

# The Kibbutz and the Development Town: The Economic Dimension of Their Reciprocal Relations— The Case of the Hula Valley

## ABSTRACT

The article examines the socio-economic interaction between the kibbutzim of the Upper Galilee and Kiryat Shmona during the first decade of the town's existence. The main consideration behind the support of most Upper Galilee kibbutzim for the establishment of Kiryat Shmona was the urgent need for laborers to help dominate the new extensive areas belonging to Arab villages in the Hula Valley. The completion of the draining of the Hula swamp a decade later likewise left tens of thousands of dunams available for cultivation and an urgent need for workers.

The massive growth of the town, including eight thousand new immigrants from North Africa in the late 1950s, despite the socio-economic vacuum and the absence of economic infrastructure, suited the needs of the Regional Council. The dearth of opportunities in Kiryat Shmona caused heavy reliance on unstable seasonal agricultural work in the surrounding kibbutzim and public works that advanced mainly kibbutz infrastructures. Not only after the fact but even during the establishment of Kiryat Shmona and its development from a *ma'abara* into a town, there were clear warnings as to the social consequences of the growing gaps. The frustration and helplessness they engendered erupted in riots in May 1956.

## INTRODUCTION

THE ARTICLE FOCUSES ON THE TEST-CASE OF THE HULA VALLEY during the 1950s. It demonstrates the significance and impact of the socio-economic relations between the kibbutzim and the *ma'abara* (and the town that grew out of it), which were no less powerful than the cultural encounter between the new immigrants and the environment into which they were absorbed. This test-case is pertinent to a broader sphere of research contexts, including Israel's first decade, with an emphasis on socio-economic processes; the mass immigration and the creation of the country's periphery;<sup>1</sup> the Labor movement and the Kibbutz movement at the time of the establishment of the state;<sup>2</sup> inter-ethnic relations in Israeli society;<sup>3</sup> and processes of settlement and urbanization.<sup>4</sup>

The distinctive conditions of the Hula Valley region make it a fascinating laboratory for study of the encounter that took place during Israel's early years between the Kibbutz Movement and the mass immigration. At the northern edge of the country, far from the young state's central institutions, the Upper Galilee kibbutzim had a decisive influence on the molding of the northern region, including the establishment of Kiryat Shmona. The discussion below is historical and based on analysis of early sources and documents from the formative period of the reciprocal relations.<sup>5</sup>

ESTABLISHMENT OF A WORKERS' TOWN  
IN THE UPPER GALILEE

The last decade of the British Mandate witnessed the growth of an impressive, organized, and well-established settlement bloc in the Galilee Panhandle. The distance separating these communities from the center of the country and the core of Yishuv activity forced the young kibbutzim to organize themselves efficiently and to set up infrastructures and services that could operate independently of the national institutions. The "Bloc Committee" that was established (here as in other areas) with British approval demonstrated leadership and organizational ability, attending to economic, social, and security issues which, in other regions, were handled by the national institutions.<sup>6</sup> The well-developed pioneering consciousness was another valuable resource for the inhabitants of this distant region. They viewed themselves as pioneers fulfilling a national mission, rather than as inhabitants of a far-flung, inconsequential outback. With the establishment of the state, the Bloc Committee became the region's central administrative

body with authoritative influence. It represented twenty-six communities, mostly kibbutzim with a small number of moshavim, numbering a total of some seven thousand inhabitants.

The demographics of the Hula Valley underwent dramatic change in 1948. A few days prior to the declaration of the state, and in the wake of the fall of Arab Safed, the Hula Valley was emptied of its Arab inhabitants. The departure of some 13,000 Arabs (and, particularly, the measures put in place by the Israeli government to prevent their return to their villages) fundamentally altered the situation of the Upper Galilee kibbutzim.<sup>7</sup> They were allotted tracts of land, a resource they had long yearned for,<sup>8</sup> and were granted special conditions which they were able to leverage for further development over the coming decades. Among the tracts that were distributed were those that had belonged to the inhabitants of the village of Khalsa, the center of Arab settlement in the Hula Valley: according to British records; these totaled some 11,300 dunams.

The decision to establish a Jewish settlement in the village of Khalsa was based on the recommendations of the government Planning Division, but at the same time was also the result of pressure applied by the leaders of the Upper Galilee Bloc Committee. This body had realized early on that neither the Jews from the center of the country nor immigrants with the means to make their own choices were likely to come and settle the region; applicants for membership of the northern kibbutzim were few in number. In a meeting held in the spring of 1949 with Prime Minister Ben-Gurion, the kibbutz representatives demanded that Khalsa be settled with new immigrants, who would solve the perennial labor problem faced by the northern kibbutzim.<sup>9</sup>

The main consideration that led most of the kibbutzim in the area to support the establishment of a neighboring urban center was thus the urgent need for workers. The new community, initially named Kiryat Yosef (in memory of Joseph Trumpeldor), was established in July 1949 by immigrant Yemenite families that arrived in Khalsa and took up residence in the village's abandoned houses.

*Davar* newspaper reported optimistically on the founding of the new community, asserting that "more than two thousand inhabitants or more are expected this year", adding that "They will be able to find work in the Valley communities, which are crying out for laborers."<sup>10</sup> The same message emanated from a ceremony held in March 1950, in which the Bloc Committee officially became the Upper Galilee Regional Council. Hillel Landsman, chairman of the new Council, set forth his expectations as to future development of the region: "The Hula Valley with all its hidden

riches, and the mountain tracts, are waiting for Jewish workers.”<sup>11</sup> On the other hand, some of the leaders of the Committee, seeking to ensure that the kibbutzim would be able to continue cultivating the agricultural land left behind by the Arabs, had expressed reservations concerning the establishment of a large urban center. It was for this reason that Kiryat Yosef was originally established on a mere 970 dunams—less than a tenth of the area of the Arab village of Khalsa.<sup>12</sup> The impact of this decision on Kiryat Shmona’s territory of jurisdiction and its ability to grow was felt for many years. Even later on, when the town’s boundaries were extended, it spread vertically, down the mountainside, leaving most of the available agricultural land in the hands of the kibbutzim.

There were also warnings as to the socio-economic reality that the establishment of the new community in Khalsa would likely create in the Hula Valley. Nahum Horwitz and Eliezer Krol, prominent members of Kibbutz Kfar Giladi, preferred—for this reason among others—that a small agricultural cooperative moshav be formed in Khalsa, which could integrate on a more egalitarian basis within the largely homogeneous region. This suggestion was rejected, since most of the members of the kibbutzim in the region preferred the idea of an urban settlement that could alleviate the shortage of agricultural laborers. MK Shmuel Dayan, a leader of the Moshav movement, warned of the danger of establishing a town in the north of the country whose viability would depend on its inhabitants working in the local kibbutzim, which would become their employers:

These workers’ camps lead to the creation of two classes in the heart of the kibbutzim . . . [That which proceeds from] necessity and habit will come to seem natural, and with time, two classes will come into being. For what purpose shall we bring people who are living Socialism on a daily basis, to the point of social atrophy, through exploitation of permanent salaried workers?<sup>13</sup>

Instead of a “permanent proletariat” in “cramped camps” which doomed the immigrants to “salaried lives forever; without justice, without fairness”, Dayan proposed that the available land in the Upper Galilee “should be divided fairly. It should not be given to those who are already rich with land, but rather to those lacking land—the Yemenites and other immigrants.”<sup>14</sup>

In June 1950, the Regional Council decided, in cooperation with the government Names Committee, to change the name of the new settlement to Kiryat Shmona.<sup>15</sup> The transition from Kiryat Yosef to Kiryat Shmona simultaneously turned the small community comprising mostly Yemenite

immigrants into a transit camp whose population increased dramatically. Immigrants from Romania, Iraq, India, Persia, Hungary, and, in small numbers at this stage, North Africa, were directed by the national authorities to the distant north. In July 1950, the population of Kiryat Shmona stood at about 800 inhabitants. Within a year, the number had reached almost 4,000, and continued to grow.

The public services in the *ma'abara* collapsed under the strain. At this stage, the kibbutzim of the Upper Galilee played a key role in alleviating some of the everyday hardships in the nearby *ma'abara*. Dozens of kibbutz members were active in Kiryat Shmona, providing various social services. At the same time, some of the immigrants began voicing criticism over the socio-economic relations that were developing in the north. The Communist newspaper *Kol ha-Am* spoke out against the praise heaped by the workers' parties on the new "northern city": "Khalsa is in fact the 'native village' of all the kibbutzim in the area, and its inhabitants are Ben-Gurion's 'blacks', his 'natives'—second-rate citizens of the 'Socialism in Our Time' regime."<sup>16</sup>

An echo of these voices reverberates in documentation of internal kibbutz discussions during the new town's early years. Between 1950 and 1951 there was internal discussion as to the possibility of including the *ma'abara* within the Regional Council. Some of the speakers expressed a profound awareness of the danger of creating a class distinction in the Galilee. Eta (Arthur) Meron of Kibbutz Kfar Szold warned that "The reality is that they [the residents of the *ma'abara*] are being exploited by the owners of the land in these parts—i.e., the kibbutzim. No amount of public relations on behalf of the kibbutzim will help there. We can expect a march of the unemployed in front of the kibbutzim."

He proposed that Kiryat Shmona be brought into the Regional Council as an equal partner, and that cooperation with this urban settlement be strengthened: in this way, he argued, "We shall be able to prevent hatred of the 'kulaks'."<sup>17</sup> However, a different view ultimately molded the relations between Kiryat Shmona and its neighbors. Opponents of the inclusion of the *ma'abara* within the Regional Council felt that the time had come for the kibbutzim to take care of themselves and protect their own interests. Accepting the *ma'abara* of Khalsa as an equal partner in the Council might pave the way for demands for an egalitarian distribution of land, which would diminish the assets that the kibbutzim had acquired. Since Kiryat Shmona at this stage already had thousands of inhabitants, the kibbutzim feared that it would become a majority within the Council and the central influence over the region. At a general meeting held in Kfar Szold, this fear was expressed clearly,

Already today there are demands by [Kiryat Shmona] for land, which could cause great harm to the kibbutzim . . . . It will be a bitter struggle. If a different majority is created in the Council [other than that of the kibbutzim], it will endanger the tracts that the kibbutzim are cultivating.<sup>18</sup>

The debate at the Regional Council in 1951 paints a picture similar to that arising from Bareli's study of the Mapai party's attitude towards the Mizrahi immigrants during the same period. Within Mapai there were some who wanted to transform these immigrants from a subordinated population into active, equal partners in government. The party leadership, however, ruled against this view, preferring a centralized policy that encouraged paternalism and dependence of the new immigrants on the Party.<sup>19</sup>

Thus, the democratization that would have allowed the thousands of inhabitants of Kiryat Shmona a meaningful influence on the Galilee region was ruled out. Instead, the decision was that Kiryat Shmona would be kept out of the Regional Council, thereby safeguarding the fundamental interests of the local kibbutzim: expansive tracts of land for agriculture, thousands of available workers, and control of the Regional Council governing the area. The institutions of the Regional Council were established in Kiryat Shmona, as were its factories, but the town itself was excluded from the decision-making process.

The economic interest is only a partial explanation for the way in which the relations between the veteran population and the new immigrants were molded. The cultural dimension of the relationship must also be taken into consideration. The patronizing, orientalist view of the immigrants and the decision not to extend membership in the Regional Council to the *ma'abara* precluded any possibility of Kiryat Shmona becoming the real urban center of the region, and made it easier to come to terms with the deepening economic gaps.

The reluctance of the Upper Galilee Regional Council to integrate Kiryat Shmona within its midst was not a unique phenomenon. There were many municipalities throughout the country that elected not take *ma'abarot* under their wing—whether as a result of reservations concerning the possible influence of the new immigrants on the socio-cultural character of the area, or based on simple economic reasoning: the inhabitants of the *ma'abara* would lack the means to pay municipal taxes, but would require an array of expensive services.<sup>20</sup>

## A TOWN DEPENDENT ON ITS RURAL SURROUNDINGS

The municipal affairs of Kiryat Shmona were handled by the Upper Galilee Regional Council only until 1953, but the Council's influence on life in the town continued for years thereafter. Between May 1953 and the summer of 1955, three appointee mayors, dispatched by Mapai, served in Kiryat Shmona. The second, Ilan Hartov, served for just a few months after replacing Avraham HaKohen, the first appointee mayor.<sup>21</sup>

Hartov described to me the circumstances of the termination of his own term of office towards the end of 1954. He had been troubled by the seeming impossibility of running the young municipality without any regular income. He understood that he could not collect municipal taxes from the thousands of *ma'abara* residents who lacked permanent employment. He therefore proposed that the industrial area in the southern part of the town be transferred from the jurisdiction of the Regional Council to that of the Kiryat Shmona municipality. To his view, the municipal taxes collected from the factories that were already located there, and from those that would be built later on, could serve as the initial basis for the town's economic independence.<sup>22</sup> His suggestion aroused the ire of the kibbutzim, which were not willing to relinquish their lucrative assets in the industrial area. The question of fair distribution is not a simple one in this instance, but at the same time there is no ignoring the disparity of power reflected in this conflict. The Regional Council was in close, ongoing contact with the national leadership, which was attentive to its needs and interests. According to Hartov, the heads of the Regional Council got the Mapai leadership involved, and he was removed from his post.

In a separate article I have described the mobilization of dozens of kibbutz members to set up services and offer aid to the *ma'abara* in the areas of education, community, welfare, and construction, as well as the *ma'abara* responses to this initiative.<sup>23</sup> At the same time, the scope of external volunteer activity notwithstanding, the decision that the *ma'abara* would be managed during its early years by the Regional Council—in other words, from the outside—foretold the failure of the vision that had guided the establishment of the development towns.<sup>24</sup> The gap between the original intention of the government Planning Division to create an integrated economic and social framework for the kibbutzim and the urban center, and the reality as it developed, became apparent already at this early stage. The Planning Division had envisioned the town as a well-developed center in relation to the rural surroundings, and had hoped that the regional services and businesses would be concentrated within its boundaries, along with

agricultural and other industries based on local produce, natural resources, and private initiatives.<sup>25</sup> The town would house the high-schools that would be attended by the youth of the entire region, as well as commercial, administrative, health, and cultural institutions.

The reality was that the kibbutzim were organized as a powerful and efficient Regional Council that provided most of the necessary services; their produce was sold through a country-wide marketing system and party-run purchasing organizations, with less reliance on the neighboring town; their schools were not located in Kiryat Shmona—and were certainly not open to the town's children. In a complete reversal of the original intention, Kiryat Shmona came to occupy a secondary status in relation to the “labor settlements”, the “pioneers”. Within this larger northern periphery the town became a symbol of a two-fold periphery: in relation to the center of the country, where the central administration and economic forces were located, and also in relation to the regional “center”, embodied by the Regional Council.<sup>26</sup>

The establishment of Kiryat Shmona entailed extensive housing construction, but there was no complementary government plan for construction of factories and employment infrastructure.<sup>27</sup> It was the Regional Council that set up factories where inhabitants of the *ma'abara* and others found work. The regional factories became a symbolic expression of the separatist reality: they were established on territory belonging to the Regional Council that formed a sort of enclave within the town. Located as they were on the seam line between the two municipal jurisdictions, the kibbutz factories became the arena for an encounter that highlighted the asymmetric nature of the relations between the two population groups.<sup>28</sup>

The dominant feature of the socio-economic reality that developed in the Hula Valley during the 1950s was the deepening rift between the kibbutzim and the town. Minister of Labor Golda Meir expressed early on her feeling that the socio-economic processes unfolding in the young state would lead to polarity and would widen the gaps between the veteran population and new immigrants. It was specifically in the wake of a visit to Ayelet HaShahar and to Khalsa that she expressed her sense that the processes of development, which had been facilitated in part by funds raised among Diaspora Jews, were in fact serving mainly the veteran population. Meir recounted that her concern in view of the approaching winter led her to ask the members of Ayelet HaShahar—“a kibbutz boasting a considerable number of craftsmen”—to send five of them to Khalsa, but she was refused.

Having been personally involved in fundraising in the US for immigrant absorption, she chided her hosts: “Perhaps you can explain to me how



the Yemenite children are going to get through the winter in the Galilee mountains?" She concluded, "I cannot accept this way of operating."

In whose name did we ask for this money? Not in the name of the established population. On the contrary, we were always proud to say, "Do we need help? We have no need for anything. The Yemenite Jew, the Iraqi Jew—they are your Jews, just as they are ours; you are obligated to take on at least a meaningful portion of that concern." But I am growing closer and closer to a terrible sense that this is not the truth. The dollars that we are receiving—it is mainly we ourselves who are consuming them, because our standard of living is higher, because "we need more things"; so we say. We quieten our conscience with the fact that we need more than does someone who comes from Yemen or from Iraq. Why do we need it more? I don't know . . . With regard to the immigrants, we have to want [their absorption]. If we, the workers, will understand the pain, the shame, the tragedy of our way of life and realize that in the long term we cannot absorb just by talking about immigration, then the solution will lie in our own hands.<sup>29</sup>

The first decade of Israel's existence witnessed impressive development momentum in the Hula Valley. The kibbutzim of the region enjoyed extraordinary conditions for economic consolidation. Two historical events changed the face of the Hula Valley beyond recognition: the Arab exodus in the spring of 1948, and the great national project to drain the Hula marshes that was carried out over the course of the 1950s. The relatively small group of settlements received tens of thousands of dunams of agricultural land, while the considerable demographic growth of Israeli society increased the need for produce. The network of close personal and political contacts between the Upper Galilee kibbutzim and the government ministers, heads of the Histadrut, and directors of the various institutions comprising the Labor Movement, all aided the kibbutzim in their development of the Hula Valley. The Regional Council and its constituent communities managed to obtain settlement budgets, water quotas, loans, and credit, as well as budgets for public works.<sup>30</sup>

As a result, the Regional Council had a clear interest in increasing the number of inhabitants of the *ma'abara*. The need for a large number of available laborers in the Upper Galilee, along with the government policy of population dispersion (which effectively meant immigration dispersion) spurred the constant growth of Kiryat Shmona. The Regional Council published an announcement in *Davar*, "The Galilee calls for laborers";<sup>31</sup> there was even a call for a thousand families to move to the Hula Valley

within a short time in order to solve the labor shortage in the kibbutzim. The expansion of industry, the laying of an extensive irrigation network—“All of this requires thousands of workers and dense settlement in the uncultivated territories and in the drained areas once the draining project is completed.”<sup>32</sup> Announcements of an urgent need for workers in the Upper Galilee usually appeared during the spring, in anticipation of the intensive agricultural working season.

The reality of the 1950s led growing numbers of kibbutzim to agree to hired labor. In the Upper Galilee, too, the kibbutzim were collapsing under their workload, having undergone accelerated development while the number of members remained static. The additional land acquired by the kibbutzim, along with the development of kibbutz industry, made hired labor imperative—all the more so in view of the nearby *ma'abara*, which was filled with new immigrants desperate for employment. The cooperative settlement employers had access to a workforce that could be employed at low wages, along with public works programs that contributed to the development of the kibbutzim but were funded by municipal or state budgets. The needs of the kibbutz economy, developing quickly and crying out for additional manpower, simply overrode any other consideration. Hired labor quickly became the archetypal framework for relations between the kibbutzim and the immigrants.

#### DEVELOPMENT, LACK OF DEVELOPMENT, AND A DIVIDED EMPLOYMENT MARKET

The considerable government and public investment in the Hula Valley over the course of the 1950s focused mainly on the regional processes of agricultural and industrial development, rather than on creating an income-generating infrastructure for Kiryat Shmona. It was the laborers of Kiryat Shmona who were engaged in the national endeavors (such as draining the Hula Lake) and regional works (agriculture and factories),<sup>33</sup> and it was mainly their efforts that built up the income-generating infrastructures of the kibbutzim. While kibbutz members also took part in the various development projects, there developed in the Hula Valley—as in the Israeli economy as a whole—a riven labor market. On one side were the kibbutz members, who were assured better conditions and who also enjoyed the long-term benefits of the projects that they worked on. On the other side were the laborers from Kiryat Shmona: they generally received very low wages, their work conditions were less comfortable, and the scope of their

future benefit from the development of the area was limited. The resources that the kibbutzim enjoyed during this period of development provided more than just an initial head start in relation to the nearby *ma'abara*; they were an advantage that tended to renew and reinforce itself.<sup>34</sup> Thus, the allocation of government and public resources for the region's economic development contributed to the creation of a clear class structure.

The riven labor market in the Hula Valley was characterized by instability. Along with periods when there was a great need for additional laborers, the sources document periods of acute unemployment, since the available work followed seasonal agricultural needs. In June 1952, following a few weeks of regular work, the unemployment situation in Kiryat Shmona grew to the point where a third of the main breadwinners were out of work. Their claims were published in *Davar*:

We listened to the government and the national institutions, calling on immigrants to head to the frontier, to agriculture, not to crowd themselves in the cities. We went to the distant north, to Kiryat Shmona. Can it be, then, that there is no work for us, and that there is no-one who cares about us and our children? Is this what is meant by "population dispersion"?<sup>35</sup>

At the same time, the secretary of the Kiryat Shmona Workers' Council, Avraham HaKohen, sought to initiate employment projects immediately. He acknowledged that "public works are unsatisfactory, both educationally and as a permanent solution," but asserted that in Kiryat Shmona, "which is on the cusp of development, there is no other option". He described the bleak poverty to which he was exposed in his visits to the workers who were fortunate enough to have a few days of work, setting forth a "horrifying picture" of their wretched conditions:

Immigrant workers eat dry bread—with no exaggeration, dry bread—for lunch, lacking the money to buy something more nourishing. Forestation work is carried out in difficult conditions . . . among thorns, with no shoes. . . . Someone should have ensured, as a first step, that Jewish workers would not be working barefoot.<sup>36</sup>

One of the central phenomena of the labor market in Kiryat Shmona was the delaying of wages. Throughout the 1950s, it was very common in Kiryat Shmona for laborers to wait many months for payment. A description of an angry outburst at the local employment bureau in January 1951 shows that laborers who had worked in Kfar Giladi the previous April (!)

had not yet been paid.<sup>37</sup> Nor was this a one-time occurrence. Two years later, the chairman of the Kiryat Shmona Workers' Council issued a "severe warning" to the executive council of the Histadrut: "The kibbutzim of the area owe the laborers four months' wages." He stated that the laborers had "had enough", as had the Regional Council, which was inundated with complaints.<sup>38</sup>

HaKohen's letter illustrates the complexity of the situation in which the Kiryat Shmona Workers' Council, run by Mapai representatives, was required to manage a stormy union struggle over the withholding of wages by the kibbutzim:

The Tradesmen's Association adjacent to the Workers' Union has ways of collecting wages from private employers, but over the course of our work in the Association we have not encountered employers from the Histadrut sector; therefore, it is not clear to us what measures we are meant to adopt against them.

The secretary of the Workers' Council described his fruitless efforts:

Personal visits by the secretary to the kibbutzim, visits with delegations of laborers, appeals in writing and by telephone, efforts by the Regional Council and various local institutions. None of these activities have produced any results.

HaKohen also presented the argument of the kibbutzim that "the Labor Ministry owes them a considerable sum, and in their current financial straits they are unable to pay the debt." In other words, the development budgets for the projects for which residents of Kiryat Shmona were employed by the kibbutzim were funded by the government, and the delay in transferring the funds to the kibbutzim was what caused the withholding of wages. He included in his letter a detailed list of fifteen kibbutzim that were withholding wages totaling 30,000 Israeli lira, and warned, "If you are unable to sort out the matter of the wages, there is no justification for our continued activity here."<sup>39</sup>

Letters from the Kiryat Shmona Workers' Council to the Histadrut's Agricultural Center often included an explicit request to act to have funds transferred to the kibbutzim, with the claim that only this could solve the problem of withheld wages.<sup>40</sup> The distorted work relations brought about a situation whereby the Workers' Council was unable to mount an effective workers' struggle or exert any real pressure on the kibbutzim. The only

horizon of activity left to it was to push for the transfer of funds to the kibbutz employers, so that they could pay belated wages to the Kiryat Shmona laborers, whose work had contributed to the development of infrastructure that fell, as noted, mainly within the municipal jurisdiction of the Regional Council. Angry spontaneous demonstrations by laborers, which sometimes got out of control, served on some occasions to catalyze a release of pressure. Thus, for example, Kibbutz HaGoshrim and Kibbutz Sde Nehemia each sold three cows in order to pay, in January 1954, the wages owed to the hired laborers from six months earlier.<sup>41</sup>

The picture that arises of the Kiryat Shmona labor market is one of day-laborers paying regular visits to the labor bureau, lacking any employment security, and dependent on the establishment to provide days of employment and to transfer funds so that they could receive their wages. The divided labor market of the Upper Galilee was not created in a deliberate and premeditated manner by the Regional Council, but there were aspects of it that suited the interests of the kibbutzim—such as the need for seasonal laborers for agriculture and specific projects—while running counter to the interests of Kiryat Shmona workers, who wanted permanent jobs.

Criticism of the situation at the time was often politically motivated and directed against Mapai, but even the party's own magazine, *HaDor*, addressed the injustice of the reality in Kiryat Shmona: "It is no secret that some 90% of the Kiryat Shmona laborers are employed by the surrounding kibbutzim, and this employment hangs by a thread." It chose harsh words in its description of the masses of "simple laborers" serving as a *lumpenproletariat* for the kibbutzim of the region. Along with this description there was criticism of the lack of proactive investment:

Instead of the public works that the Ministry of Labor awards from time to time—projects that can only with great difficulty cover the laborers' needs . . . they would do well to think about development and realistic plans to set the town on a solid footing.<sup>42</sup>

The micro picture of the Upper Galilee sits well with the macro picture of society as a whole in Israel of the 1950s and 1960s, which John Gal has defined as an "aid state" rather than a "welfare state". The pioneering ethos inspired the ideal of a society of laborers, which was incompatible with having people rely on state services, and therefore sought to limit these to the most elementary aid services.<sup>43</sup> Mapai was oriented towards the middle class, and, contrary to its depiction as a Socialist-Zionist party, did not

elect to establish a welfare state. The pioneering ethos entailed a wariness of granting excessive welfare benefits that could undermine the value of manual labor. The result of this mindset was a split economy in which the middle class that developed in partnership with the national, Histadrut, and party establishment was privileged over the laborers who, for the most part, were Mizrahi immigrants.<sup>44</sup> Returning to the reality that was created in the Hula Valley, the allotting of establishment resources for the region's economic development contributed to the creation of a clear class structure. Public institutions directed resources mainly towards development that was carried out by the kibbutzim, and towards the Regional Council, while the bifurcated aid state awarded only the most rudimentary services to the residents of Kiryat Shmona, allowing them, at best, to survive, but left them lacking the conditions required for economic development and a halt to the widening gap between them and the surrounding kibbutzim.

The kibbutzim were engaged in isolationism, taking care of themselves and making the most of the opportunities afforded by the country's development to veteran groups and those with good political connections. The level of government support for agricultural development rose in the years following the establishment of the state, with a consensus as to the need to increase the agricultural yield. The overall national framework rewarded the kibbutzim for their symbolic status as pioneers by favoring labor settlement, allotting monetary resources, and awarding political support and a high level of prestige. At the same time, the residents of the *ma'abarot*—including those in faraway Kiryat Shmona on the northern frontier—were not treated as “pioneers” and earned no symbolic capital at all by virtue of settling the northern tip of the country.

In some interviews with Kiryat Shmona veterans, appreciation was expressed for the employment and for the humane treatment; in many other instances the impression that comes across most prominently is the class-structure experience and the balance of power in which the Kiryat Shmona laborers occupied a position of inferiority and dependence.<sup>45</sup> The gap between labor discourse and Socialist rhetoric, on one hand, and the polarized reality of the Hula Valley, on the other, created a dissonance that was difficult to resolve. Kibbutz members were active in Kiryat Shmona, attempting to “establish a workers’ consciousness” by means of lectures or May Day parades. Signs throughout the town trumpeted “the Land of Israel Workers’ Party”, “labor settlement”, and “the workers’ society”.

The discourse that distinguished between the *ma'abara* laborers and the pioneers in the kibbutzim helped the latter to reconcile themselves to the profound gap and to justify it, but the terminology upheld by the

Labor movement, including the kibbutzim, concerning commitment to socio-economic equality, could not conceal the class gap between the more veteran Israelis and the working class residents of the *ma'abara*. In the Neot Mordechai newsletter, a kibbutz member wrote about the laborers from Kiryat Shmona: "They—the workers—stack the loads while we sit on the tractors, urging them on." The system that managed this inequality between rhetoric and reality was a hierarchical political mechanism that included close supervision of the institutions of the party, in whose branches the influence of the neighboring kibbutzim was clear; a Workers' Council that was dependent on the Histadrut mechanism and could not fully express the interests of the public works laborers; and a municipality that likewise operated in the vise of regional powers.

## FROM MASS ABSORPTION TO PROTEST

The years 1952–1953 were a particularly difficult period for Kiryat Shmona. Against the backdrop of a halt to the waves of mass immigration, fewer new families were being sent to the northern town, while a great many residents chose to leave, heading for the center of the country. Of the 5,000 inhabitants of Kiryat Shmona at the end of 1951, about 3,000 remained two years later. Only with renewed immigration, this time from North Africa, did the demographic trend pick up again, and as 1955 approached the numbers were back to 1951 levels. An even more significant demographic turning point followed, during 1955–1956, with the number of residents doubling. This growth continued until the early 1960s. What caused this dramatic increase? Unquestionably, the mass immigration that renewed itself during these years, as a result of the instability of Jewish life in North Africa, drove this phenomenon, along with a decision by the Israeli government to transfer the immigrants "from the boat to the frontier", or "from the boat to the *ma'abara*".<sup>46</sup> Still, it is clear that the distant Kiryat Shmona, lacking in economic infrastructure, was not suited for such a dramatic absorption project.

The system of services in the young town, which had only just become an independent municipality with its own elected leadership, was too new and unsteady to absorb thousands of new immigrants within a short time. The decision to absorb 8,000 immigrants from North Africa between 1955 and 1959, despite the socio-economic vacuum and the town's weak infrastructure, suited the needs of the Regional Council. During these years, the draining of the Hula swamp came to an end, and tens of thousands

of dunams were now available for cultivation, creating an urgent need for workers.

The plan for renewed absorption first became known in the summer of 1954, in the context of Kiryat Shmona's connection to the countrywide electricity grid. The "festival of light" that was celebrated in the town included a visit by Minister of Labor Golda Meir, and the announcement that Kiryat Shmona would soon absorb a thousand immigrants from North Africa.<sup>47</sup> The new arrivals were mostly from Morocco, with some from Tunisia and Algeria.

In July 1955, the town held its first municipal elections. Asher Nizri was officially appointed mayor by the city council on 7 September, but a day earlier a letter was dispatched by the municipality to Finance Minister Levi Eshkol, conveying the town's appeal to absorb another 1,000 immigrant families over the next year—in other words, many thousands of new inhabitants.<sup>48</sup> This "determined" request was presented as arising out of "a moral and national obligation to take on the yoke of absorption and to join ourselves and the Upper Galilee region in general to this task," and to "come to the rescue of North African Jewry".

The sources do not reveal the background to this decision, making it difficult to know whether it perhaps emanated from a naïve but sincere belief that such rapid and extensive absorption was possible and that such dramatic growth would be beneficial for the new town. A different possibility, in view of the circumstances, is that the decision by Kiryat Shmona to absorb such large numbers of immigrants was guided by the Regional Council, which was faced with an intensifying shortage of labor. The interest of the kibbutzim in additional cheap labor, with the swamp drained and the imminent prospect of accelerated development of kibbutz agriculture and industry, was clear. In any event, just a few days after Nizri's election as mayor of Kiryat Shmona, an impressive gathering was called, with thousands of residents participating. *Davar* reported: "The decision to absorb another thousand families from North Africa was taken at a mass gathering held on Saturday night in Kiryat Shmona, at the initiative of the Regional Council, the municipality, and the Kiryat Shmona Workers' Council."<sup>49</sup>

Alongside the new mayor, participants at the gathering included the secretary of the Workers' Council and MK Ehud Avriel, a member of Kibbutz Neot Mordechai and a prominent figure in Mapai and among the Upper Galilee kibbutzim.<sup>50</sup> It appears that he, like the leadership of Kiryat Shmona, believed that the arrival of thousands of new residents within a short time would create the critical mass needed to advance processes of development.



The euphoria was short-lived. In reality, the growing numbers of immigrants led to crisis. Towards the end of 1955 and in early 1956 some 500 immigrants were arriving each month, such that the population doubled each year. Taking in dozens—sometimes up to a hundred—new families each month, the town collapsed under the burden of caring for them. A member of Kibbutz Dan who visited the new immigrants from Morocco in the neighboring town, described the families that he encountered:

With some of them out of work, they are literally short of food and clothing, and sick, and despairing; they hate the country, the veterans, those who sent them here, and they cry for their land of origin and its inhabitants.<sup>51</sup>

Along with the collapse of the education, health, and welfare systems, the unemployment situation once again became acute. In December 1955, some 200 unemployed heads of families demonstrated outside of the local employment bureau, including dozens who had not worked a single day since their arrival in the country.<sup>52</sup> Winter was the season that offered the least scope for agricultural work in the region, and the government advance payments fund, whose role was to bridge the periods when there was no work and no income, had no budget left.<sup>53</sup> An emergency meeting was held in the town, with participants including members of the Organization Department of Mapai as well as Kalman Levin, director of the Northern Region in the Jewish Agency. Representatives of the municipality, the Workers' Council, and the local Mapai office declared that "the plan to absorb the additional 1,000 families apparently failed to take into account the labor situation during the winter months."<sup>54</sup> The reliance on the nearby kibbutzim and on the fluctuating, seasonal nature of the agricultural work, along with the lack of construction of internal economic infrastructure in Kiryat Shmona, all led to a deadlock.

The frustration and fury exploded in a fierce protest at the beginning of May 1956. In honor of the celebrations marking 1 May 1956, representatives of all the kibbutzim of the region came to Kiryat Shmona, and two of the heads of the Regional Council delivered speeches at the main ceremony. The slogans about "workers' fraternity" hit a raw nerve among hundreds of heads of families in the town, new immigrants and more veteran residents alike. They were trying to cope with withheld wages and yet another announcement by the Labor Bureau of a cancellation of the advance payments that were meant to cover their most basic needs until they received wages from the kibbutzim for work performed months earlier. "Severe incidents and raging riots at the Labor Bureau" in late April and early May

led the police to reinforce its presence there.<sup>55</sup> On Sunday morning 6 May, hundreds of workers gathered at the entrance to Kiryat Shmona, seeking to prevent other laborers from setting off to work. They stopped the vehicles that were transporting laborers to the kibbutzim, and surrounded the public institutions.

*Davar* presented the incident as the result of incitement by “Communist Party and Herut activists”, but there is no doubt that the situation was the result of the plight that had developed in the town over the preceding months, and the Workers’ Council had no criticism for the frustrated demonstrators. The police detained about thirty of them, but had trouble dispersing the demonstration, which included stone throwing, the injury of two police officers, and the burning of the Labor Bureau building. Press reports of the event highlight the contribution of MK Ehud Avriel who came over from Neot Mordechai to try to calm the situation. He proposed to the workers (in French) that they put together a delegation that would present their claims. He played a major role, along with Mapai negotiators and the heads of the Workers’ Council, in a meeting that was called at the police station in an effort to arrive at some way of calming the raging crowd and deciding whom the police should arrest.<sup>56</sup> The name of the mayor, Asher Nizri, appears nowhere in the reports, and the sense arising from them is that it was the Regional Council leadership that took charge of dealing with the protest. This reality was the background to the decision by the *HaOlam HaZeh* weekly to place a photograph of Avriel on its front page, defining Kiryat Shmona as “Ehud Avriel’s concentration camp”.<sup>57</sup> The trial of those detained on what was called “the blackest day in the history of Kiryat Shmona” lasted several weeks, and eventually some were given prison sentences with others fined.<sup>58</sup>

While tempers cooled, different groups traded accusations as to responsibility for the outbreak of the riot. Whatever the direct cause might have been, it is clear that the eruption expressed the impossibly difficult socio-economic situation in the town, the dependence that characterized the labor market in the Upper Galilee, and the unfathomable gaps between Kiryat Shmona and the surrounding kibbutzim in all aspects of infrastructure and processes of development. The advances that were provided as a bridge for hundreds of families, some of whom had just arrived in Kiryat Shmona, were reinstated after the protest at the beginning of May 1956,<sup>59</sup> but these payments could not change the socio-economic relations between the kibbutzim and the town.

The 1960s saw some improvement in the situation, with the establishment of two textile factories in Kiryat Shmona, but the profound gaps

persisted. The significant political influence of the kibbutzim within the political system in Kiryat Shmona continued up until at least the early 1960s, and political support for the “workers’ parties” in elections continued up until the national “upheaval” of 1977. Clearly, then, even in the absence of other public displays of protest, the emotions and consciousness that had prompted the riot of May 1956, continued to simmer beneath the surface.

## CONCLUSIONS

The early years of the State of Israel presented the northern kibbutzim with a formidable test. As a sector that viewed itself as spearheading the Socialist-Zionist revolution, this group now needed to remold its identity and redefine its goals in view of dramatic changes. The process by which the members of the northern kibbutzim became the region’s “bourgeoisie” occurred unnoticed and was the result of their position of strength. In their discourse, rhetoric, and self-image, their aspiration towards a just society continued to play a central role, while their everyday lives played out on a level parallel to and far removed from the ideology that they espoused.

The energetic kibbutz volunteerism in Kiryat Shmona in its early years was impressive, and might have earned the esteem of the town’s inhabitants over the years. At the same time, it seems that the relations of political control and economic dependence that had to be viewed as a necessary evil during the period of the *ma’abara*, came to characterize the relations between the communities throughout the years that followed. Not only after the fact but even during the establishment of Kiryat Shmona and its development from a *ma’abara* into a town, there were clear warnings as to the social consequences of the growing gaps. These eventually became an abyss that separated the kibbutzim from the town in their midst, causing the fragile rapport that had been built up in the Hula Valley to crumble. The promise implied in the “melting-pot” enterprise—that the embrace of “Israeliness” and of modernization by the new immigrants would lead to their successful absorption—came to be perceived as illusory and false against the backdrop of the un-egalitarian system that became a fixed and unalterable reality in the Hula Valley.

The residents of Kiryat Shmona felt and understood that their veteran neighbors in the surrounding kibbutzim maintained dominance and control of the region. While kibbutz members visited Kiryat Shmona freely, the kibbutz area was defined as private property and Kiryat Shmona residents were barred from entry, unless they were coming as laborers.<sup>60</sup> Against

this background, the presence of kibbutz members within the *ma'abara*—whether for the purposes of volunteering or for a May Day parade or an election campaign—was a painful reminder of the asymmetrical relations, and caused growing antagonism. The kibbutz became the “other”, in contrast to which the Kiryat Shmona identity consolidated itself; it was an entity that did not and could not bring an authentic message of values because of the great gap between the pioneering self-image and egalitarian rhetoric, on one hand, and the exploitative reality, on the other.

Two realities coexisted in the Hula Valley; two entities that were distinct from one another in almost every possible dimension (ethnic, cultural, economic). Thus, a counter-identity was born, growing increasingly solidified and bitter over its long incubation until it finally expressed itself outwardly. This new Israeli identity developed, belatedly, a profound connection with an alternative political identity—the right-wing political camp, which had not been part of the absorption activity of the 1950s.

The lengthy delay in the manifestation of this identity, owing to the prevailing political hegemony, served to consolidate and intensify its power, exacerbating the fury that finally erupted in 1981. During the election campaign that was held that year, Prime Minister Menachem Begin accused the Labor Movement of harboring a discriminatory and arrogant attitude towards the Mizrahim. In the wake of a televised interview with a member of Kibbutz Menara at the kibbutz swimming pool, Begin described the kibbutzniks as millionaires paddling “in their swimming pools”.<sup>61</sup>

The huge political-ethnic-identity tension that characterized the election campaign for the tenth Knesset fanned the flames of disaffection that had accumulated in the Upper Galilee over decades. The local Kiryat Shmona press published a caricature depicting the Upper Galilee kibbutzim as wolves pouncing on the town.<sup>62</sup> Following this episode, efforts were made—both on an ongoing basis and on separate occasions—to foster rapprochement between the town and the kibbutzim, but they proved no counter-weight to the powerful processes described above.<sup>63</sup> A significant contribution could be made by a future study of the shift by Kiryat Shmona voters from Mapai and the Labor movement to the Likud, with an analysis of the stages of this process.

The northern kibbutzim were not the sole actors in creating the reality of Kiryat Shmona. The Israeli government policy of settling new immigrants in border regions and its tepid efforts to complement this policy by creating satisfactory economic infrastructure had a decisive influence on the processes that shaped the country's periphery. Nevertheless, a microhistoric view of the kibbutz and the *ma'abara* in the Upper Galilee during Israel's

formative period points to a missed opportunity. The potential for broadening the social vision of the kibbutz within the unique conditions of the distant Upper Galilee was left unrealized. Even in the Hula Valley, where the kibbutz movement held a dominant position, it lacked the strength to create a more egalitarian partnership with the development town whose establishment it had approved and whose character it had chosen.

The leadership of the Regional Council failed to create an alternative to seclusion and the unequal socio-economic order. It did not succeed in formulating a social challenge that would excite the imagination of its members—or at least the younger generation among them—and inspire them to turn the Upper Galilee into the arena for the realization of a new stage in the kibbutz vision. The members of the northern kibbutzim maintained a strong and proud self-image, even as the kibbutz status within Israeli society was slowly being eroded. They viewed themselves as pioneers working on the distant frontier, carrying out a nationally-important defense mission, while at the same time realizing the Socialist vision by maintaining an egalitarian and communal lifestyle among themselves. Many of them had a social awareness that was also outwardly-oriented, prompting considerable activity in the *ma'abara*, as a result of which the isolationist, elitist, and sometimes interest-driven aspects of the pioneering ethos that guided their activity were less prominent in their self-image.

The growing town might have been a place in which to volunteer, to clear their conscience, and reconcile a disturbing dissonance. The difficulty of resolving this dissonance between the egalitarianism within the kibbutz and the class-based, capitalist reality that developed in their relations with Kiryat Shmona sometimes made the town a nuisance that disturbed their self-image and aroused resentment over the lack of gratitude on the part of the *ma'abara* for the aid that the various kibbutzim extended from time to time.

Would it have been possible, during the period of transition from the Yishuv to the state, to broaden the kibbutz ideal in a quest to create a regional model society? This question arises and lingers specifically in light of the promise embodied by kibbutz society with its utopian aspirations. The goodwill that found expression in the kibbutzim's attempt to adopt the immigrant society while in the midst of its own processes of normalization and bourgeoization, was not enough. The relations that developed in the Hula Valley were ultimately a failure, not a model for emulation. As time went on, the kibbutz and the town came to symbolize two opposite directions in Israeli society.

## NOTES

1. See Devorah Hacothen, *Immigrants in Turmoil: Mass Immigration to Israel and its Repercussions in the 1950s and After* (New York, 2003).
2. Anita Shapira, "The Kibbutz and the State," *Iyunim Bitkumat Israel* 20 (2010): 204–5 [Hebrew].
3. See Yaron Tsur, "Israeli Historiography and the Ethnic Problem," in *Making Israel*, ed. Benny Morris (Ann Arbor, MI, 2007), 231–77.
4. See Ilan Troen, *Imagining Zion: Dreams, Designs, and Realities in a Century of Jewish Settlement* (New Haven, CT, 2008); "New Departures in Zionist Planning: The Development Town," in *Israel—The First Decade of Independence* (Albany, NY, 1995), 441–60. For discussion of similar relationships between new development towns and more veteran kibbutzim in other areas of the country, see Arnon Golan, *Wartime Spatial Changes: Former Arab Territories Within the State of Israel, 1948–1950* (Jerusalem, 2001), 172–5; Zvi Ben-Horin, *Kibbutzim and Development Towns—From Paternalism to Cooperation* (Haifa, 1983) [both in Hebrew].
5. It is my pleasure to thank the participating community of the course "Writing the history of Kiryat Shmona", which is held under the Town Square Academia in the program at Tel Hai College, for the opportunity of creating joint understandings on historical and social issues.
6. Noa Zion, "The Colonization Project in the Northern Huleh Valley" (Ph.D. diss., Hebrew University, Jerusalem 2006), 251–68.
7. See Mustafa Abassi and Amir Goldstein, "A Narrow Bridge Over the Hula Swamp: Kamel Hussein in the Vise of the National Struggle", *Israel* 23 (2016): 241–67 [Hebrew].
8. Golan, *Wartime Spatial Changes*, 223–32.
9. Ben-Gurion Archive, Ben-Gurion's Diary, 16 May 1949.
10. *Davar*, "New Garden City Being Built in the Eastern Upper Galilee," 21 July 1949 [henceforth, all newspaper articles in Hebrew].
11. Upper Galilee Regional Council Archives, Summaries of Resolutions of Council Meeting held 19 November 1950 [henceforth, all archive materials in Hebrew].
12. Golan, *Wartime Spatial Changes*, 172–3. See also his discussion of the parallel position adopted by the kibbutzim of the Beit Shean Valley and the discussion concerning the future of the Arab town of Bissan following the expulsion of its inhabitants.
13. *Davar*, "Workers' Camps—For What?", 26 January 1950.
14. *Ibid.*
15. Troen, *Imagining Zion*, 244.
16. *Kol Ha'am*, "The Truth about Khalsa—The 'Northern City'," 30 October 1950.
17. Kfar Szold Archive, Kibbutz Kfar Szold meeting, 17 March 1951.
18. *Ibid.*

19. Avi Bareli, "Mapai and the Oriental Jewish Question in the Early Years of the State," *Jewish Social Studies* 16.1 (2009): 54–84.

20. Dvorah Hacohen, "The Veteran Yishuv and the Immigrants: Local Authorities versus Transit Camps," in *Veterans and Immigrants*, ed. Dalia Ofer (Jerusalem, 1996), 102–4 [Hebrew].

21. HaKohen had been sent by Mapai. He first established the Workers' Council in the ma'abara and served as its chairman and later was appointed mayor.

22. Author's interview with Ilan Hartov, February 2013.

23. Amir Goldstein, "The Kibbutz and the Transit-Camp (Maabara), The Case of Kiryat Shmona," *Journal of Israeli History* 35.1 (2016): 17–37.

24. Dvora Hacohen, "The Plan for 'Direct Absorption' of the Mass Immigration of the 1950's and its Repercussions," *Iyunim Bitkumat Israel* 1 (1991): 375 [Hebrew].

25. *Davar*, "Construction of the Workers' Town in the Eastern Galilee Has Begun," 8 May 1950.

26. Erez Tzfadia, "Public Policy and Identity Formation: The Experience of Mizrahim in Israel's Development Towns," *The Journal for the Study of Sephardic and Mizrahi Jewry* (2007): 57–82.

27. Troen, "New Departures in Zionist Planning," 451.

28. Avraham Pavin, "A Case of Israeli Pluralism: Ethnicity and the Relation between Development Towns," *Kibbutz Trends* 16 (1994): 50–5 [Hebrew].

29. Golda Meir Memorial Association Archive, Golda Meir Speech at the Conference of Workers' Committees, 14 July 1950.

30. Labor Party Archive, Natan Cohen, "Five Years of Activity" in Outlines and Summaries for 5 Years, 34; David Tekhor to Chaim Rokah, 20 March 1952.

31. *Al HaMishmar*, "A Shortage of Workers in the Galilee," 9 July 1951. "The *Davar*, Galilee is Calling for Workers," 1 December 1952.

32. *Ibid.*

33. Tal Elmaliach, *The Kibbutz Industry, 1923–2007: A Study of Economy and Society* (Givat Haviva, 2009), 59–60 [Hebrew].

34. Shlomo Swirski and Deborah Bernstein, "Who Worked on What, for Whom and in Exchange for What, the Economic Development of Israel and the Formation of Community Divisions in Work," *Mahbarot le-Mehkar u-Bikkoret* 4 (1980): 5–66 [Hebrew].

35. *Davar*, "Why is There No Work in Kiryat Shmona?," 3 June 1952

36. Labor Party Archive, Avraham HaKohen to Chaim Rokah, 7 June 1952.

37. *Herut*, "Demonstration by Unemployed at Khalsa," 30 April 1951; *Davar*, "Demonstration by Unemployed Workers in Kiryat Shmona," 13 September 1951.

38. Upper Galilee Regional Council Archive, Chairman of the Kiryat Shmona Workers' Council to Histadrut executive committee concerning withholding of wages, 10 March 1953.

39. *Ibid.*

40. Kiryat Shmona Archive, Workers' Council Telegram to Yaakov Reich of the



Agricultural Center, 24 August 1954; Kiryat Shmona Letter, Workers' Council to Histadrut executive committee employment department, 4 March 1955.

41. *Davar*, 'Workers' demonstration at the Upper Galilee Regional Council,' 31 January 1954.

42. *HaDor*, 'Development Instead of Public Works: Let the South Not Cause the North to Be Forgotten,' 25 February 1954.

43. Daniel Gutwein, 'The Contradiction between the Pioneering Ethos and the Socialist Ideology of the Israeli Labor Movement: David Ben-Gurion and Yitzchak Ben-Aharon 1948–1967,' *Iyunim Bitkumat Israel* 20 (2010): 208–48 [Hebrew].

44. Dov Khenin, 'From 'Eretz Yisrael Haovedet' to 'Yisrael Hashnina': The Social Discourse and Social Policy of Mapai in the 1950s,' in *The New Israel: Peacemaking and Liberalization*, ed. Gershon Shafir and Yoav Peled (Boulder, CO, 2000), 131–63.

45. Transcripts of the interviews are in the possession of the author.

46. Avi Picard, *Cut to Measure: Israel's Policies Regarding the Aliyah of North African Jews, 1951–1956* (Sede Boker, 2013) [Hebrew].

47. *Davar*, 'Festival of Light in Kiryat Shmona,' 19 August 1954.

48. Kiryat Shmona Archive, Kiryat Shmona municipality to Minister of Finance Levi Eshkol, 6 September 1955.

49. *Davar*, 'Kiryat Shmona to Absorb Another Thousand Immigrant Families from North Africa,' 12 September 1955.

50. Around this time Avriel's involvement in Kiryat Shmona's affairs was intense. Sharett referred to him, in a diary entry in the summer of 1956, as 'serving as a father and patron of the new town, whose number of residents has doubled itself within the last year, reaching 9,000' (Moshe Sharett, *Personal Diary*, 9 September 1956) [Hebrew].

51. Dan Archive, Kibbutz Dan newsletter 170, Shlomo V., 'Lessons from 'Home Visits',' 1 July 1955.

52. *Davar*, 'Unemployment Situation in the Country Worsens,' 14 December 1955.

53. *Davar*, 'Demonstration of Unemployed in Kiryat Shmona,' 14 December 1955.

54. Labor Party Archive, 2–002–1956–114, Kiryat Shmona municipality and Workers' Council to Chaim Rokah, 19 January 1956.

55. *Davar*, 'Unemployment Situation Worsens in Kiryat Shmona and Rosh Pina,' 4 May 1956.

56. *Davar*, '25 Lightly Injured in Clash Between Demonstrators and Police in Kiryat Shmona,' 7 May 1956; *Knesset Protocols*, 8 October 1956.

57. *HaOlam HaZeh*, 1956.

58. *Davar*, 'Kiryat Shmona Demonstrators Sentenced to Prison and Fines—Six Acquitted,' 5 September 1956. See Bryan K. Roby, *The Mizrahi Era of Rebellion: Israel's Forgotten Civil Rights Struggle 1948–1966* (New York, 2015).

59. *Davar*, Letters to the editor, 'What Does the Labor Bureau Coordinator Have to Say?,' 20 May 1956.



60. Pavin, "Ethnicity and the Relation".

61. Shapira, "The Kibbutz and the State," 204–5.

62. Shlomo Swirski, *Not Naturally Inept But Socialized to be Inept: A Sociological Analysis* (Haifa, 1981), 104–19.

63. See Sylvia Fogiel-Bijaoui, *The Kibbutz Movement's Relationship with Its Surroundings 1983–1986* (Ramat Efal, 1988), 22–7; 39–41 [Hebrew].

AMIR GOLDSTEIN is a Senior Lecturer at Tel Hai College. His recent publications include: "The Kibbutz and the Transit-camp (Maabara), the case of Kiryat Shmona," *Journal of Israeli History* 35.1 (2016); Olei Hagardom—From Institutional to Collective Memory," *Journal of Israeli History*, 34.2 (2015); *Zionism and Anti-Semitism in the Thinking and Action of Zeev Jabotinsky* (Sde-Boker, 2015); *Heroism and Exclusion: Olei Hagardom and Israeli Memory* (Jerusalem, 2011) [both in Hebrew].