov.il/Activity/Legislation/Laws/Pages/LawPrimary.aspx?t=lawlaws&st=lawlaws&lawitemid=2073986> [Hebrew].

Palestinians in the West Bank; and Druze, Christians and Muslims. The first three of these are investigated in a thorough, albeit dated approach by Smootha (1978, especially Ch. 5, Ch. 6, Ch. 7). Although Smootha admits to finding some variation in categorisation, he refers to the identity groups as “quasi-castes” due to their rigid association with birth status (1978: 74). Later Smootha (2002) developed this notion into one of Israel as a prototypical “ethnic democracy”, in which the prevailing hegemonic power (i.e. the Ashkenazi) maintains a façade of emancipation. This account is further digested in a more nuanced manner in Berent (2010). Using ethnic democracy, both authors provide a moderately even-handed account of the intricate social patterns that underline all intra- and inter-state social interactions involving Israel.

Through her anthropological research on gender and racial protests between the Single Mothers’ March (2003) and the New Black Panthers (2014), Smadar Lavie, a Jaffa-born Mizrahi Israeli-American anthropologist, deconstructs the “one people” myth of Israeli Judaism. Lavie’s 2014 work highlights the domination exerted by Ashkenazim over other Jewish groups, notably Mizrahim, by deconstructing Ashkenazi hegemony over other social and political groups. In her hierarchy, Lavie equates marginalisation within Ashkenazi-dominated political officialdom with systemic torture that simultaneously disenfranchises and impoverishes the Mizrahi while still working to create a positive experience that yields full Mizrahi loyalty to the state. Whether as seen by Kuper and Smootha or by Berent and Lavie, Israeli strata will be relevant throughout the forthcoming ethnographic chapters, as I explore how sport is used both as a mechanism for control by the secular Ashkenazi elite and potentially as a means of empowerment by others, predominantly Mizrahi Jews and Palestinian-Israelis.

While I will explore other aspects of these hierarchies in various parts of the thesis, one that requires special attention is the distinction between Palestinian-Israelis who have Israeli citizenship and those who do not. The main distinction is that Palestinian citizens of Israel are entitled to most of the same benefits as Jewish citizens, not serving in the IDF being the key exception. Many Palestinians found themselves incorporated into the Israeli state following Israel's annexation of land following the 1948 and 1967 wars (those incorporated in 1948 were nonetheless subject to martial law until 1966; see Segev 2007: 81-82, 88-90). Although many were offered citizenship at the time, most declined so as not to legitimise Israel and its annexations of Palestinian land. Some Palestinians have since applied for citizenship, many unsuccessfully. Without citizenship, they are officially stateless and granted only the status of permanent resident. Permanent residents vote in municipal elections, pay taxes, have work permits and receive certain state welfare benefits (e.g. health care, social security). However, their status is precarious. According to B'tselem (2017a), non-citizens comprise 40% of Jerusalem's population yet only have access to 8.5% of its land—access to much of which involves daily passages through checkpoints, which can limit employment and educational opportunities, as well as access to health care, etc. Even if one has been born in Israel, residence permits are rescindable, one is not eligible to participate in national elections, and requests for building permits or family unifications are rarely approved.

As such, the state's Jewish priority, its different resident Jewish sects and the varying statuses of Palestinians and other minority ethnoreligious populations all complicate Israel's socio-political infrastructure. To understand how sport can be a catalyst in Israeli identity politics, I will provide a brief history of Zionism. This is not intended to be exhaustive, but rather aims to highlight certain debates that help explain the contemporary Israeli-Zionist

platform. As I am looking at this issue ultimately from within Jewish Israel as driven by Zionism, this history frames issues and debates that have contributed to the creation of Israel through the lens of the Zionist movement.

Relevant history of Zionism

Zionism is a *sui generis* national movement whose goal is to establish a Jewish nation in Eretz Israel.²¹ Although it has several factions, the movement is most closely associated with Theodor Herzl and his 1896 pamphlet, *Der Judenstaat* ([1896] 1986). Quickly becoming a fundamental Zionist text, *Der Judenstaat* proposes the twentieth-century formation of an independent Jewish state that Herzl envisioned would reduce the anti-Semitism and exclusionism that Jews experienced throughout Europe. Herzl convened the First Zionist Congress in Basle the following year (1897), which created a symbolic legislative assembly to develop the goals of Zionism, notably to explore the creation of a Jewish state in Palestine, enshrined in what became known as the Basel Program (Berkowitz 1993: 37).

Herzl's Zionism followed other similarly motivated Jewish initiatives by independent individuals and organisations throughout the second half of the nineteenth century.²² One notable such initiative, *Hovevei Zion* (Lovers of Zion), headed by Leon Pinsker in 1884, was also spurred by pogroms throughout the Russian Empire (see Penslar 1991). Explored in his 1882 text, *Autoemanzipation!* ([1882] 1936), Pinsker argues that Jews would continue to be

²¹ Attested in the Hebrew Bible, Eretz Israel refers to the areas of Israelite settlements. According to Israeli historian Shapira (1992: ix), although localised to the southern Levant, the term denotes ownership rather than finite geography. The Palestinian historian Masalha (2007) argues that the term acquired geographical relevance with the Zionist movement when it began to lay claim to particular swathes of territory.

²² At this time (1850) 4% of Palestine's 350,000 inhabitants were Jewish, 85% were Muslim and 11% Christian (Schölch 1985: 503).

subordinated until they achieved national consciousness and self-rule. While Pinsker's book was a turning point for Jewish nationalism, Herzl rejected Hovevei Zion and other earlier movements for not seeking the support of the local government for their immigration plans, which Herzl deemed imperative for the success of large-scale immigration. Without the support of the Ottoman government, in whose territory the proposed settlement would be made, Herzl foresaw that gradual Jewish colonisation would be destined for failure because it would eventually threaten the region's status quo. Öke (1982), Shaw (1991) and Rabkin (2015) effectively discuss Herzl's negotiations with international dignitaries—including the Ottoman sultan, Abdul Hamid II, who was initially not supportive of the idea—to generate support for increased Jewish settlement following the 1897 Basel Congress.

Although modern Zionism only dates to the second half of the nineteenth century, a slender connection with earlier Biblical history was attested to in the state's proclamation, delivered by Israel's inaugural prime minister, David Ben-Gurion in 1948:

After being forcibly exiled from their land, the people kept faith with it throughout their Dispersion and never ceased to pray and hope for their return to it and for the restoration in it of their political freedom.

Impelled by this historic and traditional attachment, Jews strove in every successive generation to re-establish themselves in their ancient homeland.²³

Zionism was sold as a national movement to support the needs of the Jewish nation, but despite increasing anti-Semitism, it has never received universal support among Jews (Goldmann 1978: 77; H. Kaufman 2005: 150). The platform was not without its practical and religious controversies: in particular, it was argued that there was no proof that a homeland would solve the Jewish Question. Should it fail, it might sabotage later Jewish efforts to integrate into the dominant European culture(s). The secular Jewish Bund opposed Zionism's desire to create a homeland. Reform Judaism rejected Jewish nationalism as anti-Judaic, and

²³ The Provisional Government of Israel (1948, May 14). "The Declaration of the Establishment of the State of Israel". Accessed 13 January 2017 from https://www.knesset.gov.il/docs/eng/megilat_eng.htm.

the Ultra-Orthodox felt the Messiah would come through divine, not socio-political intervention (Taylor 1971: 10-11; Zur 1998: 111). Others feared the possibility that any Jewish state would be secular rather than religious. Rabkin's *A Threat from Within* (2006) comprehensively explores these issues, as well as mechanisms of current opposition to Zionism from within the global Jewish community, to explain how a supposedly pro-Jewish ideology, albeit a largely secular one, can run counter to the tenets of contemporary faith.

Rise of nationalism

Zionism also fed into a new trend rising in Europe at the end of the Romantic period in the nineteenth century—the tendency for nation-states to replace multi-ethnic empires. Such multi-ethnic empires (e.g. the Ottoman, British, Russian and Austrian empires) comprised monarchies ruling over collections of different ethnicities. With the new nation-state, governments implemented policies through the mass media, using education, literacy and the notion of a shared culture to create well-defined identities. These processes have been widely discussed in the writings of, among others, Benedict Anderson (1983), Ernest Gellner (1983) and Hobsbawm and Ranger (1983), although Wimmer and Feinstein provide an alternative reading, proposing that the nation-state developed out of more local, intrastate forces and historical institutionalism (2010: 765).

In western Europe, the nation-state united itself around its civic character. These states, inspired by liberalism and philosophical rationalism, are characterised by supposedly common ideologies and shared territory as well as ethnicity. Thus their membership is inclusive of anyone ascribing to the values of the state (e.g. language, government). In eastern Europe, home to many members of the Jewish Diaspora, emerging nation-states were ethnically based. Membership in ethnic nations is based on shared heritage, and as such is exclusive. In order to be accepted, one needs to assimilate in full—to adopt a new ethnicity

and a new history (Dowty 2017: 31). Under these new codes, states like Poland and Germany became places for Polish Poles and German Germans; neither was a place for Jews.²⁴

Lacking the geographical restrictions of civic states, Safran (2008: 184-185) writes, ethnically-based nation-states can include diaspora groups—communities of ethnically related individuals in non-contiguous regions. Accepting this, one can see the Jewish Diaspora as a nation without a state. Indeed, this became part of the Zionist framework propelled by ideologues such as Herzl and Nordau. For example, Nordau, in the Zionist newspaper, *Die Welt*, wrote: “Even if it would be true that Jews today are not a people among others, the mere fact that anti-Semitism exists would be a sufficient reason for them to become a people” (Nordau 1897, my translation).

The appeal of Palestine

One of the unique facets of Herzl’s Zionism as a national movement is that it identified with a homeland in which the vast majority of its followers were not living at the time of its inception. Indeed, at the time, its members lived in different countries and spoke different languages, meaning the movement lacked a united culture. Literature explaining the attraction of Palestine for Zionists beyond its Biblical roots is scarce. Engel (2009: 12) suggests that Palestine was not chosen as a destination solely because of religious links with the territory, but rather because it satisfied the immediate material needs of east European Jews, needs largely catalysed by the emergence of nation-states and anti-Semitism discussed above. Engel (2009: 31) gives several pragmatic reasons for Palestine’s selection, apart from religion: it was outside the European nation-states, it had access by sea to Europe, and there was already an established Jewish community there.

²⁴ Such states were not necessarily mono-national, but they identified as such regarding their ideological aspirations.

Following the Sultan's early dismissal of the proposal for a Jewish state in Ottoman territory, the Zionist organisation considered the alternative locations for a "homeland" offered by Joseph Chamberlain, then-Britain's Secretary of State for the Colonies, namely nearby Cyprus and Sinai and more distant British East Africa, all of which were under Britain's control. However, as they all lacked a connection with the Jewish homeland, the focus returned to Palestine. Other proposals included Madagascar, then a French colony, and the Jewish Autonomous Oblast (JAO) in Russia's Far East. In both cases, the push for settlements was based upon anti-Semitic policies that sought to remove Jews from the European continent. The Madagascar proposal, which would have been funded through the liquidation of European Jews' finances, was promoted by the Third Reich, but it became redundant after Germany's defeat in World War II (Browning 2004: 88). Although the JAO was established in 1934 as part of Stalin's nationality policy, it failed to attract foreign Jews (a recent book by Gessen (2016) tells its story from Stalin through to the present). While today the JAO is recognised as the world's only official Jewish territory outside Israel (in accordance with the Russian Constitution 1993: Art. 65.1), only 0.01% of its population identifies as Jewish (Federal State Statistics Service 2010: 226).

British interest and the Balfour Declaration

At the start of World War I, many Jews remained loyal subjects of their states and supported the Central Powers (Austro-Hungarian Empire, Ottoman Empire, Germany). Additionally, Germany especially had been the cradle of many Jewish and Zionist social

networks (Berlin would become home to the Zionist organisation in 1919). Furthermore, the history of pogroms made it hard for Jews to support Russia, which was part of the Triple Entente (Goldschmidt and Davidson 2010: 279).²⁵

However, the Ottoman-German Alliance, which had been ratified shortly after the war broke out, limited Germany's ability to support Zionism, as Palestine was still part of the Ottoman Empire. Germany's status as a Zionist partner was further hampered in 1917. Precipitated by the German sinking of the *RMS Lusitania*, the United States entered the war as an "associated power" of the Entente. By this time, the United States had developed a significant Jewish diaspora community because of a combination of the entrepreneurial opportunities perceived to exist in the so-called New World and of the United States as a refuge from European anti-Semitism, and some Zionists counted themselves among Woodrow Wilson's closest advisors (Gelvin 2005: 82-83). In conjunction with the fall of the Russian Empire later in that year (Goldschmidt and Davidson 2010: 279), the United States' involvement generated Zionist support on behalf of the Allies. With the Entente receiving more Zionist support, Britain stepped in with a proposition.

In 1917, the British foreign secretary, Arthur Balfour, addressed to Lord Rothschild, a leader of the Jewish community, a letter that has since become known as the Balfour Declaration:

His Majesty's government view with favour the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people, and will use their best endeavours to facilitate the achievement of this object, it being clearly understood that nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine, or the rights and political status enjoyed by Jews in any other country.²⁶

²⁵ Nonetheless many Jews did support the Entente, largely out of homeland loyalty, despite Russia's pogroms and Jewish deportation policies. Lohr, a Russian historian, surveys the Russian army's approach to the country's Jewish population during World War I (2001).

²⁶ Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs (1917, November 02). "The Balfour Declaration". Accessed 14 September 2017 from [www.mfa.gov.il/mfa/foreignpolicy/peace/guide/pages/the%20balfour%20 declaration.aspx](http://www.mfa.gov.il/mfa/foreignpolicy/peace/guide/pages/the%20balfour%20declaration.aspx).

As the Balfour Declaration is often held to be the document that established political Zionism, its content is the key to understanding the British position, which shaped its perspective on Zionism until the Palestinian mandate was dissolved in 1947, and it continues to have limited influence. Notably, through the declaration, Britain became the first major power to acknowledge officially the Zionist desire for statehood (Caplan 2010: 60). Despite its significance in the development of Zionism, Balfour's wording is intentionally vague (see Gelvin 2005: 82ff.; Goldschmidt and Davidson 2010: 279-280). What do "view with favour" and "best endeavours" mean? Balfour chose phrases such as "national home" over "nation[al] state", despite the former having no validity in international law, because members of the British Cabinet were unconvinced by the Zionist claim to statehood (see Yapp 1995: 9; McTague 1980: 240). Likewise, "in Palestine" was preferred over other variants, such as "of Palestine", to clarify that Palestine would not be reconstructed as a Jewish territory and thus potentially disenfranchise the existing non-Jewish inhabitants.²⁷ That said, one may also argue, on the basis of the Basel Program, that early Zionism itself lacked an explicitly established unified goal regarding its aspirations to statehood—did it seek to create a state? If so, what type of state (Aschheim 2012: 41)?²⁸ Despite Balfour's precautions in authorship, British historian Gilmour (1996: 67) notes that only one member of the 1917 Cabinet that issued the declaration, Lord Curzon, anticipated that a Jewish homeland in Palestine would lead to decades of ethnic hostility. While the declaration did not receive universal Zionist support due to its apparently soft approach (Gelvin 2005: 82), Zionists were largely content to move forward under a British protectorate within Palestine.²⁹ Conversely, the Arab

²⁷ One may argue, and indeed Rashid Khalidi has (2004: 25-30), that the creation of the mandate itself disenfranchised the native (Arab) population. In describing the proposed mandate, Article 22 of the League of Nations (1919) defined the former Ottoman Empire territory as being "inhabited by peoples not yet able to stand by themselves under the strenuous conditions of the modern world", whereas the "peoples" in question had existed on that land before the Ottoman Empire came into existence.

²⁸ This latter question is still debated, especially with regard to the Basic Laws in 1985 that defined Israel as a "Jewish and democratic state".

²⁹ Churchill's 1922 White Paper denies that Jewish statehood was the intended eventuality under British rule (Mansfield 1992: 181). Meinertzhagen (1959: 104), however, believes that both Balfour and Lloyd George did

response to the British Mandate was largely negative, partly driven by fears of future Jewish domination (Morris 2001: 76) and partly because mandate rule was seen as a poorly disguised form of colonialism (Mansfield 1992: 179).

Following the defeat of the Central Powers at the end of World War I, the victors established a series of mandates under the 1920 San Remo Conference and Article 22 of the Covenant of the League of Nations. The objective of the mandate system was to have areas that had been under now-defunct states to be administered by European powers until they were capable of self-governance (League of Nations 1919: Art. 22). In the Middle East, these arrangements were largely based on the 1916 Sykes-Picot Agreement. Unlike protectorates and colonies, the mandatory powers were expected to act on behalf of the needs of the native population rather than in their own interests (Matz 2005: 70-71). Britain was officially awarded the League of Nations mandate for Palestine upon the latter's ratification in 1923. Britain also received the mandate for Iraq, though it was never fully enacted, and Iraq gained full sovereignty in 1932 (Sluglett 2007).

British interest in Palestine

Renton (2010: 17) suggests that, in keeping with the spirit of the world war, the Balfour Declaration was an attempt by Britain to appeal to the Jewish Diaspora for Allied support rather than necessarily because it supported Zionism. To this extent, in the previous two years, Britain had participated in several other contradictory agreements over the division of Ottoman territory (e.g. the McMahon and Hussein Correspondence and the Sykes-Picot Agreement).³⁰ In seeing the Balfour Declaration as propaganda for the war effort, Renton

anticipate a future state. Additionally, Naguib Azouri, a Lebanese Maronite Christian, wrote what may be the first book on Arab secularism in which he discusses the need for an Arab state independent of the Ottoman Empire, partly in reaction to rising Zionism, suggesting that he recognised Zionism's potential for growth (1905).

³⁰ The McMahon–Hussein Correspondence (1915-1916) is a series of ten letters between Hussein bin Ali, Sharif of Mecca, and Sir Henry McMahon, British High Commissioner to Egypt, in which Britain pledges to recognise

believes the scheme quickly blossomed into something larger than anticipated, and thus Britain was unprepared for the intricacies of the eventual mandate (2007: 85). Some indications of this can be found in the work of the British-Israeli historian Michael Cohen, who writes that Churchill saw Britain's Middle East mandates as superfluous and burdensome additions to Britain's global imperialism (2012). In a 1919 memorandum to Prime Minister Lloyd George, Churchill expressed regret regarding the Ottoman partition and mandate plans, writing that "the Palestine venture is the most difficult to withdraw from and the one which certainly will never yield any profit of a material kind" (M. Cohen 2012: 2). In addition to not yielding any profit, Churchill and T.E. Lawrence, his advisor on Arab affairs, also allegedly thought little of the Palestinian Arabs ("stupid ... materialist, and bankrupt"; Wasserstein 1978: 14), but both believed the Hashemites of Transjordan (allocated to Britain as part of the mandate of Palestine in the Sykes-Picot Agreement; cf. Transjordan memorandum) to be among the most venerated of Arab families, having which under British dominion might offer the opportunity to broker any future British interests in the Middle East (M. Cohen 2012: 3).

Whether part of Britain's initial plan was to gain support for the Allies or not, the British had other reasons for investing in a Zionist territory in Palestine. To some degree, the Balfour policy was a logical continuation of Britain's existing presence in Palestine (see Schölch 1992). Britain had maintained a consulate in Jerusalem since 1838 as part of Egyptian ruler Muhammad Ali's appeal to European powers to support his expansionist aims and, after 1840, it had used its presence there to support the Ottoman Empire. Outside the war effort, there are two primary channels of thought regarding Britain's interest, one set out by Leonard Stein (1961), a British Liberal Party politician and leader of the Anglo-Jewish

Arab independence following World War I in exchange for the Sharif—previously aligned with the Central Powers—fighting the Ottomans (the Arab Revolt of 1916) on behalf of the Triple Entente. The Sykes-Picot Agreement (1916) covers the division of the Middle East (anticipating a Triple Entente victory) between France and Britain. These treaties are discussed in Fromkin (1989).

Association, and the other, in response, by Mayir Vereté (1970), an Israeli historian. While notably shy of definite conclusions, Stein provides a highly nuanced account of the motivations behind the Balfour Declaration, largely seeing Britain as a handmaiden of the Zionists, notably Chaim Weizmann. From this angle, Weizmann's autobiography (1949) also details the early meetings and negotiations affirming British support.

Vereté's perspective places Britain in the driving seat. For him, the Crown believed that a British-sponsored Jewish population could ensure continued access to the Suez Canal as a water route to India (then a British colony) and to port cities, such as Haifa, for pipeline and rail access to the Persian Gulf.³¹

The British Mandate

There were two major movements during the mandate era that saw the interests of the Jewish and Arab Palestinians come face to face with British authority: the Arab Revolt (1936-1939) and the Jewish insurgency (1939-1948). By 1936 the Jewish population of Palestine had grown to 30% of the mandate's population. Out of a fear of becoming a minority in the future and questioning British colonialism (e.g. Mohs 2008: 3; Costantinos 2014: 211), the Arab-Palestinians staged a revolt against the British, demanding an end to unlimited Jewish immigration (Townshend 1988: 923).

In response, the British government restricted Jewish land purchases and immigration and, led by Lord Peel, re-examined the long-term stability of Palestine. In 1937, Britain's Peel Commission proposed the division of Palestine into separate Jewish and Arab states, although this would be replaced shortly thereafter by the White Paper of 1939 (Engel 2009:

³¹ Additional theories, as well as attentive commentary on Stein and Vereté, have been provided by Kimche (1968), Shlaim (2009), Lewis (2014) and Hahnemann (2014). Caplan (2010) discusses some of the implications of Britain's interest in Palestine and describes how this interest was received by Zionists and Arabs respectively.

116).³² The 1939 White Paper articulated Britain's plan to establish an independent Palestine within ten years, jointly governed, proportional to population, by Arab-Palestinians and Jewish-Palestinians. Additionally, the White Paper placed a quota on Jewish immigration and limited land acquisitions. The Zionists overwhelmingly rejected the White Paper, believing that it limited Palestine's capacity to become a Jewish homeland, thus breaking the Balfour Declaration (see Kayyali n.d.: 221-222). Around this time, in 1939, the Grand Mufti of Jerusalem, Haj Amin al-Husseini, the *de facto* leader of Arab-Palestine, was exiled to Beirut and then to Iraq (Mallmann and Cüppers 2010: 65). Although the Haj still exerted his influence from abroad, his departure created a power vacuum, and the Arabs' fighting prowess did not recover (see W. Khalidi 2005: 70-71). This vacuum created an opportunity for the Jewish insurgency, a series of anti-British attacks in the 1940s perpetrated largely by Jewish underground militias (e.g. Haganah, Irgun). These militias were relatively substantial, comprising more than 5% of the Jewish population (Charters 1989: 42).³³ Charters (1989) provides the first academic account of the British campaign against the insurgents and shows why the British army found itself waging a losing war due to its redundant tactics and poor comprehension of the Zionist doctrine. In his book on the Irgun, Begin (1951) places the blame for many of these issues on supposed British duplicity in its alleged promise to support the creation of a Jewish homeland.

³² The Arab High Committee was against the partition entirely. The Committee opposed the creation of a Jewish state and was not interested in giving up valuable land (quality and quantity) for such a state (Qumsiyeh 2011: 85; Podeh 2015: 28ff.). The Zionist reaction to the Peel Commission's partition plan was mixed, but support for it was ultimately insufficient (see Podeh 2015: 28ff.). Morris (2001: 138) writes that Weizmann and Ben-Gurion believed the lack of support was foolish, as even a state in reduced territory could be a stepping stone to full acquisition of mandate territory. Galnoor (2012: 208) discusses how, although displeased with the overall partition plan, the partition concept was entertained enough to contribute potentially to later partition efforts.

³³ Key attacks include the assassination of the British Minister of State for the Middle East, Lord Moyne, in Cairo in 1944; the 1946 bombing of the British administrative headquarters in Jerusalem's King David Hotel; and the Acre Prison break and the hanging of two kidnapped British sergeants, both in 1947.

The termination of the British Mandate

In October 1946, Winston Churchill, as the Leader of the Opposition to the Labour Government under Prime Minister Clement Attlee (1945-1951), suggested that Palestine be transferred to the control of the United Nations. A few months later, in February 1947, the British Foreign Secretary, Ernest Bevin (1945-1951), formally presented a plan to refer the issue of Palestine to the UN (Newsom 2001: 77). In September of that year, the recently organised United Nations Special Committee on Palestine (UNSCOP) recommended the division of the Palestine into separate Arab-Palestinian and Jewish states (Newsom 2001: 77). In 1947, after outlining geographical divisions in Palestine based upon majority ethnicity, a two-thirds ruling by the United Nations General Assembly (from which Britain abstained) approved UNSCOP's partition recommendation (Bunton 2014: 18).³⁴ Britain announced it would terminate its mandate on May 15, 1948, several months prior to the expected UN takeover in August, leaving a further power vacuum in its wake. On the day prior, May 14, the Zionist leaders signed the Israeli Declaration of Independence, establishing Israel as an independent Jewish state.

On May 15, Egypt, Syria, Jordan and Iraq invaded Israel, triggering the 1948 Arab-Israeli War. In 1947, the Arab League,³⁵ headed by retired Iraqi general Ismaïl Safwat, had decided that the Palestinians would be unable to defeat the Jewish state without its military support (Gelber 2006: 11). Foreseeing a tough battle against the Arab coalition, and fearing Holocaust 2.0, Israel initially aimed to survive the 1948 war without losing too much ground. However, as the fighting escalated and as Israel proved to be the stronger side, it changed tactics and fought to expand its borders to include defensible Palestinian territory (Morris 2008: 397-398). By the time of the 1949 armistice agreements that brought an end to the war,

³⁴ Although one state would be designated Jewish and the other Arab, the populations were too intermingled to separate them completely, so the Jewish state would have had some Arab residents and vice versa (see Bunton 2014: 11).

³⁵ A collective formed in 1945 of six nearby Arab countries: Egypt, Iraq, Transjordan, Lebanon, Syria and Saudi Arabia. The Arab League currently has 22 member states (2018).

Israel had seized 60% more territory than the 1947 UN partition originally allocated (Morris 2008: 400, 419). The remaining territory of the former mandate was subsequently divided between the West Bank (annexed by the Kingdom of Jordan) and the Gaza Strip (placed under Egyptian military occupation). Thus, there was no Arab Palestinian state as envisioned by the UN, and as many as 80% of Arabs living in what became Israel were displaced (Masalha 1992: 175). As a result, what is known today in Israel as the War of Independence is known among Palestinians and the pan-Arab region as *al-Nakba* (the Catastrophe).

Many Palestinians in Israel were expelled by the Israeli or Palestinian authorities or left to their own devices out of a fear of further Zionist-led massacres, one of which had occurred just prior to the declaration of statehood.³⁶ Israel extended offers of citizenship to some Palestinians (still under martial law), many of whom refused as a protest against Jewish rule.³⁷ Amid the war, in September 1948, Israel appointed a trustee to oversee absentee Palestinian land.³⁸ In March 1950, the Knesset passed the Absentee Properties Law 5710,³⁹ which gave ownership of absentee properties to the trustee, who would then either gift or sell the land to Israel for purposes of commercial development. The Israeli military could ban access to any land at will, thus preventing Palestinians from accessing it and classifying it as abandoned and available for the Israeli trustee (Jiryis 1973: 90, 93). As part of a greater series of measures to acquire Palestinian land, the Knesset also passed the Emergency Land

³⁶ Zionist militia groups, the Irgun and Lehi, attacked an Arab village near Jerusalem, Deir Yassin, in attempt to gain control of Jerusalem during the siege of 1948.

³⁷ Living in what was defined as a Jewish state, Palestinians residing in the annexed territory would be “relegated to permanent and irremediable limbo status” (Susser 1998: 494-495), unable to adopt a full Jewish identity.

³⁸ Arab land ownership practices in Palestine at the time were different to those of the Zionists. With no deeds of legal ownership until the Turkish Land Registry Law of 1858, most land rights were based on association (Aumann 1972: 117). Much of the arable land was farmed by *fellahin*, peasant farmers who lived in small villages and worked for wealthy absentee landowners, who themselves lived elsewhere in cities, often as far away as Kuwait and Damascus. With the landowners absent, there was little security to counter inter-village feuding or prevent nomadic Bedouin sieges and Zionist land claims. Furthermore, the practice of Zionists settling on Arab land, often in vacated Arab houses, was seen as a safeguard against Arab repatriation (see Dowty 2017: 63; Falah 1983: Ch. 3).

³⁹ C. Weizmann, D. Ben-Gurion and E. Kaplan (1950). “Absentees’ Property Law”. Accessed 04 July 2017 from www.knesset.gov.il/review/data/eng/law/kns1_property_eng.pdf.

Requisition (Regulation) Law 5710, which authorised Israel to confiscate land if “necessary for the defence of the state, public security, the maintenance of essential supplies or essential public services, the absorption of immigrants or the rehabilitation of ex-soldiers or war invalids” (Jiryis 1973: 98). Cumulatively, these laws gave the Israeli state jurisdiction over the fate of Palestinian land.

The Six-Day War of 1967 saw another decisive Israeli victory and removed any remaining doubt regarding the budding state’s military prowess. During this short war, Israel captured the Sinai Peninsula and the Gaza Strip from Egypt, the Golan Heights from Syria and the West Bank and East Jerusalem from Jordan. The victory was more than an increase in physical land, it was a sentimental victory as well in that all of these territories were ones from which Jews had been exiled thousands of years before (field notes, 2016). As both Israel and Palestine see land as a condition of their identity (Kelman 1987: 348), debates concerning land ownership continue to be a fundamental topic of the on-going Israeli-Palestinian conflict and have been central to peace negotiations (e.g. Oslo Accords) and the occupation at large. Bisharat (1994) provides an excellent and lucid account of Jewish land acquisition, its legal implications and the Arab response following the declaration of Israeli statehood. Although the Israeli occupation of Palestinian territory has its unique aspects, this sort of “exchange of populations” is well attested throughout the world, and until mid-twentieth century was often held to be a solution to ethnic disputes (Segev 1986: 90-91; Finkelstein 2003: xiv). In fact, its promotion as a solution had even formed the second recommendation of the Peel Commission (see Morris 2001: 139).

Contemporary Zionism

Zionism still underpins the current Israeli (Likud) government, although the Labour Zionism associated with Herzl is in retreat within the contemporary state. The changes in Zionism's trajectory can be partly attributed to the successful creation of Israel—although Israel's expansionist policies, the occupation, the on-going unrest in the region and the lack of universal acceptance of Israel all indicate that 1948 was not the end of the process. While Likud-led Israel might feel the need to continue to secure the state, Dowty believes that much of the vulnerability is self-perceived. While there may be attempts to injure the state, external governments have effectively given up challenging Israel's statehood (Dowty 2017: 238-239).

Additionally, when the conservative Likud came to power in 1977, it brought with it new economic and social priorities that countered the socialism of the Labour Zionists and the broader Israeli left. Running on a Revisionist Zionist platform, many of the early Zionist demands remain central to the Likud's policy. The Likud's platform claims that "settlement of the land is a clear expression of the unassailable right of the Jewish people to the Land of Israel and constitutes an important asset in the defence of the vital interests of the State of Israel. The Likud will continue to strengthen and develop these communities and will prevent their uprooting" (Likud Party 1999). The Likud further supports the Jewish right to a united Jerusalem, claiming that the entirety of Jerusalem is the capital of, and only of, Israel. It justifies its claim to all of Jerusalem (and indeed the West Bank) by demarcating the Jordan River as Israel's eastern boundary. Beyond staking a wider claim to territory for the Jewish state, the Likud also seeks to deny the Palestinians sovereignty, stating that "in matters of foreign affairs, security, immigration and ecology, [Palestinian] activity shall be limited in

accordance with imperatives of Israel's existence, security and national needs” (Likud Party 1999). As one might surmise, many of these alleged needs contradict what Palestinians claim as their right to live a “normalised” existence.

Key issues of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict: a growth from land

While land continues to figure predominantly in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, the struggle is evolving, as are the contributing factors. Dowty (2017: 182-183) divides the conflict into four key phases by ideology, beginning with the initial fight over land and political control (1880s-1948). He sees this as then extending into a wider pan-Arab conflict that briefly removed Palestinians from the driving seat until after the 1967 war (1948-early 1990s). Dowty follows this with a third period of heightened hope surrounding the Oslo Accords (1990s) and finally into the current phase marked by a change of externalities (2006-present). Such externalities include changes in systems of warfare,⁴⁰ non-state agents taking over the state’s authority (e.g. Hamas) and the increase in religious extremism.⁴¹ These facets have vastly changed the tactics of all of those involved and have contribute toward the obdurate nature of the conflict. Despite its extended duration and periodic punctuations of extensive violence,⁴² its death toll remains dwarfed by the death tolls of many other contemporary conflicts.

At its historical core, the conflict remains a debate over territory, but as Dowty shows, it has developed into a debate over ethnicity, nationalism, autonomy and settler-colonialism, as well as many related issues (access to resources, rights of people, etc.). Extensive research

⁴⁰ Rupert Smith (2005: 1) cites the 1973 Arab-Israeli War as the last “real tank battle” before modern warfare brought an increase in guerrilla-type, hybrid and decentralised warfare.

⁴¹ Dowty does not suggest religious extremism did not exist prior to this point: rather, the argument is that extremism gained political influence (2017: 184). Reiter (2010) identifies religious extremists as those who use religion to justify a means to an end.

⁴² Rupert Smith argues that the extended duration of conflicts is one side effect of modern “amongst the people” warfare (2005: 289-292). Although he suggests that modern warfare was in full bloom by the time of the Cold War, it began to replace industrial warfare after the development of the atomic bomb (ibid.: 267). Thus, following Smith, one might posit that the extended duration of the Israel-Palestine conflict is a consequence of warfare tactics rather than of the intractability of the conflict itself.

has been conducted on land as a factor in ethnic and civil wars. Of particular interest is Weiner's "sons of the soil" (SoS) theory (1978), first applied to India and south-east Asia (see also Fearon and Laitin 2011). Bates (2008) and Boone (2017) have brought the concept of SoS and settler-migration to Africa, where they identify the political implications of two major drivers of SoS conflict: 1) pressure on land, and 2) the development of a heterogeneous population from in-migration. Both of these factors are central to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict (see Haklai and Loizides 2015).

While the Israeli-Palestinian conflict certainly meets the SoS criteria, its parameters remain unique for several reasons compared with other conflicts assessed by SoS barometers. First, the territory claimed by both overlaps completely rather than being a contested border or an especially fertile swathe of agricultural land (e.g. the Xinjiang province in north-western China (Dillon 1997) or the Patani region in the northern Malay Peninsula). A second unique facet is that Israel and Palestine are two separate states, whereas most ethnic conflict involves intrastate feuding (e.g. the Sri Lankan civil war between the Sinhalese and the Eelam Tamils). The nexus of statehood, ethnicity and nationalism lead Ben-Yehuda and Sandler to call Israel-Palestine a "compound" conflict (2002: 175; see also the opening chapter of Carment et al. 2006). The third issue with the SoS paradigm is that both Palestinians and Israelis frame themselves as the indigenous population and position the other as the in-migrant. In other SoS conflict areas, this distinction is less opaque (e.g. the Muhajirs in the Sindh province of south-eastern Pakistan). Although Israelis are typically assigned the role of the outsider, claims to an ancient but still historically relevant homeland form the *raison d'être* for Zionism and thus justify their indigenous claim. Added to this is the fact that Israeli and Palestinian identities are both modern constructions, at least in terms of their relationship. Not only are, as Makkawi (2008: 27) notes, the identities defined negatively in response to the other, but both see the existence of the other as a threat to the self (Kelman

1987: 354). The Palestinian identity in particular, while also tracing its nationalist roots to the same wider ethnic and civil nationalist movement as Zionism (R. Khalidi 1997: 19–21), was further reinforced as a national group in reaction to the Jewish settlements in the late nineteenth century. This is not to say that Zionism stimulated the creation of a Palestinian identity. As Rashid Khalidi (1997: 154) continues, a patriotic regionalism identifying Palestinians as a people distinct from other Arab populations had preceded the Zionist movement in the face of earlier incursions by other Europeans and Turks (see also Kimmerling and Migdal 1993: xviii).⁴³

The Oslo Accords, the rise of the Palestinian National Authority and the occupation

Heralded as supporting the “right of the Palestinian people to self-determination” (United Nations General Assembly 1996), the Oslo Accords (1993, 1995) were an attempt at a peace treaty that would realise the earlier UN Security Council Resolutions 242 (1967)⁴⁴ and 338 (1973).⁴⁵ As a Jaffa-born Palestinian lawyer and human rights activist (founder of Palestine’s Al-Haq) living in Ramallah, Shehadeh (1997) provides what I believe to be an excellent and comprehensive account of the negotiations leading up to the initiation of the Oslo process, the struggles encountered by the Palestinians and the hopes for the interim Palestinian government. In a subdued tone, Shehadeh uses his knowledge of local and international legal practices to allege that the Palestine Liberation Organisation made

⁴³ A concept not lost on the Zionists, British historian Arnold Toynbee suggests the Jews might have the longest continuous history of any people. (Toynbee’s description of a fossilised Jewish nation, e.g. 1934-1961, Vol. I: 90; Vol. V: 126; has not been without additional scrutiny, some of which has been handled in the final volume (XII) of the series entitled, *Reconsiderations*.) Outside of Biblical references, Malamat (1976: 42) notes that the first reference to the Jewish population is the “Merneptah Stele”, a c.1220 BCE Egyptian inscription. Estimated to correspond approximately to the time the Israelites returned to Canaan following the Egyptian Exodus, if this passage does refer to the Jewish people (for alternative interpretations, see Eissfeldt 1965: 14), it suggests they have endured when then-contemporaries (e.g. Philistines, Babylonians) have not.

⁴⁴ The two basic principles of S/RES/242 are 1) the withdrawal of Israeli forces from Palestinian territories acquired from the 1967 war; and 2) the ability of Palestinians and Israelis to reside peacefully within their borders without external threat (United Nations Security Council (1967). “Security Council Resolution 242”. Accessed 14 March 2017 from [https://undocs.org/S/RES/242\(1967\)](https://undocs.org/S/RES/242(1967))).

⁴⁵ S/RES/338 calls for 1) the immediate implementation of a cease-fire, and 2) the prompt negotiations for lasting peace (United Nations Security Council (1973). “Security Council Resolution 338”. Accessed 14 March 2017 from [https://undocs.org/S/RES/338\(1973\)](https://undocs.org/S/RES/338(1973))).

irreparable concessions in its agreements having failed to grasp the Israeli tactics in furthering Jewish interests. As the book was published shortly after the resolutions were initially passed, it reflects a dampened optimism simultaneously reflecting hope while ultimately foreshadowing the subsequent failures of Oslo and the deadlock reached following the stalemate of the Camp David Accords (2000) and the Second Intifada (2000-2005). Although the Oslo process did establish the Palestinian National Authority as a provisional self-governing body, it ultimately fell short in creating self-determination for Palestinians, perhaps in part because the pact never set the conditions for the Palestinian government or defined its responsibilities or its territorial jurisdiction. In addition to the Palestinian National Authority, one hitherto lasting result has been the division of the West Bank into three zones, called “areas”, as part of Oslo II (1995). Although the intended withdrawal of Israeli armed forces was never completed in the three areas and Israeli settlements are still being built, the areas remain demarcations of state authority. Area A is administered by the Palestinian Authority exclusively, and Israeli citizens are prohibited from entering. The ban initially included the IDF as well, but since Israel’s Operation Protective Shield in 2002, the IDF stages frequent raids in Area A (N. Barnea 2016). Initially only 3% of the West Bank 1995, Area A was expanded in 2013 to encompass eight cities totalling 18%. As will be described further in Chapter 3, while in the region in 2016, I was briefly involved in the Palestine Marathon. The marathon was founded, in part, to highlight the non-contiguous nature of the land in Area A, which limits the mobility of residents (the marathon, for example, involves a series of loops, as there is no twenty-six-mile stretch of road unhindered by checkpoints). Area B (22%) is under joint Palestinian-Israeli governance and includes 440 villages (Beinin 1999). Area C (60%, initially 74%) is exclusively under the Israeli government’s administration and includes Israeli settlements and East Jerusalem. Area C is the only contiguous part of the West Bank and is the richest in natural resources (B’tselem 2017b).

These selected aspects of Israeli history aim to provide an elementary background for understanding the ways in which the muscular movement and sport have been formative in the negotiation of contemporary Jewish-Israeli identities. While no longer aiming to allay the same persecution that contributed to muscular Judaism's instigation, modern sport has become a platform for debates on identity and relationships that fit within the wider socio-political discourse.

Looking forward

This chapter revolves around a specific research question, namely how contemporary Jewish-Israeli identity may be actively refracted through sport. In exploring this question, I have also introduced the broad themes of the thesis, including the interplay between sport and Israeli identity and the often claimed capacity of sport to achieve the normalisation of relations. I have also discussed the parameters of the study, establishing the boundaries of Jewish identity and sport for the purposes of this thesis and likewise identifying aspects that remain outside its scope. I have also outlined some basic tenets of Jewish nationalism, necessarily incorporating a relevant history of the Zionist movement to account for the genesis of the link between sport and Jewish identity. Although focusing on Jewish Israel, this section has also included an elementary discussion of what is now the State of Palestine to account for the historical and current relationship between the two and to contextualise the occupation.

Looking ahead, Chapter 2 will analyse the anthropological literature on the Euro-American tradition of sport, as well as on normalisation as relevant to understanding ways in which sport can be instrumental in its efforts. Chapter 2 opens by reviewing the development

of sport as a topic within anthropology. In looking at this tradition, I survey a selection of literature that deals specifically with sport, initially showing how it interacted with other cultural institutions at the time. Following this, I look more specifically at works that, in some capacity, address themes I draw upon throughout this thesis. These themes, such as nationalism, education, religion and the spread of ideology, are common ways of analysing sport within anthropology that relate directly to sport's position within Judaism and Israel. The second part of the chapter considers the literature that contributes to sport as a tool for identity negotiation and normalisation. After an initial introduction to some relevant anthropological material on ethnic conflict, nationalism, ethnicity and statehood, I continue the introduction to normalisation begun in Chapter 1 and, in brief terms, expand upon what it means for both Israel and Palestine. I also draw upon literature not commonly included within the social anthropology discourse, notably works in psychology on contextualising conflict behaviour and work in cognitive anthropology on connecting social bonding to exercise-induced neurochemical changes. Chapter 2 concludes with a brief look at the literature surrounding the use of sport in other conflicts that have been compared in some capacity to Israel-Palestine. Special attention is paid to apartheid in South Africa and the ethnoreligious conflict in Northern Ireland.

Chapter 3 is also divided into two sections following a brief introduction that contextualises my fieldwork in terms of the disruptions to it I experienced. The first part adopts a descriptive and chronological approach to the ethnographic research and introduces field sites, basic methods and the issues that arose. More practical and less contextually descriptive, the second part of Chapter 3 takes a different approach to methods. Here I establish some of the background knowledge informing the research, including some of its political aspects such as my use of terminology and my positionality. This section also examines the selection of organisations and individual informants and proceeds to look at

specific methods employed throughout the research. Here, I discuss my use of archival material, interviews, social networks, participant observation and quantitative methods. I frame these methods in terms of how I used them, the issues they present, and how I strove to ensure the quality of the results.

As the first ethnographic chapter, Chapter 4 seeks to examine how Jewish identity is refracted through sport in ways experienced by ordinary citizens. Examining sport initiatives that are predominantly accessible to the average person, I also look at the ways in which such sport can support normalisation and how its successes and failures are connected to wider beliefs about identity. I first discuss two sport-for-peace NGOs, PeacePlayers International and the Twinned Peace Sports Schools, both of which explicitly seek to ameliorate negative Israeli-Palestinian relations. Both organisations use sport as a medium to draw Israeli and Palestinian children together under the assumption that cooperation through sport translates into cooperation off the field. Through fieldwork (mainly participant observation and interviews), I assess the degree to which these organisations contribute to the largely peace-building rhetoric and whether their impact extends beyond the NGO sphere. The second component of Chapter 4 looks more broadly at community sport with a focus on schools and on community offerings. As much of this section looks at Jerusalem (including East Jerusalem), there is a greater focus on the occupation and sectarianism than in other chapters. In order to situate sport in Jerusalem, some asymmetries between disparate communities are highlighted, and I also look at the wider impact of the state's Jewish jurisdiction over open-access sports programmes, including community centres, playgrounds and running teams.

Whereas Chapter 4 focused on the practitioners of sport and identity, Chapter 5 focuses on Jewish identity as experienced through the fandoms of professional sport. Exploring displays of vehement, opinionated and conflicting senses of belonging, this chapter is situated wholly within the Jewish-Israeli perspective. It shows a side of Jewish identity in

which sectarian ideologies are strongly expressed and where negligible space is afforded to Israeli-Palestinian negotiation. This chapter analyses the fandoms of three Jewish-Israeli professional football teams, Hapoel Tel Aviv, Maccabi Tel Aviv and Beitar Jerusalem (some discussion of Palestinian Israeli teams and players is included in context to the extent that they are part of the Jewish team's personal rhetoric). As each team was previously affiliated with a political movement involved in the development of the Israeli state, I discuss their relevance within the historical and present political landscape. Then I analyse how aspects of their earlier political ideology have become as if fossilised within their team philosophies, a process I determine to be largely fan-driven and sometimes directed in opposition to other teams as part of an overall contest within Israeli Judaism. Through this, I link the teams to wider aspects of modern Israeli culture, including socioeconomic status, education, politics, vocation and family values. I see these teams as beacons of sectarian identity around which their supporters mobilise to establish themselves as prominent within the state's ideological framework, despite changes in team management, the establishment of statehood, and new Israeli political and economic infrastructures. Whereas professional sport has been a venerated marker of masculinity and nationalism for Jewish teams, stemming from muscular Judaism, it does not carry the same intrinsic meaning for Palestinians. However, I will also develop the idea that some Palestinian teams have adopted this Jewish-nationalist fabric, and even Jewish symbols and anti-Palestinian slogans, in order to create a common ground that is both simultaneously "safe" for Jewish-Israeli teams while being culturally distant, and thus less threatening, to themselves.

As the final ethnographic chapter, Chapter 6 focuses on Israel's craving for international recognition as seen through sport. Building upon topics explored in earlier chapters, including muscular Judaism, the nexus of sport and politics and state ethnoreligious agendas, this chapter takes a more international and administrative perspective to see how

such themes inform a national identity. Drawing upon my experience of training at Israel's national elite training centre and upon interviews with athletes and national sport leaders, I show how international sport has become a contact zone and a space for identity negotiation. This phenomenon is increased in a state like Israel, which is not universally recognised and maintains tense relationships with its neighbours. However, I find that, while Israel may aspire to create an international impression of itself through sport, much of the process involved in this creation is actually born and harboured within the state. Touching upon themes such as body capital and religion, I show how this creates certain tensions that may put individual athletes at odds with the state. Although this sphere of sport presents fewer opportunities for normalisation, my research shows that it necessarily involves the direct negotiation of disparate identities. I explore this in conjunction with the Tel Aviv Marathon in the final section of the chapter. Drawing on theories borrowed from cognitive anthropology, I consider how such mass participation events such as the marathon might become platforms for identity negotiation and normalisation outside of government interests.

In conclusion, Chapter 7 opens by reviewing how the ethnographic chapters show contemporary Jewish identity as being actively refracted through sport and associated implications for normalisation. These ideas are then supported through a synthesis of the key ethnographic findings, showing how Israel expresses, develops and asserts its identity and the reverberations of this for those within the state, and how this relates to other identities within Israel. The second half of the chapter is devoted to situating this research within a wider anthropological perspective. Here, I analyse the contributions made by this thesis in terms of the existing literature and address some of the implications of my findings and the ways in which they can be contextualised within a wider understanding of the nexus of sport and

identity. Finally, as sport is only one way through which Israel's Jewish identity can be explored, I briefly investigate expressions of identity and normalisation beyond the sporting milieu.

Following Chapter 7 is a short appendix. This appendix discusses football3, which is the basic method of sport practised by both PeacePlayers International and Twinned Peace Sports Schools, two of the NGOs focused on in Chapter 4. Football3 will be introduced at relative minimum in Chapters 3 and 4 when I discuss methods and these sport-for-peace programmes specifically. I provide this appendix in order to contextualise further the style of play, provide examples and explain how the method is believed to facilitate the development of mutual respect, fair play and dialogue for which it is known among its participants.

Chapter 2. Sport within anthropology and its potential pathways for identity exploration and normalisation

Sport within anthropology

On March 24, 2009, *The New York Times*' "Idea of the Day" was "Sports fandom feeds a primitive human need to belong to a whole larger than the self. 'Marx was wrong: The opiate of the masses isn't religion, but [spectator] sports'" (Kuntz 2009).

Sport has been found in some form throughout recorded human history. However, it only arose as a topic within anthropology following the subject's so-called reflexive turn in the 1970s. Notwithstanding anthropology's early avoidance of sport,⁴⁶ British sociologist Eric Dunning argues that most if not all societies have pursued some physical activity analogous to contemporary western sport (1986: 3). One reason for its earlier avoidance is, perhaps, that, in Euro-American societies,⁴⁷ sport involves active reflections upon the self, another avoided topic in earlier anthropological studies, even in works involving the person, such as Mauss (1938), which instead understood personhood as an expression of culture. Furthermore, even if sport had been studied in parallel with other topics for cultures already

⁴⁶ This is not to say that sport was not discussed in early anthropology, but when it was addressed (e.g. Howitt 1904: 770; Perry 1923: 312-313), it was not ascribed meaning in its own right. Howitt used sport to explain totemic structure. The secondary status of the sport is further indicated by it being described between sections on fire-making and infanticide in a chapter of "various customs". Two decades later, Perry cited, nearly verbatim, Howitt's account. Not unlike Howitt (although Howitt conducted the ethnography), Perry saw the ball game as a way to understand other features of this Australian society, and he expressed no interest in the game itself.

⁴⁷ While I am aware of other traditions (e.g. Trobriand cricket (Kildea and Leach 1976, Stoddart 1988: 670) and Magar archery (Oppitz 1988: 90-92)), it is the Euro-American traditions and organisations of sport that are most relevant for this thesis.

targeted by anthropologists, it would have received little direct attention because it was neither neoteric nor unfamiliar and therefore did not contribute to the quest to study differences.⁴⁸ Of course, one potential explanation for the inability to trace sporting traditions within early anthropology may be that the history of such traditions is factitious, and the traditions may indeed be more recent than they seem. Hobsbawm (1983a) notes the need for industrialised societies to have practices that have a sense of historical continuity. These practices become ritualised or symbolic responses to societal changes and innovations, thus satisfying a societal need for predictable references.

That does not mean that contemporary anthropologists have not tried to explain the relative absence of sport from the discipline. The Argentine anthropologist Eduardo Archetti (1998), for instance, argued that Euro-American sport may have been ignored, as it establishes an asymmetry between participants (winners and losers) that anthropologists may have dismissed as associated with modern capitalism and industrialisation. This idea is based upon Lévi-Strauss's argument that Algonquian ball games, at first glance, share the same superstructure with their rituals (1966: 30-33). However, whereas rituals ultimately create a communion among initially separate groups, Lévi-Strauss shows that their games create the inverse—they culminate in the separation of participants into categories of winners and losers, where prior to play such distinctions did not occur (32). Sands (2010: 6) claims that the modern human has evolved into a creature capable of various physical movements, which have been co-opted by culture and shaped by the individual's social, political and cultural spheres. In this respect, sport may, if successful, be a means to an end (e.g. education, soft

⁴⁸ However, while sport was not studied in its own right, early anthropology still contributed to its scholarship. Some of anthropology's preminent theories, such as Durkheim's collective effervescence ([1912] 1954), first applied to the religious life of Australian aboriginals, has been extended to sport. Faure et al. (2014) relate their experience competing as international triathletes to collective effervescence. They find their national pride subsumed personal goals in much the same way as a collective identity enveloped individualism within Durkheim's religious societies. Like individuals in Durkheim's community networks needing to reinforce collective effervescence, members of Faure's Team USA continually prove their membership through athletic performance.

diplomacy) in the sense not of Radcliffe-Brownian functionalism as a universal and objective explanation for the social, but of functions, roles, etc. being emically defined by the given culture. Anthropology is thus an ideal vehicle for understanding sport. However, in part because sports studies have developed in other disciplines, I will be drawing upon academic material from other fields, including sociology, history and neurochemistry/physical anthropology, to explain some of the social anthropology phenomena I will discuss throughout this thesis.

Beginning in the mid-eighteenth century, the Industrial Revolution greatly impacted the organisation of (European) culture through various processes including urbanisation, commercialisation, industrialisation, pedagogy, increased transportation and mass media. These changes gave rise to a new industrial and commercial middle class, as well as to a wage-earning working class with various degrees of leisure time and spending money. Organised sport—including gambling, coaching, cheering and playing—became a leisure activity and, for a few, a viable profession. Focusing on Britain, Kirk et al. (1996: Ch. 22) discuss how different social classes developed sport, or even rebelled against it, to suit personal needs. In particular, Kirk et al. look at the role of gambling, public schools and muscular Christianity in constructing what has been termed—in the context of physicality—“*genus Britannicus*” (Molnár 1875: 61; see also Mangan (1983) on the role of education during the Victorian and Edwardian eras). In more recent years, with the development of global transportation and mass media and the increasing prevalence of professional athletes, sport has played an increasingly significant role in social constructs.

In the context of Jewish history, sport also figured prominently in the Zionists’ muscular Judaism movement, which co-opted sport to create the “New Jew”—a strong, brave, valiant people, free from the *shtetl* and worthy of their own nation (e.g. H. Kaufman and Bar-Eli 2005). Following the establishment of Israel in 1948, sport became a forum for

displays of nationalism and legitimisation of the Jewish state (e.g. H. Kaufman and Bar-Eli 2005). Today, sport provides a platform for identity negotiation between Israelis and Palestinians (e.g. Galily et al. 2013). In this case, sport can be a tool of political leverage, of grassroots diplomacy and of wider discussions concerning identity and statehood within Israel itself. These themes will be expanded on throughout this thesis.

Understanding sport

There is no universal definition of sport, a phenomenon that does not exist in a cultural or political vacuum. Even within the Euro-American tradition, sport is contextual—for example, it may form a pastime or a viable career, it may be results-driven, and it may have some scope for spontaneity. Blanchard (1995) provides some anthropological parameters that help situate Euro-American sporting traditions within a wider framework of activity in terms of how they relate to seriousness, leisure, recreation and games in traditions around the world. The framework for what constitutes sport is culturally contingent and relates to factors such as whether societies have undergone industrialisation as well as their social and economic values (e.g. Lüschen 1970, Ager 1977). Such distinctions, however, go beyond the scope of this thesis, as they have not been defining characteristics in so far as sport has been used to express Jewish identity.

Given that sport is associated with trends specific to its surrounding culture, in a manner similar to Sands, mentioned above, Jarvie and Maguire (1994: 152) see sport as offering an emic function by providing an “anchor of meaning” within “global space-time compression”. Therefore, in order to understand the overall role of sport within society, it needs to be seen through a more comprehensive lens in order to understand how it fits within the broader infrastructure. For example, building upon Norbert Elias’ civilising process ([1939] 1994), Elias and Dunning (1986) consider how sport is both a mode of civilisation

and something simultaneously civilised by the surrounding culture.⁴⁹ Situated within the Weberian tradition, in so far as Max Weber sought to understand the conditions that enabled capitalism to develop in western Europe, Elias and Dunning ask why the so-called civilising process, an antecedent to modern Euro-American sport, took root in the same world region (1986: 19-20). Elias, a German-British sociologist, has not gone uncriticised among anthropologists.⁵⁰ However, where I find his work, with Dunning (1986), especially useful is in its presentation of what is, as far as I am aware, the first broad analysis of the relationship between spectators (fandoms) and on-field activity, which I will discuss in Chapter 5.

Chronicling an anthropology of sport

As already noted, the 1970s was the period of the so-called reflexive turn in anthropology. With it came an increased interest in self-reflection, part of which blossomed into a new body of anthropological literature on sport. In 1973, Geertz published “Deep Play: Notes on the Balinese Cockfight”, which remains one of the best known anthropological essays on what might be considered sport, even though the actual participants are non-human (although one might posit that the human participants could be considered fandom). Based on fieldwork in Indonesia in the 1950s, a time when cockfighting was illegal and matches had excessively high stakes, Geertz examines its role in Balinese culture. Not unlike the case of sport in Zionism, Geertz saw sport as a narrative for the participants, written by, and for, themselves. Using this narrative, Geertz concluded that cockfighting is a microcosm of Balinese village and kinship networks, with the roosters representing their high-ranking male owners.

⁴⁹ One example of this is foxhunting (Elias and Dunning 1986: 160ff.), a blood sport beginning in sixteenth-century Britain that has seen a continual distancing between those controlling the hunt and the killing of the fox—initially dogs did the killing, and now the “fox” may be just a scent.

⁵⁰ See Goody (2002) and a counter-critique by Dunning (2002). Major criticisms focus on whether Elias’ work fits within anthropology because of its lack of ethnography, selective case studies and the lack of applicability to non-literate western European cultures.

Following Geertz, a number of ethnographies were published building upon his understanding of sport as a social narrative. Some of these ethnographies are what may be considered non-scholarly texts written for a popular audience. However, I have endeavoured to ensure that those I have chosen are authored by people who can be considered experts in their field. One such author is Robert Whiting (primarily 1977, 1989, 2004). Whiting, a journalist introduced to Japan through the military, portrays Japanese society by analysing the trajectory of baseball from a pastime to a national philosophy, which, despite its American origins, gives expression to the ethos of *wa* (Japanese social harmony) and to local concerns like maintaining “face”, seniority and cooperation (see also Staples 2011).⁵¹ However, Kawai and McDonald (2012: 2451, 2461) also show how this American sport has brought an ethos of individualism that runs counter to traditional Japanese concepts of sportsmanship (see also R. Whiting 1989: 113-114). Clément (2014) shows a similar process through rugby in Samoa, and Brownell questions the reciprocity between sporting culture and nationalism in China (1995, 2008).⁵²

Ellis Cashmore (2003, 2004, 2005, 2012, 2013) notably addresses ethnicity in a series of compendia on sport. Of particular interest is his work on ethnic hegemony and the social mobility of black athletes in America, which identifies sport as one of two arenas in which black athletes are “allowed” to excel (the other being music) (2012: 8). This links to his wider analyses of ethnic hegemony in the realm of sport. Owing to a different history, there are fewer opportunities for ethnic mobility for Israeli athletes, a topic touched upon in the context of fan culture in Chapter 5. This concept of mobility can be compared to David Gellner’s belief that sport became a tool for differentiation among nations, creating opportunities for

⁵¹ Robert Whiting also considers how this Japanese philosophy of baseball can consequently inform the American tradition through being transferred back to America through Japanese athletes playing in American Major League Baseball.

⁵² Robert Whiting (2006: 13-15) also discusses individualism, partly in response to Kelly’s analysis (1998) of it in Oh and Faulkner (1984: 196-197), in which Whiting accuses Kelly of having misunderstood the degree to which, and the way in which, individualism in Japanese baseball is accepted.

them to challenge each other and exert individuality after World War II effectively designated nation-states as legally equal entities (2010: 31). In his article, which is otherwise on the peculiarities and plasticity of British nationalism(s) (mentioned in Chapter 5), Gellner suggests that a dearth of international challengers in the United States' two most popular popular sports—baseball⁵³ and American football—may contribute toward any American exceptionalism (2010: 32; the relationship between sport and American exceptionalism is also explored in Markovits and Hellerman 2001: 46).

Lever (1983) suggests that the popularity of football in Brazil enables it simultaneously to fortify and transcend divisions in society so as to be able to reinforce local rifts while bolstering an overarching national pride (see also Bellos 2002). Balancing the interests, often different or even opposed, of individuals and the state, Lever and Bellos both introduce conceptual frameworks for understanding how Israeli sport may simultaneously serve different purposes for different people. Others, such as Archetti (1999) on the nexus between same-sex sports such as football and polo and cross-sex activities such as the tango in his native Argentina, and Klein (1993) on the psychosociality of the American body-building macho, see sport as building a hyper-testosteronic and virile masculinity that they associate with national loyalty.

Looking at baseball in the Caribbean elucidates a history that shares many similarities with Israel's in which sport transmits culture, develops ethnic pride, resists colonialism, at times acquiesces in what might seem like the exploitative behaviour of a dominant power and brings together different social spheres. Klein (1991) traces the role of baseball in the Dominican Republic, where it represents both the country's status as an object of American hegemony and a path of social mobility for athletes. In addition to the (imperial) influence of the United States, baseball's more direct origin in this case was Cuba (Gedda 2009: 83),

⁵³ Some foreign players do participate in the country's Major League Baseball teams, but its championship, the World Series, remains an event for teams from the United States and Canada.

where it had been introduced by American troops stationed there in the 1860s. Whereas baseball represents American hegemony in the Dominican Republic, Bjarkman (1994) suggests it represented opposition to Spanish colonialism in Cuba. Although there has always been a tie through baseball to America,⁵⁴ Bjarkman argues that its role as a contested pastime (the Spanish powers banned it as part of their cultural dominion during the first Cuban War of Independence to encourage Cubans to adopt Spanish bull-fighting) has earned it status as a defiant aspect of Cuban nationalism (see also Perez 1994 and a related work by James (1963) on cricket in Trinidad). A newer work on (American-based) international relations through sport is that by Eastman et al. (2007), which situates sport within the context of specific nationalisms and looks at the ramifications of American sports transplanted into other cultures (e.g. basketball as played in Senegal).

Thangaraj et al. (2014) argue that cricket serves a similar role in shaping colonial resistance and nationalism in South Asia, and Guha (2002) uses cricket to analyse the nexus of caste, religion, politics and colonialism in post-British India. However, such cases as baseball in Cuba or cricket in Pakistan prompt a question that goes beyond colonial resistance and possibly contributes to a debate on Israel, namely how and why (colonial) sport has turned to the service of other, sometimes subordinated national identities. On a more political level, Guthrie-Shimuzu (2012) discusses baseball in ways that are relevant to the discussion of normalisation in this thesis (introduced in Chapter 1 and discussed further in the second half of this chapter). Guthrie-Shimuzu traces the use of baseball as a tool of soft-power politics, which in some ways speaks to its globalisation and exchanging of values in ways addressed by Robert Whiting, etc., but he also discusses the particular attempts to “Japanise”

⁵⁴ One example is the flow of Cubans into American Major League Baseball, which is discussed in various accounts, including Gedda (2009: 13). González Echevarría (1999: 387) writes how, despite the American embargo, there remained a channel for Cuban player defections, especially after the collapse of the Soviet Union, on which Cuba had relied for financial stability. Kerrane adds that, of those in the Major League, there are even accounts of the scouting of Fidel Castro prior to his becoming president and trying to prevent Cuban baseball players from playing professionally in America (1985: 278; Gedda 2009: 84).

the sport as part of developing local support during the Asia-Pacific War, which can be connected to work by Klein (1991) and Bjarkman on the localisation of Dominican “sugarball”.⁵⁵

Sport as creating a fit and healthy society

Whatever the actual reasons that give rise to it, one common argument is that sport can impart society’s values to its members by connecting it with other social institutions, such as religion, family life, education and art (Jarvie and Maguire 1994: 9),⁵⁶ as well as nationalism and other political philosophies. Far from supplanting other forms of social structure, therefore, it is argued that sport contributes, if with varying degrees of success, to the stability of socio-political and emotional domains, unites disparate social groups, ingrains cultural beliefs, enables social mobility and propels ideology (Jarvie 2006: 27). Hobsbawm (1983b: 287ff.) considers sport to be one of the primary conveyors of social class in Britain. For Hobsbawm, sports such as football, tennis and rowing are products of British middle-class amateurism (see also Mason 1980: 90-93). Rowing, for instance, was the first formalised sport to be played between Oxford and Cambridge, as well as by a collection of elite universities in the United States that would be later known as the Ivy League (Hobsbawm 1983b: 297-298). Honey (1977 253ff.) attributes the elite status of the Ivy League to the belief that the suitability of sport partnerships maps onto social stratifications, thus achieving social prestige. Indeed, contends Hobsbawm (1983b: 303), the last three decades of the nineteenth century saw the institutionalisation of sport, which both brought together socially equal people otherwise lacking organic connections and, in the process, further defined social classes and spaces.

⁵⁵ “Sugarball” refers to a version of baseball popularised in the 1950s by sugarcane harvesters in the Dominican Republic (González Echevarría 1999: 191).

⁵⁶ See Unutulmaz (2014) on the use of ethnic football among London’s Turkish-speaking diaspora to (re)produce links, including social values, between London and various homelands.

Elias (1969, 1982, 1986) sees sport as an institution that develops in parallel to society, both reflecting and reinforcing social needs while also providing a means of transcending them. In state and national ideologies, this can be attested in broad statements such as Spiro Agnew's "[sport is] one of the few bits of glue that holds society together" (Lasch 1979: 114), spoken against the backdrop of the Vietnam War and "ping-pong diplomacy".⁵⁷ Later, at the inaugural Laureus World Sports Awards in 2000, Nelson Mandela described sport as having "the power to change the world. It has the power to inspire. It has the power to unite people in a way that little else does. It speaks to youth in a language they understand. Sport can create hope where once there was only despair."⁵⁸ These two statements, reflecting the very different perspectives of a disgraced US politician and a third-world anti-apartheid revolutionary, might attest to the normalisation of a belief regarding sport's potential to create healthy societies. They also, however, fall in line with Coalter's warning (2010) against assuming too readily that sport is inherently beneficial, perhaps reflecting a normalised, but utopian rhetoric that may be disconnected from the very societies they address.

Deviating further from utopia are two pieces by Armstrong (1998a, 1998b) that make apparent the congruence of sport, masculinity and nationalism in what, perhaps, might be the first truly anthropological explorations of football violence. In these works, Gary Armstrong examines the hooliganism of Sheffield United F.C. fans, the Blades (1998b). The Blades' extremist fan activity, according to Armstrong (1998a), is a ritualised production of idealised masculinity. Like the earlier rooting of masculinity through sport in various South and North American nationalist cultures by Bellos, Archetti and Klein, Armstrong also connects the Blades' hooliganism to their social experience, in this case to their shared identity as Sheffielders within an industrial working-class milieu.

⁵⁷ A sporting exchange in the early 1970s that is credited with easing Sino-American relations.

⁵⁸ Laureus Sport for Good Foundation (2018). "Introduction to Laureus". Accessed 07 April 2018 from <https://www.laureus.com/content/introduction-laureus>.

In an analysis of the cultural and aesthetic characteristics of the New Jew as described by Nordau in his 1898 proposal of muscular Judaism, Presner (2007) seeks to understand the development of the physical body as an integral political and social symbol designed to foster evangelical nationhood. This body, Nordau argued (1909), would supplant stereotypes and would eventually reflect a regenerated Zionist nation. Presner, the director of Jewish Studies at the University of California, nestles Nordau's inspiration for the Muscular Jew within the Prussian *Turner* (gymnastics) movement. In a history of this movement, Goltermann (1998) writes that, contrary to other sporting movements, self-cultivation and individual discipline were not central to it. Instead, founded in the early nineteenth century for the Prussian population, the movement turned the German body into a stage on which to test questions of commitment, loyalty and dedication to the cause of Germany's liberation from Napoleon. As both a historian and an anthropologist, Hau (2017) takes Goltermann further, shifting from the history of sport to its exemplification of the word *Leistung* (performance). Commonly associated with sport, *Leistung* also refers to success in other aspects of life, such as work (Hau 2017: 4). Hau looks at the impact of *Leistung* on German ideology, the workplace and social structure from the time of unification (when the *Turner* movement peaked) through sport. Much like the early Zionists, Hau argues that the German elite saw sport as a way to achievement (*Leistung*) in health, productivity and national survival. The authors included in the volume edited by Michael Brenner and Gideon Reuveni (2006) are somewhat similar to Hau in their approach in that they all use sport among the European Jewry to make sense of additional themes, such as ethnicity, the Diaspora and gender.

In addition to German gymnastics linking muscular Judaism to nationalism, another predecessor of the latter was the comparable muscular Christianity of the Victorian era. Newsome (1961: 195-197) suggests that muscular Christianity blended evangelism and personal well-being to create the body as a divine subject. This subject, according to British

historians Mangan and Walvin (1987: 3), “symbolised an attempt at a metaphysical comprehension of the universe. It represented an effort to achieve a *Weltanschauung* with an internal coherence and external validity which determined ideals, forged identity and defined reality.” Watson et al. (2005) trace the first connection of sport within Christianity to Rousseau's treatise on education, *Émile* ([1762] 2013), in which Rousseau wrote: “Give [the student's] body constant exercise, make it strong and healthy, in order to make him good and wise; ... let him run and shout, let him be always on the go; make a man of him in strength, and he will soon be a man in reason” (Rousseau [1762] 2013: 97). Although *Émile* was banned at the time of its publication for its religious connotations, Mangan (2010: 152) argues that the work influenced the revived national education system that spread throughout Europe following the French Revolution, which prioritised physical education (PE) to better meet the social and emotional needs of pupils. In addition to Nordau's call for the Muscular Jew, Sorek (2005) suggests that muscular evangelism, through its Christian roots, also travelled to Mandate Palestine as part of British culture, through which it was absorbed into Zionist thinking.

Physical education (PE) has remained a pertinent aspect of Euro-American education. Beyond encouraging moral behaviour, PE has also been tailored to meet specific cultural needs.⁵⁹ One of the reasons the Zionists incorporated PE was to create a healthy population to provide fit and robust soldiers, discussed in Ben-Israel (2007: 581). As indicated in Chapter 1 in an introduction to Nordau and muscular Judaism, the ability of sport to contribute to soldiers' experiences and recoveries, as well as to increase their physical capacity, had been previously attested (e.g. Nye 1984: Ch. 9; Park 2007: 1613; Park 2012). For Israel, a country with conscription, PE still forms the basis of pre-army training today, although this may

⁵⁹ These needs vary with location and time. For example, hygiene figured predominantly during the Industrial Revolution as rapid urbanisation and poor sanitation led to increased transmission of disease. Sufian (2007) claims the Zionist pioneers in Palestine also faced a variety of new communicable and environment-based diseases, surviving which was integral to the success of the Zionist movement.

become less relevant as the military increases its reliance on technology (field notes, 2014, 2016).⁶⁰ Interestingly, despite the centrality of physicality to the Zionist platform, Haim Kaufman (2005: 156) describes a gulf between theory and practice in the implementation of PE, which he attributes to immigration from regions not yet exposed to muscular Judaism. Today, Even (2011) writes that publicly funded Israeli schools have one of the lowest number of class-hours dedicated to sport compared with other states (see Chapter 4). Consequently, I found, many students need to train for the army through extracurricular sport (field notes, 2016). Regardless of the army, Griffin (1998) suggests that Euro-American youth sport still begets success in practitioners' later professional lives (cf. e.g. Danish et al. 2005, Papacharisis et al. 2005, Jones and Lavallee 2009 on the transfer of skills from youth sport to later careers).

Writing on Canada, sports historian Kidd (2006) argues that the values of muscular evangelism, which were initially associated with religious fundamentalism and conservative politics, have seen a resurgence in progressive politics. Kidd cites Thomas Hughes' *Tom Brown's Schooldays* (1857), which was influenced by Rousseau's ideas about French education and muscular Christianity, as having been institutionalised into (Canadian) society through promoting a values-driven culture (see also Brown 1986).⁶¹ Outlining a somewhat tumultuous history following 1970, which saw the state host the 1976 Olympics, the withdrawal of Ben Johnson's sprinting world championship and Olympic titles for steroid use and the rise of the political left, Kidd demonstrates the malleability of values in the "values-driven" culture that transmits Canadian customs. In addition to drawing upon his academic expertise as a social historian, Kidd's understanding of the nexus between sport and culture

⁶⁰ Certain elite units of the IDF continue to demand a high level of fitness. However, for many foot soldiers, fitness is necessary only in respect of injury prevention and developing mental toughness (interviews with IDF soldiers, March 2016, English and Hebrew).

⁶¹ Beyond impacting on Canadian society, the muscular values extolled in *Tom Brown's Schooldays* (1857) influenced audiences around the world, and undoubtedly contributed to Nordau's development of muscular Judaism (see Honey 1977 and Watson et al. 2005). The book was translated into Nordau's German in 1859.

that is evident in his writing directly draws upon his own experience as a life-long member of the Olympic Movement, including as a track Olympian for Canada and a member of the International Olympic Committee. Kidd is also the chair of organisations such as the Commonwealth Advisory Body on Sport, which aims to “promote sport as a positive part of nation building and human development, particularly youth development.”⁶² Kidd’s finding is shared by Rookwood and Wassong (2010), who place the values of muscular Christianity (see Kwauk 2007) at the core of several progressive conflict-resolution projects, including Football4Peace, a British sport-for-peace NGO in Israel, albeit not one I address directly.

Sport as transcendence

One area of literature concerning the anthropology of sport I find particularly contentious is that which sees it as a form of contemporary religion in itself, as opposed to an activity that may evoke ideas of religion in those who pursue it. The argument that sport is a religion, as maintained, for example, by religious studies scholar Arthur Remillard (forthcoming), positions sport within Durkheim’s interpretation of religion as “a unified system of beliefs and practices relative to sacred things, that is to say, things set apart and forbidden” (Durkheim [1912] 1954: 47). This is because sport 1) brings people together, 2) provides a focal point for collective energy, and 3) has a form of liminality reflective of van Gennep’s theory of ritual (1909; partially refuted by Turner 1974). While there are, I believe, similarities—and indeed I have already discussed the religious impetuses for muscular evangelism—my own position is that it is problematic to equate contemporary Euro-American sport with religion because such sport lacks connections with other worldliness and spiritual beings, it is generally considered a non-obligatory activity and, citing the example of Lévi-Strauss’ Algonquian games (1966: 32) mentioned above, it culminates in participants

⁶² The Commonwealth (2014). “Commonwealth Advisory Body on Sport Meeting”. Accessed 06 June 2017 from <http://thecommonwealth.org/media/event/commonwealth-advisory-body-sport-meeting-2014>.

being dichotomised.⁶³ That said, Hoffman (1992) makes a compelling case to see sport within contemporary industrial society as fulfilling a social purpose not unlike religion, at least on a superficial level. However, whether one aligns sport with religion or not depends entirely on one's definition of religion, on which one's chosen criteria depend. There are ways in which religion dovetails with sport that I do not contest and will discuss directly through ethnography in Chapter 6. In Israel, as in the Diaspora, even though many Jews are non-observant in religion, they continue to be united with Jewish national identity through Judaism as an ethnic marker of shared culture and ancestry (see Sharot 1998: Ch. 6). Despite this, however, the Israeli sporting sphere is shaped by religious forces, such as the state-imposed observance of Shabbat, which impacts on both observant and non-observant athletes. Moreover, it is possible for sport to have ritual components without necessarily being a ritual itself. Examples of ritual within sport include *yul lha/pho lha* ceremonies in Bhutanese archery (Pommaret 2004: 52) and the Olympic Flame relay (see MacAloon 2013, Wann et al. 2001: 198).

Instead of understanding sport through religion, I suggest that this relationship is better viewed as one of transcendence. Transcendence involves reaching beyond the boundary of human existence to access greater powers (Firth 1996: 184). Although commonly associated with religion, according to Parkin this boundary may be found in other contexts too, such as sport and leisure and their separation from the work-a-day world (2013: 10). In sport, there is a clear antagonist—the opposition—around which teammates unify. Perhaps this is less so in religion, although there are still dichotomies to be transcended, such as sacred and profane. Sport uses the body as an instrument to reach for ideals. Indeed, this is

⁶³ Blanchard (1995) discusses cases within (and external to) Euro-American sport for which these criteria do not necessarily apply. One such example is Fox's 1961 article in which he discusses witchcraft and suspicion in Pueblo baseball. The ancient Olympic Games are also regarded as a religious festival (e.g. Swaddling 1999). The Greeks (and Romans) also evoked the supernatural in games of chance (Kendall 1956: 11). Such divine intervention in games of chance has been studied around the world, and features in extensive works by Brian Sutton-Smith and John Roberts (e.g. 1971: 81; also Sołtysiak and Suraj-Sołtysiak 2006). However, John Roberts et al. (1959: 597) preclude physical skill in such games, which may therefore be seen as distinct from sport.

the root of muscular Judaism, and it parallels the unity of utopian Zionism and the Jewish-Israeli state. Nationalisms may focus more on unity within themselves than on this oppositional dualism. Similar boundaries, opponents and dichotomies form barriers to the normalisation of Israeli-Palestinian relationships. Sport may also be able to transcend these distinctions in ways not yet achieved through politics.

Anthropology of the body and sport

Bourdieu states that habitus is an innate reflection of who we are—our pasts and presents “incarnate” (1990: 190). Although habitus as it relates to interacting with the body has an intrinsic connection with physicality, it was Bourdieu, building upon Mauss and Merleau-Ponty, who first saw sport as a tool for understanding this aspect of culture. Bourdieu (1977, 1984; see also Mauss 1936, Comaroff 1985) saw culture as grounded within a socially constructed physical body. In a similar argument, de Wachter (1985) suggests that bodies have come to be “systems of differentiation” (1985: 58). These bodily capacities, according to Dreyfus and Dreyfus (1986), do not just shape our identities but also help us to navigate and cope with our surroundings.

Earlier I discussed Presner’s (2007) development of the body within the context of Nordau’s 1898 call for muscular Judaism in the reframing of the Jewish nation. However, along with western sport (Nordau’s movement after all began in Germany before extending throughout the Diaspora and Jewish Palestine) came new values that reflected a developing body culture and were perceived as threatening to Zionism: hedonism, preoccupation with appearance, dominance over others, narcissism and personal fitness (Jarvie and Maguire 1994: 55).⁶⁴ Naison (1972) accounts for some of the ways in which these new (Euro-American) values, partly a response to increased capitalism and militaristic identity, filtered

⁶⁴ This reflects a 1980s narcissistic era of self-improvement, stemming in part from self-bettering ideologies consistent with conservative politics under leaders of the time, including Thatcher and Reagan.

into Jewish sport. Writing from within the Israeli perspective, social historian Anat Helman (2007: 106) suggests that, especially among Zionists in Mandate Palestine, some such aberrations in ideology were tolerated, as the primary focus was on nation-building, to which sport contributed significantly.

Assuming for the moment that sport has inherent meaning, this meaning enables sport to acquire hegemonic power (Carrington and McDonald 2009, B. Wilson 2012). While Gramsci seeks to explain the power structure that legitimises capitalism, Crossley (2005), citing Merleau-Ponty (1964, 1982), looks at this hegemony in terms of how people aspire toward common goals by employing what he terms “reflexive body techniques” of which sport forms a part (2005: 10). Jarvie suggests that sport, when afforded such hegemonic power, becomes a form of cultural nationalism. It can help reconcile other forms of cultural nationalism, such as the mythical, ethical, invented, civic, ethnic, etc., and can contribute to increased patriotism and national consciousness (2006: 116). Looking specifically at Zionism, Presner (2003, 2007) seeks to understand how corporal fitness has reflected the Zionist agenda from Nordau (1898) to the present. Presner looks at how Zionism has appropriated sport both in the Diaspora and within Israel and has done so on the local, national and international levels.

A role for sport in Israeli-Palestinian relations

The overarching theme of this thesis is to understand how modern sport in Israel reflects contemporary Jewish identity. Identity is as much a positive construct of what one is as it is a negative construct of what one is not. This becomes especially relevant in a conflict such as Israel-Palestine, which is multi-faceted (with religious, ethnic, territorial, etc.

parameters). This has contributed to claims about the conflict, such as those made by local Israeli scholars Liebes (1997: 134) and Bar-Tal and Tiechman (2005: 99), as a zero-sum game, and by American sociologist Kriesberg (1993) as one of intractability. In his work on Hindus and Muslims in India, Varshney (2002) contends that many ethnic conflicts have a basis in another sphere, such as religion or politics, even though the conflict expresses itself in terms of ethnicity. Another argument, this time through historical sociology, that applies to the Israel-Palestine conflict is summarised by Anthony Smith (2010: 59). In looking at the melting pot concept in the United States, Smith writes that ethnicities were used by their leaders as “sites of mass mobilisation and as constituencies in their competition for power and resources, because they found them more effective than social classes.” A similar process has taken place in Israel and Palestine, which puts additional emphasis not only on Israeli-Palestinian ethnicities but on sub-groupings within them (e.g. Ashkenazi, Mizrahi, Eastern Orthodox, Sunni), about which I will talk further later. As a result, the second theme of this thesis considers the relationship between different identities, specifically in the context of the so-called normalisation of relations between predominantly secular Jewish-Israelis and Palestinian-Israelis through sport. The rest of this chapter will examine what has been written about normalisation, which I introduced in Chapter 1 as it relates to Israel-Palestine.

Horowitz’s *Ethnic Groups in Conflict* (1985) is a formative text in the social sciences on the field of ethnic conflict, drawing upon dozens of societies around the world. Its seminal position was earned through it being the first major text to look at ethnic conflict from the wide-reaching perspectives of such fields as affirmative action and institutional politics. Before Horowitz, works on ethnic conflict limited themselves to certain aspects of ethnic conflict—for example, its relation to nationalism (see Geertz (ed.) 1963, Connor 1972, Brass 1974, A. Smith 1979). Interest in the wide-reaching aspects of ethnic conflict surged following the collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War. The Cold War was,

perhaps, a testing ground for theories of conflict and became the subject of numerous works on ethnic conflict and resolutions.⁶⁵ Around this time, two significant introductory books on ethnicity were published in anthropology specifically: Eriksen's *Ethnicity and Nationalism* (1993) and Banks' *Ethnicity: Anthropological Constructions* (1996).

Both books connect ethnicity with earlier anthropological works on nationalism. In defining nationalism, Ernest Gellner (1983: 1) writes that “the political and the national unit should be congruent.” Building upon Gellner's concept, in order to be a nation, according to Varshney (2009), an ethnic group must have its own state—“a political and a territorial home” (2009: 277)—although Varshney hedges that this state may only be recognised under an autonomy constitution rather than as sovereign. Likewise, one might refer to ethnic groups such as the Sahrawi of north-west Africa and the Turks of northern Cyprus to demonstrate that, while the combination of territory and ethnicity is necessary for nationalism or statehood, it is not sufficient. Like these two examples, Palestine has many aspects of statehood. Palestine's legal status is that it is a sovereign state *de jure* (Israel maintains *de facto* military control) and a UN (non-member) observer state. Also in 2012, Yeocheol Yoon, the UN Chief of Protocol, announced that the UN would officially recognise Palestine as the “State of Palestine” (United Nations General Assembly 2012) (although Palestine self-declared statehood in 1988, backed by the earlier UN General Assembly Resolution 43/177).⁶⁶ As of 2018, Palestinian statehood remains controversial, and it lacks recognition by 30% of UN member states, including Israel.⁶⁷ I will refer to Palestine as a state, even though it does not have the same level of sovereignty and autonomy as Israel, whose

⁶⁵ Coakley (1992), Mamdani (2001), Toft (2003), Kalyvas (2006) and Stroschein (2014) are a selection of such texts that draw parallels between ethnic conflict and Israel-Palestine.

⁶⁶ United Nations General Assembly (1988, December 15). “Question of Palestine”. Accessed 12 October 2017 from www.un.org/documents/ga/res/43/a43r177.htm.

⁶⁷ Permanent Observer Mission of the State of Palestine to the United Nations, New York (2018, April 03). “Diplomatic Relations”. Accessed 07 May 2017 from <http://palestineun.org/about-palestine/diplomatic-relations>.

statehood is also not universally recognised. Indeed, this asymmetrical power dynamic is a focal issue in the on-going Israeli-Palestinian conflict (see Gallo and Marzano 2009).

Normalisation

As indicated in Chapter 1, a working definition used by soft-power activists in Israel and Palestine, such as those featured in Kuriansky (2007), and by local academics such as Tamari (2013) is to understand normalisation as the social and political process through which concepts are seen as “normal” in quotidian life. At its most basic, normalisation in Israel-Palestine refers to the establishment of bilateral relations between both governments and their respective citizens.

The rising prevalence of “anti-normalisation” movements in Israel and Palestine (e.g. Salem 2005, Eid 2016) suggests that this definition of pursuing “normalcy” is a major issue with normalisation at large. The definition of normalisation provided above, which I adopt in this thesis, seeks to establish the necessary conditions for disposing of the oppressor-oppressed relationship. Writing for *Mondoweiss*,⁶⁸ Azzam (2016), an editor for the Arab Center Washington, cites a second understanding, also evoked by Eid, a Gaza-based post-colonialist academic, that arose within Palestine following the initial failure of the Oslo Accords. According to Azzam, Eid and others, such as al-Hout and al-Hasan of the Palestinian Return Centre (a UK-based Palestinian refugee organisation), this meaning sees the relationship between oppressor and oppressed as a given, thus understanding normalisation as equated with conditions laid down by the dominant state, or at least as disregarding the inequalities of power between the two states and the identities associated with them (1993). Stanley Cohen (2001: 51) further sees normalisation as a blanket term of denial along with tolerance and accommodation—both of which figure in Azzam’s

⁶⁸ *Mondoweiss* is an American foreign-policy journal focusing on the Middle East from a predominantly anti-Zionist and progressive Jewish perspective.

understanding of normalisation. Although Cohen speaks to this in the immediate context of abusive interpersonal relationships, he later contextualises Israel as embracing a similar culture of denial, on which the Azzam-style normalisation agenda relies. According to Ameinu (n.d.) (an American labour Zionist foundation) and two leaders of the Alliance for Middle East Peace,⁶⁹ Braunold and Abuarquob (2015), this second definition has contributed to the rise of anti-normalisation efforts, which dismiss contacts between Israelis and Palestinians that are not “devoted to ‘co-resistance’ [of the occupation] rather than ‘co-existence’” (Ameinu n.d.: 1).

Anti-normalisation has grown out of the mutual distrust and suspicion that are prevalent in all factions of Israeli society. Anti-normalisation efforts are typically concentrated between Jewish-Israelis and Palestinians, as that is where large-scale reconciliation efforts are centred. In all cases, such feelings stem from an enduring sense of being unable to trust the intentions of others and the belief that the government(s) is not meeting everyone’s personal needs fairly. There are many reasons for this, some of which are discussed in the context of anti-normalisation by Walid Salem (2005), the director of the Palestinian Center for the Dissemination of Democracy and Community Development and a lecturer in conflict resolution and human rights at Al-Quds University in East Jerusalem. For example, despite trajectories set during the Camp David and Oslo Accords, Israel has continued to finance settlements in the West Bank. From the Israeli perspective, one example is Hamas’s alleged use of Gaza as a territory from which to attack Israel following Ariel Sharon’s 2005 unilateral disengagement from it.⁷⁰

⁶⁹ The Alliance for Middle East Peace is based in Washington and oversees ninety non-governmental organisations targeting Israeli-Palestinian relationships. Among its members are ones I discuss throughout this paper, such as PeacePlayers International, the Peres Center for Peace, Hand in Hand, the Arab-Jewish Community Center and Runners Without Borders.

⁷⁰ Here I reference Israel and Palestine, but comparable scepticism is seen in conjunction with the Fatah-Hamas conflict and the interactions with external states.

Contextualising scepticism and suspicion are critical within normalisation. Heÿn and Schroeder (2015) imply that such feelings have the upper hand in maintaining the status quo through blocking (or at least directing) channels of communication, which can undermine any normalisation practice (see also Goldenblatt 2012). Writing for *KAS International*, a German foreign-policy periodical, Heÿn and Schroeder discuss how individuals promoting normalising activities become targets of anti-normalisation campaigns, even when they are known not to be acting as government marionettes (2015: 108). The authors believe that the heterogeneity of anti-normalisation movements enables them to infiltrate all channels of social contact, thus turning even casual playground activity into a political act (see Chapter 4). Paradoxically, Heÿn and Schroeder, who are aware of the accusations that such campaigns are largely responsible for the stagnation of negotiations, expect anti-normalisation activities to continue until a sustainable act of reconciliation takes place (2015: 96). In a more popular culture piece in the Jewish-American magazine *Forward*, Naghi (2017) also looks at the persistence of anti-normalisation as the sum of practical principles (e.g. the occupation), rather than as a means embedded in any particular ideology. Regardless of the basis for an anti-normalisation stance, research such as Philip Gordon's (2017) shows that the fact that Israel and Palestine appear unable to form a normalised relationship precludes either from establishing positive relations with other Middle Eastern states and by extension, other international players. Gordon's interstate focus stems from his work as an American diplomat, previously the most senior White House official studying the Middle East, and his engagement in various foreign-policy think tanks in the United States, as well as in the Middle East.

To someone not sharing the Palestinian experience, anti-normalisation may sound counter-productive in respect of negotiations and any eventual reconciliation. However, in social psychology work on India and South Africa, Dixon et al. (2010) describe how

seemingly constructive normalisation efforts can actually contribute to the maintenance of inequality by limiting the willingness of the disenfranchised group(s) to necessitate change. In writing on Māori and European New Zealanders, Barlow et al. (2013) propose a “wallpaper effect” in which the ability of contact to improve perceptions of the other group is dependent upon the numerical ratio of Maori and Europeans. Applying this to Israel suggests that areas with a high percentage of Jewish-Israelis may be less able to support prejudice reduction through community contact (as per Allport 1954) than areas with a more ethnically balanced population. If normalisation is to occur, it may involve Palestinians directing normalisation activities, rather than being passive participants in good-will Israeli programmes. This agrees with Chaitin (2011), an Israeli psychologist involved in joint Palestinian-Israeli NGOs, who argues that Palestinians need more than half the talking space in any sphere of negotiation due to the frequent silencing of their stories and experiences.

As mentioned in Chapter 1, Tamari argues that, for Palestinians, what is “normal” is a life not punctured by hostility and the occupation. For (Jewish) Israelis, conversely, it refers to a desire to live as (western) Europeans (Tamari 2013: 48) in which exile and marginalisation (in Europe broadly and in the *shtetl* more specifically) have been replaced with a peaceful class society outside geographical Europe (Kimmerling 1989: 203). A starting point for unpacking these ideas may be to outline some of the criteria at the heart of previous peace talks, namely the Oslo Accords (1993, 1995), the Arab Peace Initiative (2002) and the peace talks of 2013 and 2014.

For Palestine, the main demands are:

- 1) A boundary around a sovereign state based on the Green Line (pre-1967 boundary)
- 2) No further construction of Israeli settlements within this boundary
- 3) The right of return for all Palestinians in the Diaspora, including prisoners from Israeli jails⁷¹
- 4) Equal rights for Palestinian citizens in Israel
- 5) East Jerusalem as the state's capital

Primary demands for Israel include:

- 1) A border based on the pre-1967 boundary, negotiated with territorial exchanges to accommodate the Jewish settlements
- 2) Removal of military forces from Palestine
- 3) Right of return for Palestinians to the State of Palestine, not to Israel
- 4) Recognition of Israel as a Jewish state and its right to exist
- 5) Sole Israeli control of Jerusalem

A reading of the above lists highlights one central issue: the demands of each side are not necessarily compatible with the demands of the other. For example, Israel loses its West Bank settlements if Palestine is recognised as delimited by the 1967 borders, and East Jerusalem cannot simultaneously be the capital of Palestine while being under sole Israeli control. It further seems that neither state trusts the integrity of the other to take its pleas seriously. One example of this is that, during the time Israel was proposing a land swap in exchange for settlement territory (e.g. the Lieberman Plan 2004), it continued, apart from brief moratoria, to authorise the construction of thousands of new settlement units. Today the settlements, illegal under international law, have an annual population growth (3.7%) twice that of the Jewish population in Israel (1.9%) (European Union 2012).⁷²

Tamari's focal issue is that, while both Israel and Palestine ultimately seek relief from prolonged violence and desire sovereignty, the conditions for each to obtain these are not necessarily mutually agreeable, as neither is interested in compromising its values in the face of the other. This aspect is tied directly to anti-normalisation initiatives, for, at the extreme,

⁷¹ Adwan et al. (2011) and Ahmed (2012) discuss extensively the plight of Palestinian refugees, including how they experience the Palestinian Diaspora and Israeli control.

⁷² Some of the fallout from these conflicting interests is handled in two recent works by Hüser and Oehring (2014) and Bauck and Omer (2017).

the very conditions that contribute to perceived normalcy among Israelis are instrumental in maintaining instability—and the consequent lack of normalcy—for Palestinians (Tamari 2013: 48). Yiftachel, an Israeli political geographer, discusses many of these issues, aiming to highlight grievances surrounding Judaisation from both the Israeli and Palestinian perspectives, as well as the positions of internal ethnic groups on both sides, with particular space devoted to Bedouin and Mizrahi in multi-ethnic cities (2006). Yiftachel explains some of the internal debates that frame these issues in terms of their (in)applicability. For example, he cites Hamas' refusal to consider a two-state solution (2006: 72) and Israel's promotion of settlements (2006: 75). However, instead of simply expanding upon the requests of all those involved, Yiftachel explores additional solutions involving the future of statehood, with a preference extending toward a situation of binationalism and multiculturalism. Stroschein (2014) discusses a form of this style of government called consociationism, which she argues has calmed ethno-nationalist tensions in post-Dayton Bosnia. This notion may have had some success in Bosnia and may be applicable to other multicultural states, such as Switzerland (Hechter 2000). However, an older but still relevant article by Lijphart (1969), a Dutch-American political scientist, explains how consociationism has failed in other cases, such as Cyprus and Lebanon, in ways that might herald a similar fate for Israel. Such issues are not discussed by Yiftachel, although he notes that his research is thus far inconclusive. A precondition here, as it is at the epicentre of much of the conflict, is the unification of Jerusalem. Instead of focusing on the two-state rhetoric that divides Jerusalem, Yiftachel proposes a restructuring of the political geography to create a single, binational metropolis (2006: 265ff.). Yiftachel is not the architect of this plan, which is also explored in a variety of ways elsewhere by Abu Odeh (1992), Rashid Khalidi (1992), Hirsch et al. (1995), Benvenisti (1996) and Dumper (2009).

Finally, Yiftachel and Tamari each briefly approach normalisation from a longitudinal perspective—seeing what it means, to whom, and the degree to which each considers it to be a success. They trace this from the beginning of Herzl’s Zionist movement to the present, a timeline punctuated by statehood and *al-Nakba*,⁷³ the Six-Day War and the more recent Oslo Accords and intifadas.

As part of the UN disarmament unit, Atieh et al. (2004) review the whole spectrum of people-to-people NGOs in Israel and Palestine from 1882-2004 and highlight how their projects interact with civic and political needs, especially following Israel’s declaration of statehood, the 1977 Israeli elections, the Oslo Accords in the mid-1990s and the creation of the Palestinian National Authority in 1994. Atieh et al. make no mention of sport, and their book is not concerned with particular organisations, but where I find it successful is in its analysis of the failures of these projects in general in terms that extend to all people-to-people NGOs. It looks at the political environment that constitutes project failure and outlines the necessary minima for future initiatives. A complementary paper is that by Maoz (1994), which also looks at people-to-people failures following a post-Oslo surge through the Second Intifada. Maoz is, perhaps, more despondent about the potential for NGOs to contribute to the normalisation process than Atieh et al. However, both question whether there is a realistic place for people-to-people projects within the political frameworks of normalisation.

Guided by social psychology’s *contact hypothesis* (“it’s harder to dislike acquaintances”; Allport 1954) and a political rhetoric of exclusionism (“rejection of the stranger”; Stolcke 1995) are two collections that look specifically at grassroots normalisation efforts between Israelis and Palestinians on the NGO and community level, edited by Edy Kaufman et al. (2006) and Kuriansky (2007). Kaufman et al. trace peacebuilding measures through early Zionism and the British Mandate, critically assessing the errors and lessons that

⁷³ The Arabic term for the 1948 war and the events surrounding it as affecting Palestinians.

still feed into reconciliation projects today. While sometimes the book emphasises political rhetoric to the detriment of critical analysis, its eight chapters by Palestinian and Israeli authors show the potential for a cognitive shift by linking civil-society activism with the political sphere and paying attention to the ways in which this might function differently in Palestine and Israel, as well as within the different ethnoreligious sectors of each state. With an overlay of psychosocial patterns, Kuriansky's forty chapters demonstrate how individuals and small groups have sought to champion hostility through people-to-people, educational and cultural projects. Although sport is not central to this compendium (related activities, such as dancing, are included), many of the issues raised, such as access and trust, directly reflect what is also found in sport (field notes, 2016). Both books highlight the discord over normalisation expressed at the government level that prevent a rebalancing of diplomatic relations, as well as progress with civilian relationships. In an update on Allport (see Hewstone and Brown 1986; also Ben-Ari and Amir 1986 as applied to Israel), Hewstone, a social psychologist interested in social relations, has pioneered research on the reduction of intergroup conflict through intergroup contact. Known earlier in his career for his work on attribution theory (1983, ed.), Hewstone, at times with other authors, e.g. Al Ramiah (2013), Hewstone et al. (2014), Árnadóttir et al. (2018), explores pivotal mechanisms of contact that have contributed to successful conflict reduction around the world.

Indeed, although normalisation is part of the discourse of the different governments, and the respective governments have made token normalisation efforts with varying levels of intent and force, the majority of peacebuilding has taken place in the non-governmental sphere, which includes some sporting activities. Considering anti-normalisation movements, a related new book edited by Alon and Bar-Tal (2016) looks at the breakdown of confidence between Israel and Palestine, and notably (albeit from the Jewish-Israeli perspective) considers ways in which there may be opportunities to build trust in the current climate.

A primary challenge to the normalising of Israel-Palestine relationships is that in this case a normalised state cannot refer back to a pre-conflict state, as neither today's Israel nor Palestine existed as such before the conflict. Despite this, normalcy, for both sides, does involve a longing for a restructured and reimagined idealised past (Tamari 2013: 49). Less than a year after Israel's declaration of statehood, Ernst Simon, a German-Jewish philosopher, published "What Price Israel's 'Normalcy'?" In this article, Simon articulates incongruences between what he believes to be the state's desired trajectory toward western Europeanisation and its present Levantisation (the ascription of attributes of the surrounding region), a process increased by the initial rise of Mizrahi culture stemming from early migrations of Mizrahi Jews, especially from Iraq and North Africa. This discord, he felt, would prevent a normalised relationship emerging between the Jewish enclave and its surrounding states, as well as challenging what he described as the main dilemma for Jewish youth—the search for a "normal" existence (Simon 1949: 342). In this context, Simon wrote that, from the beginning, Zionism, by coming to Palestine, "'burdened' itself with Arab relations and with the immense weight of the historic Jewish landscape and tradition. ... A chemically pure normalisation became chemically impossible: the specifically Jewish problems of *our* nationalism emerged anew" (ibid.: 342-343).

Also looking at the psychology of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, Nets-Zehngut and Bar-Tal (2007) and Chaitin (2011) identify major psychological roadblocks to peace. In addition to the themes of collective memory and ethos (e.g. Rouhana and Bar-Tal 1998, Kansteiner 2002, Sorek 2015) that contribute to dehumanising the other, instability and cyclical violence (e.g. Masalha 1992, Shapira 1992, Bar-Tal 2000, Abdel Jawad 2007), there are the various coping mechanisms that both Israelis and Palestinians have developed to fulfil their collective and individual needs for "normalcy" in the context of the conflict (e.g. Rouhana and Bar-Tal 1998, and Abdeen et al. 2008). Without greater support, grassroots

efforts, such as those described in Kuriansky's volume, struggle to reach far beyond their immediate audience, something which may or may not be seen as problematic (e.g. Hanafi 2007: 73-75). However, other authors, featured in Kuriansky (2007) and elsewhere, believe that community support is a precondition for international reconciliation (e.g. T. Barnea and Abdeen 2002). According to Northrup (1989: 55), personal identity is paramount in understanding one's global environment, which positions the self centrally in wider crises. Abu-Nimer and Lazarus (2007)⁷⁴ write about their personal backgrounds as academics assessing the efficacy of conflict-resolution organisations by adding that NGOs are more focused on the short term, risking failure in the longer term and even for future generations. Indeed, as pointed out by Stidder and Sugden (2003: 139), while certainly not ineffectual and potentially catalytic, sport-for-peace in Israel is unlikely to achieve what politicians have thus far been unable to achieve. Doubilet (2007: 49) goes further, arguing that, if political diplomacy alone could solve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, the fighting would have long been over. Of particular interest, Doubilet's chapter, focusing on the efficacy of people-to-people initiatives, was written following a year as a project developer with the Peres Center for Peace and near the beginning of her subsequent appointment as the managing director of the Middle East chapter of PeacePlayers International. My involvement with both of these NGOs will comprise the first section of my ethnography in Chapter 4.

Although anthropology has a tradition, post-Durkheim, of antagonism to psychological explanations for the social, an antagonism that has since softened, some early works by major figures in anthropology did incorporate considerations of psychology. Notable examples include Malinowski (e.g. 1929, 1944) and Margaret Mead (e.g. [1928] 2001, 1939), whose ethnographies on Trobrianders and Samoans respectively demonstrated that what had previously been considered psychological universals (e.g. anxieties during

⁷⁴ Lazarus worked as the Jerusalem-based programme director (1996-2004) for the Middle East chapter of Seeds of Peace, another NGO that believes sport can accelerate positive changes in conflict zones by bringing young adults together.

puberty) are culturally specific (e.g. Róheim [1943] 1971). With further notable contributions by the likes of Kardiner (e.g. 1939), Benedict (e.g. 1934), Sapir (e.g. 1956), Beatrice Whiting (e.g. 1963) and Devereux (e.g. 1969), this aspect of anthropology continued to use psychoanalysis, but it focused on how culture impacts on psychology rather than how psychological experience shapes one's culture. Erikson, primarily a psychologist, pursued anthropological fieldwork with the American cultural anthropologist Alfred Kroeber as part of his (Erikson's) study of the psychosocial stages of childhood (1950). This work, along with another on Martin Luther (1958), developed a basis for looking at how experience shapes behaviour, and although focused on personal and collective histories and quickly subsumed into psychohistory, it drew attention to the impact of the psychological experience on individuals and collectives.

This flirtation with psychology has continued in some work in anthropology since these early efforts. Abner Cohen contributed to theories of institutionalised violence and its maintenance through his work connecting power struggles with symbolic psychological behaviours (e.g. 1969, 1976). This paved the way for other anthropologists, such as Beeman (2005), to argue that the mutually reactive devaluation of Iran and the US has led to symbolic and recurrent demonisation of the two sides, preventing successful negotiations. Reactive devaluation, proposed initially by Ross and Stillinger (1988), has contributed directly to psychological analyses of Israel-Palestine. This type of assessment invokes a culturally specific cognitive dimension to themes such as asymmetric power, mutual distrust and negotiation failures (e.g. Maoz et al. 2002, Malhotra and Ginges 2010, Ross 2014). Atran, a French-American anthropologist, builds upon similar themes to see how they, along with matters like religious fundamentalism, terrorism and sacred values, exert leverage on rational choice within conflicts (2010). As a founder of Oxford University's Centre for the Resolution of Intractable Conflict and ARTIS International, as well as someone who has worked with the

United Nations Security Council on the Middle East, Atran (with Ginges et al. 2007) takes special interest in the role of rational choice in Israel-Palestine, concluding that rationality and reasoning may be undermined when adversaries confront what they hold to have sacred values.

Finally, in looking at issues such as collective memories, Clignet (1990) considers the psychological impact of conflict on traditional societies. This work was published as part of the proceedings of a 1987 meeting organised by the US Center for the Study of Foreign Affairs. Other works in the proceedings, edited by Montville (1990), assess ethnic conflict on six continents through a variety of themes. Esman (1990) and Volkan (1990) both contribute essays specifically on the social implications of psychology and psychoanalysis within a cultural conceptualisation of ethnic conflict. Robert Rubenstein has authored a number of works (e.g. 1988, 2005, 2015) on the relevance of anthropology for the success of organisations, such as the United Nations, that seek to mitigate international disputes. Rubenstein argues that anthropology contributes the understanding of psychological and cultural nuances without which peace processes risk destabilisation and interventions risk futility. The final book I mention here is Robben (2010, ed.), which asks what anthropologists can contribute to the study of the Iraq War. One chapter in this collection, authored by Pereet (2010), is based on her research on the politics of space and geopolitics as impacting on experience in Palestinian refugee camps in Iraq. She finds that features associated with Palestine, such as curfews, checkpoints, foreign occupation and ethnic divisions, are increasingly defining Iraqi culture. Similarly, Sluka (2010), also featured in Robben's collection, seeks to apply lessons learned from his research in Belfast to the concept of a war on terror (see also Sluka 1989, 1995, 2000 (ed.)).

Like psychology, another area of literature that is not frequently included within social anthropology but is included within cognitive anthropology connects social bonds to neurology. Cognitive and social anthropology seek to answer different questions and take different approaches toward the study of anthropology.⁷⁵ This is not to say that there is no overlap between cognitive and social anthropology. For example, one nexus between the two that I invoke at several points throughout this thesis relates to principles of identity fusion (e.g. Swann et al. 2012) and ESIM (e.g. Reicher 1996). Both of these theories look at collective salient identities that have been used to account for the kin-like bonds of various groups from frontline Libyan revolutionaries fighting against Gaddafi (Whitehouse et al. 2014) to sport hooligans fighting for status in the English Premier League (Newson et al. 2016). Here, however, my interest in drawing upon cognitive anthropology is that it may elucidate the ways in which mutual participation in sport can bring people together, specifically in connection with theories of normalisation discussed in the ethnographic chapters below.

Emma Cohen et al. (2010) uses a university rowing team to demonstrate that, when competing as a team, athletes have increased tolerance for pain, are more exhilarated and develop deeper social bonds, a process known as behavioural synchrony. While Cohen et al. specifically targeted rowers who would normally be rowing together in eight-oared shells and therefore forced to work in unison (2010: 106), her research team assessed them in the gym on individual ergometers, which enables a level of individual freedom.⁷⁶ She found that the athletes, even out of their team boat, still exhibited increased endorphins and opioidergic activation when in the presence of others. This suggests that the *perception* of togetherness is critical in improving physiological synchrony and altered psychology. Therefore, it seems

⁷⁵ According to D'Andrade (1995), cognitive anthropology looks at how people ideate the world around them through implicit knowledge and subconscious awareness. Methodologically, it is typically bracketed with quantitative analysis rather than the ethnography associated with social anthropology.

⁷⁶ Emma Cohen et al. (2010) tested the athletes both training alone and with a group to assess the impact of a group environment. When in a group, they were still on independent rowing machines.

plausible to extrapolate her findings to other athletes competing together in the same activity, even if not matching in speed or unison. Indeed, Cohen (as part of Bulbulia et al. 2013 on a cultural evolutionary approach to religion) argues just this: the release of neurochemicals through like-patterned behaviour, expressed as shared but not necessarily identical movement, is effective in building cultural solidarity and social commitment, not unlike Durkheim's collective effervescence. In a more recent article, Cohen (now as part of Davis et al. 2015) returns to rowers to conclude that synchrony is only paramount if the participants are chasing the same goal, otherwise the sense of collaboration is sufficient (2015: 9). Perhaps this togetherness serves as a social placebo providing safety in numbers and support, thereby enabling each participant to reduce personal caution and be more open to new experiences. While rowing might be associated with competition and teamwork, especially among Cohen's original cohort of university athletes, others have found a positive correlation between sociality and non-competitive sport or other activities, like dance, drumming and capoeira (see Fischer et al. 2013, Reddish et al. 2013).⁷⁷ Outside the Euro-American framework, Widlok (2007) connects collective consciousness and cooperation to trance dancing among the southern African San.

Other examples of ethno-national conflict: China, South Africa, Northern Ireland

Much in the same manner as the earlier discussion of sport as producing a fit society, sport has held out a promise to many others in striving to achieve normalisation. If successful, relationships normalised in this way may percolate into larger-scale economic and political spheres.

⁷⁷ Fischer et al. (2013) did suggest a lack of prosociality in running, which is contrary to my hypothesis. Critically, however, they used social cross-country running (in addition to social poker) and stated that the athletes involved in the study had no common goal, which Davis et al. (2015: 9) identify as a keystone of prosociality. Later I will discuss prosociality in the context of running but, critically, in the context of a shared goal.

One of the most frequently cited examples of local-level sport contributing successfully to normalised diplomatic relationships is what is known as “ping-pong diplomacy”. “Ping-pong diplomacy” refers to a 1971 table-tennis exchange between the United States and China that is credited with ending an embargo on relations that had its roots in the late nineteenth century. It is claimed that the exchange helped ease previously acrimonious Sino-American relations sufficiently for Nixon to become the first US president to visit China in 1972 (MacMillan 1985: 179). However, Sugden and Bairner (1995: 127) argue that such exchanges are only likely to be successful because of simultaneous progress in restoring diplomatic ties through political and other means (see also Dutt 1974, Hong and Sun 2000).⁷⁸ In the words of Stuart Murray and Geoffrey Allen Pigman (2014: 1102), this means that, “while traditional diplomacy is the means to a state’s foreign policy ends, sports diplomacy is one of the means to the means of those ends.”

Two conflicts that have raged alongside, and have been compared with, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in the twentieth century have seen some degree of normalisation allegedly through sport, namely South Africa and Northern Ireland. Publishing during the height of the South African apartheid era, Geldenhuys (1984: 177, 218; also Lapchick 1975) discusses sport’s role in desegregation efforts that ultimately contributed to the ending of apartheid. Ramsamy, the Chairman of the South African Non-Racial Olympic Committee, discusses non-racial sport in the country and positions all sport within the greater debate over race (1982).⁷⁹ Sport had two primary roles in normalising ethnic relations in South Africa: 1) permitting games between blacks and whites (Jarvie 1985: 50); and 2) ending the

⁷⁸ The US was less successful in restoring relations with Cuba, for example, for this reason. Castro Mariño (2002) and Philip Brenner and Colleen Scribner (2016: 394) discuss baseball’s inclusion in the Clinton administration’s attempt to normalise US-Cuba relations in 1999. However, the administration did not follow through with governmental action, and as such, LeoGrande (2016: 27) notes it would be another seventeen years until another exchange took place along with additional government policy under Obama’s normalisation plan.

⁷⁹ The irony of non-racial sport in South Africa is that different ethnicities are associated primarily with different sports: Blacks with football, Afrikaners with rugby, and British and Indians with cricket. Sport divisions along ethnic or sectarian divides are seen in many states: including Belgium (Vanreusel et al. 2000), Canada (Harvey 2000), Germany (Merkel 2000), India (McDonald 2000) and Northern Ireland (Sugden and Bairner 1995).

international boycott that brought race-based colonialism to the media frontline and to collective consciousness (see Jarvie 1985: 47;⁸⁰ Guelke and Sugden 2000). Although other aspects, such as economic embargoes, had a greater impact on ending apartheid, the way sport was organised in the country generated a lot of public interest around the world (Bose 1994). Citing predominantly the failures of Israelis to dismantle the occupation in the decade following Oslo, Marwan Bishara (2002) likens Israel's treatment of Palestinians to South Africa's treatment of non-whites during apartheid—a comparison that remains contentious (e.g. Greenstein 2013a, Greenstein 2013b, Pogrud 2014). Anti-normalisation movements, such as BDS (Boycotts, Divestments and Sanctions), oppose normalisation on the grounds that Israel is an apartheid state and must first cede occupied land. Those making the apartheid analogy are not necessarily critics of the Israeli state—notably, former Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin warned in a then-unpublished interview in 1976 that Israel risked becoming an apartheid state because its annexation of, and settlements in, the West Bank (Laufer 2015). Others from within Jewish Israel drawing this same analogy include academics, such as two from Ben-Gurion University, anthropologist Lev Grinberg (ed., 2000: 140) and political geographer Oren Yiftachel (2006: Ch. 5).

Relations between Israelis and Palestinians can also be likened to the ethno-nationalist Northern Ireland conflict for reasons including land partitions and community segregation, the duration of the conflict, double minorities and siege mentalities.⁸¹ Violence in Northern Ireland has largely subsided following the Good Friday Agreement in 1998, but sport also had—and continues to have—at least some role in normalising relations between the two sides (Sugden 2010: 265). However, writing several years prior to the Good Friday Agreement, Sugden and Bairner (1995: 71) argued that normalisation might not be the

⁸⁰ Jarvie (1985) also discusses how sport perpetuated apartheid through the inequality of opportunities afforded to different populations.

⁸¹ This is not to say that Israel-Palestine is like Northern Ireland in every way, and some of these also apply to other ethnic conflicts. An issue of the *Palestine-Israel Journal*, “Lessons from the Northern Ireland Peace Process” (2017, Vol. 22: 1), is dedicated to this topic.

inherent outcome: in fact, state-sponsorship of sport for the purpose of mitigating nationalist tensions might even exacerbate the conflict by subsuming sectarian identities (71ff., 134; also Hargreaves 1986: 183). However, at the same time, the authors discuss how state-sponsored sport during the Troubles inadvertently contributed to an increase in local leisure and sporting facilities, especially around Belfast (Sugden and Bairner 1995: 112). Sometimes known as the “Belfast Experiment”, the hope was that community order could be maintained through community sport, both in playing across sides and also in acquiring personal discipline and training (Sugden and Yiannakis 1982), although Ken Roberts (2014: 156) suggests that much needed to be rebuilt after the conflict. “Sectarianism and Sport in Northern Ireland”, published by the Northern Ireland Assembly (2001), which links sectarianism to eight sports in the country, further supports these apparently contrasting perspectives. The Assembly’s paper considers how sport can both contribute to and counteract sectarianism,⁸² both sides of which can then be perpetuated by the media, governments and, of course, the participants themselves.

However, for many commentators, sport is unlikely to be the harbinger of Middle East peace. In their analysis of Northern Ireland, Sugden and Bairner (1995) showed that sport can even increase violence if it is used too frequently as a political lever. While George Orwell did not otherwise concern himself with sport, he reacted to a 1945 goodwill Soviet football tour of Britain in an article published in the *Tribune* later that year in which he protested at the goodwill aspirations by claiming that “[one does] make things worse by sending forth a team of eleven men, labelled as national champions, to do a battle against some rival team, and allowing it to be felt on all sides that whichever nation is defeated ‘loses

⁸² For example, according to Sugden (1995: 202) and Tonge (2002: 109), Gaelic sports (hurling, Gaelic football, camogie) are played predominantly by Catholics. These sports have been used to affirm Catholic (Irish nationalist) heritage following the Troubles (Cronin 1994: 15). Football, a “British” (Protestant) sport, although banned temporarily for Catholics by the Gaelic Athletic Association, is sufficiently popular among both Catholics and Protestants that, at least in the Republic, Holmes (1994: 97) believes it transcends sectarian lines. Sugden (2010: 264) counters this for Northern Ireland, stating there are rarely mixed teams.

face’.” In what has since become a cliché, Orwell claimed that sport brings out the “most savage combative instincts” and, in a statement that has equally become a cliché, defined sport as “war minus the shooting” (1945). Perhaps two reasons for any athletic acrimony are the inherent tensions within sport (Standal and Moe 2012: 78-79; Eichberg 2013: 274) and their exploitation by identity politicians.⁸³ Frith (2002), a British-Australian cricket historian, looks at the degree to which the 1932-1933 English “bodyline” cricket tour of Australia strained political relations between the two countries. There were underlying sovereignty and financial issues between Britain and Australia prior to the tour, but Frith believes that disagreements over playing tactics fuelled discontent that led to acrimony between the two states until the Second World War (2002: Ch. 10).⁸⁴ Sissons and Stoddart believe the “bodyline” tour has remained a “benchmark” in the two states’ relations to this day (1984: 143). Almost thirty-five years later in 1969, a World Cup qualifying match between El Salvador and Honduras triggered a four-day battle resulting in 3,000 deaths. Kapuściński, a Polish reporter covering the battle, clarifies that, although the conflict was not rooted in sport—it was a dispute over land ownership and migration—the game made the atmosphere tenser and emotional and sparked what became known as the “football war” (2007; see English 2013). The case of the Israeli football team Beitar Jerusalem (discussed in Chapter 5) also shows how playing a sport may be linked to ethnic antagonism, not normalisation.

Monnington (1986: 159) has shown that attempts to dismantle tribalism in parts of Africa have been hampered by extreme allegiance to sporting bias. Even if violence is not the result, rivalries that have long since evaporated in the political spheres seem to be frozen in

⁸³ For example, the Nazis used propaganda around the 1936 Berlin Olympics to showcase a united and peaceful Germany to the fifty-two participating nations, while simultaneously promoting Aryanism and German expansionism (Hart-Davis 1986). Hough (2008: 1290) provides another example of Croatia’s President Tudman changing the name of the Dinamo Zagreb football club to Dinamo Croatia in 1993 to reflect the newly minted state on the international stage.

⁸⁴ The Statute of Westminster (1931), which granted Commonwealth nations legislative independence, was not ratified by Australia until 1939. Thus, Australia was brought into World War II with Britain.

sport. Winner (2012) takes up this idea to account for the football rivalries between Germany and the Netherlands, citing them as being left over from the political rivalries of the Second World War. In a more extreme example of lasting rivalry, Grant and Stringer (1995: 3) suggest that any on-field hostility between (the rugby teams of) Scotland and England—despite both belonging to the United Kingdom since 1707, and thus periodically playing as part of the same team—might stem from Scotland’s victory over England in the 1314 Battle of Bannockburn. Bannockburn was a decisive victory in the First War of Scottish Independence, which *de facto* established Scotland’s independence from England.

This chapter has dealt with the broad treatment of sport within anthropology, as well as specific ways through which it has contributed toward Zionism and modern Israeli identity, ranging from muscular Judaism to normalisation. In conjunction with the next chapter on methods, the theories explored within this chapter will underpin the ethnographic chapters that follow.

Chapter 3. Methodology and Methods

The importance of history

Loïc Wacquant's *Body and Soul: Notebooks of an Apprentice-Boxer* (2004) convinced me that, in whichever direction my thesis would develop, I would be “in” on the action. I wanted to *feel* the power of Wacquant's body capital and carnal sociology (2004: viii), not just witness it notepad in hand. I wanted to acquire a corporal understanding of Israel. How does modern sport in Israel reflect contemporary Jewish identity? How can sport be used to negotiate identity, especially in the so-called normalisation of Israeli-Palestinian relations? Indeed, my first activity in Israel involved training with athletes at the national sport facility, as described in Chapter 6.

Interest in Wacquant notwithstanding, at the outset of this project, I intended to follow what I believed to be traditional anthropological methods, namely one or two years of participating in my informants' daily lives. However, when I arrived in Israel in early July 2014, I had just passed through immigration at the airport when an air-raid siren stung the air, signalling the beginning of what the Israeli government would term Operation Protective Edge. Instead of progressing to baggage claim, I was swallowed in the cascade of bodies careening through large steel double doors marked “רחבמ מוגן” (shelter) and down countless flights of unnoticeable stairs before landing among waste bins and air ducts. After several false *All clears!* over an unknown period of time, the steel doors reopened, and sunbeams reaching down the first flight of stairs, formally welcoming me to Israel.

With the 2014 Israeli-Gaza conflict underway, fighting escalated. Although rockets from Gaza had reached Tel Aviv in 2012, the 2014 conflict saw the use of new M75 missiles, expanding Hamas' range and increasing its accuracy. Citing their inability to guarantee my safety and the violation of risk assessments, soon the US Embassy and Oxford University requested my departure from the field. Initially disappointed to find myself bound for London after a few weeks, not months, let alone years, the fighting made me realise the degree to which I can only understand the Israeli present through a comprehensive knowledge of its past.

Unable to return to Israel once the ceasefire held because my sites had not yet resumed normal operations after nearly two months of fighting, I decided not only that a library-based approach could bolster any ethnography, but also that historical research could explain some of the phenomena in the field. For health reasons I took leave of absence from December 2014 through early 2016, when I once again flew to Israel. In late 2015, nearing return from my leave, tensions in Israel began to rise again. Although both sides declared victory in the 2014 conflict, Gaza had been disproportionately weakened.⁸⁵ This next phase, known by various names including "wave of terror",⁸⁶ "*habba*"⁸⁷ (upheaval) and "Intifada of the Individuals" (Avnery 2014), saw an increasing frequency of seemingly random, lone

⁸⁵ The 2014 conflict disproportionately impacted Gazan citizens (and other Palestinians to a lesser extent) more than Israelis. The exact casualty counts vary by agency, depending whether it is Israeli or Palestinian. To provide some numbers, the Palestinian Ministry of Health claims that 2,310 Gazans were killed and a further 10,626 were injured, the majority civilians (*Ma'an News Agency* (2015, January 03). "Ministry: Death toll from Gaza offensive topped 2,310". Accessed 01 May 2017 from www.maannews.com/Content.aspx?id=751290). This can be compared with the seventy Israelis killed, including six civilians. A further 730 Israelis were injured, of whom 469 were members of the IDF (Hartman 2014). There are many reasons for this discrepancy, including military tactics (whether civilians are protected or used as human shields; although this is debated, IDF foot soldiers claimed to me that they had met Hamas fighters with children strapped to their chests (interviews, February 2016, English and Hebrew)), warfare technology (e.g. Iron Dome), unequal resources (e.g. sirens and shelters) and geography (e.g. Gaza is a small and densely populated target with less protection). Similar patterns can be found throughout Israel. For example, Palestinian towns throughout the country may have fewer, if any, shelters (Arlosoroff 2014, Hass 2014).

⁸⁶ Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs (2018, March 18). "Wave of Terror 2015-2018". Accessed 07 April 2018 from <http://mfa.gov.il/MFA/ForeignPolicy/Terrorism/Palestinian/Pages/Wave-of-terror-October-2015.aspx>.

⁸⁷ Palestinian Center for Policy and Survey Research (2016, June 07). "Palestinian Public Opinion Poll No (60)". Accessed 08 June 2016 from <http://www.pcpsr.org/sites/default/files/poll%2060%20June%202016%20pressrelease%20English.pdf>.

wolf-style attacks, mainly knifings and axings, in major cosmopolitan areas in Israel. Additionally, whereas previous attacks were predominantly between Palestinians and Israelis, this round appeared to some to be less discriminating (field notes, 2016).

I had access to (limited) intelligence information through informants in the Israel Defense Forces. Especially on my return to Israel in 2016, this helped me calculate—and minimise—risks by planning routes, acquiring appropriate defensive equipment and maintaining a current understanding of the somewhat undulating political landscape. Although I felt well-protected, following a spree of shootings in the environs of my fieldwork, I was advised against taking certain routes through East Jerusalem, some parts of Jerusalem's Old City and the West Bank. This prevented me from participating in a few events, required rearranging some interviews and further encouraged me to consider library-based and archival research. Ultimately, I left Israel after several months, citing my mental health following the suicide of a primary informant and roommate, witnessing several attacks and narrowly escaping one myself that proved fatal for others. In winter 2016 and spring/summer 2017, I completed the final phase of the ethnography, revisiting existing informants and expanding my networks for further interviews. This work was done through conversations by telephone, Skype and email.

Because of both practical and safety concerns and funding requirements, this thesis has therefore acquired a more historical focus than is usual in anthropology theses. Nonetheless my own fieldwork in Israel serves to contextualise and make relevant historical phenomena. By examining the nexus of the past and present through themes such as twentieth-century Zionism, contemporary Jewish identity and the controversial issue of so-called normalisation, I am able to understand the developing role of sport in shaping contemporary Israeli identity and relations. In fact, one contribution made by this thesis is that these historical connections with Zionism and early ideas of the Jewish nation continue

to be reiterated throughout modern Israeli society. Despite losing much of their historical political scaffolding (e.g. labour-socialism), they continue to underpin present-day nationalism.

The rest of this chapter is divided into two parts. The first part provides a descriptive account of the fieldwork. This is mainly concerned with what I did and where I did it. In the second part, I frame my positionality, further discuss ethnographic techniques and explore additional issues that arose throughout the project. The reason for this choice of presentation is twofold. Firstly, I feel it is important to account for what might be considered an unusual ethnographic practice described above. Secondly, all methods apply to more than one area of the ethnography.

A chronology of fieldwork

Summer 2014

Wingate Institute

In the heat of the morning sun, once out of the airport's bomb shelter on that early July day, I travelled 30km north to the Wingate Institute (WI) in Netanya, Israel. As well as being a residential training centre for many of Israel's national sport teams, the Orde Wingate Institute for Physical Education and Sports includes sport-related research centres for physiology and medicine, a pedagogical centre, a national archive and a military training base that focuses on hands-on combat and physical fitness. Throughout my stay, I slept in the

athletes' dormitory and took meals at one of the two campus cafeterias, sharing common rooms and tables with the national volleyball teams, Rio-bound track-stars, weightlifters, gymnasts and swimmers.⁸⁸

The Institute's Zvi Nishri Archive, founded in 1968, contains material on Jewish sport from the turn of the twentieth century to the present day. The material reflects the development of sport both within Israel and throughout the Diaspora. Because of my need for archival resources, I was granted access to the archive and to library and audio-visual resources at the Institute's Turner Pedagogical Centre. The reference librarian and archivist worked with me to identify materials that would be most useful in my quest to understand the historical Jewish relationship with sport. Unfortunately, apart from materials in the main library, which were largely on coaching philosophies, physiology and the political nature of sport, I was not permitted to go through the archives myself to browse or to choose my own material directly. Instead I would suggest themes of interest, and the archivist would disappear into a back room before returning with a collection of materials that I “might find appealing”. Thus, although I was able to specify my areas of interest in the WI libraries, I did not have full control over the newspaper clippings, unpublished documents and photographs that I was allowed to access.

While at WI, I wanted to experience how body capital and corporality shape Israeli identity in much the way that Wacquant found body capital developed and managed within the walls of his Chicago boxing gym. Having spent more than a decade as an elite athlete in the Euro-American tradition, I understood the basics: constant competition reinforces the ranking and dominance of athletes and maintains the pressure to perform well. Stronger performers are offered higher-stakes competitions and enjoy a social status as desired individuals that can percolate beyond the athletic sphere. While my prior experience as an

⁸⁸ As I note below in conjunction with research on NGOs, I could not interview all of these athletes with whom I interacted on a daily basis, as some of them were under eighteen.

internationally competitive rower earned me invitations to train alongside a national team while at WI, my sport was not one for which they catered, and my options were limited: I had never fenced; I struggled through four pool lengths in the time the swim team managed eight with ease; I had not played basketball since bruising a finger at age five. In the end, I joined the women's volleyball team for cross-training beach runs and was paired with the men's powerlifting team for gym work. Although the powerlifters had calves the size of my waist, I had spent years lifting weights and could at least safely train alongside them. In addition to engaging with athletes from other sports around the dormitory and dining halls, I was able to meet with some of the nation's top coaches, national and Olympic team coordinators and former competitive athletes to learn about the structure of the state's sporting environment. While at WI, I secured an invitation to join the national rowing team at its base in Tel Aviv upon my expected return there at the end of the summer for the next stage of my fieldwork. I looked forward to this because I knew my international ranking and would be able to engage fully in the economics and power plays of the sport,⁸⁹ something in which I could not fully engage at WI, as I was not a fully-fledged member of the volleyball team, nor could I compete on par with the powerlifters.

The 2014 conflict intensified during my time in Netanya, which was itself considered to be beyond the reach of Gazan rockets and an unlikely target of the watching Lebanese Hezbollah. The only real impacts of the conflict at WI were reduced staff coverage because some were unable to commute in, scheduling changes to keep athletes indoors during hours of anticipated rocket launches, and a lack of sleep, as we spent several nights in the dormitory's built-in shelter—a room designed for minimal occupancy but welcomed regardless when sirens wailed.

⁸⁹ By this I refer to the commodification of the body in terms of capital. In this sense, the skills associated with highly-trained athletes are equated with an acquired cultural prestige and become a form of exchangeable capital (e.g. Bourdieu 1986, Wacquant 1995, Shilling 1991: 654).

Like Netanya, Tel Aviv is largely protected from rockets by its distance from the state's Gazan and Lebanese borders, as well as by the Iron Dome missile defence system. Although Tel Aviv had opened its public shelters, many residents placed their faith in the USD \$50,000-per-firing Iron Dome and calculated any personal risk as low. Shelters, sirens and interceptor missiles, however, are not infallible. Many organisations in Greater Tel Aviv, including those with which I had planned to work, ceased operations and left me to rearrange placements. I was also held to the codes of conduct of the United States Department of State and the University of Oxford and had to leave at their request, which came just short of the final ceasefire in late August. Upon returning to Oxford, I resumed archival research and began to plan a second trip to Israel. Unfortunately, although the 2014 war officially ended in late August, tensions continued to remain at a level that affected the operations of the organisations with which I had arranged to work. As I was limited in research scope by my funding body, I opted to delay my return until I felt I could carry out the rest of my ethnographic work with minimal disruption.

Winter-Spring 2016

Nearly eighteen months following my departure from Israel in late summer 2014, I returned to Tel Aviv to resume the fieldwork I had abandoned. The intervening period included several months of library-based work, visits to places such as London's Imperial War Museum and meetings with Jewish sports teams. From December 2014 through January 2016, I was on medical leave, which caused a greater gap between ethnographic research trips than intended.

In *Body and Soul* (2004), Wacquant argues that the boxing gym is an institution that replicates the ghetto while simultaneously resisting it. He sees "carnal sociology" as a way of explaining the development and management of body capital. In 2014 training with Israel's

top athletes appealed to me because, like Wacquant's boxing apprenticeship at the Woodlawn Boys Club in South Side, Chicago, doing so would enable me to participate in the commerce of body politics and capital. However, upon my return to the country, I felt focusing on mass and public-access sport might make me aware of the connections between sport and the contemporary state in ways I might miss if I focused on a finite group of elite athletes. There was also a practical reason for this decision, as I had had five shoulder operations while on medical leave and was unable to row as a result.

With this new focus, I chose several targets: a trio of marathons, two sport-for-peace NGOs (both of which I had intended to work with in 2014), the fandoms of several professional football teams, archives and sports historians. While any one of these domains would probably be sufficient on its own, together they paint a more global picture of the position of sport within Israel's nationalist infrastructure.

Marathons

One of the attractions of marathon running is that events generally cater to a wide range of abilities. The three I chose—Tel Aviv, Jerusalem and Palestine (in Bethlehem)—all present themselves as running festivals, which means they offer a variety of events and distances, further attracting a range of abilities. In the end, participating in each of the events meant I would run the trifecta within five weeks—a questionable task given that my shoulder was still painful, and I was also carrying a persistent hip injury that would require surgery several months later. In the end, I focused on Tel Aviv and Palestine. However, my involvement in the Palestine Marathon is no longer relevant to this thesis, as my interests have shifted.

One of the reasons behind my decision (made in consultation with my supervisor) not to participate in the Jerusalem Marathon was its promotion of Israeli control over all of Jerusalem, something that has led the Palestine Liberation Organization as well as local organisations to call repeatedly for its boycott as a violation of international law since the run's inception in 2011. The diversity of the route, a 42km run through West and East Jerusalem and the Old City, is promoted as one of the marathon's greatest attributes:⁹⁰ "The various tracks pass by fascinating historical sites that illuminate 3,000 years of the history of Jerusalem, Israel's capital."⁹¹ The Israeli claim mentions nothing about the annexation of East Jerusalem following the 1967 Six-Day War and nothing about the run taking place partly in the Occupied Territories. Although Israel continues to claim Jerusalem as its indivisible capital, Jerusalem was initially marked as a *corpus separatum* in the UN's 1947 partition plan, and the UN Security Council has identified the region as illegally occupied Palestinian land since 1968 (United Nations Department of Public Information 2003). Although running presented a very political experience, I decided that I did not want to be associated with the event given the mounting calls for boycotts that extended beyond the anti-normalisation efforts. Moreover, some of my informants in other contexts were some of the very people who were calling for the scrapping of the race, and I wanted my actions to respect our relationships.

⁹⁰ Jerusalem Marathon (2016). "Mayor's Greetings". Accessed 03 February 2016 from www.marathon-jerusalem.co.il/jm-Mayor-EN.aspx.

⁹¹ Jerusalem Marathon (2016). "About the Marathon". Accessed 03 February 2016 from <https://jerusalem-marathon.com/Jerusalem.aspx>.

Sport-for-peace NGOs

“Children who play together can learn to live together” is the motto of PeacePlayers International (PPI), an American NGO that uses basketball to bridge different communities of children. For several months in spring 2016, I engaged with two sport-for-peace NGOs, PPI and the Twinned Peace Sports Schools (TPSS), part of the larger Peres Center for Peace. Akin to PPI, TPSS also uses a variety of sports to connect Palestinian and Israeli children. Whether it is basketball for PPI or wheelchair basketball and football for TPSS, both programmes utilise a method known as Fair Play, or football3, developed by streetfootballworld, a German sport-for-peace NGO, and KICKFAIR, its network partner. This method involves no referees, and participants agree upon their own rules prior to the game, which they self-police with the assistance of mediators throughout play. The belief is that the focus on equality and sportsmanship (for which game points can be awarded) translates into off-pitch skills. I will discuss these games at greater length in Chapter 4 and provide examples in the appendix.

Working with PPI and TPSS posed one specific problem: the presence of children. My ethics review had not authorised me to work directly with children. Unfortunately, this limited my interactions with many of the children—the projects’ targeted majority—to observations of their training sessions, which I saw more as illustrations of what I discussed with the programme leaders and parents. I interviewed programme coordinators, coaches and parents as well as older participants, most of whom had completed their respective programmes. PPI, for example, seeks to keep its graduates involved through their Leader Development Programme, which trains alumni to be programme facilitators. TPSS also offers older children positions as coaches and mediators. The oldest athletes (high-school students over 18) and recent graduates of the programme were able to tell me about their experiences as school-age participants, which helped provide me with some understanding of the perspectives of the younger children. However, their memories may also be shaped by

several years of participation and new perspectives as mentors and coaches. It would have been fascinating to speak with the younger children, most of whom had their first positive experiences with the “other” (Israeli, Palestinian) through these programmes, but this was not possible because of the restrictions of the ethics review.

A further limitation dealt with safety: PPI targets mixed identity regions where there is some degree of political instability. Sessions are frequently relocated and periodically cancelled in response to concerns, usually from parents, regarding safety. In accordance with my risk assessment, I did not have permission to travel to many of these areas, most of which were Jewish settlements in East Jerusalem and Occupied Palestine. In addition to being involved with TPSS, the Peres Center also has an extensive library and archives, to which I had access. As with the archive at the Wingate Institute, there was some material on the history of Jewish and Israeli sport, but there was also material on coexistence, sport-for-peace and the relationship between Israel and Palestine.

Professional football teams

In all aspects of research, I recruited most of my informants by asking current informants for further contacts. One such initial contact, an acquaintance of a British colleague, knew I was intrigued by sport and gave me the name of an Israeli friend whom she thought followed “some football team somewhat fanatically”. While I met this friend in person in March 2016 while in Tel Aviv, we exchanged emails beginning in early 2014. Although she was not the avid sports-supporter I had been led to expect, she was fascinated by the degree to which sport permeated Israeli society. Her fascination developed when she moved away from Israel for a few years to study abroad in the United States and through her feeling that, as an observant Jew, her opportunities to play competitively in her new country were stifled—games were often played on Shabbat. She also noted that professional team

allegiance seemed variable. She noticed that people support their local team, and that they find a new team to support if they move, whereas in Israel fans generally support one team, regardless of where they live. She attributed this variability in the team's lack of relevance in the national infrastructure when compared with Israel (interview, March 2016, English). This comparison inspired me to look at the role of football—and particularly of its fans—within Israeli social structure. At first, I thought looking at professional football in this manner would be akin to a library-based study—seemingly passive and foundational. However, as I began speaking with people about football, I realised that it was integral to national identity and required more hands-on participatory ethnography.

Ultimately, incorporating professional football teams into my ethnography has enabled me to connect early Zionist literature with the rhetoric of sport today. The same sport leagues—Hapoel, Maccabi, Beitar and Elitzur⁹²—that carried the torch of national Zionism continue to be beacons of nationalism and Jewish pride today. What struck me, however, is that, while the concepts of Jewish nationalism from the teams' early circumstances to the present have developed (nationalism being a product of space-time), the followers of the team remain a consistent cohort. They continue to strive for the same political ideals irrespective of the changing external environment, frozen through one hundred years of kicking a ball into a net (see Chapter 5).

Originally, I planned to compare the fandoms of the Hapoel Tel Aviv and Maccabi Tel Aviv football teams: two neighbouring teams—even sharing the same home stadium—but drawing upon different segments of society for support. However, I quickly realised that Beitar Jerusalem, a predominantly Mizrahi club, makes an interesting comparison, as it stands apart from other teams in Israel for its aggressive stance against Arabs and Muslims

⁹² “Hapoel” means “the worker” (socialism). “Maccabi” is named for the Maccabees, a national liberation group who successfully revolted against Antiochus IV Epiphanes and the Seleucid Empire. “Beitar” was the last Jewish fortress destroyed by Emperor Hadrian in the Bar Kochba Revolt and is also a Hebrew acronym for Joseph Trumpeldor, considered to be a Zionist hero. “Elitzur” was the leader of the Tribe of Reuben.

(field notes, 2016). Apart from a fourth team, Maccabi Haifa, which I did not study, these three teams are the only teams that have played in the Premier League each season up to 2017 (see footnote 145). As I will discuss in Chapter 5, I also incorporated some research on an additional team, the Bnei Sakhnin.

I became acquainted with the different teams through their archives, games and followers. Maccabi archives are located at the Pierre Gildesgame Maccabi Museum in Ramat Gan, north of Tel Aviv. The Labor and Pioneer Archive at Tel Aviv's Levon Institute offered material on the history of Hapoel. Many of Beitar's materials had been lost in a fire several years earlier. Other material for Beitar is located at the Jabotinsky Institute in Tel Aviv. These resources, in conjunction with material at the Wingate Institute, offered a comprehensive picture of the clubs from their initiations early in the twentieth century to the present. For games, I attended two in person while in Tel Aviv and watched several others on television (when in Israel) or online (when abroad). While in Israel, I watched some games on television in sports bars in order to experience some of the emotions of supporters and talk with them about the games. One advantage of the televised games in Israel was the advertising breaks, during which my informants would explain what had happened during the previous play. However, instead of explaining the rules of football—most of which I still remembered from middle-school junior varsity—they punctuated the matches with commentary about the players and the banners in the stands. While streaming games online, I followed several internet forums that catered to vocal fans. I watched the games to observe the behaviour of both the fans and the players. Through discussions with fans and on football fan forums, I wanted to see whether football reflected different social circles, political stances and economic statuses. In addition, I spent time around a community Hapoel club in Tel Aviv, and spoke with sport historians and active football supporters in various non-stadium settings, ranging from sports bars to hostels.

I chose seven focal football games because they featured all of the major Israeli teams, and thus I expected they might be most prone to displays of team spirit and team camaraderie (** indicates matches I attended in person).

December 12, 2015 Hapoel Tel Aviv v. Beitar Jerusalem, Bloomfield Stadium, Tel Aviv.

January 02, 2016 Beitar Jerusalem v. Maccabi Tel Aviv, Teddy Malcha Stadium, Jerusalem.

February 07, 2016 Maccabi Tel Aviv v. Hapoel Tel Aviv, Bloomfield Stadium, Tel Aviv.

February 29, 2016 Hapoel Tel Aviv v. Hapoel Acre, Bloomfield Stadium, Tel Aviv.**

March 12, 2016 Maccabi Tel Aviv v. Bnei Sakhnin, Bloomfield Stadium, Tel Aviv.**

March 19, 2016 Bnei Sakhnin v. Beitar Jerusalem, Doha Stadium, Sakhnin.

April 11, 2016 Maccabi Tel Aviv v. Beitar Jerusalem, Bloomfield Stadium, Tel Aviv.

Spring-Summer 2017

Expanding community-based sport culture

In spring and summer 2017, I completed the final instalment of my research. This involved telephone calls, Skype interviews and email exchanges with previous and new informants. The majority comprised new informants involved in physical education programmes at schools. The goal of this was to understand more about the involvement of sport in the daily lives of individuals. Most were affiliated with two types of schools: Palestinian schools in East Jerusalem and Hand in Hand coexistence schools, which are spread in six locations throughout the country (I focused on Hand in Hand's Jerusalem branch, the largest and the only one to offer a full curriculum). I did speak with several teachers at Jewish state schools that catered primarily to Ashkenazi students, but I focused on Palestinian schools because I had less exposure to those communities. I also believed this would let me understand more about the occupation and the ways in which they fit within the

matrix of Jewish-governed Israel. I spoke with representatives of four schools in different Palestinian neighbourhoods (two primary, two secondary; one under the Israeli school system and three considering the change; see Chapter 4 on the different school systems). Schools were chosen based on contact accessibility, which I decided was sufficient because my interest was in experiences in schools, rather than in conducting a comprehensive survey.

PE programmes offered several benefits: 1) there is a history of PE in muscular Judaism, 2) it is part of the Israeli curriculum, and 3) it is the only access to sport for some children. Children's sport also seems more organised and available than adult programmes, which I found more ad hoc or restricted to set enclaves. Although I found the predominantly Jewish adult population in Tel Aviv to be physically active, the same patterns did not emerge in Jerusalem, nor indeed among Palestinian adults in any locale. I faced many of the same ethical issues with schools and community programmes during this period as I had the year before with the NGOs, namely that, while the programmes at which I looked had children at their epicentres, most of the people with whom I could speak directly were restricted to being parents and teachers.

Methods

Terminology

In the previous section, I discussed one specific issue involving ethics and children. This was not the only issue I faced, and I will discuss others as they arise throughout the thesis. However, I will expand upon one issue here that permeates nearly all aspects of my ethnography, namely the use of terminology. Here, I reference the use of words or phrases found frequently in the literature and in ethnographic contexts, but with political implications

that I may not want to express. For example, coming from the Jewish-Israeli framework, many of my sources (archival and human) refer to Palestinians as Arabs or, if Israeli citizens, as Arab-Israelis, terms which, although established in the western literature, deny Palestinian identity to those named as such. Throughout this thesis, I refer to these individuals as Palestinian-Israelis when the context of Israeli citizenship is relevant, and otherwise as Palestinians. Not all Palestinians agree with this terminology, as Israeli citizenship, heritage, religion, ethnicity and status relating to the wars of 1948 and 1967 all affect the chosen ethnonym. Sometimes the choice suggested itself to me, for example, the Israeli Ministry of Education's "Arab" education track, referred to as such by both Israeli and Palestinian sources (see Chapter 4). Other times I use terminology preferred by my informants (see a discussion in Chapter 5 on the meanings of "Arab" within certain football fan groups). Moreover, throughout my research, I found repeated instances in which non-Palestinians within Israel's minority rhetoric are aligned (with varying degrees of agency) with Palestinians in opposition to Jewish-Israelis. Examples include NGOs' mixing of children, school organisation, professional football fan clubs and international participation (field notes, 2016, 2017). Thus, even in just the context of ethnic Palestinians with Israeli citizenship, I recognise that my use of ethnonyms flattens identities that are, on many levels, anything but homogeneous by placing them in an insufficient, and sometimes even inapplicable, dichotomy in opposition to (Jewish-)Israelis. Likewise, the majority of Jews in Israel identify as being either Ashkenazi (45%) or Sephardi/Mizrahi (48%; Pew Research Center 2016: 75). Although Sephardim and Mizrahim represent different ancestral territories (the Iberian Peninsula and the Middle East/North Africa/Central Asia respectively), they share similar liturgy and traditions compared with Ashkenazim, who trace their history to eastern Europe. As such, "Sephardi" and "Mizrahi" are often used interchangeably, even if they do not align perfectly. Adhering to this, I typically use "Mizrahi", as that was the

preferred term among those whom I interviewed, but I occasionally reference someone as “Sephardi” at their request or when it is more applicable.⁹³

In all sectors of Israeli society I investigated, I found some degree of in-group ethnic and religious stratification. As an introduction to this, especially in the works of sociologists like Leo Kuper (1978) and Smooha (1978)—the former an Ashkenazi (Lithuanian) Jew from South Africa, the latter a Mizrahi (Iraqi) Jew who immigrated to Israel—internal sectarian identity was discussed in Chapter 1 as it fits within the overarching Israeli and Palestinian image. However, sectarian divisions were not always relevant to my participants in the same ways. For instance, some NGOs (Chapter 4) are predominantly interested in whether individuals identify as Jewish in any capacity, whereas for football fans (Chapter 5), the specific sect of Judaism is of the utmost importance. As a result, whether I refer to participants by nationality, ethnicity or sect is ultimately determined by the context.

Names present similar problems. Is it “Jerusalem” (/jeruʃaˈlajim/) (a common pronunciation among Israelis even in English) or “al-Quds”? “Security fence” or “apartheid wall”? “Ihud Bnei Sakhnin” or “Ittihad Abna Sakhnin”? “War of Independence” or “al-Nakba”? Although, as with “Palestinian” and “Arab”, I aimed to honour the terms used by my informants, my defaults became versions advocated by the International Press Institute. For example, throughout this thesis, I refer to Jerusalem (/dʒəˈruːsələm/), the separation barrier, Bnei Sakhnin FC and the 1948 Arab-Israeli War (although “al-Nakba” refers to a greater series of events between 1947 and 1949 affecting Palestinians, and thus I reference it as such where necessary). This does mean that at times I change between different pronunciations, terms or usages. For example, in Chapter 1, I refer to Zionism’s “Basel Program”, the German being conventional in this context, but I refer to the Swiss city itself as

⁹³ Identities may bleed across the Israeli-Palestinian divide. For example, Mizrahi Jews from the Middle East may be from Arab-majority areas or speak Arabic (Shohat 1988, Tamari 2004); some Druze identify as Arab (and still others as Zionist) although their men are conscripted into the IDF (Nisan 2010, Halabi 2014); Circassians, predominantly of the Adyghe Caucasian ethnicity, are also conscripted, but lack full Israeli citizenship and share Sunni Muslim beliefs with many Palestinians (Merza 2012).

the anglicised “Basle”. I anglicise other spellings as well, including treating the “al” prefix in some Arabic names as part of the surname (but honouring the individual’s choice of hyphenation and capitalisation), even if doing so differs from what might be traditional use as a definite article or reflecting dynastic heritage.

Positionality

Unquestionably, given the socially constructed nature of qualitative research, as Abu-Lughod (1991) and Clifford and Marcus (eds., 1986) point out, positionality affects ethnography. Positionality shapes how I interpret data (Arab? Palestinian?), the framing of my questions and how I present myself, all of which influence the study. I do not share any of the ethnic backgrounds of my informants. Ethnically, I am a freckled, red-headed Scot. Apart from six years in the United Kingdom, my life has been spent in small communities in the north-eastern United States, near a glacier in Iceland and on a remote Norwegian island (the conglomeration of which has produced what is frequently assumed to be an Australian accent, which further identified me in the field as an unidentifiable “foreigner”). Religiously, I do not strongly identify personally with any Abrahamic religion, although I grew up in Christian areas with minimal exposure to other religions, especially in daily life. My only significant prior experience of Judaism in the workaday world took the form of extended stays in Jerusalem in 2009 and 2010 following my Norwegian boyfriend, a Russian Orthodox Jew, who moved into a Russian community there. I had nearly no prior experience of Palestinians of any religion.

At first I thought I could avoid politics in order to avoid emphasising my positionality and seeming to identify myself with one side of a many-sided argument. However, it became clear that any attempts to do so could increase the feeling of bias and might distance me further from the perspectives of my informants. Although I do not take a stand on Zionism or

the current (2018) Likud government's platform, nor adopt the positions expressed within this thesis as my own, the very nature of my topic of enquiry means that I approach this project primarily from a Jewish perspective, but without neglecting Palestinian perspectives on issues such as normalisation. In addition to the Jewish focus of my fieldwork, there are other factors that contribute to the perspective I adopt for the purposes of this ethnography. For example, I was funded by the Stanley and Zea Lewis Family Foundation with the request that I pursue an aspect of historical or contemporary Jewish or Israeli life, and I had previously worked with Jewish academics in England, which contributed to my interest in Jewish nationalism and Israel.

As became evident within hours of landing in Israel in July 2014, the political environment throughout Israel and Palestine applied to me, a US citizen and student of a British university, differently than it would have done had I been Israeli or Palestinian. On the one hand, I had access to certain places, such as Area A in the West Bank, that Israeli citizens, in theory, do not (see Chapter 1). On the other hand, I was subject to restrictions placed on me by the United States Department of State and the University of Oxford, which, as already noted, ultimately terminated my initial round of fieldwork prematurely. Although this was frustrating, it also highlighted a privilege that environments considered by some to be too dangerous for a freckled female foreigner were a more or less daily experience for Mizrahi Jews and Sunni Palestinians.

An aspect of culture I did share is experience within the same Euro-American sporting traditions. Having spent a decade as an elite athlete within that system, which had involved competing against some of the athletes with whom I sought to train while in Israel, I understood and appreciated the values of Euro-American sport. Furthermore, I had prior experience as a coach within the KICKFAIR football³ approach through earlier projects as part of a Norwegian programme with which I had worked. Although these experiences were

not ones I sought to draw upon so as not to make assumptions about what I might find in Israel, it was important that I understood some of the core coaching and training philosophies.

Nonetheless, as my role as an ethnographer has implications that are unavoidable, understanding my positionality enables me to place myself, both objectively and subjectively, within the narrative of my research in a fashion that informs my ethnography.

Selecting organisations and informants

My choice of organisations with which to work had several factors. The Wingate Institute was an easy choice, as it is the premier sports facility in the country. Choosing NGOs, however, was more complicated. First I targeted organisations that seemed well established. My criteria for assessing this included their having clear mission statements, independent impact reviews, a clear governing body and people in various stages of the programme, including those considering joining and those who had progressed through it or had moved to higher levels of involvement after several years. I was also interested in organisations within reach of Tel Aviv and Jerusalem. I expected the cosmopolitan environment to be correlated roughly if not directly with the increased diversity of participants. Focusing on these areas enabled me to overlap my involvement in different activities. A further criterion in choosing organisations that was less under my control was the response rate. I sent many inquiries to targeted organisations that went unanswered. I had been warned that this would be a likely outcome if I advertised myself as a foreign researcher and sought to arrange involvement in advance. Accordingly, once in the country, I successfully followed up several previously unanswered requests. However, in making final selections, I ultimately prioritised organisations that expressed an interest in having me join them, as I thought that would be more successful. A similar process applied to my selection

of individuals, though this was a more organic process. Although I established about twenty contacts prior to travelling to Israel in 2014, I expanded this network by introducing myself as a “friend of a friend” and gaining access to social networks. My aim was to find acquaintances who were respected within their communities, but generally not leading figures unless I felt engaging with someone in such a position would foster connections I might otherwise not be able to generate.

I also needed to consider the language abilities of interviewees in order to ensure successful interviews. As a fluent Russian and English speaker, conducting interviews in these languages gave me the most confidence. However, especially in the case of English, my preference for these languages was balanced by my trust in my informants’ knowledge of them. Unless the informant was personally introduced to me in English, I initiated my conversations in Hebrew and negotiated the use of language from there. Sometimes, conversations were continued in Hebrew, although I preferred this option only if I felt my Hebrew was stronger for the topic on hand than the other party’s English or Russian or I had an interpreter present who could verify my understanding or translate. On several occasions, I had interviews with Danish informants (due, originally to an additional Danish NGO I examined in Palestine). I speak Norwegian, which is mutually comprehensible with Danish with some effort. Only one such exchange, from the Tel Aviv Marathon, made it into the final copy of this thesis and is indicated as having taken place in “Scandinavian”, as both Norwegian and Danish were used to facilitate understanding. Focusing on key cities, such as Tel Aviv and Jerusalem (as indicated above), also increased the likelihood that my informants would be comfortable in additional languages, although this was not a relevant decision in choosing locations. Throughout this thesis, I will indicate the language(s) in which the interviews and exchanges took place.

Ultimately, I was faced with a perpetual question in qualitative research, which is determining the saturation point. How many interviews do I need? This question became paramount when I needed to rely on email, Skype and telephone for further discussions after I returned to England. In the end, I spoke directly with over 225 people. These discussions took place with a variety of people, including East Jerusalem school teachers (in both the Palestinian and Jewish school systems), elite athletes, housemates, national team coordinators, NGO participants and opinionated citizens in sports bars. Some of these produced multi-hour interviews, others just a few lines in a notebook. Some became key informants to whom I would return several times, while others' contributions remain unused.

Methods

Archival material

A significant part of my research is library-based, and I made use of eight archives in the process. Although I count archival work as part of the qualitative ethnography in terms of its contribution to the overall thesis, it is different methodologically. In addition to having some availability outside Israel, archival material presented several benefits. Compared with other methods, I was not involved in its initial collection or interpretation. This may minimise possible biases generated by my personal presence, although I still need to consider the impact of the original reporter or author. I found archival material useful in its validation and confirmation of what I discovered through other methods and vice versa. As a non-fluent speaker of Hebrew, I had an easier time reading written material than handling speech, as I could consult reference material and progress through it at a slower pace. Moreover, much of the early material was in Russian (Russian Jews comprised a large faction of early migrations), which I could readily read as a fluent speaker of the language (see the previous comment about language choice for interviews on page 106). Additionally, archival material

added an element of history, as I had access to materials produced since the turn of the twentieth century. Although I have not carried out a specific longitudinal study using my own ethnography, incorporating early archives has let me trace how, for example, professional football teams can separate from their political parent organisations while still having the political ideology fossilised through their fan bases, or how the body continues to be used as a form of socio-political capital in contemporary identity recognition, mirroring the purposes of muscular Judaism one hundred years earlier.

As with all methods, archival material has its limitations and other biases as well. Someone initially produced the material and someone else selected it for the particular archive. In several libraries, I did not have direct access to browse sources and therefore had to rely on librarians selecting appropriate material for me based on what I thought I would want (or sometimes, more truthfully, what they felt I needed). For these reasons, I was not able to know what material I did not have (either because it did not survive, was not in the archive or was just not selected for the library or for me). Other forms of bias reflect the very nature of the material: some of it is political propaganda, and some reflects the opinions of the original reporting agency. Finally, it seems likely that topics covered in material at different times reflect the interests of the then-readership and are not inherently reflective of the broader environment at the time. For these reasons, although I found archival material important, I found it worked best as part of a mixed methods approach.

Interviews

The majority of my data were derived through sixty-nine semi-structured interviews. I found that semi-structured interviewing produced relatively flexible conversations. These discussions generated a lot of data while still remaining sensitive to personal issues and enabling any necessarily tangential or clarifying discussions. For each interview or set of

interviews, I prepared lists of themes to address, but not specific questions. To me, preparation had several benefits: it helped ensure I would not forget what I thought might be key issues, offered some level of continuity throughout the entire process, as interviews could not be replicated, and gave me a way of comparing responses at least at an elementary level by connecting topics across different sets of interviews. I also felt that preparation increased my appearance as a professional and would better suit my skills as a researcher, as I am relatively introverted and find confidence in preparation. All sixty-nine semi-structured interviews were recorded using a small hand-held recorder (2016) or using software on my laptop computer (2014). Although the computer produced very clear results, I found it intrusive due to its size and only used it after my pocket-sized recorder was confiscated when I entered the country. I did not record unstructured interviews and *ad hoc* interactions, such as those with athletes during gymnasium sessions and with runners after the Tel Aviv Marathon.

My original plan did involve structured interviews, which I selected for their replicability, a factor I expected would ease analysis and increase reliability. At times, I also relied upon an interpreter, and I thought discussing questions in advance with him might minimise any impact his presence might add. However, only seven interviews were completed in this manner, as I abandoned my list of questions quickly during the first few interviews upon realising that the set structure was unsuitable for many reasons. For example, my questions added pre-judgements concerning my own and my informants' positionalities (or what I assumed their positionalities to be) and imposed an inflexible protocol that constrained the range and depth of my informants' conversations and answers.

Whether structured or not, it is hard to guarantee the honesty of informants in interviews. Marsh et al. (1978: 95) discuss this issue and highlight a case when the same informants described the same act of hooliganism as both "orderly and safe" and "bloody and

dangerous”. In some cases, this apparent juxtaposition need not be a contradiction. Indeed, for Potter and Wetherell, pioneers of the field of discursive psychology, in-group hooligans might see this paradox as contributing toward a necessary functional rhetoric of danger (1987: 61-62) that maintains their social cohesion and structure. With the exception of the least-structured discussions, most of which took place following the Tel Aviv Marathon (Chapter 6), I aimed to engage with informants and/or with their social networks as relevant in order to introduce myself at least informally ahead of time. Prior interaction within their networks, interviews that sometimes lasted up to five hours or would involve multiple sessions and approaching similar questions through other methods increased my confidence in the data I collected. These interviews are denoted throughout the ethnography either as a “[personal] interview” or as “field notes”, depending on the nature of the contribution. Several of my informants raised concerns about sharing opinions they believed to be unpopular or somehow contentious. As a result, I have chosen to include some interviews within the broader “field notes” category to ensure further anonymity. Likewise, I provide informants’ background details only to the extent to which I have consent and to which doing so is necessary to understand the exchanges or perspectives expressed.

Integrity in interviews

In almost every area, from organisers of the Tel Aviv Marathon and members of the Israeli Olympic Committee to coaches at PPI or TPSS and physical education teachers at the Hand in Hand schools, I interviewed idealists. Discussions with idealists were hard to analyse, as the informants emphasised the programme’s positive aspects and downplayed its challenges and disadvantages. I found the NGOs to be particularly vulnerable to this bias. This may in part be due to the difficulty in assessing the efficacy of such programmes (see above discussion on choosing NGOs). Additionally, some programme facilitators seemed to

overlook or disregard imbalances between Israel and Palestine. For example, according to one informant, they “want people to have fun and get along” without addressing the realities of the occupation (interview, February 2016, Hebrew), reflecting a problematic idealism also discussed in Chapters 4 and 6. Those overseeing national sports squads seemed more balanced, but they had external checks in the form of international medals and organisations with which to assess their level of success. In this sense, the Israeli national teams also prioritise state-driven interests rather than emphasising cooperation (as do Palestinian teams, although they remain external to my research).

Social networks

In addition to gaining access to individuals through their social networks, the social networks as a whole were also relevant in understanding communities. Inspired by Barnes’ use of the method in his 1954 study of a Norwegian island parish, several aspects of my research demanded I have a more comprehensive understanding of an individual’s social network. This relates to the density of networks and the degree to which they overlap. My interest in these networks comes from what Durkheim termed “social facts” ([1895] 1919)—that is, phenomena grounded in the interaction between individuals. Simmel expanded this concept to look at how third parties can inform this interaction (Wolff 1950: 145-169).

In my ethnography, I used elements of social network analysis in research on both NGOs and community-based sport (Chapter 4) as well as on professional football clubs (Chapter 5). In these cases, I felt it necessary to understand the influence exerted by individuals and groups, not simply to identify their connections. I did not draw up formal sociomatrices, but I did use sociometrics as background information to inform the direct interactions I experienced within my ethnographic settings.

Like other methods, social network analysis has its disadvantages, which I am able to compensate for, at least in part, by foregrounding other methods, primarily interviews. Some of the issues with network analysis can include the denial of individuality and the accepted interdependence of actors and assumptions made based on the density and complexity of the networks and specific nodes within them. In some cases, if an informant knew I had spoken with an acquaintance, she would ask whether the acquaintance had a similar question and, if so, how it had been answered. I encountered this most frequently in talking with the parents of children in NGOs and schools. For this reason, although I had similar conversations with different individuals, I worked to approach topics from different angles. My personal experience of using social networks as an ethnographic method is through my background as a sociolinguist. Indeed, several well-received linguistics studies may exemplify some of the potential issues of its use in anthropology. For example, Milroy and Milroy (1978) found that the degree to which individuals used vernacular forms of language depended upon their integration into social networks (speech communities), with denser networks contributing to the maintenance of stronger dialectal markers. In a later example, Labov and Harris (1986) showed that the leaders of linguistic change were those associated with greater influence and social prestige, as demonstrated by their larger and denser ego networks. The idea here is that the more nodes in a network the more people to whom the message is spread, and the greater the density the greater its saturation. One might attribute such phonological variation to Foucauldian processes of normalisation, but both examples highlight a potential lack of agency on the part of individual members, while emphasising the role of the greater network beyond its relevance.

Participant observation

As noted in the beginning of this chapter, one aspect of ethnography that has excited me is participant observation. In the end, this method became secondary to interviews, but its contribution remains integral to the ethnography, perhaps especially in terms of my own positionality. Participant observation added a flavour of in-depth and experiential knowledge. However, I did not spend enough time in the field for it to produce a significant amount of data. Even had I spent more time in participation mode, I may still have experienced issues with this method involving objectivity, replicability, honesty and ethics.

Whatever the method I adopted, my involvement with informants was overt. At no point did I attempt to hide my identity, although the degree to which I advertised it varied. For example, when I spoke to administrators of organisations (Wingate Institute, NGOs, etc.), I told them my plans, in part because I relied on their cooperation and their willingness to have me involved. Additionally, I felt initial openness offered me the flexibility to ask any probing questions or to follow up after I had left the field without needing to expose myself. I could also record material as needed, which would not have been possible had I attempted to participate covertly.

In some cases (e.g. running marathons, training with athletes, online football forums), I felt no need to identify myself specifically unless I foresaw needing consent to speak with participants, in which case initial transparency became relevant. Being overt, however, did increase the impact of my presence, which I hoped to minimise through triangulation and cooperation with individuals' social networks. Although my research teeters on the political, at no point did I knowingly cross the line into topics of illegality or ones that risked the well-being of my informants. For example, Pearson (2009: 246-249; 2016: ix) describes conducting his doctoral research on football hooliganism as an undercover fan at British football matches, which involved his direct participation in some of the gangs' criminal

offences. Pearson's research goal, however, focused on criminality and intervention, and thus he felt that fans would refuse him such activity or alter critical details in interviews if he were to be open about his identity as an outside researcher, wary he would report illicit behaviour to the authorities (his willing participation in criminal acts was intended to increase his credibility as a legitimate gang member). Additionally, as he was involved in violence-prone hooligan gangs that had frequent run-ins with police, Pearson had concerns about his own safety if his identity as an academic was realised at an inopportune moment or by the wrong person. Apart from worries over his physical well-being, Pearson reflects that his covert research may not have been fully necessary. He reckons that the extended length of time (three years) he spent in the field and the insight he gained through secondary sources would have enabled him to detect and account for any distortions he might have faced as a non-covert researcher (2016: x-xi; see also Pearson 2009 on his research experiences and methodological justifications; and Spaaij and Geilenkirchen 2011 on distortions and methodology within football ethnography). Buford tells a more harrowing tale of covert research into football hooligans. His 1992 book chronicles eight years of earning "street cred" through violent activity and assaults at the hands of rioters, fellow fans and even the police. Armstrong and Hobbs (1994) describe a series of covert British police sting operations in the late 1980s and early 1990s in which some police allegedly acted as agents provocateurs while undercover. Such accounts made me uneasy with the idea of doing anything furtively. In fact, I found that, by adopting the role of a "professional stranger" (Agar 1980), some people opened up to me in ways they might not have done had I been an indoctrinated member of their communities.

Another reason for my openness was that I was concerned about my ability to be objective. As I said above, I did not fit easily into the communities in which I participated, so I was not always certain how to act or whether certain questions were appropriate. I felt any

attempts to “be native” would be met with immediate suspicion, hindering my credibility. Regarding football research, according to Pearson (2016), the typical European football ethnographer is a white, heterosexual male in his early to mid-career. After reading several articles by female football ethnographers, e.g. Poulton (2012) and Richards (2015), I felt I needed to be myself and openly so. Even if I could be a mid-career male, I still would face hurdles that would affect all aspects of the ethnography, especially imperfect language skills and not being Jewish. The only aspect of my identity I did downplay was my US citizenship, except in specific cases, such as when speaking with PPI participants, as that organisation makes explicit use of US interns. This is because, even though my research focused on Israel more than Palestine, I wanted to distance myself from the pro-Israeli stance ascribed to the US.

Quantitative methods and triangulation of data

A very small amount of data was obtained using quantitative methods. This involved accessing state records for statistical information, such as demographics, or access to city plans explaining playgrounds or air-raid shelters in different neighbourhoods. I did find some variation in numerical figures between Israeli and Palestinian sources. To counter this, I tried to access third-party information or to see whether the facts were consistent with what was reported in interviews. When these tactics failed, my default was to rely on Palestinian sources for Palestinian data and Israeli sources for Israeli data.

Finally, I also employed aspects of triangulation, which highlighted aberrant data. I used two forms of triangulation noted by Flick (2009), data and methodological. Data triangulation involved collecting data in a variety of situations—different times of day, in groups and alone, whether in conjunction with an activity in question (e.g. after sports practice), or whether on location or elsewhere (elsewhere typically being a café).

Methodological triangulation involved using several secondary methods. In addition to interviews, I used archival material, social network analysis and participant observation. To a lesser degree, I also drew upon case studies, although these did not contribute to the ethnography per se. Although I employed triangulation for quality-control purposes, it does have particular implications of its own. One of these, highlighted by Bryman (2004: 3), is the assumption that “data deriving from different research methods can be unambiguously compared and regarded as equivalent.” I do not accept that there is a single correct interpretation of data, and therefore I expect incongruences between data collected through different means. However, by using a variety of methods, I feel I have acquired a more comprehensive perspective on the material at hand.

In this chapter, I have outlined the chronology of my ethnography and discussed the ways in which I collected data. Although I have sought to contextualise this here, I will elaborate on methodology further over the next three (ethnographic) chapters.

Chapter 4. Local sport in Israel from the perspective of the participants

In Chapters 1 and 2, I described the role of sport in recent Jewish history (this role will be explored further in later chapters). I looked at the muscular Judaism movement and showed how, through sport, Jews sought to dispel stereotypes and contribute to the political foundations of the contemporary Israeli state in the first half of the twentieth century.

The aim of this and the following two chapters is twofold. The primary objective is to show contemporary sporting activities as continuing the narrative of Israel's Jewish identity that I started in Chapter 1. In order to do so, one must also consider how this Jewish identity interacts with others with which it comes into contact, which means predominantly Palestinians, while also reflecting internal Jewish sectarianism, also introduced in Chapter 1. Therefore, a second focus is to understand certain attempts to use sport as part of the normalisation efforts between these opposed ethnicities (notably Jewish-Israeli and Palestinian-Israeli).⁹⁴ In addition to reaching a wide audience, some of the specific objective ways in which sport contributes to normalisation involve its unpredictability and rule-driven play (with the rules necessarily either universal or agreed upon prior to the match). In certain circumstances, additional features, such as having a zero-sum outcome, may be relevant. In other cases, including the NGOs I will discuss in the first part of this chapter, zero-sum results may be even counterproductive. While sport, from informal childhood school games to professional football matches, may be connected with Jewish identity, and may even have

⁹⁴ As Said (2000) pointed out, each ethnic category comprises many sub-groups that are rarely equal in size, political influence or cultural dominance. As such, they have different experiences within Israel and may even be opposed to each other. As dictated by my ethnography, I will discuss identity and normalisation at various levels, e.g. ethno-national or sectarian, throughout the thesis.

normalisation as an aim, my ethnography suggests that not all aspects of sport are equally suited to normalisation. I argue that their respective degrees of success are connected to the ways in which activities linked to any prevailing Jewish identity are associated with the practitioners or organising body. For example, as I will show in the next chapter, professional football is inseparable from the pre-state muscular Judaism movement. As such, it carries a politically charged history that renders it uncondusive to normalisation in the same way as an NGO specifically developed to bring disparate groups together. As the focus is on Israel, while some of the normalisation projects I investigate involve Palestinians in areas of the West Bank under the full control of the Palestinian Authority, the majority concern those within the Green Line (the 1949 armistice line) or East Jerusalem (under Israeli control, and separated from the rest of the West Bank). A corollary would be to consider normalisation programmes within areas fully controlled by the Palestinian Authority. I do not deal with this in this thesis for several reasons. First, Israeli and Palestinian sport have different histories, and I am focusing on the traditions within Israel. Furthermore, my involvement in sport within territory exclusively under the Palestinian Authority (Area A) is limited to a few encounters with two Bethlehem-based projects, the Palestine Marathon and the Ibdāa Cultural Centre at the Dheisheh Refugee Camp. In neither of these contexts does sport necessarily involve direct interaction with Jewish-Israelis, who are forbidden to enter Area A cities such as Bethlehem. Despite this lack of direct interaction, both projects are reactions to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. For example, the marathon, although now run by the Palestine Olympic Committee, was initiated by a Danish organisation to highlight Israeli control over Palestinians' freedom of movement, while the Ibdāa Cultural Centre is organised under what might be considered a created environment within the confines of a tightly controlled refugee camp for Palestinians displaced during the 1948 and 1967 wars.

The present chapter focuses on participation in community-based sport. Events themselves are not necessarily unambiguously local but are construed as such in that they are pursued by ordinary citizens, predominantly within particular communities. Given, as discussed in the opening chapter, that sport had a significant role in Zionism's muscular Judaism movement, I am curious about the extent to which identity is still expressed through sport. Furthermore, as these activities generally target specific populations, I am interested in the degree to which they can contribute to normalisation efforts, which are sometimes an explicit aim and one seemingly met with varying degrees of success. These same themes are continued in Chapters 5 and 6, which look respectively at identity in spectatorship (fandom) and state interest in and through sport.

In this chapter, I will look at several different initiatives. These initiatives do not comprise an exhaustive list but rather reflect different ways through which sport reaches the local population (e.g. NGOs, schools and municipal enterprises). The majority of sports programming that promotes normalisation focuses on youth participants. I suggest several reasons for this. One, expressed by a Palestinian school teacher in East Jerusalem (interview, August 2017, Hebrew), is that children are allegedly impressionable regarding issues of identity and political views. Not everyone agrees with this. For example, Tamir Lion, an Israeli anthropologist at the Ethos Institute, whom I did not interview, contradicts some of my informants. Lion feels that attitudes among Jewish-Israeli youth are naturally drawn toward an "us versus them" dichotomy based on an aura of uneasiness within the state, regardless of parental influence or political allegiance. As a result, Jewish youth, Lion claims, form "a group that defines itself not as what it is, but what it hates" (Erlanger 2014, cited in Shehadeh 2015: 100). Beyond any alleged malleability, young people may also have more free time than adults. This means that children have additional energy to invest in initiatives and that parents may be interested in having activities to occupy their children. One Jewish-Israeli

mother told me that she is “more at ease” with her three daughters in a structured afterschool sports programme at their northern Tel Aviv Jewish community centre. She believes it improves their health while preventing them from getting into “the wrong crowd” (interview, July 2014, English). Her three children, like many others—predominantly Jewish—are subject to mandatory conscription following high school.⁹⁵ NGO coordinators whom I interviewed suggest that the army may influence the dynamic between Jewish-Israelis and Palestinian-Israelis, so normalisation programming prior to conscription may be more likely to challenge assumptions about the other (interviews, winter-spring 2016, English and Hebrew). Some of the older adolescents I interviewed in various capacities throughout this project highlighted the army as an agent of social division. Some Jewish informants reported that their army training involved “dehumanising” Palestinians, while some Palestinian-Israelis reported losing the trust of their Jewish friends once the latter entered army service (field notes, 2016, English and Hebrew). Schisms are further established at this age when the state offers certain social benefits (housing loans, scholarships, etc.) to soldiers and does not offer equivalent schemes for those, such as Palestinian-Israelis, most of whom do not serve.

Most adult sport fits within existing social cleavages. While some programmes involve fringe members of the divided groups, few cite normalisation as a direct goal. As a counterpoint, fewer adult normalisation schemes involve sport. There are many enterprises that seek to improve Israeli-Palestinian relations, involving, for example, music, cooking and kite-flying, with varying degrees of success. Kuriansky (2007) discusses a variety of these initiatives in her edited collection, and I will discuss others later in this chapter.

⁹⁵ Most Jews and Circassian and Druze males are conscripted (exemptions apply), whereas others may (sometimes) join voluntarily.

Non-governmental organisations

PeacePlayers International

It could have been an ordinary after-school game of basketball in central Jerusalem. Rucksacks thrown in the corner, some parents in otherwise empty stands. Older students, acting as mediators, jotted notes throughout the game about interactions between players.⁹⁶ They periodically blew whistles to stop the game, sometimes after a player scored for his team and at other times seemingly at random. Malik, a member of the yellow-jersey team, threw another ball through the hoop. Whistle. “One point for yellow! And one fair-play point for red! Score 9-to-13, well done all!” As Malik and his teammates return to position for the next play, they exchange high-fives—and surprisingly to someone not familiar with these athletes—the opposing red-jersey team is also celebrating. The red team, despite making fewer baskets than yellow, is leading by four points.

This game is organised by an international NGO, PeacePlayers International (PPI). Teams comprising equal numbers of Israeli and Palestinian players earn points for getting the ball into the basket and also for displays of sportsmanship—the latter contributing to Red’s triumph, despite being the weaker team. Afterward, the two teams discuss the game. In his third year with PPI, Arik reflects on his personal growth: “Out there today, I felt like a real basketball player. I intercepted plays, and I caught the ball from, and threw it to all my teammates. I didn’t think whether the other boy was Jewish, I just looked for red jerseys.” “When I first started,” Arik explained afterward: “I missed a lot of moves because I only wanted the ball from Jews like me” (Hebrew).

⁹⁶ Based on the “football3” method, games rely on mediators instead of referees. Points are earned through scoring and sportsmanship (see the appendix).

PPI is a United States-based initiative launched in 2001 to use sport to bridge divisions between disparate communities in unsettled regions around the world (it also operates in South Africa, Northern Ireland, the United States and Cyprus). In Tel Aviv and Jerusalem, I met with (older) current players, former participants (some now with the programme as mentors), parents, coaches and PPI organisers. I also spoke with the head of the international organisation in Washington to understand the special constraints of the Israeli-Palestinian programme in relation to PPI's other regions. Although the occupation and nuances of ethnic conflict distinguish the Israel-Palestine case, it is also PPI's only site with an active conflict. With the exception of occasional (Palestinian-only) leadership development programmes within Area A in Palestine, PPI focuses on what it terms "dual-identity" communities (areas in which different identities live in parallel) in East and West Jerusalem and periodically elsewhere within the Green Line.⁹⁷ PPI is relatively small, which, according to the Tel Aviv-based coordinator, enables it to "invest a lot in each kid and create a family of optimism and trust, which we hope causes a ripple effect" (interview with PPI coordinator, February 2016, English; see Sugden 2011: 60-61). This small size also means that PPI recruits participants from selected schools, thus generally only children at these schools are able to participate.⁹⁸

Despite aiming to bring Palestinian and Israeli children together through sport, the in-country Israeli director states that PPI's interest is in opening minds rather than peace-building. To that degree, the programme promotes itself as a social sports club, a position it believes attracts school administrators and students who are interested in playing games but

⁹⁷ There are few mixed communities in Israel. The Green Line that cuts across Jerusalem exacerbates divisions within the city. Sanctions, fighting and barriers—both invisible (e.g. curfews) and visible (e.g. checkpoints and the separation barrier)—have led to divisions in Jerusalem and elsewhere in Israel-Palestine. Furthermore, when different ethnic and religious groups share neighbourhoods, they may identify with different socioeconomic strata and have independent social infrastructures.

⁹⁸ For continuity, PPI works with the same schools every year. Some schools are involved because administrators are interested in the project and others because they lack their own sporting infrastructure. These factors are balanced with the desire to bring segregated communities together.

might be intimidated by a focus on “building” peace. Despite this, I found the “additional activities” (those aimed at normalisation directly) are one of PPI’s attractions, especially for children uninterested in a top-level competitive club.⁹⁹ For Yossi, an 18-year-old Jew, the activities beyond basketball are PPI’s appeal. “Obviously, we come to play basketball. But, you know, it’s all fun, the other stuff. If I didn’t like that, I’d play with school, because that’s just basketball. But then I wouldn’t have my friends here” (English). Yossi’s statement is reiterated by his Jewish teammate Misha, 18: “I played in Hapoel Jerusalem’s youth league for two years. I got really good at basketball, but I’m not super competitive, so it wasn’t for me. Here I get to play without pressure and meet new friends” (English). One of the Palestinian boys who joined Yossi and Misha for a game, Abdel, 18, said that playing on a PPI “All-Star” team has enabled him to see Jews as “nice, talented people who want the same things as Palestinians.” Abdel continued: “It’s hard to see people as people when you have little contact and the news repeatedly tells you they’re evil” (English). This contradicts Sugden and Schulenkorf’s analysis (2013) of the University of Brighton-backed Football4Peace initiative in Israel. A project very similar to PPI, Football4Peace mixes football training with peace-based dialogue. Whereas the normalisation activities are seen as a draw for PPI participants, Sugden and Schulenkorf report that participants join Football4Peace mainly for the sport. Therefore, they are drawn only gradually into the normalisation aspects, as otherwise they might resist them outright.

Training sessions involve learning to play basketball on single-identity teams overseen by a same-identity coach. Most single-identity teams are mixed-sect, e.g. Ashkenazi/Mizrahi and Christian/Muslim, although this depends on the structure of individual communities. Northern Israeli Druze and Circassians have occasionally participated and have formed their own teams, as the participating Druze and Circassian

⁹⁹ A mixed-identity PPI team won a 2014 Israeli regional championship, which gained credibility for the programme as one with the potential to blend serious sport with social initiatives.

communities share an education department through which PPI is organised. Teams ideally have an equal number of girls and boys at least for the first few years, after which teams might be separated according to biological sex. After players have gained confidence with the sport and with their teammates, PPI arranges “twinning” to bring Jewish-Israeli and Palestinian teams together. Twinning always take place between the same two teams in order to build trust and camaraderie among the individuals. In theory, the location for each twinning alternates between the Israeli and Palestinian sites, though many sessions take place at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem as a third (although more Israeli) site, as (usually Jewish-Israeli) parents sometimes forbid their children from travelling to certain Palestinian neighbourhoods. Initially, practices are held during school hours to limit burdening families, but at higher levels, practices involve non-school time. This requires increased family commitment and leads to some attrition (there are no participation fees, but families are responsible for transportation).

I participated in several training sessions and in two twinning events with older teenage participants. I did not have any particular tasks in these sessions other than to assist with the coaching when needed, such as demonstrating drills and participating in post-training discussions (see below). To reduce sensations of favouritism, twinings are overseen by English-speaking American interns. Older children, who serve as mentors, and coaches translate the English into Hebrew and Arabic.¹⁰⁰ In order to fit within the children’s accepted paradigm, I introduced myself as an American—one of the few times I emphasised my citizenship throughout fieldwork. In part, the use of American interns reflects the organisation’s American origins, but more importantly, PPI claims that over the past fifteen years across its four sites, conducting sessions in third languages (if relevant) by members of third cultures increases perceptions of its neutrality (interview, April 2016, English).

¹⁰⁰ Ideally this promotes equality. However, as Sugden and Schlenker also report (2013: 11), I noted that Hebrew instructors often monopolised conversations to save time, their assumption being that Palestinian children speak Hebrew.

For many of the children, twinnings never involve a competitive game of basketball, as this could pitch the two identities against each other. Older children may play competitive basketball on mixed-identity teams, but younger participants engage instead in basketball drills and other joint activities (ones still involving normalisation, e.g., cooking, folk music and reading stories) to increase their comfort with each other. Additionally, the basketball drills used are not necessarily specific to the game, as improving game-specific skills can be done during non-twinning sessions. Instead, many of the drills chosen, known as “touching” within the programme, involve physical contact, as the moderators feel this develops trust more quickly (field notes, 2016, English and Hebrew). For example, the entire mixed-identity group may be divided for a relay race in which each participant dribbles a basketball around a cone before tagging the next person in line—someone of the other identity—to do the same. In this case, the relay does develop ball-handling skills, but the emphasis is on the cooperation needed to win the race. PPI believes this utilises the supposedly inherent competitiveness of the individual as a way of reaching goals. To perform well, it is not enough to play well individually, as one needs to rely upon teammates, regardless of their identity, and “winning” might even entail forgoing personal achievement for collective benefit. Other drills focus on learning about each other, typically through some variant of passing balls to different teammates while exchanging personal information. Players might share their best school subjects or their favourite musicians before tossing the ball to a teammate to do the same (see the appendix). The idea behind these drills is that participants find common ground, something that may be denied in their normal and often separate lives (field notes, 2016, 2017). 23-year-old Yonaton, now an assistant coach, remembers being nervous at his first twinning, a reflection of “growing up in a culture afraid of non-Jews.” “An Arab threw a ball at me. I didn’t know whether to catch it or not. I caught it for my team, but I thought my town would hate me if they found out” (English). According to Mia, a 21-

year-old Jewish player-turned-mentor, cross-ethnic interaction during the first several twinnings between two programmes is “often strained because it is usually the first time children are asked to interact directly with the other identity” (English). The programme progresses slowly at first to accommodate this, and in Mia’s experience, after a few months, most children have developed a working relationship.

Partnering with the Arbinger Institute, an American mindset foundation, PPI finishes its twinnings with discussions about the activity in order to “walk the walk”. Aiming to avoid political confrontation, the dialogue focuses on the experience of working with the other identity—e.g., how did you *feel* during that drill? What did you *learn* about your new teammate? The dialogues are light and brief in order to be seen as secondary by participants, some of whom may stop coming if they feel they are being lectured to on peace and reconciliation. Heft et al. (2007: 151) describe this type of dialogue as being “as much about listening—truly listening to another’s experience—as it is about talking. It is not always about reaching agreement or finding solutions—sometimes it is about opening a little space between people so they can hear each other across their differences and honor those differences.” In the words of the Palestinian intellectual and activist Edward Said, “We cannot coexist as two communities of detached and uncommunicatingly separate suffering. ... The only way of rising beyond the endless back-and-forth of violence and dehumanisation is to admit the universality and integrity of the other’s experience and to begin to plan a common life together” (2002: 208).

In the view of at least some of the children, their parents and coaches, PPI has created an environment in which all participants gain confidence in interacting with the “other” and aim to bring this understanding into their external social networks. Older participants report getting together outside of PPI trainings, attending each other’s school functions and having slumber parties. However, given the voluntary aspect of the programme, it could be argued

that PPI's participants are already open to the idea of Israeli-Palestinian coexistence to some fundamental degree. Otherwise, participants would presumably select another team that better suits their interests.

For West Jerusalemite sisters, Sara and Leah, 17 and 21, East Jerusalem had a fabled existence—their father, a supporter of a united (Jewish) Jerusalem, would warn them never to ride the Light Rail north of Ammunition Hill (a 1967 war memorial site near the Green Line) because of “bad things”—unrest that would be solved, he reasoned, if all of Palestine were to fall under Jewish jurisdiction. However, last year, a Palestinian twinning teammate from East Jerusalem invited Sara for a sleepover. At her father's insistence, Leah accompanied Sara. They rode the rail past Ammunition Hill into Beit Hanina, a Palestinian neighbourhood in East Jerusalem. Not knowing Sara's friend well, Leah spent much of that evening with the friend's mother. She told me that their night in Beit Hanina showed her how much Sara had in common with her Palestinian friend. A family-style meal (albeit of less familiar food) was followed by the two younger girls helping each other with their mathematics homework before they settled down to watch a pre-bed episode of *Friends*, a favourite of both girls. Leah, having just finished her army service, had travelled through East Jerusalem several times, but she had never entered a Palestinian home before. Sara is the first of her Jewish school friends to travel to East Jerusalem. Leah reports being startled by apparent divisions in her home city that she had previously never realised. She saw children tossing an old beach ball in the street—the only “free” space near their housing—dodging cars as they chased after the ball. There were houses without running water or sewerage services. There was a school that longed for some cans of paint. Throughout all of my research involving the mixing of communities, the need to experience others' lives as an aspect of understanding their realities was reiterated (field notes, 2016, 2017, Hebrew).

Sawsan, 16, a Palestinian-Israeli from the East Jerusalem neighbourhood of Shuafat, invited Yael, 17 and a Jewish twinning teammate, home for dinner one night. Sawsan's parents told me they had invited everyone in their apartment building to have a pot-luck dinner to meet Yael, as she was the first Jew many of their neighbours would meet personally.

These relationships may be tested when the majority of the Jewish teenagers enter the army. Mia, 21, reflects: "When I had to join the army, I thought my Arab friends would really hate me. I felt disloyal, but I didn't have any choice. It's the law. They understood, but it still hurt. For two years I defended Israel against some of my best friends whom the state sees as mortal enemies, despite them living here" (English). Sawsan's parents say they worry for Yael, as she will begin her army training next year. Sawsan's father, Issam, knows that Yael might have limited conscription options as a result of her Palestinian acquaintances. "She's upset. She tells me she's betraying us. She's worried being in the army will impact her relationship with us. I tell her we'll still love her, but she's concerned the army might change that by exposing her to violence. She's also concerned that having Palestinian friends means she won't pass background checks to have her choice role, intelligence, in the army" (English). Although both Mia and Yael felt punished by the state and army for their cross-ethnic friendships, Mia worked to maintain her friendships during her service and now mentors those preparing for army enrolment, especially about maintaining relationships. Mia is working with Yael to plan some weekend activities with Sawsan's family and other Palestinian friends for when she will get time away from the army.

Peres Center for Peace

While PPI is an international NGO that is left largely alone by the Israeli government, another, the Jaffa-based Peres Center for Peace and Innovation, operates on the fringes of

politics. The Peres Center was founded in 1996 by two leading Israeli politicians, Shimon Peres and Uri Savir. It describes itself as “focused on developing and implementing innovative and cutting-edge peacebuilding programs in Innovation, Peace Education, Medicine, Business, and Environment, reaching tens of thousands of participants over the last 20 years.”¹⁰¹ By focusing on shared interests, the Peres Center seeks to open dialogue, overcome fears and establish a framework for lasting reconciliation projects. Like other peace-based NGOs in Israel, it claims to bridge ethnic divisions. However, one might note that those involved in the management of the organisation include past and present state leaders, ambassadors, members of Israel’s presidential cabinet and journalists, all with some experience of normalisation work within government, and all are Jewish-Israelis.¹⁰² A less common practice used by the Center to reduce its position as a third party is peer-to-peer learning by drawing on local professionals (usually Israeli) in various fields, such as business, agriculture and medicine, with the aim of supporting adults (usually Palestinian) in developing professional livelihoods throughout Israel and the Palestinian territories. As this might suggest, its peacebuilding programming involves a variety of projects ranging from private- and public-sector business appeals, environmental resource management and access to health care to cultural projects, including photography, dance, theatre and sport. Over six days in March 2016, with follow-up interviews in 2017, I visited the Peres Center in Jaffa to learn about a sports project known as Twinned Peace Sports Schools (TPSS), which engages approximately 2000 children throughout Israel and Palestine. Like PPI, students train in single-identity settings and participate in monthly twinnings in a variety of sports on mixed teams. I did not play an active role in TPSS, but observed and interviewed several members of staff, coaches, participants and parents. While TPSS offers a collection of sports (including parasports) for its participants, I was exclusively involved in the football programme.

¹⁰¹ Peres Center for Peace and Innovation (n.d.). “Who We Are”. Accessed 03 January 2016 from www.peres-center.org/who_we_are.

¹⁰² In January 2016, there was one non-Jew on the general payroll (field notes, 2016).

Avram, a Jewish man living in Sderot and the father of 14-year-old Yoni, enrolled his son in TPSS following an injury from a *Qassam* rocket fired from Gaza several years earlier. Avram felt the programme could help Yoni accept his injury without developing hatred for Palestinians. Fayyaad, 18, from the West Bank city of Hebron, joined TPSS after learning about it from a surgeon while undergoing treatment after being shot by an Israeli soldier six years earlier. Now in his final year as a TPSS athlete, Fayyaad attributes his ability to move on from his injury both in daily life and in his desired career—one in diplomacy—to his involvement with TPSS. “I was prepared to hate Israelis after being shot, but engaging with them through TPSS gave me the tools to understand my feelings and has energised me for my future career” (Hebrew).

Noor, 18, another Palestinian from Hebron, mentioned the ease with which it is possible to vilify the other: “I always watched the news. I remember segments on raids and missile systems and felt indoctrinated into distrust. Playing with TPSS has given me the opportunity to meet some of these people and learn about them” (English). Noor’s mother, there along with Noor’s younger sister, interjected that violence “just seems too easy”. In a not dissimilar statement, one of the mediators of a TPSS team, Rafael, a 24-year-old Mizrahi Jew, claims that the distrust that was indoctrinated into him from an early age contributed to his motivation to coach. Rafael says he is now “somewhat embarrassed in hindsight” that it took him until well after he reached “his manhood” (by which he meant his eighteenth birthday) even to speak with Palestinians. “There I was, living in East Jerusalem, on the edge of a Palestinian district, I even spoke Arabic. But I kept to myself because I was scared. I finally studied abroad after the army and got involved somehow with some Palestinians there, and I guess I sought out that connection when I returned to Israel. Helping coach now lets me help other kids not have my experience as a kid” (interview, August 2017, English).

“That game was a success! Who had fun? Aisha, you were a great leader today helping Tali. And Katia, you’ve improved quite a bit today. Does anyone have comments?” Aida is a Palestinian-Israeli volunteer coach with TPSS. As with PPI, twinnings consist of discussion as well as games, a similar system to PPI. Despite not relying on American interns like PPI, TPSS still conducts these conversations in English. “We’re not choosing Arabic or Hebrew. Instead, the kids, with varying degrees of English knowledge, need to work together to make sure everyone understands everything”, Aida said. Her Jewish coaching partner, Dani, said he has come to realise how powerful sport can be as an international language: “Children may not always be able to communicate, they may be shy, they have preconceived opinions about each other, but give them a football, and they know what to do with it” (English). Dani, from Ramla in central Israel, learned about TPSS after taking part in an enterprise called Youth Leadership through Sport, which is funded by the Laureus Sport for Good Foundation in conjunction with the Peres Center. 23.7% of Ramla’s residents identify as Palestinian/Arab (Ramla Municipality 2015: 3), a slightly higher percentage than the Israeli average of 20.8 (Central Bureau of Statistics 2017: 1). Youth Leadership through Sport brings together Jewish-Israeli and Palestinian-Israeli children from different schools in Ramla to teach them about using sport to promote social justice, education and leadership. He now coaches three teams with TPSS.

Despite allegedly positively influencing thousands of Israelis and Palestinians for the past fifteen years, TPSS, and the Peres Center more generally, has also received negative criticism. One, mentioned by Raczka (2016: 333), concerns the organisation’s main building itself, which is located in Jaffa’s Ajami neighbourhood, just south of the Old City. For some, the large, imposing concrete and glass structure designed by internationally renowned Italian architect Massimiliano Fuksas, radiates natural light and symbolises harmony. For others, it

is another visual symbol of the gentrification that caused the eviction of 500 Muslim and Christian Palestinian-Israelis in Ajami the year it was built (field notes, 2016, Hebrew).

Much of the criticism stems from politics, especially following the failure of the Oslo Accords, something to which the NGO exposes itself by being on the political periphery and by the pro-Israel career of its namesake.¹⁰³ A number of reasons have been given for why the Oslo Accords failed to improve relations between Israel and Palestine, one of which is the imbalance of power between the two states (see Chapters 1 and 2). Without returning to the political stage to address the power differential, the occupation and mutual recognition, normalisation projects such as TPSS may see themselves as normalising the abnormal—as making Good Samaritan-like efforts to cover up what they are unable to solve (Aggestam and Strömbom 2013: 17). In writing for *Haaretz*, a left-wing Israeli newspaper, shortly after the Peres Center’s tenth anniversary, Benvenisti (2008) wrote that the “soccer competitions ... paint a false picture of coexistence” because they do not solve any of the underlying issues that maintain the status quo and operate within a Jewish-Israeli framework. “There is no chance that the activists and administrators of the peace center will participate in the daily struggle of the Palestinian olive pickers; in the frustrating efforts to transport critically ill people via the checkpoints; or to breach the economic siege and sea blockade of Gaza” (Ibid.).

Indeed, both PPI and TPSS claim that their successes are on the social, not political level. As described by PPI, the organisation targets attitudes and experiences with the hope that any changed impressions and attitudes will spread through social networks, creating a culture that may eventually permeate the political sphere (field notes, 2016). Despite attempting to operate largely in the private sector, public-sector funding and politicians’ support has also produced criticisms from both the Israeli and Palestinian governments. The

¹⁰³ Peres was a member of the Haganah and a naval commander during the 1948 war before becoming the Minister of Defence, a position from which he oversaw secret nuclear programmes and the building of the first Israeli settlements in the West Bank.

Israeli right has argued that the Peres Center is seeking to subvert the established government (Hermann 2009: 152-153; field notes, 2016), a claim supposedly substantiated because the initial founding body, along with Peres, involved former government employees who left their positions under Netanyahu (field notes, 2016). Although the Center might promote equity among all citizens of Israel and Palestine, it is also seen quite explicitly as prioritising what it believes to be Israel's interests (field notes, 2016). For example, one Jewish informant at the Center's library said, "While most of us don't really support the Likud, we can't threaten Israel's security either. I'm proud to be Israeli, I like the idea of a Jewish state. I just believe that Israel's security is tied to a viable Palestine" (field notes, 2016, English).

Four days after the August ceasefire that ended the 2014 Israel-Gaza conflict, TPSS held a football match between approximately eighty Jewish-Israeli and Palestinian (West Bank) boys aged six through sixteen at Kibbutz Dorot near Gaza in southern Israel. The Israeli children came from nearby Sderot, an Israeli city that has experienced continuous threats from Gaza since 2001 (Diamond et al. 2010: 19). The Palestinian children came from Yatta, a Fatah-stronghold near Hebron in the West Bank. Israel invaded the area during the previous June's offensive that it called "Operation Brother's Keeper", a supposed reaction to the suspected murder of three Jewish-Israeli teenagers by Hamas extremists (see Leas 2015, writing for the *National Lawyers Guild*), an incident that later contributed to the incitement of the 2014 conflict.

Dima, a Russian-born Jew now 18, was excited to see that his friendships survived the tense summer intact. "I remember that game, and when we saw the football, we just played. It was nice to see that friends from earlier were still my friends" (Russian). Benjamin, now 19, was also playing for the Sderot team that day: "I've since joined the army. We play sport in army training, but it's a tool for fighting. Like in September 2014, we once used sport to unite with Palestinians, now it's to dehumanise them." Benjamin wrote to me a year later in

2017 with further reflections: “We’re taught we can win through toughness. In the army, I’ve realized that winning to many people means hurting another. In sport, you’ll sometimes fail and need to explore new options to win. TPSS taught me that strength is only helpful if you know how to play well, and winning isn’t zero-sum” (Hebrew).

Being largely self-selective, just as with PPI and other normalisation programmes, those involved in TPSS support bringing communities together. Thus, while some doubt the overall efficacy of the programme, everyone with whom I spoke felt positively about their involvement.

Sol, 18, a Jewish-Israeli from Tel Aviv, remembers when he first realised he had made true friends through TPSS: “In July 2014, my family had just spent the night in a shelter. That hadn’t happened before to me. I didn’t sleep much, and I was pretty scared. In the morning, I got a text from Hamid, a TPSS teammate from Hebron: ‘Hope you’re OK. We’ll get through this together.’ I realised we built a friendship too strong to be divided by our countries” (Hebrew).

Nala, a 25-year-old Palestinian coach and former participant, said that, while she was involved in TPSS as a teenager, she never believed it would lead to actual change. “I did it just because I loved it, that’s the only reason. I met friends, some are still my friends. Honestly, I’m not convinced we’ll change much overall, but I see kids having fun with others whom they might not otherwise meet, and that’s enough for me” (English).

Outside of the Peres Center, not everyone feels that TPSS is beneficial or is even benign. Six days after the aforementioned Sderot-Yatta match in September 2014, Jibril Rajoub, Chairman of the Supreme Council for Sport and Youth Affairs in the Palestinian Authority, responded to the TPSS match on Facebook: “Any activity of sports normalisation with the Zionist enemy is a crime against humanity” (Rajoub 2014). He backed up this statement by claiming that such events are a misuse of sport by Zionists “to cover up their

crimes against Palestinian athletes”. Soon to be engaged in a lawsuit with the *Fédération Internationale de Football Association* (FIFA) concerning Israel’s professional football teams (see Chapter 5), Rajoub proceeded to rebuke the coaches of the Palestinian team as traitors and called for anyone minded to participate in future sporting events with Israel not to do so (*Kooora Palestine* 2014). These opinions are shared by other Palestinian officials, including several members of the Palestine Olympic Committee (field notes, 2017, English), and may be rooted in their suspicion of Israeli-initiated normalisation movements (see Chapters 1 and 2), something possibly compounded by TPSS’s links to the Israeli government. I will discuss the government’s role and reaction to identity and normalisation through sport in Chapter 6.

PPI and TPSS are just two of many sport-for-peace NGOs in Israel. Although some of these NGOs argue that they make a small but meaningful contribution to the social fabric of Israel (field notes, 2016), it is difficult to determine whether they have the capacity to bridge disparate communities. In work throughout Africa and India, Coalter, a sports policy researcher, criticises sport-for-peace operatives for assuming a direct correlation between sport and social concord and suggests that the beneficiaries often lack the social skills needed to establish peace without external enforcement (2010). This logic may imply that communities engaging with sport-for-peace projects will become capable of establishing normalised relationships through these projects. Indeed, Kruse calls this weakness “optimism of the will” driven by “intuitive certainty” (2007: 8). Kruse, who works for the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation, argues that sport-for-peace programmes may fail as a result of evangelist idealism that is not backed by political know-how, funding and proper training. Conversely Patriksson (1995: 128) believes that escaping this idealist framework enables sport to contribute to normalisation: “Sport, like most activities, is not a priori good or bad, but has the potential of producing both positive and negative outcomes. Questions

like ‘what conditions are necessary for sport to have beneficial outcomes?’ must be asked more often.” Or, in the words of Coakley (2004: 99), “Sports are sites for socialisation experiences, not causes of socialisation outcomes.”

While sport in this capacity, especially within Israel, is associated with a Euro-American context, some consider that its benefits reach more widely. Kay (2009) found that Indian women gain confidence through sport in that it informs their professional lives. In Zambia, Meier and Saavedra (2009) found similar patterns in promoting gender confidence through boxing. Citing examples from Northern Ireland, Scotland, England and Canada, Skinner et al. (2008) suggest that sport can help solve the social issues and exclusionism that have developed following the collapse of the welfare state. Relating, perhaps, more directly to Israel, Gasser and Levinsen (2004) see how football has had a unifying impact on children following the wars in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The International Council of Sport Science and Physical Education has produced a guide to using sport positively for psycho-social recovery from global natural and human-made disasters (Lauff 2008; also Gschwend and Selvaranju 2007; see also section on psychology in Chapter 2). In looking at the impact that events and festivals have on community, seen by some as comparable with sport, Moscardo (2007) identifies three types of change, which can be extrapolated to the context of international sport-for-development: 1) creating social capital (e.g. networks), 2) amplifying community capacity (e.g. skills) and 3) bolstering services (e.g. social change). Like sport, music has also been used for its alleged diplomatic and peace-making features (see O’Connell and Castelo-Branco (eds.) 2013), while simultaneously being deeply tied to nationalism (e.g. Stokes 1994, Bohlman 2004, and Regev and Seroussi 2004 on Israel specifically). Notably, while some of these authors identify physical activity as a path to change in sport-for-peace or development campaigns, Sugden and Schulenkorf (2013: 119) attribute any capacity for change to the intention and environment surrounding such drives

rather than to the sport per se (e.g. football3 model (appendix), supportive adults, local and international leaders). Additionally, NGO involvement raises its own issues, especially in the presence or aftermath of conflict (e.g. K. Anderson 2004, Walton 2008, Carey 2010). Some of these issues are explored within the modern corpus of Israeli and Palestinian anthropology. For example, Dalsheim's *Producing Spoilers: Peacemaking and the Production of Enmity in a Secular Age* (2014) draws upon two decades of anthropological fieldwork and peace activism to show how international peace-making projects may entrench the very processes of ethnic separatism, territorial control and nationalism they seek to deconstruct.

In spite of any potential associated issues, there are many such peace-through-sport programmes in Israel and throughout the world. Other Israeli ones include Mifalot, Surfers4Peace, Football4Peace, the Equalizer Project, Ultimate Peace (Frisbee) and Runners Without Borders (discussed later in this chapter). There are some Palestinian-based NGOs as well, including Palestine: Sports for Life, PACES, the Ibdaa Cultural Centre, the Right To Movement and the East Jerusalem YMCA. My experience suggests as a broad generalisation that the foreign NGOs operating in Israel seek reconciliation, whereas in Palestine they focus more on single-identity development. Local organisations in both states tend to be backed by more one-sided political agendas. Later, I will discuss the benefits and drawbacks of foreign and domestic organisations.

The rest of this chapter will continue to look at participants' experiences in sport through schools and community programming. Most of these programmes are affiliated with, or are reactions to, some governmental agency, so biases in line with two-party schisms appear more frequently.

Schools and Communities

Sport in school

Ernest Gellner (1987: 16) argued that standardised education transmits codified values throughout societies. Indeed, as mentioned in Chapter 2, Wilhelmine Germany employed scholastic sport for this very purpose, as did Nordau's muscular Judaism throughout the Jewish Diaspora. Israeli school-organised athletics continue to impart state values to their participants. However, the values transferred depend on the identity of the school and its membership.

In a book on politics in pan-Arab sport, Mahfoud Amara, an Algerian-born and Qatar-based sports policy academic, contends that "every sector [in Israel], including ... sport, [is] in a society which is constructing its identity based on 'Jewishness', the sense of belonging to the Jewish identity of the state of Israel, offering thus more rights to any Jew in the world than to Arab-Israeli citizens" (2012: 144). Sport, legally part of Israeli state education in the form of physical education, is another phenomenon in which access largely hinges upon ethnicity.

I do not intend to discuss the position of sport within Israeli educational systems as such, as very little of my original fieldwork dealt with education. Much of the research in this section is based on follow-up interviews conducted since leaving Israel and on the secondary literature. However, as state-funded Israeli schools must offer sport and as school attendance is mandatory,¹⁰⁴ school sport is one way in which pupils are exposed to sport. Education is one area that exhibits strong sectarian divisions. However, beyond a broad introduction to education as such, I will not address it further here. Instead, I will look more broadly at how (Jewish) identity is reiterated through sport within the educational environment.

¹⁰⁴ Abu-Rabia-Queder (2006), Yair and Alayan (2009) and Arar and Haj-Yehia (2016) discuss attendance compliance with respect to Jewish- and Arab-tracked pupils.

Of the five established channels of education in Israel, three come under the Ministry of Education: secular and religious Jewish state schools and Arab¹⁰⁵ state schools.¹⁰⁶ My research indicates very little cross-over between these tracks, especially between the Jewish and Arab state schools. Each channel is further sub-divided along lines of internal sectarianism, furthering this separation. For Jewish schools, this includes distinctions between Orthodox and secular Ashkenazi and Sephardi, as well as Yemenite, Ethiopian, etc. Although all within the Jewish system—and sometimes even within the same school—there is high level of academic disparity among them.

Distinctions within schools appear in the qualities of teachers and facilities (see H. Ayalon 1994), racial tensions (see Ben-Eliezer 2004) and funnelling pupils into different educational pathways based upon heritage (e.g. university-bound, vocational) (see Shavit 1984). Different standards may even be found within the same classroom. For example, I heard several accounts of Ashkenazim having priority seating in classrooms or more freedom throughout the day than other pupils (field notes, 2017, Hebrew). This perhaps speaks to the findings of another recent contribution to Israeli anthropology, Lavie's *Wrapped in the Flag of Israel: Mizrahi Single Mothers and Bureaucratic Torture* (2014), which challenges a belief in Jewish unity to indicate that Israelis experience an internal Jewish divide in which non-Ashkenazi Jews are simultaneously positioned as the “other” while still fulfilling a “one people” Jewish prophecy. Yinon Cohen and Yitchak Haberfeld (1998), whose sociology and economics research focuses on social stratification in labour markets, observe a sect-based economic gap among working adults, which they partially attribute to this system. A similar pattern classifies Arab schools as Druze, Bedouin, Christian, Muslim, etc., each of which

¹⁰⁵ Schools are referenced as “Arab” in both Israeli and Palestinian material (e.g. Barghouti 2009).

¹⁰⁶ The Arab schools with which I interacted are fully supported by the Ministry of Education and either follow its curriculum or that set by the Palestinian Authority (if in East Jerusalem; see footnote 109). The sectarian make-up of each school depends on the neighbourhood. Other systems include religious independent schools and private schools. Christian Arab schools, largely funded by international church networks, are among Israel's best-performing schools (Maniv 2011).

may be represented within a single school or have some level of academic autonomy (see Abu-Saad 1995, Abu-Rabi'a 2001, Court and Abbas 2010, Al-Haj 2012: 74).¹⁰⁷ As my own ethnography also shows, Lustick (1980), Seliktar (1984) and McDowall (1989) see this categorisation as a mechanism of Jewish control in that it separates and divides the Arab system, whose curricula are designed and their infrastructure created by the Israeli authorities. A still-developing sixth track, first appearing in 1984 in the cooperative village of Neve Shalom/Wāḥat as-Salām, is Jewish-Arab integrated schools. In addition to the token private school, there are six integrated schools in Israel that are at least partially supported by the Ministry of Education. There is a goal for at least another five to ten such schools to open by 2025, potentially impacting 20,000 Jewish-Israeli and Palestinian-Israeli citizens (field notes, 2017). These integrated schools, known as Hand in Hand, are organised jointly by Palestinian-Israelis and Jewish-Israelis and teach an extended form of the Israeli secular curriculum, with added coursework in bilingual education, civics and religion.

In the case of state-funded schools, the Ministry of Education allocates two hours per week for PE in each grade out of a range between 31.3 scheduled hours (lowest, Jewish secular elementary) and 46 hours (highest, Arab technological secondary) (Azulay et al. 2013: 31). Traditionally, the majority of Ultra-Orthodox pupils have been excused from the state's physical education requirement and have been educated in *yeshivot* or elsewhere within the religious sphere. For them, the body is merely a temporary vessel for the soul, and therefore, there is no reason to train the body for its own sake (Hakak 2009: 233; see also Arend 2002 on the body in rabbinic literature). Hakak (2005: 79-91; 2009) suggests that the

¹⁰⁷ E.g. some Druze regions (mainly in northern Israel, where they form an education department with Circassians) teach a state-funded Druze curriculum (Court and Abbas 2010).

Ultra-Orthodox approach to sport is changing, with more individuals becoming interested in the health benefits of physical activity and participation in wider elements of secular Israeli society.¹⁰⁸

According to Azulay et al. (2013: 41), on behalf of the Israeli Ministry of Education, PE comprised 0.0% of Israel's education budget for the year 2012. Thus, while other "non-core" subjects are removed, citing financial concerns, PE has a negligible financial impact. However, whether PE is implemented reflects the broader Jewish identity held by the state. In 1961 Israel ratified UNESCO's multilateral Convention against Discrimination in Education, which asserts that education policy must be extended equally to all pupils, regardless of social origin, ethnicity, religion, etc. According to Israel's Pupils' Rights Law (2000), academic institutions may not discriminate against pupils directly, but it does not specify that the state government must uphold UNESCO's equality convention. In 2004, the Central Bureau of Statistics released a special report on education, which showed that the state invested three times more funding per pupil in state-funded Jewish schools than in pupils in the Arab track (Central Bureau of Statistics 2004).¹⁰⁹ Partially as a result, Arab schools now have fewer teachers, insufficient classrooms, poorer facilities, more overcrowding, less access to academic enrichment programmes and fewer extra-curricular activities, all of which contribute to attrition (field notes, 2017, Hebrew).

The gulf in educational quality between state-funded Jewish and Arab institutions (e.g. see Al-Haj 2012, A. Ayalon 2007, Y. Cohen et al. 2007) becomes especially stark in Palestinian schools in East Jerusalem. Following the Oslo Accords, the curriculum in Arab-

¹⁰⁸ Some Haredi (Ultra-Orthodox) newspapers have begun to incorporate football stories. However, these stories are not circulated to share scores, but to demonstrate the savageness of secular and Hellenic culture. Leoussi and Aberbach (2002) discuss some of the reservations about physical and Greek among Haredim.

¹⁰⁹ In 2013, Israel began increasing funding to East Jerusalem Arab-track schools offering the Jewish curriculum (Kashti and Hassan 2016), an offer since accepted by ten schools (out of 180) as of 2015. This has been met with a backlash from Palestinians (N. Wilson 2016). Informants at Ir Amim (Israeli left-wing activist group) insisted that the Israeli curriculum "Israelifies" Palestinians, although the Israeli government argues it increases educational equality (field notes, 2016, English and Hebrew).

track schools in East Jerusalem, which had been under Israeli control since 1967, was transferred to the Palestinian Authority. However, as in all of Area C, Israel continues to control the infrastructure in East Jerusalem (see Seliktar 1984). This prevents the Palestinian Authority from legally constructing new schools, assuming that it could even finance them; as Dayan notes, there is not always enough money for electricity and water in existing schools (2010: 11). Two-thirds of East Jerusalem schools are so overcrowded that “auxiliary” spaces, like playgrounds and gyms, have been converted into classrooms (Abu Lafi 2008, cited in Nuseibeh 2016: n.p.), and other makeshift classrooms are created in apartments without a free space for playing. Whereas Tanner, an American educational planner interested in student productivity, indicates that each student needs between 4.55m² and 5.94m² of personal space (2009), Hijazi (2012) finds that the space allotted for students in East Jerusalem schools averages between 0.5m² to 0.9m², and teacher qualifications are directly correlated with students’ learning (cf. Darling-Hammond 2004). In addition, checkpoints and permit issues dissuade many qualified West Bank-based teachers from working in East Jerusalem. According to Nuseibeh (2016), this means that, when less central subjects like PE are taught, they are often overseen by ill-equipped advisors from other subjects who either focus on entertaining the children rather than teaching them about physical education or use the time for additional study in their own field.

According to Cook, a Nazareth-based British journalist, discrimination follows Palestinian children who wish to attend university (2010).¹¹⁰ Indeed, *Adalah*, a pro-

¹¹⁰ For example, if Palestinian East Jerusalemites attend university in the West Bank, the commute is complicated by checkpoints, time and expense. If they move to campus, they risk forfeiting their Israeli residency (5% have Israeli citizenship, the rest have permanent residency; Central Bureau of Statistics 2007: 2). If they apply to Israeli universities but studied for the Palestinian matriculation exam, they may need a supplementary year (Hijazi 2015). Students also must take psychometric exams (assessments of disposition and aptitude) that, according to Nuseibeh (2016), favour Jewish-Israelis. Additionally, Palestinians are faced with higher tuition fees because they do not qualify for the same financial arrangements available to those who served in the Israeli army. In 2017, the Hebrew University of Jerusalem became the first Israeli higher education institution to accept the Palestinian exam (Hasson 2017; “Equivalent Certificates” (n.d.). *The Hebrew University of Jerusalem*. Accessed 11 June 2017 from http://info.huji.ac.il/sites/default/files/equivalentcertificatesforinternet_1.pdf).

Palestinian legal centre and human rights organisation in Israel, notes that pupils in Arab schools comprise 25% of Israel's overall student body but only 1.2% of its university academics (*Adalah* 2010: 7). Regardless of further education, Mazawi, a Canadian Middle East education sociologist, also contends that the bias the children experience growing up translates to the workplace (1995).

Thus, although the state may mandate the same hours of PE in all of its schools, those in East Jerusalem are partially under a different system, and Arab schools elsewhere lack the funding that would ensure quality programmes, or for many pupils, any programming at all. Through observations and interviews with parents and teaching staff, Nuseibeh (2016) writes about the impact on these children who have little or no sport available to them. When there is no empty space in the neighbourhoods, no playgrounds, and community offerings are out-priced, children can lack the health benefits and social acculturation of exercise and sport, which, Nuseibeh argues, can contribute to medical and behavioural problems. Given the stark contrast here with the amenities associated with Jewish schools and areas, the author imputes this to Israel's lack of interest in meeting the needs of its non-Jewish citizens and residents. As the state recognises the importance of youth sport (it even offers sport at the highest level on the national matriculation exam), Israel creates, according to Nuseibeh, a self-perpetuating culture in which Jewish identity is prioritised and Jewish dominion over all others is reiterated. "The values of bravery and sacrifice, from the past and the present, beamed from the nationalistic facet of [the Hebrew pioneer] and enabled physical education to become a wellspring of education for character and for emotional and physical strength" (Galily and Ben-Porat 2013: 72).

Some NGO community sports offerings, such as those made by organisations including PPI and TPSS, are the only PE offered to some children in Arab-track schools without integrated programmes (field notes, 2016, 2017, English and Hebrew). In some of the

schools where PE is offered, it may be only offered to boys (interview, July 2014, Hebrew; Arar and Rigbi 2009). While meeting with faculty and students at the Wingate Institute's pedagogical college in 2014, I first heard about a state plan to invest in sporting infrastructure in Arab schools (including those in East Jerusalem, as their facilities are also under aegis of the Israeli state). The aim of this plan, however, was not to promote the well-being of Palestinian pupils but to forestall "deviant" behaviour by young people by using up their extra energy and free time. Although such a programme has yet to be implemented, the example seems to show that the promotion of youth sport is context-dependent. One Jewish faculty member at WI, Itai, referred to the proposal as "a terrorist-prevention programme". Former student Khaled, a 27-year-old Palestinian-Israeli affiliated with Maccabi Ahi Nazareth, a professional football club in Nazareth, described the state's approach to Israel's Arab-track PE as "No, you're Arab, you don't deserve nice things like playing football! Oh, wait, we think you might be criminals! No! No, don't blow stuff up! Here, play football" (interviews, 2014, Hebrew).

Given the data I have considered, it seems that state-funded schools are an area in which normalisation falls short of expectations. Access to PE in these communities is one way in which the state's preference for Jewishness maintains a hierarchical and divided status quo among all ethnicities. However, the Hand in Hand integrated schools seek to bridge this gulf and seem to be largely successful, at least within the programme's immediate reach. The six affiliated schools are spread throughout Israel. In addition to public funding, Hand in Hand is supported financially through its own international funding base, as well as grants through USAID (a unit of the US government responsible for foreign civilian aid), other foreign aid and on levying tuition fees (NIS ₪5,000 in 2017) to cover the majority of its operating costs. It now receives just under 40% of its funding from the Israeli state, signalling

at least some state interest in the school's role in normalisation, although this interest varies with respect to the individual municipality of each of the six schools (L. Gordon and Bardach 2016: 34).

Unlike organisations like PPI, which seek to address coexistence and normalisation without actively discussing politics, these schools make politics, terrorism and the occupation routine, reflecting the daily lives of the children and teachers. "They need to know their realities because everything we do as a school, we want it to reflect the real world. Whether it's language, science or soccer, we want it to help kids be successful emissaries in their other lives" (Alia, Palestinian teacher. Interview, August 2017, English). These are also realities that can affect the pupils' daily lives, and the teachers want to limit negative impacts on education through preparation. The Hand in Hand school in Kafr Qara, 35km south-east of Haifa in the Wadi Ara area, thought by an affiliated teacher to be the only school in the country that has Jewish children attending school in a Palestinian-Israeli community (the reverse is more common; field notes, 2017), has seen a decrease in Jewish enrolment over the past five years allegedly due to parental concerns about escalating violence in the school's neighbourhood. In 2014, another Hand in Hand school in Jerusalem was partially burnt by arsonists and is routinely tagged with hate graffiti.

PE is considered a vital part of the curriculum for its benefits in bringing children together. In the same way that PPI reports children overcoming barriers when working toward a [common] goal, teachers at Hand in Hand also find that time on playgrounds and sport fields helps to develop and maintain relaxed relations between pupils of all identities. Consequently, the school in Jerusalem provides an indoor gymnasium, outdoor sports courts and a large playground, as well as an additional play area and playground for the youngest children. "We're a school, and we pride ourselves in the quality of our education. But, kids need to be kids. They need to see each other as friends, as teammates. We prioritise play and

sport because that's where they get to have fun and socialise as normal kids. We think that helps them in the classroom and in life" (Mahmoud, Palestinian-Israeli teacher. Interview, September 2017, English).

When I was in Israel in spring 2016, Hand in Hand was preparing for its first Hand in Hand Olympics (successfully repeated in spring 2017, and expected to be an annual event). The event was organised by fifth- and sixth-grade pupils at the Hand in Hand school in the Misgav (Galilee) to mark the International Day of Sport for Development and Peace. The pupils researched how the modern Olympic Games are claimed to be value-driven and how similar principles (e.g. teamwork, responsibility, leadership and trust, *inter alia*) could be developed and assessed within their own event (field notes, 2016, 2017, English). The Olympiad brought together pupils, parents and the neighbourhood communities of three of the Hand in Hand schools—Misgav, Kafr Qara and Jerusalem—for a day of competitive sport in the spirit of de Coubertin (see Chapter 1). Following the morning opening ceremonies, the parade of delegates and a collective acknowledgement of the athletes' oath, the competition began. For two hours, the athletes competed in individual track and field events. They broke into teams, two from each schoolroom entering into five competitions: 60m, 600m, throwing, high jump, long jump. After a fifteen-minute lunch break, teams comprising different classes met on the field for football and dodgeball. The day finished with a closing ceremony to honour the effort and integrity of all competitors, and diplomas and medals were awarded. The pupils chose to hang the medals on a mixture of blue/white and green ribbons, reflecting the colours of Israel and Palestine.

This past year, following the 2017 event, I followed up with one of the teachers from the Jerusalem school to ask for her thoughts on the Olympiad. "From an academic perspective, it taught organising, planning, strategy, use of basic reading and maths skills. But overall, I believe sport brings everyone together because it is enjoyable. People don't

realise how much they're learning when kicking a ball around. But they're better people for it, and that reflects back to the classroom and into their communities" (Shoshanna, Jewish-Israeli teacher. Interview, August 2017, Hebrew).

As Hand in Hand follows the state curriculum, it must offer a minimum of two hours of PE weekly. Hapoel Katamon Jerusalem, a professional football team playing in Israel's second league, has partnered with the Jerusalem school to oversee fifth-grade PE. The fifth graders also participate in the Neighbourhood Soccer League, a Katamon outreach project that arranges monthly joint football matches for Jewish and Arab school pupils:

Our kids don't look at ethnicity. Bring them to the Neighbourhood Soccer League, they'll just play with whomever. Compare that to kids from other schools, who've got a lot of apprehension until they get into playing. But our kids jump right into playing. Seeing our kids interact like that, outside of their own classroom, with new kids, that makes me confident we're doing the right thing. (Sada, Palestinian-Israeli teacher. Interview, July 2017 English)

In addition to playing in Katamon's Neighbourhood Soccer League, Hand in Hand pupils play on competitive school sports teams. However, there have been a number of issues limiting the reach of school sport to pupils.

One issue raised to me by several parents is transportation. Frequently, children travel to sporting events on public transportation. Many of them also travel to the school on public transportation, but neighbouring parents often take turns to accompany children on morning routes to make sure that no child is alone through certain routes in the city. However, transportation is harder to monitor if children travel home at different times, for example, after games or following after-school practices. Both parents and teachers said that children are "not infrequently" harassed on public transport: "The worst probably came in 2013 when a few sixth graders were riding the Jerusalem city bus home. They were speaking in Arabic, and some Orthodox teenagers spat on them, hit them and called them names. An older Orthodox woman called our girls 'backward, stupid monkeys' who should do society a favour by hanging themselves, else she would hire a hitman to murder them" (Sara, Jewish-

Israeli teacher. Interview, July 2017, English). “I got so excited when my son started playing football for school, but he stopped. His jersey had Arabic on it, and he said he is scared to wear it. He won’t play on the school team because he doesn’t want to be seen with the other kids. He doesn’t want anyone to know which school he attends. He tells people he attends a Jewish school out of town” (Shimon, Jewish-Israeli father. Interview, July 2017, Hebrew).

Katia, a Jewish mother of two attendees aged nine and thirteen, echoed some of Shimon’s message: “The whole point of this school is to get people together, to have our kids grow up not defining each other by race. Our kids play sports against other schools, but not everyone can participate because either they or their parents are afraid to be seen representing the school in case someone throws a grenade or something. Some people think this school should be illegal.” Katia cites part of her concern over the proximity of the [Jerusalem] school to Teddy Stadium. Children walk to Teddy Stadium weekly, as that is Hapoel Katamon’s base. However, the stadium is also home to another team, Beitar Jerusalem Football Club, known for being “the most racist Israelis in the country” (Zinshtein and Arbourne 2016; see Chapter 5). Beitar’s more ardent fans have made death threats and physical attacks against those they believe to be Palestinian, and they sometimes congregate in the streets around the stadium. Katia includes herself among hesitant parents: “I see how much my nine-year-old loves playing with his team, but I’m of mixed emotions when he pulls on his jersey with the school name on it. I can’t think of a better way for him to learn to grow up to be a responsible and civic-minded adult, and I see how much he loves it. But I know some people in the city don’t think it’s fine,” she pauses. “There are a lot of extremists in Jerusalem, a lot who believe they’re right. You just need one to make a move” (interview, July 2017, Hebrew).

Assad, a Palestinian father of a six-year-old student, feels the school's walls mark "an oasis and a retreat from the reality of the outside world." Although Assad would like his son to be a doctor or a lawyer one day, he says his son's favourite "subject" is recess, which is fine with him. "My son is an energetic boy; he needs to play. Playing, though, is good for him, he gets along with all the other children, he learns to share, to take turns, to help his classmates. Right now, that's the best subject he can study. This will help him later" (interview, July 2017, Hebrew). Gabriel, a Jewish-Israeli teacher at the Jerusalem school, agrees. "Ultimately," he says, "we don't want to be a mere 'coexistence' school. We expect more than that. We want to be a 'living together' school" (interview, July 2017, English).

While schools allegedly recognise the benefits of sport in some capacity for personal development, and even to challenge social norms, those desiring implementation may not have the necessary tools at their disposal (field notes, 2017). With all children in Israel being legally obliged to attend school (see footnote 104), the scholastic setting might be one through which they gain exposure to sport. However, it is clear that not all schools are able to meet such needs (e.g. A. Ayalon 2007, Y. Cohen et al. 2007). Through a lack of funding in Arab schools especially, additional sectarian segregations and its maintenance of control over those in East Jerusalem, education is another way in which the Israeli government exerts its chosen, and Jewish, ascendancy (Seliktar 1984).

Community centres

Another channel through which children (and adults) participate in sport is community programmes. In Israel in 2016 I joined two running groups, Runners Without Borders and a Palestine Marathon training group. I participated in these groups, as I had hoped to race the Palestine Marathon and wanted to learn more about it, it then being co-organised by a Danish human rights NGO and independent Palestinian runners. Additionally,

I visited two community programmes in Jaffa. One, the Arab-Jewish Community Center (AJCC), includes sport, but at the time of my visit, my interests were focused elsewhere. Instead of looking at their sport programme per se, I wanted to understand how people experienced the municipal and state-driven frameworks that are seen by some as reinforcing Jewish hegemony over minority cultures. I only spent one day at AJCC for a few comparative interviews, which I had expected might help shape my background knowledge and perspective about community normalisation agendas. I met four people affiliated with AJCC—three teenagers in AJCC’s Yafati afterschool centre, and one tutor who oversees their school work and matriculation exam preparation. The following year, I reconnected with three of the four people—two of the teenagers and the tutor—and have made contacts with others in mixed communities to learn about the efficacy of community-based sports offerings.

Located in the same neighbourhood as the Peres Center for Peace, discussed earlier, sports offered by AJCC are also built around the theme of normalisation. This region of Jaffa, known as Ajami and Jabaliyya, is traditionally Muslim and Christian Palestinian, but it has undergone gentrification over the past fifteen years, and more upper-class Jews have moved in as the Palestinian-Israeli residents have been outpriced or evicted (field notes, 2016). Thus, as the demographics have changed, these neighbourhoods have been the site of protests and tensions involving ownership and ethnicity.

As the only publicly-funded mixed-identity community centre in Israel, the AJCC is open to all Tel Aviv-Jaffa citizens. In addition to offering schemes that seek to better relations within Tel Aviv-Jaffa, such as adult education workshops, joint choirs and empowerment workshops, the AJCC offers several sports opportunities, again emphasising positive relationships. Every year the centre hosts a “gymnaestrada”, a celebration of the different sports teams. Maiya, 18, a Palestinian-Israeli member of the Yafati teen centre from Jabaliyya, participates in circus sports and has previously participated in the gymnaestrada.

“I’m a gymnast, and I focus on small-group circus stunts. It’s sometimes scary and dangerous, so I’ve learned to trust my teammates. We support and spot each other. An act will only work and be safe if we believe in each other” (Hebrew).

Ornetta, the tutor I met in 2016, identifies as Jewish-Israeli (although she asked me to note that she has lived in the “Ajami ghetto” her entire life and that her mother was Palestinian). Ornetta says engaging her pupils in sport has improved their academic performance. As a tutor, she aims to create an environment in which all children can succeed and is especially interested in preparing Jaffa’s Palestinian-Israeli pupils for the Israeli matriculation exam. She believes sport is vital to pupils’ success in school and in their future careers. “Sport helps everyone. Need to improve teamwork? Basketball. Improve confidence? Well, Circus. A kid struggling in school because he isn’t focusing? Archery. How about that kid who struggles with controlling aggression? Martial arts or capoeira.” Ornetta has enrolled her own children in the AJCC’s dancing school. “Dance, like any sport, is great for getting kids to work together,” she said when I asked why she chose dance for her daughters. “My girls study traditionals like ballet, but they also do a lot of improv in class. Improv is all about mixing ideas, styles, like jazz and flamenco, and cultures. Since it’s a taught class, it’s legitimate to them, not just hodgepodge. And it’s still recognised as fantastic dance. My girls know that they can use a medley of styles and create something beautiful. That could be Israel” (English).

Publicly available sport in communities

Throughout Jewish cities in Israel, there are numerous opportunities for residents to participate in sport. There are many community centres offering swimming pools, playgrounds and sports teams for children and adults. In Tel Aviv, there are more than twenty outdoor “gyms” (parks with various exercise machines that are open to the public, without

charge). There are approximately 70km of bike lanes with expectations for 100km of additional work-commuting cycling paths throughout the greater metropolitan area (Ministry of Transport and Road Safety 2017: 109). For those without a bicycle, the city has a rental scheme with free access for short rides. Elsewhere in Tel Aviv, there are public climbing walls, volleyball nets and weekly running races. The city also has professional and recreational teams. The findings are similar in Jewish neighbourhoods throughout Israel. These regions have a history of sport, which continues to shape their present landscape. Thus, organised sport, regardless of its purpose, may occur against the background of an already-active community.

Israel's Palestinian cities have fewer offerings, in line with their generally poorer facilities, schools and infrastructure. Finance officials have linked this with lower rates of tax collection in Palestinian-Israeli cities (e.g. Brender 2005). In light of a Ministry of Finance report that Israel spends 42% more per capita on services in Jewish localities than in Palestinian ones, Sikkuy (the Association for the Advancement of Civic Equality in Israel—a bipartisan Israeli-Palestinian NGO) and Injaz (the Center for Professional Arab Local Governance—a Palestinian NGO working to increase Palestinian positions of leadership in Israel) reject the government's argument that the lack of social infrastructure is a result of low tax payments (Gerlitz and Natour 2016). While acknowledging that there is only partial compliance with tax collection, Gerlitz and Natour, executive directors at Sikkuy, claim that Palestinian-Israeli districts “would remain poor and weak even with better management and 100% collection of property taxes” (2016). They argue that impoverishment is the result of the state intentionally placing primary economic infrastructure within Jewish areas. As a result, Palestinian-Israeli towns receive very little external stimulus, and the money generated goes to essentials. Sport, regardless of whether it is part of school PE, community classes or for normalisation, is not as necessary as water and electricity.

Sports facilities are not just playgrounds and football fields. There are no Olympic-sized swimming pools in Israel's Palestinian-majority areas, no maintained running tracks, no basketball arenas. Bnei Sakhnin Football Club, the only Palestinian-Israeli team in the Premier League, is based at Doha Stadium, the only stadium in a Palestinian-Israeli city, which was largely funded by the Qatar National Olympic Committee, hence its name (Nahmias 2006).

The Ministry of Construction (housing) may exacerbate the institutionalised lack of social infrastructure, claiming that Palestinians have “different needs, demands and patterns of behavior” and therefore do not need the same amount of open space (Levinson 2013).¹¹¹ In other places, NGOs and foreign aid have stepped in with funding, believing that sportsgrounds promote an “immediate improvement of living conditions”, which can “eas[e] displacement pressures, while securing growth opportunities for Palestinian communities in East Jerusalem.”¹¹² Since Sur Baher, a Muslim neighbourhood in East Jerusalem, lacked a playground for its 40,000 citizens, a donation from the Belgian government organised through Bimkom (a planning and human rights NGO in Jerusalem) and UN-Habitat enabled it to construct its first playground, with two swings, two slides and a merry-go-round. The playground opened while I was there in 2016, but its construction had not been approved by the city of Jerusalem, meaning the city can demolish it without warning (*The Times of Israel* 2016). Such donations have helped Palestinian cities throughout the country construct spaces for sports.

As with education, the issue of access to playgrounds and sports grounds in Jerusalem reflects ethnic differences. On January 10, 2016, the verdict in a legal suit heard by the Jerusalem District Court declared that Jerusalem must build at least ten new playgrounds in

¹¹¹ Although I focus on overall Jewish identity, Levinson (2013) also highlights inequalities in the space offered to Haredi Jews compared with other Orthodox, traditional/Masorti and secular Jews.

¹¹² UN-Habitat (2016, February 11). “UN-Habitat Supports a Community Initiative in East Jerusalem”. Accessed 16 June 2017 from <https://unhabitat.org/un-habitat-supports-a-community-initiative-in-east-jerusalem>.

two Palestinian neighbourhoods, Shuafat and Beit Hanina, by 2018 and at least twenty more by 2021 (Hasson 2016).¹¹³ The court heard that each neighbourhood has only one municipal playground for its 30,000 residents. Compare this with figures for two neighbouring, but Jewish areas in East Jerusalem: Pisgat Ze'ev has 56 playgrounds for its 44,000 residents, one playground for every 785 citizens; and Ramat Shlomo has one for every 607, with 28 playgrounds shared between its 17,000 residents (Hasson 2016; figures reflect entire population of the neighbourhood, including adults).

Even where there are facilities, there may be a subtext. A multipurpose sports field was created in the East Jerusalem neighbourhood of Sheikh Jarrah in 1993; it was simple, with football nets and basketball hoops. As one of the few open spaces around, it became the cradle of local sport and socialisation (field notes, 2017). In 2010, the Jerusalem municipality added an outdoor “gym”—a small park with a stationary bike, chin-up bars and a few other pieces of equipment. Nothing fancy, but it was one of the few places where one could exercise in East Jerusalem without cost (field notes, 2017). A placard was installed at the entrance of the gym with equipment instructions. Instead of being in Arabic, however, the sign is only in Hebrew, except for a warning that the space should not be used by children under fourteen, which is in English. Although many in the Palestinian neighbourhood speak Hebrew, the language choice can be seen as another reflection of the hegemony exerted by the state.

Some Palestinian neighbourhoods, like Silwan and Beit Hanina, have community centres with sports programming accessible to children and adults, and there are a few cooperatives between West and East Jerusalem that enable children to use each other's sporting facilities. Additionally, there is a YMCA (connected with three additional locations in West Bank Area A cities) with community sports opportunities, and there are private gyms

¹¹³ As far as I know, as of July 2018, this programme has not yet been completed.

and clubs. However, as I discussed earlier, the majority of these are not accessible to many Palestinian residents. This is predominantly because membership is expensive, but the lack of transportation infrastructure, checkpoints, social stigma and free time also make them non-viable or impracticable options.

Some places, like Sur Baher, and also other Palestinian neighbourhoods and cities throughout Israel, build their own sports equipment when their needs are not met by the government. However, as Israel issues building permits, non-approved structures can be dismantled. Demolition notably happened at a park in Silwan, a predominantly Muslim Palestinian neighbourhood just south of Jerusalem's Old City. According to the Middle East Children's Alliance, at the time I visited Silwan in 2009 and 2010,¹¹⁴ only twenty building permits had been issued by Jerusalem in the past forty years (Shields-Stromsness 2017). Unable to get permission for what would be the only area of publicly accessible space for Palestinian children, the neighbourhood, with funding from the Middle East Children's Alliance, constructed its first sports field and jungle gym, which were bulldozed shortly thereafter on the grounds that it lacked a permit. Following a rebuild, the state once again announced it would demolish the new playing space because it had been rezoned for a national park surrounding the alleged City of David—a mechanism, according to Bimkom (Kulka et al. 2012: 18), to Judaize the neighbourhood. In reaction to the destruction of the sports ground, one resident of Silwan told *al-Araby al-Jadeed* (a left-of-centre pan-Arab media source), “All the kids in the neighborhood use this land, they play soccer and other games. We built it by our hands for our children. ... They don't want our children to have fun things or to have a future” (Silver 2015).

¹¹⁴ Previous personal trips unrelated to fieldwork.

Runners Without Borders

As noted in Chapter 3, I did not race in the Jerusalem Marathon. However, I trained for it with the Jerusalem running group, Runners Without Borders (RWB). Based at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, RWB is a Jerusalem-based NGO aspiring to unite citizens of Greater Jerusalem through running. Partly in response to the 2014 Israel-Gaza conflict, RWB was formed in November 2014 when a then-seventeen-year-old woman managed to convince teenaged friends from East and West Jerusalem, Palestinians and Israelis, to join her in running (field notes, 2017). After an initial race together in the 2015 Jerusalem Marathon, RWB developed into four separate teams for girls, boys, women and men.

RWB runners accrue mileage on a city trail, Train Track Park. Traversing seven Jerusalem neighbourhoods, this seven-kilometre thoroughfare is popular with runners. The park, a site originally built for train travel by the Ottomans, ceased being used by Israeli Railways in 1998 and reopened as a park in 2010. There have been discussions to extend the park into the greater Jerusalem Metropolitan Park, yielding an eventual 50km of paths (field notes, 2010, 2016). The fact that one of the neighbourhoods traversed by the park, Beit Safafa, is Palestinian has come to symbolise unity to its users (field notes, 2017). However, Beit Safafa is not representative of nearby Palestinian neighbourhoods: 17% of its land is open space, which includes several playgrounds and a fenced-in football field, and it is surrounded by Jewish districts, meaning easier access to services and better infrastructure (Bar-Cohen and Kronish 2013: 84, 86).¹¹⁵ Moreover, it is at the park's pedestrian terminus and sees less activity. In discussing the park with two people, one from Beit Safafa and one from the nearby Jewish neighbourhood of Pat, I learned that they were both cautious about running in the park near Beit Safafa. The person from Beit Safafa said, "It's an in-between area. I'm just never comfortable walking there, especially alone. Sometimes there are guards

¹¹⁵ Beit Safafa has since been bisected by a settler-only road, increasing restrictions on Palestinian citizens.

[but] I'm just uneasy about it." The other, from Pat, agreed, "The path narrows as you get to Beit Safafa. Most people don't go that far. I won't run there at night" (interviews, 2016, Hebrew).

Train Track Park has been the site of RWB trainings, because, symbolically, it suggests unity, and practically, it is a car-free swathe of land. In 2016, RWB started holding biannual races in the park. The most recent one in July 2017 drew 325 athletes, a mixture of different ethnicities (field notes, 2017). Despite bringing people together, the group does face challenges, notably resistance from more conservative individuals who disapprove of female athletes and of Palestinians and Israelis publicly interacting, as well as the lack of transport between East and West Jerusalem and security issues (field notes, 2016, Hebrew). All these factors became apparent to me in the lead up to the 2016 Jerusalem Marathon. At one training in the park, I found that one Palestinian runner, Khaled, 34, had not told his wife how he planned to spend the day: "I left Bethlehem this morning, kissed her and walked out the door. There are lots of uprisings at Damascus Gate, my bus station. I can't always tell her where I go because it upsets her" (field notes, 2016, English). When I followed up with Khaled in 2017, his weekly trips to West Jerusalem on the other side of separation barrier were still his secret. I do not have permission to share some quotes from some of the Palestinian women. However, this cohort consisted of wealthier and less conservative individuals.

This section on (select) sports activities in schools and communities shows that participants' experiences are influenced by governmental and social structures at least as much as by their ethnic and religious identities. Overall, the local power structures play their own sport. The authority granted to the Jewish government reinforces Jewish hegemony and identity among all members of the state, even in Palestinian-majority areas. I will develop

this point further in Chapter 6 when I discuss Tel Aviv's international marathon. The marathon has become a way in which the state has inserted itself within the local running community as a forum for state-dictated identity.

Access to sport, which affects social relationships, cognitive development and personal experiences of the "other", is thus influenced by identity. One might identify Palestinians as having fewer resources and therefore reduced access to sport. However, this could equally mean that they are targeted for participation in sport by those who connect sport with normalisation. Thus, one might also surmise that there are distinctions between participation and resource allocation in the public and private spheres. Ostensibly, at best this unequal distribution of power contributes to the maintenance of a status quo. At worst, it perpetuates the inequalities that counter any normalisation efforts and leads to increased violence. Although my focus remains within the sphere of sport, these patterns are reiterated through many socio-political domains influenced by the state. Overall, when compared with international NGOs within Israel, the government seems less interested in the normalisation of relationships under its own jurisdiction. Reinforcing this perspective is Prime Minister Netanyahu's 2011 commission to Yaakov Amidror, in the latter's capacity as the chief of the National Security Council, to assess the forcible uprooting of thousands of small Bedouin villages in the Negev. Amidror's involvement makes "it clear yet again that as far as [Netanyahu] and the Jewish state are concerned, Arabs are first and foremost a security risk" (Michaeli 2011).

Conclusion

Overall, Israeli cities are bedrocks of identity. The Israeli government has always prioritised Jewish interests over those of non-Jews, and access to sport through municipal channels reflects this. This chapter has looked at participation in a variety of types of locally focused sport in Israel. I hope to have shown that sport, whether reflected through a PPI twinning or access to a swing set, is linked to Jewish identity and hegemony. At this level, there seems to be some scope for using sport to support normalisation aims, though, as I have shown above, success is variable and connected with wider beliefs about identity. Here, non-governmental organisations seem more successful than local municipalities when it comes to normalisation activities. I suggest that the primary reason for this is that municipal sport programmes are under political management. For example, playgrounds in both East and West Jerusalem are overseen by the city's beautification division, and permits for constructing sports grounds are issued by the department of licencing, both of which are part of the Jewish government. Consequently, whether swing sets or soccer fields, the activity may be intrinsically political—something clearly seen in the unequal distribution of funds or in the bulldozing of sports grounds to Judaise Palestinian neighbourhoods.

NGOs, on the other hand, have the opportunity to be more focused on the participants and on barriers between people. International NGOs, like PPI, may be less likely to elicit lasting structural change than local organisations, such as the Peres Center. Foreign organisations may be accountable to donor demands and may focus on particular, idealised issues without connecting them to larger frameworks or integrating local leaders. However, they might also be able to bring in foreign expertise and funding, offer rejuvenated enthusiasm and be more impartial, especially in conflict areas. Local NGOs, by contrast, might have more lasting impacts, but are more likely to be seen as less idealistic and as acting

within a political framework, which can raise questions about their supposedly subversive intentions (field notes, 2016). Nevertheless, they may be more closely connected with a community and exhibit better judgment and knowledge about the immediate infrastructure (e.g. Tzifakis and Huliaras 2015). One weakness of sport-for-peace activities is that participants are predominantly self-selected and, therefore, the audience is limited; also in this capacity, international NGOs may be less able to impart ideas of change (see Crowther 2001, Francis (ed.) 2012: 75). Ultimately, as noted by Sugden (2005: 239), sometimes aspirations and dreams take precedence even when they are known to counter recognised logistics and despite empirical evidence to the contrary. Politics do, of course, affect the normalisation ability of all NGOs. All the NGOs discussed here report higher rates of attrition among their Jewish participants, especially among Ashkenazim, which makes it hard to maintain the necessary mixture of ethnicities (field notes, 2016, 2017, English and Hebrew). On the one hand, some attrition may stem from having other opportunities available to them, but Sugden and Bairner (1995) suggest another reason. In looking at Catholic and Protestant participation in joint sport in Northern Ireland, these two British sports social theorists found that Catholics were more interested in participating than Protestants. In addition to suggesting that Catholics had fewer external opportunities for sport, Sugden and Bairner felt that Protestants were suspicious of activity that sought to normalise relationships in case it would weaken their domination of the province. Ultimately, however, in Israel, “When it comes to budgets and infrastructure, discrimination against Arab sports is at least as severe as in other areas of life, if not more so, since sport is ostensibly a luxury” (Michaeli 2011).

Chapter 5. National sport from the perspective of fandoms

Whereas Chapter 4 focused on the practitioners of sport and identity, Chapter 5 focuses on Jewish identity as experienced through the fandoms of professional sport. Positioned almost exclusively within the Jewish-Israeli framework, this chapter explores displays of vehement, conflicting senses of belonging and strong opinions through which I show a side of Jewish identity steeped in religious divisions and political ideology that affords very little space for normalisation with Palestinian-Israelis.

Focusing on the fandoms of three Jewish-Israeli professional football teams, Hapoel Tel Aviv, Maccabi Tel Aviv and Beitar Jerusalem, and incorporating some discussion about Palestinian Israeli teams to the extent that this is part of the overarching Jewish athletic discourse, I describe how each team traces its identity to earlier political landscapes that have continued to inform wider social patterns within contemporary Israel. Seeing team ideologies as largely fan-driven, I show how disparate teams are able to both mitigate and enforce the sectarian divisions that divide contemporary Israel.

As indicated earlier, this sphere of sport provides few opportunities for negotiation between Jewish- and Palestinian-Israelis. In part this is because, while professional sport has become a venerated marker of masculinity and nationalism for Jewish teams, it does not support Palestinian identity in the same manner. Instead, I will show how some Palestinian teams have worked themselves into this Jewish-nationalist rhetoric, even adopting its pro-Jewish and anti-Palestinian symbols, in order to use football to create common ground. This constructed mutuality is simultaneously “safe” for Jewish-Israeli teams while being culturally

distant, and thus less threatening, to Palestinian-Israelis. The latter part of the chapter will examine the role of football within Palestinian identity, but it will be embedded within the overarching debate on Jewish nationalism.

Identity as established by professional football clubs

As of April 2018, FIFA recognises 211 national football teams, representing eighteen more nations than are members of the UN.¹¹⁶ Known for its quadrennial World Cup, FIFA's membership is indicative of football's global impact. The Israeli national football team, included among FIFA's 211 nations as the direct successor of Mandate Palestine's (all-Jewish) national team, played its first international match in September 1948 against the United States, four months after declaring its independence. Of the current [men's] national squad (March 2017), the majority are affiliated with local Israeli teams—only seven out of the 23 players are signed with foreign clubs when not competing for Israel.^{117, 118} Most Israeli national team players are Jewish-Israeli, although there have been token non-Jews on the national team. Some of the best-known Palestinian-Israelis on the national team are Ali Othman of Beit Safafa and and Rifaat Turk of Jaffa, who, in 1976, became the first Palestinians named to these teams. That summer, Turk would become the second (of two, as

¹¹⁶ The UN recognises 193 permanent member states. Of the 193, the Marshall Islands is the only UN member state not to be represented by a national football team.

¹¹⁷ This number is relatively low compared with other national teams. For example, as of September 2016, fifteen out of twenty-three of the Brazilian men's squad and seventeen out of twenty-four members of the Portuguese men's team play for foreign clubs.

¹¹⁸ Israel founded a women's team in 1997. Three out of twenty-one members (April 2018) play for foreign clubs.

of 2018) Palestinians on an Israeli Olympic team. More recently, Abbas Suan of Sakhnin cemented all-star status after scoring a game-tying goal in the final minute of a 2006 World Cup qualifying match on 26 March 2005 in Ramat Gan, near Tel Aviv.

Despite scoring the goal against Ireland that kept Israel in contention for the 2006 World Cup, Suan's presence became a subject of identity politics, raising questions about who represents Israel. Some Jewish-Israelis immediately hailed Suan as a *gibor yisrael*—a Biblical term for a hero of Israel. However, on April 3, 2005, when Suan joined his club, Bnei Sakhnin, to play against Premier League rival Beitar Jerusalem, his reception was very different. The game was held at Teddy Stadium, the home of Beitar Jerusalem. A group of ardent Beitar fans, known as La Familia, met Suan with banners reading (Hebrew): "Suan, you do not represent us!" From the stands, La Familia cycled through a variety of chants (Hebrew), including back-to-back "No Arabs, no terrorism!" and "Death to the Arabs!" (I found an irony in this sequence, although it was clearly lost on the fans.) In response, Bnei Sakhnin fans booed the playing of Israel's national anthem, *Hatikvah*,¹¹⁹ further inciting Beitar fans to accuse them of a lack of patriotism. Anti-Palestinian sentiment is routine at Teddy Stadium; Beitar Jerusalem stands alone as the only team in the state's premier league never to have signed a Palestinian player, a principle largely upheld by the club's supporters, despite at least some effort by the club's staff to do so (field notes, 2016). Beitar's then-new owner, Russian-Israeli businessman Arkadi Gaydamak, who allegedly purchased the team in 2005 to support his subsequent campaign for election as mayor of Jerusalem, with some believing he even bankrolled La Familia to generate a radical political base (interviews, February and March 2016, July 2017, English and Hebrew), apparently saw an opportunity to capitalise on the hero-status of Suan to neutralise the racism associated with Beitar and invited Suan for a trial with them (field notes, 2016, 2017). However, a still-infant La Familia

¹¹⁹ *Hatikvah* is a Zionist poem that expresses aspirations of returning to Zion following 2000 years of exile.

protested and rioted against Suan; the move was stopped in its tracks, but not before death threats had been made against Beitar Jerusalem's manager and Suan himself.

As I will explore in the next chapter, national teams exert a national identity. However, identities conjured up through professional clubs are generally focused at some local level, whether that of the team itself, the city or the region (Ben-Porat 2003). There are exceptions to this, as some clubs even directly challenge the respective national identity. For example, while they both play under the auspices of the Royal Spanish Football Federation, Spain's Athletic Bilbao and FC Barcelona represent the Basque and Catalan nations respectively, nations that are opposed to the Spanish in identity terms and have wings seeking independence from the Spanish government. The "home nations" of Wales, Scotland, Northern Ireland and England play in a variety of formats that express their separatism as well as competing as part of Team GB (the brand name for the United Kingdom).¹²⁰ It is possible for the United Kingdom to be represented by its constituents because the home nations claimed status as independent governing bodies prior to the establishment of sporting rules of the sort that keep the Spanish nations united (David Gellner 2010: 34; see also Vaczi 2015). On a more local scale, *el Clásico* (*el Clàssic* in Catalan), a football match played between Spain's two largest cities, Madrid and Barcelona, is an often fiercely-fought derby in which Spanish centralism (Real Madrid) is confronted by Catalan separatism (FC Barcelona) (Vaczi 2013: 208-209). Major Israeli clubs, however, contest both their local and national identities. Israel is not unique in this respect: Serbian anthropologists Đorđević and Žikić (2016) show how football reflected the rifts, both internal and external, that affected the constituent nations comprising Yugoslavia in the late 1980s. Creating both local and national identities gives rise to multiple cleavages that need to be negotiated by the team involving

¹²⁰ For example, each fields its own national football team; England and Wales are part of the same cricket tournament, whereas Scotland is independent, and Northern Ireland plays with the Republic of Ireland. Northern Ireland also joins Ireland in rugby against a Wales-Scotland-England composite side. All four UK nations compete as Team GB for sports including cycling and figure skating.

questions of ethnicity, religion and nationalism. Carmeli and Bar (2003), Sorek (2007) and Alfasi et al. (2015) have all used the local identities forged through club football as anthropological (Carmeli and Bar) and sociological (Sorek and Alfasi) lenses through which to explore expressions of overall Israeliness. As sociologists writing on post-Soviet Slovenia, Topič and Coakley (2010: 378-383) present modern sport as having seven features that suggest it could have been designed for nationalism and internal divisions; these include an increasing interest in a pan-European identity, the commodification of culture and global flow of products, and constant media infiltration.

In Israel, these same features yield fairly rigid divisions among the fandoms of the state's major football federations. For example, Hapoel draws the majority of its support from more secular, left-wing and Ashkenazi Jews who support Palestinian sovereignty and advocate balancing strong social welfare with a market economy that is heavily oriented toward the United States. Beitar, on the other hand, draws support from more religious, right-wing Mizrahi Jews who generally oppose Palestinian statehood in favour of a strong military and Zionist traditions. Later in this chapter, I will explore several exceptions to these and other associations, all of which are clouded with a degree of suspicion.

I first became intrigued by the conflict between the club and the nation early in my research when I came across a photograph of a banner flown by supporters of Hapoel Tel Aviv during the 2001-2002 football season. Following a successful season that climaxed with appearances in the UEFA Champions League and playing AC Milan in the quarter-final of the UEFA Cup, Hapoel Tel Aviv attracted many new Israeli fans. The team's performance was the best of any Israeli team on the European circuit to date. However, until Hapoel's success in the Champions League, these new fans had identified with other clubs in Israel.

Original Hapoel Tel Aviv fans felt the newcomers were “fans of success” rather than true believers in the spirit of Hapoel. As a result, the original or “true” Hapoel fans created banners reading:

מייצגים את הפועל ולא את ישראל
([We] represent Hapoel and not Israel)

At later matches, Hapoel Ultras created a full club song around these words. In its heyday, supporting Hapoel would have been akin to supporting Israel. After all, as I will discuss below, its very *raison d'être* was to push the nascent state along a certain trajectory. Today, however, fans seem to identify first and foremost with their club. What is it about Hapoel that prevents it from representing the state whose foundation was the very reason for its inception in 1926? The answer is shrouded in the club's existence beyond football, among the remnants of a national and political ideology that its founders sought to establish in Eretz Israel. At the time of its development, Hapoel sought to create (and control) a niche in society, which it hoped would shape the development of the future Jewish state. Although the earlier political ties have since been fully severed, owners have changed, states have replaced mandates and Likud has replaced Labour, the ideological drive never fully lost its relevance. Hapoel was—and continues to be—defined as much by what it is as by what it is not. Each team defines itself in a Manichean “us versus them” dualism. Under the cover of this dualism, ethnic, religious and nationalist identities expressed locally, regionally and nationally are debated through football. In this regard, the professional football clubs are more dynamic than the national team in their construction of Israeliness, and indeed one of the more surprising findings emerging from fieldwork is that nationalism is most clearly defined among the clubs, not the national team. Therefore, the professional clubs are the focus in this chapter rather than the national team. The allegiance to clubs is so great that fans regularly boo players on the national team who do not belong to their home club. This goes

against a general assumption that the citizens of a country support their national team, a symbol of the nation. This idea is, perhaps, most clearly articulated in the work of the historian Eugen Weber. Weber's classic book on modernisation, *Peasants into Frenchmen* (1976) explains how the French Third Republic used various forces, including education, infrastructure and new economic structures, to develop a pan-French identity throughout the state's disparate regions. In Chapter 2, using scholarly and non-scholarly sources, such as those of Robert Whiting (1977, 1989, 2004), Klein (1991, 1993) and Galily et al. 2013, I discussed ways in which sport reflects nationalisms. From diplomacy to team uniforms, names to national anthems, philosophies to resistance, nationalism and sport are difficult to separate. The Israeli national team may represent the state on the international scene, but it seems that Israelis' identities are grounded within their local football clubs.

One might argue that the two primary cleavages in Israel explored through club football divide the state into Jewish-Israeli and Palestinian-Israeli factions (i.e. Jews and Arabs) and then, more locally among the former, into Ashkenazim and Mizrahim. Wrestling between these two situations also evokes questions concerning what it means to be Israeli, who is Jewish, how (and whether) Palestinians fit within the Israeli discourse, and who is able to make these decisions.¹²¹

Although the debate around the Palestinian question receives significant media attention, especially in light of the on-going conflict, my research found that much of this attention is secondary to its co-optation by the divisions navigated by Jewish sectarian debates. There has always been a Jewish bias in Israeli sport, largely stemming from the Zionist muscular movement and the development of Jewish sport federations independently of Palestinian ones in the Yishuv. Over fifty years following the initial founding of the

¹²¹ Outside of sport, these questions are tackled in broader works on nationalism, including Anthony Smith (1979, 1986), Benedict Anderson (1983), Ernest Gellner (1983), Hobsbawm and Ranger (1983) and Horowitz (1985).

Maccabi federation in 1912, Hassan Boustouni¹²² signed with one of its teams, Maccabi Haifa, and became the first Palestinian-Israeli to play in the top league in 1963. Although Palestinian-Israelis have formed an integral part of many top-performing teams for more than fifty years now, the stalwarts of the Beitar Jerusalem team, with their strong Jewish identity, continue to argue that football, and indeed Israel, is “no place for an Arab” (interview, March 2016, Hebrew). Palestinian football, both within the modern state of Israel and in the Occupied Territories, has a history very different from that of Jewish-Israeli football. Although I take a closer look at Palestinian football in the context of nationalism in a later section of this chapter, here I skim over a lot of its particularities to focus on its interaction within the Jewish-Israeli sphere.

A brief history of Israeli football in the context of Zionism

Based upon fan attendance, media coverage and opportunities for athletes, football is the most popular sport in Israel today (H. Kaufman and Galily 2008: 81). Despite its current popularity, the early history of the game in the region is vague and relatively undocumented (Halevi n.d.: 3-10). The first written account of a football match in Palestine was published in 1912 in the newspaper *Hacherut* (Naor 2002, H. Kaufman 2006). Although the *Hacherut* article only mentions football in passing, it indicates that the sport was included as part of that year’s Rehovot Games.¹²³ While football was a minor sport in Ottoman Palestine at the

¹²² Boustouni is the nephew of Rostam Boustouni, who, in 1951, became the first Palestinian-Israeli to represent a Zionist party (Mapam) in the Knesset.

¹²³ Initiated in 1908 during Pesach, athletes of Rehovot invited others, namely those from Jaffa, to compete in a multi-sport competition. Occurring six times in total (1908-1910, 1912-1914), the 1912 edition led to increased popular interest in the games due, possibly, to the presence of the HaShomer organisation, a paramilitary group that had been contracted to provide security. HaShomer, founded in 1909, was the first defence organisation to attempt to provide security for Jewish settlements in Palestine *en masse* until it was disbanded in 1920 and reorganised into the larger Haganah.

time, it was growing in popularity in Russia, with the formal founding of the Russian Football Union also in 1912. Therefore, it is quite possible that the sport travelled to Palestine with members of the Second Aliyah (1904-1914),¹²⁴ most of whom were Zionists from Russia. Another possibility is that it travelled to Palestine with missionary schools around the turn of the twentieth century. Football among (Quaker) missionary schools is attested to in the diaries of Khalil Totah. In a diary entry dated December 13, 1914, Totah reflects upon his childhood schooling in Ramallah. In particular, he notes that in the summer of 1902 his school, the Ramallah Friends Boys' School, rented buildings and a football field from the nearby Friends Girls' School after an earthquake damaged the Boys' School (Ricks 2009: 102; I. Khalidi 2014: 75). While football traces its natal roots to at least the decade prior to World War I, the sport flourished under post-war British influence.¹²⁵

Zionism and sport

As discussed in the introductory and theoretical chapters, one unifying feature of Zionism was its quest to recreate the Jewish body as a fortifiable phenomenon, reflecting both the strength of the nation and the alleged loss of neurosis associated with the ghetto Jew through anti-Semitism. Jewish-specific clubs predominantly arose in western and central Europe, where the Enlightenment and industrialisation were supported by the growth of a culture of the body, which had already been used to disseminate national values. Friedrich Ludwig Jahn, the father of the German gymnastics movement, the *Deutsche Turnerschaft*, saw physicality as a way to free Prussia from Napoleonic control and to build a core German identity. The Czech organisation *Sokol* (falcon) was founded in 1862 for a similar purpose, namely to develop and spread Czech nationalism during the Austro-Hungarian Empire

¹²⁴ *Aliyah*, a tenet of Zionism, is the immigration of Diaspora Jews to Eretz Israel.

¹²⁵ Non-Jewish teams also formed in Mandate Palestine. There were approximately twenty Arab teams in Palestine by 1930 (I. Khalidi 2014: 76), although these teams lacked the organisation enjoyed by the Zionists and did not develop large leagues. For the purpose of the present discussion, I am focusing on the Jewish teams.

(Dimond 2007), and the sports club even earned a colloquial reputation as the “Czech national army” (Nolte 2002: 62). While most of these clubs did not have official anti-Semitic policies,¹²⁶ many Jews felt more comfortable training in a Jewish environment (H. Kaufman 2005: 148). Likewise, Jewish clubs did not become exclusively Zionist until after World War I, being open to all Jews earlier. The first Jewish club in Europe, the *Israelitischer Turnverein*, was founded in Constantinople in 1895 and was followed by others, notably Plovdiv’s *Gibor* and Berlin’s *Bar Kochba*, which were formed in 1897 and 1898 respectively. These clubs gave rise to the wider Jewish Gymnastics Movement in 1903 (see H. Kaufman 2005: 148), and their names reinforced their purpose of fortifying the Jewish body.¹²⁷ Jewish clubs in eastern Europe and Russia (e.g. Łódź 1912, Odessa 1913, Warsaw 1914) developed later due to the delayed Enlightenment influence and fears of a potential Jewish uprising (Miller 2003).

Sport clubs developed in the Yishuv as well, where sport was harnessed to develop Jewish society—increased physical conditioning improved both military and labour performance. Although sport would soon be entangled in politics, the first clubs in the early twentieth century side-stepped such issues in order to avoid divisive topics like Zionism. According to the Tel Aviv Municipality Newsletter (1938: 116), during the early mandate the British chief of police encouraged Jews to become involved in sport in order to direct attention away from the region’s volatile politics. However, as organised sport gained a foothold during the British mandate, heavily influenced by the sportive British army, it began to be connected directly with politics. Maccabi, initially formed in 1912 and formally constituted as a club in 1921, was the primary sports club in the mandate until 1926, when Hapoel was established. Maccabi, like other sports clubs that followed, organised itself as a federation comprised of teams spread throughout Eretz Israel (e.g. Maccabi Tel Aviv,

¹²⁶ Some clubs in the Habsburg Empire had Aryan paragraphs in their charters, preventing Jewish participation.

¹²⁷ For example, *gibor* evokes a valiant and strong hero and Simon Bar Kochba led the Jews of Judea in the Third Jewish-Roman War of 132 C.E. (the Bar Kochba Revolt).

Maccabi Haifa; both to be discussed later in this chapter), and later, throughout the Diaspora. Maccabi therefore had teams throughout the region that could play each other, as well as teams representing the other federations. Prior to developing a sports wing in 1926, Hapoel had been founded in 1905 under the name “Hapoel Hatzair” as an A.D. Gordon-inspired political faction reflecting the communal demands of the socialist Zionists who would later back the labour union (C. Smith 2007: 38). As a result of competition from Hapoel, Maccabi, which had thus far remained apolitical, defined itself as what Hapoel was not: an organisation that trained individuals for personal goals and victories. Politically it turned right, toward the liberal centre. To members of Hapoel, this identified Maccabi as bourgeois (field notes, 2016, English and Hebrew), and some saw the formerly apolitical club as abandoning its Jewish roots and encouraging fascism because it did not prioritise the collective associated with the prevailing socialist and Zionist leadership of the time (*Hashomer Hatzair* 1935: 5-6 and *Hashomer Hatzair* 1936: 3, both cited in Helman 2007: 102; H. Kaufman 1998: 81-91). Letters from Maccabi to the Tel Aviv municipality, which I found in the Tel Aviv-Jaffa Municipal Archive, also find fault with Hapoel’s platform, citing Hapoel’s use of the socialist anthem, flag and symbols at its events,¹²⁸ as well as its integration of members of different social and economic classes.¹²⁹ These differences were firmly ventilated when Hapoel declined to participate in the first Maccabiah Games (see later in this chapter and in Chapter 6), hosted by Maccabi in 1932, believing that the multisport event would reinforce Maccabi’s political views while rejecting their own (*Hashomer Hatzair* 1936: 17, cited in Helman 2007: 103; Eisen 1979: 142, 148, 152).

¹²⁸ Letter from Maccabi to Tel Aviv (1926). 4/3830. Tel Aviv-Jaffa Municipal Archive, Tel Aviv.

¹²⁹ Letter from Maccabi to Tel Aviv (1926). 4/3828. Tel Aviv-Jaffa Municipal Archive, Tel Aviv.

Seeing each other as direct competition, a rivalry developed between the two that continues to this day (see H. Kaufman 2007 on their development). For much of their pre-statehood existence, the two had relatively equal stakes in the social fabric of the country. However, Hapoel, affiliated with the left-wing party Mapai, soon gained greater representation with the election of its member, David Ben-Gurion, as prime minister in 1948. In addition to Hapoel and Maccabi, two other major sporting associations developed during the mandate period, Beitar and Elitzur. Like Hapoel, they both began mainly as political movements (Reznik 2002: 160, 162).

Beitar was launched as a youth movement for the Revisionist Zionism Party (formed in 1923 in Riga by Ze'ev Jabotinsky). Revisionist Zionism argued for the recreation of ancient Israel and emphasised militarism, which led to members playing key roles in the Irgun and the national navy (C. Smith 2007: 122-123).¹³⁰ Although formed in 1939 as a social cover for youth in the Haganah, Elitzur soon became a stand-alone club affiliated with the Hapoel HaMizrachi religious Zionist movement.¹³¹ Inspired by the legacy of Rabbi Abraham Isaac Kook (1865-1935)¹³² and muscular Judaism, the club sought to instil spiritual drive and discipline in religious youth through physical training. None of the clubs was sport-specific, and all catered to a variety of athletic abilities (Simri and Paz 1978: 50-51). Competitive sport rarely happened outside of the auspices of one of these associations, and thus even the most informal and local event was performed against a partisan backdrop (Galnoor 1982: 340). Contests between teams from different federations often initiated additional off-field altercations, as supporters were influenced by the political allegiance of the competing clubs (Nevo 2000: 336).

¹³⁰ The Irgun was a Zionist paramilitary group that opposed the British Mandate between 1931 and 1948. It was part of Haganah and was absorbed into the Israel Defense Forces at the beginning of the 1948 Arab-Israeli War.

¹³¹ A predecessor of the National Religious Party and today's Jewish Home Party (right-wing, religious Zionist). Not connected with Hapoel Hatzair.

¹³² HaRav Kook was the first Ashkenazi chief rabbi of Mandate Palestine and founder of Mercaz HaRav Kook, a prominent *yeshiva* in Jerusalem.

Externally, these clubs promoted Zionism as some form of cultural autonomy and strengthened the Yishuv's international ties with the Diaspora. This politicisation of sport within Israel mirrored similar developments elsewhere in Europe, which helped the organisations forge foreign ties. In 1927, for instance, Hapoel joined the *Sozialistische Arbeitersport Internationale* (SASI), an international labour union sports programme, which had developed in 1920 as an alternative to the modern Olympics, which was believed to be too bourgeois and chauvinistic (Wheeler 1978: 200).¹³³ Internally, the competition among all the clubs brewed sectarianism that reflected schisms throughout the territory. Not simply responsible for sport, the political parties associated with these federations also supplied their members with housing, medical services, education, leisure activities, building societies, employment services and newspapers, especially the latter, which provided platforms for party propaganda (Nevo 2000: 335; Galnoor 1982: 58-59).

In addition to sport's ability to revitalise the Jewish body, there are other reasons for it being a preferred Zionist activity. Sport, as well as other programmes considered to adhere to the nationalist agenda (e.g. Hebrew classes), received government subsidies and lower tax rates. For example, sporting events were subject to 0.02%-5% taxation, whereas non-subsidised leisure activities, such as films and dances, were subject to an "entertainment" tax of 18%-22%.¹³⁴ Thus, not only did sport support the national agenda, it was also one of the more affordable forms of amusement. Sport also fed the fledgling economy. It provided employment through coaching and managerial positions. Teams required sporting venues, equipment and uniforms, all of which could be locally manufactured, providing both start-up

¹³³ Despite joining SASI in 1927, Hapoel failed to gain the international support enjoyed by Maccabi. Haim Kaufman (2007: 562) cites two contrasting reasons for this: one is that Maccabi, having established its own international network, did not wish to cede any foreign domain to Hapoel. The other was that Hapoel did not want to be seen as having been absorbed into the Maccabi framework by interacting within the apparently similar spheres.

¹³⁴ "Letter from Mayor Bloch to Maccabi" (1926, December 27). 4/3828. Tel Aviv-Jaffa Municipal Archive, Tel Aviv; "Entertainment tax list" (1937). 4/3457. Tel Aviv-Jaffa Municipal Archive, Tel Aviv.

and maintenance jobs. Furthermore, with the branding of items and media attention, tournaments provided sponsors with a plethora of advertising opportunities (Maccabiah newsletter, 1932).¹³⁵

Financially the four federations, each comprising teams spread around the mandate, were mostly supported by their respective political parties, who saw it in their interests to target youth. In this respect, the clubs became political stepping stones for politicians seeking youth engagement in their parties. Through their political links, clubs gained stability because unwavering political undertones and social coercion prevented members from switching between them. Although sport did receive basic public local and state funding in the form of government subsidies, financial incentives from political parties were significant enough for the latter to retain a political monopoly on sport and prevent non-partisan teams from developing (Nevo 2000: 337).

The British were known for weaving their culture into the fabric of their foreign colonies. Sports such as hockey, rugby and cricket—as well as football—were adopted in many British protectorates, with some contemporary sporting matches retaining these colonial links, including the Ashes and the Commonwealth Games. Not only did the British aspire to spread their system of education and values through sport, but British sport also represented the empire's alleged greater social systems and was demonstrative of its self-ascribed national superiority of the British (e.g. Kirk et al. 1996; see Chapter 2). According to Harif and Galily (2003: 41). The sense of British pre-eminence was further reinforced through the refusal of the British forces to participate in locally organised Jewish sport and their resulting insistence on creating their own leagues. However, apart from football, none of the other British sports—nor indeed much of British culture—gained a lasting foothold in Palestine despite nearly thirty years of mandate control. One might suggest, along with Harif

¹³⁵ “Maccabiah newsletter 16” (1932, February 24). 4/3828. Tel Aviv-Jaffa Municipal Archive, Tel Aviv.

and Galily (2003: 45), that it was the introduction of football as a competitive sport, rather than as a non-competitive exercise—and indeed one largely replacing the earlier gymnastics movement associated with muscular Judaism—that resulted most from British influence (2003: 45).¹³⁶ However, to account for the lack of overall British influence in contemporary sport, my assumption is that the Zionist zealots rejected the very idea of it out of a fear of compromising their own nationalist aspirations. Furthermore, Sorek (2009: 1066) adds that Israeli football need not be interpreted as an aspect of British culture, but rather of modernity. In this sense, he compares it to post-colonial cricket in India (Appadurai 1995) and football in Egypt (Di-Capua 2004) and Zimbabwe (Stuart 1996). One should also heed the nature of mandate rule as a temporary arrangement following the 1920 San Remo Agreement until the mandate territory developed home rule, as well as the degree to which Britain invested in colonial activities.

While the British forces and Jewish teams co-organised football matches, relations between them were not warm. Games were cloaked with allegations of cheating, which led to violence among supporters during matches (Harif and Galily 2003: 47). After an escalation of rancour between the two sides following the release of the 1930 Passfield White Paper,¹³⁷ the third High Commissioner, John Chancellor, prevented the two teams from playing each other. Following a reduction of British troops, some games between the two sides were reinstated in 1932, and the British were fully reintegrated into the mandate league by 1938 (Harif and Galily 2003: 47). One reason for this sporting rapprochement may have been a political attempt to endear the British to the Zionist cause, especially regarding immigration quotas. Despite the 1930 White Paper and subsequent MacDonald Letter (1931) curtailing Jewish

¹³⁶ Halevi (n.d.), Shavit and Bigger (1982), Harif and Galily (2003), Mangold (2016a) and Mangold (2016b) provide perspectives on British contributions to the development of football in Palestine, and the relations between the British forces teams and those of Jewish and Arab-Palestinian clubs.

¹³⁷ The White Paper sought to limit Jewish immigration to Palestine further, accusing Zionist foundations, such as the Jewish Agency and the Histadrut, of causing damage to the economic infrastructure of the Arab-Palestinian population.

migration to Palestine, Jewish settlement continued at rates higher than the British law permitted. By 1936, the Arab-Palestinians began rising up against what they saw as uncontrolled Jewish immigration. Perl suggests that the Zionist paramilitary unit Irgun may have enabled more than 40,000 Jews to immigrate unbeknownst to the British between 1937 and 1944 (1983: 1). Nachem Chet, a Maccabi leader, argued that, in the Arab revolt, in improving relations between the Zionists and the remaining British soldiers, it was necessary to ensure that the land claimed by the Jews would be defended as such.¹³⁸ Football was, Chet reckons, perhaps the only shared interest between the Jews and the British, and thus it became an ideal vehicle for improving relations and was used as such until the termination of the mandate.

The privatisation of sports federations

Inflation, which had hit 40% under the Labour Party in 1976 following the 1973 oil crisis after the Yom Kippur War, accelerated under the newly-elected Likud government (1977), which sought to develop a free-market economy. Following the 1983 Israeli bank stock crisis, inflation peaked at nearly 500% in 1985 (see Bruno and Minford 1986; Bruno was the chief economist behind the 1985 bank stabilisation plan. The bank crisis and its social impacts are further discussed in Rivlin 2010: Ch. 3). With Israel verging on economic collapse, the Likud adopted a series of anti-inflation measures, which developed the private economic sector while reducing government involvement.¹³⁹ This economic shift produced ripple effects throughout various social institutions, including the sports federations, which had been previously supported under the Labour government. Following Israel's independence, sporting organisations had a smaller role as political feeder movements than

¹³⁸ A Letter from Chet to Col. Kisch (28 September 1936). S25/3376, p. 3. The Central Zionist Archive, Jerusalem.

¹³⁹ Zilberfarb (2005) argues that the transition from a socialist economy to a free market one was dictated by economic pragmatism stemming from uncontrolled inflation, rather than being affected by ideological differences between Labour and Likud.

they had had during the early mandate years (Ben-Porat 2012: 450), but they were still largely financed through government public-interest funding and party donations. In the early 1970s, this support covered 75% of the costs for premier league clubs, and members covered the deficit through subscription fees. At the same time, the pressure increased to find more money to professionalise the clubs in the hope of increasing their competitiveness on the global circuit (Ben-Porat 2012: 452). Professionalisation could yield a deeper athlete pool, as star performers from different teams would be available to play for all teams, rather than only those affiliated with a particular federation. As the competitiveness of the Israeli teams increased on the international stage, success and finances took priority over the ideological values that had previously defined them.

In the 1980s, following protests regarding membership fees, a Jewish cycling team formed an independent club. It petitioned the Supreme Court to receive government funding in proportion to what was awarded to the politically governed clubs. The court found that state funding should be divided equally, a move that “challenged the monopoly of the partisan federations” (E. Levy 1996).¹⁴⁰ At the same time, increased media coverage provided new funding opportunities and enabled the organisations to emerge from their political umbrellas. As a result, supporters and players no longer had politically-based allegiances to particular teams (Nevo 2000: 339).

The loosening of political association shifted sports federations from being ideological bastions to being motivated by money and convenience. Clubs began to draw upon nearby communities, creating a membership that was geographically, not politically, contiguous. Overall, this resulted in the need for fewer clubs, producing stronger teams and

¹⁴⁰ There had always been non-politically-based sport associations, though these primarily oversaw non-Olympic sports, such as cricket, bowling and skiing. These associations were especially popular among non-Jewish athletes because they could participate in the sport without being politically active in support of the Jewish-led government (Galnoor 1982: 349).

more support: funding from the local authority was no longer divided among as many different clubs, the athlete pool was larger (providing each team with more top athletes) and the local fan base was consolidated (Nevo 2000: 340).

Pressures from the Likud's new economic platform and the clubs' interest in professionalism forced the more leftist sports programmes to undergo privatisation, a process that also affected other Labour-related and socialist organisations, such as the kibbutz movement. Political parties were also weary of the teams' financial failures reflecting upon them (see Ofek 1997). The liberal-backed Maccabi organisation was the first to lose government support, a process accelerated by the formal dissolution of the Liberal Party in 1988. Without official political ties, Maccabi teams could appeal to other sponsors more than other premier league teams. Beginning with Maccabi Haifa in 1993, all Maccabi teams underwent privatisation, giving them financial security on a par with the best in Europe (see Havron 1992: 314-320). In short, this process transferred the ownership of the club from the state to individuals, largely businessmen more interested in maximising profit than in ideology.¹⁴¹ Over the next eight years, all but two Premier League clubs would be privatised (Ben-Porat 2012: 453), although legally the owners only acquired managerial rights due to the non-transferable status of the clubs as non-profit organisations (ibid.). Using a case study on Maccabi Tel Aviv, Galily et al. (2011) show that privatisation drastically altered the dynamics between the owners and the fans as each fought for representation. Although sports teams on the surface, these clubs were very much social clubs, and fans associated with them in order to have access to particular social groups. Compared with other clubs, Maccabi teams tended to draw membership from more prosperous and permissive communities.

Therefore, despite losing public support with the disbanding of the Liberal Party, the

¹⁴¹ For example, Beitar Tel Aviv briefly joined Hapoel Tel Aviv. Hapoel, which had associated with the local Histadrut workers' union, was bought by an international business group. It was briefly managed by Eli Tabib, who would leave the club to manage Beitar Jerusalem. Beitar Jerusalem was purchased initially by Gad Ze'evi, a Labour-backing kibbutznik. Arkadi Gaydamak bankrolled both Beitar Jerusalem and its ideological arch-rival, Bnei Sakhnin, which had itself been the product of a Hapoel-Maccabi merger in 1991.

federation was able to benefit from this affluence and divergent ideology to attract non-partisan sponsorship that was otherwise not available to the still government-backed clubs (Nevo 2000: 341). Gradually privatisation took over the entire social sphere, and all clubs saw a decline in government subsidies. As a result of the new reliance upon commodification for survival, sports federations that had sponsored teams in a variety of sports were forced to focus on more profitable sports, such as football. Sports like football encourage fan involvement, which, through media, merchandising and ticket sales, enables clubs to draw funding from non-players. This external revenue means that less emphasis is placed on social activities and sports that possess little economic interest, such as boxing—which, ironically, was among the very sports initially targeted by muscular Judaism.

Today, teams representing Maccabi, Hapoel, Beitar and Elitzur persist because they were too connected with politics internally to be able to reconfigure the entire social-athletic infrastructure. Their names, however, now reflect a historical association rather than a contemporary political allegiance. Maccabi Tel Aviv's basketball team has won six European titles and five Euroleague championships, which makes it one of the most successful basketball teams in Europe and a source of pride for all of Israel. The team's success has framed national consciousness and cultural nationalism (Galily and Ben-Porat 2013: 19).

Investigating football

Although some independent clubs have arisen, with the exception of Elitzur,¹⁴² teams representing Maccabi, Hapoel and Beitar federations still maintain a monopoly in Israeli football—indeed, only one team in the top two leagues during the 2016-2017 season was not

¹⁴² Elitzur does not sponsor a top-flight football team because of religious prohibitions against participation on Shabbat.

affiliated with one of these federations. The Israel Football Association involves 238 clubs grouped into sixteen divisions in five leagues. Teams are seeded within the leagues based upon performance and are subjected to relegation and promotion based on points accumulated at the conclusion of each season. The highest tier, the Israeli Premier League, thus holds contests between the fourteen highest performing clubs in a given year and is where national identity is debated under the scrutiny of media, fans and Europe. Premier League teams play thirty-three to thirty-six games between August and May depending on rank, five of which on average overlap with Shabbat. Teams share Shabbat games equally, removing any disadvantage for teams with observant players who might opt not to participate in a game on Shabbat. The overall winner of the Premier League at the end of the season is named Israeli champion and moves to the second qualifying round of the UEFA Champions League. The next two or three teams contest the second qualifying round for the UEFA Europa Cup League.

While Israeli football is highly religious and political, Shabbat competitions remain beyond the limits of religious influence on the sport. Games have taken place on Shabbat since the inception of the state because it was a day during which people would otherwise not be at work and thus were available to attend games. Despite this history, the religious right continues to contest the practice, most recently in 2015, condemning it as against Jewish tradition. After passing by one vote in March 2018, the law preventing work on Shabbat was again waived for those employed within football, as it is for essential services (hospitality,

security, medicine, etc.).¹⁴³ As a result of the religious protests, football employees (players, coaches, managers, vendors, etc.) who work on Shabbat are now entitled to remuneration and an additional day off.¹⁴⁴

Between 2014 and 2017, I followed three professional Israeli club teams in Ligat ha-Al, the Israeli Premier League: Beitar Jerusalem, Maccabi Tel Aviv and Hapoel Tel Aviv. Along with Maccabi Haifa, these three teams are known as the “Big Four” because they are the only teams to have contested each season in the premier league since the league’s inception in 1999.¹⁴⁵ Additionally, I have done more recent research on a fourth team, Bnei Sakhnin, which joined the premier league in 2003. Each of these teams was chosen for its potential contributions to discussions of Israeli nationalism. Beitar Jerusalem stands out among all of Israel’s clubs as having a very marked conservative, nationalist ideology. Hapoel Tel Aviv and Maccabi Tel Aviv, on the other hand, have one of the biggest established rivalries in Israeli sport, highlighted throughout each season with Tel Aviv derbies. However, while the two share a home stadium, they draw on different fan-bases, which enables me to understand some of the intricacies of locally defined nationalisms. Bnei Sakhnin, although not one of the clubs I originally studied, stands out as the only Palestinian-Israeli team currently in the premier league. Matches between Bnei Sakhnin and Beitar Jerusalem are often accompanied by some of the most violent clashes among fans due to their ideological differences. The increased tensions between these two teams are not surprising. Researching fusion-driven violence and retaliatory behaviour among Israeli Jews as directed toward Palestinians during the Intifada of the Individuals (see pages 87), Fredman et al.

¹⁴³ Ministry of Labor, Social Affairs and Social Services (25 March 2018). “Final Soccer Matches will be Held on Saturday: Minister of Labor and Social Affairs Haim Katz Signed a General Permit for the Football Industry”. Accessed 17 August 2018 from <http://www.molsa.gov.il/Dover/Pages/NewsPage.aspx?ListID=76c73ffb-5c7e-40f4-bdc1-20a68f9aa9e8&WebId=57bafbcd-ffba-4897-85eb-c3379813c505&ItemID=866>

¹⁴⁴ Ibid.

¹⁴⁵ Hapoel Tel Aviv was relegated to Liga Leumit, the second tier, for the 2017-2018 season following a deduction of points after entering administration in December 2016. After one season playing in Liga Leumit, Hapoel Tel Aviv was promoted back up to the Premier League for the 2018-2019 season.

(2017) conclude that fusion-driven violence (undertaken to “protect” the group, see Swann et al. 2012 and Newson 2017) escalates when it occurs between groups that see themselves as diametrically opposed to each other. Ultimately, these four teams were chosen because they repeatedly arose in football discussions as key teams, and I found them used as markers for different groups of people, and even synonymously or euphemistically for political parties.

As noted in Chapter 3, my research on the football teams involved watching seven matches, both in person and on television, and either in Tel Aviv sports bars or alone while participating in online fan organisations. Additionally, I used club and municipal archives¹⁴⁶ and conducted interviews. My primary interest in watching the games was to observe the behaviour of those involved, both fans and players. As a result, the games chosen were selected because they featured the teams on which I am focusing. Some of my interviews targeted self-described sports fans, whether in stadium stands, at sports bars, meetings around town or through online football fan forums. Other interviews involved people who did not identify as followers of any team. Together, these two groups of people help me understand how the clubs extend their influence outside their immediate domains and reflect membership in social circles, political organisations and economic strata. For each team, I sought to understand its relevance within the historical and present-day political landscape, some of which was discussed in Chapter 1. Analysing these connections led me to realise that aspects of their earlier political ideology have become fossilised within their modern team philosophies. Given that teams have been purchased and sold without respect to federation association (see footnote 141), I show how this fossilisation is largely fan-driven and directed in opposition to other teams as part of an overall contest within Israeli Judaism. Although it played a lesser role in my fieldwork in 2016, I did additional research on Bnei Sakhnin in

¹⁴⁶ Maccabi (Pierre Gildesgame Maccabi Museum, Ramat Gan), Hapoel (Levon Institute, Tel Aviv) and Beitar (Jabotinsky Institute, Tel Aviv). I also spent several days at the Zvi Nishri archive at the Wingate Institute, Netanya, which was especially useful for early club history (as well as Zionist sport in general), as were the Tel Aviv-Jaffa Municipal Archive in central Tel Aviv and the Central Zionist Archive in Jerusalem.

2017. Through literature and interviews, I have come to understand how football creates a recognised entry point into Jewish-Israeli culture for Palestinians, although one that may compromise one's Palestinian identity. In this capacity, Bnei Sakhnin highlights issues with normalisation within Israeli football and also underscores the Judeo-national role that football plays within Israeli culture as a whole.

Fan culture

Unlike the relatively open participatory nature of sporting activity discussed in the previous chapter, opportunities for the involvement of non-contracted players within Israel's professional football leagues are generally limited to spectatorship. As already indicated in this chapter, fandoms play an integral role in club identity. Having adopted *de facto* ownership, they exert leverage over their teams' ideological trajectories. These connections are linked to wider elements within modern Israeli culture, as fans of different clubs often draw on disparate socioeconomic statuses, educational backgrounds, political factions, vocations and family values.¹⁴⁷ With little space to challenge norms, the teams absorb and reflect the political, national and ethnic identities of their local supporters and share these with opposing teams, creating a secondary battle in the stands above the playing field (field notes, 2016). Whereas players and staff may attract personal fans, teams are overwhelmingly commodities (field notes, 2016). This is not to deny players personal ideologies but, especially following the professionalisation of the leagues, players are bought, sold, traded and exchanged between teams, usually through decisions made by coaches and managers,

¹⁴⁷ For the players, there is more of a disconnect between identity and team belonging. For the Israel Football Association sport is a potentially lucrative business, and Israel's professional football players are economic opportunities, bought and sold as their stock increases and decreases. This is a common professional sport practice and is not unique to Israel. While some Israeli athletes take part in a club's youth league and continue to seek senior squad positions within the same club, individual athletes rarely have the opportunity to choose the team for which they play. Israeli Premier League teams are also allowed to field up to six foreign players, most of whom have little interest in the Israeli sport system beyond their pay check.

which frequently transgress federation and ideological boundaries in the process. This means that players do not always play for teams they would otherwise support. Spectators, on the other hand, rarely change teams.

Today, this association with one's local team is strong enough that, even when individuals move to new cities, they continue to support the team of their birthplace. Viktor, 36, a recent *oleh*¹⁴⁸ from Russia, told me, "You know that saying about the two constants in life being your mother and your football team? Truer in Israel than anywhere else" (Russian). I did not know the expression, but I understood the sentiment. Miriam, 71, a retired Jewish linguist, says that her team, Hapoel Tel Aviv, has been a constant companion: "I moved across the country—I even moved across the world to Los Angeles! I changed careers. I married, divorced, I remarried. I lost all my savings, but I never lost my team. I am Hapoel. I now live in Tel Aviv again and travel around the country to watch Hapoel Tel Aviv play; they remind me who I am" (Russian).

Like football teams around the world, each team has its casual supporters, those who attend football matches for pleasure or to express local pride. Each team, however, also has a core group of ardent fans who define the culture of the club and have come to play an integral role within its political structure. The core groups affiliated with many clubs self-title themselves "Ultras" (a common name used by extreme fan clubs around the world, short for "ultra-fanatic"). In one key exception, Beitar Jerusalem's extreme fan-base is known as "La Familia".

Much like how Faure's Team USA experienced a sense of Durkheimian collective effervescence ([1912] 1954) and used their performances routinely to prove their value as contributing members of Team USA (see footnote 48), membership in an Ultra club can be similarly likened to collective effervescence. In this case, Ultras need to continually reaffirm

¹⁴⁸ A Jew who makes *Aliyah* (see footnote 124).

their commitment to the club. This may be done in a variety of ways, from actively participating in club activities (especially if it is criminal or dangerous) to voting in elections for candidates chosen by the most senior hooligan (field notes 2017). Some Ultra fan groups have formalised contracts laying down rules of membership, whereas other Ultra groups are organised more informally.

Some of the Ultras with whom I spoke said that jail time, divorces and legal issues were all perfectly justifiable consequences of belonging to a club. I spoke with three former Ultras, all of whom were appalled in hindsight at how they had damaged relationships and careers in order to be accepted as football fans. This hints at potential applications of [E]SIM (Reicher 1996) or labelling theory (Becker [1963] 1973) in which individuals behave according to the accepted norms of the category in which they are placed. These consequences of participation, accepted without pause, also show the primacy of club identity in the Ultras' lives. Questioning the club's motives or refusing to participate in some event are grounds for ostracism and dismissal. Ultras who leave of their own accord may be considered traitors, and some have received death threats (interview, July 2017).

Although some fans identified themselves to me as "fringe" Ultras, they were not accepted by fully-fledged members. One might posit from Bourdieu (1977: 105) that fans derive honour from engaging with those whom they consider to be equal in status. In this light, some Ultras make an effort not to engage with non-Ultras, even picking fights with or stealing from those whom they suspect to be "wannabes" in order to maintain the status differential (field notes, 2017). These so called "fringe" members may wave provocative banners at games, dress in team jerseys and participate in Ultra-led choruses, but they are not allowed access to the Ultra gates in the stadia. They are also not joined by other Ultras if, for instance, they initiate a song. Some may openly engage in more extreme Ultra-specific activity, such as vandalism, throwing fire bombs to disrupt play or storming the field, in order

to be, as it were, scouted by an Ultra club. The socio-political ties separating the different teams in Israel, especially historically, mean that established Ultras do not mix with Ultras from other clubs, a practice that also happens elsewhere in the world (field notes, 2017).

In my discussions with football fans, both Ultras and more casual supporters, I identified several recurring themes. The first was what seemed to be an intimate association between fans and teams that was described as a sense of ownership and of core identity (field notes, 2016). This association with ownership suggests some level of uniqueness among Israeli football fans. Pilz and Wölki-Schumacher find that many Ultra groups in other countries remain outside club politics, only engaging as necessary to confer about matters that could potentially affect the game, such as the use of stadium space, songs and pyrotechnics (2010: 14). In March 2016, while visiting Bloomfield Stadium, Hapoel Tel Aviv's home in northern Jaffa, I asked one Ultra, Avner, 67, a Tel Aviv-born Jew now living in the southern Israeli city of Sderot, whether Hapoel Tel Aviv represents Israel on the international circuit. Although I expected an answer cloaked in ideology, as I had heard earlier with respect to the "[We] represent Hapoel and not Israel" banner, Avner believes the biggest issue with having a team like Hapoel represent Israel is that the club is identified with a set group of individuals, even if the individuals all adhere to a shared belief system. The team is a stand-in for its supporters, and thus is not reflective of the state at large.

"Hapoel, they represent us, the fans—*their* fans. A Hapoel team, no matter where they play, they don't represent Israel. I mean, if they win the [Premier] League, they become the [Champions League] team from Israel, but that doesn't mean they represent the country. It's not alright to cheer for them unless you are one of us" (Avner, Hebrew). These statements not only highlight the influence fans can have on the political trajectories of their teams but also the degree to which fans see themselves as having unsolicited ownership of their chosen teams. Arik, 65, an Ashkenazi Jew from Herzliyya near Tel Aviv, for example, described his

ownership status with Maccabi Tel Aviv as a “mutual relationship”. He explained this “mutual relationship” in the following way: “I don’t go to the game to support my home team, it’s the other way around—they play in order to give me something to do. They have to do that, they owe it to people like me, they have to show their fans they care” (English).

Abigail, 34, and her husband Iddo, 33, both also Ashkenazi Jews from Herzliyya, had similar reactions concerning their expectations of the team players’ obligations and allegiance toward their fans. Abigail believes her cohort of Hapoel Tel Aviv fans strongly feel a sense of ownership but keep it relatively quiet “out of respect for the team”. She says she periodically writes to the managerial staff about the team, her letters including as much praise as “suggestions for improvements”. “We work together,” Abigail says. “Obviously, because it’s our team, they have to keep us happy. We control them, they don’t want to lose their fans, and they know we could go support another team, whereas they can’t just play elsewhere. We respect them too, but really they don’t want to lose us, so they listen.” Upon my pressing her further, Abigail said she probably would still stay a fan of Hapoel Tel Aviv even if she disagreed with the direction of the team: “I’d like to think I could go to another team, but could I really? I don’t know how” (English). Iddo had a similar view: “Of course I threaten to leave, but I know in my heart I couldn’t. It would be like divorcing my mother. I know she’s sometimes wrong, and I try to help, but I wouldn’t just leave her. In the same way, I want to influence Hapoel, but I’d be lost without it. Actually, I think I care more about the team when I don’t agree with them or when they lose” (English). These further responses from Abigail and Iddo regarding whether they felt able to leave Hapoel reminded me of what the friend of my early British colleague had said about the durability of team bonds among football fans in Israel compared with those of fans in America (page 97).

As I would discover repeatedly, and will explore later in this chapter, for ardent supporters, association with a football team cannot be manipulated and changed very easily. Iddo's last point about feeling increasingly connected to Hapoel Tel Aviv when there is some dissatisfaction or poor performance is reminiscent of Whitehouse et al.'s (2017) work on football fan dysphoria as a mechanism for strengthening team bonds. Using quantitative models as part of a cognitive anthropology study, Whitehouse et al. looked, in part, at the social experiences of defeat among fans of English Premier League teams and concluded that dysphoria associated with defeat was also correlated with increased social bonds. Although my fieldwork ended at the beginning of Hapoel Tel Aviv's relegation to the second league (see footnote 145), I did follow up interviews with several dedicated Ultra supporters who did not think that many "real" Hapoel Tel Aviv fans would give up on the team in order to continue to be associated with the Premier League. Instead the Ultras believed that their job became one of "taking the reins and rallying the team back to its proper place". Part of "rallying" could include using the "force of the Ultras" to renegotiate the team's management (interviews, October 2017, English and Hebrew).

While supporters of all teams identified with some element of ownership, the most volatile assertions of ownership came, perhaps unsurprisingly, from Beitar fans. Shlomi, 33, a Mizrahi Jew who is an eleven-year "lifelong member" of La Familia, explained his role to me in a way that seemed more emotive than I expected of ownership and struck me as reminiscent of patronage or possession: "It's my team. Owner-shmowner, he's just the one getting paid. In reality it's my team, and if I don't like something, obviously they'll get the message loud and clear! It's my team" (English). As already indicated in this chapter, this avowed ownership or patronage of to a chosen team is met by the expectations of reciprocal obligations by that team to meet its fans' needs. On the topic of ownership, another Mizrahi Beitar fan, Levi, 27, added, "We've walked out, we've thrown fire bombs, we've burnt the

club house. We're not against killing the coach and maybe bad players if we don't like them. The managers are afraid of us because we follow through, so even if it's not official, we're the ones who call the shots, we get our way." "When Itzik [Korenfein, General Manager] announced we'd be getting two Muslims, I told that *ben zona* [son of a bitch] that I'd be first in line to rape his daughter, that *manyak* [bastard]" (interview, February 2016, Hebrew).¹⁴⁹

In fact, however, the clubs discussed here are not ones over which fans have legal ownership, usually as part of a collective, as is found elsewhere in the world (Argentinian law, for instance, requires all professional football teams to be non-profit organisations owned by their constituencies). There are several teams in Israel that are actually legally fan-owned, two of which are so-called "protest" clubs discussed elsewhere in this thesis, Hapoel Katamon Jerusalem and Beitar Nordia Jerusalem (see Chapter 4 and footnote 159; see also Ha-Ilan 2017). In both cases, these second clubs were formed by fans who had previously been associated with other clubs but had become dissatisfied with issues involving those clubs such as racism and violence. Although the remaining supporters and management saw them as disloyal defectors (field notes, 2017), the collective owners were able to use the new clubs to create a "protected space" in which authenticity and "genuine fandom"¹⁵⁰ are continually reaffirmed by the current membership (Ha-Ilan 2017: 10). This reaffirmation of belonging as fluid diverges from Avner's perspective (above) that the identity of the clubs is relatively stable. In both cases, however, the fans see the clubs as uniquely reflective of their belonging in the state.

¹⁴⁹ Of note, Korenfein became general manager for Beitar Jerusalem following a twelve-year tenure (six as captain) as a well-liked goalkeeper for the club (1995-2007).

¹⁵⁰ "Genuine fandom" refers to supporting the team in a positive manner and typically eschewing the racism and violence that has become associated with Ultra support among the other teams (field notes, 2016, English).

Expressions of nationalism

Similar sentiments regarding ownership involved fitting identity within a larger, national sphere. Avner's daughter Sara, 23, also a Hapoel fan from Sderot, said: "For example, if Maccabi were to play Chelsea, you might think I'd cheer for Maccabi because they're Israeli, right? But actually, I'd cheer for England because they're not Maccabi. Maccabi might be from my country, but they are not from me. We have nothing in common" (Hebrew). This same sentiment was expressed by Emi, 65, of Petah Tikva, just east of Tel Aviv: "I cheer for Hapoel. And also for whomever competes against the enemy, Maccabi" (Hebrew). Another Hapoel Tel Aviv fan, Yaakov, 45 and a Tel Aviv-born Ashkenazi Jew, summarised his relationship with Hapoel Tel Aviv by saying, "I love my team. I don't say 'my team' just because it's my local team. No, seriously, it is my team, it represents me. It's my team. I feel some sense of responsibility" (English). Yaakov was unique among the Hapoel fans I encountered for feeling responsibility for the team's development. This idea was expressed more freely by Beitar Jerusalem fans. Unlike Hapoel's, however, the fans of Beitar Jerusalem, La Familia in particular, frequently challenge the team's official management. Upon asking Yaakov what he meant by "responsibility", he mentioned sharing his latest political views with others, making banners ("polite ones only") and making certain he attends every single game (interview, February 2016, Hebrew). David, 18, an Ashkenazi Jew and Maccabi "wannabe-Ultra", also puts himself in the driver's seat of what he considers to be an opportunity to strengthen the country through his allegiance with Maccabi. Consistent with the comments above, David's claim to "strengthen the country" should not be read as a suggestion that national identity comes before club identity. Instead, he sees a Maccabi identity as one that feeds into his imagined identity for the state. David and his parents were all born after the Likud came to power in 1977, not long before Maccabi began

to lose its funding and pursue privatisation, something which David feels actually strengthens the political potential of the club, as it can operate independently from the government. “Just like how Beitar fans see their team as the underdog challenging established norms—getting the Mizrahi voice heard and not wanting Arabs here. I want to be an Ultra so that I can organise us like La Familia, because they get their voice heard and get respect. I want to do what I can so we get that too” (interview, March 2016, Hebrew). More involved than Yaakov, David saw his tasks ahead as “making sure [his] voice is heard at every single game” and participating in as many club activities as possible. He mentioned attending open practices as well as games (sometimes skipping school to do so), baiting online fan forums with gossip and crashing bars during Hapoel Tel Aviv games. “I’m a Maccabi Tel Aviv fan,” says Orit, 37; “it makes me feel like a real Jew, a real Israeli Jew. It gives me a sense of responsibility to make sure my team keeps making me feel that way.” For now, Orit says that just attending the periodic game (she attended four in the previous season) is enough to rekindle her sense of belonging without further action. “I sit down, hear the roar of the fans near me, and yes, I think this is where I’m meant to be. It’s like pressing ‘reset’.”

When I asked Orit a similar question regarding whether Maccabi could represent Israel on the international stage, her answer elucidated the distinction between a sports team and a more exclusive social fixture (Orit does not self-identify as an Ultra). “I actually don’t really care about football. I love my team and go to their games because they make me feel good about myself as a person. I like the lifestyle, I’m one of the guys,¹⁵¹ we all kinda think the same and want the same things in life. It’s not about the football; for that, well, if you just want to watch football, I’d recommend the national team” (interview, March 2016, Hebrew). The only team whose members felt strongly about it having the capacity to represent Israel

¹⁵¹ By her use of “one of the guys”, I am assuming Orit is referring to a sense of feeling socially “cool”. She had previously commented that associating with a football team is a fashionable way of forming an identity.

was Beitar Jerusalem. As the club's La Familia is a predominantly male cohort,¹⁵² I did not have full access to it and had to acquire entry through social networking. One member of La Familia said that the club has the potential to represent Israel. "It epitomises Israel in its purest form. It will be a wonderful day when Beitar is a true reflection of the state" (field notes, 2016, Hebrew).

While someone like Orit was relatively vague about what she needs from her teams, Yossi, 32, a Mizrahi member of La Familia, left little unspoken. "My team, Beitar, tried a few Muslims. They weren't even Arab, they were from Chechnya and Nigeria, but darn straight did we refuse! We let them know! La Familia can't have dirty Muslims. We'll enforce purity if the club can't. We'll dictate club rules." Through his day job, investing in Israeli settlements in Palestine, Yossi believes he "know[s] the dangers of living with Arabs" and says his goal is "to use Beitar as a mechanism of community service to return Israel to being a pure, Jewish state" (interview, March 2016, Hebrew). Relations with Muslims and Palestinians were a main talking point for Beitar fans, as if their status as never having signed a Palestinian-Israeli to their team was immediately under threat. Related themes, including Jewish settlements in the Occupied West Bank, were also prominent. Yet, while Maccabi and Hapoel seemed more focused on reiterating their ideology to a closed and exclusive network ("[We] represent Hapoel and not Israel") and blocking "fans of success", the most vocal of Beitar supporters reiterated a contemporary Zionist dream that, they argued, would improve Israel for all Jews.

My research (2016, 2017) suggests that individuals may even identify with teams out of an expression of their wider beliefs rather than any fondness for sport. For example, at one of my first interviews with football supporters in early 2016, I was told by my informant that I am unquestionably a supporter of Hapoel Tel Aviv. My status as a Hapoel supporter was

¹⁵² I estimate about 10% of La Familia to be female. This is in line with other Ultra groups around the world (10-20%, according to Spaaij 2006: 418).

reiterated by several other informants that spring. No one asked whether I had a preference for football teams or about any beliefs of mine that might associate me with one team or another. Instead, I was identified as Hapoel as if it had been blazoned on my chest.

However, it took me a while to understand the need to identify me with any team at all, let alone Hapoel. Football, I would come to realise, is a way of marking identity. Whether it is about political opinion, religious rights or football, there is no space for neutrality or indifference. This means that my informants were looking for clues: What did my “messy” bun or my organic salad signify? What did wearing jeans to a football match symbolise? Why was I, a blond female, travelling alone? How would an anthropologist see Israel-Palestine? How about a foreign, female, graduate student-anthropologist? All of these aspects of my character were used by my informants to assess my social and political beliefs, and with it, give me my Hapoel identity.

In February 2016, I met with Talia, 35, a linguist at Ben-Gurion University. Talia and I mainly discussed her experiences as an elite swimmer, only briefly touching upon football at the end of the interview. She identified herself as a casual supporter of Hapoel Be’er Sheva. While proudly non-religious, she said her grandparents were Ashkenazi Jews from Poland, and her support for Hapoel somehow honours their legacy. As part of the conversation, Talia suggested I meet her friend, Sarai, a former classmate from university who works in Tel Aviv.

Talia: “Sarai would love to talk with you. She likes talking about her club with other fans!”

SH: “Fantastic. I’m not sure I’m exactly a fan, though. I don’t know anything about Hapoel!”

Talia: “Haha, it doesn’t matter about the club, it matters who you are as a person!”

SH: “Well, what if I don’t like the club once I see them?”

Talia: “Then don’t go to any games” (English).

A month later, on March 5, 2016, I met Levi, 23, an Ashkenazi Jew from Givatayim (just east of Tel Aviv) for an interview over a late lunch. Before we progressed to the body of the interview, Levi apologised for not inviting me to watch that afternoon's game between Maccabi Tel Aviv and Hapoel Kfar Saba with him. Levi had invited a few of his friends to his home to watch the game, although, as the game was scheduled to begin almost two hours before the end of Shabbat, he said he was not expecting a high turnout.

Levi: "I'd invite you over later to watch the game, but you see, I can't, because I'm having some Ultras over."

SH: "Oh, that doesn't bother me, I'd like to meet your friends."

Levi: "Yes, but they're Maccabis, you see. Hardcore fanatics. They're not your material."

SH: "What does that mean? I'd like to meet some Maccabi Ultras!"

Levi: "Well, yeah, but you wouldn't fit in. Even if you don't even care about football, they still know you are from the other side [a Hapoel supporter]."

SH: "I've never been to a Hapoel game! I don't know whether I support Hapoel!"

Levi: "You may not, but everyone here treats you that way. You're not Jewish, you're young, idealistic and educated. Let me guess, you support gay rights, you think Arabs are cool, and you believe in things like health care access. Am I right? I'm not even sure I'd invite you over if you were Scarlett Johansson—and she's Jewish!"

SH: "But, what if I like, say, the players of Maccabi? What if I like the atmosphere? What if I want to support them?"

Levi: "That doesn't really matter. You were born Hapoel. Get over it, it's OK" (English).

Levi's declaration that I was "born Hapoel" struck me. I was familiar with what I have previously described as an intimate association between fans and teams, but Levi clearly saw my Hapoel identity as not just the product of assimilation but as naturalised from birth. As far as it concerned me, a foreigner, this was especially intriguing. I had not even heard of Hapoel until I began this thesis—how could I have been a fan of something so supposedly close to my core being that I had not known about? This suggests that it may be profitable to interpret fan identity as a product of some subconscious acculturation or Foucauldian "archaeology" (1972). Levi's concluding "it's OK" spoke to the finiteness of this association, despite my self-perceived lack of agency in identifying as Hapoel. My American upbringing told me that belonging to a team I had not chosen seemed odd, but my experience was certainly not unique. In writing on Turkish football, John McManus had a similar experience. McManus found himself teaching at a high school in Ankara, where his students forced him to choose whether he was a fan of Galatasaray or Fenerbahçe, two rival Istanbul football clubs (see page 203). Not having an affinity for either club and knowing he would alienate half of the school with either choice, he recalled the account in which he was outed as a fan:

Student: 'Which team?'

JM: 'I don't really follow Turkish football.'

Student: 'OK, well, which colours do you prefer? Red and yellow, or blue and yellow?'

JM: 'I don't really like any of those, my favourite colour is purple.'

Student: 'OK, OK. What is your favourite animal: a lion or a canary?'

JM: 'I like dolphins.'

Student: 'OK, but you have to choose one! Dolphins aren't an option.'

JM: 'OK, I guess... a lion.'

Student: 'Ah, you're Galatasaray! Why on earth do you like them?' [McManus 2018: 10]

As my experiences with Talia and Levi, as well as others, suggest, fans in Israel do not choose teams in as much as they are seemingly born into the fandom of a particular club, almost comparable to Indian castes or British social classes (field notes, 2016). In the morning before I interviewed Levi, I had a brunch interview with Cordelia, 49 and an Ashkenazi Jew, at a café in northern Tel Aviv. As a Hapoel Tel Aviv fan, Cordelia had

driven two hours from her home in Kiryat Shmona near the Lebanese border to watch the team play Maccabi Petah Tikva at HaMoshava Stadium in Petah Tikva, 10km east of Tel Aviv. “If I just liked soccer, I’d support my local team—it’s even technically a really good one.”¹⁵³ However, I grew up in Tel Aviv, so I still am definitely a Tel Aviv fan. Even my kids, they know they can’t support the Kiryat Shmona team because our family belongs to Tel Aviv. I live 200km from Tel Aviv now, but of course I drive to their games because I feel connected to them. I even follow them around the country, sometimes internationally when they play there too” (Hebrew). Another Ashkenazi Jew, Mikal, 34, also told me that he couldn’t imagine being a supporter of any other team: “Hapoel Tel Aviv is my comfort food. When I would get homesick while abroad for university or during my army service, I’d snuggle up in my Hapoel jersey or watch replays of their games, and I’d just feel better. The other teams, they are sports teams, but that collective of men wearing red and white isn’t just a sports team, it’s like my teddy bear” (Hebrew). Zvi, 61, has been a lifelong supporter of Maccabi Tel Aviv, something he feels happened naturally: “Supporting them hasn’t been conscious. My parents were real hard-core Ultras, so I grew up with it. I remember when the team was really political—my family supported them unquestionably. There are still some politics, I don’t agree with it all, like banishing Syrian refugees in the current refugee crisis, but I overlook that: everyone is allowed faults” (Hebrew). Yitzik, 76, says the former politics are still relevant to him: “I am proud to belong to a club where I can be me. Maccabi puts a massive face to my beliefs. They are my north star. I’ve never had issues voting, for instance, I follow the precedent set by Maccabi. I vote for whomever they [Ultras] vote. I do that because I support my brothers. I am Maccabi before I am Mizrahi or Israeli” (Hebrew). Ari, 28 and a Mizrahi Jew, feels that fans expect other fans to buy completely into a club’s ideology. He says he once told some fellow Maccabi fans that he supported Rivlin’s election

¹⁵³ Cordelia’s home team is Hapoel Ironi Kiryat Shmona. This team finished the play-offs in second place the previous season (well ahead of Hapoel Tel Aviv’s eighth place) and qualified for the UEFA Europa League for 2015-2016.

to the presidency in 2014 and was unprepared for the consequences. “I didn’t mean to say anything; I should have known. We were waiting for a game to start, and it—that I liked Rivlin—just slipped out. Eli, the man next to me, sucker punched me and said I had betrayed the team. I didn’t attend games for the rest of the season” (English).

The last time that Hapoel Tel Aviv championed the Premier League and competed in the UEFA Champions League was in 2010. However, many Hapoel Tel Aviv fans also support Hapoel Be’er Sheva, the reigning Premier League champion now competing in the UEFA Champions League for the second consecutive year. In theory, Hapoel teams around the country all share the same elementary platform—a fan of Hapoel Tel Aviv is foremost a fan of Hapoel and then a fan of Hapoel Tel Aviv. This means that Hapoel Tel Aviv fans follow the Tel Aviv team personally but are still inclined to back other Israeli Hapoel teams when Hapoel Tel Aviv is not on the field. The same pattern is true for fans of the other federations.¹⁵⁴ Thus, while Alia, 47 and Ashkenazi, lives two hours from Tel Aviv but only forty minutes from Be’er Sheva, she still supports Hapoel Tel Aviv because she prefers the atmosphere. While she would not attend any of their games, she gets excited when Hapoel Be’er Sheva triumphs over the “vile” Maccabi teams. This hometown allegiance was reiterated in two other interviews I conducted in spring 2016. One was with a woman born in Tel Aviv but now living 350km away in Eilat, and the other was with a man living 80km away in Saphir. Both are Ashkenazi Jews who grew up following their home-town team, Hapoel Tel Aviv. However, they moved away from Tel Aviv for work after they had established their careers (the woman is a 43-year-old hospital worker and the man is a 58-year-old anthropologist). Joining closer teams, such as Hapoel Eilat and Hapoel Be’er Sheva,

¹⁵⁴ Hapoel, Maccabi, Beitar and Elitzur federations comprise most of the Israeli football clubs, but some football teams are independent or overseen by smaller agencies. One of the best known of the unaffiliated teams is the top-ranked Palestinian-Israeli football team, Ihud Bnei Sakhnin (United Sons of Sakhnin), formed in 1991 from a merger of Hapoel Sakhnin and Maccabi Sakhnin.

did not appeal to either as a way to integrate with their new communities. Instead, both saw continuing to follow Hapoel TA as a way of remaining connected with their home towns.

Commercialisation and weakening tides of nationalism

Despite the history of Israeli football as entrenched in nationalism and the nationalist tendencies that still propel the sport forward, Tamir (2014a) believes that nationalism is weakening as a force among fans. This largely counters previous work citing the social institution of sport as a continued flag-bearer of nationalism, some of which I discussed in Chapter 2. Tamir attributes this atrophy to factors such as commercialisation, privatisation, individualisation and globalisation.

The previously discussed privatisation of the Israeli football federations and interest in professionalisation also contributed to the sport beginning to be played for commercial value rather than for reasons of entertainment or ideology (Ben-Porat 1998 discusses the commodification of Israeli football). During the mandate years, transportation between various cities in Palestine was difficult and expensive, which spurred the proliferation of local leagues. There were so many teams that it was possible for regions to hold their own competitive championships. For example, Halevi (n.d.: 36) and Haim Kaufman and Yair Galily (2008: 85-86) count eleven teams under Jerusalem's jurisdiction and nine under Haifa's at the time. Later, under privatisation and commercial guidance, teams that represented niche communities and small towns gave way to big city teams with better funding (Sorek 2003a: 430; discussed on pages 177-178). Since the origins of Israeli football, teams representing the three largest cities in Israel—Jerusalem, Tel Aviv and Haifa—have won 74% of the top league titles.

Despite the lack of football infrastructure in Palestinian-Israeli towns (touched upon in Chapter 4), Sorek also suggests that Palestinian-Israeli teams have not had a significant impact on Israeli football due to a lack of fan support, which he again attributes, in part, to relative city size and the isolation of cities. Drawing upon Lustick (1980), this can also be understood in the context of martial law imposed upon Palestinians following 1948. Whereas Jewish-Israelis were able to move freely between cities, Palestinians lacked such freedoms and therefore developed an immediate city-culture in preference to a regional or national identity (see A. Bishara 1998). Tamari (1999: 3-4) counters this somewhat by acknowledging that local identity had been part of Palestinian culture prior to *al-Nakba* and martial law. However, the lack of freedom imposed upon Palestinians following the war certainly encouraged the development of such pockets of culture. The correlation between freedom of movement and the scale of identity networks can be attested in football. In the years following 1948, Jewish-Israelis developed more centralised teams that drew upon fans travelling from a range of towns. Palestinian-Israeli teams, on the other hand, were limited to the residents of their immediate district (field notes, 2016).

Another aspect controlling the strength of nationalism today may be the media. A secondary theme in Krøvel and Roksvold's (eds.) *We Love to Hate Each Other* (2012) looks at the impact of media on football subcultures. Some pieces within the collection, e.g. Ytterstad (2012), highlight the nation-building force of the media on sports teams. Using Gramscian theories of common sense and hegemony and methods including frame analysis, Ytterstad traces how Norwegian fans construct and uphold national boundaries in the context of the relative successes and failures of pre-eminent national football players as reflected in the blogosphere. Other works, such as a contemporary piece by Simon Kuper (2012, not part of Krøvel and Roksvold), show that media may breach national boundaries by exposing teams to foreign fans, giving media the potential to subvert nationalism. According to Kuper

(2012: 140-141), broadcasting enables fans to identify with and support clubs to which they would not have access in person, which, if it crosses national boundaries, could render those boundaries less relevant (cf. B. Anderson 1983 on imagined communities). Media exposure, according to Tamir (2014b: 743), has garnered a significant following for European football leagues (in which Israel participates) in Asia. Foreign audiences may revitalise local teams by reinforcing local markets that otherwise may already be saturated through over-exposure (Chadwick 2007: 348). However, the media may be developing an Asian subculture at the expense of galvanising the local continental one. For example, some live games are scheduled at times that maximise Asian viewership (even if it inconveniences European support), and certain advertisements are displayed in arenas that specifically target foreign audiences, as suggested by the typical consumers of the specific product or the language used for the advertisement (field notes, 2016).

While invoking the media to help explain fans' support of non-local and even foreign teams, a ruling in 1995 by the European Court of Justice, known colloquially as the "Bosman ruling", permitted free transfers for players moving between teams throughout the EU once they were out of contract.¹⁵⁵ This standardisation of football rules means that skills are transferable—players can play for other federations, and fans can follow other federations' games. Without the receiving club necessarily needing to purchase players who have been made available for trade from their releasing clubs, an intracontinental market opened up,

¹⁵⁵ The Israeli Premier League began accepting foreign players in 1991 in order to increase its competitiveness internationally but caps foreign participants at six per team (initially two per team according to Ben-Porat 1998: 274), allegedly so as not to exclude local representation. Foreigners who have resided in Israel for six years, have Jewish ancestry or otherwise can meet standards set for citizenship through the Law of Return (1950) do not count toward the foreign quota. For the record, in theory the English Premier League permits an entire team of non-English players, providing that a minimum of eight out of twenty-five were signed to an English club for three years prior to their twenty-first birthdays (Premier League (2010, July 16). "Home Grown Player Rules". Accessed 17 August 2017 from <https://web.archive.org/web/20100813203222/http://www.premierleague.com/page/Headlines/0%2C%2C12306~2094341%2C00.html>).

with the money saved in transfers being put toward higher salaries. Teams throughout Europe thus develop commercial identities as brands rather than national identities in order to offer more lucrative deals to those it views as the top players in the market.

Commercialisation extends beyond players and fans, however. For example, companies sponsor teams in exchange for publicity. While smaller clubs may attract more local companies, larger clubs compete for global companies. These companies may be local (city or state), but many are global. In addition to domestic sponsorship (including Toto Winner sports betting, Factory 54 luxury fashion and Mey Eden mineral water), the Israeli national football team is sponsored by Adidas, a German sportswear company. International corporations have also been attracted to premier league clubs: Maccabi Tel Aviv has been connected with Adidas (Germany), UNICEF (UN), Sony (Japan), Visa (USA) and Chevrolet (USA). Beitar Jerusalem currently wears Givova (Italy) kit and has worked previously with Puma (Germany), Diadora (Italy) and Subaru (Japan). Maccabi Haifa has been affiliated with Nike (USA), Honda (Japan), Alfa Romeo (Italy) and IsraCard (Israeli merger of American Express (USA) and EuroCard (Sweden)). Hapoel Tel Aviv has attracted the likes of Nike (USA), Umbro (UK) and the China Machinery Engineering Corporation (China).¹⁵⁶ When sponsorship crosses national lines, it can blur national divisions. Galily (2009: 143) highlights an example in which the American Phil Knight, the former CEO and co-founder of Nike, reportedly supported foreign teams playing *against* the US national team if the foreign team was a Nike-sponsored team because the US team was donned in the competing brand, Adidas.

¹⁵⁶ Bnei Sakhnin, the Palestinian-Israeli team, has only received one commercial Israeli sponsor, the mobile company Cellcom, which also operates in Palestinian cities. Bnei Sakhnin has traditionally relied upon donors, some of whom initially saw supporting Bnei Sakhnin as “charity” and thus withdrew support after the team proved to be successful by winning the 2004 State Cup title in its first Israeli Premier League season and becoming the first Palestinian-Israeli team to qualify for the UEFA Cup (field notes, 2017).

Jewish-Israeli society is often portrayed as homogeneous, a converging brotherhood shared by different people from different backgrounds united through pasts of religious oppression and faiths. There are collective memories of the Biblical Land of Israel and of the Holocaust. A more recent shared history may be the homogeneous categorisation of the “Other” during the development of eastern European nation-states—the Jews were not Poles, not Czechs, not Lithuanians. There is a fraternalism that has welcomed refugees through covert rescue operations (e.g. Operation Moses in 1984, Operation Solomon in 1991). There is a desire for sovereignty. In other ways, the modern state is still showing its early development, as if unsure which way to grow. It is a land of juxtapositions, of masked tensions and façades. Football, however, is one arena in which grievances are aired as much as a matter of pride as of perceived social inequity. For supporters of Beitar Jerusalem and Hapoel Tel Aviv, a match between the two teams has little to do with football (one might even suggest that their style of play is relatively uninspiring compared with the styles of other European nations). Instead, the games are a debate between history and modernity, religion and secularism, Mizrahi and Ashkenazi, Palestinian and Jewish, poverty and affluence, belonging and not belonging, right-wing and left-wing (see Shohat 1988). Beitar Jerusalem and Hapoel Tel Aviv represent rifts in Israeli culture beyond the sectarian divisions discussed in Chapters 1 and 4, as team association brings to mind additional categories of opinion, including family values, social mobility, expected levels of education and political perspectives, as well as religious beliefs. In reply to my asking about identity, several informants felt it was “more streamlined” and “just easier” to express their [Jewish] identity as an aspect of their club identity, as it summarised their sense of self more comprehensively than a sectarian or political label. Although popular, identifying as such also leads to people making assumptions about the beliefs of the other (or, in reverse, about the football team!). Avra, 49, an independent Ashkenazi political scientist, says she is proud to tell people she

supports Hapoel Tel Aviv because of the connotations involved in saying so. “It makes people assume I am educated; well, yes, I have a PhD. And it suggests that, while I have money, I don’t flash it around—Maccabis do, you know! Being Hapoel tells people that I have a good job and am humble. It doesn’t imply that I watch football. I don’t own a television. I’ve never been to a game” (interview, March 2016, English). Avra continued to say that, although she has never asked, she suspects one of her university colleagues to be a Beitar supporter. “You brush his skin and he is Beitar, you know what I mean? He acts all Hapoel-like, and he acts accepting, he wants to be included in our professional sphere. He looks tidy in his business suit, he has a good job, but he is Beitar. He can’t hide it. His skin, it is a racist skin” (interview, March 2016, English).

“Forever Pure”: ideological oppositions of teams’ extreme fan groups

Sectarian and ideological oppositions are commonly reflected through sport derbies around the world. In addition to Spain’s el Clásico, Buenos Aires sees River Plate (upper-middle class) and Boca Juniors (working class) face off in the Superclásico; Istanbul’s Intercontinental Derby features Galatasaray (European, Istanbul aristocracy) and Fenerbahçe (Asian, Turkish working class); Rome’s Lazio (right-wing) and Roma (left-wing) compete in the Derby Della Capitale for legitimacy over Rome; and Glasgow fields the Old Firm derby between Celtic (Irish nationalist, Catholic) and Rangers (Scottish nationalist, Protestant).¹⁵⁷

¹⁵⁷ Between the 1920s and 1989, the Rangers had an unofficial policy of not fielding a Catholic player, not unlike Beitar’s attitude toward Palestinian-Israelis (W.J. Murray 2000: 60, 64). This can be compared with Athletic Bilbao fielding only Basque players (MacClancy 1996: 183).

On the meaning of “Arab”

Beitar Jerusalem is the standard-bearer of the right, a source of pride for La Familia, the members of which continue to fight for the “purity” of the team (field notes, 2016, Hebrew). The issue of “purity” was raised in several of my interviews with fans of both Beitar and of other clubs discussing Beitar to refer to ethnic unity, meaning more specifically “without Arabs”. However, in the context of further interviews and other research, it appears that the categories of “Jew” and “Arab” are oversimplifications conflating sectarian and political identities.

As with other Premier League teams, Beitar Jerusalem can employ up to six active international players each season, the majority of whom are Christian. Although non-Jewish, these players are accepted by fans. Ruth, 54, a Mizrahi from a Jewish West Bank settlement, explains: “There was even one who’d cross himself every time he took to the pitch, but we accepted him because he was a foreigner, and a very good one at that. He was also on loan. He wasn’t living here, just here to help for a bit. Also, he was European—English, I think. But he wasn’t Arab, that was the most important thing” (interview, March 2016, Hebrew). Ruth’s statement was echoed by other fans. Non-Jews are accepted if foreign, believed to be temporary, cannot be classified as Arab and improve the standard of play for the team. The use of “Arab” (and in some contexts, “Muslim”) by Israeli football fans extends beyond Palestinians and Palestinian-Israelis. It simultaneously refers to 1) Palestinians of any religion; 2) Palestinians who are Israeli citizens, legal residents of Israel, or who live in the Occupied Territories, West Bank or Gaza; 3) ethnic Arabs from elsewhere in northern Africa and the Middle East; and also 4) Muslims, regardless of ethnicity. One might also suggest a tension in self-categorisation as such, as Beitar fans are overwhelmingly Mizrahi, and as a result are sometimes identified as ethnically Arab (“Jewish Arabs”) by Ashkenazi Jews due to their Middle Eastern roots (Zeltzer-Zubida and Zubida 2012; Roby 2015). As a result, any

fear connected with being associated with Arab populations may increase anti-Arab behaviour and beliefs among Mizrahi fans due to their desire to distance themselves from Arab populations.

While Beitar Jerusalem prides itself on never having signed an Arab player, it has signed several non-Arab Muslims. These signings have been made, in part, as an initial step toward an all-inclusive team. However, each of the new recruits had short tenures with the team, generally only part of a season, as each has been driven away by religiously and politically motivated fan violence, as “Muslim” is, for some, still against the unwritten tenets of purity (field notes, 2016, Hebrew). Beyond being unable to keep players, the racist and anti-Arab rhetoric has meant the team faces routine sanctions, losses of sponsorship and not infrequent threats of the resignation of managerial staff (field notes, 2016). Critically, sanctions, which include fines, games played in empty stands (thus no revenue from ticket/vending sales, as well as lack of support) and league point deductions, have been only a slap on the wrist with no lasting impact (interview, February 2016, English). Moreover, these initiatives punish the players, coaches and managerial staff, all of whom have limited impact on curtailing fan hooliganism, which the fans continue with unchecked (field notes, 2016).

The Chechen affair

After failing to sign Abbas Suan (see beginning of this chapter), Beitar Jerusalem owner Arkadi Gaydamak succeeded in bringing two Muslims into the team, Dzhabrail Kadiyev and Zaur Sadayev, a signing that would precipitate his premature departure from the team several months later in June 2013. Although Muslim, Kadiyev and Sadayev were not Palestinian but Chechen-born players from Chechnya’s team Terek Grozny (now known as Akhmat Grozny). As already noted, the connection between the two teams may have been inspired more by the Russian Gaydamak’s interest in expanding his political and business

opportunities into Chechnya than with challenging the anti-Arab culture of the team. At the same time, Gaydamak had been developing business opportunities with Telman Ismailov, an Azerbaijani-born Russian-Jewish businessman. Ismailov was the vice-president and sponsor of Terek Grozny, a team whose *de facto* manager was Ramzan Kadyrov, the head of the Chechen Republic. Zinshtein and Arbourne's 2016 documentary provides a critical look at the politics and power-plays involved in Beitar's signing of the Chechen players and the extent to which La Familia works to keep the team "forever pure".

After a tense signing, Kadiyev and Sadayev were given personal security guards, and more moderate fans were hopeful that La Familia would support the Chechens as non-Arab Muslims in a new wave of ethnic optimism (interview, April 2016, Hebrew). However, La Familia immediately reasserted its position. When the Chechens first ran on to the field in Beitar's yellow and black, La Familia drowned out an otherwise largely enthusiastic crowd with jeers and anti-Arab chants and unfurled a banner:

בית"ר טהורה לעז
(Beitar forever pure)

As a result of their actions during the game, La Familia's 7000-seat section of the eastern grandstand in Teddy Stadium was closed for five games, and Beitar Jerusalem was fined by the Israel Football Association. Two weeks after the Chechens joined the team, two members of La Familia launched an arson attack on Beitar's clubhouse, burning administrative offices and destroying eighty years of club memorabilia. While La Familia was specifically indicted for the fire, the football club itself was fined, even though the club was the direct victim of the attack (field notes, 2016, 2017). By March 3, 2013, La Familia was back in the stands when Beitar faced Maccabi Netanya. Sadayev, a striker, scored his first goal, Beitar's sole one in the game. Amidst on-field celebrations of Sadayev's goal, La

Familia walked out. A Muslim had become the team's star—a Muslim, on their *Jewish* team. Kadiyev and Sadayev, who had been given bodyguards, lasted less than three months and were gone by mid-April.

In speaking about the signing of the Chechen players, a (fringe) member of La Familia told me that being a member of the fan club is not part of his football identity but rather “part of [his] lifestyle. Jerusalem is Jewish. Simple. It's the indivisible capital of Israel. We don't need Muslims. They belong in Jordan” (field notes, 2017, Hebrew). His statement clarified that the ethnic or national identities of Kadiyev and Sadayev did not matter to him—they were among the maligned category of “Arab”, which was sufficient reason for opposing them.

“We are the most racist team in the country!” Beitar Jerusalem and La Familia

The day after the Tel Aviv Marathon in late February 2016, I met with several Beitar Jerusalem fans for lunch outside Jerusalem, a few hours before their team would defeat Maccabi Petah Tikva at home. I would return to the same place to meet other fans the following week. This group of people, ten in total, all identified as fans believing in the tenets of the club—seeking Jewish homogeneity, supporting the occupation and, although as non-participants, the behaviour of La Familia (following: interviews, English). One, Naftali, 39, had actually been involved with La Familia until about five years earlier. I asked Naftali, a Mizrahi living in Tel Aviv whom I had met two years earlier when he picked up his girlfriend from the Wingate Institute, why he had left La Familia. “When I joined I was naïve; I thought it would make me feel good,” he said. “For ten years it felt good to spit at Arabs, and I'd just instinctively sucker punch one if I saw one, and I thought that was cool. I thought that made me cool. Being part of La Familia gave me such an adrenaline rush. But you know, nothing changed. Arabs are still here. I still support La Familia. Those guys are my family, but I've

grown up.” In addition to throwing the periodic punch and spitting, Naftali said he had done “other things” that earmarked his commitment to La Familia. Although he refused to elaborate what he meant by “other things”, Naftali said they were activities that made him uncomfortable at the time and led to legal issues, jail time and a divorce, all of which eventually contributed to his departure from the club. Originally described by Tajfel and Turner (e.g. 1986), psychology’s social identity theory (and theories born from it, e.g. identity fusion and ESIM, mentioned on page 79), may be employed to explain some of the intragroup behaviour exhibited by the various teams. In my interviews, such as the one with Naftali, I noticed that Israeli football fans (especially new or fringe La Familia/Ultra members) generally adopted beliefs of the group leader or participated in criminal activity on the premise that it “confirmed their commitment” to the team.

I was unprepared for the prevalence of the word “racist”, seemingly used as a badge of honour, although one with various meanings, among the more right-wing fans. Israeli media refer to racism as racial discrimination, but for Beitar’s right, the word has taken on a more positive twist, as they justify their discrimination as a matter of national pride (interview, April 2016, English). “We are the most racist team in the country!” is shouted around Teddy Stadium during games, regardless of where the opponent sits on the political or ethnic spectrum (field notes, 2016, Hebrew). In asking about this with my lunch group, eight of the ten shrugged or nodded when I asked whether they identified positively with that term. Serafim, 45 and a Mizrahi, interjected, “Am I racist? Well, I mean, sometimes I spit in their faces and stuff, but Arabs hate us, and Israel is the Jewish homeland. They can fuck off if they don’t like it, in fact, we’d all be better for it.” The association of racism with perceived hatred and territory recurred. Aderet, 39, a first-generation Yemeni Jew, said she was “perfectly fine” being called a racist and justified her attitude as one of revenge. “I don’t mind if people know I hate the Arabs. The Arabs definitely hate us, so what’s wrong with

hating them? Plus, they hated us first.” Her older sister, Ofra, 44, was even more dismissive. Ofra shrugged, saying: “Yeah, call me racist, whatever. We’re Jewish, and this is our land. We don’t need the Arabs.” The two of the group who did not identify as racist still expressed similar attitudes. Another Mizrahi, Naavah, 34, said she prefers to refer to herself as “clean” rather than racist because she feels it is a more morally appropriate term. “Clean”, Naavah clarified, is instead about “recreating Israel in Jewish form.” Finally, Zara, 41, who identifies as “a Likudnik’s Likudnik”, claimed that she is “definitely not racist” and is, instead, nationalist. However, she recognised there is some conflation between the two terms, especially in the context of Israeli football, and thus is “not against racism if it gets the same results.”

Like Zara, some supporters do not believe that their anti-Arab stance constitutes racism and instead attribute it to Jewish nationalism, which for them is a less loaded term. Josef, 28, a Mizrahi from a Jewish settlement in the West Bank, summarises this sentiment by saying, “Arabs just shouldn’t be here. It’s not racism. They don’t belong. Jews have suffered too long; if Arabs need to make sacrifices so Jews can be here, so be it.” Smuela, 32 and also a Mizrahi from a Jewish West Bank settlement but not part of my lunch group, has a similar perspective. She told me that “Israel should be a pure state. It was promised by God to the Jews. That’s a fact, it says so in Genesis. Tell me, was God racist? Because I don’t think it’s racism if we’re just taking what is rightfully ours. Israel isn’t rightfully the Arabs” (field notes, March 2016, Hebrew). The significance of purity was also mentioned by Yael, 34 and one of the few Ashkenazi Jews associating with Beitar whom I interviewed: “I’m very proud to be represented by a team like Beitar. I think it demonstrates that we, as a nation, are strong. We fight and don’t quit. I am very proud of my team for upholding the values of this country” (interview, February 2016, English). Yaer, a 57-year-old Mizrahi professor of politics at an Israeli university, is quiet about his support of Beitar. He fears his colleagues,

all of whom he believes to be Ashkenazi, not Mizrahi, might take his political science work less seriously if they were to know he supports a team that is better known for its extreme right-wing fan culture than for its football. His research focuses on the access rights of Palestinians, so he did not fulfil my personal image of a classic Beitar supporter. I gathered he also wrestled with this, as evidenced by his unwillingness to share it with his professional acquaintances, most of whom he believes to be supporters of various Hapoel teams. Yaer reasoned that his interest in Beitar extends beyond football: “I believe in the power of the nation, and I see that there at Teddy [Stadium]” (interview, February 2016, Hebrew).

La Familia is worth a special mention because it demonstrates Beitar’s tolerance of a small group of supporters who have managed to uphold the “purity” of their team despite a not insignificant cost to the club in terms of league rankings and finances. To members of other Ultra groups, the core of La Familia is seen as a lower-class Jewish, uneducated, largely male cohort. Some members of La Familia defy this stereotype—the assumed head of the group is a wealthy accountant, for example. Although not members of La Familia, as the standard-bearer of the political right Beitar is also the chosen club of many of Israel’s political elite. It counts such dignitaries as current and former Israeli prime ministers Benjamin Netanyahu, Ariel Sharon and Ehud Olmert among its thousands of supporters. The fact that leading politicians continue to support a team supposedly with La Familia in the driving seat gives oxygen to the extreme fan club (interview, February 2016, Hebrew).

Beitar has been associated with right-wing Zionism and has opposed Labour since its inception. Since then, the football club itself has drawn nationalist scrutiny through its history of association with the revisionist youth movement and the Irgun, a non-socialist offshoot of Haganah (Sachar 1977: 265; C. Smith 2007). As discussed in Chapter 1, the Irgun was behind a Jewish uprising against the British, notably the 1946 bombings of the King David Hotel and the British Embassy in Rome and the 1947 Acre Prison break and Sergeants’

Affair, all of which contributed to the dissolution of the mandate and Israel's statehood. These events are recounted by the leader of the Irgun, Menachem Begin (1951, as mentioned in Chapter 1), who would later found the Likud Party and become Israel's first non-Labour prime minister in 1977. Beitar became a popular club for Mizrahi Jews who feel themselves to be on the periphery of Israeli society because they allegedly see it as challenging the Ashkenazi elite (field notes, 2016, Hebrew; see Swirski 1981, Shafir and Peled 1998, Tzefadia and Yiftachel 2001 on Mizrahim in Israeli society). This marriage between Beitar and the Mizrahim was cemented in the mid-1970s when the right-wing Beitar Jerusalem won the Israeli Super Cup¹⁵⁸ in 1976 against Labour-backed Hapoel (Hapoel Be'er Sheva), a victory soon followed by Likudnik Begin defeating the Labour Party in the 1977 elections. The La Familia organisation has moved Beitar Jerusalem more to the political right, supposedly a reaction to the Second Intifada (2000-2005), which itself was part of the motivation for the creation of La Familia, formally founded in 2005 (interview, April 2016, Russian). Indeed, while Beitar does attract a range of more than 100,000 supporters from around Israel, including political liberals and Ashkenazim (mostly secular but also a few Ultra-Orthodox), La Familia counts several thousand fans who overwhelmingly identify as Mizrahim (mostly secular or traditional/Masorti Jews with a smaller, yet significant Orthodox cohort) (field notes, 2016).¹⁵⁹ La Familia members are of all ages (there is a noticeable swell of men in the 20-35 age bracket) and usually attend games dressed in the team's yellow and black colours. Some members have devoted their bodies to reflect their team's pride with tattoos of the club's menorah symbol or slogans such as "forever pure" (field notes, 2016). A

¹⁵⁸ A competition between the champions of the Premier League and the State Cup.

¹⁵⁹ Many Beitar supporters (as well as players and staff) not affiliated with La Familia condemn its behaviour and rhetoric, but despite support from law enforcement and sanctions from the Israel Football Association and from FIFA, La Familia still holds the team's reins. In 2014, some of the aggrieved fans created a protest team (not unlike Katamon), Agudat Sport Nordia Jerusalem, known casually as Beitar Nordia. Nordia supports right-wing pretence like Beitar Jerusalem, although it made an early effort to sign both Arab players and Arab staff (field notes, 2016). President Reuven Rivlin has said that Beitar Nordia "brings back to life the heart and the soul that was once the essence of Beitar Jerusalem" (Rubin 2015).

common site around the stands, whether on flags, shirts or tattoos, is the Kach Party logo of a clenched fist inside the Star of David. Although the Kach Party was banned in 1994 (see Juergensmeyer 2017: 51ff.), this symbol has become a sort of street artist-like tag associated with La Familia (field notes, 2016). These symbols may be interpreted as Durkheimian totems of secular nationalism (see Marvin and Ingle 1999). Perhaps unsurprisingly, given the club's right-wing connections, the political beliefs of La Familia fit within the Likud's conservative platform. For example, it overwhelmingly opposes abortion and homosexuality, while supporting Jewish settlements in the Occupied Territories and the West Bank. In speaking with Ultras from Hapoel and Maccabi, I learned that some of them engaged as a unit in ideologically driven projects external to their football teams, e.g. food drives, refugee resettlement programmes, etc. Newson (2017: 9) concludes that charitable acts by fans can be conceived as a "pro-group" activity developed from the same type of aggressive fusion that is associated with violence. However, although La Familia members are involved in other activities, some of which may touch upon politics, etc., the vast majority of their energy is directed toward ensuring the "purity" of their football team, and they are less likely to extend to other anti-Arab/Palestinian extremist activity outside of sport.¹⁶⁰ Outside Israel, extremist behaviour by hooligan organisations extending outside of sport is more common. For example, the Casuals FCB, a Catalan ultranationalist faction of the Boixos Nois, the hooligan group associated within FC Barcelona, has been called the "mafia of Boixos Nois" and accused of being a criminal organisation involved in drug-trafficking, murders and extortion (Albalat 2010).

¹⁶⁰ There have been a few notable extensions to this. For example, La Familia protested against the Israel Football Association by torching its offices and threatening its chair after the IFA punished Beitar for La Familia's racism in a 2007 match against Bnei Sakhnin. Nearly a year later, La Familia interrupted the annual commemoration of Yitzhak Rabin's 1995 assassination (Rabin was an Oslo Accords signee and avid supporter of the peace process with Palestine). In spring 2012, La Familia attacked Palestinian workers at the nearby Malha Mall following a match.

“Refugees ^{^not} welcome” and “Who is not a refugee here?” Ultras of Maccabi and Hapoel

While Beitar Jerusalem has been co-opted as a megaphone against what its fans allege is an Ashkenazi bias in the state (interview, April 2016, Russian), the Ultras of Hapoel and Maccabi are no less invested in using their respective teams for nationalist purposes.

Hapoel was the last federation to sever its political ties, in this case with the Israeli Labour Party (Labour Zionism, social democracy), trade union and two state-wide communist parties, Maki and Mapam. Its Ultras continue to follow this line of support, being collectively left-wing, and socially and fiscally liberal. Hapoel retains international ties with other International Labour Sports Federation teams around the world and with several *antifa*¹⁶¹ groups. As a generalisation, members of Hapoel tend to support much of the current Labour Party platform, being in favour of unemployment allowances, universal healthcare and gay rights (same-sex marriage cannot be performed legally in Israel, although it is now recognised when consecrated abroad) and against the occupation. They also support a two-state solution and affirmative action policies to bring Palestinians into the public sector. These latter three stances have meant that Hapoel has earned respect among Palestinians while earning nicknames such as “Hapoel Arabs”, “Red traitors”,¹⁶² “Jew-haters” and “Hezbollahists” by right-wing Jewish Israelis, including Maccabi Ultras and La Familia (field notes, 2016, English and Hebrew). Hapoel’s history is still one of pro-Jewish nationalism, as its largely Ashkenazi support network is the remnant of an eastern European elite that undermined Palestinians and non-Ashkenazim in order to develop its own national agenda during the initial nation-building phase in the first few decades of the twentieth century. This has caused some Maccabi fans to see Ashkenazi Hapoel supporters as “radishes”—red

¹⁶¹ Anti-fascist.

¹⁶² “Red” is one of Hapoel Tel Aviv’s team colours and is also a nickname for the team. As the colour connects the team with socialism, referring to the team by that nickname is a way of calling out its identity, with either positive or negative connotations depending on the context.

(socialist/accepting) on the outside and white (in-group interest) on the inside (a term defined by Nikolay Ustryalov in the context of Lenin's New Economic Policy and Russian National Bolshevism; Utechin 1964: 254).

While Beitar Jerusalem's fan-base remains largely Mizrahi, Hapoel Tel Aviv continues to draw upon Ashkenazim, putting the team in ideological opposition to its Jerusalem opponents. Unlike Beitar, which rarely sees La Familia members promoting their Zionist agenda through external community involvement, Hapoel Tel Aviv Ultras gather for periodic "Hapoel work days" during which they do such activities as providing food to homeless people and cleaning parks. Zoï, 23 and a recent Ashkenazi *oleh* from Germany, says the community service days help her find "a microcosm in which everyone looks out for each other" (interview, February 2016, Hebrew), a feeling she believes is important to develop if Israel wants to reduce violence. The ties Hapoel Tel Aviv maintains with other *antifa* and labour unions abroad are reinforced through international community service. In the early 2000s, Hapoel held clothing and food drives for refugees in Darfur, and while I was there in 2016, there were a few proposals to become involved in the on-going refugee crisis.

Unlike Hapoel Tel Aviv and Beitar Jerusalem, the overall fandom of Maccabi Tel Aviv adheres less to any philosophy and is sometimes seen as a less biased club (field notes, 2016). This neutrality stems from its earlier loss of political support upon the dissolution of the Liberal Party in 1988 (interview, March 2016, English). Although Maccabi Tel Aviv's Ultras share many of the same characteristics with La Familia regarding pro-Jewish nationalism, they are often overshadowed by Beitar Jerusalem and La Familia. Earlier in this chapter I mentioned the reaction of La Familia to Abbas Suan, both as an opponent playing for Bnei Sakhnin and as a potential Beitar signee. In reaction to Suan's goal in the World Cup qualifiers as a member of the Israeli national team, Maccabi Ultras posted threats to the Sakhnin-based midfielder, promising to kill him and harm his family for upstaging Jewish

athletes (interview, July 2014, English). Threats to Suan were not just a one-off scuffle, but were part of a steady stream of ethnically motivated turbulence stemming from the Ultras that has seemingly become mainstream.¹⁶³ At the semi-final of the State Cup on April 21, 2016, Maccabi Tel Aviv defeated Bnei Sakhnin by one goal, which some external to the Maccabi team have condemned as a racist act (field notes, 2016). During this game, a Sakhnin player lay injured on the pitch while a Maccabi player kept the ball in play and scored the game-winning goal. The referees, disregarding the standard protocol of stopping play to assist the injured athlete, permitted the goal, and Maccabi progressed to the final of the State Cup. Online fan forums that I had been monitoring ignited. Fans of Maccabi argued that the scorer did not notice the impaired Sakhnin athlete or suggested that the Sakhnin athlete had faked the injury (“Another Arab, another ‘injury’”) to save his team from losing. Supporters of Sakhnin accused Maccabi of poor sportsmanship, bribing referees and catering to Ashkenazi favouritism (“Since when have rules ever applied to Maccabi?”, “They have the nation as their back”, “Israel stands on their shoulders”, “When will we be Israeli?”, “Israel is our country, too”, “This is what those racist cows do to keep us from representing Israel”) (field notes, 2016, English and Hebrew).

These racist incidents, however, are not exclusively directed at opposing teams. Often Maccabi Ultras oppose their own players. Maccabi Tel Aviv, unlike Beitar Jerusalem, has openly signed Palestinian players, as well as ones from other Israeli minority groups, including Bedouin and Druze. Both, while not Palestinian, have also been blocked from joining Beitar Jerusalem by La Familia (field notes, 2016). Anti-Arab chants by Maccabi Ultras are no different from those of Beitar’s “Death to the Arabs!”, “May your village

¹⁶³ Despite the racism associated with Maccabi Tel Aviv, Maccabi Haifa (followed by Hapoel Tel Aviv) is the favourite non-Palestinian Israeli football team of Palestinian-Israelis. This favouritism allegedly stems from Maccabi Haifa’s early severance from politics (it being the first team to do so), the apparent ethnic tolerance in the city and the relatively high numbers of Palestinian athletes connected with the team compared with other teams (their all-time top scorer, Zahi Armeli, among them) (field notes, 2016). Haifa also leads Israel in other normalisation efforts (e.g. Hand in Hand education discussed in Chapter 4).

burn!” and “Mohammad is dead!” These chants are shouted at the team’s own Palestinian-Israeli players. While Maccabi’s Bedouin and Druze players are less frequently targeted with the team’s anti-Arab slogans, Maccabi’s rivalry with Hapoel Tel Aviv is drawn into the mix, and even Hapoel’s Ashkenazi athletes are likened to the scandalised Palestinians (e.g. “Hapoel Arabs”, “Jew-haters”, see above) due to the assumption that they are Palestinian sympathisers.

Like La Familia, which was founded in 2005, Hapoel and Maccabi Ultras, founded in 1999 and 1996 respectively, are relatively new organisations that have developed since the clubs have been in the private domain. On the field, the Hapoel Ultras are sometimes known by their former moniker, the Red Militia, a name that refers to their self-ascribed mission of socialist expansionism (interview, March 2016, Hebrew). Hapoel Ultras dress in team jerseys or in the team colours of red and white, which are reflective of the club’s socialist history. These colours are also those of smoke bombs thrown onto the field, a common practice among Israeli fans both to celebrate one’s own team and also to disrupt play in protest of the opposition’s success. Around the stadium, fans wave red and white flags, as well as those of the hammer and sickle and of the face of Argentine Marxist revolutionary Che Guevara. Occasionally, one sees Karl Marx or Satan depicted on flags and banners, the latter expressing a satirical connection between socialism and “devil’s work” (e.g. Faxneld 2013). Stadium banners reinforce Hapoel Tel Aviv’s self-perception as maintaining a socially and politically liberal social-democratic club, despite it being a capitalist enterprise and a focal point for the wealthy Ashkenazi elite. Derived from Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels’ *Communist Manifesto* ([1848] 1968), one of the most frequently spotted slogans is “Workers of the world unite”. Despite Hapoel’s deterrence of “fans of success”, many of the banners flown at their matches suggest a sense of mass inclusionism developed through its origins in the Histadrut labour union, such as “Hapoel: we have a place for everyone” and “You will

never walk alone, HP TA”. In support of themselves, banners read “Hapoel until I die” and “Red or dead”. Aware that other Ultra groups see Hapoel negatively, they also have several banners that celebrate their unity in a self-deprecating manner. Some of these include: “Failures of the world, unite”, “From the depths of the underworld [image of skull and crossbones]”, “Souls of Satan”, “Antifa! Smash fascism! [Hapoel logo with a devil]” (field notes, 2016, Hebrew).

Banners addressing opposing teams seek to clarify the self-perception of Hapoel as politically and morally superior. In a game against Maccabi Tel Aviv, Hapoel Ultras unveiled a large sheet-like banner that covered several rows in the stands. On the sheet had been painted the pointing barrel of an Uzi submachine gun. When asked about it, a Hapoel Ultra responded: “We fly that when Maccabi is here. The Uzi points at that racist scum. We’re defending ourselves” (field notes, 2016, English and Hebrew). Smaller banners are flown throughout the stadium: “The hated racist, ultra-nationalist, Maccabi Tel Aviv!” and “I pity the racist fool”. This concept of racism was reiterated by two opposing placards, one over the Ultra’s central base that read “No racism here” and another pointing toward the Maccabi fans reading “Racist scum”. This tension between the two teams is heightened by their sharing Jaffa’s Bloomfield Stadium as their home base. Initially the property of the Histadrut, Hapoel Tel Aviv has based itself at Bloomfield Stadium since 1962, with Maccabi Tel Aviv initially joining several years later in 1968.¹⁶⁴ In October 2011, Yair Galily, a Jewish-Israeli sports sociologist (previously a research student under Eric Dunning) and head of the research department for the Israel Football Association, noted a series of attacks written beneath the Hapoel stands: “slogans such as ‘Maccabi to Auschwitz,’ ‘Shoah to Maccabi,’ ‘Avi Cohen is

¹⁶⁴ At the time of writing Bloomfield Stadium is under construction, and its home teams have been separated until the stadium’s expected completion date in 2019 (Maccabi to Netanya and Hapoel to Petah Tikva).

a Nazi,¹⁶⁵ ‘Meni Levi is dead,’¹⁶⁶ and ‘All of Maccabi to Treblinka.’ There were also three swastikas painted there” (quoted in Borowitz 2011). The IFA threatened to block Hapoel’s fans from their next game, but the team’s management allegedly refused to tell the IFA the names of the offending fans and ultimately received no punishment (field notes, 2016).

While both Hapoel Tel Aviv and Maccabi Tel Aviv share Bloomfield Stadium, they occupy different regions within it. For example, Hapoel Ultras claim stands four and five, whereas Maccabi Ultras are based in stand eleven. These stand numbers have come to reflect the spatial identity of “in” groups. “Gate 11” (the gate that is the access point to that stand) is used to refer to Ultras who have a place in that seating area. “Gate 11” is also the name given to Ultra-specific clothing (scarves, blankets, etc.) and social media groups. Inside the stadium, both teams have their own “home” facilities and thus need neither cross paths with the other nor be relegated as the “away” team (field notes, 2016). Although I did not attend a Tel Aviv derby—the matches between the two teams—having both teams and fans identify themselves as the “home” team can sometimes escalate into violence.¹⁶⁷ For example, a November 2014 derby was interrupted when a Hapoel fan ran onto the field and attacked a Maccabi player. After the two exchanged punches (for which the Maccabi player was red-carded, further inciting Maccabi fans), Ultras from both teams stormed the field, forcing the game to be abandoned. With no team winning the derby (it was tied 1-1 upon its cancellation), off-pitch melees between the two fan clubs extended into the week as they

¹⁶⁵ Cohen, who died the year before the inscription was discovered, was a former Maccabi Tel Aviv player (1974-1979, 1981-1987) best known for being the first Israeli to play for a foreign club (Liverpool FC, 1979-1981).

¹⁶⁶ Levi played for Maccabi Tel Aviv (2000-2002) until he collapsed during a game against Beitar Jerusalem due to a previously undiagnosed cardiac arrhythmia. He survived, although has not recovered full brain function. Levi continues to be an inspiration for the team, and the team has dedicated later successes to him (field notes, 2016).

¹⁶⁷ While Bloomfield Stadium is under construction (2016-2019), derbies alternate between the teams’ separate temporary locations in Netanya and Petah Tikva. According to several follow-up exchanges with fans in 2017, this has changed the dynamics of the derby, as only one team (and its fan group) is the “home” team (Bloomfield was still in commission while I was there in 2016).

fought among themselves to be Tel Aviv's dominant team. According to one interview, the violence escalated because both teams felt the need to defend their honour and their team in front of their home crowd (interview, March 2016, Hebrew).

In the early part of this chapter, I wrote that Hapoel (and indeed all teams engaged in rivalries) identifies itself as much as by what it is as by what it is not. One instance that highlights this dualism took place several months before I returned to Israel in September 2015, although the fallout continued throughout my stay in 2016.

In mid-September 2015, Arsenal (an English Premier League team) held a banner in front of the Emirates Stadium in London reading, "Refugees Welcome" ahead of a home game against Stoke. Throughout Europe, eighty teams playing in the UEFA Champions and Europa Leagues pledged to give the equivalent of one euro for each ticket sold at home games during the month of September to Save the Children's Child Refugee Crisis Appeal. That year Maccabi Tel Aviv was Israel's representative in the Champions League, and the club agreed to participate in the refugee appeal. The Ultras overwhelmingly did not approve. On September 12, 2015, at a home game against Kiryat Shmona, Ultras raised a similar banner to Arsenal's the week prior, only it contained a caret "not". "Refugees ^{^not} welcome". In addition to the attention-seeking caret, the text was in English, indicating the universality of the target audience (most of the banners are otherwise in Hebrew).

While Maccabi's banner alone says something about the club's beliefs, this message was further contextualised and complicated when Hapoel Tel Aviv flew their own banner at a game the following day, reading "מִי לֹא פֶּלִיט פֶּה?" (Who is not a refugee here?). This banner received less international attention, in part because the message targeted a specific local audience and, as a rhetorical question, was less politically volatile. This time, instead of appropriating the position of the state, Hapoel spoke directly to Israelis, understood as such by the preposition "here" and the use of Hebrew. The message of the banner extended

beyond its words and can be understood within the framework of J.L. Austin's speech act theory (1975). In what J.L. Austin called a perlocutionary speech act, the meaning of the banner (i.e. we are all refugees here) forces its readers to acknowledge that their anti-refugee stance is illogical given how the (Jewish) Israeli state emerged and developed. Although "Who is not a refugee here?" is a response to Maccabi's "Refugees not welcome", it is also the name of a popular song by Israeli rap artist and celebrity radio DJ, Quami de la Fox. This popular cultural connection enabled people to connect with Hapoel's slogan, as they were already familiar with it in their everyday lives (interview, March 2016, Hebrew).

Sport in the context of Palestinian nationalism and normalisation

Chapter 4 discussed some of the ways in which sport is used for purposes of normalisation between Jewish-Israelis and Palestinian-Israelis. The potential for such interaction in professional football is more strained. From what I have shown in the previous section of this chapter, the overarching reason for this is that Israeli football developed within the Jewish enclave as a way of constructing (Jewish) sectarian identity and belonging. There was some token involvement by (Arab-) Palestinians in the development of Jewish sport in Mandate Palestine, but it was largely nominal. Of the nine members on the mandate's Olympic Committee, established in 1933, only one was ethnically Palestinian (one was British and seven were [Jewish] representatives of Maccabi) (Yekutieli 1975: 133-138, cited in Harif 2009: 26). Although Israel would not participate in an Olympics until 1952, by which time the Olympic Committee had been reorganised, the Maccabi monopoly over the initial committee meant that non-Maccabi members would not have been chosen for selection. During the Mandate, Arab and Jewish (and British) sports were organised

separately. As a result of the Zionist networking and the muscular Judaism movement, Jewish teams were more economically and socially profitable than the Arab ones, and they developed independently with little interaction (Galily and Ben-Porat 2013: 2). *Filastin*, an Arab newspaper active during the Mandate, had a near-daily column between 1944 and 1947 arguing that Jews and Arabs should unite to harness the nation-building characteristics of sport in order to unify and strengthen Palestine (Galily and Ben-Porat 2013: 2). However, while accepted as a concept, it failed in practice. It seems likely that this was because neither the Arab nor the Jewish population wanted to strengthen the other side because that might jeopardise their own stakes in their shared territory. There is certainly a history of Palestinian football within the modern Israeli state that developed independently of the Jewish clubs. Israeli and Palestinian sociologists, such as Amir Ben-Porat (e.g. 2012, 2014; and 2009, 2013 with Yair Galily) and Tamir Sorek (e.g. 2003a, 2003b, 2007, 2009), as well as Jerusalem-born scholars in other fields, such as Issam Khalidi (2014) and Alon Raab (2016 with I. Khalidi), have contributed to an enormous literature on how football fits within the Palestinian nationalist rhetoric in both contemporary Israel and the Palestinian Territories. However, the monopoly on the sport has been maintained by Jews, and as a result there is little space for Palestinians to use the same platform for their own explorations of nationalism. Therefore, it seems that Jewish-Israeli and Palestinian-Israeli involvement in the sport is governed by a football code whereby the two perspectives adhere to different systems of conduct, which affords varying freedoms of identity. Notably, this means that for Palestinians football was never associated with in-group chauvinism and masculinity (Sorek 2009, discussed below).

As a result, professional football fulfils different functions for Jews and Palestinians, and thus is not used to bring individuals together to advance normalisation.¹⁶⁸ In light of sport's nationalistic developments, discussed in Chapter 2, the lack of space for nationalism in Palestinian-Israeli football can be contrasted with Glasgow's Celtic FC representing the city's Irish minority (Bradley 1994), as well as Spain's Basque and Catalan minorities being represented by Athletic Bilbao (MacClancy 1996: 182ff.) and Barcelona FC (Allison 1986: 2-3) respectively. Sport is an arena in which Israelis, both Palestinian and Jewish, simultaneously operate, but an arena which otherwise privileges the Jew. Taking a neo-Marxist approach, Brohm (1978) suggests that sport maintains this power dynamic by creating the illusion of a lack of structure and thus a figurative opportunity for integration. Palestinians are thereby offered a zero-sum choice: use football to find acceptance within the Jewish matrix, or use it as a podium of national expression (Sorek 2007: 7). They have overwhelmingly chosen the former. There are indications, highlighted by Zubida (2016), suggesting a reclaiming of Palestinian pride, although my own fieldwork (2016, 2017) suggests that these indications are patterns of order that still do not contest the larger Jewish monopoly.

Bnei Sakhnin's home stadium, the Doha Stadium, was named after the Qatari capital in honour of the Gulf state's donation of USD \$6,000,000 toward its construction (Nahmias 2006). This funding, Nahmias reports, was demonstrative of peaceful and sympathetic gestures bolstering both Qatari-Israeli relations and pan-Arab support for Palestinians. Qatar has previously attempted to broker relations between Gaza and Egypt and has supported Palestinians living in Gaza and the West Bank. Although Qatar has never formally recognised Israel's statehood and does not allow Israeli citizens to enter its territory (making

¹⁶⁸ As discussed in Chapter 4, as a sport, football has been used in normalisation efforts, e.g. Katamon's youth programme in Jerusalem. This is a different matter from any normalisation efforts between members of different professional leagues.

an exception for the 2022 FIFA World Cup was a condition for Qatar being awarded the event), the emirate established diplomatic relations with Israel in 1996, although these have, at times, been strained.

Israeli institutions, ranging from the Prime Minister's Office to the Peres Center (Nahmias 2006; field notes, 2016), have spoken out against naming the stadium after the Gulf state and instead wish it to be named the Peace Stadium (or, failing that, the Municipal Stadium). "Peace", however, is not a name acceptable to all, especially those in Sakhnin. Indeed, several Palestinian-Israelis whom I interviewed (March 2016, English) had opinions about this: "Why is it that, of fourteen Premier League teams, it is the only Arab one that should name its turf for goodwill? Why hasn't a Jewish team done it?" "The Jews want the stadium to reflect a race-free place, where us Arabs are equal. But we're not equal, not in the stadium, and not outside it." "Political farce." "Equality is having the same naming rights as teams anywhere. It's our stadium. When Israeli companies sponsor us, when the government makes sure we can pay our staff, when anyone but us cares that we have safe equipment, then we can talk about names."¹⁶⁹

At the same time that football may seem to exclude possibilities for normalisation, it still serves as a shared code between Jewish- and Palestinian-Israelis. One of the most obvious ways to attest to this may be the use of the Hebrew language among Palestinian-Israeli teams. The degree to which Palestinians speak Hebrew and Arabic is determined by the extent of their interactions with the Jewish arena (Amara and Kabaha 1996). According to Ramzi Suleiman and Benjamin Beit-Hallahmi (1997: 222), even though Arabic is not universally spoken among Palestinian-Israelis, it remains central to Palestinian identity (see also Y. Suleiman 1994, 2013 (ed.); Amara 2006; Bitar 2011, evoking Sapir 1956; and

¹⁶⁹ For the record, Beitar Jerusalem: Teddy Stadium, named after former Jerusalem mayor, Theodor Kollek. Maccabi Haifa: Sammy Ofer Stadium, named after an Israeli military and shipping mogul. Maccabi Tel Aviv and Hapoel Tel Aviv: Bloomfield Stadium, named after a Canadian family, who, along with Canadian labour sports unions, financed its construction.

Hawker 2013). When Arabic is used within the Jewish domain, such as among Palestinian-Israeli members of the Knesset, it is perceived to be a marked linguistic choice. Despite have been an official language of the state until July 2018, its use has traditionally represented a deliberate decision to emphasise non-Jewish identity on the part of its speakers.¹⁷⁰ Even though the majority of Palestinian-identifying individuals in Israel speak fluent Hebrew, given that Arabic is central to Palestinian identity it follows that the use of Hebrew in an otherwise Arabic-Palestinian environment is likewise a marked linguistic choice. Whereas it might be unsurprising that Hebrew is the most common language among Bnei Sakhnin fans during a game against a Jewish team, it is also the *lingua franca* during games against other Palestinian-Israeli teams, such as Maccabi Ahi Nazareth FC. Even Arabic-speakers who would otherwise communicate with each other in Arabic tend to converse in Hebrew in the context of football (field notes, 2016, Hebrew). Sorek (2003b: 438) attributes this to Hebrew serving not so much as a language of communication as of football. Sorek sees Palestinian participation in football as a matter of Palestinians being included in Jewish-Israeli society in a manner that is not threatening to Jews. Whereas a Palestinian team might taunt a Jewish team in Arabic, thus triggering a reaction among other Arabic-speaking fans while in effect marking a distance from the overwhelmingly Hebrew-speaking Jewish players, two Palestinian teams may taunt each other using Hebrew. Not only are their slogans in Hebrew, e.g. “*Natzrat al hazayin!*” (Nazareth on the prick!), “*Zevel!*” (Trash!), but some are taken directly from anti-Palestinian rhetoric, e.g., “*Aravi melukhlakh!*” (Filthy Arab!) (field notes, 2017, Hebrew). Phrases such as “filthy Arab” seemed to be directed at Palestinian-Israeli players on opposing teams, whether on another Palestinian-Israeli team or a Jewish-Israeli team (the same definitions of “Arab” outlined on page 204 are also used by Palestinian fans in the context of football). Such deprecating phrases are, however, used with an air of irony

¹⁷⁰ Arabic was relegated to “special status” in July 2018 as part of the “Nation-State” bill (see footnote 20).

in mimicry of common Jewish parlance heard on and off the field. Taunts made to Jewish teams often reference the Holocaust (field notes, 2017) or battles in which Jews met defeat. Writing in the sports section of *Kul al-Arab* (an Israeli Arabic-language newspaper), Maher Awawde (1999, cited in Sorek 2003b: 435, 2007: 90) compares war metaphors used by fans, particularly metaphors for battles between Israel and its neighbours. Examples include referring to football teams as “commando units” who need to win by “hitting the target”. At times, these references expand into nation-making. For example, when playing Jewish teams in southern Israel, Bnei Sakhnin says they need to defeat the Jews once again, who, in 1973, lost to the Egyptian soldiers crossing the Suez Canal (Sorek 2003b: 435). Like Jewish teams signing Palestinian players, Bnei Sakhnin’s roster includes Jewish players. Ben-Porat (2001) suggests two reasons for this: 1) it reflects the commodification of Israeli professional sport that causes the team to seek quality players like any other; and 2) the team’s desire to demonstrate its inclusivity.

Despite increased openness (and legality) in celebrating Palestinian nationalism following the Oslo Accords,¹⁷¹ Palestinian nationalism has largely remained within the private domain, and demonstrations of it are often absent from Bnei Sakhnin games (interview, September 2017, English). In addition to the dearth of nationalist slogans and cheers, there are few Palestinian flags compared with Israeli flags flown by Jewish-Israeli teams, and the Israeli anthem, *Hatikvah*, is played at Sakhnin’s games just as it is at other Jewish-Israeli teams’ games. However, when I asked several Palestinian-Israelis about the use of *Hatikvah*, they reported singing alternative lyrics, principally replacing the last line of the refrain “Land of Zion and Jerusalem” with something like “Land of Peace and Jerusalem”. The use of the anthem lets them “maintain a sense of Israeliness, but [we] change the words as not to inflict harm upon [us]” (interviews, July 2017, September 2017, English

¹⁷¹ For example, the Palestinian flag, as well as using its colours for political purposes, was banned following the 1967 Six Day War until the passing of Oslo I in 1993.

and Hebrew). This desire for inclusion is different from what Cronin (1997) describes in Northern Ireland, where Protestant and Catholic football supporters sing different anthems simultaneously to avoid giving in to the other. Sorek suggests that the singing of *Hatikvah* might also be an action of respect for the (Jewish) state. Sorek (2007: 168-169) writes that Palestinian supporters stand prior to the singing of the anthem as a way of not standing *for* the Israeli anthem but still not to be seen as insolent toward it. While there are common cheers in Arabic, they infrequently express ethno-nationalist sentiment and instead are general cheers of encouragement, e.g. “Let’s go!” or are religious in nature, e.g. “Glory for Muhammad!”, “God is [the] greatest!”, “God, give strength to our brothers” (field notes, 2017, Arabic and English). One key feature at many Bnei Sakhnin games is the presence of Handala, a cartoon depiction of a ten-year-old boy that has come to symbolise Palestinian resistance following the 1948 *Nakba* (al-Ali 2009).

Based upon a survey conducted in 1995, Smootha (1999: 20) suggests that the majority of Palestinian-Israelis (69.8%) feel more connected to the Israeli state and the life it represents than to the Palestinian territories. While admittedly dated, the findings were consistent with my fieldwork. This opens up some internal conflict whereby “Palestinian” is framed as an identity partially within (Jewish) Israel and not diametrically opposed to Judaism, as is often implied or expressed through the antics of fans, especially of Jewish clubs (field notes, 2017). Overall, there seems to be some inconclusiveness regarding the absence of field-based nationalist displays. Although my research is consistent with Sorek’s (2007) in its interpretation that football is a non-threatening way for Palestinians to assert themselves in an otherwise Jewish milieu, Zubida (2016) believes that Palestinian engagement in Israeli football is evidence of a growing confidence in Palestinian self-determination.

In his article “‘The only place where an Arab can hit a Jew and get a medal for it’: boxing and masculine pride among Arab citizens of Israel”, Sorek (2009) deconstructs expressions of nationality and masculinity that have been integral to the Jewish and Zionist relationship with sport to discover that Palestinians within the Jewish athletic framework are not afforded the same platforms for expression. Initially subjected to inconsistent exclusionary and martial laws following the founding of the Israeli state, Sorek (2009) suggests that Palestinian-Israelis have been caught on the dilemma of *either* expressing nationalism *or* fitting within Jewish rhetoric—either decision being at the expense of the other. This relative silence on behalf of Palestinians marks a significant difference in Jewish nationalist clubs that use sport to fight for their minority nation elsewhere in the Diaspora, as well as other embedded nationalist movements, such as Black Power in the United States. For example, in addition to the early Zionist muscular Judaism clubs throughout the Diaspora discussed earlier in this thesis, sport gave the likes of Mohammad Ali, John Carlos and Tommie Smith a voice to highlight systemic discrimination of their race as part of the United States’ Civil Rights movement in ways never afforded to Palestinians. Perhaps this may be in part because the (Jewish) government monitored Palestinian sports clubs for provocative activity in ways that others, such as the Americans, were not monitored. Even in sports in which Palestinian-Israelis excel(led) over Jewish-Israelis, this surveillance may have suppressed the blossoming of sport as a nationalist vehicle (field notes, 2017). This correlates with sport creating artificially governed exhibitions of “excitement” (cf. Elias and Scotson 1994: 49; Elias and Dunning 1986).

In *Working Out Egypt*, Jacob (2011) attributes some of the alleged lack of masculinity (and thus chauvinism and patriotism) in Palestinian-Israeli sport to repeated defeats in Arab-Israeli wars, as well as to suppression under martial law. Hawari (2004: 33) argues that, under martial law, Palestinian-Israeli masculine pride was redirected towards being able to

provide for one's family. Furthermore, their national focus largely centred on their immediate communities, rather than on pan-Israeli or occupied ones (field notes, 2014). In addition to Palestinian communities often developing as islands flanked by Jewish ones, which was part of Zionist design (field notes, 2014), this community focus may also stem from the administrative detentions, deportations, curfews and travel restrictions characteristic of military rule. Thus, while football teams associated with Palestinian cities generated local support, they were unable to attract supporters from farther afield. Although martial law legally ended in 1966, these early patterns of regionally focused support continued among fans. The only Palestinian-Israeli football team that has been able to generate a broad Palestinian following outside of its district is Bnei Sakhnin (field notes, 2017).

Palestinian nationalism in football outside Israel

Football has provided a channel for Palestinian nationalism outside Israeli control, for example, for Palestinians living in the West Bank when under Jordanian rule or now under the Palestinian National Authority.

Although the Palestinian national team is registered with FIFA independently of Israel, and even plays in the Asian Football Federation, whereas Israel plays in Europe, it is based in Ar-Ram, a mostly Area C city, and as such is still subject to Israeli regulation.¹⁷² The two national federations share little in common. Each has filed a motion with FIFA to have the other banned, citing the occupation and manipulation of power (discussed in the

¹⁷² For example, Palestine has forfeited games after Israel has refused to issue exit visas to players, and some players have been refused re-entry by the Israeli authorities, claiming that football may be a guise under which to carry out jihadist activity that could threaten Israeli security (field notes 2016). In some cases, Israel blocks Palestinian players from playing football altogether. Under suspicion of prior jihadism, Mahmoud Sarsak was imprisoned in 2009 for three years without trial following his arrest at the Erez border crossing between Gaza and the West Bank (von der Lippe 2014: 1801). Armed with a permit to cross Israel, Sarsak planned to drive with another football player to negotiate an elite contract with a team in Balata, near Nablus.

next chapter). Unlike the Palestinian teams in Israel, however, there appears to be a greater sense of Palestinian pride among the fans in Gaza and the West Bank (interview, August 2017, English).

Professional football in Palestine is divided into the West Bank Premier League and the Gaza Strip Premier League, each fielding twelve teams. Teams within these leagues have broader fan bases than Palestinian teams in Israel, with fans travelling, if possible, to games. Cheering at games is more nationalist than religious in nature, and there are more Palestinian symbols in the stadia (field notes, 2017). In an effort to ensure the Palestinian identity of the teams, the Palestinian Football Association has backed down on the issue of the AFC allowing foreigners on Palestinian club rosters and insists that all signees be Palestinian or Palestinian-Israeli athletes (field notes, 2017).¹⁷³ *The National*, a non-government newspaper produced in Abu Dhabi, has produced a series of editorial articles seeing football as a “galvanizing game” that bonds Palestinian citizens together when the on-going conflict with Israel is otherwise a wide-reaching “assault on the aspirations of all Palestinian[s]” (*The National* 2014; see also Khaled 2015).

Outside Palestine, one might point to the Jordanian Al-Wehdat SC, a top-flight team comprising players from a Palestinian refugee camp team near Amman, as one that epitomises Palestinianism (Tuastad 1997). This is highlighted through the Derby of Jordan, when Al-Wehdat plays against another Amman-based team, Al-Faisaly, conjuring up memories of the 1970-1971 Black September between Yasser Arafat’s Palestine Liberation Organisation and King Hussein’s Jordanian Armed Forces.

¹⁷³ The Palestinian clubs are not the only ones that insist on locally-born and in-group athletes.

Boxing: a Palestinian enclave?

While football may not support Palestinian nationalism, there are some sports, mostly combative ones such as boxing and weight-lifting, that are dominated by Palestinians-Israelis. Boxing, for instance, is frequently identified as a Palestinian or at least a non-Jewish sport. When I was at the Wingate Institute in 2014, boxing came up in conversation with several informants (July 2014, English). Although boxing is not a sport trained at WI, other combat sports, such as *krav maga*,¹⁷⁴ are. I asked one *krav maga* student, 23, a Mizrahi from Netanya, whether he had a background in other fighting sports, including boxing. He shook his head: “Boxing? That is for Arabs and immigrants. *Krav maga*, that is for Israelis.” Another athlete at WI, an Ashkenazi from Tel Aviv, 22, reported that “Jews are left out of boxing; it doesn’t seem to be for us anymore,” adding that its loss is “sad, because boxing is such a great sport.” The identification of boxing as a minority sport in Israel fits its “lower-class” status patterns elsewhere in the world. Sociologists Bourdieu (1999: 438) and Wacquant (2004) argue that boxing is a lower-class sport because the body is the athlete’s instrument for obtaining something else. Thus pugilists negotiate social rank, race and inequality through fights.¹⁷⁵ Boxing briefly appeared as part of the Maccabiah Games (see Chapter 6). However, following several gold-medal wins in the 1977 games by Palestinian-Israelis, the sport was withdrawn from future Maccabiot, something which Sorek (2009: 1068) sees as symbolic of (Jewish) Israel withdrawing itself from the sport. Boxing continues to be dominated by Palestinians, who won nearly 80% of national boxing titles in the beginning of the twenty-first century (Sorek 2009: 1068). William Shehade, one of the

¹⁷⁴ Literally “combat contact”, this is a close-combat system of self-defence based upon boxing, wrestling and various martial arts developed by the IDF.

¹⁷⁵ As acknowledged by Besnier and Brownell (2012), there is no fixed correlation between sport and social class. Perhaps stemming from the introduction of the Marquess of Queensberry Rules (1867) that sought to improve safety and encourage sportsmanship, boxing also has a history as a gentlemen’s sport in nineteenth-century Britain because it challenged balance, rewarded tactics and improved spiritual and muscular health—qualities indicative of sufficient personal wealth, social standing and leisure time, associated with the upper classes (Boddy 2008).

[Palestinian-Israeli] 1977 Maccabiah champions who qualified for the event as the reigning national champion, is the current director of the Israeli Boxing Association, based in Kfar Yasif. As such, boxing is the only Israeli sport to be led by a Palestinian-Israeli and to be based in a Palestinian-Israeli town. Palestinian dominance, however, is still exerted under the Israeli flag—literally. The Israeli colours hang at the Palestinian-run headquarters in Kfar Yasif, where, like football games at Sakhnin's Doha Stadium, *Hatikvah* opens each match, regardless of the national identity of the athletes, all at the request of Shehade, to highlight the contribution of Palestinian athletes to Israeli sport (interview, July 2017, Hebrew).

If one sees football as a common space, one must not lose sight of the social and political hegemony at play and the fact that Jewish Israel has the upper hand. That is, Palestinians have adopted to the space of football under the rules and regulations of Jewish interest. Normalisation, in this sense, is never a goal or a surface outcome of any game. Even though there is a cleavage in Israeli identity that targets Jewish- and Palestinian-Israelis in football, it is fought overwhelmingly exclusively between Jewish clubs without Palestinians being given any agency in the debate. Instead, football is an accepted and non-threatening point of entry into Jewish society in which Palestinians, framed by Jews as a subordinated group, support the hegemony of the Jewish population over them.

Chapter 6. Sport as a contact zone

Whether it was a competition in Mpumalanga, South Africa, which featured a local Zulu dance troupe at the farewell *braai*, or the inability to find peanut butter to make my “lucky” pre-competition breakfast in Montemor-o-Velho, Portugal, my previous experiences as an internationally competitive athlete had already led me to sense that somehow sport can be a contact zone.¹⁷⁶ However, other than noting cultural differences, I did not realise the potential significance behind them until I rowed in a week-long competition near Munich, Germany, in summer 2014.

The competition in Munich featured competitors from forty countries, including Ukraine and Russia. Less than a week before the event, Malaysia Airlines Flight 17 had been shot down as part of an on-going conflict following Russia’s annexation of Crimea that March, and violence between the two states was increasing. Coincidentally, I travelled to Munich through Ukraine, where I had had the opportunity to spend a day in Kiev learning about the conflict from a more local perspective. The individuals with whom I spoke were Ukrainian citizens from the greater Kiev area, well away from the war in the Donetsk and Luhansk *oblasty*, and the language we spoke was Russian because I do not speak Ukrainian. Both of these factors raise potential political implications surrounding Ukrainian nationalism, Russophilia, Soviet history and eastern separatism.¹⁷⁷ However, my conversations were not

¹⁷⁶ Introduced by linguist Mary Louise Pratt, a “contact zone” “refer[s] to social spaces where cultures meet, clash and grapple with each other, often in contexts of highly asymmetrical relations of power, such as colonialism, slavery, or their aftermaths as they are lived out in many parts of the world today” (1991: 34).

¹⁷⁷ A poll by the International Republican Institute (2014: 5-6) demonstrates that 93% of citizens in the central district (including Kiev) oppose Russian involvement as well as 78% in the east. Opposition to Russia also transcends language, with 95% of native Ukrainian speakers and 79% of native Russian speakers expressing hostility towards Russian involvement. Snezhkova (2004: 85) asserts that Russian is still a dominant language

on-the-record interviews demanding maximal impartiality but rather informal discussions stemming from my own curiosity. As such, I was less worried about political opinions. My use of Russian did not go unnoticed, however. The first two people I approached looked at me and said (in perfect Russian): “We don’t speak that language anymore. Return when you speak our language.” By the time I boarded my flight to Munich, I had heard how some people want to “nuke the hell out of Putin”, how “Kiev” should be “Kyiv”¹⁷⁸ and how others felt belittled by the Russian government but equally frustrated by their own for what they perceived to be an insufficiently aggressive response. The solution for many Kievans was to ignore their north-eastern neighbour entirely.

At the Munich championships, however, instead of keeping a distance, the two countries shared more than the general venue. The two had been assigned neighbouring areas to set up and store their equipment. More than any other teams at the event, the Ukrainian and Russian squads each decorated their assigned space with national flags and club symbols, although I do not know whether this was an effort to stake a claim or was merely incidental. On the water, the teams’ performances were neck and neck, and they exuded the sportsmanship expected of well-versed elite athletes. They helped each other get boats on and off the water, raced fairly and congratulated each other afterwards with firm handshakes and a sincere: “*Pozdravlaiju. Spasibo za konkurs*” (Congratulations. Thank you for the race). Off the water, however, they ignored each other. While the physical space between the two teams’ areas was barely wide enough to fit an adult human, the gulf could have been the

for informal communication among otherwise Ukrainian-speakers, being seen without political implications when used in official contexts.

¹⁷⁸ I have opted to use “Kiev” over “Kyiv” due to its preference in English in accordance with major international journalism academies associated with the *BBC*, *CBC*, and *The New York Times* (e.g. *BBC Academy* (n.d.). “Names”. Accessed 15 June 2017 from www.bbc.co.uk/academy/journalism/article/art20130702112133537).

Pacific Ocean. Over the week, they avoided each other by timing their training sessions in order to avoid using the training facilities or cafeteria at the same time. The only time they acknowledged each other's presence was on the water.

One Ukrainian coach took full responsibility for his team's attitude: "It's a business trip; we're not here to make friends," he said. "When our plane touched down in Munich, I was like, 'We know the Russians are here, that's OK. You are athletes, and you will treat them as athletes too. You don't need to be friends, but until we're back on the plane on Monday, you need to be respectful—just like you would with everyone else. Got it?' I had a challenge, too, I had to set the example" (Russian).

As nearly all competitors had flown to Munich, the downing of the Malaysian jet was a frequent topic of conversation among them, regardless of nationality. Tangentially to one such conversation, I asked Andriy, a 28-year-old Ukrainian, whether he had particular feelings about the proximity of the Russian team's gear to his own: "Initially we reacted badly when we saw them. Like, why do we need to be near Russians, especially now? But the organisers told us that the plan had been written last year. So we'll just need to see them like anyone else, you know. I pretend they're Italian" (Russian). Lyubov, a 29-year-old Russian, had a similar dismissive reaction. "I'm just happy to have arrived in Munich," she said. "Racing is what I care about. I don't care who else is here, that doesn't need to affect me. We're all here to perform" (Russian). Another Ukrainian delegate, Misha, also 29, said he also ignores the Russians: "I'm so angry with Russia right now, I can't be nice. But I am trained to be a sportsman, which means I need to respect fellow competitors. I've just decided to pretend they're not here" (Russian).

While I did not follow the relationship of the two teams throughout the week beyond casual observation, the brief exchanges I had—initiated because I was excited to have an opportunity to practise my Russian, and my day in Kiev gave me elementary fodder for small talk—piqued my curiosity about sport as contact zone.

International and transnational sport is a primary area in which identity is negotiated in the international sphere. Big athletic events have often provided a stage for nationalist identities, and indeed some of sport's largest controversies are rooted in nationalism: Nazism at the 1936 Berlin Olympics (e.g. Large 2007), the political connections of the (Palestinian) Black September Organisation's massacre of Israeli athletes in Munich in 1972, the 1981 South African Rugby Tour of New Zealand in violation of the earlier Gleneagles Agreement¹⁷⁹ and on-going cricket matches between arch-rivals India-Pakistan following the partition of British India in 1947.

This chapter begins by exploring how sport was used by both Mandate Palestine and Israel to develop positive relationships between the territory's Arab neighbours and the global Jewish Diaspora as part of asserting its nationality. The chapter then proceeds to look at the contemporary experience of athletes representing Israel abroad. Much of this section deals with issues and barriers facing Israeli athletes as Jewish subjects (which they are seen as, regardless of personal religion). This is done by examining some of Israel's policies, notably its treatment of athletes with respect to religious festivals, as well as considering how Israel is received by non-Jewish friendly states. Finally, in keeping with themes in the previous two ethnographic chapters, I look at whether international sport supports any form of normalisation between Israel's Jewish and Palestinian populations. This is done, in part, through a case study of the Tel Aviv Marathon as an international event that reflects local discourse. While there seems to be limited support for Palestinian-Israelis to develop into

¹⁷⁹ The Gleneagles Agreement (1977) discouraged Commonwealth countries from having professional athletic contact with South Africa until the fall of apartheid.

international calibre athletes who could represent Israel, available support for Jewish athletes is not restricted—either in theory or in practice—to particular sectarian divisions. This is due to the adoption of Judaism as a national identity, which does not take the same form as a religious one. While this form of Judeo-nationalism was initially based on European Ashkenazi practice, it largely brings together different sects (although continuing a pattern in Zionism, it ignores some factions of Orthodox Jews who oppose Judaism as an ethno-nationalist identity).

Sport as building international relationships

“Soccer has always been considered to be one of the most important modernising forces of the continent [Africa]. The degree of competence an African state has achieved is measured on the soccer pitch. ... The World Cup Tournament, the ability to compete at the highest level, has become the ultimate measure of progress” (Wagg 1995: 37). As with Africa, Mandate Palestine also saw football as a place to assert the Jewish nation’s presence in the Middle East, and as a litmus test demonstrating its prowess and proving its worth, both to its Arab neighbours and to the wider Jewish Diaspora.

Mandate-era Zionists realised the capacity of sport to develop and defend relationships that could be critical in the construction of their envisioned state. These exchanges took several forms. A few tackled geopolitics by taking place between Eretz Israel and neighbouring Arab states. Others sought to develop connections with the Diaspora. A third class took the form of the Maccabiah Games, colloquially known as the “Jewish Olympics”, which brought Jewish athletes from around the world together to compete in the Holy Land.

Mandate-era exchanges with neighbouring Arab states

Although few games were played between the Mandate's Jewish and (Arab-) Palestinian teams pre-statehood, Jewish teams did play against teams from neighbouring Arab states. As I will show later with other forms of exchange, the motivation for these games was largely to reinforce and legitimise the Zionist plan for statehood. The Zionists saw matches with Arab states as a way to both assert the Jewish presence and potentially to ease ethnic tensions stemming from that presence within the otherwise Arab Middle East (H. Kaufman and Galily 2008: 86). Like Palestine, some of these Arab states were also under post-Ottoman British and French mandatory control. Transjordan (affiliated with the Palestinian mandate until 1946) and Iraq (a mandate until 1932 observing the Anglo-Iraqi Treaty) were under British dominion, whereas Syria and Lebanon were both part of a French mandate lasting from 1923 until 1945. Egypt was, to varying degrees, also controlled by British forces from the Anglo-Egyptian War of 1882 until 1956 following the Anglo-Egyptian agreement and the Suez Crisis. The presence of the British and French authorities in the area neutralised some of the anti-Semitism that might otherwise have been expressed in these states towards the Jewish enclave had they been independent. The Jewish teams from Eretz Israel were even able to develop positive relations with some of these states, notably with Egypt—a relationship that fast-tracked the (Mandate) Palestine Football Association's acceptance by FIFA (H. Kaufman and Galily 2008: 88). However, constructive exchanges with Arab states largely ceased with Israel's declaration of statehood, and subsequent events (e.g. Suez Crisis (1956), Six-Day War (1967) Yom Kippur war (1973)) have further strained relationships. Later in this chapter, I will discuss some contemporary issues that surround matches between Israel and the Arab states that reflect changes in political relationships.

Mandate-era exchanges with Diaspora populations

In addition to playing against teams from neighbouring Arab states, the Jewish teams in Mandate Palestine also played international fixtures against teams throughout the Jewish Diaspora. Not unlike matches with neighbouring Arab states, these matches also focused on strengthening connections between the two sides, in this case, Eretz Israel and the Diaspora. In addition to legitimising Zionism and the Jewish population in Palestine, these Diaspora-based football tours were often linked to Zionist propaganda designed to attract Diaspora Jews to make *Aliyah*, showing them Eretz Israel as their long-sought once-and-future state. Maccabi, the Jewish federation most involved in international outreach (see H. Kaufman 2007), had built connections with Diaspora sport clubs throughout Europe (e.g. *Gibor* in Plovdiv and *Bar Kochba* in Berlin (mentioned in Chapter 5)). Eventually, in 1921, the federation formed the Maccabi World Union as an international sister organisation to continue to grow networks throughout the Jewish world.

In 1924 Hakoah Vienna, an Austrian football team formed in 1909 as part of the muscular Judaism movement in Europe,¹⁸⁰ became the first Diaspora sport club to visit Mandate Palestine. Hakoah played three games, one against Maccabi Tel Aviv and two against British teams in Jerusalem and Haifa. Although the final game ended in a draw, Hakoah won the first two (5-1, 3-0). The Austrians returned a year later and again handed defeat to Maccabi and the British teams (11-2, 4-2) (H. Kaufman and Galily 2008: 87). These two visits were integral to the development of Jewish sport in Palestine for two reasons. First, the matches generated a lot of excitement and attention for all those involved. The Viennese players were met with great enthusiasm by local Palestinian Maccabi players, thousands attended the games, and media in Austria, Britain and Palestine followed the Viennese closely on their tour (field notes, 2014). As the games were not competitive enough to be

¹⁸⁰ Reflecting upon meanings of names of clubs associated with muscular Judaism discussed in Chapter 5, “Hakoah” is Hebrew for “the strength”.

particularly interesting in themselves, the media served as propaganda, as it drew attention to Maccabi's welcoming treatment of the visiting Jewish athletes and Hakoah's experience (field notes, 2014). The second reason is that Hakoah, having won the Austrian professional football championships, was recognised as a top-calibre team, and its visits are credited with improving the standard of football in the mandate by exposing local teams to a higher quality of play and stronger training regimes (field notes, 2014). Although it was the most notable in solidifying football as a vehicle for Zionism, Hakoah Vienna was not the only European club to visit Mandate Palestine. Other key teams to visit include Magyar Testgyakorlók Köre Budapest and Hrvatski Nogometni Klub Hajduk Split. Some of the visiting teams were Jewish or had Jewish connections (Magyar Testgyakorlók Köre Budapest, for example, had been founded by Jewish businessmen in 1888 and drew the majority of its players at the time from Jewish ranks; Foer 2004: 84-85), but others had no Jewish background at all.

In 1925, Maccabi Tel Aviv travelled to Europe for a series of twenty football matches against teams associated with the Maccabi World Union. After a visit to Vienna, where it again lost to Hakoah, it played against Jewish teams in Poland and Czechoslovakia affiliated with the Maccabi World Union, where it fared better and finished the tour having only lost three of the twenty games (H. Kaufman and Galily 2008: 87). Although Maccabi Tel Aviv won most of its games, the tour focused on attracting foreign players to Eretz Israel, and the games became "a propaganda tool for awakening Jewish consciousness" (Fehér 1937, cited in Maroti and Dumitrescu 2010: 899). This intention may be evidenced in part through the games taking place exclusively between Maccabi-associated teams. Two years later, Maccabi Haifa was invited to tour the United States, a tour that was significantly less successful in promoting Zionism than Maccabi Tel Aviv's European fixtures. To begin with, Maccabi Haifa, unable to field a competitive team, was bolstered by professional athletes from Hungary, some of whom were allegedly anti-Semitic and exclusively involved with the tour

due to the financial incentives (H. Kaufman and Galily 2008: 87). The Hungarian players, as well as some of the Jewish-Palestinian ones, defected at the end of the summer and did not return to Palestine. Moreover, the lack of general interest in football (soccer, not American football) at that time in America led to poor match attendance, funding and negative media attention (field notes, 2014). While less successful as a propaganda trip, Maccabi Haifa's payment of professional Hungarian stars to increase the team's successes and the defections contributed to domestic tensions in Palestine between the Maccabi and the newly-formed Hapoel federations over the purpose of athletic outreach (vis-à-vis differences expressed in Chapter 4). Despite some negative fallout from the Maccabi Haifa tour, the organisation continued to organise a chain of successful football tours to play the United States' Diaspora. The Maccabi Haifa tour followed an earlier tour by Hakoah Vienna. Although met with some negativity from members of the Jewish Sabbath Alliance of America for scheduling games on Shabbat (Gurock 2008: 77), Y.I. Sivitz, a *Jewish Record* columnist at the time, reflected upon the tour, claiming that "the spirit of Hakoah is worth far more for the Jewish people than the hundreds of Jews who say psalms in synagogues and the hundreds of students who fill the American *yeshivas*" (Gurock 2008: 77-78).

Another notable tour took place in 1939, when Maccabi Tel Aviv completed a five-month tour of Australia. During this tour, the team competed in some of the matches as "Palestine" rather than as Maccabi Tel Aviv. Referring to the team as "Palestine" reflected the political primacy Maccabi associated with itself and outwardly demonstrated the idea of a cohesive nation. Like the earlier tour to the United States, the Australian tour also had a troubled reception. Prior to Maccabi's arrival, the Grand Mufti of Jerusalem, who sought to dampen any recruitment effort as part of the tour, had sent notice to Australia: "Palestine

Soccer Team. Sending out a few terrorists to play against you in Australia.”¹⁸¹ Although Australia did have several Jewish football clubs (and indeed had competed at the 1932 Maccabiah Games in Palestine), it was at the time—as had been the United States—chary of the repercussions of the football tour. In particular, Australia was wary of involving itself in any activity that could be associated with Jewish immigration, especially as the government was coming under pressure to increase its Jewish refugee quota in the lead up to the Second World War (see Markus 1983). (In fact, as pointed out by Rutland 1985: 33, Australia’s quota was still among the highest of the thirty-two countries at the International Conference on Refugees.)¹⁸² This uneasiness in being associated with the Diaspora, combined with several embarrassing defeats by Australian teams, led to some negative press, including an article in *The Sydney Morning Herald* (1939: 15) claiming that the test series involved a “wretched standard of play” that led to “resentment among paying spectators”. The newspaper proclaimed that the New South Wales State Soccer Association needed to safeguard itself against further “poor-class” tours that are “likely to prejudice, irreparably, the sporting public against the Soccer code” and that future tours should be limited to representatives of the British Empire.

The games demonstrated the transformation of the former Diaspora Jews into the very antithesis of the anti-Semitic stereotypes of others. Even with negative publicity, hope lay in the belief that individual Diaspora Jews would be inspired by the dramatic transformation of the New Jew they saw on the playing fields and would make *Aliyah* to realise the possibility

¹⁸¹ Australian Online Football Museum (2013, August 10). “1939 Palestine Tour of Australia”. Accessed 4 September 2017 from www.ozfootball.net/museum.

¹⁸² Convened by then-President Franklin D. Roosevelt (US) in Évian-les-Bains, France in 1938, the conference sought to address the growing number of Jewish refugees fleeing Nazi Germany. In her autobiography, Golda Meir (as the unofficial secretariat of the Histadrut, which had become the *de facto* executive branch of the Zionist movement; Tzohar 1986: 505-506) recounts how she was there in the “ludicrous capacity of the ‘Jewish observer from Palestine’” (Meir 1975: 158). Given only observer status, Meir was unable to address the conference and was forced to sit in the audience, away from the official delegates (Meir 1975: 158; Brustein 2003: 1-2). With the British controlling Palestine’s Jewish immigration quota, a silenced Meir describes listening to other representatives debate the fate of those whom Meir describes as her own in terms of impersonal numbers and quotas. Meir, however, claims she was unaware of the future death camps, fearing instead that Jews unable to leave Nazi Germany would be treated as lepers and untouchables (Meir 1975: 158).

of a similar transformation for themselves. During the Second World War, Hapoel also initiated international sporting events, and along with Maccabi, played against soldiers from Australia, Czechoslovakia, Greece, India, Poland, South Africa and the United States (Harif and Galily 2003: 43). However, unlike previous tours that spread Zionism, these ones aimed to develop positive relations with foreign powers as a form of self-protection surrounding anti-Semitism and the Holocaust.

Statehood-era exchanges with Diaspora populations

Following Israel's declaration of statehood in 1948, sporting exchanges continued to expose diasporic Jews to the success of statehood and to inspire them to be part of the to-be-continued upward trajectory of the now *Israeli* Jews. Harif's *Zionism of Muscles* (2011) recounts these early recruiting trips and Israel's early use of sport in connection with its foreign-policy aims in the first half of the twentieth century. Again, the results of these international scrimmages were measured not by the number of netted balls but by the number of (one-way) inbound passport stamps.

A series of Olympic qualifying football matches between Israel and the Soviet Union in 1956 exemplified the role of propaganda in Jewish outreach. Several years prior, in 1953, diplomatic relations between the two countries were severed (see Ro'i 2003), and while relations were thawing as part of Khrushchev's de-Stalinisation reforms, the matches took place with a still-strained nationalist undertone. This two-game series, however, was important because, even with reduced support from the Soviet government (and additional Israeli-spurred antagonism toward its foreign and domestic policies), left-leaning Israeli Ashkenazim were somewhat sympathetic to the Soviet Union as a former homeland. Russian culture, language, art and politics had all influenced Ashkenazi Zionist ideology. More recently, the Soviet Red Army had helped secure the release of Jews from Nazi camps during

the Holocaust, having previously rescued many from pogroms during the Russian Civil War (1917-1922) (Helman 2008: 118 n.188). Israeli players (representing Hapoel Tel Aviv, Hapoel Petah Tikva, Maccabi Tel Aviv and Maccabi Jaffa football clubs) initially travelled to Moscow for the first football match armed with material to convince, and then support, Russian Jews to follow their earlier brethren to Israel (Galily and Ben-Porat 2013: 39). Despite this Jewish-brethren connection and the all-Jewish-Israeli team, no player for the Soviet team, to the best of my knowledge, was affiliated to a Jewish-specific home club.¹⁸³ In the first meeting, the Soviet Union team scored a landslide 5-0 victory in Moscow. Less than a month later, the Soviets travelled to Ramat Gan, outside Tel Aviv, where they again defeated the Israelis in front of a home crowd. As with the earlier match, the score did not determine the victors, at least in the minds of the Israelis, who already saw themselves as the inferior younger brother to the Soviets (interview, July 2014, Russian). On the day of the match in Tel Aviv, Jewish-Israelis around the state left work at noon to join the 60,000 spectators¹⁸⁴ or to listen on the radio to the game, which had been described as “two hundred million Russians against two million Israelis” (Rimon 1956, cited in Helman 2008: 118, n.193). Even the event tickets depicted an image of players from the two nations shaking hands, suggesting sportsmanship transcending borders (Gabai, cited in Helman 2008: 118, n.197). Despite losing the home match (1-2), Israeli pride was bolstered through their lone goal into the Soviet fortress (see Harif 2003: 119-120, 129-130). Israel, never expecting to win anyway, left the two-match series satisfied that it had demonstrated to one of its most prominent motherlands that it has survived on its own and flourished—a demonstration it hoped would encourage Soviet Jews to make *Aliyah*. 1956 and 1957 were marked with a notable swell in immigration, but I do not know how much of this can be pinned on these

¹⁸³ “Football Match: 11.07.1956 Soviet Union v Israel” (n.d.). *EUFootball.info*. Accessed 14 May 2016 from https://eu-football.info/_match.php?id=14706.

¹⁸⁴ In 1956, there were 1.87 million Israeli residents (Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs (1998, December 24). “Population of Israel: General Trends and Indicators, Fig. 1”. Accessed 01 March 2018).

athletic endeavours.¹⁸⁵ In much the way Wagg (1995) describes for Africa, Israel had shown that it could field a competitive football team; it had finally come of age. Israeli poet Natan Alterman (1962: 145) wrote about the match that, through scoring its single goal, the Israeli team had kicked through the walls that had, thus far, prevented Russian Jewry from coming home.

The Maccabiah Games

Today, perhaps the most lasting edifice of Zionist sporting practice is the Maccabiah Games, now a multi-sport event held every four years in Israel. International Jewish athletes from around the world, as well as all Israeli athletes (regardless of religious or ethnic identity), are eligible to participate. Although I did not conduct any research involving the Maccabiah, it remains relevant to understanding sport as a contact zone and as a method of disseminating Zionism, especially as the event has endured for more than 85 years. The Games were first organised as part of Maccabi's international outreach in 1932, and, apart from a break during the Second World War, have now regularly taken place twenty times, most recently in 2017.

Ostensibly, the Maccabiah is structured as an opportunity for Jewish athletes to convene, meet each other and learn about their heritage. However, the event is rooted in Zionist immigration and Maccabi's sport outreach in the 1930s.

Inspired by the 1912 Olympics, Maccabiah founder Yosef Yekutieli sought to incorporate a similar feel of nationalism in Jewish athletes. Three years after proposing the idea of a "Jewish Olympics" at the Maccabi World Congress in 1929, nationalism was on full display at the inaugural Maccabiah. Twelve horse-riders in the opening ceremony signified the twelve tribes of Israel, speeches throughout the event praised the Jewish presence in

¹⁸⁵ Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs (1998, December 24). "Population of Israel: General Trends and Indicators, Fig. 2". Accessed 01 March 2018.

Palestine, and Zionist flags and anthems hung in the air. The mayor of Tel Aviv, Meir Dizengoff (1911-1936), opened the inaugural event with an invitation to the visiting Diaspora Jews to “marvel over the achievements made in Palestine during fifty years of Jewish settlement.” Dizengoff articulated the Zionist message of the Games as he continued, “And when you return to your countries and homes, please tell all our brothers around the world that here in our country and in Tel Aviv the pioneers are preparing the land for immigrants from the Diaspora. We are waiting for our brothers to join us here and take part in the national creation” (Helman 2007: 100). Although most athletes did return to their home countries at the conclusion of the Maccabiah and were encouraged to apply for permission to make *Aliyah* from the mandate government, some opted to remain in Palestine undetected. In this sense, the two Maccabiah Games before Israeli independence, held in 1932 and 1935, were opportunities for Zionists to smuggle more Jews into Palestine than the mandate otherwise permitted (Helman 2007: 99).

Representing the Jewish state abroad

In Chapter 2, I looked at Caroline Faure et al. (2014)’s work on Team USA athletes competing internationally and showed that they experience collective effervescence comparable to Durkheim’s collective identity ([1912] 1954). Several Israeli national team rowers also spoke about the collective pride they experience representing the Blue and White (following: interviews, July 2014, English). One Jewish-Israeli, Francesca, 25, explained this pride: “I remember when I got my first ‘Israel’ kit, I even slept in it. I was so proud to represent my country. I guess I felt like an ambassador! I never used to think about what that means for other people, but I’m aware of politics more now, so I do [think about it] a little.

But at the end of the day we're all athletes. I like meeting people from other countries; I have now friends all over [the world]." Francesca's 26-year-old Mizrahi teammate, Obadiah, also feels a sense of effervescence when he competes abroad. "I want everyone to know I compete for the country. I definitely have some swagger when I strut through public places like *Natbag* [the Tel Aviv airport] in my kit on the way to an event—like a lion sniffing prey. I want people to notice me, that makes me proud, and in turn makes me feel supported." "I was so proud to represent my country and have the Star of David on my chest!" says Jawahar, 24, a Palestinian rower. After a pause, however, Jawahar continues, more sombrely, "My grandmother didn't approve. She wanted me to be a doctor, not a rower. She thought I should be saving people, not sympathising with oppressors. But like everyone else, she turned it into a Jewish thing. She lives in the West Bank. I get it, but I'm Israeli." The statements show that some feelings about representing Israel are universal, whereas others are more specific to the state. Some of the tensions that I will explore throughout this chapter concerning the international representation of Israel are exemplified through the country's participation in professional football under the auspices of FIFA. Therefore, in order to situate these tensions, the next several paragraphs will establish the history of Israel's involvement in FIFA and how its current position in the European league has led the state to periodically find itself suspended between continents.

Between two continents

In addition to the Maccabiah Games providing continuity to one aspect of Zionist sport, another residual artefact is Israel's UEFA membership, as introduced in the previous chapter. While Jewish teams initially played neighbouring Arab states, enmity between Jewish-Palestine and its Arab neighbours increased toward the end of the mandate years until the hostility contributed to the 1948 Arab-Israeli War. That war, as the beginning of the on-

going Israeli-Palestinian conflict, was fought between a coalition of Arab states and the newly minted Israel. As a result of the animosity, Israel has struggled to play in football competitions with its immediate neighbours and has often played farther afield as a result. In 1954 it became a founding member of FIFA's Asian Football Confederation (AFC), playing specifically in the West Asian Football Federation, a regionally defined conference that grew to include much of the Middle East. As more Arab nations joined, Israel's presence became anomalous. For example, taking place less than a year after the 1956 Suez crisis, Israel advanced directly to the 1958 World Cup without stepping on to the pitch after each of its opponents in the joint AFC and African qualifying division forfeited matches to avoid playing against it.¹⁸⁶

Following the 1973 Yom Kippur War, Kuwait, another member of the West Asian Football Federation, initiated a boycott against playing Israel (Podoler 2017: 10). In the 1974 Asian Cup, this boycott was backed by then-new AFC member North Korea—a state with no recognisable Muslim population, but one that has thus far refused to recognise the legitimacy of Israel. Other Muslim AFC member states followed Kuwait and North Korea, and increasing political pressure from these states contributed to Israel's expulsion from the Asian league in 1974. For another twenty years, Israel played largely outside the regional conferences. During this time, it remained eligible for FIFA competitions and briefly played, when permitted, in the football federations of Oceania, Europe and South America before becoming a full member of UEFA in 1994.

Like Israel's participation in the AFC, its affiliation with UEFA has not gone unchallenged. Opponents cite its geography as a reason to exclude Israel (interview, February 2016, English), but not all other UEFA member states are unambiguously European. Some UEFA states, such as Turkey and Russia, are transcontinental. Like Israel ahead of it,

¹⁸⁶ FIFA decided that a country should not qualify without playing at least one match and held a play-off between Israel and Wales, a UEFA runner-up.

Kazakhstan joined UEFA in 2002, having also played for the AFC since 1994 following the break-up of the Soviet Union.¹⁸⁷ A more problematic issue has faced Israel since 2013, when the FIFA-initiated Task Force Israel-Palestine conducted an inquiry into Israel's alleged human rights violations toward Palestinian citizens. This grievance extends beyond mere football hooliganism and touches upon Israel's political relations with its neighbours.

Initiated by Jibril Rajoub, chair of the Palestinian Football Association (mentioned in Chapter 4 for calling TPSS's Sderot-Yatta football match in 2014 "a crime against humanity"), the purpose of FIFA's Task Force Israel-Palestine was to investigate whether to revoke Israel's membership on the basis of the following alleged injustices: 1) Israel's control over the movement of Palestinian people, thereby preventing the development of Palestinian football; 2) its control over the movement of equipment and materials into Palestine; 3) the Israel Football Association's inclusion of teams from Israeli settlements in the West Bank; and 4) racism toward Arabs and Palestinians within Israeli football. Through these allegations, sport has become a way to put Israel directly on trial for ostensible breaches of international law. While FIFA has not yet (as of April 2018) imposed sanctions on Israel, should it vote to revoke Israel's membership, Israel could not participate in international competition under FIFA's jurisdiction, though its membership could be reactivated upon amelioration of the grievances agreed upon by the governing body (cf. South Africa's apartheid-era sporting

¹⁸⁷ A briefing paper (Cornell and Engvall 2017) for the Institute for Security and Development Policy, a Stockholm-based non-profit think tank, examines Kazakhstan's alignment with Europe rather than Asia. Cornell and Engvall (2017: 5) acknowledge that Kazakhstan still needs to reform its political system significantly if it is to fully adopt a European persona (Kazakhstan has yet to be accepted by the Council of Europe as a result of human rights violations; 2017: 31) but conclude that it was right to be accepted by Europe, citing Kazakhstan's "Path to Europe" political mission, renewed education policies to target European standards, its concept of an inclusive civic nation-state as well as Europe's increased interest in its geographical position as a transport corridor to Asia. Additionally, an article for a local media service in Tajikistan, *Tajikistan News ASIA-Plus*, cites an interview with the president of UEFA, Michel Platini, in which Platini opposes the ability of the other post-Soviet states in the AFC (Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan) to join UEFA, claiming they had made an earlier allegiance to the Asian federation (Chorshanbiyev 2012).

boycotts; Booth 1998: 88). As I mention in the second half of Chapter 2, Israel dismisses several of Rajoub's complaints as necessary contributions towards Likud-era expansionism and national security, thereby denying any wrongdoing.

A quick Google search reveals numerous inquiries as to why Israel is even a member of UEFA, given its lack of a European presence, reiterated by fans throughout Europe and some in Asia as well. This is not a universal sentiment for sure, but much like my talking with Ukrainians while in Kiev about the place of Russia in their national culture, I spoke informally with football fans in several European countries about the propriety of recognising Israel as a European participant. While not surrounded by as much fanfare as UEFA—or even other continental events in which Israel participates, such as Eurovision—competing on the European circuit seemed as normal as eating breakfast to the athletes I met at the Wingate Institute in 2014. While Israel is not geographically within the contiguous European continent, it is a member of many treaties and agreements with European member nations (e.g. CERN, OECD, the European Union's European Neighbourhood Policy, Council of Europe observer status), and there have been proposals to develop Israel-EU relations further (e.g. Müller 2006), and even an interest expressed in applying for EU membership (8.5% of Israelis are already EU citizens through additional citizenships).¹⁸⁸ Halfway through the calendar year, many of the athletes had either recently represented Israel or were hoping to do so soon in their respective sports' European championships. "I'm Jewish, family's German; pretty sure that makes me ethnically European. Same with many of us here. Geography says nothing about who we are. It lets Kazakhstan—well east of us, by the way—count as European but totally ignores who we are as a people" says one Jewish athlete, 19 (English). Another Palestinian-Israeli athlete, 19, remarked that competing on the European circuit is about "connecting with a shared culture and unique history" (English), reflecting her belief

¹⁸⁸ "BGU Survey Reveals Major Israeli Support for the European Union and NATO". (2011, July 12). Ben-Gurion University of the Negev. Accessed 03 March 2016 from http://in.bgu.ac.il/en/Pages/news/EU_NATO.aspx.

that Israeli culture is reflective of the state's European connection rather than an Asian one. Although the general consensus was that Israel belongs in Europe rather than Asia, this was not to reject feelings of belonging more locally: "I don't think competing in Europe means we are trying to be like Sweden or France. Israel is in the Middle East, I'm proud of that. But culturally, I think we fit in more with others in Europe" (Ashkenazi Jewish athlete, 21, Hebrew).

Israelis do not, however, have an exclusively positive perspective of Europe. In fact, apathy and contempt toward the continent—or at least Euroscepticism—was a recurring theme in my interviews. Some commented that, with respect to the EU, the concept of a supranational continent is not only illogical but is destined to fail. This framework is likely augmented by Israel's relatively precarious position in the Middle East and the state's preoccupation with issues within itself. Although perhaps a slight hyperbole, Henry Kissinger, former US Secretary of State, addressed this concept when he claimed in referring to Israel's seemingly unconstructive negotiations with Egypt: "Israel has no foreign policy, it has only a domestic policy" (1973, cited in Blackstone et al. 2014: 142). One Jewish political science student at Tel Aviv University, 22, suggested that Israel is a fascinating country to study because it has so many of the world's problems within its own borders (interview, July 2014, English). Perhaps, Kissinger and domestic policy aside, contempt for and hesitation towards Europe may be subsumed in the belief that the continent has not been a source of constant support for Israel historically. Herzl-era Zionists sought to escape anti-Semitism in Europe, the Nazis conducted a programme of anti-Jewish ethnic cleansing, and the British (Mandate) capped Jewish immigration quotas. According to Primor (2011), Israel feels punished by Europe, in part because Europe sees the Israeli state as a colonial power (especially with regard to the occupation), something Europe is uncomfortable with, perhaps

in seeking to atone for its own colonial histories.¹⁸⁹ For one Jewish professional football player, 26, a feeling of tenuousness about relations with Europe is a reason to emphasise his Israeli identity: “I do wonder how I’m received when I have played in France or England more than, say, if I were to compete in America or Japan. For me, the best thing when I go there is to be as Israeli as I can and make my identity their problem. They don’t want me to fit in, but I do. It’s not like I’m not trying to be European, I’m trying to be Israeli” (interview, July 2014, Hebrew).

Shaping appearances as a Jewish state

Israel’s perception as a state on the international circuit, whether within Europe or farther afield, is largely determined by policy within Israel itself and its identity as a Jewish state. Although Israeli Jews share at least some of the same religious beliefs, some tenets of Judaism have developed into a polysemic Israeli identity.¹⁹⁰ Certain Jewish events are honoured by most Israelis, whether Jewish or not, whether observant or not. For example, an increasing number fast on Yom Kippur (Day of Atonement) (field notes, 2016, English and Hebrew), and state-wide air-raid sirens call for two minutes of silent remembrance on Yom HaShoah (Holocaust Remembrance Day) and on Yom HaZikaron (Day of Remembrance), bringing many citizens to attention. The weekly Shabbat is a time for the family, if not

¹⁸⁹ While I opted not to explore colonialism in this thesis except in passing, as it does not tie directly into my discussion of sport, much has been made of Israel (and Mandate Palestine/Zionism) having colonial agendas. This view is predominantly propelled by Palestinian, academics including Said (1979), Massad (2006) and Jamal (2011).

¹⁹⁰ To understand Judaism as a nationality, one could compare key tenets of Israeli Jews with those from abroad. For example, the Pew Research Center (Lipka 2016) compared the opinions of Israeli and American Jews on the key elements of Judaism. One shared essential is remembrance of the Holocaust (73% US, 65% Israeli). US Jews ranked morality and equality higher than Israelis (69%-47% and 56%-27% respectively). Israelis emphasised tradition as the key to identity, something reiterated when pluralities on both sides claimed that a belief in God is unnecessary in the face of history (55% Israel, 62% US).

religion. To support itself as a Jewish nation, sanctions based upon religion are imposed upon all citizens—food in government buildings is kosher, marriages (and divorces) must be consecrated by a rabbi, and many businesses close and public transportation ceases on Shabbat. In this sense, attributes broadly associated with Judaism have come to be ascribed to even secular (and sometimes Palestinian-) Israeli identity. The congruence between Judaism and nationalism seeps into Israel's athletics. On the athletic stage, what statement does Israel intend—or does not intend—to make when it enters stadia in Doha or Muscat? What statement is received when athletes withdraw citing religious infringements?¹⁹¹

Given the Jewish-based platform of the state, it should be of little surprise that Israeli athletes expressed views that they too were accountable to Jewish law. In speaking with international-calibre athletes, as well as national team leaders and those involved in the administration of international sport, I came to understand how the state uses religion to mediate sporting contact zones and the degree to which Israel consciously uses its athletes to enforce a particular impression of itself. In some sense, athletes may be seen to be pawns in setting out and defending state interests. This can be seen in patterns of funding allocation, through selection and in the state's insistence that all athletes abide by a certain protocol that identifies Israel as a Jewish state. In this sense, the athletes representing Israel are chosen in part because they are able to reflect a self-gratifying image of the state, rather than being exclusively assessed on their performance (field notes, 2014, English and Hebrew). At times this creates a conflict of interest, as supporting the state's interests may mean forgoing any of the athletic success for which they have trained. Although sport is not endowed with national power in the same way as other institutions—the economy, education and government policy, for example—it earns power as an emotive topic for the public (field notes, 2014, 2016).

¹⁹¹ This concept pigeonholes certain other states as anti-Jew. While the current Zionist Right supports a single-identity Jewish state, this highlights one issue with seeing “Israeli” as synonymous with “Jewish”. While I am trying to demonstrate in this chapter that Judaism has become a nationalism, this does not imply homogenising the religion.

As an elite athlete myself, I struggled to grasp how athletes serve as state subjects in ways that may not be self-serving. How did these Jewish laws affect athlete experience? An initial question of mine, although one I quickly realised was overwhelmingly naïve, concerned the role of the Jewish calendar. How does a top athlete who has trained several times a day for years deal with the discovery that a major championship is scheduled for Yom Kippur and he must withdraw? What if he is not even Jewish but just happens to have been born in Israel? As I quickly learned, although this is an issue faced by all Israeli athletes, there is very little space for negotiation outside the state agenda, and as such, little energy is invested in debating personal interest over state or religious demands. There are a variety of ways through which Jewish identity can affect athletic training and performance in sport. For example, athletes may adhere to kosher diets, dress in particular ways that emphasise modesty or participate in training segregated by biological sex. However, one pervasive marker of Jewish identity that was brought up routinely by my informants as having a significant impact on their sport-related careers was that of religious festivals and holy days. In the following section, I will examine several aspects cited by my informants regarding the impact of Jewish festivals on their ability to train and compete.

Festivals

Shabbat

I met Nuri, a three-time competitor in the weightlifting world championships, in July 2014. Currently Nuri is a director of the coaching academy at the WI and leads the Israeli Weightlifting Federation. As part of his first position, he oversees much of the training for prodigious young athletes at WI's multi-sport youth academy. According to Nuri, balancing

self and state interests comprises part of the young athletes' initial training, as they learn what it means to represent a Jewish state. Grappling with self-interest and sacrifice is a repetitive theme throughout Judaism (e.g. Dein 2013), so sport is simply one way it is continued in daily life. In some contexts, it can be more appropriate to acknowledge that these athletes are ambassadors of Israel first and sportspeople second. Strict rules concerning the behaviour of athletics, however, are not concrete and have changed over the past generation, in part to place more focus on athletic performance (field notes, 2014). Today, while Israel still prevents its athletes from competing on certain religious days, prohibitions on training are often left to personal beliefs. For example, when Nuri trained in the mid-eighties, the weekly Shabbat was a universal day away from sport entirely. Since the beginning of the twenty-first century, however, it has become acceptable for athletes to train on Shabbat, and many athletes have chosen to do so (there are still some restrictions in place regarding competitions). An observant Jew when younger, Yana, 18, began training on Shabbat two years ago and noticed a significant increase in her performance. Although her overall weekly time in training did not increase (she altered her training timetable), she attributes performance gains to Saturday morning workouts. This is because, as a cyclist, Yana feels safer and better able to push herself harder when there are fewer cars on the roads.¹⁹² However, Yana smirked, fewer cars also means there are more cyclists and runners, as athletes in many sports identify Shabbat as an opportunity to develop endurance under what are assumed to be safer conditions (interview, July 2014, Russian).

For lower level athletes, not training on Shabbat need not affect performance. All, even elite athletes, have days away from training, and thus taking Shabbat for rest purposes is possible. However, in my experience, time away from sport is specifically calibrated in relation to pending competitions and is thus flexible. To have it inflexibly imposed by the

¹⁹² In a public opinion survey, the Pew Research Center found that 95% of secular Jews use transportation on Shabbat, as do 53% of Jews identifying as "not very religious" or Masorti. Very few, if any, others travel on Shabbat (Pew Research Center 2016: 24).

state and potentially affecting participation in desired competitions struck me as unusual. When I asked Nuri how he dealt with his missing critical events, he shrugged. “It just happens, you accept it, it doesn’t even occur to you to do otherwise” (English). I found it difficult to accept his answer. One of my biggest regrets as an athlete was missing the Olympic trials because of injury. However, *I* had withdrawn *myself*. I could not imagine how I would feel if my country, the one I had earned the opportunity to represent, had made that decision for me based on something that had nothing to do with my well-being or performance. Nuri replied that I do not understand his country.

Despite Nuri’s almost black and white perspective, through further interviews in July 2014, I would later learn that athletes do not casually accept not competing at big events because of religion—it can be a source of great stress and disappointment that has caused some to leave their sport entirely. Indeed, Nuri acknowledges that one of his jobs as a coach is to instil an attitude in his athletes that reflects the state’s Jewish heritage. He wants his athletes to compete for the state, not for themselves, which inevitably leads to most feeling they need to overlook their own desires at times. One of his Jewish trainees, 23, seems to have adopted this mentality: “My feelings don’t matter. For me, competing for the national team is like any work, only Israel is Boss. I follow Boss’s orders” (Russian). Another Jewish sports coach at WI does not see the two as necessarily incompatible: “I tell my students that who they are, their beliefs, their religion, everything is nestled in their bodies. That’s why we train. How they use their bodies, when, where and against whom they compete, how hard they are willing to go for the sport, for Israel, that all shows their soul” (English). Although it remains open, WI limits its operations on Shabbat—the cafeteria closes early, many of the residential athletes leave the facility to spend the night with their families, and most of the formal training stops. Nonetheless Nuri estimates that approximately only 20% of current WI athletes keep Shabbat, and the trainers aim to ensure that the observant athletes do not feel

ostracised from the rest of their teammates. The primary tool for this is to have all training on Shabbat be uncoached or have it as a time for athletes to make up sessions missed during the preceding week. Of the 80% who do choose to train on Shabbat, approximately half impose limits on their training. Such limits include completing less tiring sessions or supplementary training (e.g. a cyclist might practise yoga). Sometimes these limits are necessary consequences of wanting to adhere to religious Shabbat restrictions, including fasting and driving. Yosef, 27, a Jewish national-level rower based in Herzliyya, trains on Shabbat: “My parents are observant, [but] I stopped observing when I left home. I try to keep it quiet, though. I train alone, outside. I’m in nature, alone with the birds, in a way that feels more spiritual than when I really observed Shabbat as a kid. I don’t train sprints or lift weights, though. Oh, and I only train on Shabbat, never, ever on other days, like Yom Kippur. I wouldn’t even think of that” (English). Ilani, Yosef’s 22-year-old teammate, opts not to train on Shabbat, something she believes does not take anything away from her athletic abilities: “My religion is first for me. Being a good person comes before being a good rower. I work really hard during the week; trust me, by Friday, my body definitely needs the rest” (English). Another Wingate athlete, 18-year-old gymnast Aliza, feels avoiding training on Shabbat would make her less competitive: “Before I came to Wingate, I didn’t train on Shabbat, but then I came here and realised I can’t compete with everyone if I take extra days off when my body might not need the rest. So I train a little on it, maybe just conditioning” (Russian).

The WI, like the Israeli Olympic Committee, discourages athletes from competing on Shabbat, although this request is periodically breached. Most Israel-based organisations hold competitions on Sundays, but international events do not always align with the Jewish calendar. How to handle an event on Shabbat is dealt with on an as-needed basis (field notes, 2014). Some international competitions may hold parallel events for Israeli participants on

alternative days or make special exceptions that enable participation without breaking *halakha* (prohibited activities). For example, weight-classed athletes may be permitted to be weighed at a different time if the weigh-in window overlaps with Shabbat (as is common with weekend fights). At other times, though, the athlete is faced with deciding between observing the festival and competing. In the case of a more minor festival, like Shabbat, this decision is sometimes left to the athlete. If it is a more major event, such as Yom Kippur, Yom HaShoah or Yom HaZikaron, the athlete is generally withdrawn on behalf of the state (field notes, 2014). However, in the same way that the closure of public services on Shabbat affects everyone, any decision made by the state reflects its position as a Jewish agent—it does not matter whether the athlete is an observant Jew or a Palestinian-Israeli Muslim. This is where Israel's self-development as a Jewish state becomes very evident: Jewish state, Jewish laws. In this sense, Jewish events have come to be subsumed under a national identity that is adopted by all Israelis, regardless of identity (field notes, 2014).

While international competition in the past one hundred years has given questions of permitting sport on ritual days a higher profile, the question is not a product of recent globalisation. The permissibility of Shabbat competition can be traced back to 175 BCE, when Antiochus sold the Jerusalem priesthood to Jason, who supposedly supported the Hellenisation of the city and of Judea. One of the ways in which Greek influence was exerted was through sport training—done nude and on Shabbat, both of which were anathema to the Orthodox Jewish zealots (Sobovitz 2007: 168).

Despite the general avoidance of competition on Shabbat by Israelis, the Israel Football Association has scheduled its own football games on Shabbat since the 1930s. Although a subject continually raised in the Knesset regarding whether such games are constitutional, their appropriateness has been continually ruled as such, with measures in place to avoid penalising observant players—and indeed, the Elitzur sport organisation does

not sponsor higher level football teams precisely because those teams would need to play on Shabbat (see Chapter 5). In addition to playing on Shabbat, there are numerous prohibitions associated with the games that affect spectators as well as players: driving to matches, exchanging money for tickets or soft drinks, competition, playing for wages and using leather equipment. Like other football clubs around the world, Israeli clubs are an international business venture, and there remains a consensus that the squads are more economically viable and competitive when they play on Shabbat, even if doing so challenges traditional beliefs (field notes, 2014).

I spoke with four residential rhythmic gymnasts at WI with whom I shared living quarters about how they felt about holy day restrictions. Anya, 18 and a first-generation Russian-Israeli Jew, believed that honouring Jewish holidays is integral to representing the state abroad: “When you compete, you bring Israel to the world. If we can’t compete because of religion, that also shows the world who we are just as much” (Russian). One night I had dinner in the cafeteria with Lali, a quiet 15-year-old New York-born Jewish gymnast, and her parents, who were visiting for a week from the United States and making plans for celebrating Shabbat (at Lali’s insistence) several days later. Her father Elie looked at me, eyebrows discerningly raised: “Look at my child! Imagine, just two years ago, back in New York, she’d fight me when I’d drag her to the synagogue. She always wanted to be a gymnast, and she’d scream at me for ruining her Olympic dreams by not letting her train. Look at her now. She came to Israel to pursue her dreams, and she’s discovered her heritage. Now she is a champion of her sport and of His Name” (English). One of the older gymnasts, Flora, 19, who happily trains on Shabbat but believes she would not compete, has yet to compete internationally and is not sure how she would react if a meeting took place on Shabbat: “So far I haven’t had any events on festival days. It would be horrible, but since I wouldn’t have a choice [whether to compete], I just don’t think about it” (Russian). Although

centred around festivals, these responses showed me that both participation and non-participation are integral to building one's identity as an Israeli athlete. Elie's opinion of his daughter slowly transitioning from rejecting the synagogue to embracing her Jewish roots also brings out tensions between group and individual identity in a way not dissimilar to Nuri's review of balancing self-interest earlier on pages 253-254.

Major festival days

Some international competitions can be rescheduled to avoid Israeli athletes participating on the major festivals, such as Yom Kippur, Yom HaShoah and Yom HaZikaron, but many cannot. The 1988 Seoul Olympics provided a forum for such debate when the event clashed with Yom Kippur. Ultimately the Israeli fencing delegation did not attend, as a scheduling conflict could not be avoided. In a move that eliminated him from the competition, two-time light flyweight Olympian Yehuda Ben-Chaim forfeited his opening boxing match once in South Korea after it could not be rescheduled. Revital Sharon, a gymnast, was able to delay her competition until immediately after Yom Kippur. However, as Sharon had fasted for the previous twenty-five hours, her resulting performance may have been impacted (field notes, 2014). Eldad Amir and Yoel Sela, a sailing duo in their third Olympics and possibly Israel's best chance of a medal, knew that their lowest result in a multiday series of races would not count as a matter of course. Therefore, they skirted the issue of sailing on Yom Kippur by not participating in that day's race. This kept them in the regatta but without a safety net. Ultimately, the two finished fourth, a placement that might have been bettered had they competed in each race and thus been able to discard another race result (see also Galily and Ben-Porat 2009: 21, although the authors misidentify the sailors). Two other sailors, brothers Ran and Dan Torten, disregarded their state's prohibition on competing on Yom Kippur and opted to take to the water, not wanting to miss a race for

which they had trained for much of their lives. Although they were permitted to complete the competition, once back in Israel, the two received five-year bans from the Israeli Olympic Committee as a result of their participation on Yom Kippur. More than twenty-five years later, issues surrounding participation and non-participation on days such as Yom Kippur continue to reflect the relationship between one's personal and national identity.

As mentioned in Chapter 3 on methodology, while staying at WI, I trained with the weightlifting team. Weightlifting is a sport with ample built-in rest periods, enabling the body to recover between lifts—an ideal time to talk about sport. On one day, my focus was on how athletes deal with training for something only to not compete. Arik, 23, stepped back from the squat rack and looked into my eyes. “Mate,” he said, “I get up at 5am every day. I train, that’s all I do. I haven’t seen my family in years because I train. But that said, I’m a Jewish man. There has never been any question in my mind, competing on any holy day, even Shabbat, is never going to be an option” (English). While Arik’s tone is one of early acceptance, his secular training partner Anatoli, 19 and a Ukrainian *oleh* who had come to Israel seven years earlier, took a while to adjust to his new country’s restrictions: “I had to withdraw from something once because of Yom Kippur. I think I threw a vase; I broke things in rage when I found out I couldn’t participate. My coaches, though, they made it clear they were still proud of me for qualifying. My dad was even proud of me for withdrawing because he thought I recognised higher things in life—my personal goals are not the ultimate thing” (Russian).

Two Palestinian athletes expressed differing opinions (interviews, July 2014, English). Being unable to compete internationally on Jewish holidays left Belal, 26, feeling slighted. “I’m not sure the state wants athletes like me really representing them anyway. We rock the system. They want Jews, religious ones who proudly make a statement about not competing because of religion and such. Bold, mentally strong and faithful people, in the

Jewish way. Luckily I haven't found myself in this situation. It might be hard to control me!" Belal, from Nazareth, has always sought to distance himself politically from any Jewish regulation. Abduwahab, 22, grew up in a Jewish neighbourhood in central Tel Aviv, something that, despite being Palestinian, helped him develop an affinity for the Jewish state. He feels that supporting Israeli politics helps him identify with regulations that otherwise might be seen as not being in his interest. "I wanted to do a competition on Yom Kippur a few years ago. I didn't think it was fair for me because I'm not Jewish. That seemed wrong. However, I am Israeli. I have pride in that. I have pride in representing my country, even if sometimes I can't. That's part of representing Israel. But yeah, as an athlete, maybe I'd rather live in America or Britain, where I can do what I want."

Belal and Abduwahab's inability to compete on Yom Kippur demonstrates that recognising the festival is an aspect of Judaism that has been subsumed into the national identity associated with representing the state. More interesting cases are those of Yael Tugendhaft Albag and Dudu Aouate, which suggest that Israel expects its citizen-athletes to adhere to a particular code, whether representing the state or not. Albag was a non-state-sanctioned table-tennis athlete who self-funded her way to the 2013 Czech Open in Ostrava, an event that overlapped with Yom Kippur. Despite Albag's insistence that she did not play on Yom Kippur itself or wear a national team uniform at any point during the competition, the Israeli Paralympic Committee issued her with a two-year ban from the sport, timed to prevent her from qualifying for the 2016 Paralympics. As a non-sanctioned and unsupported athlete, Albag saw herself as operating outside the Israeli sport committee regulations for participating in the Czech championship. However, the Paralympic Committee saw her as a disrespectful citizen of the state who prioritised personal interests over the "sanctity of the Jewish people" (interview with the chair of the Paralympic Committee, July 2014, English). A more complex example still involved Dudu Aouate. Aouate is an Israeli-born goalkeeper

who played for the Spanish football club Deportivo de La Coruña and returned to the Israeli national squad as needed. In 2006, while with La Coruña, he had to play, in accordance with his contract, against another Spanish team, Real Sociedad of San Sebastián, on Yom Kippur. He planned to delay honouring the Day of Atonement until after the game when the stadium lights dimmed and he was no longer bound by his Spanish contract. Upon hearing that Aouate might place his professional obligation ahead of his religious-national one, the Israel Football Association threatened to drop his name from its national roster. Ultimately La Coruña was able to bring the game forward to avoid the conflict. Like Aouate's plan, sometimes athletes have the flexibility to reschedule their own personal honouring of festivals. Beyond individual suspensions, there are also financial repercussions. For example, the Israeli tennis team was scheduled to play Belgium in the world-group play-offs of the 2013 Davis Cup on Yom Kippur. While the Belgian team initially refused requests to reschedule the match, the International Tennis Association agreed to the request. The ITA extended the series to incorporate a Sunday match for the two teams, enabling Israel to participate, but it fined the state €10,000 for added costs and inconvenience.

Representing Judaism in the Diaspora

The Jewish laws by which Israel abides can impact on (observant) Jewish athletes throughout the Diaspora. In heavily populated Jewish enclaves, townships may have Jewish leagues, which avoid practice and matches on Saturdays. In other areas, just as in Israel, observant Jews either withdraw themselves or make alternative arrangements for their

participation.¹⁹³ Whereas in Israel decisions are guided by the state, in the Diaspora they are often guided by a rabbinical council. An American rabbi based near Philadelphia, Barry Dov Lerner, a former national archery champion, states that observant Jews tend to have a sports ceiling because of their inability to dedicate 365 days a year to their sport. For instance, in the thirty-day autumnal month of Tishri, thirteen to fourteen days—excluding the weekly Shabbat—may be celebrated by religious Jews in ways that prohibit sport training.

In a nutshell, you can participate in sports, you can enjoy it, you can excel, but the way the world runs, you're not going to be in any competitions. You can't be in any sport that has competitions on the Sabbath, and not just games, but also workouts and practices on the Sabbath or holidays; that means you're not eligible for a football scholarship. Well, go learn the oboe. (Lerner, cited by Henry 2011)

In the Diaspora, there are observant athletes among the internationally competitive ranks, and any media attention often places them on pedestals of religious morality. One such time-honoured beacon is Jewish-American baseball pitcher Sandy Koufax, who became an overnight inspiration when he forwent the first game of the 1965 World Series, which fell on Yom Kippur. While Koufax was not particularly observant in other areas of his life and did not routinely forgo baseball on Shabbat and other holidays, he sought to be an example to Jewish-America by demonstrating that heritage is bigger than any sport. Although Koufax won the World Series that year, as he had three times before, his legacy as a baseball player is his prioritisation of his spiritual interests over his professional ones. The symbolic strength of Koufax's missed game is such that it continues to have repercussions more than fifty years later. In part, according to Kuttler (2015), by observing Yom Kippur rather than pitching for

¹⁹³ Such modifications might include walking to venues, using non-electronic scales for weight-specific sports, wearing more modest attire and altering competition time. Akin to Israel's rescheduling of the Davis Cup match, individuals are responsible for any additional fees incurred. In order to avoid penalties, less religious athletes (and others, such as those living in polar climates with long/short daylight hours) may choose to celebrate a Jerusalem-based festival time rather than the local one. While these modifications can enable religious competitors to avoid conflicts of interest, they still prioritise competition and the self over religious and ethno-national commandments. Diaspora Jews may face other issues with festivals. Some observant Diaspora Jews, for instance, extend festivals. This is because it once took time for the Sanhedrin's holy day proclamation to reach those living outside Jerusalem, so additional days were incorporated as a safety precaution to ensure that the proper day would be honoured.

the Los Angeles Dodgers, Koufax injected his faith in the very pith of Americanness, solidifying a place for American Jewry. There have been more pious athletes than Koufax, but none has been held up as such a luminary. Perhaps, because Koufax did not otherwise identify as observant, his lack of participation in a game on his sport's largest stage brought to the fore that his identity as a Jew is at the foundation of his identity as an athlete.

Other external issues in competing as a Jewish state

Representing Israel abroad potentially raises issues that go beyond the religious-nationalist image it projects. In addition to managing Jewish identity, another significant issue facing Israeli athletes is competition with (some of) the country's Arab neighbours. An earlier part of this chapter discussed how, during the mandate era, the Zionists sought to use sport to develop connections with their Arab neighbours and argue for state legitimacy, but today anti-Israel boycotts and the refusal to let Israeli representatives into Arab countries are common manifestations of tenuous and since-damaged relationships. Both Israel and the collection of its Arab neighbours¹⁹⁴ have specific reasons not to play the other, from disagreements over the position of the Jewish state in the Middle East and Israel's approach to Palestine to international alliances. As with decisions regarding Jewish athletes on Yom Kippur, decisions about such things as boycotts are frequently dictated by the state. This places sport at the centre of an international political playing field. This section will show how international competitions continue to be used to question and assert state legitimacy, providing a good counterpoint to how Israel uses them to normalise relations (a theme to

¹⁹⁴ In addition to states in the Middle East/northern Africa, other countries that typically refuse to play Israeli athletes include Bangladesh, Indonesia, Malaysia and North Korea. Other states that do not recognise Israel or have diplomatic relations with it still compete in sporting events with it. Bolivia, Cuba and Venezuela, for example, participated in the most recent Maccabiah Games in Israel in 2017.

which I return in the context of international sport in the later sections of this chapter). In this section, as in others, I am focusing on the Israeli athlete experience because this is what I investigated in my research. I take no position regarding any action instigated against Israeli athletes by other states.

Boycotts

Overall, sports boycotts are an effective way to make a statement. The most notable recent sports boycotts include the US-led boycott of the 1980 Moscow Olympics protesting against the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan¹⁹⁵ and the international boycott against South Africa because of its apartheid policies between 1964-1991 (Gorman 2012: 170 notes, however, that individual stands against South Africa's racial policies were taken decades earlier than the boycott).¹⁹⁶ The degree of success of these boycotts varied. The Soviet Union responded to the 1980 boycott by issuing a counter-boycott of the next summer Olympics, hosted by the United States. In terms of ending apartheid, international trade embargos and disinvestments had a greater impact than the sports boycott, as did the negotiations that eventually ended the regime. However, in both cases sport was used symbolically to demonstrate opposition to apartheid in a way that garnered political, emotive and popular attention (see Keech and Houlihan 1999).

¹⁹⁵ The boycott was instigated by US President Jimmy Carter as the result of a failed ultimatum he issued requesting Leonid Brezhnev's withdrawal from Afghanistan. Ultimately, sixty-six countries boycotted the Games and a further sixteen limited their participation (e.g. competing under the Olympic flag or forgoing the opening ceremony). Some countries did not take part for other reasons: Iran's Ayatollah Khomeini independently accused Moscow of arming its enemies. Taiwan refused to participate in the wake of the 1979 Nagoya Resolution that saw the IOC recognise both the People's Republic of China and the Republic of China. Qatar was admitted to the IOC after the registration deadline and thus was also ineligible. The Soviet Union's counter-boycott of the 1984 Los Angeles Games was backed by fourteen countries.

¹⁹⁶ When South African interior minister Jan de Klerk announced that the country would not send a racially integrated team to the 1964 Olympics, the International Olympic Committee revoked South Africa's IOC membership, blocking its participation in the Games (Booth 1998: 88). Following an episode in which twenty-nine countries boycotted the 1976 Montreal Olympics because the IOC invited New Zealand—which had sponsored a South African rugby tour that summer—the British Commonwealth of Nations drew up the 1977 Gleneagles Agreement. South Africa was only welcomed back into international sport after the fall of apartheid. In fact, South Africa would host—and win—the next Rugby World Cup (1995) following its readmission, an event glorified in John Carlin's 2008 book, *Playing the Enemy: Nelson Mandela and the Game That Made a Nation*, and the subsequent 2009 Clint Eastwood film, *Invictus*.

Smaller scale boycotts are sometimes seen when individual athletes withdraw from competition citing issues, typically ideological in nature, with their opponents. Given the well-established underlying political tensions, these proscriptions can raise questions about the exercise of national and individual agency. Where Israel is concerned, this often means that athletes representing states that do not recognise or approve of Israel avoid participation in matches against it. Most of these withdrawals follow a particular pattern—the athlete declares an injury, possibly feigning one, after being drawn against an Israeli competitor and withdraws on medical grounds prior to the competition. For example, the Tunisian tennis player Malek Jaziri withdrew from the 2015 Open Sud de France tournament after citing a flare-up of an earlier injury. Because the withdrawal came after Jaziri was drawn to face an Israeli competitor, the Association of Tennis Professionals launched an investigation to determine whether the athlete was actually injured. Previously, Jaziri had been removed by the Tunisian federation from a match against an Israeli in 2013, which had caused the ATP to block Tunisia from participating in the 2014 Davis Cup, citing violations of sportsmanship (Abadi 2017: 526). More recently, at the 2016 Olympics, Saudi Arabian judoka Joud Fahmy withdrew from a preliminary match, also citing multiple injuries. It was reported that she forfeited her match to avoid being drawn against Gili Cohen of Israel in the following round should she win her opening contest against Mauritius (e.g. Elia 2016). In such cases, the event becomes exclusively about politics and not about sport. While Fahmy's claims to have been injured have not been substantiated, incidents of covert illness and injury by anti-Israel teams are generally assumed to be rooted in nationalism. The supposition that athletes might be crying wolf in this way may lead to the mistreatment of legitimate injuries and claims of poor sportsmanship that can damage careers.

Entering the 2004 Olympics as a two-time defending world judo champion, gold medal-favourite Iranian Arash Miresmaeili was disqualified for not making the regulatory weight for his initial match, a failure that is a rarity among seasoned elite athletes. Miresmaeili had been drawn against Israeli judoka Ehud Vaks for the match. It has been Iranian practice not to compete against Israelis, citing that it no longer recognises Israel as a state, nor Israel's occupation of Palestine. Indeed, there are no records of athletic matches between post-1979 Iran and Israel.¹⁹⁷ Although the International Judo Federation eventually decided that Miresmaeili did not connive at his own disqualification, statements by the athlete himself and the Iranian federation indicate otherwise: "Although I have trained for months and was in good shape, I refused to fight my Israeli opponent to sympathise with the suffering of the People of Palestine, and I do not feel upset at all" (M. Kaufman 2004, cited in Hauss and Haussman 2013: 398). Though Miresmaeili "did not get a gold medal, he earned eternal honour by his refusal" according to Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, then-mayor of Tehran (2003-2005) and later Iranian president (2005-2013) (R. Hughes 2004). Allegedly, Iran further rewarded Miresmaeili with USD \$125,000 for withdrawing, the same prize that is awarded to its gold medallists (*ibid.*).

The International Olympic Committee, as well as many international sports governing bodies, prohibit political forfeitures and may impose sanctions on athletes and their countries if forfeitures are found to be politically motivated.¹⁹⁸ However, if competitors do not act in accordance with their countries' demands, they can receive further in-house punishments (not unlike the Israeli Olympic sailors receiving a ban for competing on Yom Kippur). One example is that of an Iranian weightlifter, which had ramifications for both the athlete and the director of Iranian weightlifting. A viral video from the 2010 World Masters Weightlifting

¹⁹⁷ Iran has not recognised the Israeli state since the 1979 Iranian Revolution (Tarock 1998: 102 and Bialer 2007: 31 discuss the strengths of the relationship during the Pahlavi dynasty).

¹⁹⁸ Participating nations must "resist all pressures of any kind, including but not limited to political, legal, religious or economic pressures," which prevent fair play (International Olympic Committee 2015: 62). Violations of the Olympic Charter are subject to withdrawal of accreditation (*ibid.*: 63).

Championships in Poland shows the silver medallist, Iran's Hossein Khodadadi, refusing to shake hands with Sergio Britva, the champion from Israel, and instead offering him a salute (Milhalter 2010: 1'37"-1'39"). The international community condemned Khodadadi for poor sportsmanship in affronting Britva. The fall-out from Khodadadi's podium appearance had several consequences. According to Oster (2010), Iran subsequently issued a life ban on Khodadadi for appearing next to an Israeli. Although aware of the potential consequences from Iran of attending the podium ceremony, Khodadadi, who forwent wearing his official Iranian uniform to distance himself from his state, was in a no-win situation. Had he not accepted his medal during the ceremony, officials from the international weightlifting federation had informed him that all of Iran's results would have been nullified (ibid.). Another example from the 2016 Olympics in Rio de Janeiro highlights the scrutiny of body language and possibly the degree to which Israel-Arab interactions are scrutinised (field notes, 2017). Egyptian judoka Islam El Shehaby was threatened by some conservative Egyptians, largely in the media, with the loss of his citizenship for shaming the national religion if he played his Israeli opponent, Ori Sasson. The match went ahead. Following Sasson's victory, El Shehaby acknowledged the victor on the mat but did not return Sasson's handshake. While handshaking is not mandatory, the IOC interpreted the action as a politically charged refusal and requested that the Egyptian leave Brazil (Elia 2016: 16; A. Epstein and Osborne 2018: 29).¹⁹⁹

Competing in states that do not recognise Israel

In addition to competing against Arab athletes, Israeli athletes have also struggled to compete in events hosted by Arab states, regardless of whether there is any direct athletic

¹⁹⁹ There remains some dispute over whether El Shehaby was sent home or simply left Brazil after failing to advance into later rounds of the competition (e.g. "Rio Olympics 2016: Egyptian Judoka Islam El Shehaby 'Sent Home for Handshake Snub'" (2016, August 16). *BBC Sport*. Accessed 17 August 2016 from www.bbc.co.uk/sport/olympics/37090339).

competition between the host country and Israel (field notes, 2014). Typically, the competition goes ahead as scheduled, with Israeli athletes absent, but sometimes Israeli athletes do participate discreetly. Ma'ayan Davidovich and Amit Ivry are two Israeli athletes who recently competed in Arab Gulf states despite controversy over their nationality.

Israeli windsurfer Ma'ayan Davidovich, two-time defending windsurfing world bronze medallist, became the first Israeli athlete to compete in the Sultanate of Oman. While Israel had initially expected to send three windsurfers to the 2015 world championships, it withdrew its delegation over security concerns. Davidovich was ultimately allowed to compete given that she could enter Oman on a secondary (Austrian) passport and arranged to be accompanied by a bodyguard throughout her time in the Sultanate. Once in Oman, Davidovich competed incognito after removing the Israeli flag and “ISR” country code that would otherwise be affixed to her boat and marking her nationality as “RSX”—the official name of her windsurfing class (Aharoni and Zenziper 2015). While she did not represent Israel on paper, her identity as an Israeli was marked by virtue of the efforts extended to keep it covered. Everyone involved in the competition knew who she was. She was the only athlete without a flag on her boat and the only one to compete without representing a country. Perhaps these alterations of identity were exemplified, as Davidovich entered the competition as a gold-medal contender, and her very presence in Oman was scrutinised in the media. Regardless, by not directly acknowledging her state, she was granted the immunity Israel desired for her to compete safely (field notes, 2016).

In a not dissimilar context, Amit Ivry competed at the 2013 FINA Swimming World Cup in Doha in which she earned a pair of silver medals. Like Oman, Qatar does not recognise the sovereignty of Israel and censored out the Israeli swimming team in its media coverage. In addition to providing little media attention for Israeli medallists, the Qatari media replaced any expected graphic of the Israeli flag with a white rectangle. The flag was

not shown in the aquatic centre where other athletes' flags were nor on television broadcast overlays paired with Ivry's lane and name.²⁰⁰ Additionally, when Ivry was introduced, the announcer called her by name only (not mentioning her nationality as he did for other entrants) and the television crew avoided showing Ivry, panning from the previously introduced swimmer to the one following Ivry. Although the Israeli flag was displayed when Ivry took to the podium to claim her medal, the other incidents violated FINA's anti-discrimination policy. FINA still permitted Qatar to host the following year's world championships, under the condition that it acknowledged Israel equally to other all states. A recent article by Reiche (2018), although focusing on Lebanon and its policy of boycotting Israel, looks at the different approaches Arab states take toward competing against Israeli athletes. In discussing these boycotts or "pragmatic solutions" to avoid competing against Israelis, whether removing flags, citing injury or missing a match due to arriving late (Reiche 2018: 38), Reiche also addresses the implications faced by the instigating governing body or the sport as a whole. In one instance Kuwait, host of the 2015 Asian Shooting Championships, refused to issue a visa to Yair Davidovitz, an Israeli serving as an International Shooting Sport Federation technical supervisor for the event (2018: 38). This led to Kuwait being suspended by the International Olympic Committee and the championships, thus losing its Olympic qualifying status, a move that impacted all Asian

²⁰⁰ A video of Ivry's race at the 2013 Doha World Cup can be found at: Gerjon007 (2013, October 24). "Doha 2013: Women's 100m IM Final" [Video file]. Accessed 10 August 2016 from www.youtube.com/watch?v=K0Cfa0RtBh8.

Notable points in the video:

0'02" The Israeli flag appears next to Ivry's lane assignment.

0'25"-0'45" Ivry is dismissed during the introductions, during which each participant is called individually to the swimming platform by name and nationality as the camera focuses on the swimmer. However, Ivry is called just by name and the camera continues to follow the previous swimmer, Verraszto, until the following one, Hosszu, comes into the arena.

1'22"-1'41" Ivry's lane flag is a white rectangle.

2'41"-2'51" Ivry's lane flag is a white rectangle marking her second-place finish.

2'51" The camera pans to the gold and bronze medallists, Hosszu and German Theresa Michalak and recaps their races.

3'34"-3'47" The final placement screen includes the Israeli flag.

Olympic contenders, not just Kuwaitis.²⁰¹ In light of the next section on normalisation, these examples have shown that sport can just as easily be used to reinforce societal cleavages. Again crossing the national-individual divide, while states may impose regulations, the individuals themselves are overwhelming the ones directly affected as figureheads of their state.

Normalisation

The same week that Jibril Rajoub launched an anti-normalisation stand against Israel's participation in international football due to the state's treatment of Palestinians (mentioned previously in this chapter), Itamar Marcus and Nan Jacques Zilberdik of the Israeli NGO Palestinian Media Watch²⁰² called on FIFA to ban Palestine instead. The two write that

The Palestinian Authority's abuse of sports is a concrete example of how the Palestinian National Authority chooses to further entrench the conflict rather than work to resolve it. The Palestinian Authority uses sports to send the message that murdering Israeli civilians is honorable and heroic, that all of Israel is 'Palestine,' and that peace building or 'normalization' with Israel is prohibited and even criminal. (Marcus and Zilberdik 2015)

While Rajoub's particular stance seeks to block Israel from all international competition (not just competition against Palestine), Palestinians have struggled for recognition even when competing alongside Israelis. Part of Chapter 5 showed that, while Israeli football is not a sport with which normalisation is often associated, it is one in which

²⁰¹ M. Dalla Dea (2015, October 30). "Asian Shooting Championship in Kuwait: IOC Executive Board Revokes the Olympic Qualifying Status". *International Shooting Sport Federation*. Accessed 12 December 2017 from www.issf-sports.org/news.ashx?newsid=2441.

²⁰² Through its founder, Itamar Marcus, PMW, a right-wing, Israeli Zionist organisation, has connections with Zionist societies such as Im Tirtzu (Israel) and the Central Fund of Israel (United States), which support right-wing Zionism through West Bank settlements and activism. Despite inherent bias, I found PMW to be used by some international news sources to flag stories that merit further investigation.

there is a normalising element. The present chapter, however, shows that, although Palestinians may represent Israel internationally, there is very little opportunity for them to do so without adopting at least a veil of Judaism and observing the religious-cum-nationalist laws imposed by the Israeli Olympic Committee and the national sports federations.

Despite comprising approximately 20% of Israel's population, very few Palestinian-Israelis compete for the country in sport. While Palestinians continue to have a presence in the national football team and in Israeli professional football, only one has ever been on an Israeli Olympic football team (Rifaat Turk in 1976, discussed in Chapter 5). Outside of football, only one other Palestinian, weight-lifter Edward Meron (1960), has participated in an Olympic squad. For the 2016 Olympics, Israel's delegation numbered forty-seven, all Jewish despite Palestinians infiltrating the ranks of national sport at a percentage not far below that of the national demographic.²⁰³

I met Hossein, a Palestinian from Bethlehem, in March 2016 when I joined his running team for a training session in Jerusalem. "I'm excited to watch this summer's Paralympics. The captain of the goalball team, Elham Mhamid, she's Arab. She represents the Arab sector, and we're going to have big parties to watch her. I don't care to watch the rest; I'm not Israeli. I don't feel connection with Israel, so it would be weird to support Israel" (Hebrew). Fariyyah, another Palestinian runner, agrees: "If the Israelis invest in us, we'll have the facilities and the good coaching, and then maybe we do well! As it is, sports are expensive—you need new boats and regulation-sized pools and proper tracks! We're denied all that, but we need it to do well." Fariyyah suspects the lack of interest in supporting the development of Palestinian-Israeli athletes is proof that Israel would rather that Palestinians do not develop into top performers who might represent the state and "ruin Israel's visage of Jewishness" (interview, March 2016, English).

²⁰³ Israel's coordinator for adaptive sport states that athlete numbers are limited because Israel directs money away from sport to finance defence. She claims reduced financing does not yield religious or ethnic bias (interview, July 2014, English).

For some Jews, however, the lack of Palestinian representation is as normal as not competing on Shabbat (following: interviews, July 2014, Russian). Maia, a Jewish-Russian member of the national volleyball team whom I met at WI, said that it had never occurred to her that she was on a team consisting exclusively of Jews. “That’s politics, I’m an athlete. I know they overlap, sometimes I don’t get chosen for stuff, and I know there are more reasons than my performance for that, but I think everyone on my team earned her place.” Maia’s teammate, Rivka, also Jewish, has heard that Israel should target a quota for Palestinian participation. “Well, I don’t think we should have to *give* them places, but I don’t think we should keep them out, you know? No one wants to be on a team with inadequate players, and no real athlete wants to be on a team if she’s only there to make up numbers. But then no athlete wants to not make a team because of her race.” Rivka continued to say that should would “support a quota *if* there is the talent, but first, that talent needs to be developed somehow.”

The Zionist focus on developing the Jewish state has meant that Palestinians were excluded from the national picture even in the early period of the prospects of future statehood (non-Zionist Orthodox and Haredi Jews were also excluded due to their broad disapproval of Judaism as a national identity, and as such, have been excluded from many sporting networks; Efron 2003, Dorsey 2015: 16). During the Ottoman and Mandate eras, Arab-Palestinian sport did not achieve the successes of Jewish sport. Predominantly, this can be attributed to the superior organisation and funding through international organisations, such as the Jewish Agency, that supported Jewish development (interview, July 2014). Additionally, some Jewish sporting organisations could also influence the participation of non-Jewish teams. For example, the (Mandate) Palestine Football Association required non-Jewish teams to seek permission for international competitions because they were otherwise excluded from membership, and FIFA stipulated that only member clubs could represent the

mandate abroad (see I. Khalidi 2014: 79-80). In Sorek's 2009 article on the life of Palestinian-Israeli boxer Hamze Yunes, he describes Israel's hesitations in encouraging Palestinians to participate in sport. Within the Jewish-driven athletic infrastructure, Palestinians have been less able to use sport as a platform for positive identity. Whereas muscular Judaism supported the Jewish drive for increased masculinity, Sorek believes the same factors neutralised Palestinian identities. Palestinians were seen as being routinely defeated in wars and left unable to provide for their families (Hawari 2004). Combative sports, like boxing, became "the only place where an Arab can hit a Jew and get a medal for it"—the title of Sorek's 2009 essay.²⁰⁴ Boxing continued to be dominated by Arabs, which divided the sport, causing it to be the only athletic event that makes Jews feel marginalised at the expense of the Palestinians (Sorek 2009: 1068). For example, following double Arab gold medals in boxing at the 1977 Maccabiah, boxing was removed from subsequent Games.

As highlighted in Chapters 2 and 4, there are some ways in which sport is well-suited to normalisation itself. Sports diplomacy falls under the jurisdiction of cultural diplomacy, a form of public diplomacy. Milton Cummings (2003: 1) sees cultural diplomacy as "the exchange of ideas, information, art and other aspects of culture among nations and their peoples in order to foster mutual understanding." Looking at cost-effectiveness and the impact on ties between countries, Arndt (2005) concludes that cultural diplomacy has a vital role to play in creating trust with other people. There are two large arguments for sports diplomacy. The first is that sport can humanise governments and allow them to relate to the general public. This assists states to dispel stereotypes, mould perceptions and create favourable images of themselves, all of which influence the reception of political agendas. The second is that it connects people with people. When two or more states struggle at the political level, their respective citizens may demonise the other as representatives of the state.

²⁰⁴ Messner and Sabo (1990) make a parallel case for the rise of sport as promoting masculinity in response to economic and social crises in western countries.

A personal connection, even if only sensed through shared interests, enables citizens to see foreigners as athletes, as people, or even as friends, which can be especially valuable when international disputes result in the dehumanisation of the enemy (field notes, 2016, English and Hebrew). That said, and as highlighted by Coalter (2010) cited in Chapter 2, sport is not inherently a positive force for negotiations and certainly cannot be subject to normalisation unless at least nominally supported by interested governments and other forms of social infrastructure.

For example, Brett (2014) and Sen (2015) discuss the cricket rivalry between India and Pakistan. This rivalry may be likened to a barometer reflecting the political relationships between the two states after their separation following the dissolution of the British Raj in 1947. Following sixty years of very few cricket exchanges owing to the various Indo-Pakistani wars, India toured Pakistan in 2004. Led by Indian Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee (1996, 1998-2004) and cricket star Sachin Tendulkar, the Indian team stated that the tour sought to “win not only matches, but hearts too” (Bhattacharya 2005: 24). Vajpayee’s efforts were short-lived as the 2008 Mumbai attacks and subsequent India-Pakistan standoff brought a further hiatus to play and diplomatic relationships. Cricket once again provided the opportunity for the first face-to-face meeting between the two prime ministers after the 2008 standoff. Indian Prime Minister, Manmohan Singh (2004-2014), invited his Pakistani counterpart, Yousaf Raza Gilani (2008-2012), to travel to Mohali for the semi-final of the 2011 Cricket World Cup in which India would play Pakistan (Sen 2015: 285). Notably Mohali is in Punjab, India, the eastern part of the former Punjab Province of British India that was divided as part of the 1947 partition. Pakistan’s Minister of Information and Mass-Media Broadcasting, Firdous Ashiq Awan (2011-2012), stated that “Our acceptance [to attend the match] indicates that both the countries are seriously coming closer with a realization that dialogue is the only way forward” (Rupert 2011). Following the match,

representatives from both states gathered in New Delhi for two days of negotiations. Despite negotiations continuing after the World Cup, violence has yet to be quenched. One reason the cricket World Cup failed to end violence in India and Pakistan, and why the 2010 FIFA World Cup did not unify South Africa as proposed (see Gibson et al. 2014; also Coleman 1988, 1990 on the interaction between social and human capital) and why nothing monumental has developed within Israel as yet, is that such large-scale projects are only effective when the opposing sides share the same goals (e.g. Carroll 2012 on the “illusions of unity” associated with mass events and nation-building). Until Israel’s many factions—whether Jewish and Palestinian or Ashkenazi and Mizrahi—can decide how each can realise self-determination, a sense of security, a homeland, their right to Jerusalem and their sense of nationhood in ways that are not at each other’s expense, international sports movements are not going to bring the two sides together in any lasting manner.

In the next section I will explore normalisation in the context of the Tel Aviv Marathon. While not having a focus on sports diplomacy, and even having normalisation as an expressed goal, the very act of distance running may itself contribute to the normalising potential of the event.

The Tel Aviv Marathon: a local manifestation of an international identity

While Israel generally denies a Palestinian identity to Palestinians representing the state abroad, international events held within the country itself can contribute to the appearance of an internal levelling of identities. This appearance of identity-levelling may be likened to an imaginary achievement of a Tamari-esque (2013) interpretation of normalcy, in which both Jewish-Israelis and Palestinian-Israelis identify themselves as living a quotidian existence without undue concerns over the presence of the other (field notes, 2016).

One of my first activities upon returning to Israel in winter 2016 was to run in the Samsung Tel Aviv Marathon, an event that exemplifies this boundary between the national and the international. Included in the Association of International Marathons and Distance Races catalogue, the race markets itself to an international audience as the largest international sporting event in Israel with 40,000 participants. However, the majority (96%) of participants are Israeli citizens, and at its core the race reflects the identity of its local participants, and of Tel Aviv, retroflexively back on itself.²⁰⁵ In this sense, the marathon also explores themes developed in Chapter 4, including its focus on participant experience, although, unlike school-accessed sport and neighbourhood opportunities, the marathon does this by being a public, mass-participation event.

On any day, a stroll along the Tel Aviv-Jaffa promenade suggests that muscular Judaism continues to influence fitness trends in the twenty-first century. Along a three-kilometre stretch near the city centre, one passes eight outdoor gymnasiums, dodges tourists and commuters riding some of the city's 2,000 green Tel-O-Fun rental bicycles, watches beach volleyballs ricochet through the air (and surf!), passes surfers heading to the beach and hears the hollow-sounding rhythmic ping of *matkot*²⁰⁶ balls and the continual *thwap-thwap* of running feet as hundreds lap the seashore route. Running is a popular outdoor activity in Tel Aviv. Nicknamed Israel's "Sin City", in Tel Aviv social norms are less conservative than elsewhere in Israel. Not unlike the athletes at the WI, for many secular and predominantly Ashkenazi Jews in Tel Aviv, Shabbat is a day not of religious significance but to revitalise oneself for the work-a-day week ahead. For many, this means embracing the sunshine and pounding the pavement.²⁰⁷

²⁰⁵ For comparison, the New York Marathon, a race with 50,000 runners, has averaged 52% international participation for the past ten years (Aisch and Schwencke 2015).

²⁰⁶ Padel ball.

²⁰⁷ With 64% of Jews in Tel Aviv identifying as such, Tel Aviv has a higher proportion of secular Jews than elsewhere in the country (e.g. 20% in Jerusalem). At the other extreme, whereas Haredim comprise 34% of

As discussed earlier in this thesis, the main reasons for arguing that competitive sport can be effective in normalisation efforts are its transcultural appeal and unpredictable zero-sum, rule-driven results. As already seen in Chapter 4 when discussing playgrounds, there is also much value in terms of socialisation and network-building in non-competitive sport. Mass-participation events, such as marathons, may work differently than the collaborative activities described in Chapter 4 or the competitive ones in Chapter 5 and the current chapter. Instead of relying on results in which all athletes are held to the same standard, mass events are often designed to enable the participation of individuals of varying abilities. Moreover, mass events aim to shape experiences through shared activities. Even without a direct focus on normalisation, theories borrowed from cognitive anthropology can suggest potential opportunities for integration through shared sporting experiences.

In addition to the alleged potential for social bonding and the ability to push oneself harder (discussed in Chapter 2), marathons may be appropriate for developing alliances in another way as well. In marathons, and even half-marathons, athletes run for a long enough duration to alter their neurochemistry. Endurance events, such as long-distance running, stimulate the opioidergic system to produce what is colloquially known as “runner’s high” and can, according to Boecker et al. (2008: 2525), increase happiness and euphoria while simultaneously reducing fear and apprehension. Therefore, sporting events in which all participants perform the same activity for an extended duration, even if not in perfect unison (Reddish et al. 2013), may contribute to normalisation by providing feelings of support while simultaneously lifting moods and reducing tension.

If we accept the above argument, athletes such as marathoners may be primed to be receptive to different attitudes and new outlooks. Although their study subjects were spontaneously hypertensive rats and not humans, Hoffmann et al. (1990) showed that

Jerusalem residents, they comprise only 2% of the Tel Aviv population (Jerusalem Institute for Israel Studies 2015: 6).

neurochemicals generated through exercise remain active within the cerebrospinal fluid for at least 48 hours following the cessation of training. Therefore, one can surmise that routine exposure to neurochemicals generated through repeated exercise may create a new homeostasis and alter brain pathways (e.g. Lynch et al. 2013 on addiction), enabling any positive opioidergic effects to continue, at least to some extent, following the cessation of sporting activities. However, event designers have the ability to influence participant experience: host cities can design routes that only show flattering sections of the city, particular politicians may conduct associated ceremonies, and certain cultural traditions are chosen to be shared throughout the race.²⁰⁸ There were many factors that shaped participants' impressions of Tel Aviv's 2016 race. The route, for one, might be interpreted as a showcase of modern Zionism, as it took runners through the affluent, manicured northern suburbs, before heading south along the beach boardwalk and dipping into the gentrified port and parks of Jaffa. The course progressed through the UNESCO Bauhaus-lined streets of central Tel Aviv toward the financial district. Finally, the route returned north to HaYarkon Park along the river and merged with the Israel National Trail to take runners to the finish. This route portrayed Tel Aviv as "a beautiful dream state" according to a Danish runner, Thijs, 43 (interview, February 2016, Scandinavian).

Following the race, I met up with Linde, 38, a Jewish-Dutch runner whom I had met a few days earlier, for coffee. She was delighted to be spending a few days in the city around the marathon: "It's walking around now, on my own, exploring, that has let me see Tel Aviv and Israel. The marathon, from the Expo to the party afterward, showed me what it wanted to show me. It showed me, as a Jew, why I would want to live here, too" (English). Later that evening, the city still quiet during Shabbat, I walked with Linde and Annemie, another Dutch marathoner, to HaHaganah train station. We walked past the Hassan Bek mosque as men

²⁰⁸ For example, the projection of Jewish nationalist exceptionalism and maintenance of the occupation by organisers of the Jerusalem marathon (see Chapter 3).

were leaving from *Asr* prayers, onto Shabazi Street through the *au courant* neighbourhood of Neve Tzedek, through the Yemenite Quarter where we ate some *jachnun*²⁰⁹ and finally along a main street through Neveh Sha'anani, the partially gentrified red-light district. Twenty minutes of walking took us through diverse adjoining neighbourhoods. As we came up to HaHaganah, Annemie remarked, "I started running marathons to see cities, but I didn't *see* Tel Aviv, I saw little pretty vignettes, a mask, not the city" (English).

Samsung and Adidas are the primary sponsors of the Tel Aviv Marathon, both international rather than local companies. In the days prior to the marathon, the event was advertised through posters reading "Marathon Samsung Tel-Aviv 26.2" alternating between Hebrew and English ("26.2" being the date and the distance). After the race, Adidas-branded English-only posters appeared around the city blanketing sides of buildings and bus shelters reading "Thank you, Tel Aviv".

In the finish corral, Adidas had stationed a large poster on a frame (approximately five metres by three) reading "Tel Aviv. Run Greatness". A comparable board appears at every major Adidas marathon. Passing permanent markers around, finishers wrote messages on the poster, mostly in Hebrew, but messages in a dozen languages reflected the event's intended internationalism. The themes of messages were the same in each language—congratulatory messages, prized times, thanks to the organisers and stamps of presence: "Sara was here!" "We love Tel Aviv!" "2:54.40 Yossi Yehezkei 26.2.16".

By the end of the day, the board showed the alleged global impact of the event, and indeed, it was a visual representation of a world city. The tagline for the annual run is "Non-Stop Party"—playing on Tel Aviv's slogan of "Non-Stop City" and emphasising a playful and cosmopolitan vibe that one might equate with a tourist brochure. Despite the relative lack of non-local athletes, the race promoted itself with little reference to its host city. With the

²⁰⁹ A Jewish-Yemenite pastry cooked in a slow oven.

exception of all directional signage being exclusively in Hebrew, men running in *kippot*, shouts of “*yalla!*”²¹⁰ and a course flanked by the Mediterranean Sea on one side and palm trees on the other, I could have been at any of the Adidas-sponsored runs from Copenhagen to Cape Town to Canberra. The homogeneity of Tel Aviv’s Adidas marathon was emphasised when, following his race, Jake, a British veteran of seventeen international marathons, exclaimed, “I had so much fun running Tel Aviv! Another tick on my list of Adidas marathons!”

The finish corral featured local bands, but the food tent was sponsored by the German dairy brand Müller, the beer tent by Denmark’s Carlsberg. However, I also noticed something I had not seen at prior sporting events—a smoking area in the finishing corral. In a study by the Israel Defense Forces’ Medical Corps in conjunction with the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Tel Aviv University and the University of Haifa (Zarka et al. 2017), 40% of Israelis were found to be current or former smokers. The authors attribute this high number to boredom and social pressures in the army.²¹¹ Smoking as a coping mechanism for stress and boredom, common experiences of soldiers, is well-established (Warburton et al. 1991, McKee et al. 2011), but to have seasoned marathoners running 12,000km a year to boost lung capacity and then choose tobacco, even before reaching for water at 35°C, was unexpected, as it did not align with my expectations of the city’s fitness-promoting culture.²¹² I approached one man, stooped over ten paces from the finish line, sweat beading off his scalp, breathing heavily, unlit cigarette in hand. I offered him a spare water bottle, “*Atah rotseh mayim?*” (Do you want water?) He looked up at me and laughed, and in English replied: “Nah, thanks, just

²¹⁰ “*Yalla*” (let’s go) is an Arabic word that has been adopted into Hebrew as slang.

²¹¹ No data are provided about the smoking rates of various ethnicities, etc. as not all are included in the army.

²¹² As I discovered, this fitness culture is not representative. According to Kaluski and Berry (2005: 116), just 20.2% of Israelis, twice as many Jews as anyone else, self-report exercising for more than sixty minutes per week—significantly lower than medical recommendations (Joy and Pescatello 2016: 1). On an aside, according to the Tel Aviv-Jaffa Municipal Archive, cigarette companies began targeting sport events in the 1930s for free advertising by providing complimentary cigarettes to spectators (Letters from Cigarette Manufacturers to the Deputy Mayor (May 1935). 4/3829. Tel Aviv-Jaffa Municipal Archive, Tel Aviv).

did my healthy thing. Gotta be Israeli, now it's *tsingaleh* time! Do you have a light?" Here it seems that any symbolic link between sport and health is undermined not only by the fact of smoking, but also by the organisers recognising it by accommodating it with a smokers' zone.

The marathon started at 06:30 to limit exposure to the midday Mediterranean heat and ensure that all participants could be home prior to sundown for Shabbat. The marathon finished in HaYarkon Park, a vast grassy area in the northern part of the city. The location was ideal for participants to stay in the area to have picnics and enjoy a day off work outside. Therefore, following my run, I spent a few hours weaving among the marathon finishers talking about running. As mentioned in Chapter 3, sometimes my distance as a researcher benefitted me. The people with whom I spoke at the marathon were randomly selected, as I did not have a reliable way of recruiting people ahead of time or distinguishing them in any meaningful way. I simply meandered among the finishers for several hours, talking with anyone willing to engage about the role of running in their lives and how it might contribute to their sense of self and personal identity. Overall, here I found the runners more selective than I had expected in their willingness to speak to a complete stranger. Therefore, I spoke with fewer individuals, but those whom I did interview seemed genuine and interested, enabling me to have more in-depth and open conversations.

Instead of asking about personal identity, my initial formulation asked whether running contributes to the individual's understanding of being Israeli. However, unsurprisingly given its vagueness, very few people were able to formulate thoughts regarding this question. After pausing, Rachele, 32, an *oleh* from Canada, commented, "I think running makes me appreciate Israel. I feel connected, like I belong with my heritage. I *feel* Jewish when I run" (English). Rachele was the only person with whom I spoke who felt able to connect running with Israel. She continued by explaining that her feelings of heritage

stem from noticing her environment and feeling an “earthly pulse” when she runs outside—sensations she does not identify when running abroad. George, a recent 29-year-old *oleh* from Portugal, explained that running makes him feel strong and empowered. He likened these emotions to “taking personal control” of his life and making *Aliyah* to Israel, a state “born of go-getters” (English). However, others saw running as reflecting parts of Israel not encapsulated in the occupation-focused media. Nan, 30, a Jew from Petah Tikva who ran the marathon with Rachele, reflected on a recent escalation of stabbings in the greater Tel Aviv area: “I watch the news. I admit security worries me, but when I run, I see a new perspective. I don’t—I can’t—see hate; I see beauty. Look at the environment. When you run by the sea, when you see birds overhead, when you run by kids playing padel ball on the beach, you cannot hate these things” (Hebrew). This view was also shared by Abir, 26, a Palestinian-Israeli from Nazareth: “How can you be angry when you run? Running takes that out of you, because if you’re upset, you can run your anger into the ground. Running leaves you happy and with possibility. We’d all be happier people if we ran more” (English).

One theme that arose throughout conversations that afternoon was whether the marathon had the potential to provide a basis for non-threatening cross-ethnic interactions between Jews and Palestinians. In that respect, the marathon might afford athletes opportunities to run with people whom they might normally avoid without feeling uncomfortable, as noted by Boecker et al. (2008) and Davis et al. (2015). As previously cited in both Chapter 2 and earlier in this chapter, in addition to not requiring direct interaction, Boecker et al. argue that endorphins released during distance running reduce fear, and Davis et al. suggest that exercising in groups might subconsciously lessen personal caution. Critically, as applied to the marathon, Davis et al. (2015: 5) also show that athletes benefit from competing in groups, even if the group members do not know each other. Using gender as a variable, the study also demonstrated that some degree of group heterogeneity increases

the bondedness factor. Whether this same finding can be extrapolated to other variables, such as ethnicity, however, remains to be seen. Talitha, 32, a Mizrahi Jew born in Jaffa, says she is “wary of Arabs” but notes that her experience of them is largely limited to media exposure, and she does not count any among her acquaintances. Now living in Herzliyya, an affluent Jewish city north of Tel Aviv, Talitha says she normally crosses the street when walking to avoid someone she “suspects to be Arab”—“just in case”. However, she has no such qualms when she runs in organised events: “In a race, I focus on myself. I see us as athletes, not Jews and Arabs. This enables you to run, and I guess interact, with others without really interacting” (English). Talitha’s younger sister, Lael, 31, also born in Jaffa and living now in Herzliyya, has a similar perspective: “When you run, you become aware of your body and you get this shared sense with other people. You know, like, when I get cramps and hurt, I know lots of people here have the same thing” (English). Tahir, 43, a Palestinian from Nazareth, agreed that marathons create an environment for shared experiences. “Marathons are tough. They require you to really break yourself—not everyone can do that. You need goals. I know everyone here has goals and that they are also willing to push themselves, just like me. Maybe I respect them in this environment because I know their goals. I know they tried hard and what they put into it” (Hebrew).

Mina, 37, who identifies as a Sunni Jordanian-Israeli, says that she has received death threats for running near her home in the Palestinian city of Tira, in Israel’s Central District. “There are some Salafists there, and they especially don’t approve of women running, and especially not in public in our sports kit. At home I have to run tucked away. I feel safe here, I can be part of Israeli society. I want to show the world that Muslim women run” (Hebrew). Mina, along with about fifty Sunni women and girls, trains in a stadium after dark so as not to be seen running in public or around men. Some of those in Mina’s training group also participated in the marathon, seeing it as a *force de résistance*. In looking at female (Shia)

Muslim football players in Iran, Fozooni (2008: 118) finds participation in sport instrumental in female empowerment by upending gender norms, as football is considered part of the male domain. Mina believes running does something similar by questioning ethnic norms as well because female athletes, in her opinion, are more part of the Jewish culture than of her own.

Indeed, while this claim that the marathon creates normalisation opportunities recurred repeatedly, it was counterbalanced by a lack of belief that it could elicit change beyond its immediate environment. This is reflected in scepticism regarding whether it impacts on normalisation outside a few hours on a February morning. For instance, when I asked Lev, 45, an Ashkenazi from Tel Aviv, how he feels running alongside non-Jews, he replied: “Arabs?” grasping immediately at the obvious “other”. “They are suspicious. It’s hard to know their real intent. But running stuff, it’s a way to break that up. I mean, I don’t like Arabs, but there were a lot of police along the marathon course” (English). Like Talitha, Yossi, 34 and also Jewish, claims to avoid people whom he suspects are Palestinian but believes that the structure of the marathon may enable anyone running to sense a greater community, albeit briefly. Yossi says his profiling of other pedestrians is something he learned to do from his parents and is something of which he is ashamed, but equally it is inescapable. Yossi expressed less interest in promoting running to bring disparate ethnicities together and more about needing to outrun them. He hoped the marathon might help him take the first step, but at the post-race picnic he relocated when a Palestinian family settled nearby.

Despite, or perhaps because of, the marathon’s international image, the city paints its autobiography: a desire to fit in, to reach out, to win. Tel Aviv, sometimes referred to as the “bubble” (field notes, 2016, Hebrew), is the home of international embassies, venture capital and economic powerhouses. The high-tech “Silicon Wadi” extends along the northern metropolitan sprawl. Geographically removed from the conflicts bordering the West Bank

and Gaza and religious strongholds, it is more liberal and secular than its counterparts.²¹³

While many cities in Israel have long, linear and still-celebrated histories, Tel Aviv is largely a product of twentieth-century Zionism (Shavit 2012; see footnote 216).

In theory, Israeli marathons are open to every citizen, regardless of ethnicity. Theory, however, does not align with practice. While the organisers (the city) did not collect targeted demographic information about the participants beyond home city and country (some ethnic information may be extrapolated from this, but I was only granted access to nationalities), Vera, a Russian-Israeli Jew affiliated with the organisational committee, said she suspected there were comparatively few Palestinian-Israeli participants. Vera explained, “They know they can run if they want, it’s their city too. But as a municipality, we don’t go out of our way to make them feel included, they need to take some initiative” (field notes, 2016, English). This response recalled the comment by Rivka, a member of the national volleyball team, highlighted earlier in this chapter concerning whether Israel should support quota places for Palestinian athletes (see page 273). Although I do not know for certain, I am led to believe that the differences in opinion can, at least in part, be explained by the intention of their sources. Rivka’s statement, which she attributed to the national volleyball governing body, comes from within a sport federation that itself needs to consider policies that it perceives to be in the state’s interests, and demonstrating inclusivity may be part of this. Vera’s opinion, on the other hand, represents the political opinions of members of a municipality that happened to be hosting a sporting event. While Tel Aviv may be less conservative than other Jewish cities, it is still a Jewish city.

The marathon’s pro-Jewish front and apparent lack of interest in extending Israel’s largest sporting event to a sizable national minority was expressed throughout the event’s organisation. For example, when I registered for the marathon electronically, its website

²¹³ “2015 Election Results by Neighbourhood” (2015). *Madlan*. Accessed 02 June 2017 from www.madlan.co.il/elections/2015 [Hebrew].

offered readers a choice of six languages—Arabic, despite being an official language at the time, was not among them. While many Palestinians speak Hebrew, Arabic has been an important marker of identity and inclusionism since 1922 (Palestine Order in Council 1922: Art. 82), and its absence has been often understood as Hebrew linguistic and cultural exceptionalism.²¹⁴ The marathon’s course—set to showcase the cosmopolitan city’s finest, it’s “beating heart”²¹⁵—does not traverse a single Palestinian street. Even when the marathon loops through Jaffa, which it calls the “Jewish Old City” (field notes, 2016, English), it only includes streets in the Jewish gentrified areas. I asked Vera how and why the route was chosen. “We chose the route because it’s pretty and because it shows the whole history of Tel Aviv,” she answered, seeming to disregard the city’s history before World War I.²¹⁶ Additionally, despite participants feeling more comfortable running with each other in crowds than alone, the fact that 4,000 police officers lined the course indicates a high degree of mistrust on the part of the administration. While the marathon had almost 40,000 participants, only 2500 ran the full 42km, and each route—10km, 21km, 42km—doubled back on itself, meaning the area to be covered was relatively compact (all routes ran along the same roads, just for different distances). For comparison, the 2014 Boston Marathon, which also attracted nearly 40,000 runners—all of whom ran the full distance on a point-to-point course—had 3,500 police, double what it would have had, had the previous marathon in 2013 not been bombed (Associated Press 2015: 16). Although Dugan and Fisher (2015: 12) argue that the Boston bombing has not had a discernible impact on the ability of marathons to bring people together and push the human spirit (presumably thus enabling any opioidergic effect

²¹⁴ See Shohamy and Donitsa-Schmidt 1998, Spolsky and Shohamy 1999, and Jabareen 2005 for an albeit-dated “theory versus practice” debate on Israel’s language policy, as Arabic has since lost its official status in 2018’s “Nation-State” bill (see footnote 20).

²¹⁵ “Tel Aviv Marathon 2016: Nonstop Running, Nonstop Party”. (2016, February 17). Tel Aviv Yafo. Accessed 17 February 2016 from www.tel-aviv.gov.il/en/Pages/ArticlePage.aspx?WebID=9336473c-1537-4ab6-8a69-d299b5db8bcc&ListID=b4eda22c-a69a-4bef-9479-05d5a832ad16&ItemId=24.

²¹⁶ While Tel Aviv may be a twentieth-century city, it was preceded by neighbourhoods since incorporated into the city as well as by Jaffa, which, according to the Institute of Archaeology of Tel Aviv University (field notes, 2010), has been inhabited since the eighth millennium BCE.

of running, reflecting Boecker et al. 2008 and Davis et al. 2015), they do present ways in which mass events can prioritise safety in light of any increased concerns over well-being. Various earlier works have explored the role of terrorism and fear in mass (sporting) events (e.g. Toohey and Taylor 2008, Atkinson and Young 2012). Theories borrowed from other disciplines, such as Baudrillard's hyperrealism (1994), are also productive in this regard.

The example of the marathon could suggest that the Tel Aviv municipality has a clear view of the Mediterranean metropolis—open, progressive, full of *joie de vivre*. It fits the Zionist foundation myth of the city, which attaches Tel Aviv to a collective memory that has Hebrew labourers at its heart. The myth claims that, following a ceremonial land purchase, the city was built by Hebrew labour *ex nihilo* (LeVine 2005: Ch5; see Hobsbawm 1983a: 12-14 on the invention of tradition). According to Azaryahu and Troen (2012: 10), Tel Aviv needed to be a modern Hebrew utopia: European, Jewish, modern, the antithesis of both the east European *shtetl* and of Arab Palestine. The weekend fitness frenzy evidenced on the Tel Aviv-Jaffa promenade, the harmony between smoking and exercise and the open yet sheltered socio-political climate may stem directly from this narrative of a city created from nothing into a desert oasis. Muscular Judaism built the bodies that, according to LeVine's account, built Tel Aviv. And those are also the bodies that, in the collective memories of some, are on the defensive, looking forward.

Chapter 7. Conclusion

This thesis has sought to analyse the ways in which contemporary Jewish-Israeli identity is refracted through sport. It has adopted a mixed-methods approach, combining ethnographic fieldwork with library- and archive-based data. Eisen (1998: 516) describes the nineteenth-century Jewish attraction to sport as serving two foundational needs: 1) the Jewish bourgeoisie desiring acceptance into non-Jewish European society, and 2) Jewish Zionists supporting the idea of a Jewish nation. In modern Israel, sport both reflects Israeli identity and provides a stage on which identity and belonging can be displayed and debated. These portrayals of identity through sport are necessarily informed by, and take place within, greater contests of affiliation and integration within the state, including those surrounding ethnoreligious tensions, Jewish sectarianism, Zionism and the Israeli occupation of Palestinian territories. Consequently, given these parameters in which identity negotiation takes place, a second inquiry in this thesis was the degree to which modern sport may be a successful moderator in normalising these disparate relationships within the state. While Israel is home to many ethno-national and religious groups, all of which have some history involving sport, in pursuing the issue of normalisation this thesis has focused on the relationship between Jewish-Israelis and Palestinian-Israelis specifically. In part this is because this was the focal division during the British Mandate, and it has remained the most prolific in terms of argument, especially through the on-going Israeli-Palestinian/Arab conflict. Moreover, while I am not interested in trivialising or concealing the nuances of the

normalisation of additional identities—e.g. Circassian and Druze, as well as Jewish sects, e.g. Ashkenazi and Mizrahi—they are often subsumed within the matrix of the Israeli-Palestinian debate.

Having situated this research within the existing theoretical framework of the anthropology of sport and of normalisation, and having applied the various research techniques discussed in the comprehensive review of the methods and methodology in Chapter 3, this thesis has looked at the rhetoric of Jewish-Israeliness and of Jewish- and Palestinian-Israeli normalisation through three interdependent lenses of Israeli sport. Although corresponding roughly to the expanding scales of the local, national and international, these lenses are interdependent and, at times, inform each other. Dedicating an ethnographic chapter to the core of each of them, I have engaged with different populations, from schoolchildren kicking a ball around to fanatics following a professional team around, and with diverging degrees of social and political interest, to show some of the different roles of sport in Israeli society. In each chapter, I have contributed to the existing literature in a variety of ways. For example, in Chapter 4 (and 6 to some degree) I contributed to the research on normalisation, seeing it as refracted through sport and framing it within the greater literature on the occupation. In Chapter 5 I adopted a different perspective on existing work on fandom, arguing that it provides a form of political infrastructure. Chapter 6 proposed a way in which theories in cognitive anthropology may have practical applications within social anthropology and the greater contest of normalisation. Ultimately, my primary contribution, made throughout the entire thesis, is that I build upon the history of muscular Judaism to develop a longitudinal perspective that demonstrates how Israel, as a state, uses the body capital provided by its athletes to legitimise and broker its identity to members of the Diaspora, the Arab cradle and its own citizens.

Rooted in the local sphere, Chapter 4 undertook a participation-based analysis of sport as providing an opportunity for social exploration, integration and even resistance to the other. Looking at sport through NGOs, community projects and schools, I analysed the ways in which sport has been successful in normalising ethno-nationalist and sectarian identities and some of the challenges that have limited its success. Despite efforts to achieve normalised relationships—a stated goal of the NGOs with which I worked—I show that sport, even through these same community measures, is still used to convey Jewish values, thereby reinforcing Israel’s identity as a Jewish state. In part, this is due to the authority of Israel’s Zionist government and the socio-political and economic control it maintains. In this sense, this chapter draws upon two types of secondary sources. First, I have compared my research in Israel to various sport-for-peace initiatives around the world (e.g. Sugden and Bairner 1995; Gasser and Levinsen 2004 and Coalter 2010) in order to understand the conditions that have contributed to the successes and failures of such sport projects. Secondly, I have also built upon other (non-sport) region-appropriate normalisation projects (e.g. E. Kaufman et al. 2006 and Kuriansky 2007) to understand the ways in which Israel-specific identity politics, sectarianism and politics more generally present a unique landscape for normalising relations. Together these have enabled me to look at issues of identity and normalisation within Israel as refracted through sport.

Chapter 5 took what may perhaps be considered a more conventional approach to sport, at least as far as much of the academic literature is concerned, including that by local authors like Ben-Porat, Galily and Sorek. This chapter explores how ethno-national identities are developed, maintained and argued through professional football. Like other works that view professional football as a playground of Israeli identity, my own research also supports the conclusion that contemporary Israeli football is a product of its Zionist past. However, I contribute to this body of existing literature on professional sport in several ways. Primarily,

in leaving behind other scholarly works on football, I take a particular interest in the fandoms of the professional teams. In this sense, I see the fans as guiding agents, providing a stable socio-political scaffolding for Jewish identity during the dynamic period of the pre-state mandate and subsequently Israel, from the founding of Mandate Palestine to the creation of the State of Israel, from the Haganah to the IDF, from government-subsidised teams to privatisation, from Labour to Likud, and from socialism to capitalism. This is one respect in which I deviate from other works on fandom by applying the rich history of Israel and role of socio-political identity for the fans at a level not seen in explorations of teams by others (e.g. Hughson 1998, Pearson 2009, Pearson 2016, Spaaij and Geilenkirchen 2011). The enduring strength of the teams' past political allegiances, despite their no longer being feeders for political parties, is strong enough that the fans of any team are assumed to have specific socio-political beliefs, some individuals possibly identifying with a professional team instead of a political party. In part, for at least some informants this is because expressing political beliefs through allegiance to a specific football team enables a more comprehensive system of beliefs: that is, team identity subsumes political belief while also enabling the space for more nuanced opinions. Although still speculative—and indeed an area I would like to investigate further—my data are indicative of identity fusion (e.g. Swann et al. 2012) and suggest that the strength of team identity can be so strong among fans that it trumps identity with the nation.

Chapter 6 looked beyond the borders of the Israeli state, again leaving behind previous academic interpretations of the role of Israeli sport. In this chapter, I described how sport developed body capital that has been used to legitimise Israel as a Jewish state. From the kernel of muscular Judaism and the eastern European Jewish relationship with stereotypes, I suggested that the ability to field competitive teams was designed to prove the Zionists' capacity to be an identifiable people worthy of a state. With this in mind, I showed

how Jewish-Israelis continue to use international sport to affirm their legitimacy as a people and a nation throughout the Diaspora and the surrounding Arab cradle, as well as reaffirming its status to its own citizens. Part of this chapter looked at some of the implications involved in representing Israel internationally, while another looked at the potential of international sport as an arena in which to debate identity. While there are a variety of international boycotts concerning Israel and/or its products, there is yet to be a widespread sports boycott, such as those that affected South Africa during apartheid. Without a large-scale boycott, sport remains a productive arena for identity negotiation and normalisation within Israel. Considering the prospects of sport itself for normalisation, I incorporate some research within cognitive anthropology on the opioidergic processes involved in exercise. Although cognitive and social anthropology seek different questions and rely on different methods, this chapter adds to the work of authors (e.g. Boecker et al. 2008, E. Cohen et al. 2010) on behavioural synchrony through suggestions that such neurochemical effects may have positive contributions toward the enculturation of normalisation. Although this connection has yet to be made otherwise, I suggest that the opioidergic effect could lend itself to theories of normalisation by transcending fears and preordained beliefs regarding out-group members.

Implications for anthropology and beyond

Theoretical explorations

The findings of this thesis have several implications for the wider scope of anthropology and related social sciences, as well as for several additional audiences, including those involved in orchestrated normalisation efforts, both governmental and non-governmental.

First of all, those concerned with identity politics may be interested in my work on modern Jewish identity as underpinning social institutions throughout the state, and even infiltrating seemingly non-religious aspects, such as which child is allowed in which playground. Not unrelated to identity politics, my use of NGOs in Chapter 4 (in terms of both the sport-for-peace programmes analysed there and ones like Bimkom and Hand-in-Hand mentioned later in the chapter) and discussions of the disparities and goodwill underlying normalisation efforts throughout the ethnography have implications for those interested in the non-government sector—foreign aid workers in particular.

Furthermore, aspects of this thesis may be of interest to researchers on sport or on fanatical followers of organisations in that I show how the fans maintain the wider social structure in the absence of a stable political structure. Fans have long been of interest to ethnographers, but previous work has viewed them in their own right, rather than as part of a wider structure of identity construction and maintenance.

Lastly, from a theoretical perspective my thesis has applications for anthropologists and other academics in that it reapplies several anthropological theories that are prominent in other areas of the discipline to my particular case. Examples of this include interpreting Weiner's "sons of the soil" theory (1978) as applicable to Israel-Palestine so as to provide a structure framing some of the cardinal claims over land rights that are central to the conflict. Another example of a reapplication of theory, highlighted earlier in this chapter, is the establishment of a potential link between cognitive and social anthropology. Despite being two disciplines that seek to answer different questions using different methods, I have shown that the two can, in the proper context, inform each other.

Looking beyond sport

Although my focus is on sport, sport is just one institution in which displays of Jewish identity are made apparent. This opens up the possibility that the implications of this research may be applied to a variety of social institutions that share similarities with sport. With some parallels to the controversial position of Israel within UEFA, Israel's participation in Eurovision has also been contentious. Despite not being geographically European, Israel has participated in Eurovision since 1973 as a full member of the European Broadcasting Union.²¹⁷

Religious laws that prevent Israeli athletes from competing on Jewish festival days have also interfered with Israel's participation in Eurovision. Having won in 1979, Israel became the only country thus far unable to attempt to defend its title the following year when the event overlapped with Yom HaZikaron (Day of Remembrance; see Chapter 6). Additionally, in the same way that Chapter 6 explored Israel's relations with its Arab neighbours, events like Eurovision also highlight Israel's contentious position in the Middle East.

In line with the rules of Eurovision, Israel's 2009 song, "There Must Be Another Way", did not make any direct mention of politics itself. However, its performance by Achinoam Nini "Noa", a Yemenite Jew, and Mira Awad, a Christian Palestinian from the Galilee, was anything but apolitical. Coming at the end of the 2008-2009 Gaza War, some Palestinians felt that Mira was making a false pretence of civility to the audience by participating in state-driven propaganda, thus denying the "Palestinian cause" (Lindquist 2012: 129; see also Belkind 2010). Likewise, some Jewish-Israelis argued that Mira was

²¹⁷ Originally defined by the reach of telegraphy cables in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries rather than by political geography, the EBU—like UEFA—includes some members outside continental Europe (Vuletic 2018: 20).

“Arabising” the state and chided Noa for singing in Arabic (field notes, 2016, English). Just as on the sports field, Eurovision has provided the space for the negotiation of Israel’s identity and place, especially following its first victory in 1978.

Once it became clear that Israel would secure its first win at the 1978 contest, the Jordanian network broadcasting the event (having gone to a commercial break during the Israeli song) cut short its coverage, finished the broadcast showing a bouquet of daffodils (O’Connor 2010: 74-75) and announced the second-place winner, Belgium, as the grand victor.²¹⁸ Coincidentally, many Israelis had tuned into Jordan’s coverage to watch the event as Jordanian broadcasts were in colour, whereas Israeli legislation blocked colour transmissions,²¹⁹ and thus, Israelis did not know their own entrant had won until it could be covered in the Israeli news the following day (field notes, 2016). More recently, in 2005, Lebanon, a country that does not recognise Israel, allegedly withdrew from what would have been its first appearance in the event after being told it could not censor the Israeli performances (Vuletic 2018: 62). The only year in which another Arab state, Morocco (which also does not recognise Israel), participated was in 1980, the year Israel withdrew citing Yom HaZikaron. Israel’s entry for Eurovision 2016 was confirmed while I was in the country, leading to the topic being raised in conversations over the breakfast table and at taxi ranks. Two of my Jewish-Israeli housemates, one born in northern Israel and the other in Egypt, believed that Israel’s participation was blocking Arab entrants, as other eligible Arab states (e.g. Tunisia, Algeria, Libya and Egypt) have not yet participated, and none but Egypt has ever recognised Israel. A further issue presented by Motschenbacher (2016: 26) is that

²¹⁸ “Paris 1978”. (n.d.). *The Official Website of the Eurovision Song Contest*. Accessed 10 March 2018 from <https://eurovision.tv/event/paris-1978>.

²¹⁹ Although the Israel Broadcasting Authority had colour technology in the 1970s, Arnon Zuckerman, the then-director of the IBA, records that broadcasts were not in colour at the request of Prime Minister Golda Meir, who felt it was “artificial” and promoted social inequality, as not everyone could afford colour-capable television sets (Zuckerman 1999: 123). Having received special permission from the government, the IBA had unveiled its colour transmission several months before the 1978 Eurovision Contest when then-Egyptian President Anwar El Sadat became the first Arab leader to visit Israel in 1977 (Priel 1977: 3). Israel next used colour signals when it hosted the 1979 Eurovision and began to run full programming in colour in 1983. Jordan began transmitting colour television in 1974 (Soffer 2015: 142).

Israel's membership in the EBU, and thus its Eurovision participation, signals Europe's support of Israel as a state, and by extension its support of the occupation. Borrowing theory from Máiréad Nic Craith (2006: 17-18), an Irish anthropologist interested in critiquing the concept of Europe, a corollary argument then may be to ask whether what has become defined as Europeanness is inclusive of Muslims, or in the case of the Israeli occupation, their rights.

Eurovision's broadcasting regulations have become entwined with the politics of other international conflicts. For example, during the height of the Bosnian War (1992-1995), Bosnia-Herzegovina made its first appearance in Eurovision. Highlighting the impact of the conflict to the international broadcast audience, Bosnian judge Senad Hadžifejzović had to use an unstable satellite connection to place his live-broadcast vote, as the international telephone landlines had been severed during the war (Vuletic 2018: 59). Eurovision has also been a platform for socio-political topics, such as human rights and issues of belonging, notably a performance by Israeli Dana International (1997). Coming around the time of the 1993 and 1999 Maastricht and Amsterdam treaties signalling the EU's commitment to gender equality, her performance was especially notable because of the sectarian divisions it stirred up within Israel. The singer, born male, received death threats from members of the conservative Israeli religious right (O'Connor 2010: 153) while simultaneously being praised by liberal and secular communities in Israel as signalling Israel's status as what it sees as a western democracy in which sexuality can be openly expressed (Gluhovic 2013: 201).

Current explorations of normalisation and sport

Normalisation remains a controversial and volatile issue in Israeli-Palestinian relations. Both sides remain steadfast in their stated needs and demands, as well as in their lack of interest in benefitting the other state. My own belief is that neither government, nor

their respective foreign supporters, currently has any interest in establishing a lasting solution. It appears that both normalisation in Azzam's sense (2016) and the anti-normalisation campaigns, both of which reject contact unless it involves resistance to Israeli oppression, see reconciliation as only possible if accompanied by Israeli concessions (cf. Salem 2005). However, with Israel seeing little incentive thus far for any concessions on its part, these approaches may be too myopic. Open participation by Palestinians in activities with Israelis may give the appearance of their acceptance of the status quo, or they may present a picture in which both sides are assumed to have an equal stake. Both of these have potentially damaging consequences for Palestinians who are seen as cooperating with the oppressor. Even in the absence of any such assumptions, at the end of any mutual activity, Israelis and Palestinians return to their respective realities. New Israeli settlements continue to be built in the West Bank, buildings continue to be demolished in East Jerusalem, and stabbings continue in Tel Aviv.

Sport continues to be used in conflict and post-conflict communities around the world in order to cross borders, bring people together, encourage communication, promote non-violent encounters and develop justice. The next two paragraphs will look at two active cases in which sport, in the form of the most recent 2018 Olympics, may have implications for political relationships.

For example, in March 2018 North Korea's supreme leader, Kim Jong Un, allegedly committed his country to denuclearisation following negotiations between himself and Chung Eui-yong, the head of South Korean national security (Kang 2018). These talks came eight days after the two Koreas marched together under a united flag at the 2018 Pyeongchang Olympics, perhaps using the global hype surrounding the Olympics to signal détente in their relationship. While it is too early to know whether relations on the Korean peninsula have

shifted, this is at least a temporary respite coming just two months after North Korea's latest missile test and Kim's Twitter dispute with US President Donald Trump over which leader has the more powerful nuclear button (Trump 2018).

Another example of sports diplomacy from the 2018 Pyeongchang Olympics, albeit in a slightly different form, is the inclusion of the so-called "Olympic Athletes from Russia" despite the International Olympic Committee's decision to ban the Russian Olympic Committee from participating in Pyeongchang because of the state's recurrent doping offences. The individual invitations may well be a political strategy, one that Ellis Cashmore (a sports sociologist cited in Chapter 2) believes balances including Russia in the Games as a necessary global superpower against implicating it for any role in recent international allegations (i.e. suspected meddling in the United Kingdom's European Union membership referendum and in the 2016 US Presidential Election, as well as the rise of what has been termed fake news (Cashmore 2017)). The IOC has previously overlooked violations by Russia, including its prior practice (as part of the Soviet Union) of paying athletes, in violation of the IOC's former law on amateurism (Riordan 1993: 28). In either case, the IOC may have prioritised Russia's place in world politics over the ability of its athletes to compete on a par with those from other states (Rider 2016: 46).

One can see the phenomenon of the two Koreas as an external issue brought to the IOC with the intended outcome of using the Games as an opportunity to improve relations on the Korean peninsula, whereas the second example is a matter internal to the IOC in which it attempts to accommodate Russia while adhering to its own rules. However, in both recent examples, the conditions of Olympic participation are connected with global political interest. In the final part of Chapter 2, following a discussion of the contribution of "ping-pong diplomacy" to easing US-China relations in the 1970s, I write that for sports diplomacy to be successful, it must be supported by an international community of tolerant, if not supportive

and engaged politicians. Ultimately, as I have shown elsewhere in this thesis, without a solid political infrastructure, sport can just as easily expose nationalist tensions as it can ease them (e.g. “bodyline” cricket between England and Australia in 1932-1933, the 1969 World Cup qualifying match between El Salvador and Honduras, and the Black September Organisation’s killings at the 1972 Munich Olympics).

Programmes such as PPI, Hand in Hand and the Tel Aviv Marathon have demonstrated the capacity to use sport in a way that helps transcend social cleavages, at least on their own modest scale, in order to provide space for private-sector engagement in normalisation. Whether sport can ultimately be a catalyst for large-scale normalisation in Israel is perhaps especially challenging compared to the use of sport for normalisation purposes in other states. Perhaps this is due to the inseparable connection between Israel’s sport teams and its state agendas, dating back to the entrenchment of muscular Judaism in the early politics of Mandate Palestine and the international Zionist movement. However, I conclude that sport may, if used appropriately, transcend relationships enough to provide space and time for political negotiations or private-sector engagement. Whether sport can ultimately contribute toward the normalisation of Israeli-Palestinian or Jewish sectarian identities will depend on which diplomatic processes are underway when the stadium lights are turned off.

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Appendix. The Football Method Used by PPI and TPSS

Introduction to football3

PPI and TPSS apply a method known as “football3” to their sport games. This approach to sport developed in association with streetfootballworld, a global sport-for-peace NGO that was developed by Jürgen Griesbeck, a German student living in Columbia in 2002. The football3 method is based on street football, which is a more informal game in which players do not necessarily adhere to formal football regulations. The games may be pick-up games with several features that need not observe the regulations, e.g. differences in pitch size, team size, goalposts, referees. Although football3 was designed with football in mind, these same regulations are applicable to various other sports (e.g. PPI uses it for basketball and TPSS uses it for its multiple offerings). Football3 also adds a focus on additional factors, such as teamwork, respect, gender equality (teams are often mixed-sex) and sportsmanship, which are as important as technical performance and points scored through kicking a ball into a goal. The final score is the accumulation of points earned for fair play and goals scored. There are mediators instead of referees. Mediators do not referee the game but instead may start and stop play, award points for fair play and settle any dispute if the athletes fail to do so by themselves. Objectives of the method include: developing communication, sportsmanship, mediation skills, decision-making, community involvement, sense of responsibility and the inclusion of others (especially members of one’s outgroup). Football3 provides materials to help track team development in these areas.

Anatomy of a match

The name “football3” refers to the three halves of every game:

1st half: a pre-game discussion led by a mediator or a coach outlining the game’s objectives, agreeing on the rules to be used and addressing particularly pertinent social issues that impact players in their non-sporting lives. Some rules may be set for the season (e.g. the numbers of players per side, duration of matches, whether offside rules apply, consequences of a foul) while others may change with each game (e.g. whether teams rotate starters in the form of boy/girl or Jewish-Israeli/Palestinian-Israeli, whether all players must contact the ball during play, how to restart after the ball goes out of bounds, how to celebrate scoring).

Players need to understand the thought process behind each agreed rule.

2nd half: a relatively short game, possibly only twenty minutes of active play, often (at least in the case of football) played on a small (not regulation-sized) field or in a gymnasium. As mentioned in Chapter 4, when playing in mixed-identity environments, this may not be a competitive game. Instead, this playing time may rather comprise a collection of drills. Some of these will be outlined below. When drills are used, there is a preference for ice-breakers and so-called “touching” drills (interviews with coaches at PPI and staff at streetfootballworld, February 2017, August 2017, English).

3rd half: a post-game reflection assessing the degree to which the game addressed its objectives, adhered to the pre-agreed rules and how any social issues were experienced. Discussion topics may include how players felt about playing with opposite-identity team members (what was easy and what was difficult), what worked well and what did not work so well, lessons for the next twinning, any ways in which on-court issues were solved and whether individuals felt they and their opposing teammates adhered to the pre-set rules. In the case of Israel-Palestine, these discussions should be jointly led by both coaches in both

languages or by a neutral coach in a third language, such as English. Fair-play points are usually awarded at the conclusion of the game during the post-game discussions. This means the outcome of the game is not necessarily known until after the third half discussion.

Fair-play points

Examples of ways to earn such points include active participation and reflection in discussion, conduct on court and adherence to rules, demonstrations of extraordinary sportsmanship and equal inclusion of all team members. Points can be awarded by mediators, teammates and members of the opposing team. The weight of fair-play points in relation to game points depends on the team. For example, some teams may emphasise game points initially so as not to turn off players by too much of a peace-based focus. On the other hand, other teams focus more on fair-play points, especially for younger competitors or those newer to the fair-play approach, in order to promote working together. Rarely, a team with only fair-play points may triumph over a team that has also scored game points, which underlines the importance given to sportsmanship.

Examples of drills

Examples of ice-breaker drills as used by PPI/TPSS (drills are not specified by streetfootballworld to encourage organisations to tailor the game to their needs; interview, September 2017, English):

“Hot potato” (working on general ball skills):

The entire group forms a circle, and the different members take turns throwing the ball to others, calling out their names. Each time a pass is completed, all participants take a step back, enlarging the circle and making the passes more challenging.

Generic ice-breaker (throwing practice):

Members of mix-identity spread out in the gym and practising throwing the ball to each other. A Jewish-Israeli must throw to a Palestinian-Israeli and vice versa, calling out the teammate’s name and/or a unique fact about the individual (e.g. a favourite book or colour).

“HORSE” (basket-shooting practice):

Twinning teams are divided into small groups (4-6 individuals, with an equal number of Jewish-Israelis and Palestinian-Israelis). The first player with the ball tries to throw the ball into the basketball hoop. If she is successful, the next player takes a turn and so on. As soon as a player misses, she acquires a letter (e.g. “H”) and takes another shot. If a player misses a second time (or again in a later round), she acquires another letter (e.g. “O”). This continues until players earn the full set of letters to spell a word (e.g. “HORSE”). Variations include specifying how the shot is made (e.g. facing away from the basket) or spelling words related to peace-building (e.g. “PEACE”, “HOPE”).

Examples of touching games as used by PPI/TPSS

Relays (drills for agility and ball-handling coordination):

Players form two mixed-identity teams. In relay fashion, one at a time, teammates dribble the ball through an obstacle course before returning to tap their next teammate (someone necessarily of the other identity), who then takes the ball and repeats the process. The first team to finish wins the game point.

“Human knot” (drill for team building and problem solving):

This game involves no ball skills but instead focuses on increasing physical contact, communication skills and problem-solving. The group forms a circle, and everyone grabs the hand of someone not adjacent, creating a knot of bodies. Without releasing any handholds, the team needs to untangle itself until it is an open circle.

“Wheelbarrow” races (drill for team building and agility):

Divided into teams of two, one Jewish-Israeli and one Palestinian-Israeli, each team races to complete a small circuit in a “wheelbarrow” formation—one team member walking on his hands, while the other holds his ankles. The two then switch positions for the next circuit. Variations include completing obstacle courses, blind-folding one of the team members or having the team follow a trail of food (e.g. popcorn) that the “wheelbarrow” must eat on course.

Social issues and football3

Football3 has been used to promote normalisation and peace-building in various places in the world outside Israel-Palestine (e.g. Centres des Jeunes pour la Paix in the Democratic Republic of Congo; Fundación Tiempo de Juego in Colombia). It has also been used to combat a variety of social issues, including gender equality (e.g. Trans-Nzoia Youth Sports Association in Kenya; SALT Academy in Cambodia; Instituto Formação in Brazil), community development (e.g. Football Friends in Bosnia, Herzegovina, Montenegro and Serbia; Soccer in the Streets in the United States; Sport Against Racism Ireland in Ireland), and social involvement (e.g. Asociación Civil Gurises Unidos in Uruguay; KICKFAIR's Straßenfußball für Toleranz in Germany; Organización Juvenil RECREARTE in Costa Rica).