



Whereas most social ideals in the 19th century onwards remained unfulfilled utopias, a new and relevant model crystallised its ideology in a unique expression: The *kibbutz*. Embodying a social vision based on communal sharing and egalitarianism, *kibbutzim* contributed in the shaping of a socially and economically new society. Including all dimensions of life in a singular spatial organisation, the land and all functions were collectively owned by the members. Real social alternative, the study of this communal type allows us a contemporary approach on how collective communities can make a difference when dealing with the pressing social issues of the day.

Alois Ruben Rosenfeld



Paths in Utopia

Kibbutzim

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Kibbutzim

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Cover

Overview, Mitzpe Gvulot, 1945

Close-up, Gvulot, 1952

(Gvulot Archive, Personal Archive)

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Kibbutzim Paths in Utopia

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MITTAL LIA JAI KARYA

Introduction

- 10 Paths in Utopia
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[1] Cf. Lexicon

Whereas most social ideals in the 19th century onwards remained unfulfilled utopias, a new and relevant model crystallised its ideology in a unique expression: The *kibbutz*¹. Embodying a social vision based on communal sharing and egalitarianism, *kibbutzim* contributed in the shaping of a socially and economically new society. Including all dimensions of life in a singular spatial organisation, the land and all functions were collectively owned by the members. Real social alternative, the study of this communal type allows us a contemporary approach on how collective communities can make a difference when dealing with the pressing social issues of the day.

Fig. 1 Under a tamarix

First pioneers in the Negev, Mitzpe Gvulot, 1943
(Gvulot Archive)

Paths in Utopia

Referring to the book *Paths in Utopia* written by Martin Buber in 1948, this research is a plea for a deepening and renewal of collective communities in Israel. In the quest for genuine community life, the utopian ideal of the *kibbutz* and its values are re-examined from a contemporary point of view.

In this volume, Martin Buber provided a study of utopian socialist thoughts, covering figures such as Charles Fourier and Robert Owen. He demonstrated how “utopian” formulations of socialism were opposed to state centralism, and how they were inclined toward a loose federalism constituted by *communitas communitatum*, “a confederacy of various small organic and social unities, each of which would be autonomous in its given sphere”². Far from being “utopian”, this trend is constructive to the highest degree:

This “fantasy” does not float vaguely in the air, it is not driven hither and thither by the wind of caprice, it centres with architectonic firmness on something primary and original which it is its destiny to build; and this primary thing is a wish. The utopian vision is a picture of what “should be”, and the visionary is one who wishes it to be.³

Utopian socialism fights for the maximum degree of communal autonomy possible in a “restructured” society where the cell tissue would be composed not of disparate individuals but of associative units.

[4] Ibid., 140

[5] Ibid., 141

According to Martin Buber, only such reordering of the individual units could establish a harmony in the totality. In order to re-establish the true meaning of the socialist idea and reawaken the philosophy of the community as the highest form of human symbiosis, what is necessary is the “full cooperative”.

By far the most powerful effort in this direction is the Village Commune, where communal living is based on the amalgamation of production and consumption, production being understood not exclusively as agriculture alone, but as the organic union of agriculture with industry and handicrafts.⁴

The author concludes with “an experiment that did not fail” by analysing communitarian movement in Israel: “As I see history and the present, there is only one all-out effort to create a full cooperative which justifies our speaking of success in the socialistic sense, and that is the Jewish Village Commune in its various forms, as found in Palestine.”⁵

A Family Field Trip

Retracing the *kibbutz* Utopia, this thesis is also telling a story between my grandfather, a pioneer who took part in the foundation of a new *kibbutz* in the desert, and his grandson, a young architect who felt the need to explore this Jewish heritage. Dreaming to experiment a communal life and acting for a fairer society, my dear grandfather, Georges Rosenfeld, came to *kibbutz* Gvulot in 1951 where he spent 13 years of his life.

In order to know more about his past experiences in this form of collective community, we went on a field trip together last summer. This immersive approach allowed the confrontation between the Utopia and the reality, thus facilitating a complementary understanding of the radical changes and the present state of these communities.

During this journey, we had the opportunity to stay in various representative *kibbutzim*: Starting with Gvulot in the Gaza area, we then crossed the arid Negev desert and Arabah Valley to arrive in the south of the country in Ketura. Afterwards, we went to the north in the birthplace of these collective communities.

Fig. 2 Field trip

Paths in Utopia, 2017 (GIS data from Esri Open Data)



LEBANON

SYRIA

Al Qunaytirah

As Suwayda

Dar'a

Irbid

Al Ma'raq

Az Zarqa

As Salt

Amman

WEST BANK

Ramallah

Jerusalem

The Central Zionist Archives

Tamuz

The White City

Ramla

Al Khalil

ISRAEL

Beer Sheva

Al Karak

At Tafilah

Ma'an

SAUDI ARABIA

0 20 40 60 80 km

EGYPT

Bur Said

Ismailia

Suez

Eilat

Ketura

Lotan

Gvulot

Eshkol Regional Council

Yad Mordechai

Gaza

The Central Zionist Archives

Ramla

Ramallah

Jerusalem

The Central Zionist Archives

Tamuz

The White City

Ramla

WEST BANK

Ramallah

Al Khalil

ISRAEL

Beer Sheva

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SAUDI ARABIA

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A Collaborative Project

Kibbutzim, Paths in Utopia is designed in the format of an album: Divided into 2 main parts, each with a short introductory text, the book recounts the Utopia and the reality of this form of collective community.

The Project of Utopia: Starting with chronicles of utopias and communal precedents, the first chapter defines what a *kibbutz* is and its role in the colonisation of *Eretz-Israel*⁶. A rare glimpse into the early moments of such community completes this first part with an immersive collection of interiors describing the daily life of my grandfather as a *kibbutznik*.

Utopia (un)Realised: Since its heroic form, *kibbutzim* have been undergoing radical changes. In pursuit of Utopia, the present state of these communities is analysed, the crisis of this model described and new trends are approached. In order to shed light on representative types of *kibbutzim*, three case studies are presented. Finally, a collection of personal testimonies gives an inside point of view to social, economic and future trends.

Promoting an interdisciplinary approach, this research brings together specialists to expand the field of research in order to ensure the broadest knowledge on *kibbutzim*. As a homage to the ideals of these communities, this work is collaborative and introduces personal testimonies. Written as a narrative of life stories and experiences, these contributions allow us to have an intimate point of view of social, economic and future trends in collective communities. The relevance of this research goes along with historical materials not previously documented and a collaboration with the Tarbut Movement.



Fig. 3 A vote on acceptance of new members
Kibbutz meeting, Ein Hashofet, 1958 (Ein Hashofet
Archive)



The Project of Utopia

21 Communal Precedents

Utopian Socialism and Early Communes

Modern Expressions

Co-op Principle: The Case of Hannes Meyer

31 The Kibbutz Story

The Dream of the New Man and the New Jew

Modern Applications and Early Kibbutzim

Thinking Community: The Case of the White City

53 The Creation of a New State

The Settlement Project

The Redeemers of the Land

Border Role of Kibbutzim: The Case of Mitzpe Gvulot

63 Memories

Life Stories

Concerning social and ideological precedents, this first chapter investigates how social ideas and architecture crystallised in a new and relevant expression: The *kibbutz*. Starting with chronicles of utopias and early settlements, this section defines what a *kibbutz* is and its role in the colonisation of *Eretz-Israel*.

Fig. 1 Aerial view
The Jordan outlet from the Sea of Galilee, 1914
(Degania Archive)



Communal Precedents

Before understanding the crystallisation of an ideology in *kibbutzim*, we should first mention early social expressions which contributed to the evolution of society. Many theoreticians raised questions regarding the living conditions of the majority and wished to create a fairer and balanced social environment.

Fig. 2 Bee-keepers at work
Beehives, Gan Shmuel, 1938 (Arieh Sharon Archive)

Utopian Socialism and Early Communes

[1] Morris 1896, 9

Defining visions and outlines for imaginary or futuristic ideal societies, utopian socialism vehicles positive ideals for moving society forward. One key element with utopian socialists is the fact that they don't expect any form of class struggle or political revolution is necessary for socialism to emerge. Indeed, they believe that people of all classes can voluntarily adopt such ideals and small communities sharing the same ideology can demonstrate the feasibility of their utopia for society.

Utopian Socialism

The birth of modern socialist thought appeared in the early 19th century: Describing hypothetical visions of egalitarian and communalist societies, the expression of “utopian socialism” started to be used by socialist thinkers such as Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels who wished to create a fairer humanitarian world. Improving the condition of members in society without distinction between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie classes, and having a balanced future between men, work, education, progress and nature were the ideals of all socialists:

Socialism is a condition of society in which there should be neither rich nor poor, neither master nor master's man, neither idle nor overworked, neither brainsick brain workers, nor heartsick hand workers, in a word, in which all men would be living in equality of condition, and would manage their affairs without waste, and with the full consciousness that harming one would mean harming all – the realisation at last of the meaning of the word commonwealth.¹

Socialism grew as a reaction to the inequalities of the Industrial Revolution: The rise of capitalism had a tremendous human cost and the working class was used as raw materials in factories. Slaves of modern society and living in squalor in cities, new attempts of having a more just and equal world were sought.

Many socialists tried to find answers to creeping capitalism and exploitation of workers. Among them, Karl Marx was one of the main thinkers who aimed to create the conditions for a post-capitalist world. We have to mention the social theorist and economist Henry George as well, who published *Progress and Poverty* in 1879 and raised the problematic on the association of poverty with progress. Edward Bellamy gave some thoughts on improving the future and the problems related to capitalism as well: In his utopian novel *Looking Backward*, released in 1888 as reaction to American capitalism's tendencies, he imagined the world in 2000 where the United States was transformed into a socialist utopia.

[2] Buber 1949, 21

[3] Breton 1982, 92; quoted in Fiedler and Buschfeld 1995, 28

[4] Fiedler and Buschfeld 1995, 28

Early Communes

In utopian socialism, there is an organically constructive and planning purpose in restructuring society in the given conditions of the present. In order to crystallise a new social order, new communities were experimented in the 19th century.

Criticising excessive poverty and inequality due to the Industrial Revolution, Robert Owen imagined the transformation of society into small communities without private property. He proclaimed that in order to build a better egalitarian and modern life, we had to leave the city. His social units are based on agriculture and are sustained by the principle of united labour, expenditure and poverty, equal privileges, and in which all members have mutual and common interests.²

Charles Fourier envisioned a new society which would be organised with *phalansteries*, small autonomous communities in the countryside in which a better and healthier life was possible. His theory, which was fundamental in the conceptions of early socialism, contained statements such as the following: "Everything from atoms to the constellations portrays the particular attributes of human passions."³ Formation of local social units based on joint production and consumption, his utopia was thought for 1620-person cooperatives where men and women would be associated not only economically, but also sexually and the division of work and love would be abolished. Thought as a real social palace where work would be as attractive as love, "Fourier's plan is founded on this ambivalence – freedom guaranteed through regimentation – where everyone can (and must) attach himself to the group which best meets his needs."⁴ The *phalanstery*, issued from Tony Garnier's theories, was almost utopian because it was never realised except the unique case, the *Familistère* by Jean Baptiste Godin, where it was concretised for the first time in a rich and intense way.

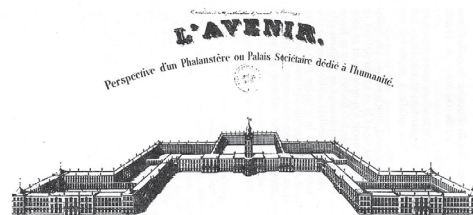
Fig. 3 Phalanstère

Charles Fourier, *Perspective view of the urban area*, 1840

(Imprimerie H. Faye)

Fig. 4 Familistère de Guise

Schoolchildren in the courtyard of the central building, Guise, 1896 (Collection musée de Guise)



The *Familistère* by Jean Baptiste Godin was realised in the second half of the 19th century. He imagined a social palace next to his factory for the workers and their family to be housed in modern apartments. This complex for 500 families had three courtyards covered with a metal and glass structure, manifestation of the latest technologies of that time. The courtyard, from where an inner passageway to the apartments was possible, was the expression of communal life. It was the first time there was a complete intuition on the way of living with housing, shared spaces and collective services. This community was intended to be autonomous and anticipated communicative qualities of modern buildings.

Modern Expressions

Modern city planning started with the Industrial Revolution and the increasing inequalities with the working class at the turn of the 20th century. Along with the ideology of creating a new social order, town planning and architecture were explored to reform communal organisations and human relationships.

The Garden City

As a reaction to the concentration of masses and industrial pollution in growing cities in the United Kingdom, Ebenezer Howard developed his vision of an urban alternative, the Garden City: "Human society and the beauty of nature are meant to be enjoyed together (...) Town and Country must be married, and out of this joyous union will spring a new hope, a new life, a new civilisation."⁵

According to him, the concentration of people in regions was a danger to society. He wanted to tackle this tendency by eliminating the distinction between city and country with the creation of a third force which would take the positive elements of the two opposing forces. When he presented his theory in the book *To-morrow, a Peaceful Path to Real Reform* published in 1898 as an answer to social problems of that time, he imagined a national network composed by "urban-rural cities". Neither rural nor urban, decentralising the working environment from the centre of the cities, these cells were self-contained communities unifying industrial and agricultural activities. This ideal city was planned on a concentric model: The centre of the Garden Cities was constituted by a central park assuring primary civic functions, beyond which were to be located housing and schools, and finally factories and services radiating behind in an outer circle.

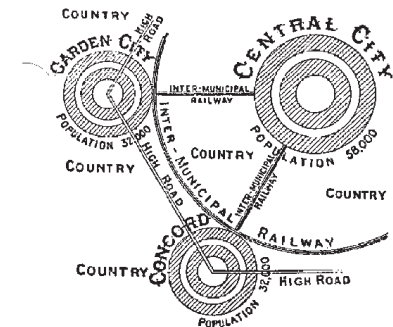
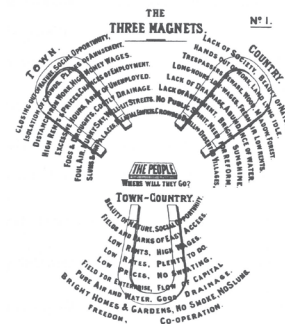


Fig. 5, 6 The Garden City
Ebenezer Howard, *Schemes*, 1902
(*Tomorrow: A Peaceful Path to Real Reform*)

This “Social City” is a meaningful alternative to the Capitalist City. In line with socialist ideals, the fundamental innovation of this model resides in the community itself: Every citizen was a shareholder, with the “unearned increment” ploughed back into civic facilities rather than to absent landlords or speculative investors.⁶ The land had to remain in collective ownership perpetually in order to avoid the concentration of private properties in the hands of the few.

[6] Wainwright 2014

The Courtyard

The adoption of the courtyard as an architectural and urban principle allowed a homogeneous and rational approach to the metropolis of the 20th century. Already in the second half of the 19th century, the urban planner Ildefons Cerdà designed the Cerdà plan for the Expansion of Barcelona with the use of the city block as a fundamental unit. Dealing with hygienic and equalitarian principles, the block had peripheral buildings, public services and green spaces.

The case of Red Vienna as a social expression has to be mentioned as well. It was a real ethical and political architecture: In answer to the housing crisis in Vienna, the government constructed 64,000 apartments allowing to house 10% of the city's population. This workers' paradise, where courtyards are fundamental elements in the urban scheme, offered facilities to enrich their inhabitants' lives: nurseries, schools, collective lavatories... The pride of Vienna's residential buildings was the *Karl Marx-Hof*: With its 1200 metres long, its succession of courtyards and collective facilities, this socialist island is a city in itself.

An example of a modern and unitary conception inherent to the courtyard principle is the collective housing *Hornbaekhus*, imagined by the architect Kay Fisker in 1922. This homogeneous complex was made possible only with common ownership of the land and a single architect who designed the whole. The central garden was the heart of this collectivity and 2085 identical windows were the affirmation of this equalitarian community.

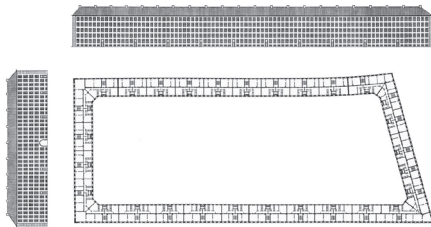


Fig. 7 Hornbaekhus
Kay Fisker, *Hornbaekhus*, 1922 (Kunstbib)

Fig. 8 Karl Marx-Hof
Karl Ehn, *Karl Marx-Hof*, 1934 (Bildarchiv Austria)

[7] Kunstgewerbemuseum der Stadt Zürich 1930,
vol. 91, 20

The Siedlungen

Modern architecture should not be reduced to an aesthetic and purified art, but as a social movement as well. As a reaction to the horror of World War I and housing crisis in Europe, new social housing in adequacy with the new post-war social and economic order were sought. According to Le Corbusier, standardisation, mass production and industrialisation were the only ways to solve the social problem of meeting the needs of the middle and working classes.⁷

In search of social expressions, *Siedlungen* offered the main contribution of modern architecture in our society. Transition from the controlled and non-dense central courtyard conception, the *Siedlungen* allowed a further attempt to functionalism with the use of rational blocks.

The *Grosssiedlung Britz* erected by Bruno Taut and Martin Wagner in 1925 was a settlement for 5000 people: Fusion between the courtyard principle and the *Siedlungen* with row houses, a monumentalised horseshoe with a common garden at its centre express the collectivity. More radical, the *New Frankfurt* is a housing settlement project under the supervision of Ernst May: Between 1925 and 1930, around 16,000 residences were built with the use of industrial techniques such as standardisation of architectural elements and prefabrication, thus allowing a reduction of costs and a fast construction. In this way, these minimalist dwellings following hygienist principles provided the working class with higher living standards and affordable residences.

Fig. 9 Großsiedlung Britz

Bruno Taut, Martin Wagner, *Grosssiedlung Britz*
Berlin, 1931 (Unknown)

Fig. 10 Siedlung Westhausen

Ernst May, *Siedlung Westhausen*, Frankfurt, 1931
(KulturPortal Frankfurt)



Co-op Principle: The Case of Hannes Meyer

Among notable figures, we have to mention one architect who had a lasting influence on the social debate: The Swiss Architect Hannes Meyer, who wanted to create a harmonious link between the individual and society through design. Embodying an organised form of existence, creative design allows a reflection on contemporary society and a social process.

Freidorf Siedlung

In his early work, he planned the *Freidorf Siedlung*, a cooperative housing estate near Basel similar to *Neudorf* imagined by Theodor Herzl in *Altneuland*. In many aspects, the structure of this community recalls the internal organisation of a *kibbutz*: They have their own currency, a collective ownership of the houses and land, inheritable tenancies, joint purchase of daily requirements for the community, cooperative arrangements for life insurance, primary education, self-administration on a voluntary basis... The different kinds of dwellings were organised according to the number of members per family and every house had 200sqm of land to grow vegetables and fruits in order to be self-sufficient. The focus of the whole cooperative is a hall which serves the community as a school, a church, an emporium and a public house. The expression of this collectivity is mirrored by homogeneous and standardised houses and assured by a certain introversion with a triangular composition. Real crystallisation of a collective life, it was intended to be a compromise between town and country, community and capitalism.

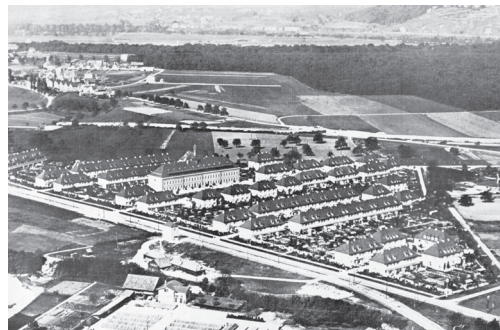
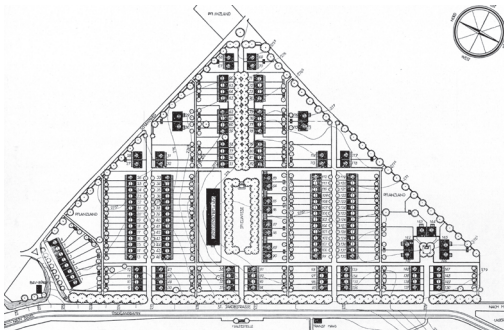


Fig. 11, 12 Freidorf Housing estate
Hannes Meyer, *Freidorf housing estate*, MuttENZ,
1919-21
(Hannes Meyer: Buildings, projects and writings)

[8] Möller et al. 2015, vol. 48, 6

[9] Sharon 1976, 14

Bauhaus Dessau

Later in 1928, newly appointed director at the Bauhaus Dessau, Hannes Meyer's social principles were reflected in the school itself: He wanted to meet the needs of the people instead of the luxury market, from the author architect to a collective approach. "His concept of the collective was not about harmony, uniformity or even stylistic orientation, but about the methodological approach of the interdisciplinary with the objective of integrating as many factors as possible in the architectonic design process."⁸

The Bauhaus school, pillar of the modern movement, embodied in its design and planning a social concept of architecture. Graduates of the Dessau Bauhaus, the institution had a lasting influence on architects from *Eretz-Israel* such as Arie Sharon, Munio Gitai Weinraub and Schmuel Mestechkin. These three architects, who did planning work for *kibbutzim*, identified themselves with the social orientation of the school and the social goals of the *kibbutz* movement. It is not without any surprise that Hannes Meyer got impressed by the practice of Arie Sharon as a beekeeper in his *kibbutz* named Gan Shmuel. During his first meeting with Hannes Meyer, he detailed his first lesson in architecture as a bee-master of the hives:

From the bees, one could learn how to design, to organise and to build so as to combine function and form in a most economical way. Honeycombs are composed of hexagons, which provide both living space for the bees and storage chambers for their product (...) This solution adopted by the bees was the most spacious, logical, comfortable and economic one, using beeswax as the basic building material.⁹



Fig. 13, 14 Beehive «campus»

Arie Sharon, *The bee-keeper*, Gan Shmuel, 1920
(Arie Sharon Archive)



The Kibbutz Story

Whereas most social ideals in the 19th century onwards remained unfulfilled utopias, a new and relevant model crystallised its ideology in a unique expression: The *kibbutz*. Embodying a social vision based on communal sharing and egalitarianism, *kibbutzim* contributed in the shaping of a socially and economically new society.

Fig. 15 Kibbutzniks dancing the Hora
Youth Movement, Ein Harod, 1936
(The Central Zionist Archives)

The Dream of the New Man and the New Jew

There are times when the word *New* flourishes: World War I left Europe with massive damage and destruction, thus creating a rupture in history. Causing a break compared to the dimension of the past, the word *New* prospered after the war, when many people sought a *New* departure and to establish a *New* society:

In Germany during the 1920s, there was the *New* Living (*die Neue Wohnung*), the *New* Art of Space (*die Neue Raumkunst*) and the *New* Architecture (*das Neue Bauen*), as the capital *N* was always included to dramatize the novelty and importance of these terms. There was the *New* State and the *New* City, the *New* Painting and the *New* Music; there was the *New* Household and the *New* Kitchen. There was the *New* Functionalism or Objectivity (*die Neue Sachlichkeit*) and the *New* Photography (*das Neue Sehen*). There was the *Neues* Frankfurt and the *Neues* Berlin. The passion for the *New* was international: The *New* Architecture in English-speaking countries, *La nouvelle Architecture* in French-speaking countries. *L'Esprit Nouveau* (the *New* Spirit) was the publication issued by Le Corbusier and his painter friend Ozenfant. Then there was the *New* Man (*der Neue Mensch*) – or better yet, he was about to emerge.¹⁰

The New Man

In modern architecture, ornamentation appeared applied and superfluous, and glass became a symbol of renewal and rebirth. The architecture critic Adolf Behne wrote in 1915: "The longing for purity and clarity, for shining brightness, crystalline accurateness, disembodied lightness and endless vitality found its fulfilment in the material of glass (...) the most incorporeal, elemental, mutable, yet richest substance for numerous interpretations and stimulation, which will fuse with the world like no other and which is the least rigid of all materials (...) animated, full of spirit and vivacious."¹¹ In the film *Metropolis* (1927), the futurist city appears as a paradise of glass and steel. In his book *Also sprach Zarathustra*, Nietzsche mentions the *Übermensch* as a *Superman*, a goal humanity can set for itself.¹² This sportive *New* Man represented the values of the *New* society made from light and air. Sports, according to Hannes Meyer, could bind the individual to the masses and served as the academy of the collective.¹³

The asceticism of the idea of the *New* Man entailed a notion of *New* departure and therefore sacrifices. Walter Benjamin gave an interpretation of the *Angelus Novus* that Paul Klee painted when he joined the Bauhaus in 1920:

[10] Fiedler and Buschfeld 1995, 15

[11] Behne 1915, 4

[12] Nietzsche 2008, 118

[13] Fiedler and Buschfeld 1995, 16–17

[14] Benjamin 1968, 257–258

[15] Ibid., 274

[16] Whyte and Berlage 1996, 119

A Klee painting named *Angelus Novus* shows an angel looking as though he is about to move away from something he is fixedly contemplating. His eyes are staring, his mouth is open, his wings are spread. This is how one pictures the angel of history. His face is turned toward the past. Where we perceive a chain of events, he sees one single catastrophe which keeps piling wreckage upon wreckage and hurls it in front of his feet. The angel would like to stay, awaken the dead, and make whole what has been smashed. But a storm is blowing from Paradise; it has got caught in his wings with such violence that the angel can no longer close them. This storm irresistibly propels him into the future to which his back is turned, while the pile of debris before him grows skyward. This storm is what we call progress.¹⁴

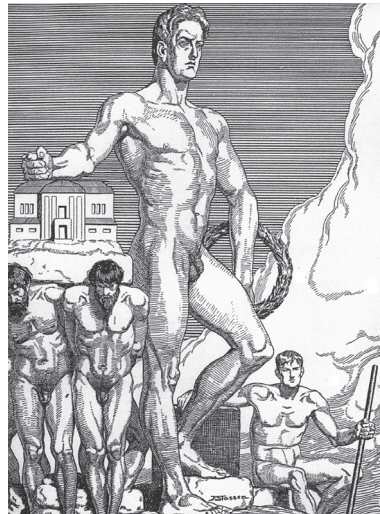
In his essay in 1931, Walter Benjamin also referred to the *Angelus Novus*, “who preferred to free men by taking from them, rather than make them happy by giving to them”¹⁵. This notion of sacrifice comes along with the concept of purification. Hendrik Petrus Berlage wrote in his book *Thoughts on Style*: “The detail – or rather, the decoration – will either be very restrained or totally absent. The masters who gave us the splendour of Romanticism achieved great harmony between the whole and the rich detail, and this deserves admiration both now and at all times. The masters of the great art of the future will more or less completely have to try to sacrifice rich details – the pride of so many architects.”¹⁶

Fig. 16 The New Man

Franz Stasse, *Image of the New Man*, 1912
(Fiedler Jeannine)

Fig. 17 Angelus Novus

Paul Klee, *Painting of the Angelus Novus*, 1920
(Israel Museum)



When Le Corbusier imagined the *Five Points of a New Architecture*, he knew he had to start from scratch as “none of the old values existed”. This *New Era* is a radical shift in time and a *New* departure. Modern architects considered themselves the builders of a *New* society, a *New* lifestyle which included the creation of a *New* Man.

- [17] Cf. Lexicon
- [18] Conforti 2011, 87
- [19] Herzl 1960, 70
- [20] Cf. Lexicon
- [21] Cf. Lexicon

The New Jew

Among the different ideas to establish a *New* society, there was the project of the *New Jew*. In the 19th century, Zionism¹⁷ aspired to create and educate a *New Jew* who would be autonomous and rational, free of the “diseases” of the Diaspora¹⁸. The dream was the return of the Jews to the Holy Land, to establish a *New* society in a *New* place: *Eretz-Israel*.

Theodor Herzl was the founder of the modern Zionism movement, also called the World Zionist Organization, and held the Inaugural Congress of the Zionist Organization in Basel in 1897. He revealed in his book *Altneuland* the vision he had for a future Palestine transported to 1923. Recounting Zionist Utopia, he wrote the legend in his novel “If you wish it, it is no fairy tale”, where a miracle occurred: The miserable Palestinian state became a highly civilised, developed and cosmopolitan country under Jewish control. In his book, he also presented *Neudorf*, a cooperative agricultural housing settlement: “With us the individual is neither ground small between the millstones of capitalism, nor beheaded by the levelling-down-process of socialism. We know the value of the development of the individual, just as we respect and protect its economic foundation, private property.”¹⁹ Here, the concept of a “third way” between communism and capitalism, was announced.

But in those days, *Eretz-Israel* was still a very poor country and had harsh conditions for immigration: It hadn't any infrastructure to absorb new immigrants and many people feared that an uncontrolled flow of immigrants could imperil the dream of a *New* society which was to be based on the ethos of land settlement and physical labour. Only the elite should make *Aliyah*²⁰ and built the infrastructure for the absorption of masses at some unspecified future time. The archetype of the elite was the *halutz*²¹, which should be young, healthy, strong, knowing Hebrew, having no family, accept a communal way of living and be ready to face Spartan conditions.

However, theses intentions were counterbalanced with the distress of the diaspora. Although Ben-Gurion urged the immigration of millions of Jews, his colleagues were fearful that such immigration could endanger the Zionist enterprise:

[22] Protocol of a meeting of the Jewish Agency Board of Directors 1944, 10–11; quoted in Fiedler and Buschfeld 1995, 31

[23] Protocol of a meeting of the Jewish Agency Board of Directors 1944, 30; quoted in Fiedler and Buschfeld 1995, 58

[24] Conference held by Shaul Meirov before commanders of the Hagana on July 26, 1943; quoted in Fiedler and Buschfeld 1995, 59

I am very concerned that if we rashly speak about a million Jews within a few months, I must view this as one of the greatest catastrophes (...) Even if we succeed in bringing in the million Jews and the world will be open – I am certain, to my sorrow and regret, that more than half of them will afterwards leave (...) When I begin to think about it, my hair stands on end. On the one hand, I am fearful for the fate of these Jews; on the other hand, for our fate; and on a third side, for the fate of the Jewish State.²²

Moshe Shertok, head of the political department, wanted to encourage *Aliyah*:

There is a great question not only of quantity but of quality as well. What does it mean to bring in one fell swoop hundreds of thousands of oriental Jews to *Eretz-Israel*, just as they are, not as I would wish them to be after (receiving) education and culture ... it is essential that we mobilise that (human) reservoir for potential and actual *Aliyah*.²³

There was not only a colonisation purpose in the creation of a human reservoir, but also military in order to establish a *Yishuv* military force. Selectivity became less important and with the rise of Nazism, there was no question of leaving behind any comrades: "We shall have to take whatever comes to hand, other than completely antisocial types and incorrigible criminals (...) We have much to do in the way of teaching a love for Israel. Perhaps only their children will be mentally suitable for us. The only thing we can do is to get them to *Eretz-Israel* as quickly as possible."²⁴



Fig. 18 Theodore Herzl
Theodor Herzl, *Hotel Drei Könige*, Basel, 1897
(The Bettman Archive)

Modern Applications and Early Kibbutzim

Eretz-Israel was an early experimental laboratory for European utopias and collective housing projects.²⁵ Moving toward Zionist Utopia, the first Jewish cooperative experiment was a future guide for *kibbutzim*.

The Adoption of the Garden City

The concept of the Garden City was adopted as the most convincing way to plan new settlements in *Eretz-Israel*. In 1903, with the beginning of the construction of the first Garden City *Letchworth*, the principles of Howard's theory were already disseminated beyond its borders.

The German Garden City movement was founded during the fall of 1902 and took its inspiration from the British Garden City movement. Franz Oppenheimer, who played a predominant role in the early moments of the Zionist colonisation, was one of its first members and took part in the adaptation of the objectives of the *Gartenstadtbewegung* according to the socio-economic needs of Germany.²⁶

In this period, the main Zionist centres were situated in Berlin and Cologne and the professionals in charge of the future Zionist colonisation, such as Richard Kauffmann and Alexander Baerwald, studied in Germany and absorbed the modern ideas of the Garden City.

The Zionist writer David Trietsch was the first to bring the concept of the Garden City to the Zionist public. His writings focused on the problematic of the economic basis of the Jewish colonisation of Palestine where he tried to adopt the principles of Howard and adapt them to the realities in Palestine. He considered the Garden City as the best urban principle for colonising Palestine and the best suited to the character of the masses of Jews who would immigrate.²⁷ He believed that Zionism couldn't use traditional rural forms of settlement because they required too many unavailable resources. With the combination of agriculture and industry, a small farm next to the settler's home, independent Garden Cities in the Holy Land could be created.

A simple layout for the inner city is the grouping in circles, which presupposes flat grounds. In the centre, public buildings and squares, one or more inner ring roads with houses and proper gardens (front gardens for flowers – back gardens for vegetables and trees), and a simple or double external ring road, where the factories are located and which is crossed by a railway connection. The third exterior ring road would have homes with bigger gardens and land for agriculture. The circle would be intersected by four, six, or eight straight roads.²⁸

[25] Ibid., 81

[26] Kampffmeyer 1908, 13–14; quoted in Fiedler and Buschfeld 1995, 65

[27] Trietsch 1905, 349–363; quoted in Fiedler and Buschfeld 1995, 66

[28] Trietsch 1905, 356; quoted in Fiedler and Buschfeld 1995, 66

Later in 1917, a brochure was even published for the establishment of Garden Cities in Palestine, which would combine the qualities of the village with the benefits of urban life. The advantages of the village were health, fresh air, cheap food and low taxes, and the advantages of the city were income, jobs, cultural institutions, and entertainment facilities. It contained recommendations on a mixed agricultural exploitation, with vegetables, orchards and dairy, and gave details of conditions of membership, voting rights, members' rights and obligation, election procedures, right of succession, ... Howard's Garden City scheme translated into Hebrew was attached to this brochure.

The Great Courtyard in Merchavia

According to Franz Oppenheimer, most of the social problems of the lower classes could be solved by returning to the people the control over their land. He developed his notion of a cooperative settlement based on the principles of private economy, competition and efficiency. Oppenheimer published his ideas on cooperative settlements with the title *Jüdische Siedlungen* (Jewish colonies), which was reprinted in Herzl's Zionist journal.

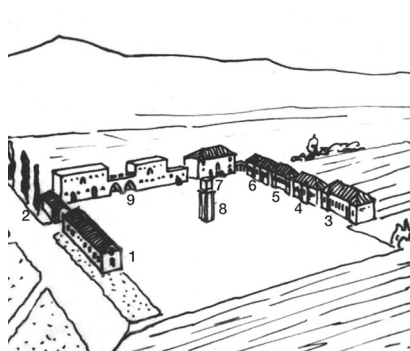
Theodore Herzl was very enthusiastic about Oppenheimer's writings: "Yesterday I read the end of Oppenheimer's Jewish colonies' in Die Welt (...) I immediately decided to support Oppenheimer's experiment. I wrote to him without delay (...)”²⁹ He adopted Oppenheimer's economic system for his *Neudorf* in Altneuland and a few years later, Oppenheimer became the economist of the Zionist Organization.

With Zionism, Oppenheimer saw the possibility of turning his ideals into practice and prepared a colonisation plan for Eretz-Israel in which modern agrarian settlements were to become model villages based on cooperation. With Dr. Arthur Ruppin, director of the Agricultural Colonisation Department, he founded in 1908 an investor's association which financed the first experimental settlement. Namely the cooperative settlement Merchavia, it was the historic fulfilment of Herzl's utopia and a future guide for the various communal settlement types in Israel.

In 1910, the Jewish national Funds bought 350,000 sqm of land in Merchavia and became the first Jewish settlement of its kind in the *Jezreel* Valley. According to Oppenheimer's principle, Alexander Baerwald was in charge of planning this agricultural cooperative which he imagined as a Great Courtyard with a U-shape.

In his drawing from a bird's eye view, Alexander Baerwald presented the general layout of the cooperative. A row of trees was planted at the entrance which recalls cooperative farms in Germany. The different individual buildings had various functions: The first constructions (1,2) had communal facilities, such as the kitchen, dining room, a laundry room, a clothes room, ... On the opposite side, the four individual buildings were two-family houses (3,4,5,6). The granary (7), also named the *goren*, served as the cooperative's barn: The upper floor was used for storing the crops in large cells, while the ground floor contained storerooms. In the centre of the courtyard stands the water tower (8): Erected in 1914, the water tower was the only water infrastructure for the cooperative and was the first building on pillars made of reinforced concrete in Palestine. The big house (9) was built in 1912 and was the place where people, carpenters, tailors ... were working and providing services to the community. It was rather exceptional to have a building on two floors: The lower floor housed the animals: the cowshed, stables and the sheep-breeding pen, as well as the dairy, blacksmith's workshop and the clinic. The upper floor served as a storage place for straw and hay from where food was thrown to the animals. It was also used as a collective sleeping quarter for single workers. Altogether, the big house with the other buildings were forming the courtyard.

The houses were built with the reuse of stones from the crusade fortress *La Fève*. They all have arches and small windows according to local Arab building traditions: Alexander Baerwald tried to do a unique synthesis between Western and Oriental, local style, as a new expression of Jewish life in Palestine. However, his intention didn't meet much approval and later, the buildings were even covered with European red tile roofs. "Baerwald remained alone in his desire to create such a synthesis. So, from the first moment, the exterior features of Zionist settlement were conspicuously set apart from their Arab neighbours."³⁰



[30] Fiedler and Buschfeld 1995, 83–84

Fig. 19 Drawing of Merchavia
Alexander Baerwald, *General layout*, 1913
(Merchavia Archive)

Fig. 20 The big farm Merchavia
Alexander Baerwald, *The Great Courtyard*, 1913
(Merchavia Archive)

[31] Kahana 2015, 22

[32] Cf. Lexicon

[33] Degania Archives 1910

Merchavia was intended to adopt Oppenheimer's economic system: First, the investor's association led by Oppenheimer was managing the early moments of the farm and teaching agriculture to inexperienced workers. During the second phase, the settlers were supposed to pay back the investor's association and become the owners of the cooperative. In the last phase, non-farmers such as teachers, shopkeepers, tradesmen and other service people, would ideally join the cooperative in order to have a complete autonomous settlement.

However, the cooperative never managed to pass the first phase: "Based on Oppenheimer's ideas, the cooperative paid its members' wages, each according to his contribution, under the administration of a hired overseer (as the impartial guardian of the common interest), an arrangement which inevitably led to disagreements and internal conflicts, finally causing the enterprise to close down in 1918."³¹

Degania: The First Kibbutz

In 1910, Degania was the first *kvutza*³² in *Eretz-Israel*, and the first permanent settlement based on egalitarian wages and uniform profit distribution: The first *kibbutz*. "On the 2nd of October of the year 1910 we arrived, ten men and two women, at Um-Juni. We went about setting up an independent settlement of Hebrew workers on the land of the nation. A collective settlement with neither exploiters nor exploited – a commune."³³

The fundamentals of the group were the following:

- Work and pioneering: Work is the basis on which man is obligated to build his life.
- Equality in the worth of man: Everyone contributes according to his ability and receives according to his needs.
- Equality in the value of work: All work, pleasant and unpleasant, is equal in value, and one is equal to the other.
- Independent work: A man is obliged to work. He must not exploit the weak or be idle at the expense of the community.
- Mutual responsibility: The entire society maintains mutual assistance in all areas for all its members, for life.
- Collectivism: In the group, there is full collectivism in the farm, at work, in education and in catering for needs.

Established by *halutzim*, Zionist pioneers, the organisation of Degania was very much influenced by the German farms and the first stable and storage structures were erected around the centre of communal life: The courtyard. The communal house was the manifestation of the collectivity and the living parts were situated outside the courtyard, thus creating a spatial separation between working and living areas. The first problems started when couples had kids: These families caused a division from the original “big family” and were sacrificing the communal spirit of the *kibbutz*. A solution was found by having both separated parents' rooms from the collective children's home:

The question of the care of the first child was resolved by the mother herself: She took the child with her to her place of work in the cow shed. When the child raised his voice and cried, all Degania broke out crying. The decision on collective education arose from the need to solve the problems of caring for the children who were born, enabling women to work on the farm.³⁴

[34] Degania Archives 1916



Fig. 21 The first pioneers
The shack, Umm-j'uni, 1910 (Degania Archive)

[35] Benari 1934, 35; quoted in Fiedler and Buschfeld 1995, 85

[36] Benari 1934, 35; quoted in Fiedler and Buschfeld 1995, 86

Another fundamental issue was the following: What was the ideal size for a *kibbutz* in order to keep its social and collective ideology? At the beginning, the *kvutza* was a small group composed of 12 members, which were spiritually close to each other and could sit around a family table: "The common table at which one could converse and divide the work while eating became the first sociological and architectonic standard for the original *kibbutz*."³⁵ Due to increasing demands in agriculture, the community soon required a bigger working area and the introduction of new agricultural branches. Therefore, the *kibbutz* had to enlarge its initial group by doubling or tripling its number: "It seemed as if economic development was at loggerheads with its social dimension."³⁶ Later, Degania even divided its group and land, thus creating Degania A, Degania B and even Degania C (today *Kibbutz Ginnegar*) in order to stay a small community.



Fig. 22 The yard
The yard in the first decade, Degania, 1913
(Degania Archive)

The Small Kvutza

Kibbutzim are easily identifiable with their unique structure. Organised in distinct *kibbutz* movements, these settlements are different from each other due to a geometry and guiding principles adapted to a specific place, economy and ideology. Furthermore, with the active participation of its members in the planning process, each *kibbutz* has a particular and unique charm.³⁷

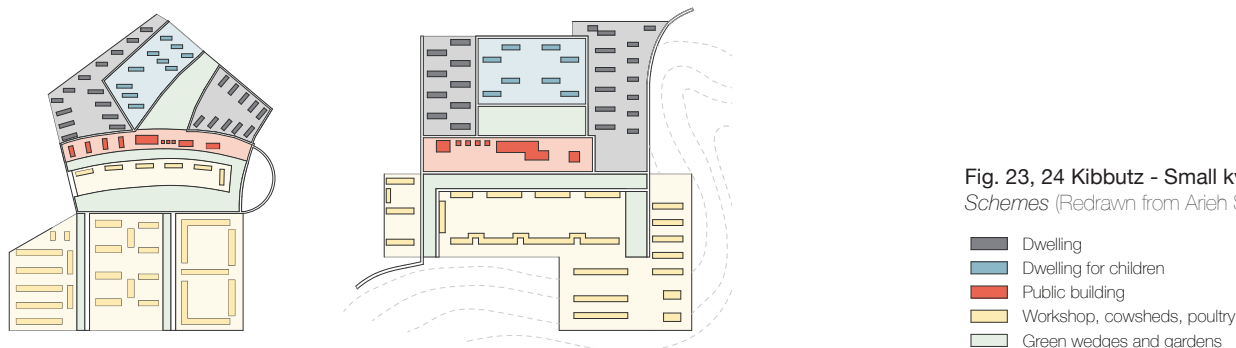
Degania was the first small *kvutza* in the *kibbutz* movement. From its very beginning, the *kibbutz* sought to limit the number of members in order to stay a closely-knit community. Working exclusively on manual agricultural labour, which could anchor an intimate spiritual partnership, the planning of such community was similar to a German farm. The main thinker of the philosophy of the small *kvutza* was A.D. Gordon, a Zionist ideologist and philosopher who promoted physical labour and agriculture as means of uplifting Jews' spirituality. In his philosophical writings, he criticised modern society for its increasing alienation from nature and sought to create a *New* society with the sense of human brotherhood:

The Jewish people have been completely cut off from nature and imprisoned within the city walls for two thousand years. We have been accustomed to every form of life, except a life of labour – of labour done on our behalf and for its own sake. It will require the greatest effort of will for such people to become normal again. We lack the principal ingredient for national life. We lack the habit of labour (...) it is labour which binds people to its soil and to its national culture, which in its turn is an outgrowth of the people's toil and the people's labour.³⁸

Later, other settlements followed the idea of the small *kvutza* and founded in 1929 the *Hever Hakvutzot* (Association of *Kvutzot*) movement.

[37] See Bar-Or and Yaski 2010, 121–122, The Discreet Charm of the Kibbutz

[38] Gordon, 1920; quoted in A. D. Gordon 2017



The Large Kvutza

After the establishment of the ideology of the small *kvutza* with the first *kibbutz* Degania, other ideological streams in *kibbutzim* were implemented. One important movement was the idea of the city village: “In contrast with the small *kvutza*, the large *kvutza* proposed a vision of a diversified society numbering hundreds and even thousands of members living a life of work and equality, engaging in a diversity of fields, including industry and the development of culture, intellectual life, and education.”³⁹

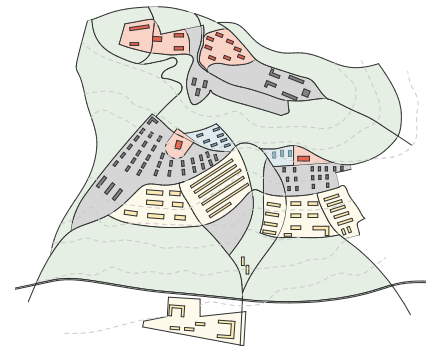
The ideology of the large *kvutza* had to be transposed in urban principles, which were different from the small *kvutza*. Neither a city, which suffered from capitalism, alienation, violence and pollution, nor a village, which was based on agriculture, depleted and exploited, the philosophy of the city village was to combine and adopt positive aspects from both archetypes. With the idea of having a large and growing community, the principles of the city village had to be crystallised in an adapted urban scheme different from the German farm: Boundaries had to be flexible and the urban planning had to be thought in order to encompass a dynamic evolution, while maintaining internal relationships and a reasonable walking distance between the periphery and the public centre. With the ideal of having a large independent community including agriculture, industries, culture and education, a fundamentally *New model* was created.

Founded in 1921, the first large *kvutza* crystallising the vision of the city village is Ein Harod and Tel Yosef. Planned in close collaboration between the architect Richard Kauffmann, Director of the Architecture Department of Palestine Land Development Company, and the members of this community, a memorandum where the idea of the rural-urban model was expressed by its members and served as a base for future planning:

Fig. 25 Kibbutz - Large kvutza

Scheme (Redrawn from Arieh Sharon Archive)

- Dwelling
- Dwelling for children
- Public building
- Farm and industrial building
- Green wedges and gardens



Our goal in our settlement is to live the life of a large society, a working society, which overcomes the artificial differentiation, harmful in both its human and its national-economic aspects, between work in 'pure agriculture' and work in crafts and industry, keeping 'urban' work and 'rural' work separate. Our aspiration is a society that unites physical and mental work within itself.⁴⁰

[40] Memorandum to the Settling Institutions » (Heb.), Ein Harod, 5 May 1924, Central Zionist archive (CZA), S15/21918-8; quoted in *ibid.*, 26

[41] *Ibid.*, 31–32

[42] Cf. *Lexicon*

[43] Rosenberg 2012, 32

Behaving as a regional cluster of two *kibbutzim*, Ein Harod and Tel Yosef constitute a rural centre of about 400 families. These are two separate social units with common institutions: cultural and educational centre (schools, museums, theatres), regional industrial and service enterprises (dairy, factories, garages) and administration and welfare facilities. Richard Kauffmann believed in the active participation of the settlers in order to establish a detailed program and planned a settlement reflecting the spirit and the social structure of its inhabitants:

The network of internal thoroughfares, the residential zones in a fan structure in the centre of which were the common public zone and the dining hall – a multifunctional building that serving as an administrative centre, a venue for the *kibbutz* meetings and for gatherings on holiday and memorial days, as well as a large plate and a broad lawn, which also served as a space for meetings and gatherings. Regional plants were located on the entrance road, the industrial and the culture, health, and education institutions higher up the hill.⁴¹

The Kibbutz Gardenscape

In 1927, other *kibbutzim* identified themselves with the principle of the large *kvutza* and founded the *HaKibbutz HaMeuhad*⁴² movement, one of the main *kibbutz* movement in the country. Samuel Bickels became the main architect dealing with the idea of the city village and planned more than 60 general plans of *kibbutzim*. He was also confronted by the question of the large community, who keeps growing and changing from its original nucleus, in a dynamic and flexible way.

He developed the concept of the *kibbutz* gardenscape, which unifies the general plan of the settlement in an organic manner: "The garden expresses the society that created it; not a 'display garden' and not a public park or cultivated landscape at the edge of the city, this is a garden in which people live, work and rest, this is an all-day garden, and I think this is the best way to define it."⁴³ Real connective tissue of the various functions of daily life, the gardenscape is not solely utilitarian, but serves at the same time as a distinctive formal frame visually and experientially.

[44] Cf. Lexicon

[45] Cf. Lexicon

[46] Cf. Lexicon

[47] Bar-Or and Yaski 2010, 24

Ideological Collectivism

Founded the same year as the *HaKibbutz HaMeuhad* movement, a different movement arose in the 1920s: The *Kibbutz Artzi*⁴⁴ of *Hashomer Hatzair*⁴⁵, a movement more politically involved in the Marxist Party *Mapam*⁴⁶. In contrast with *HaKibbutz HaMeuhad* movement, which was open to masses, the *Kibbutz Artzi* movement was founded on ideological collectivism and saw itself as a vanguard preparing the way for the masses and participating in the struggle of the working class.⁴⁷ In addition to this three main *kibbutz* movements, we should also mention the *Kibbutz Dati* (Religious *Kibbutz*) movement founded in 1935. Based on a religious and egalitarian life, the main difference in its urban planning reside in the public centre of the *kibbutz*, which contains a synagogue and a religious study house.

Thinking Community: The Case of the White City

[48] Kahana 2015, 120

[49] Metzger-Szmuk 2004, 38

A fundamental factor in human progress is Man as part of a community, first as a family, then as a group or neighbourhood, later as a nation and society. However, albeit it creates individual freedom within the constraints of income and social status, life in the city distances Man from togetherness and mutual dependency.⁴⁸ At the same time new *kibbutzim* were planned, modern and social principles were applied in the shaping of a new city in *Eretz-Israel*: The White City.

The White City

During the Zionist enterprise, a wave of immigrants escaping from Nazism imported building materials and vocabulary of the International Style in *Eretz-Israel*. Between 1931 and 1937, in order to react to an increasing demand for housing, 2700 new buildings were erected in Tel Aviv's centre according to modern principles: The White City. Imagined by immigrants with their architectural and societal planning from Europe, this transfer of knowledge was welcomed in the Israeli society which was in the quest for a national style. Most of them had a European education and brought theoretical and practical backgrounds.

The urban planner Patrick Geddes was contracted by Tel Aviv's first mayor, Meir Dizengoff, to share a vision of a Jewish city in the modern world according to the urban utopias of the Garden City. His masterplan envisioned a low-density Garden City of 100,000 inhabitants structured by a hierarchical circulation network thus creating "home blocks", embodiment of the "Garden Village" in the very heart of the city as a civic grouping:

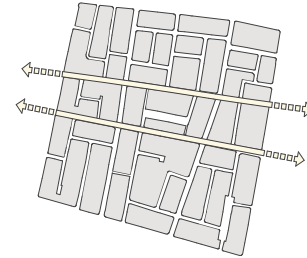
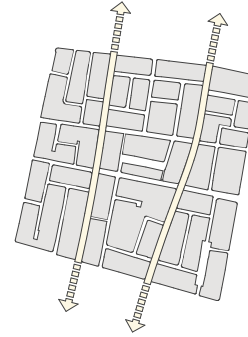
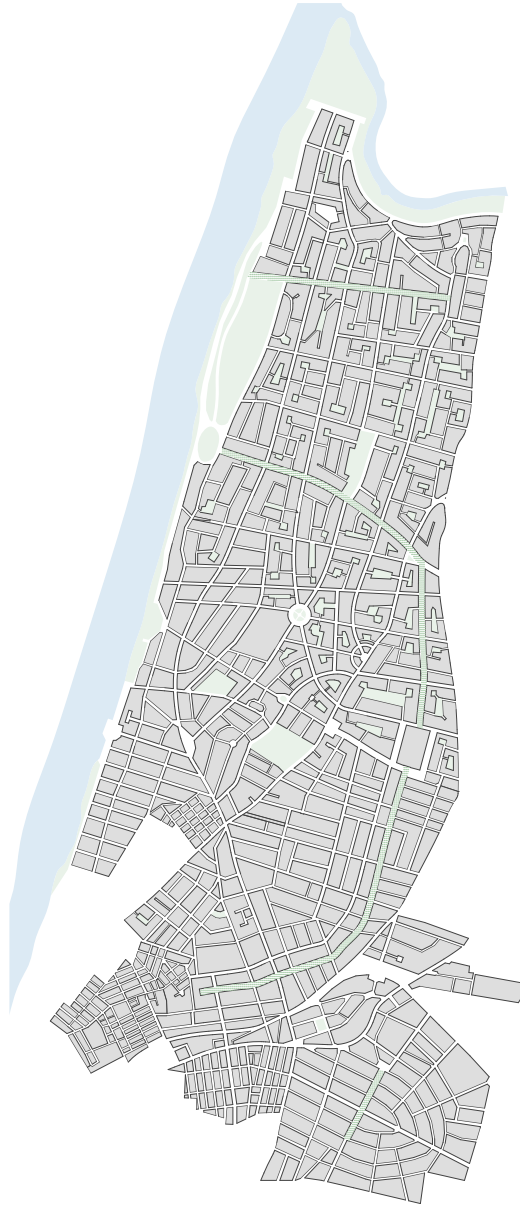
The blocks express a fresh treatment, giving more space, beauty and recreated value to the interior of each block; and with the further advantages of homely seclusion of about half of the houses within the main block itself ... and with protection from dust, noises and dangers of the streets. Basic urban unit, they have a public garden or green area with communal facilities such as synagogues or kindergarten and served the neighbourhood's residents as a social venue.⁴⁹

Although Geddes recommended some guidelines for the hot-climate Mediterranean region such as small openings and flat roofs (the best room in the house according to him), the lack of architectural codes left the door open to international style.

Fig. 26 Tel Aviv general plan

Patrick Geddes, *Proposing sixty gardens for the northern zone*, 1931

(Redrawn from cover of Geddes's 1925 report)



Modern Influences

With the wave of immigration in *Eretz-Israel*, it is without any surprise that a transfer of knowledge occurred between Eastern-Europe and the “Holy-Land”. Among the immigrants who arrived in Tel Aviv, some studied at the Bauhaus school and transmitted modern principles, others worked in Le Corbusier’s office in Paris and adapted the *Five Points of a New Architecture* to the specific local climate. The architectural vocabulary was innovative and it can give us some clues on their social impact in Tel Aviv.

For example, flat roofs are part of the common property of the residents. This extra space could be equipped with a laundry room and an area for social activities, including wedding ceremonies, birthdays, events... This rooftop for convivial get-togethers and recreation is today even used as a sleeping place on hot summer nights and a pergola is often present, indicating its social aim.

Tel Aviv is also called the city of balconies: Such as roof terraces, balconies are part of the Tel Avivan’s culture and reflect the openness of its social fabric. Real extroverted domestic spaces, they are also used as shading devices.

Construction on pilotis had a positive repercussion in the social interaction of the city as well: Residential buildings floating above the ground, air penetrating in between and offering a shaded area, pilotis allow a flow of circulation from the street into the yard, while sidewalk and stairwell plantings turn the exterior façade into an extension of the interior garden, widening the public space and creating a pleasant living climate.⁵⁰

[50] Katz 1998, 334



Fig. 27 Pilotis

Sharon standing on the left, Tel Aviv, n.d.
(Arieh Sharon Archive)

Fig. 28 Pergola

Concrete roof pergola, George Eliot Street, n.d.
(*Des maisons sur le sable*)

- [51] Weill-Rochant 2003, 157
[52] Metzger-Szmuk 2004, 56
[53] Katz 1998, 334

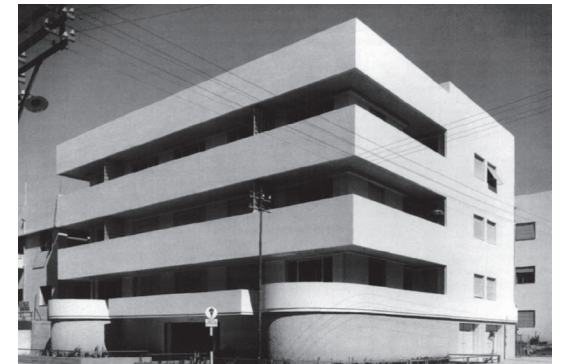
If we only had to cite one example that illustrates such common type of private dwelling, it would certainly be the *Engel House* built in 1933 by the architect Ze'ev Rechter. Previous disciple of Le Corbusier in Paris, he immigrated to Palestine and founded with Arie Sharon and Joseph Neufeld an avant-garde “circle of architects”. Their goal was to lead an “architectural revolt” and “raise the standards of the spatial plans of the Jews of Palestine to the level of the Modern movement and turn their backs on the principles of traditional design”.⁵¹ The example of the *Engel House* typically illustrates the translation of the *Five Points of a New Architecture*, adapted to local climate: The use of pilotis creates a shaded and ventilated area which also serves as a threshold toward domestic privacy. The free façade is articulated with non-bearing walls giving a certain freedom and plasticity to the overall composition. The strip or ribbon window wasn't directly applicable due to humid heat and glaring light:

The accentuated horizontality of the strip window was achieved by protruding concrete frame surrounding the windows and extending along the façade, or elongated balconies with a narrow interval between the parapet and the sun-break ‘apron’ projecting from the floor above and thus emphasising the horizontal flow of the façade.⁵²

The free plan wasn't really successfully implemented and the only flexibility in the interior design lied in double doors between the living room and the adjacent room, which could be opened or closed following differentiated needs. Finally, the flat roof with its concrete pergola is an extension of private life into the collective life of the city.⁵³

Fig. 29 Engel house
Ze'ev Rechter, *Engel house*, 1934
(*Des maisons sur le sable*)

Fig. 30 Balconies
Harry Lurie, *Horizontal «strip balconies»*, 1934
(*Des maisons sur le sable*)



Cooperative Housing

However, the extroverted domestic spaces had more to do with practical, climatic and cultural conditions rather than profound social values: The Garden City gave to liberal Zionists a framework for individual expression, private property, and entrepreneurial values.⁵⁴ Therefore, the growing Labour Zionists tried to integrate themselves in the urban fabric as well with the foundation of the *Histadrut's Merkaz Ieshikun Poalim* (Centre for Workers' Housing in the General Federation of Jewish Labour). They intended to build housing complexes for autonomous communities of workers, which would shape the *New Man of Labour*. On that occasion, the "circle of architects" experimented large cooperative housing projects.

In a competition for the ideal apartment in a housing unit organised by the *Histadrut*⁵⁵, Arie Sharon won the second prize and published an article: *The minimal dwelling in residential buildings*⁵⁶. In this article, he criticised Arab architecture, which was not compatible with a rational way of building, and also the Garden City scheme, which was incompatible with the needs of the economy. He dreamed of a symbiosis between modern architecture and the New Jew. His continuous thinking on *kibbutzim*, workers' housing, hospitals, and later even on a national scale always tried to serve his social aims. In Tel Aviv, Arie Sharon had the opportunity to build a total of 8 cooperative housings for the *Histradrut*. Real crystallisation of workers' communities, they give shape to new collective intensions. Rejecting the system of lots planned by Patrick Geddes, advocating rationalism and economy, he received the unique authorisation to group several lots in order to build his workers' cooperatives.

The cooperative housings built on Frishman Street in 1934–1936 are a clear application of international style's principles: These blocks of buildings with three stories each are composed in such a way to create central courtyards, heart of the community. Around the courtyard are located shared facilities such as a dining room, a laundry, a nursery, and the access to this garden is made by a monumental entrance with a portico.



[54] Ibid., 335

[55] Cf. Lexicon

[56] Habinjan Bamirah Hakarov, vol. 3, August 1935; quoted in Weill-Rochant 2003, 11

Fig. 31, 32 Workers housing
Arie Sharon, *The courtyard*, Tel Aviv, 1934
(Arie Sharon Archive)

[57] Ibid., 161–162

The composition itself is following rational, climatic and hygienist principles: Facing green spaces, the rows are perpendicular to the main street and studied according to the orientation of the sun and natural ventilation. The monumental entrance with elevated dwellings on pilotis allows air to flow through the courtyard. The stairways have an open façade protected by glass panels from wind and rain and the internal organisation of the apartment are optimised in order to have good ventilation of the unit.

Faced with the lack of thermal insulation, the typology of the apartments is arranged in a day area and a night area catching the evening breeze:

The rooms facing the west are cooler in the morning, those which face east are better ventilated in the afternoon (...) This is why the living rooms face west and the bedrooms face east. In addition, the east side heat is less than the west side since the rising sun strikes the walls still chilled by the night air. But since the walls on the west are heated by the afternoon sun, the living rooms need to be protected by large balconies.⁵⁷

This workers' fortress is declaring its autonomy from the Garden City and is a political gesture toward the gentrification of the city. The street and the central courtyard are used as a centre of social and cultural activities. The homogeneous treatment of the blocks with regular and simple lines, repeated standardised elements such as windows, expresses a democratic equality and allows a reduction of costs as well. The communal rooftops and the collective facilities are corresponding here to a cooperative ideology. Beauty of the functional, in many aspects we can see a unique combination between social and modern principles.

Fig. 33 Workers housing

Arieh Sharon, *Workers Housing*, Tel Aviv, 1934
(Arieh Sharon Archive)

Fig. 34 Weissenhofsiedlung

Mies van der Rohe, *Weissenhof Estate*, Stuttgart, 1927 (RIBA Collections)





The Creation of a New State

In parallel to the *kibbutz* as a utopian scheme for building a fairer and egalitarian life, we have to mention a settling reality and the military role they played in the colonisation of Israel. Zionism was from its very beginning a settlement project supporting the establishment of a Jewish homeland in *Eretz-Israel*. Such as European colonialism, the Zionist settling Institution had a very pragmatic way of colonising in order to have a recognised and legally secured home from genocide and antisemitism: Occupying and controlling the land with agricultural settlements, draining swamps and making the desert bloom to fulfill Theodor Herzl's vision of a new prosperous cosmopolitan Jewish country.

Fig. 35 Urbanisation
View at night, Israel, 2016
(GIS data from NASA Earth Observatory)

The Settlement Project

The Palestine Land Development company of the Zionist movement (*Hachsharat HaYishuv*) was founded in 1909 by Arthur Ruppin, leader of settlement activities of the World Zionist Organization. Their approach toward settlements were according to Oppenheimer's ideology, who favoured the principle of individual rewarding for individuals' initiative and labour and never managed to achieve the last phase, the social and ideological crystallisation of the cooperative. It was only a few years later that his principles were concretised with the *moshav*⁵⁸ *ovdim*, "workers' settlement" where every member had an economy of its own and a cooperative framework, with mutual aid, shared services and agricultural projects.

The Moshav Ovdim

In 1921, a centralised architectural department was opened in order to respond to the needs of planning in *Eretz-Israel* and was directed by Richard Kauffmann. Born in Frankfurt in 1887, he planned garden suburbs and residential areas and was asked in 1920 by the Zionist Federation to plan the new settlements in Palestine. He settled the first *moshav ovdim* Nahalal: It had a circular shape with the public buildings in the centre, members' homes around and the agricultural lots behind radiating in an outer circle. This agricultural unit of about 100 families was based on individual working of each farm unit by its settler-owner, and cooperative partnership in agricultural machinery, stores, dairy, and marketing of produce. Oppenheimer later wrote a report where he argued that communism has always been a failure and reiterated his point of view toward *moshavim* as the ideal form of settlement, and the idea of a small *kvutza* could still be considered, as these were nothing more than enlarged families and therefore, "a kind of religious sect".⁵⁹

[58] Cf. Lexicon

[59] Oppenheimer 1926

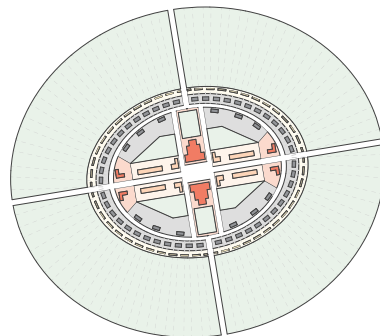


Fig. 36 Moshav ovdim Nahalal
Scheme (Redrawn from Arie Sharon Archive)

- Private dwelling
- Public building
- Common farm building
- Farm
- Agricultural lots

[60] Bar-Or and Yaski 2010, 35

[61] Oppenheimer 1926

[62] Bar-Or and Yaski 2010, 36

[63] Ibid., 38

[64] Ibid., 95–96

This more moderate conception of cooperative living was regarded as the optimal form of settlement by the World Zionist movement leadership, who had reservations about other endeavours to establish collective communities. Many of its leaders (principally in the USA) feared the settlements of the communal type would lead to the consolidation of a 'communist' or anarchist force, and public opposed the *Eretz-Israeli* workers' movement and its institution.⁶⁰

The Kibbutz

The World Zionist Organization had an overall control on the establishment of new settlements: They allocated the land, determined their size, outlined a general planning and decided their social organisation. Therefore, all the settlers were dependent on this centralised settling institution.

When Kauffmann planned the first large *kvutza* Ein Harod in 1925, it was first not accepted by the settling institutions because it was antithetical to Oppenheimer's vision who claimed its members were "pseudo-socialistic, an unclear mixture of utopian communism and the Anarchism of Kropotkin's kind".⁶¹ According to Galia Bar-Or, almost every aspect of the planning became a matter of dispute with the settling institutions:

They did not accept the goal of a 'large and growing' settlement planned in such a way that its future and its dynamic growth would be expressed in its fundamental structure (...) As a rule, the settling institutions wanted new communities to be based on the village model, with everything that this implied; hence, for example, they opposed two-store y construction, which had been chosen by the *kibbutz* members in order to reduce the dispersion of the residential houses, because this too entailed a symbolic architectural aspect that suggested a traditionally urban form (...) ⁶²

Therefore, *kibbutzim* decided to have independent departments for planning and building and each *kibbutz* movement started to establish its own planning office: "We are not going to stop living our lives and doing what we do just because someone does not like our lives and doing what we do just because someone does not like the way we live. In the worst case, we will have to do it ourselves."⁶³ It was only in the 1930s, after the establishment of the different *kibbutz* movements and their political implication in the Zionist institutions, the institutionalisation of *kibbutzim* with the intensification of the hostility between the local Arab population and the Jewish population, and finally the role played by village units in defending Jewish frontiers, did *kibbutzim* receive recognition as lasting settlements and permission to develop independently.⁶⁴

The Redeemers of the Land

[65] Ibid., 92

In the Israeli and international consciousness, *kibbutzim* were perceived as Arcadian rural settlements: The *kibbutznik* was considered as the New Jew who has cast off the diasporic culture of the *shtetl*, holding a scythe in one hand and a sword in the other. This mythical image of the agriculturist was the embodiment of the Zionist dream of the Jew returning to his homeland, bonding with its soil, and redeeming it from desolation.⁶⁵ The family was a thing of the past and was reborn not from blood ties, but from spiritual comradeship, the collective community perceived as the secure and true heaven, joining people's souls against chaos.

Beginnings

The notion of redemption was part of Zionist heroic slogan whereby the purchase, reclamation and settlement of land in *Eretz-Israel* were promoted since the very beginnings. Starting in the mid 1850s with the first attempts to enable Jews to live productively in Ottoman Palestine, the idea of land purchase was to prepare for Jewish sovereignty. The First *Aliyah* (1882-1903) and the newly formed Zionist Organization played an important role in land redemption.

Adopting the same redemption model (purchase, reclamation and settlement), two central agencies were founded by the Zionist Organization: The Jewish National Fund (JNF) and the Palestine Land Development Company (PLDP). Their aim was to purchase land in *Eretz-Israel* in order to provide land for two forms of settlements fundamental for the pioneering enterprise: The cooperative (*moshav*) and the collective (*kibbutz*).

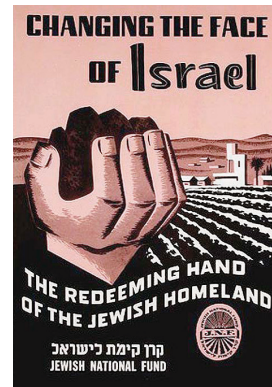
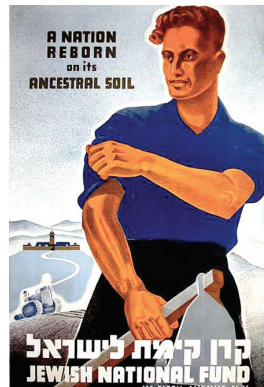
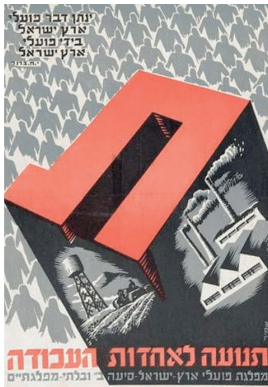


Fig. 37 The movement to unite the workers
Shamir Brothers, *The affairs of the workers of Eretz Israel should be in the hands of the workers of Eretz Israel*, Eretz-Israel, 1934 (Mapai Party)

Fig. 38 A nation reborn
Ernst Mechner, *A nation reborn on its ancestral soil*, Israel, 1950 (Jewish National Fund)

Fig. 39 Changing the face of Israel
The redeeming hand of the Jewish homeland, Israel, 1955 (Jewish National Fund)

[66] Greenwood 2017

[67] Gugger et al. 2017, 10

The British Mandate Period

By 1930, the Jewish institutional redeemers already amassed 5,200 hectares in various parts of the country, on which were established 50 settlements reflecting the diverse models that had evolved by this time: villages, *kibbutzim* and *moshavim*, and urban localities.⁶⁶ Inherent to the notion of salvation and liberation from the enemy hands, Palestine was seen as a desolate land, combination of desert and swamp, and only the true love of the land's true people could restore it to "milk and honey".⁶⁷ Because much of the available territory was situated in marshy and malarial valleys, their acquisition became crucial in land redemption and swamps had to be drained in order to find new settlements.

However, as Zionists consolidated their intentions, their activities met with increasing obstacles: Arabs caused the price of land in the country to increase exponentially and isolated Jewish settlements were attacked. Therefore, JNF acquisitions had to be as contiguous as possible and the "N-Plan" forming almost uninterrupted chain of towns and villages was developed. As future state's boundaries were depending on land ownership and cultivation, the strategic implementation of agricultural settlements was essential.

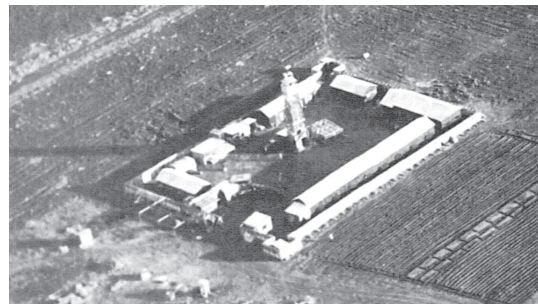
Border Role of Kibbutzim: The Case of Mitzpe Gvulot

Kibbutzim played a major role in the colonisation of *Eretz-Israel*. Even if their ideology was to march hand in hand with Arab workers and create a future of brotherhood and prosperity, the ongoing national conflict in the late 1920s between Jews and Arabs erupted forcefully. "The national consciousness predominated and agricultural settlements were strategically located on borders in order to defend Jewish *Yishuv* in *Eretz-Israel*. This unresolved conflict, as is known, exacted a toll not only of bloodshed of thousands of Arabs, but also of destruction and of refugeehood experienced by hundreds of thousands of Arabs, and is an inseparable part of the dialects of the story being told here."⁶⁸

80% of the *kibbutz* population lives in the north or south and only a marginal number in the centre of the country. This population's willingness to take upon itself the implementation of the Zionist policy of determining the country's borders by agricultural settlement, even before the state's policy of dispersing the Jewish population, was the reason for the establishment of *kibbutzim* on the country's borders as settlements with a rural character.⁶⁹

Stockade Kibbutzim

Many of these agricultural settlements were established during the 1936-39 Arab revolt in hostile areas with "facts on the grounds": These settlements called "Stockade *kibbutzim*" were temporary buildings which constituted the nucleus for a new *kibbutz*. "According to Turkish law, in force during the period of the British Mandate, a building, once erected even though illegally, could not be torn. The structural elements for all the new stockade buildings were prepared therefore in a nearby, existing *kibbutz*, and were transported and erected in one night, ready for use the next morning."⁷⁰



[68] Bar-Or and Yaski 2010, 25

[69] Tabenkin 2006

[70] Sharon 1976, 64

Fig. 40, 41 Kibbutz stockade

Migdal ve-Choma (tower and fence), Eretz-Israel, 1936-1939

(Arieh Sharon Archive)

Fig. 42 Stockade repartition

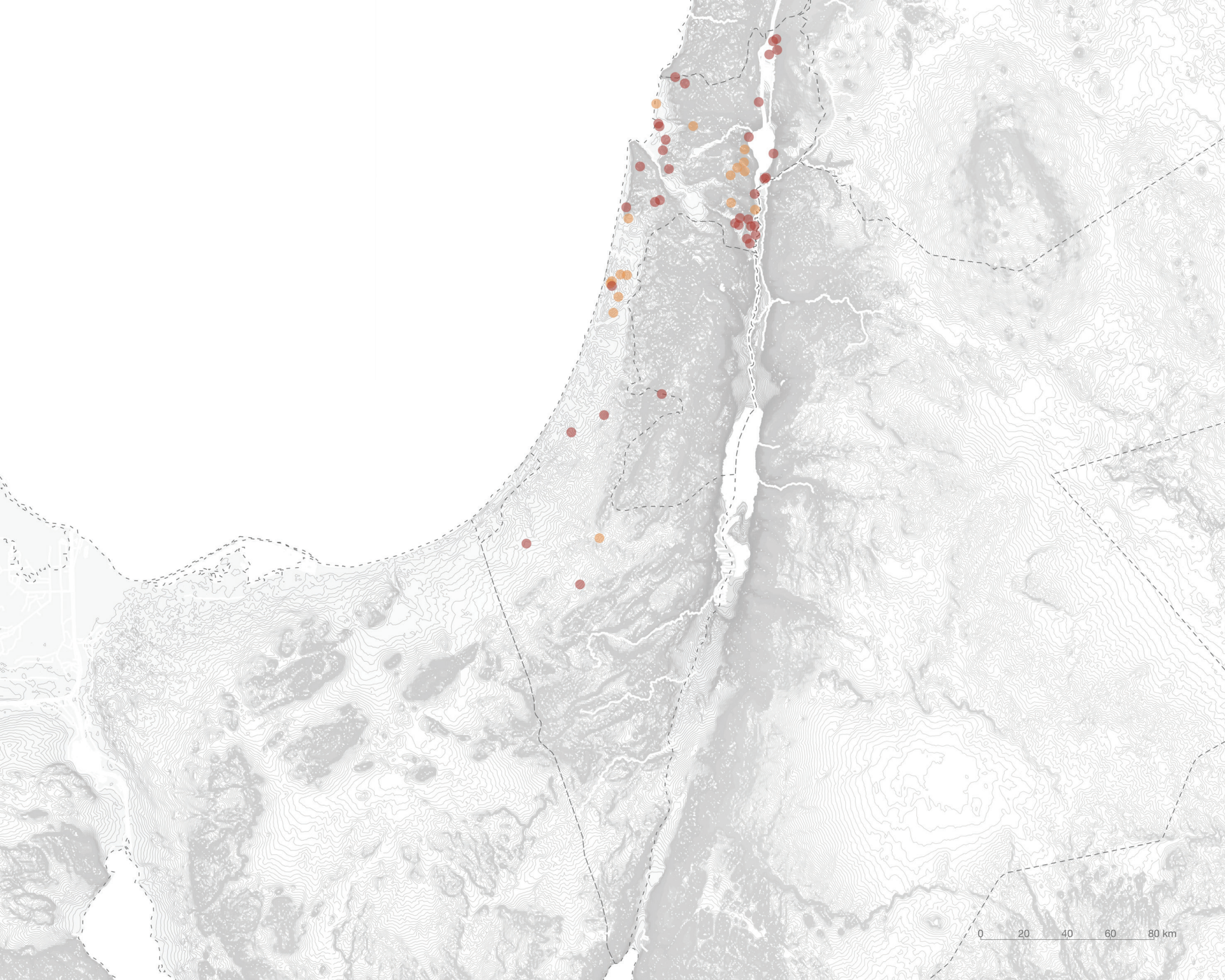
Delimiting the borders, Eretz-Israel, 1933-1943

(Data from Wikipedia)

— Political borders
— Topography

Stockade

● Kibbutz
● Moshav

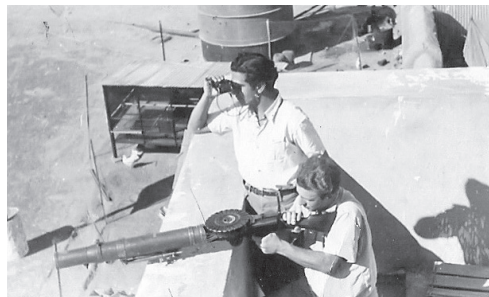


Mitzpe Gvulot

A few years later, in order to secure the Negev and assessing its feasibility for agriculture, *Mitzpe Gvulot*^[71] was one of such “facts on the ground” and the first of three lookouts established for the purpose of pioneering Jewish agricultural settlement in the Negev region. According to David Ben-Gurion, the first prime minister of Israel, without settling the South and the Negev, the security of the State will be compromised and Israeli will not attain economic independence.^[72]

The name *Gvulot* was given to the location delineating the southern boundaries of Jewish settlements in the Negev. In 1943, a group of 12 young men from the *Hashomer Hatzair* movement in *Eretz-Israel* founded the Gvulot lookout point. It consisted of three residential tents, a dining tent, and at its centre, a wooden tower with a water tank at its top. Since it became clear that the tents would not suffice to protect neither against the weather nor the attacks of Arab inhabitants of the area, the lookout point was quickly redesigned as a fortified settlement surrounded by a thick wall built from the local loess soil, as was the practice of *Fellahin*^[73] in the Negev. To buttress the sense of security of the Gvulot residents, a two-storey “secure house” with reinforced concrete walls was constructed. Over the years the structure was used for weapons storage, as a residential home, a diamond-processing plant and a lookout point.

The residents of *Gvulot* maintained a daily routine, notwithstanding the harsh circumstances and isolation. Agricultural experiments were carried out in the yard, rain water was collected, and at a later stage, a bakery was even established. Throughout the entire existence of the lookout point, in the course of which the residents also engaged in purchasing land, good relations were maintained between the Jewish settlers and the local Bedouin population. During the 1948 Arab-Israeli War, the lookout served the 8th Armoured Brigade and in 1950, the settlers began to move 1 km eastward, eventually becoming part of the present *Kibbutz Gvulot*.



[71] Cf. Lexicon

[72] Ben-Gurion 1957

[73] Cf. Lexicon

Fig. 43 Mitzpe Gvulot

The first days, Mitzpe Gvulot, 1943 (Gvulot Archive)

Fig. 44 Mitzpe Gvulot

Lookout point, Mitzpe Gvulot, 1949 (Gvulot Archive)



Memories

Gvulot is in the middle of nowhere, on the way to nowhere. When my grandfather, Georges Rosenfeld, came to the present *kibbutz* Gvulot as a pioneer in 1951 with a youth movement *Hashomer Hatzair*, he dreamed of taking part in the creation of this new *kibbutz* in the desert. A rare glimpse into the early moments of this collective community who made the desert bloom, an immersive collection of interiors is describing the daily life of a *kibbutznik*.

Fig. 45 Snapshots
Collection of stories (LABA, *My Israel*)



Night Guard

When we arrived in Gvulot, we first received weapons training and were enrolled in the night guards. Each *kibbutz* was surrounded by a metallic fence with barbed wires and has one or two gates that were closed during the night. For the night guards, a team was composed of 3–4 lookouts: The first one to start his guard had to close the gates and the last one had to reopen them and also wake up the first members who had to get up earlier, in particular the ones who were in charge of milking cows. At the very beginning, very few members had a watch. There was a bell and at six in the morning we rang the improvised bell to wake up the other members.

The night guard was one week long and was done in turns. There was a rudimentary security system: An electric current was passing through the barbed wires and if someone intended to cut it, an alarm was transmitted to the guard. He had to immediately wake the military commander up and a team of armed people rushed to the sector.

Fig. 46 The night guard
Night Guard, Mitzpe Gvulot, 1943 (Gvulot Archive)

The main danger came from the location of the *kibbutz* which is located a few kilometres away from the Gaza Strip. We were particularly alert regarding the thefts and break-ins, which could end in killings. We had to be ready to face any situation and I had moral problems: What should I do if I'm confronted with such situation?

We had aluminium pipes for irrigating the fields and we were worried that thieves would rob them. We were a group of three ambushed all night to watch over the pipes and time was very long: We couldn't even move or talk. One night, we saw a gang moving toward the pipes: We had a gun to alert the *kibbutz* but if we used it, we would be discovered. We let them approach and I had my finger ready on the trigger, but I wasn't able to shoot: I thought that these people had families too, a life like everybody else. Hopefully, they passed by and left the area. Later, in the morning, we made our report to the regional commander. We discovered that the group we saw was smuggling drugs between Egypt, the Gaza Strip and Jordan, an activity that hopefully had nothing to do with the *kibbutz*.

Komouna

Machsán Habegadim was the clothing storehouse. Following the rule that each member had the same belongings, each member had the same number of clothes: 2 sets of clothes for work and 2 sets of clothes for leisure. At the beginning, everything (the few we had) was shared, even clothes (with the exception of personal belongings such as hats and bathing suits). This didn't affect me too much as I was the tallest in the *kibbutz* and nobody could use my clothes, but I still had to have the same number of clothes as the other members, even though I arrived in the *kibbutz* with a suitcase full of personal effects. There was one thing that I was a bit ashamed of: I had a beautiful bathing towel and in the *komouna* they decided to cut it in two parts in order to have two bathing towels for children; this wasn't a big drama.

After the first generation, where everything belonged to everybody with no personal distinction, we later started to share clothes equally and these became personal effects. They were easily recognisable with a number sewn on each cloth. For example, I was

Fig. 47 Pioneers of Gvulot
Georges Rosenfeld, *Youth movement*, Gvulot, 1952
(Personal Archive)



number 8 and once my clothes were collected, washed and ironed, I could find them again on a shelf with the number 8.

To recognise a *kibbutznik* was easy: You just had to take a look at his socks. If a lace was attached to it, he was certainly one! In the clothing storehouse, to facilitate the sorting of socks, we sewed a lace on each one with a number in such a way that we could tie them together, wash them and store them in the correct personal shelf.

Once I opposed the rule of the community in which all belongings were shared in an equal manner: I had a very sensitive camera and the idea in the *kibbutz* was to put in common all cameras in one place in such a way that any member who needed a camera could use it. I knew that some comrades weren't very careful with shared possessions and I imagined that in no time, my precious camera would be broken. We convened that in order to keep my camera, I should not use it.

For men, this collective system didn't cause many problems: We accommodated ourselves with what we received. But for some women, this system wasn't so favourable as they wanted to be as pretty as possible. Hopefully, we had a member's mother, Ima Goldenberg, a skilled seamstress opened to specific wishes and personalized until a certain point clothes. But what if they couldn't have the clothes they wanted to have, and with such a restricted budget, it wasn't even possible to acquire in a store the fabric of their dreams? When a new member joined the *kibbutz*, his suitcase filled with clothes more than the limit agreed in the community, the discreet lust of future colleagues was present.

Housing

When I arrived in Gvulot in the 1950s, only married couples had the right to have a private room, which was summarily furnished, and single members had to share a room with four members: There was space for 4 beds, a small table and chairs, and personal belongings were stored in a suitcase or a box under the beds. But the situation was already much better than in the past, where we were often forced to have a "primus", a member that we placed by lack of space in a couple's room: An embarrassing situation for everybody.

Fig. 48 First house
Georges Rosenfeld, *The first house*, Gvulot, 1951
(Personal Archive)



After a certain amount of time, I had the possibility to have my own dwelling of 8 sqm. The room was furnished with a metallic bed, two empty vegetable containers stacked as the bedside table, and a primitive wardrobe that could be closed with curtains. As I was taller than the bed, the curtain allowed me to place my feet on the wardrobe's shelf. The narrow window and the door were equipped with a fly screen, as ventilation was necessary to evacuate the overheat in summer and toxic gas emanating from kerosene heaters in winter.

Some years later, with my seniority in the *kibbutz*, I had the right to have a bigger room for myself. I decorated it to my taste: With some wood from the carpentry and iron rods from the mechanical workshop, I tinkered a bookshelf for the few books I had and it also served as a separation for the bedroom. A carpet on the floor, a bed cover, a tablecloth on the table and a painting on the wall: It started to become comfortable.

One day, the *kibbutz* committee announced to me that my seniority gave me the right to have a new piece of furniture. I refused because I felt that I already had everything I needed with my tinkered furniture. Nobody really understood why I declined the privilege to have a new piece of furniture, but as I avoided an expense to the community, my decision wasn't criticised.

Nowadays, dwellings in the *kibbutz* are much more comfortable, with a room for children, a living room, a bedroom, a small kitchen, private showers, a cubbyhole, an air-conditioning system... These became an essential standard.

Heart of the Kibbutz

The refectory was the social centre of our community. At 6 am, the teams working in the fields, orchards and crops began the day with some bread, marmalade, and something to drink before leaving on their tractor or horse.

At 8 am, it was breakfast time. Except for teams working in the nursery and people working at nights, everybody met in the refectory for a 30-minute break. The space was

organised with 4 rows of tables of 6 people each. At the beginning, we sat on benches and later on, these were replaced by chairs. For better efficiency, we had to immediately fill the tables by order of entrance in the building. Therefore, if you wanted to sit next to a friend or avoid someone you particularly disliked, you had to be vigilant and enter at the right moment in the dining room.

The tables were already prepared when we entered: On each table, there were 6 plates, 6 cups, bread, a container with fresh vegetables, forks and spoons in old cans, and the *tziburit*, a bowl for rubbish. However, knives were always missing: We could buy as many knives as possible, they always mysteriously disappeared. How could we prepare our vegetable salad without this essential tool? As soon as we finished cutting our cucumbers and other vegetables, we quickly had to give the knife to our neighbours. On the table we often had olives, goat cheese, and *leben*, a kind of yoghurt. Two people for the service brought us on stainless steel tray carts with jugs containing warm beverages (coffee or tea), hard or soft-boiled eggs and hot mush. When we finished, the staff cleaned the tables for the following members. Sometimes, we had unexpected guests: Some sparrows living in corners of the roofing ate the scraps that fell on the floor and could leave some defecation as gifts, which could land on tables or, with some accuracy, on top of a *kibbutznik's* head. At the end of the service, around 9 am, the staff swept the floor and cleaned the tables. Behind the scenes, in the kitchen, the one in charge of doing the dishes was still cleaning his mountain and the cooks already started to prepare lunch.

At noon, the flood of people working in the fields, workshops and administration met again in the refectory. The night watchmen, after a well-earned sleep, joined the other members as well. The soup was served, there was on a table a container side dishes and the waiters served the main course on a trolley. People who didn't want the food served asked for a *bimkom*, a replacement such as meatballs and vegetables. There was also the *dieta* formula for people who had a specific regime.

At the end of our working day, we came back to the building in order to see if, by any chance, we received a letter. In the entrance hall, there was for each member or family a postal box. In the same area were also displayed announcements regarding activities in the *kibbutz* and our working schedule for the following day.

In the evening, we came in the refectory after taking a shower and exchanging our dirty working clothes for clean ones. The first entering were often single and temporary members. In the meanwhile, parents had to bring their children back to the children's houses. The meal was light and didn't need the presence of the cooks.

Around midnight, the watchmen and other night workers had a quick meal in the kitchen. It was also the place where *night birds* came in for discussions. We hadn't any television or other technological devices and the kitchen was replacing them.

An object that I didn't like at all was the *tzibourit* or *kolboinik*, the bowl for rubbish. How much food was wasted in it? A lack of respect for aliments, nature and the hard work. Nowadays, we can't find this detestable objet anymore, its eradication was subject to tough debates.

Once a week, in the evening, was organised the committee of members. All the subjects which could interest the collectivity were discussed and voted by a show of hands. Hence, for example, a majority gave me the right to go back to Switzerland to visit my parents. The refectory was also our cinema, the place where we had parties, wedding ceremonies, meeting with committees. Opened to the entire community, it was the heart of the *kibbutz*.

Educational System

During my 13 years in the *kibbutz*, I wasn't married, I hadn't any children and therefore, I wasn't much involved in the educational system, just sometimes as an auxiliary. Education played an essential role in our communal life. In theory, there was a gender parity in the *kibbutz*: A woman could work in the fields, drive a tractor, be involved in the mechanical

Fig. 49 The refectory
The lunch break, Gvulot, 1974 (Gvulot Archive)



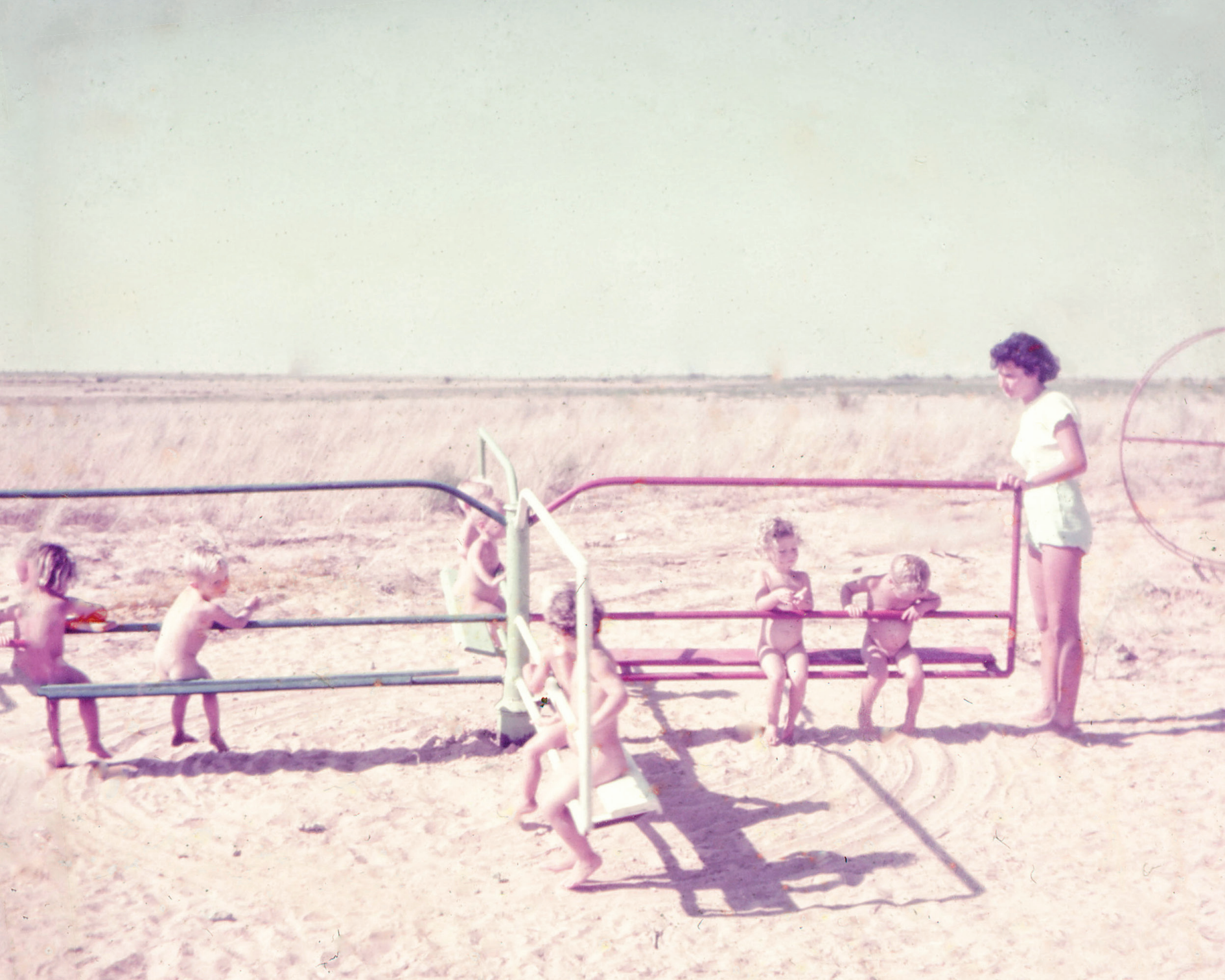
workshop, carpentry, stable, ... In reality, the gender equality in all areas wasn't always possible. Women were in a minority: Who could take care of children in the *kibbutz*? It was inconceivable to train a man for such job. The staff for the children's houses was almost exclusively composed of women, as well for the kitchen, laundry and infirmary.

To give birth wasn't a small matter as you had to go as far as the regional hospital of Beer Sheva, a long way on bumpy roads, and driving at night was dangerous. *Kibbutzim* in the area decided to rent an apartment in this city, where women could wait for the happy event. We called it the *hotel of storks*. When they came back to *Gvulot*, mothers had the right to have a maternity leave: Babies stayed in the nursery under the supervision of nurses and mums came for breastfeeding and had a free access.

This system was working quite well at the beginning. However, when the mother had to go back to work, the division parents-children became more and more difficult. The children were living in a children's house and the most sensitive problems were children's nightmares: Neither the mother, nor the father were present to calm and appease the worried child. There was always an adult who was doing nightly checks, but every week it was another member and children weren't reassured. My friend Shoshana told me that her children didn't like the educational system and therefore, they don't want their children to experience the same:

Children had to sleep overnight in the nursery and this was a problem! They cried and wanted to be with their parents. As a mother, this was a big dilemma for me. I was very worried and I didn't think this was a good thing. My son sometimes even escaped from the nursery to see me and I had to bring him back to the nursery, because you hadn't the right to have your child with you during the night. He was always asking me: 'I came until here, why do you bring me back?' Once, his father brought him back and slept with him in the nursery. These were difficult moments for both sides.

Fig. 50 The kindergarten
Georges Rosenfeld, *The kindergarten*, Gvulot, 1955
(Personal Archive)



Children's houses were structured as follows: The rooms were equipped for 4 children where they could sleep together without gender distinction. There was one sanitary sector with showers, restrooms, and a shelf to store clean clothes for each child. In the centre was a space for children's activities. My job as an auxiliary was the following: After lunch, children took a nap and as not every child woke up at the same time, my role was to take care of them until their parents finished their day's work. I think that children liked me and I was trying to give equal attention to each child. The period between the end of day work and bedtime was a precious moment where parents and children could stay together and share intense moments.

Nowadays, this educational system adopted according to the ideology of the *kibbutz* and gender equality has been modified and children are living in the same dwelling as their parents. I asked some parents and children how they lived this period of their life and answers were quite diverse, from positive reactions to very negative ones.

Sanitariut

Sanitariut was the name given to the maintenance of the sanitation facilities in the *kibbutz*, a job not very popular. It consisted in cleaning the public restrooms and communal showers. For each sector of the *kibbutz*, there were communal restrooms and newspapers were used as toilet paper. Each family received the daily newspaper *Al Hamishmar* from the *Mapam* – United Workers Party. Its content wasn't always interesting but its second use was very important.

When we arrived in Gvulot there were only two latrines, one on the northern part of the dwellings and another on the south near the youngsters' area *Chevrot Noar*. Latrines were as primitive as a deep hole dug in the ground and some wood planks above it. *Chie dur, chie mou, mais chie dans l'trou* was the slogan on that time. Flies were proliferating: It is not without any surprise that an outbreak of hepatitis affected many members, including myself.

Communal showers were situated near the refectory, between the laundry room and the linen room. The building in corrugated metal was divided in two parts, one side for men and another for women. At the entrance, you had a first space with sinks and mirrors, for men to shave and for women to brush their hair. It was also the place where the hairdresser performed fast and uniform haircuts for men. After this, you just had to write your name down on a list and the hairdresser was directly paid in the secretariat.

Behind this space was the changing room, a larger area surrounded with benches. Finally, at the back of the section were four showers, but not all of them were always working. You often had surprises in the shower: Sometimes you only had icy water or bubbling water, or it even happened that electricity stopped when you had your head still covered with soap.

Gvulot was a *kibbutz* built on sand. When you went to communal showers with your dirty clothes and shoes, you had to wear *kafkafim*: These were primitive sandals in wood and were disposed at the entrance of the building in order to prevent getting the floor dirty. As these sandals were shared, it was the ideal spot for the proliferation of mycosis. Furthermore, you often hadn't enough of these sandals on your side of the building and had to shout *kafkafim* to see the sandals flying from one side of the building to another.

The showers weren't only a place for washing and changing clothes after a hard day of work. It was also a place to share jokes, adventures of the day, a place where you could meet spontaneously. Later, when we introduced individual showers and restrooms in each dwelling, it was more convenient but it was also a first step toward a more individual life.

Chores

The principles of the *kibbutz* are based on collective and independent work, without exploiting others. Therefore, all tasks essential in a *kibbutz*, such as taking care of children, milking cows in the early morning, watering plantations, had to be assured by members of the collectivity.

Chores were equally divided among active members and during these instants, we had to say goodbye to leisure and precious moments with our family. In such a system, it was inevitable that some people were forced to perform tasks which were far from their ambitions.

For example, trucks came regularly filled with fodder for livestock. As Gvulot was the furthest destination, these were systematically delivered later than an ordinary workday and we had to accommodate with such timetable. When a delivery finally arrived, members in charge of this chore had to put their working clothes on again and work in the late evening. Another chore was the night guards where we had to sacrifice a part of the night for this job.

During the nights, a female presence was always required in the children's house to keep an eye on children. Taking turns, they had to go around the children's houses, cover sleeping children, try to reassure the ones who had nightmares and inform parents if necessary. It was also difficult to find staff for the evening service in the refectory: For parents, it meant diminishing their precious time with their children and not being able to accompany them back to their children houses to sleep.

Nowadays, things evolved in some respects: Members have the possibility to work outside and they are replaced by people from another *kibbutz*, *moshav* or city. You have more flexibility and freedom, but the collective spirit is affected.

Diamond Enterprise

Among the different kinds of occupations I had in the *kibbutz*, there was the job of a diamond cutter. In 1949, the Jewish Agency founded a diamond enterprise in order to apportion paid work places for Negev residents. This project was chosen because of the ease with which the raw materials could be transported, as well as the opportunity to market the products in the centre of the country.

Fig. 51 Diamond cutter
Georges Rosenfeld, *Diamond Enterprise*, Gvulot,
1952 (Personal Archive)



At the beginning, the plant was located in the security house in *Mitzpe Gvulot* and was staffed by several members who were trained in diamond processing in Rishon LeZion. When the settlers moved to the *kibbutz* in the early fifties, the enterprise was displaced there as well and I started to work in it.

This diamond factory was the first non-agricultural branch in the *kibbutz*. We received rough diamonds which looked like stones in sealed envelopes and our job was to cut them in order to reveal their intrinsic beauty for jewellery without having much loss. The work of diamond cutter required dexterity and an advised eye to know the exact angle in which the stone will be shaped. Unfortunately, we were lacking working force in the *kibbutz*: We had night guard turns, we needed people to pick fruits, members to work in the kitchen, ... As a result, the efficiency of the diamond enterprise became insufficient and in the mid-fifties, we had to close the factory.

Cowshed

The first pioneers in Gvulot faced numerous interrogations and doubts: "Is it a viable place? The few trees we planted, had they any chance to survive? Can we make the desert bloom? In such arid conditions, could we raise livestock?" Bedouins in the Negev had some horses, donkeys and goats, but nothing that could assure the survival of a community looking toward the future.

At first, in Mitzpe Gvulot, there was a stable for two cows. They had to be treated with care: A dairy cow needed a lot of (precious) water and fodder and had to feel comfortable in order to produce milk. When we arrived in the actual Gvulot, a real cowshed was built for a capacity of around 30 dairy cows. To maintain a dairy herd wasn't self-evident: They had to be milked three times a day, thus requiring staff from 5 am until late in the evening, seven days a week. It was a specific job and not everybody could handle it. People working in the cowshed, due to harsh working hours, were often apart from collective life.

Ours cows produced a lot of milk, but they required a lot of forage as well. Therefore, an agricultural sector was dedicated to the cultivation of fodder plants. We also tried to

Fig. 52 Milking the cow
Georges Rosenfeld, *In the cowshed: A man milking a cow*, 1960 (Personal Archive)



bring the animals to pasture but we had to renounce: The walking distance under the burning sun was too exhausting and not worthwhile.

In Israel, milk and dairy products are essential in daily alimentation and the government wants the prices to stay affordable. As a result, we had to have a rationalised and effective production, encouraging big holdings. Hence, Gvulot and two other *kibbutzim* put their folds in common, thus creating a cooperative company in which each partner is a shareholder. This is how we became one of the biggest stables in the country.

Nowadays, a standardised mix of fodder is coming from an independent industry and the cowshed is entirely computerised: Each cow has on his hind leg a chip containing its identification number and complimentary data. When cows are milked, their efficiency is registered in a centralised computer which allows a global supervision of the production. In order to maximise the production, cows are in ventilated sheds, they have a refreshing shower before the milking and music is played. Are they happy? They haven't told me yet.

In the Fields

Gvulot, borders in Hebrew, fully justify its name: On one side, the *kibbutz* is near the frontier with Egypt and the Gaza Strip and on another side, it is located on a border between sand dunes, quicksand and the plain. South of Gvulot, sand dunes are like waves in the sea, they move driven by the wind across the desert landscape. Soil in the *kibbutz* consists of Loess, covered by a thick layer of dust. On my time, we laboured the land in order to have more loess in the surface, which was more fertile, and by the same occasion, we removed weeds.

The first step, after acquiring worthless lands from Bedouins, was to plant trees in order to fix the soil. We first planted Tamarix, then eucalyptus in quicksand areas, along roads and fields in order to decrease the impact of the wind, which projected sand particles and were harming our delicate plants.

Fig. 53 In the fields
Georges Rosenfeld, *Work in the fields*, Gvulot,
1960 (Personal Archive)



For a long time, we experienced different crops in order to know what could bloom in this ungrateful desert. Today, a solution is found: Plantations buried in the soil such as potatoes, peanuts, other roots and tubers are suitable for this arid environment, as well as citrus.

Caterpillar D6

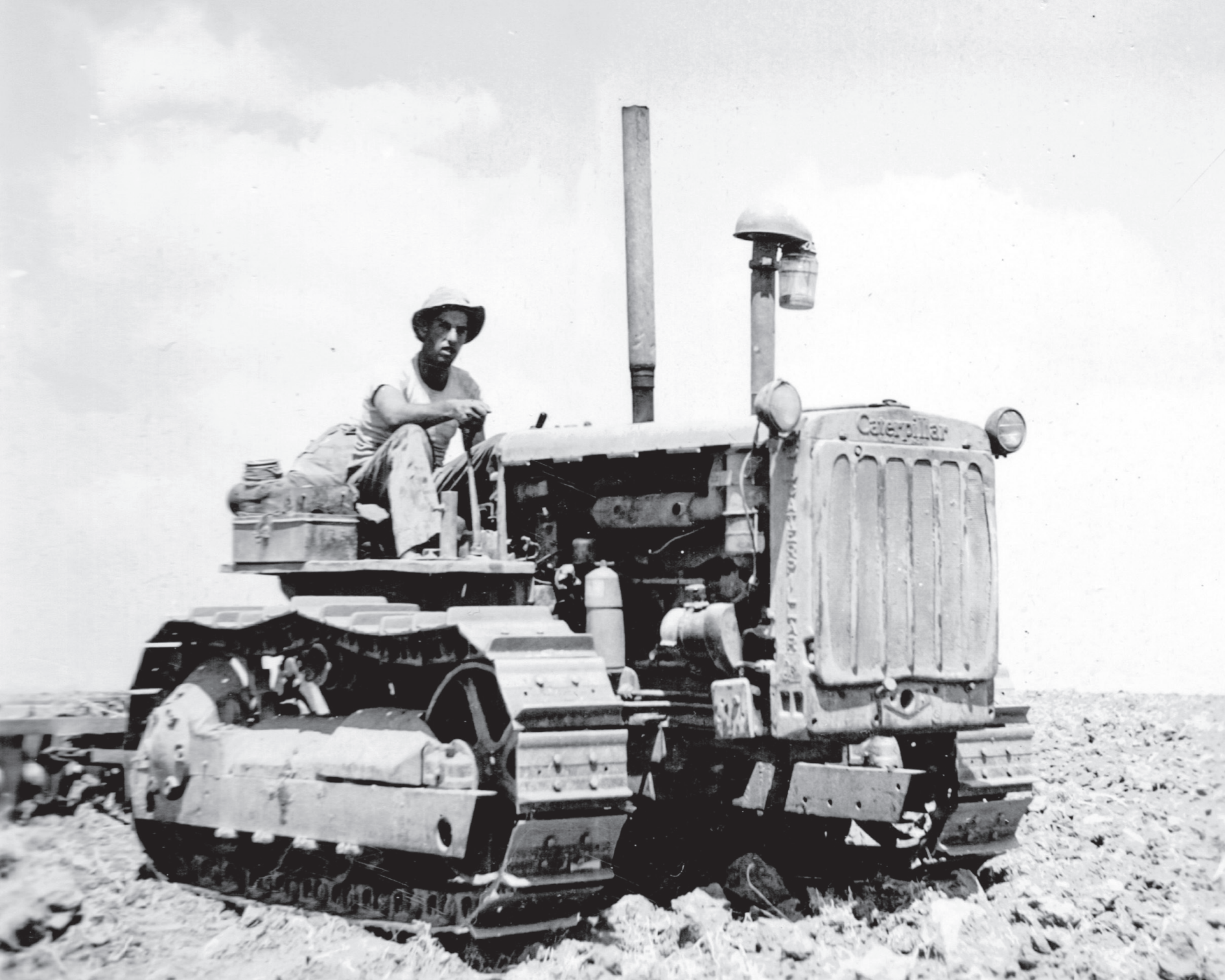
In Gvulot, the ground was composed by a layer of sand and underneath a layer of Loess. Sand wasn't fertile so we had to plough it to have more loess on the surface which was richer in nutrients for agriculture. In order to plough the land deep enough, the *kibbutz* decided to buy a new tractor: A Caterpillar D6.

This new engine of 18 tons was entrusted to me. After working in the diamond enterprise, I felt ready to start an important job for pioneers: The work in the fields. To be the master of this machine, to mark the soil for the first time, to sow the land, to imagine the future plants growing endlessly and finally, to harvest wheat with the combine harvester were satisfying moments. But it wasn't that easy: We were exposed to dust, deafening noise and insects. At best, we sometimes had glasses to protect our eyes and working days were long and harsh. At the end of the day, it was even difficult to recognise ourselves in a mirror: A thick layer of dirt and dust covered all exposed parts of our body.

There were moments that I will never forget. For example, the army had defused landmines and I was devolved to plough this new land. What could guarantee me that there weren't any landmines left anywhere and I wouldn't finish my life dismembered together with the tractor? Could I refuse this job and let a comrade take the risk instead? Hopefully, the tractor and I were intact at the end of this mission.

Another moment that I remember was the night work. Sometimes, by agricultural imperatives, we had to work days and nights in turns. In the night, we were easily recognisable kilometres away with the lights of our vehicle and the roar of the machine.

Fig. 54 My tractor
Georges Rosenfeld, *Ploughing the field*, Gvulot,
1958 (Personal Archive)



On our engine, we could only see a few metres ahead and were muted by the noise. We had to stay alert: The fields were only a few kilometres away from the enemy territory and we were armed with a machine gun, but our only chance of escaping an attack was to jump off the tractor and to hide in the dark night.

First Bus

For a long time, Gvulot was hidden in a corner of the Negev. There wasn't any phone and the easiest way to communicate with neighbourhood settlements was with radio contact. However, this method was exclusively destined for directors of the *kibbutz* and military purposes. We also had a mobile post office who delivered us the daily mail so eagerly awaited.

You had to know your way if you wanted to reach Gvulot: An imprecise track was traced on sand and during certain seasons, cars begged down and only all-terrain vehicles could access. For our Arab neighbours, it was easy to hide landmines which, sadly, caused damages and victims. Governmental instances tried to improve the situation temporarily: A motor grader was used to level the road and fix the soil with some brackish water, but it wasn't very effective.

No public transportation was available in the *kibbutz*: We had to manage ourselves to find a vehicle that was leaving Gvulot and it was even more difficult to find a vehicle to come back. *Kibbutz* Magen, which was lucky enough to be located next to an asphalted road, was more easily accessible but from there, the way to the *kibbutz* was still long. The waiting time exposed to the burning sun could last forever and sometimes, running out of patience, I decided to walk the extra 10 kilometres in sandals and without water. These were painful moments and as soon as I arrived at the *kibbutz*, I ran to drink water and lied down on my bed to recover.

One day, a miracle occurred: After endless discussions with the cooperative transportation operator EGGED, they agreed to send from Tel Aviv one of their older buses to our *kibbutz* once a week. It was an event: We had our first bus stop in Gvulot.

Fig. 55 The first bus
Georges Rosenfeld, *Inauguration of the first bus line*, Gvulot, 1954 (Personal Archive)



First Swimming Pool in the Negev

My parents, Tonia and Sigmund Rosenfeld, wanted to do something for their only son, who left his comfortable country with the desire to build a *kibbutz* in Israel. In such a community, private ownership was abolished and therefore, personal gifts were prohibited. The only gift you could offer had to be a present for the entire community.

My father made a big donation and my mother went door-to-door to collect money for the pioneers we were in the Negev. Hence, a significant amount of money was made possible to transfer to Gvulot. In the assembly of the members, we had an animated conversation on the future of this unexpected gift. Should we invest in a new tractor? Or should we envisage a project that could make life better in our hostile environment? Finally, the majority decided to build a swimming pool. The technical department of the *Artzi* movement was in charge of the planning and construction of the first swimming pool in the Negev. Built on sand, we planted a lawn and trees, which would provide shade in the future, and an area with showers in order to create an oasis in the middle of nowhere.

A new member, graduated as a teacher in sport, joined us in Gvulot and was in charge of the supervision of the pool. He founded a swimming club and trained a regional team which became one of the best in the country.

Today, with the use of solar panels warming water during winters, the swimming pool is used all year-round. Opened to regional citizens and guests from the hotel branch in Gvulot, the swimming pool is a popular place where people meet and relax.

Fig. 56 The first swimming pool in the Negev
Georges Rosenfeld, *Swimming pool*, Gvulot, 1954
(Personal Archive)





Utopia (un)Realised

95	Analysis Population and Immigration Agrarianism Traditional Kibbutzim: The Case of Ketura
105	Decline Ideological Shift Privatisation and Suburbanisation Privatised kibbutzim: The Case of Gvulot
117	Resurgence Communal Revival Toward a Regional Organisation Regional Kibbutzim: The Case of Tarbut Movement
131	Experiences Social and agricultural changes New facilities for elder people Diversification of the economy The urban kibbutz A Temporary way of living Toward a new way of living

The *kibbutz* in its heroic form was a relatively simplistic creation: single age (young), single branch (agriculture), and single objective (pioneering). However, in order to adapt to the surrounding society, new economical context and political changes, these collective communities have been undergoing radical changes. In pursuit of Utopia, the present state of *kibbutzim* is first analysed, the crisis of this model in the late 30 years then described, and finally new trends come into being.

Fig. 1 Shabbat in Gvulot
Residential area, Gvulot, 2017

מדרשות

קלפי

קבלת משפחות חדשות לחברות

יום ו',	25/08/17
יום א',	27/08/17
יום ב',	28/08/17

משתתפים בהצבעה: חברים מלאים בלבד
ברצח להצלה!



Analysis

Three types of *kibbutzim* exist nowadays: The traditional collective *kibbutz* (organised on foundations of collective ownership, equality and cooperation), the privatised *kibbutz* (with differentiated salaries and private ownership), and the regional *kibbutz* (providing social services). In order to apprehend the present state of *kibbutzim* one century after the foundation of the first *kibbutz* Degania, we should first take a look at the evolution of the population in *kibbutzim* and the importance of agriculture in the Israeli economy.

Fig. 2 Pannel with announcements and activities
Refectory, Gvulot, 2017

Population and Immigration

Founded in 1910, Degania was the first *kibbutz* in Israel. In 1948, after the Israeli independence, there were 54,000 people living in *kibbutzim*, representing a total of 6% of the Israeli population spread in 177 *kibbutzim* across the country.¹

The population of the *kibbutzim* increased until the late 1980s; since then it has been decreasing. The immigrants of 1990–1991 who settled on *kibbutzim* halted this trend temporarily. During 1992–1998 the population of the *kibbutzim* decreased by approximately 14,000 persons (-11%). During this period, the Jewish population of Israel increased by 15%.²

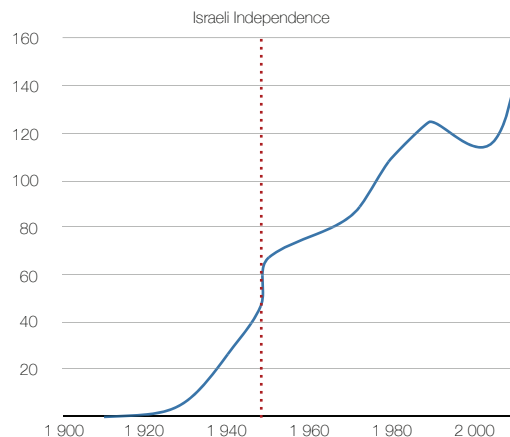
Nowadays, there are around 117,000 *kibbutzniks* in approximately 280 *kibbutzim*³, thus representing a total of 2% percent of the Israeli population. Contrary to the majority of the Jewish population to settle in the centre of Israel, most of these collective communities, as part of the Zionist policy of determining the country's borders with agricultural settlements, are situated in the periphery.

[1] Tabenkin 2006

[2] Tabenkin 2000

[3] Statistics don't take into account urban kibbutzim

Evolution of the population in kibbutzim [thousands]



Percentage of the population living in kibbutzim

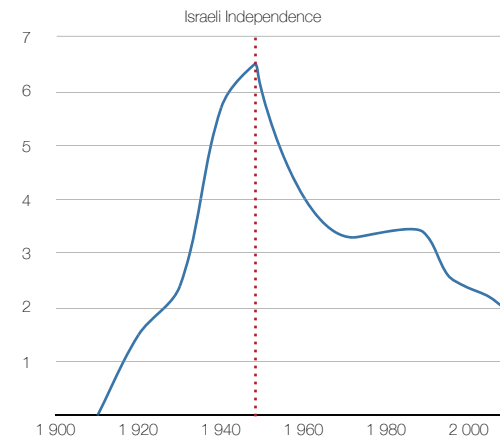
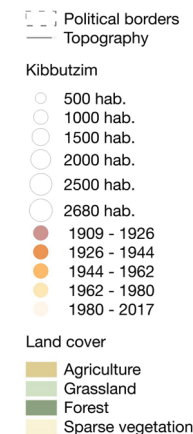


Fig. 3 Evolution of the population in kibbutzim
(Data from CBS, Yad Tabenkin Archive)

Fig. 4 Percentage of the population living in kibbutzim
(Data from CBS, Yad Tabenkin Archive)

Fig. 5 Kibbutzim repartition
(GIS data from Global Forest Watch, Wikipedia)



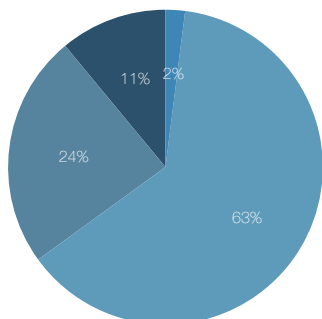


Agrarianism

What is specific to Israeli agriculture is the dominance of cooperative and collective communities such as *kibbutzim* and *moshavim*. Representing almost 80% of the agricultural output, the Israel agricultural land is divided as follows: 38% in *kibbutzim*, 38% in *moshavim*, 9% in private ownership and other entities in the Jewish sector, and 15% in the Arab sector.⁴

[4] Tabenkin 2000

Agricultural land of kibbutzim



Kibbutz agriculture as a percentage of agriculture in Israel

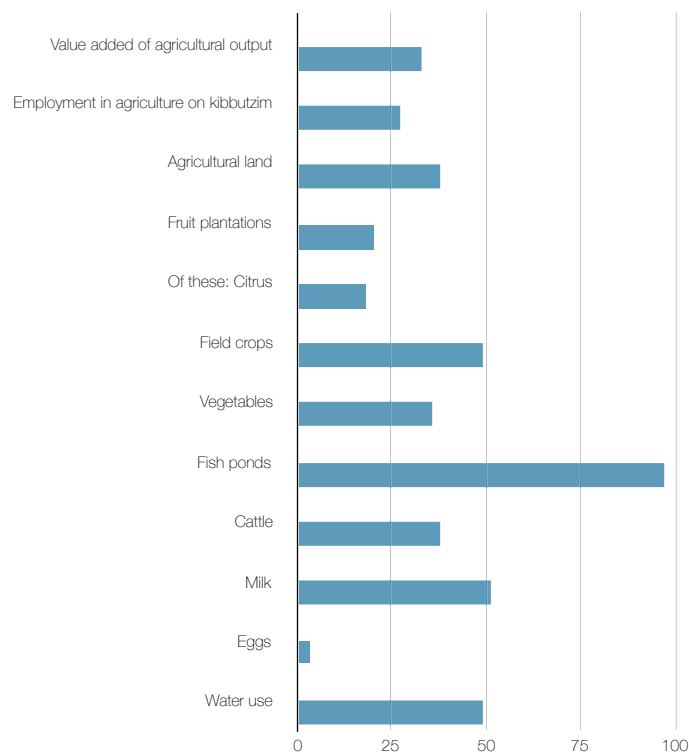


Fig. 6 Agricultural land of kibbutzim, 1997

(Data from CBS, Yad Tabenkin Archive)

- Fish ponds
- Crops
- Natural pasture
- Other (uncultivated land, roads, etc.)

Repartition of kibbutzim by district

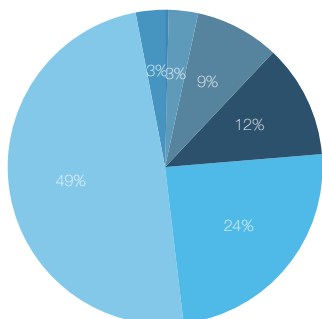


Fig. 7 Repartition of kibbutzim by district, 1998

(Data from CBS, Yad Tabenkin Archive)

- Tel Aviv District
- Jerusalem District
- Haifa District
- Central District
- Southern District
- Northern District
- Judea, Samaria and Gaza Areas

Fig. 8 Kibbutz agriculture as a percentage of agriculture in Israel, 1997

(Data from CBS, Yad Tabenkin Archive)

[5] Ibid.

[6] Gugger et al. 2017, 25

However, due to the highly increased productivity of industrialised agriculture, fewer and fewer workers are required in the fields. As in many rural areas all over the world, the numbers of farmers in Israel has reduced from 80% to only 10% of the workforce.⁵ Recent evolution in agricultural technologies go along with new socio-spatial trends and agri-tech is used as post-industrial agriculture, allowing more and more agriculture to be detached from the land and from the rural, not depending on fertile soil, rainwater or working hands anymore. New crops such as algae, jojoba for cosmetics, and solar panels are replacing traditional crops, due to their economic yields per hectare.⁶

Percentage of employment in agriculture

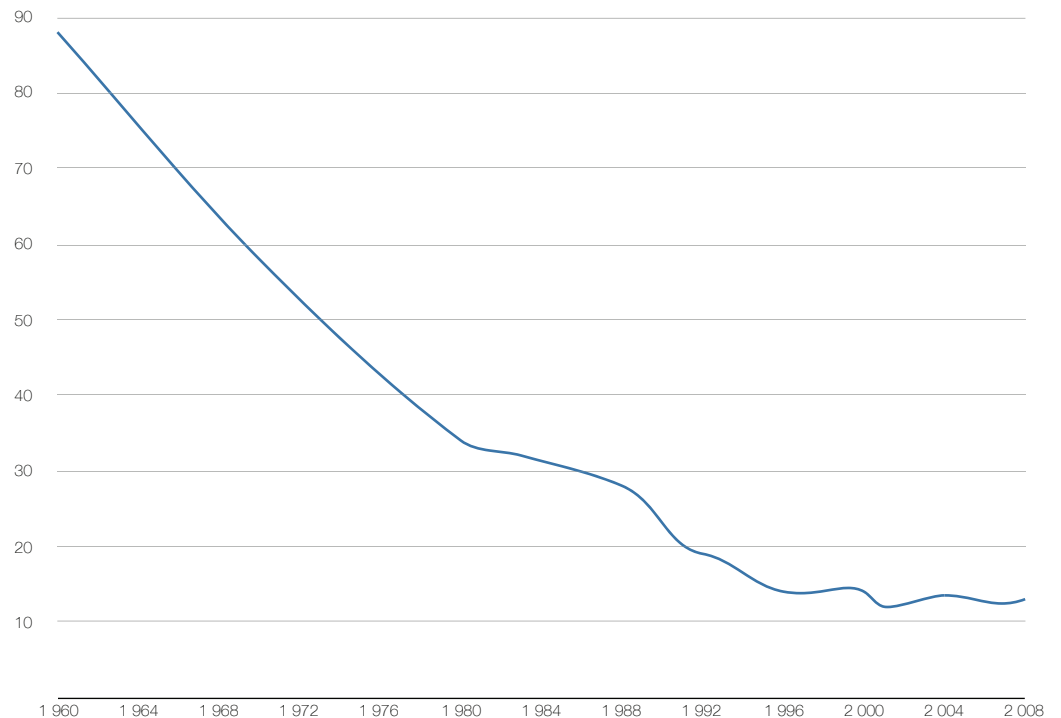


Fig. 9 Changes in rural employment, percentage of employment in agriculture

(Data from CBS, Yad Tabenkin Archive)

Traditional Kibbutzim: The Case of Ketura

Ketura is one of the few *kibbutzim* still working as a traditional *kibbutz* with a communal approach in making decisions, management, and property ownership. Located in the southern Arava, 50 kilometres north of Eilat, this community is currently absorbing new young families and expanding existing facilities. Real oasis in the middle of a desolated and arid area, the economy of the *kibbutz* is mainly based on dates, an algae factory, solar panels, tourism and education.

Present

In contrast with other *kibbutzim* moving toward privatisation, the urban scheme still reflects the communal ideology of its members. With a population of 486 inhabitants, following the principle of communal sharing, the *kibbutz* is a single and undivided space in which there are no fences or private plots.

Shared space for all the functions of life, the *kibbutz* centre is still working as the public and social focal point of this community. Like a “forum” or “agora” with its park and public facilities such as the dining hall, the administrative offices, the laundry, the member’s club, the cultural centre and the library, it constitutes the focus of social interaction. Around this nucleus are located the children’s and member’s houses. In the close surroundings are located the Arava institute for environmental studies, guest rooms and some sports areas including a swimming pool. Beyond are located stables, the algae factory and workshops. The overall layout preserves a reasonable walking distance between the furthest residential building and the public centre.

According to *kibbutz* rules, members do not own inheritable holdings: The houses and the land stay in common property. The planning committee is the only authority in the *kibbutz* for new constructions, allowing a similar and global approach. The members don’t have the possibility to make personal enhancement for their house: Everybody gets the same amount of money and has equivalent conditions of living. Nobody has its own cars and shared vehicles are available at the entrance parking for the members. Therefore, vehicles are prohibited in the *kibbutz* habitat which is devoted to be a continuous pedestrian gardenscape.

Fig. 10 Plan, Ketura

(Redrawn from Ketura Planning Department)

Infrastructure

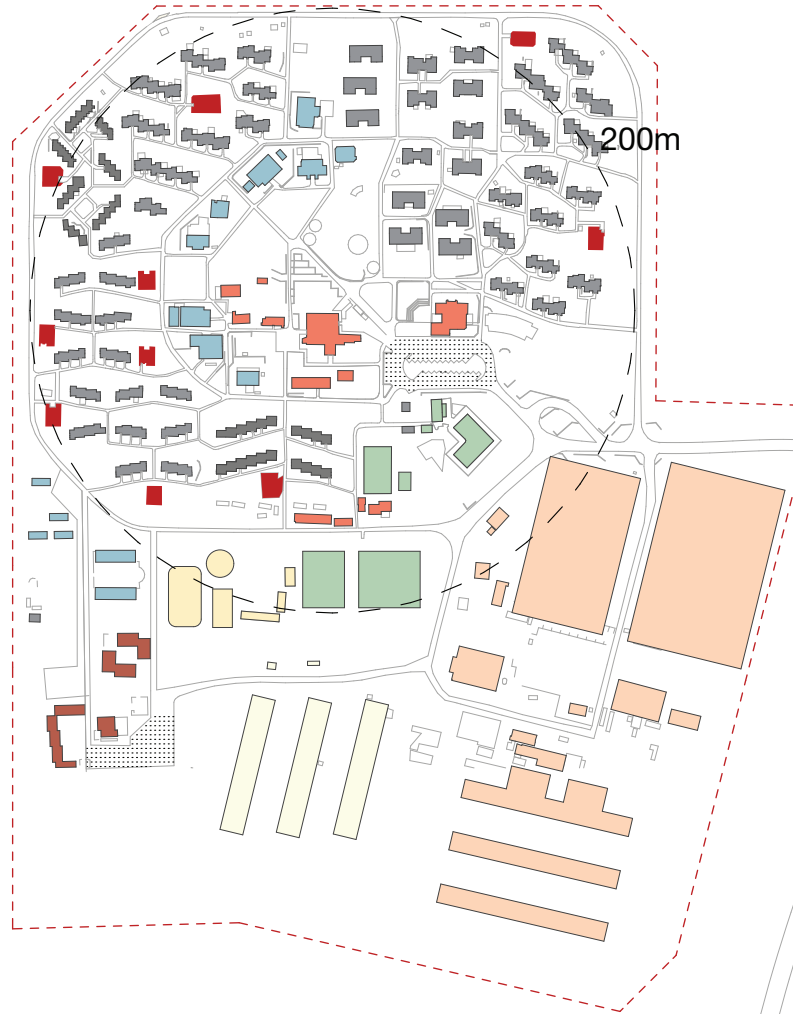
- Fence
- Gate
- Bunker
- ⋮ Parking

Living area

- Dwelling
- Dwelling for temporary members
- Tourism
- Private housing
- Public building
- Education
- Sport

Production area

- Farm area
- Industry



Future

With the intention of having a large and growing community and facing the problem of the aging of the population, the *kibbutz* is absorbing new families. Preserving its distinctive spatial and social values, the future buildings destined for living purposes are placed with their long sides facing north-west or north in order to get the maximum benefit of the cool breezes and the minimum impact of hot sun-rays as well. According to today's standards, future houses are 80 sqm instead of 65 sqm, and the *kibbutz* just allowed the existing members to enlarge their house. All costs of the extension are covered by the community and if a member wants a better kitchen for example, it is at his own expense.

According to Hanita Shweber, responsible for planning in Ketura, a particular attention is drawn to the upcoming extension in order to have shaded parts, performant isolation and windows, and natural ventilation:

Many old houses in the *kibbutz* weren't thought for the climate conditions in the Arava: During the previous planning, the government decided to build typical standard housings from the centre of the country and we had to accommodate ourselves with what we had. In the future extension of 48 new houses, environmental issues are considered: The yards will be oriented northward even though members want to have their dwelling facing the beautiful surrounding landscape. The openings will be placed in such a way to avoid the direct hit of the sun, and terraced houses will be disposed in such a way that each house will be partially shaded.

With its growth in size, the *kibbutz* is now confronted with an increasing distance toward its centre. Even if the walking distance is still reasonable (under 300 metres), we can notice the apparition of a road encircling the actual nucleus of the *village* with parking spaces, thus creating a division in the social fabric of the community.

We took into consideration the option of having multiple floors housing. However, everybody wants to live in a small little house with his small garden. The alternative of having another member in an upper floor would create social conflicts: Who will live on the ground floor and have direct access to the garden, and who is going to walk to the upper floor? Furthermore, old houses cannot structurally stand any additional charge, therefore this option was abandoned.

Fig. 11 Future development, Ketura
(Redrawn from Ketura Planning Department)







Decline

[7] Cf. Lexicon

The establishment of the State of Israel and the wave of immigrants from eastern Europe presented challenges and opportunities for *kibbutzim* in accordance with the central military role of the Zionist project. In the 1950s, many communities were still founded by the Israeli Defence Forces *Nahal'* on the fragile and porous borders of this new state. However, with time, the personal identification with the *kibbutz* and its goals decreased.

Fig. 12 Security fence
Fence, Degania Beit, 2017

Ideological Shift

[8] Luft 1961, 337

[9] Tabenkin 2006

With the fulfilment of the Zionist Project, the new immigrants were more looking for a life serving their individual desires rather than in the national pioneering period. Emigrating from Central Europe and Moslem countries, they were entirely unaccustomed to the alternative ideology of the *kibbutz*:

The new immigrants were totally lacking in the kind of ideological training which had been carried over to the European Zionists by the emissaries of the Palestinian labour parties. Nothing could have been more alien to these 'Oriental' Jews than *kibbutz* life – where no wages were paid out and women did men's work and voted in the General Assembly.⁸

Aging of the population

The formerly single-aged young and healthy community is today undergoing an aging process:

The *kibbutz* population is aging; that most of those who leave are young accelerate this process. Between 1988 and 1998, the median age increased by 2.9 years (1.8 years in the Jewish population as a whole); the number of children aged 0–4 decreased by 30% and that of persons aged 65+ increased by 10%.⁹

Main components of population change

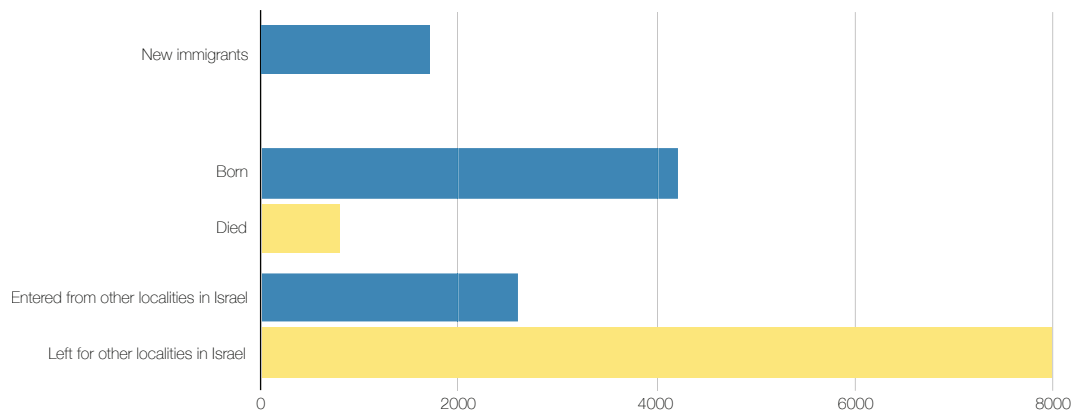


Fig. 13 Main components of population change, 1998 (Data from CBS, Yad Tabenkin Archive)

■ Added

■ Subtracted

[10] Luft 1961, 339

[11] Tabenkin 2006

The Israeli youth elite of the nation was a reservoir of manpower for *kibbutzim*. However, with the loss of the country's pioneering spirit, young people began to lose interest in communal life and are facing new challenges they consider more vital: Envisioning careers in the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, the Technion in Haifa, or other leading institutes even abroad, they prefer to move in developed towns and live a modern life. Furthermore, they are particularly uninterested in Zionism, "by which they mean anything that seems to have something to do with propaganda and ideological preaching".¹⁰

Industrialisation

In the early 1920s, when the idea of combining agriculture with industry was conceived according to the ideology of the large and growing *kibbutz*, but to a certain extent, due to economic and productivity reasons as well, *kibbutzim* began to diversify their economy. By mechanising their agricultural sector and allowing members to work outside, the *kibbutz* became for some members only a place to live in. As Israel is a small country, most villages are situated within commuting distances to central employment areas:

Of the 72,000 employed persons living on *kibbutzim* in 1998, 11,000 were working outside. 91,000 persons were employed in the *kibbutzim*: 2/3 *kibbutz* residents and 1/3 Israelis who were not *kibbutz* residents (not counting non-Israeli workers from Judea, Samaria and Gaza areas and foreign workers).¹¹

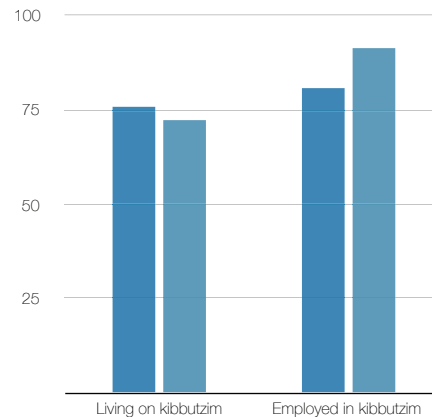
Fig. 14 Persons living or employed in kibbutzim (thousands) (Data from CBS, Yad Tabenkin Archive)

■ 1988 ■ 1998

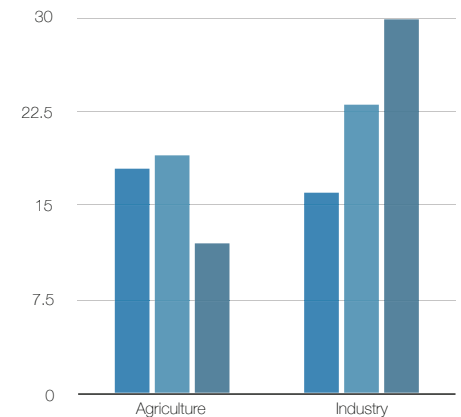
Fig. 15 Employment in agriculture and industry (thousands) (Data from CBS, Yad Tabenkin Archive)

■ 1978 ■ 1988 ■ 1998

Persons living or employed in kibbutzim (thousands)



Employment in agriculture and industry (thousands)



Weakening observance of the principles of self-labour led to the acceleration of hired workers in *kibbutz* industries, agriculture and personal services. With the expanse of agriculture, industries became the largest branch of employment and many *kibbutzim* are building factories on a regional basis.

Kibbutz industry includes 360 factories and eleven regional corporations, employing approximately 30,000 persons in 1996 (8.6% of all persons employed in industry in Israel). Income from *kibbutz* industry was NIS 13.7 billion (10.2%), the gross product was NIS 3.9 billion (8.3%), investments amounted to NIS 0.9 billion, and the value of exports was NIS 3.6 billion (9.4%).¹²

In the optic of the diversification of the economy in the *kibbutz*, rural tourism is becoming a noticeable source of income as well: Often situated in magnificent landscapes, more than 130 of them offer guest accommodations.

[12] Ibid.

Workers in the kibbutz economy according to branches

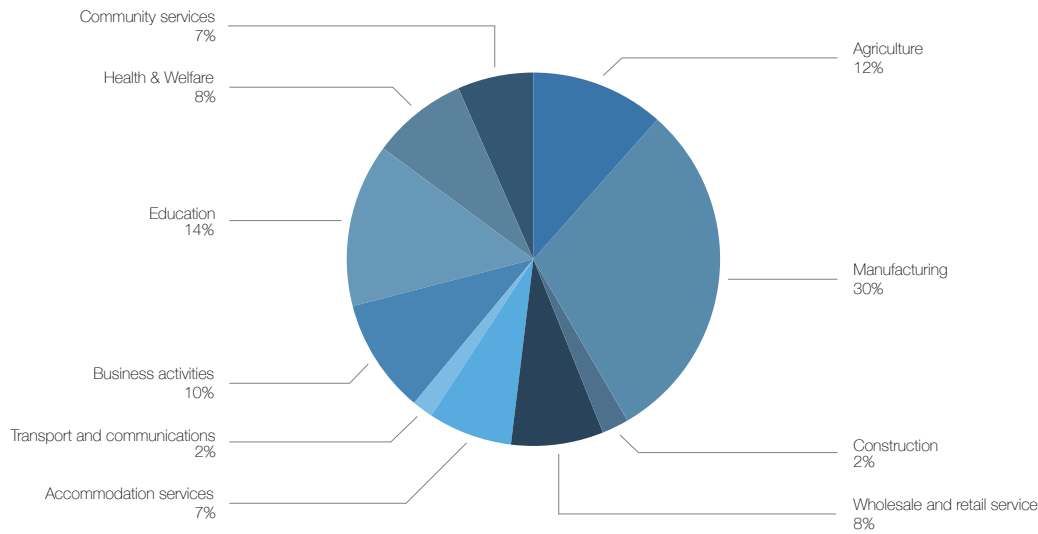


Fig. 16 Percentage of workers in the kibbutz economy according to branches, 2006
(Data from Yad Tabenkin Archive)

[13] Kahana 2015, 110

[14] Bar-Or and Yaski 2010, 19

[15] Luft 1961, 334

[16] Tabenkin 2000

[17] Cooperative Societies Ordinances (Types of Societies): Amendment (Heb.) 2005

Privatisation and Suburbanisation

In the 1980s, a severe national economic crisis hit *kibbutzim* with a period of massive inflation and had to repay debts undertaken in the period of prosperity.¹³ In order to react to the context of a competitive capitalist society, these communities witnessed a major change in their outlook and organisation.

Economic Crisis

The economy of the *kibbutz* evolved since its very beginnings. Previously, *kibbutzim* were communities exclusively based on agriculture: Work in the fields was intrinsic to the idea of the New Jew, who had to dedicate himself body and soul to a life of labour in close connection to nature.¹⁴

The *kibbutz* crisis is related to the decline in profits from the farming community. In the 1950s, during mass immigration, Israeli agriculture was flourishing: "The farming community was able to get high prices for fresh vegetables, eggs, fowl – for everything, in short, which could not be imported."¹⁵ Even if the net domestic product from agriculture increased over the years, the proportion of the total product decreased due the growth of the industrial branch and the decline in the price of agricultural products.¹⁶ When the right-wing Likud party won the general elections in 1977, an economic reform aimed to change the Israeli economy from its socialist characteristics to a more capitalist ideology. Therefore, *kibbutzim* which were affiliated with the Labour Party, lost their political support. With the stabilisation of prices by governmental policies, high inflation and interest rates, and the rise of production costs, this situation led to a severe economic crisis in *kibbutzim* which started to contract loans and accumulate debts.

Privatisation

Today, only one third is still working as the classical collective *kibbutz*, where everything is put in common in one bank account and shared equally among the members. This kind of traditional community is defined by the Cooperative Societies Ordinances as collective *kibbutz* (*kibbutz shitufi*): "A settlement society that is a separate settlement, and is organised on foundations of collective ownership of property, self-labour, and equality and cooperation in production, consumption, and education."¹⁷

In order to survive economically and attract new members, most *kibbutzim* are undergoing radical changes with privatisation and suburbanisation. Called *kibbutz mithadesh*, they practice differentiated salaries according to the retribution and seniority of each member, private ownership of dwellings and inheritable tenancies. The *kibbutz*, looking for a renewal of its population to sustain its economy, allowed new neighbourhoods to spring up like mushrooms. Real suburbanisation of the *kibbutz* in itself, the residents are non-members and they are not taking part in the community of the *kibbutz*, thus creating two separated communities aliened from one another: "The old, aging community lives in the *kibbutz* itself, while residents for whom the *kibbutz* is not the centre of their life live in the expansions."¹⁸ Altogether, privatisation and suburbanisation are increasing economic and social disparities: Due to increasing inequalities between members, the balance between individual and communal values are affected and many members lost their identification with the profound values of the *kibbutz*.

[18] Bar-Or and Yaski 2010, 106

Kibbutzim by remuneration system

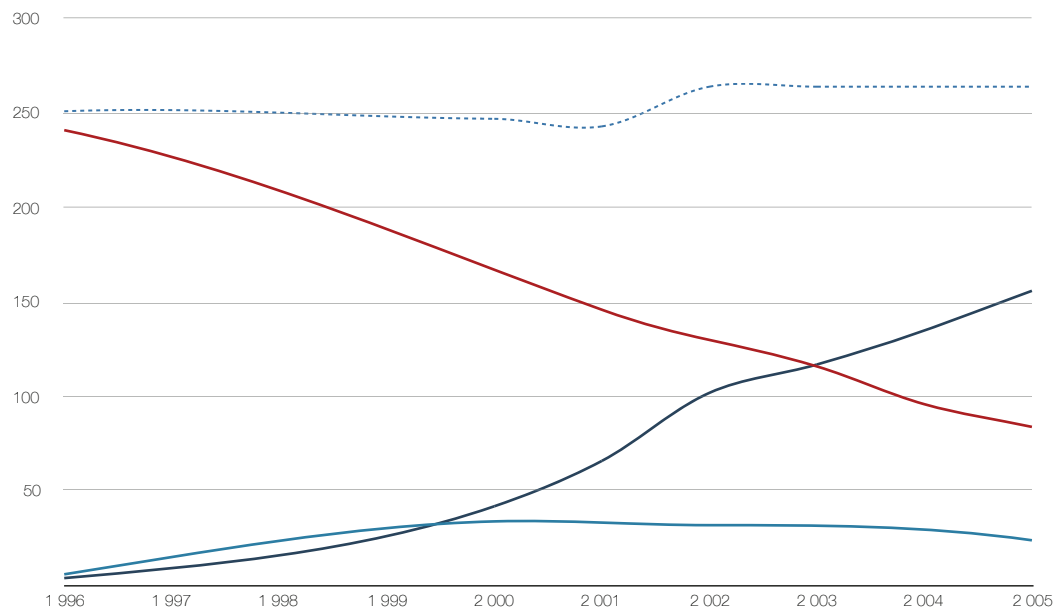


Fig. 17 Kibbutzim by remuneration system

(Data from Yad Tabenkin Archive)

- Number of kibbutzim
- Collective kibbutzim
- Combined system
- Differential reward

Changes in the Housing Typology

The evolution in the typology of the *kibbutz* apartment can assess the changes that have taken place in the way of living since the pioneering days, when the emphasis was on the community, to the present day, where the focus is rather on personal family needs. Therefore, we have to distinguish three principal periods: The pioneering period with the temporary stockade *kibbutzim*, the traditional period and the present period with privatisation.

During the pioneering period, the tents were the earliest homes for *kibbutz* members and served as living space for the members' bed and personal belongings. Later in the colonial period, there were wooden huts consisting of a number of juxtaposed rooms of 3 metres x 4 metres, each with a door and a window allowing up to four members, or a couple with a *primus*, to live in.

In the traditional period, permanent housings had similar dimensions as the wooden huts with some added facilities, such as public showers and toilets, which were shared among the residents in the house. However, in accordance with modern standards, the transition later to a second stage of housing with private facilities for each room was a first shift toward an individual and family's way of living. The inclusion of private facilities such as showers, toilets, and even a small kitchen involved the expansion of the living area. Up to 40 sqm, with a day area distinct from the night area, the dwellings were considered as apartments.

For the present period, the alterations in the family cell are a second shift in the collective ideology of the *kibbutz*: As a consequence of the children moving into their parents' apartments to sleep rather than in the communal children's house, the typology of the apartments had to be adapted to the family ideal. Therefore, the accepted area in a housing unit rose until 80 sqm. This growth in size had significant spatial repercussions in the spatial organisation of the *kibbutz* and led many communities to erect multiple floor buildings in order to keep a reasonable walking distance toward the centre. Furthermore, with the ongoing privatisation nowadays, differentiated dwellings are increasing social disparities.

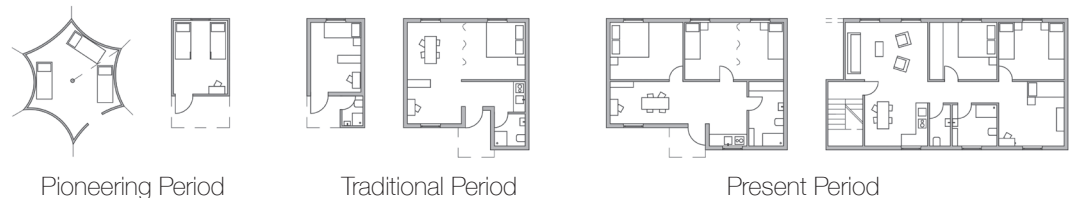


Fig. 18 Changes in the housing typology
(Redrawn from Freddy Kahana)

Privatised kibbutzim: The Case of Gvulot

[19] See *ibid.*, 9–10

Gvulot is one among many other *kibbutzim* undergoing a radical shift: A transition from a socialist conception of “from each according to his ability, to each according to his needs” to the principle of differential earnings linked to the rules of the market.¹⁹ Located in the north-western Negev, first modern Jewish settlement in the Gaza area, Gvulot is recently experimenting privatisation of the collective *kibbutz* space and facing an uncontrolled suburbanisation.

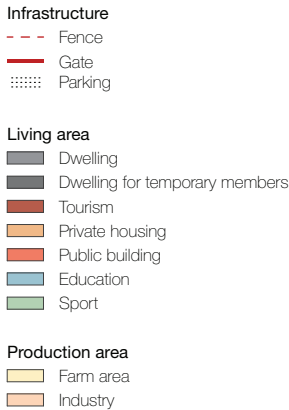
Today

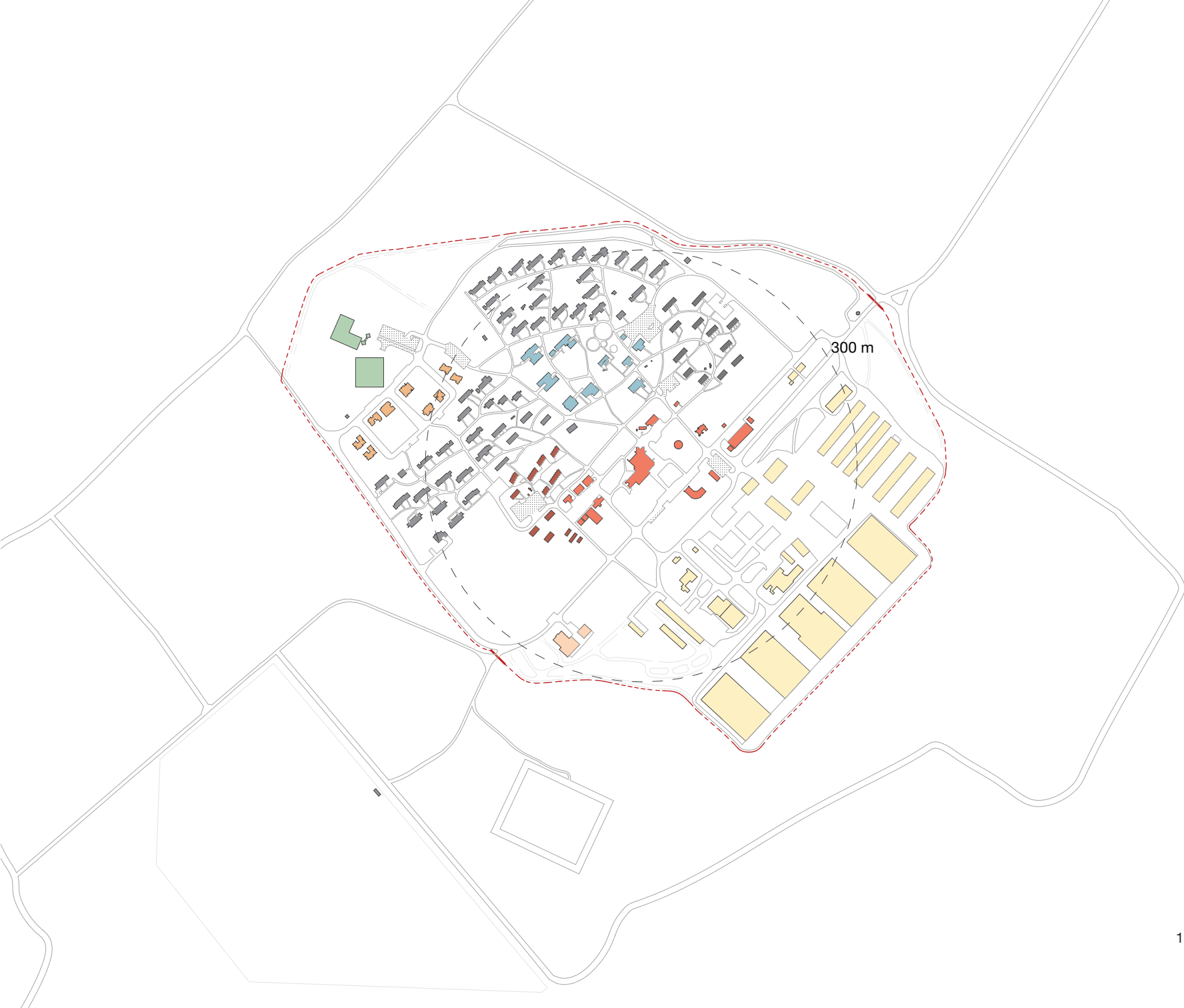
With differentiated salaries, the private ownership of dwellings and means of production by the members, we see the creation of social disparities in Gvulot. Due to economic disparities, demands arose to modify the residential space: Some members started to take advantage of their new “social status” and increased the size of their house with luxurious living rooms, a professional kitchen, a comfortable bathroom, some extra rooms, terraces and loggias. In order to increase personal economic security, the ascription of dwellings is dividing the habitat into plots detached from the social system and allows inheritable properties.

The rise of individuality and comfort is taking over the collectivity of the *kibbutz*: The public space became deserted and the refectory is not the heart of this community anymore. Used on some occasions by the members due to expensive prices, the dining hall is more often welcoming people from the tourism branch.

In the actual plan, we can already find processes of this creeping privatisation: The distance between the periphery and the centre is sometimes over the 300 metres recommended for a reasonable walking distance, and a suburban neighbourhood started to appear as a separate and alienated community. Real cancer of the *kibbutz*, these expansion neighbourhoods were firstly thought as a lifeline for the aging community. Even if Gvulot is not considered as a *kibbutz* in the traditional sense anymore, there is still a softened capitalism model with the implementation of social taxes in the *village*, thus creating a safety net and mutual aid among the members.

Fig. 19 Plan, Gvulot
(Redrawn from Gvulot Planning Department)





Future

The masterplan reflects on many points the impact of privatisation on the social fabric of the *kibbutz*:
Parcelling and zoning areas started to appear endangering the flexibility of land uses.

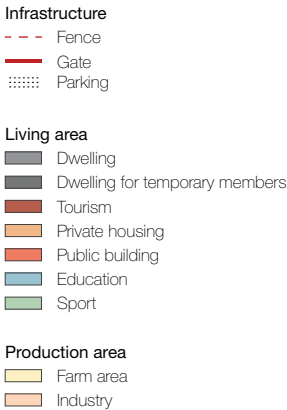
Although the *kibbutzim* were carefully zoned and planned settlements, statutorily a *kibbutz* was marked as a single outlined area without any divisions between land designations and various uses (...) *Kibbutzim* were able to change the uses of existing buildings, to demolish and to erect buildings in response to the community's needs and decisions.²⁰

With the private ownership of the houses by members, fences started to appear as a way to clearly separate each property. In the *kibbutz*, there are more and more individualistic requests: Like in a city, each person wants to have access to his own house with his own car, thus expropriating pedestrian and cycling space for motorised vehicles, enlarging roads, multiplying parking and ruining the unique intimate atmosphere of the *kibbutz* gardenscape.

This tendency toward significant expansions of the living spaces is reflected in the new extensions with bigger plots for future houses as well. All these modifications in the *kibbutz* habitat are destroying the unique social fabric of the *kibbutz* and the radius between the periphery and the central public area is doubled: From an acceptable maximal walking distance of 300 m toward the heart of the *kibbutz* to the future radius of 600 m, social interactions are distended, thus deserting and neglecting such previously core of the collectivity. "In many *kibbutzim* the dining halls, culture houses, theatres, and clubhouses were shut down (...), the *kibbutz* garden, which was one of the major distinguishing marks of the entire *kibbutz* space, stands neglected."²¹

[20] Ibid., 100
[21] Ibid., 108

Fig. 20 Future development, Gvulot
(Redrawn from Gvulot Planning Department)







↑ ↑
מים עמוקים
مياه عميقة
DEEP WATER

Resurgence

Aiming for social change, the *kibbutz* movement always tried to influence the rest of society in applying essential values: Self-labour, equality, democracy and mutual responsibility. In the past few years, we can observe signs of a resurgence of this model as communities accompanied by new social and spatial values. In privatised *kibbutzim*, a softened capitalism model appeared by implementing social taxes, thus creating a safety net and mutual aid among the members. In nearly all aspects, these communities are more open to the outside world with rural-urban cooperation and new young groups see themselves as continuing the heritage of the classic *kibbutz* movement in several “urban *kibbutzim*”, regional centres in weakened and development towns.

Fig. 21 Public swimming pool
Swimming pool, Gvulot, 2017

Communal Revival

[22] Sherwood 2012

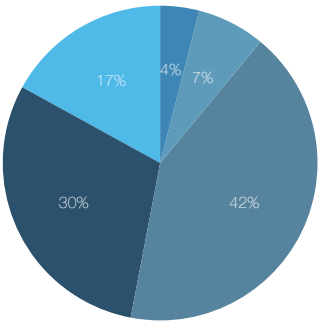
After decades of declining numbers, bankruptcies and privatisation, Israel's *kibbutz* movement is undergoing a remarkable revival, with more and more people wanting to join the unique form of collective living.²²

The Kibbutz as an Urban Alternative

Some *kibbutzim* realised in time the destructive process of privatisation in the social fabric of their community and halted this suburbanisation in order to allow a rethinking and exploration of new possibilities. More in accordance with their ideology, these communities usually try to welcome exclusively new members, which will have to be integrated in the community, and long discussions with non-members already living in the sub-urbanised area are trying to incite them to become members.

According to the *Kibbutz* Movement, the population growth approximated 25% between 2000 and 2010. More people are now joining *kibbutzim* than living: Many young families are attracted to join a *kibbutz* for its great quality of life and the multitude of services that one can benefit from in such a community. Some people who were born in a *kibbutz* and left it, in order to live the great life they always wanted to live in a metropole, are coming back to found a family. With softened social principles, many people are attracted to experience a collective way of living again: Nowadays, you can have your own kitchen, bathroom and living room and the educational system is allowing children to live with their parents.

Number of years of study in kibbutzim



Number of years of study in the Jewish population

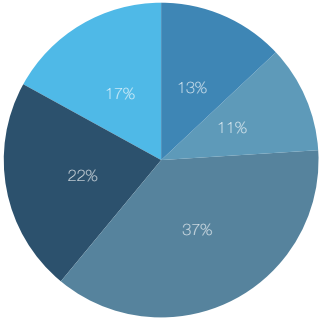


Fig. 22 Number of years of study in kibbutzim, 1998 (Data from CBS, Yad Tabenkin Archive)

- 0-8
- 9-10
- 11-12
- 13-15
- 16+

- [23] Tabenkin 2006
- [24] Rosenbum 2013
- [25] Ashkenazi 2008
- [26] Rosenbum 2013

Real urban alternative with services, the *kibbutz* is an appropriate place to raise children: They can evolve in a green secure environment, and the educational level in such collective communities is higher than the overall Jewish population in Israel: "In 1998, 15% of persons on *kibbutzim* had an academic degree (similar to the overall Jewish population), and 20% had post-secondary school certificates (12% in the total Jewish population)."²³

The Urban Kibbutz

The urban *kibbutz* is an urban cooperative located within an existing city. This urban form started in the 1970s when former *kibbutz* members and graduates of the *Nahal* wanted to experience a communal life and have an influence on Israeli society. Giving a clear answer to the lack of land, social and agricultural changes, and the ongoing privatisation of *kibbutzim*, this urban model is an answer to affordable cooperative housing.

According to Nir Harburger, a member of *kibbutz* Mishol: "The last 15 years have witnessed a revival of youth movements, with graduates opting for a communal lifestyle."²⁴ This new trend is reinventing *kibbutzim* in accordance with more relevant contemporary problems: In order to build an egalitarian society living in peace with its neighbourhoods, these youth movements are situated in weakened towns, combatting social problems and raising solidarity. Operating with a similar economic model like traditional *kibbutzim*, all the money is put in common in one bank account and divided equally. Giving up the rural ideology, the members are working in the education field and taking social actions.

It's difficult to precisely estimate the impact this growing trend of urban *kibbutzim* has: Most of them are informal, experiencing a cooperative lifestyle in rented apartments and therefore, not officially recognised. According to an article on urban *kibbutzim*, there were already about 2000 members of urban *kibbutzim* in Israel in 2008, from which four urban *kibbutzim* were officially belonging to the *Kibbutz* movement and about 100 not.²⁵ This trend of urban communities is reinventing the future of the *Kibbutz* movement: Even if most of them are very young communities and living in groups in several shared apartments, they are looking for a building where they can enhance their communal life experience and live altogether. Only a few succeeded in reaching such a goal today.

Among them, *kibbutz* Mishol was able to move in an abandoned immigrant absorption centre in order to implement their living quarters: "*Kibbutz* Mishol doesn't have any fields or fish ponds, sprawling lawns or looming water towers. What it has instead are corridors, filled with the odours of clothes being cleaned and food being fried."²⁶

After years living in different rented apartments, its 120 members moved to an eight-floor building in Upper Nazareth. The *kibbutz* consists of eight groups from different *Nahal* cohorts, each group living in its own floor with its common areas: "The group shares a large common space containing a sitting area, a work space, a small library, a kitchen and a dining area."²⁷ The family dwellings at Mishol are pretty small (3.5 rooms for 75 sqm), therefore some items are placed in corridors or in the communal area, which is also used for events. In the bottom floor of the building are located communal areas such as a library, a member's club, a music room, a painting room, a second-hand shop, a café, a child care centre, ... In this urban *kibbutz*, there is even a small high-tech industry and outside the complex there is a playground and a vegetable garden.

[27] Ibid.



Fig. 23 Kibbutz Mishol
Urban kibbutz, Nazareth, 2013 (Haaretz)

Toward a Regional Organisation

Another trend in *kibbutzim* remains in its planning and cooperation between other rural entities: Confronted with economic problems, these agricultural settlements are more open to regional cooperation on different aspects. For *kibbutzim*, these associations have been formalised in a national central federation, the *Kibbutz* movement, merging of the United *Kibbutz* movement and the *Kibbutz Artzi* of Hashomer Hatzair.

Comparisons show that small units have failed, being unstable and inefficient in their social and economic development, while the clustering together of several small settlements in a large, stable and efficient economic corporation also facilitates community development in relatively small settlements.²⁸

In the 1980s, the *Kibbutz* movement asked the planning department to prepare a plan for *kibbutz* settlement for the year 2000 and a team studied alternate regional settlement options and assessed the viability of the already changing *kibbutz* as a future settlement form:

I had intermittently raised the suggestion that neighbouring *kibbutzim*, such as Ramat Yochanan, Usha, and Kfar Hamaccabi, on the edge of Haifa suburbia and already part of regional enterprises, should form a joint "Mikbutz" (*kibbutz* cluster), sharing central institutions and combining their agricultural and industrial enterprises, not only as a more efficient conglomerate, but also as a higher form of urban alternative: "neither rural, nor urban". The idea was raised during the ongoing polemic regarding "The New *Kibbutz*" which signalled the changes to come, as a possible structural adaptation of the "autonomous and autarkic" *kibbutz* to changing economic and social circumstances (...) Consisting of a network of cooperative and communal settlements conjoined as a "Mikbutz", sharing in regionalised agriculture, industry and tourism, and reliant on their own educational, cultural, and welfare institutions through the regional council.²⁹

Outline of the National Plan

This actual trend was already recommended by Arie Sharon: When he headed the Planning Department in 1948, he was in charge of the first overall plan for the State of Israel. Pursuing his social aims, he planned the outline of the national plan to serve the interests of the individual and the community. When the State of Israel was founded, 82% of the population was concentrated in the narrow coastal strip, from Haifa to Tel Aviv. In order to avoid vast and congested conurbations, and have a well-balanced repartition of the masses in the country, he proclaimed to develop abandoned areas.

Arieh Sharon proposed to develop the country in regions with the intention of accomplishing the decentralisation of the population and its economy. The regions should have one or two urban centres in order to serve the rural hinterland as *foci* of trade, industry, social and educational activity, and seats of administration. Finally, these regions could evolve in complete and well-balanced social and economic entities, deriving benefit from the mutual relations between the urban centres and their hinterland.³⁰

[30] Sharon 1952

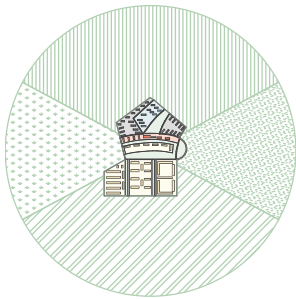
[31] Ibid.

In his writing *Outline of the National Plan*³¹, Arieh Sharon did a survey of existing settlements and the consideration of future planning-needs led to a classification of five main settlements types in the country, differing in size, social and economic characteristics and purposes as follows:

- Village unit constituting a basic agricultural cell with a population of about 500, i.e. the small *kvutza* (small *kibbutz*), *moshav*
- Rural centre composed of several agricultural units linked to a common service centre, with around 2,000 inhabitants, i.e. group of three to five *moshavim* forming a large village, or a large *kvutza* (Ein Harod).
- Rural-urban centre providing economic, cultural, commercial and industrial regional services for dozens of villages in the vicinity, with a population of 6,000-12,000. i.e. Khalsa
- Medium town serving as the focal point for the region, with a population between 40,000 and 60,000, i.e. Afula, Beer-Sheva
- Large town containing regional and national development factors with a population exceeding 100,000, i.e. Jerusalem, Tel Aviv, Haifa

Arieh Sharon observed a gap between the first and the fifth of these types, the isolated agricultural units and the congested and crowded conurbations. In order to contribute to the social and economic stability of the country, the other types have to fill the gap between villages and large towns as cultural and economic centres, thus aiming to provide a social and economic continuity.

Fig. 24 Outline of the national plan
Arieh Sharon, *Planning in Israel*, 1952
(GIS data from Arieh Sharon Archive, CBS)



Village Unit



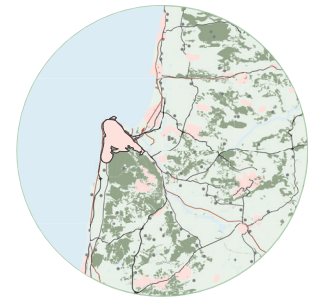
Rural Centre



Rural-Urban Centre



Medium Town



Large Town

The Concept of Cluster

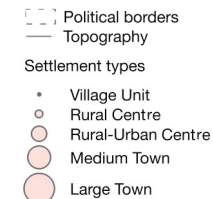
Three topological situations of relations between settlements exist: Individual, where the distance between settlements prevents significant interaction, in proximity, where the distance between settlements allows potential interaction and adjoining, where there is little distance between two or more settlements.

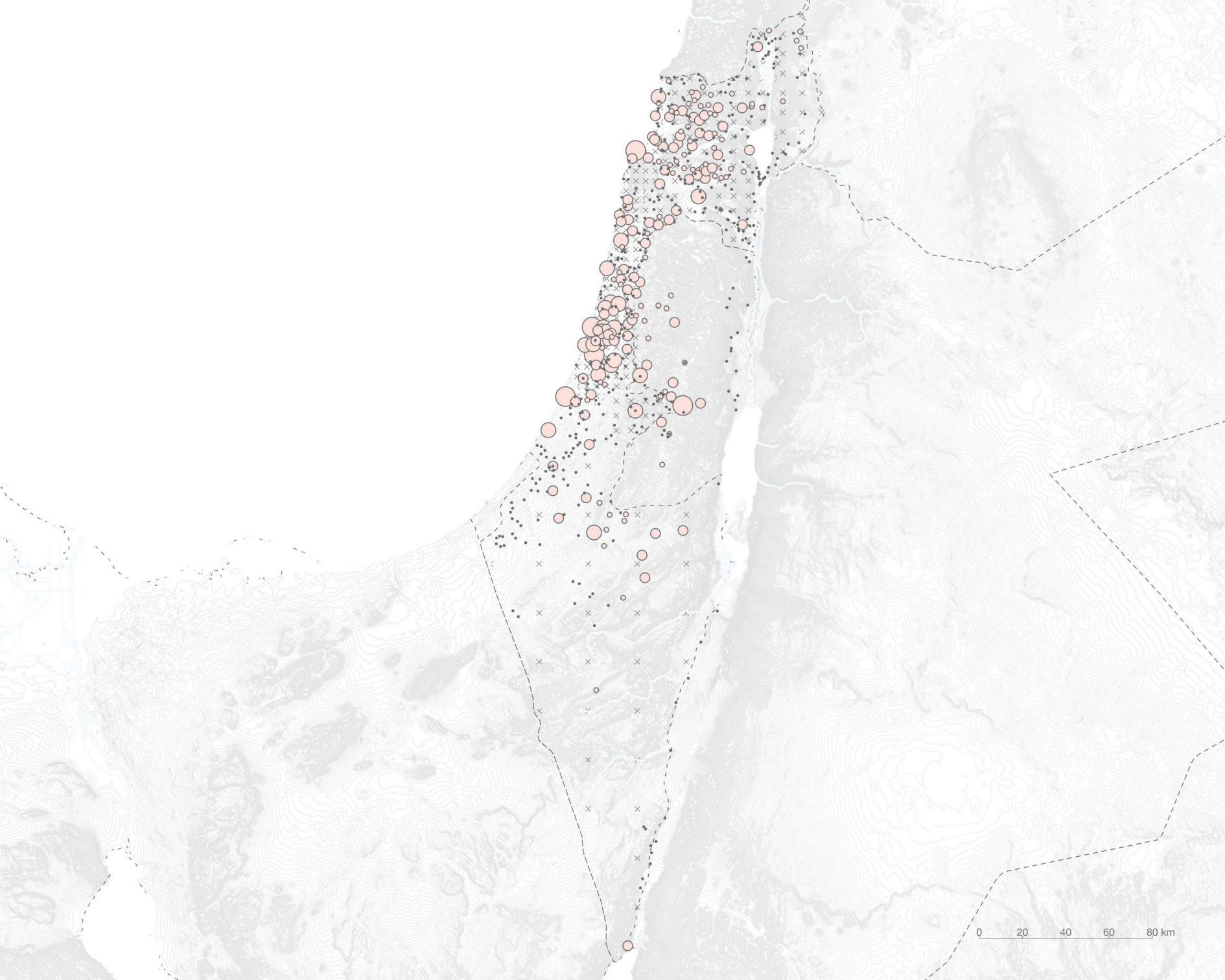
The dynamics resulting from these relations can provide us a scenario for the development of adjoining settlements by ensuring village unit cooperation and establishing cooperative rural centres, regional cooperative social and consumer institutions (care for the aged, social centre, ...) and regional rural-urban / town complex which would nurture the separate and autonomous communities and activate its own absorption and development policy.³²

Gvulot is a relevant example to illustrate these new emerging dynamics: With other *kibbutzim*, they put their folds and fields in common in order to increase the production and cost effectiveness of their rural activity. Today, with such joint action, their stable is one of the biggest in the country and allow them a higher economic maturity. On a regional scale, working as a cluster, coordinated investments between rural units allowed the creation of regional schools and regional centres for older people. Finally, the regional town of Beer-Sheva provides complimentary regional services such as regional banking, administrative and medical institutions, agricultural craft and industries, and educational and communal buildings.

[32] Kahana 2015, 84

Fig. 25 Toward a graded social network
Rural and urban localities, Israel, 2017
(GIS data from CBS, Wikipedia)





Regional Kibbutzim: The Case of Tarbut Movement

Tarbut ("culture" in Hebrew) is a non-profit national movement composed by 500 young artists and educators that have decided to make a difference in Israeli society and devote their lives to social change. These artists are living in the social and geographical peripheries of Israel in order to reduce social gaps, to renew local solidarity and make Israel a better place.

We are a movement of pioneering young artists who reside and work as Tarbut communities ('urban *kibbutzim*') in weakened towns and cities throughout Israel. Our mission is to use art and culture as a vehicle for self-empowerment and social change to reshape the future of Israel, promoting values of solidarity, equality, democracy and tolerance.

Present

Tarbut movement is an innovative social enterprise comprised of a combination of activities designed for the development and revival of culture and arts in Israel as an educational tool, a vehicle for social empowerment, and a driver of economic development with at-risk communities.

Executing a multitude of actions throughout Israeli society and over the years, Tarbut movement cultivates a fertile ground for a variety of initiatives and the resources needed to implement them. Their communities operate a unique range of key programs, such as:

- A multi-year training program for young artists from all artistic fields.
- Exposure to art and culture for thousands of children and youth throughout the country, through a new organisation founded and run by Tarbut artists.
- Professional and academic training programs for young artists, to provide them the tools for their educational and community work through the arts.
- A network of activists, artists, and educators, that cooperate on national and local initiatives, who relocated to urban areas in the geo-social periphery of Israel.
- Network and partnerships with a wide range of art and cultural institutes and leaders in Israel and abroad.
- Art, culture and leisure-based business ventures, and business skills training for artists.

Fig. 26-31 Cultural activities

Tarbut Movement, *Cultural activities*, Israel, 2017
(Tarbut Movement)



«OHEL» Theatre



Mobile Museum



Artwork Shops



Local Culture Festivals



LGBT+ Programs



All-Women Cabaret

Employing a wide range of artistic forms, including theatre, dance, music, film and plastic arts, with over 500 members living and serving as councillors in 30 different towns and cities all across Israel, Tarbut communities touch the lives of over 5000 children and youth at risk, as well as adults and seniors.

Future

“Tarbut believes that the essence of the artistic process it to build upon and expand the reality of ‘what is’ into the realm of ‘what can be’. Its mission is to use art and culture as a vehicle for self-empowerment and social change to reshape the future of Israel, promoting values of solidarity, equality, democracy and tolerance.”³³ The first pioneers who came to the country engaged in paving roads and draining swamps. For Tarbut counsellors, Zionism for the 21st century has to dry up modern swamps of Israeli society.

Israeli social fabric is affected by racism and poverty, where an increasingly marginalised Arab population is victim of institutionalised discrimination: Jewish citizens’ pay is on average twice that of their Arab counterparts, and similar inequalities exist within the country’s education system as well.³⁴ Therefore, the activists are located in underprivileged communities, encouraging empowerment, coexistence and solidarity, in order to recreate a dialogue between Arabs and Israeli.

Tarbut looks to the future, striving to reach new communities, recruiting more counsellors and touching more lives. Dreaming and acting to change Israel tomorrow, Tarbut is building the country’s largest interdisciplinary movement of social change and community renewal in Israel through culture and arts. Federation of communities, they run cultural “during school” and “after-school” activities for disadvantaged youth, local art groups, leadership programs, professional local art festivals and social businesses.

[33] Tarbut Movement 2017
[34] Horrox 2007

Fig. 32-37 Soco-economic indicators
Social inequalities, Israel, 2017
(GIS data from CBS, Wikipedia)

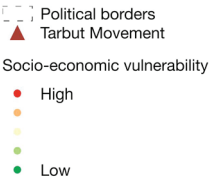
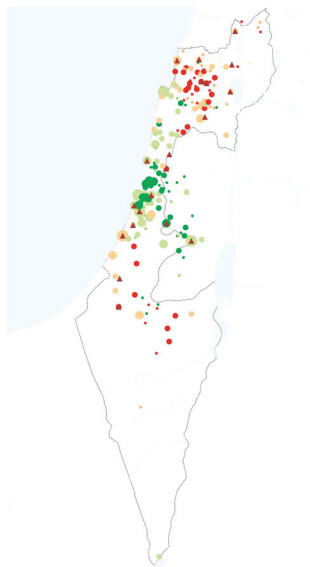


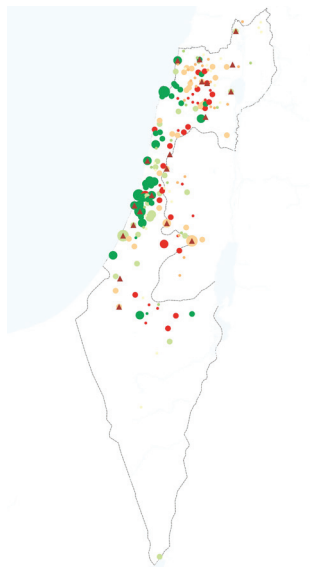
Fig. 38 Cultural network
Cultural network, Israel, 2017
(GIS data from CBS, Wikipedia)



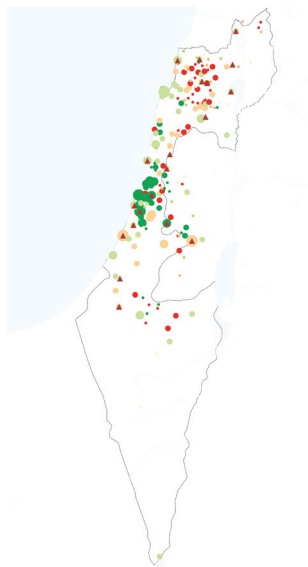
Work seekers



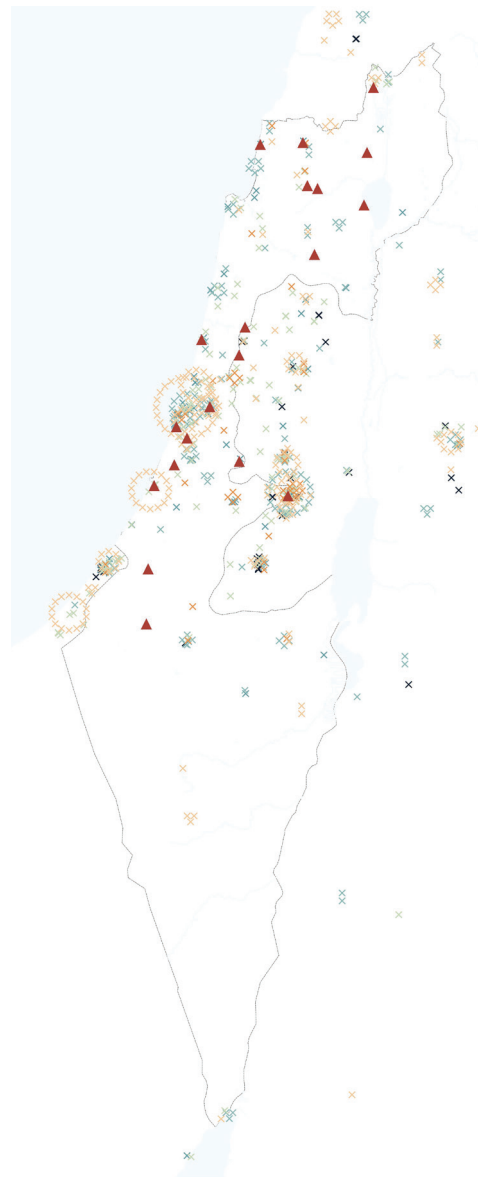
Median age value



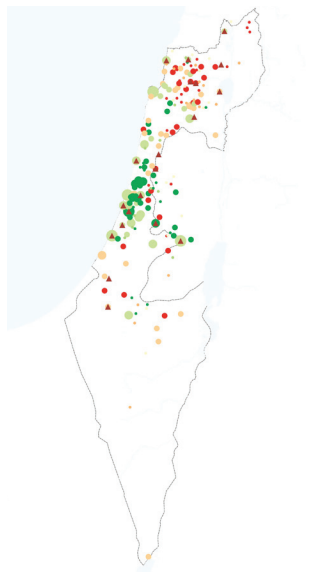
Average income per capita



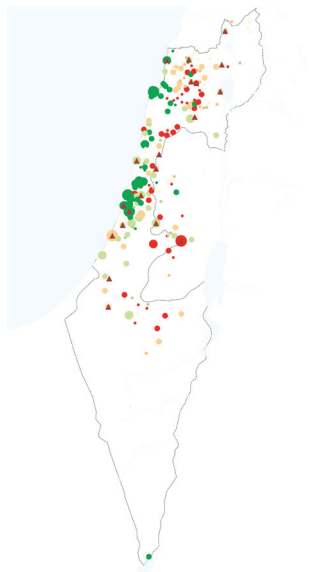
Cultural network



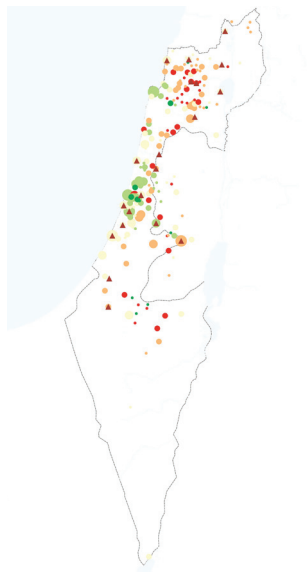
Sub-minimum wage earners



Families with 4/+ children



Localities by type of cluster





Experiences

Discussions about the lives of *kibbutzniks* vividly describe their heartfelt feelings and facilitate a complementary approach to the understanding of the radical changes and the present state of *kibbutzim*. With the following collection of conversations, personal testimonies give an inside point of view to social, economic and future trends in collective communities.

Fig. 39 Conversations with kibbutzniks
Personal testimonies, Israel, 2017



Previous director of the agricultural branch in Gvulot

Yigal Gilbao

Social and agricultural changes

I have been living in *kibbutz* Gvulot for 51 years: I came first to Gvulot in 1964 when I was in *Nahal* and I decided that after the army, I would live in a *kibbutz*: I heard so many stories about these collective communities that I decided to experience this unusual life.

The *Kibbutz* movement directed me to come to live here in the Negev, as was part of the national goal of having settlements on the borders because in the middle of the country, there were already many *kibbutzim* and a high density of the population in general. Gvulot is situated less than 13 km away from the Gaza Strip and 17 km from Egypt. In 1968, when I finished the army, I became a member of the community. As a member, I was working in orchards and I was cultivating apricots, grapes, pomegranates and I started to be the director of the agricultural sector. But this is a *kibbutz*: As a director, you continue working like everybody else. I had volunteers from Switzerland and I helped them to pick up fruits. Even after 6–7 hours, when the volunteers finished their day work, I had to keep working another few hours because as a director, I had many responsibilities. During the high season, I was even working up to 14 hours a day in order to pick up fruits, pack them and wait for the truck to take them to the market.

Fig. 40 Cowsheds
Farm area, Gvulot, 2017

Agricultural Experimentation

We did agricultural experimentation in the desert and I remember we had a failure with mangos: They became very attractive in Israel and we wanted to grow mangos in the desert as well. We had a counsellor who told us how to grow mangos and we were so enthusiastic that we decided to cultivate around 120 dunams of mangos (1 dunam = 1000 sqm). The councillor told us that we will get from each dunam 2.5 tons of mangos but unfortunately, despite the fact we were following his recommendations, we hadn't even 1 ton per dunam. After years, we found out that the failure of such experimentation resided in salt water from the ground and mangos cannot stand salt water at all, unlike tomatoes.

Industrialisation

Nowadays, with industrialisation in agriculture, the whole system has changed: 50 years ago, if you wanted to pick tomatoes and other fruits, the work had to be realised by hand. From sowing the land up to climb on ladders in order to pick fruit, labour in the fields was the main job in the community. Today, you have specialised and heavy tractor machines to help such physical work. No one thought 50 years ago that one day we would have such big tractor engines! To take all the potatoes from the ground, you needed so many workers that you couldn't manage those tasks only with *kibbutzniks*. We started to hire people in villages, in settlements for new immigrants, Arabs or people from the Far East.

The importance of agriculture in the *kibbutz* has tremendously decreased: With mechanisation of agriculture and its low pay, many inhabitants don't want to work in agriculture anymore. Here in Gvulot, the main income is still provided by agriculture, which is quite unusual nowadays in *kibbutzim*: We have potatoes, sweet potatoes, carrots, onions, green peppers, peanuts... We have one of the largest agricultural fields in Israel in terms of size. The problem is not really what we can produce or not, but rather the labour itself: Nobody wants to work anymore in the fields. In the new generation, a lot of young people are doing advanced studies, graduating from universities and becoming engineers. As we don't have enough work for engineers in the *kibbutz*, they have to find work outside, leaving the *kibbutz* in the morning and coming back to their home at the end of the day.

Therefore, I don't see any future in the agriculture field. People working in the fields are now almost exclusively foreigners: Bedouins, Arabs and people from Thailand. In order to compensate the economy of the *kibbutz*, we started to implement an industrial part, thus giving new opportunities to the inhabitants. For example, in Gvulot, we have a high-tech polymer industry and solar panels belonging to a private company. Here, we have fully sunny days even in winter: We rent the land and make money out of it.

Privatisation

The *kibbutz* itself changed a lot. From my point of view, Gvulot is not a *kibbutz* anymore since privatisation: We became a community, which is completely different from a *kibbutz* life. With privatisation, everybody gets his own salary and life became similar to any other urban life: If you want to live in the *kibbutz*, you have to find a job because the *kibbutz* won't take any financial responsibility. However, cultural and social activities are kept like gold at least to let us think that we are still a *kibbutz*: We try to celebrate Jewish celebrations, holidays and we don't want to give up social activities. For example, the community wanted to organise a trip to Poland in memory of the holocaust: About 20 members registered and had to pay from their own pocket in order to enjoy this cultural activity. Before, the *kibbutz* covered all the expenses: I remember a trip years ago to Turkey and to Egypt where the collectivity covered all the expenses. If someone wanted to study in order to become an engineer or a teacher, the *kibbutz* was covering all the four years of studies.

I don't see any future in Gvulot as a *kibbutz* anymore, but I see a great future for Gvulot as a community: Since we are a community, we started to absorb new families from the cities because people are looking for quietness, tranquillity, there are no cars and buses and it is a safe and good environment to raise children. Many people want to experience a softened communal life, and still have their own private life.



Eldest member in Gvulot

Shoshana Aloni

New facilities for elder people

I'm the eldest member of *kibbutz* Gvulot and I was among the first pioneers to settle here. My family was living in a *kibbutz* near Haifa and I studied in the agricultural school of Nahalal. One day, a group of young people asked me what I wanted to do and I answered them that I wanted to settle in a *kibbutz*: I joined them and we were part of the first group to come to Gvulot. The idea of experiencing a communal life was very exciting for me: In those times, this idea was very progressive and new. I wanted to live in a community, to be a pioneer in a new *kibbutz* where I would be able to experience this way of life from the very beginning.

The Beginnings

When we arrived in *Mitzpe* Gvulot in 1946, there was only dust and some Bedouins. With my experience from the agricultural school in Nahalal, I began to work in the agriculture field. I was working in the orchards and vineyards and I was the only woman responsible for this sector. We were able to start some plantations with water we brought in the Negev, thanks to a first-water pipe which was always the target of sabotage from Bedouins. We also had an asphalt slab from which it was possible to collect rainwater.

Fig. 41 Activities for elder people
Regional Council, Eshkol, 2017

But these first plantations were rather experimental: We didn't know what was suitable or not to plant in the Negev. After many experiments, we chose some plantations which were the most adapted to this extreme climate environment: onions, potatoes, peanuts... I remember we had wonderful grapes here as well! But we had to stop because of the scarcity of water, grapes required too much water and wasn't economically viable. Now, many *moshavim* and *kibbutzim* in the region know what is suitable or not for their environment.

Aging of the Population

Many changes occurred in the *kibbutz* since its very beginnings: Nowadays, the community is dealing with aging of the population and we had to start finding adapted solutions for older people. For example, we have in the *kibbutz* a member who is now in charge of elders. I had an accident some time ago and I went to the hospital: This member came with me to the hospital, asked about my needs, gave me food and medical care. I have a friend, Dvora, who has even a special woman who lives in her house and tends to her every day. In order to cover our expenses, we get a pension from the state and if this income is not enough, our community covers the extra needs: Since privatisation, the implementation of a social tax allows us to keep a certain solidarity between members.

Social Interactions

The role of the refectory changed through time too: It is not the centre of social interactions in the *kibbutz* anymore. We have other places where we can meet and share and not necessarily around food. We have celebrations, different committees and clubs. For example, we are 30 members in the third age and we have a special committee to discuss problems. Once a month, on Fridays, we meet in the clubhouse and spend our day together. Near Gvulot, we have a rural centre common to other settlements for elder people: A special shuttle comes to my place and takes me to Eskhol where I can have different occupations. With such a club for retired people like me, life in Gvulot is really diversified: We can enjoy new social activities, conferences, movies, music and painting classes. Once a week, we even have a small trip in the surroundings. There is always a pretext to see each other.

Diversification of the economy

People coming to Ketura often say: “This *kibbutz* is very interesting: It is still working like an old and traditional *kibbutz*, it’s alive, and you also have high-tech industries with the algae factory, a solar field, you have the Arava Institute, the off-grid village, ... Therefore, it makes the *kibbutz* very attractive.” As the manager of Ketura, my role is to find additional income for the community: I’m in charge of the business in the *kibbutz* and I’m looking for new investments, interesting jobs for the members and trying to find new ways to earn money for our life here, which is not so cheap.

Agriculture

We are looking for new incomes, in the domain of agriculture for instance: We are very interested in a new kind of tomato who can stand the brackish water in the Negev. We get some subsidies from the government regarding the quality of water: The saltier the water is, the less we pay. But as we don’t have any other choice, we use salt water for agriculture. Therefore, we cannot grow every vegetable or tree we want because the water is too salty. We have dates which are among the best in the country and represent 50% of the income in our *kibbutz*.



Tourism

We are also under discussion with experts in tourism for example, to see if tourism can be an additional and complimentary income. We think that people are looking for something to do on their way to Eilat, especially when they are travelling in groups.

One point of interest in Ketura is for example the old Methuselah tree with its another 6 baby trees. We want to create a park because we think that all Christian visitors coming to Israel, the Holy Land, will be interested in coming to see this tree from the age of Jesus. I'm in contact with people related to branding and marketing. The idea is to imagine a tour for tourists with a holy trees' park. We think we can increase the value of our tourism sector by making these tours special.

Furthermore, with the new international airport, there will be cheap flights to Eilat: Tourists will be able to come from Geneva, Budapest, Poland for only 20 euros! With this new airport 20 minutes from here, we hope to develop tourism in the region: It will be cheaper to land here than in Ben Gurion. A lot of groups will come to visit Israel for a week, have a trip from Eilat to Jerusalem, Nazareth, and go back to Tel Aviv. If they intend to see a *kibbutz* on their road, we want to be the one they are going to see.

Regional Cooperation

Cooperation between *kibbutzim* is very important: In my previous job, I was the director of a cooperative bank, allowing *kibbutzim* to put their money together and do coordinate investments. We also have cooperative societies which are trying to help us with the government, water and land issues. We always make joint decisions and invest money accordingly. Most of our business is cooperative.

Regarding the scarcity of water for example, water is becoming more and more salty. There is this project to bring water from the Red Sea to the Dead Sea, which would provide us a lot of water, but until then, we sit together and talk. Everybody wants the other one to survive and we intend to survive together. Solidarity is very strong and we try to help each other for a better life and social security, especially in such an arid area with extreme heat, isolated from everything.

Fig. 42 A *kibbutz* in the desert
Path in the Arabah Valley, Ketura, 2017

The Dining Hall

The role of the dining hall is currently being discussed: Tonight, we were only around 30 people to eat in the dining hall. Everybody wants to keep the refectory because it is symbolic of the heart of the *kibbutz*. But all this building for such a small number of people, implying a lot of electricity, air-conditioning and maintenance is not cost-effective.

Nowadays, there is a kitchen in each apartment and besides, there is a dining room. So, you can choose whether you want to eat here or there. In the past, if you wanted a coffee or to eat something, the dining hall was the only place where you could eat and drink together. The same goes with showers: In the past, there were only communal showers for all the members where they could meet after a long day of work. Today, each apartment has his own private shower. How do you meet each other then? Well, you don't meet as much as before. You meet other members on holiday, once a week for a meal together, in the kindergarten and this is enough. This is the kind of meeting and social life we have now in the *kibbutz*.

Future

Our *kibbutz* is caring for its future: We are constantly talking and working on it. One of the main issues is the aging of our population. This is why we are building many houses for new members to join. We are not building just one or two houses, but we are erecting a whole new quarter because young people want to live with other members of the same age. We need strong and young members that can support pensions for older people.

A lot of *kibbutzim* almost literally died with this problem of the aging of their members, because they had over 75% of the members on pensions. Hopefully young people are attracted again to live in *kibbutzim* with their families because it is very convenient for them, especially in the centre of the country: You can live in a house and be at the same time located near Tel Aviv, you have a job, children can have a good education and many services are present in *kibbutzim*.

What we wish for Ketura is to stay a *kibbutz* for a long time. But we are not sure that it would stay as a traditional collective community: The world is changing very fast and people are more and more individualistic. We try to maintain our values: In a *kibbutz*, you really have to trust in each other. You might not like everybody in the *kibbutz*, but you should learn to listen to each other and make compromises. Dialogue and compromise are the keys of a successful community.



The urban kibbutz

All *kibbutzim* are kind of villages built in parks: They all share a vision of an egalitarian life but in the facts, these collective communities have a fence and a gate for practical reasons. Symbolically very strong, these settlements clearly distinguish an interior and exterior. *Kibbutzim* want to be active in the Israeli society and many members are working outside, in development towns such as Bet Shemesh, in schools and libraries in order to help children to do their homework, and in centres for elder people to assist them. They leave their *kibbutz* in the morning, go to work, and in the evening, they go back to their segregated oasis, like in a dormitory town.

For some *kibbutzniks*, acting this way isn't good enough: If *kibbutzniks* want to influence and be part of the Israeli society, they have to live inside the cities. Therefore, some groups decided to live together in what we call the urban *kibbutz*, a community living in a dense urban area in order to strengthen Israeli society.

Fig. 43 Urban kibbutz
Kibbutz Tamuz, Bet Shemesh, 2017

Kibbutz Tamuz

Among these groups, one came in Bet Shemesh and founded in 1987 the urban *kibbutz* Tamuz. Very unique in the history of urban *kibbutzim*, only two constructed their own building from scratch: *kibbutz* Tamuz and *kibbutz* Migdal. Other urban collective communities are more informal, sharing apartments, and are not officially recognised. People who founded these first urban *kibbutzim* grew up in traditional *kibbutzim* and had a vision of what an urban collective community should be. But in younger urban *kibbutzim*, most of the people never experienced the traditional way of living and therefore, have other ideas on what an urban community should be, what the relationship between the members are, equality, how much they want to share with each other, ...

As a *kibbutz*, Tamuz doesn't produce anything: We don't have any shared business and we all work in the city. We put our salaries in the same bank account and we share it. In traditional *kibbutzim*, since they have their own production line and many services, new people always have to join the *kibbutz* in order to support the economy: You are always dependent on staff for the kitchen, someone working in the fields, ... Like in Ketura, there is always a need for people to accomplish tasks that might not interest them. One of the ideas of *kibbutz* Tamuz is that we don't want to force members to do a specific job. Therefore, we don't have cows that someone has to milk or any business forcing other members to work in.

The Heart of the Community

In the *kibbutz*, the idea of a park is still present. One of the first principles that the architect Ram Karmi imagined was the fact that there wouldn't be any gates: Our *kibbutz* is organised around a garden, core of our community where we can have events and gatherings. We also have a communal area where we have the possibility to eat and drink together, and shared facilities are situated on the ground floor with for example a shared laundry, equipment for gardening, and an electronic schedule where we can book one of the shared cars available for our community. One special aspect of the apartments is the fact that we have communicative doors between loggias, thus allowing to connect several loggias together.

Aging of the Population

Today, our *kibbutz* is not growing anymore: People are not joining us and prefer creating another urban *kibbutz* with a group of people with the same age. Therefore, our community is dying. One of the problems we encounter in the *kibbutz* is regarding accessibility: We have stairs everywhere going up and down, and even inside the apartments. This complex is very rigid and wasn't conceived for old people. In the future, we intend to build a new complex for elder people in a surrounding empty parking lot, in order to keep living altogether.



Member of kibbutz Amitai

Ron Valdniger

A Temporary way of living

Our community is specialised in the education field because this is what the Israeli society needs nowadays. We want to change the society, to make it better, to raise solidarity, equality, and fight racism. We live in a complex multicultural society and our role is to create connections and live together.

We are not working as a traditional *kibbutz* with its industries, agriculture and its specific education system, but we are implied in today's society where we teach and organise social activities. Our community is composed of 60 members, between 30 and 37 years old from the same youth movement. We all work as teachers in schools or in youth organisations, and we put all our income in one shared bank account which is used to pay rents, bills, shared vehicles, healthcare and other fundamental needs... The surplus of money is then equally divided among the members. Every 2–3 months, we have a seminar where we discuss the future of our community and make collective decisions for different financial and social aspects.

Fig. 44 Mobile homes

A temporary way of living, Givat Haviva, 2017

Mobile Homes

We used to live in groups located in several communes near Rehovot. We don't have any place where we can live altogether yet and until a few months ago, we were living in several shared apartments in different cities. We are currently trying to find a big complex near Rehovot, where we could all live in the same location and therefore, enhance our communal life experience. Awaiting the construction of such building, we just moved to Givat Haviva where we found an area in which we can temporarily live altogether in caravans.

We installed our community in movable houses and built in a few days a wooden deck with stairs in order to access the them. The spatial arrangement of the caravans tries to mimic a typical atmosphere with nature and trees in traditional *kibbutzim*. This cheap and flexible solution allows us to rearrange each unit according to groups of friends and families: One mobile home can be used as a central unit with the kitchen and living area, on which other houses are "plugged in" in order to have sleeping rooms and restrooms. Light walls are disposed in such a way to divide the space as wanted.

If a bigger group needs a larger living room and kitchen, up to two caravans are connected together to offer a space in accordance their current needs. The restroom is even shared between two groups of friends, where an extra door connects directly to the living area of the second apartment. Like an alternative camping, caravans have a technical space under the floor where electricity, water and wastewater are located with movable pipes. Therefore, we can constantly place whenever wanted a new kitchen or bathroom, thus modulating the houses in order to suit our social needs.

Social Interactions

One disadvantage we encounter is regarding noise: From inside or even outside, one can listen to different sounds and conversations because isolation is not so great. But this is a *kibbutz*! The fact of living together in the same area strengthen dialogue in our community. We have the possibility to share more than ever, from sugar and salt if needed, cars available for our community, and more generally friendship with meetings

in the evening. This has undeniably social, practical and economic advantages and we think that in our future urban complex, connections between members and society will even grow stronger.

We believe that nowadays, many people are attracted to live in a community because they want to be part of a group, share a same vision. We hope that in the near future, more cooperatives will flourish all across the country: In our multicultural society, we have to work hand in hand and support each other.



Director of the museum in Ein Harod

Galia Bar-Or

Toward a new way of living

There were these ideas about living in a new society and a new community, *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft*. *Kibbutzim* were developed according to eastern-Europe ideals, with the notion of the city village and Kropotkins's vision. He wrote a book about this new kind of habitus: Neither a village which was exploited, nor a city which was alienated. The idea of the city village was a new model, an alternative to Darwinism and the survival of the fittest.

Pyotr Kropotkin was a Russian geographer and anarchist thinker who envisaged a future society as a federation of communities without any governmental authority. When he was in Siberia, he found out that animals could only survive if they support each other. Solidarity was a means of survival. I found out in the archives of Ein Harod, which was the first large *kvutza* and leading *kibbutz* of *HaKibbutz HaMeuhad* movement (United *Kibbutz* movement), that the members read the Kropotkin's book which influenced their vision for a community.

Fig. 45 Mishkan Museum of Art
Museum of Art, Ein Harod, 2017

Ein Harod: The First Large Kvutzah

When Richard Kauffmann was invited in 1919 by the Jewish Agency, he became the Architect of the Zionist settling Institution and specifically the architect of Ein Harod. In 1925, he initiated the first general plan of Ein Harod and was favourable to the ideas of the settlers. They worked hand in hand to establish a program for the *kibbutz*.

At the beginning, they had to fight because their vision was different from the Jewish Agency, which already had its own way to build the country with *moshavim*. The Jewish Agency's ideas were based on a capitalist way of thinking and were opposed to Pyotr Kropotkin and his communist ideas. In *moshavim*, you have somebody who gives orders, and everybody has a goat and a field where they have to do whatever they can to earn as much profit as possible. The Jewish Agency thought that Kropotkin's ideas would be a big waste of money and people wouldn't be efficient enough...

Richard Kauffmann planned the *kibbutz* according to the ideas of the pioneers: He discussed with them and was very attentive to their ideology. He made a footprint of the future *kibbutz* he envisioned, taking into account the future growth of the *kibbutz*: It wasn't closed like a small *kvutza* such as Degania, which was planned like a German ranch, but on the contrary, it was able to integrate dynamic and future evolutions. The issues of the maximal radius between the periphery and the centre were interesting ideas that I wrote in *Kibbutz, Architecture without Precedents*.

But it wasn't built for a long time because there were a lot of obstacles from the Jewish Agency who didn't want to fulfil their ideal. For example, they didn't want the dining hall because they saw it as a big waste of money. Different from their ideal capitalist agricultural settlement, Degania was accepted because it was seen as an enlarged family, like a sect. Furthermore, the Zionist Agency wasn't favouring the idea of implementing industries, a museum, a place for health and other multipurpose buildings, like the big *gesellschaft* the members of Ein Harod dreamed of. Much freer and dynamic than Degania with industries and agriculture, spiritual life and art culture, their members and Richard Kauffmann imagined the *kibbutz* as being integral.

Kibbutz, Architecture Without Precedents

When Yuval Yasky and I wrote the book *Kibbutz, Architecture without Precedents* for the architectural biennale of Venice, architecture in *kibbutzim* wasn't discussed at all. We wanted to describe this equalitarian life and unique crystallisation in architecture and urban planning. Not like a city, nor like a village, the *kibbutz* had to deal with essential questions such as flexibility in its planning and defining a maximum walking distance in a *kibbutz*. The dining hall is really an architecture without precedents: Heart of the community, all generations gather there. Functions in it are very diversified: Becoming by moments the assembly of the *kibbutz*, a dancing course, a space for activities during holidays, the place where you could see tomorrow's working schedule, ... The conception of such building has no other parallel in architecture. The *kibbutz* case is not like any investor's planning: The inhabitants themselves were the leaders of the decisions. Problematics in *kibbutzim* can be relevant on a contemporary point of view, giving some answers on the issue of "living together".

Toward the Future

Regarding the future of *kibbutzim*, one should take a closer look to an important movement of new communities which are dealing with the problematic of "living together" in the complex and multicultural Israeli society. This movement is called Tarbut (culture) movement and is composed by young artists who are located in many peripheral towns. They live in several apartments and live in groups of friends or families together. This movement is involved in this triangle: society, education and culture. They want to raise solidarity, especially in weakened towns and cities with massive unemployment, immigrants, elder people, drug addicts, ... They believe in culture as a way of recreating a social fabric, bringing people together again and transmitting an energy of solidarity with the creations of institutions, theatres and schools. In such poor cities oppressed and neglected by the right wing, they deal with everything related to human beings: They don't judge people according to their origins and role in society, everybody is welcome and they work hand in hand with Arab villages as well. I believe the future of *kibbutzim* reside in such kinds of communities. Still informal at the moment, one should collaborate with them for future projects.



Conclusion

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In their pioneering stage *kibbutzim* took part in the project of creating a Utopia, a new egalitarian society composed by a federated network of democratic, autonomous communities, public ownership of the land and the negation of the wage system. Alternative to the capitalist city, these collective communities were considered as “the experiment that didn't fail” according to Martin Buber.

Fig. 1 Local festival

Tarbut Movement, *Social activities*, 2017
(Tarbut Movement)

Toward a Regional Campus

As we have seen, this communal type has changed greatly since its beginnings, with a majority abandoning their original principles and evolving into privatised settlements dealing with capitalist-driven concerns. However, we noticed a revival, with more and more young Israelis setting up their own communes all across the country. Trough being an alternative to the capitalist city and by promoting social values, *kibbutzim* allow us a contemporary approach for a renewed regional communality.

Dreaming for social change and equality, these communities are active through a variety of educational and social initiatives, encouraging empowerment and coexistence, teaching mutual aid, solidarity and tolerance.

In the old days of the movement the bottom line was about establishing a country, and creating a new human being, building an economy based on agriculture, settling the land, defending the borders. Those needs are not the same: The needs today are more the social needs of the country, narrowing those gaps, and recognising that these are the needs of the country in the twenty-first century... We see the ways of dealing with those needs as being based on the same values, it's just the methods that are slightly different.¹

In order to strengthen the countrywide social network, urban-rural centres integrated within a wider collective region are required to reach a graded social continuity, a balance between Man and regional communities.



Fig. 2 Tarbut movement headquarters
Administration centre, Afula, 2017

[2] Tarbut Movement 2017
 [3] Ben Eliyahu 2017

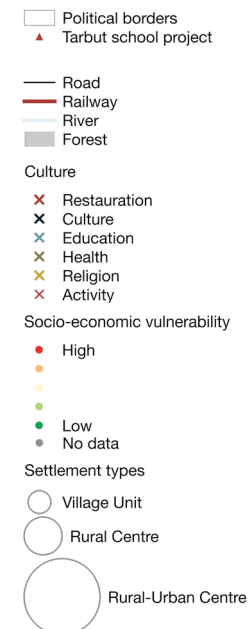
A Social Palace for the Jezreel Valley

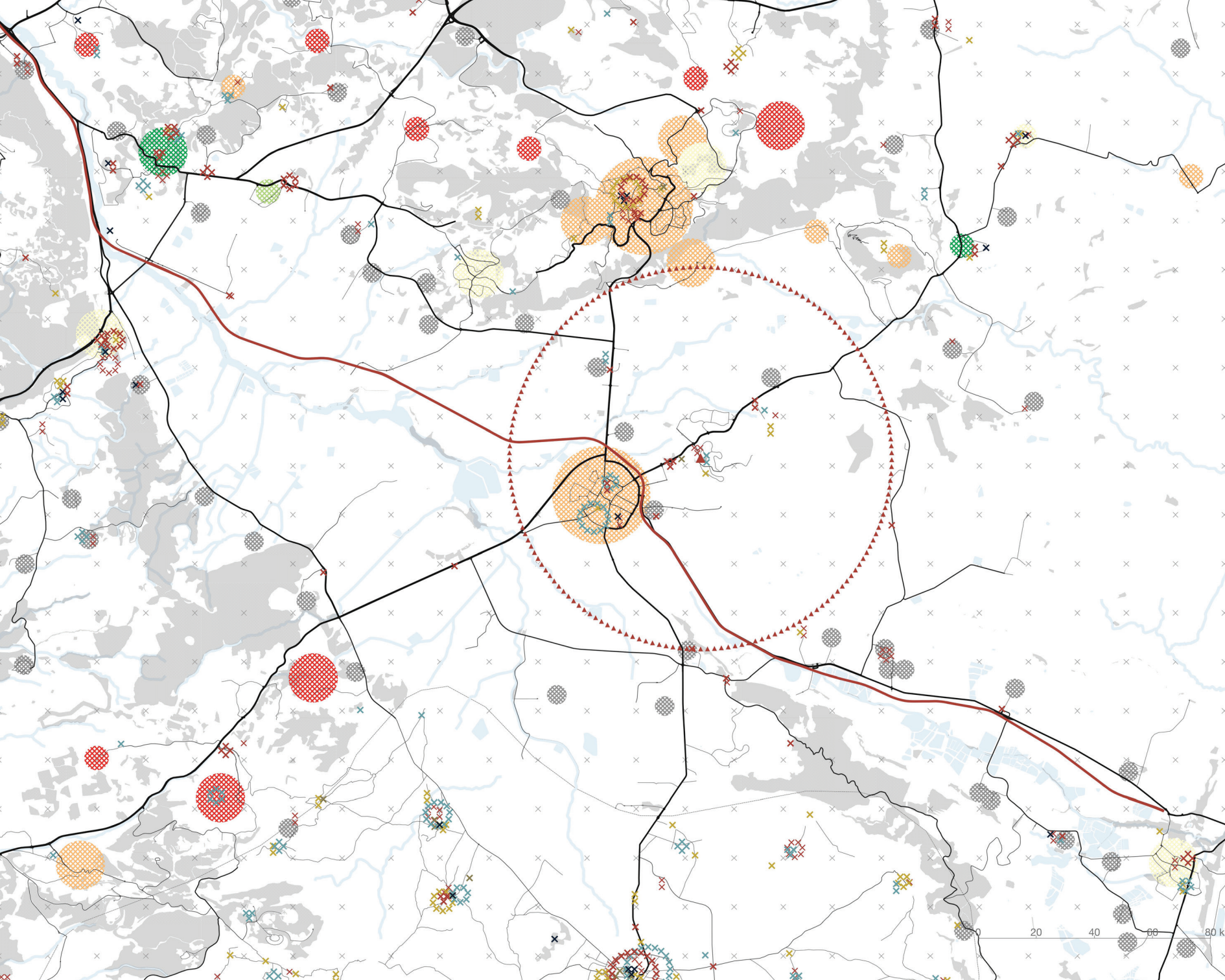
Afula is one of many weakened towns and cities in Israel: 35% of the population is composed by new immigrants, from which almost 50% are currently unemployed. In these places, there are dwindling budgets for education and culture, and there is a desperate need for committed people to be involved and make a difference to change this reality.² Giving us a view toward the future, Tarbut movement is planning to have a first physical educational campus in their headquarters in Afula:

Our community is aspiring to evolve into a regional centre in the field of culture and art. This campus will have an innovative mix of educational, artistic, commercial activities and a living area. The vision is to become a financially self-sustaining centre that catalyses cultural change in the immediate community, in the Jezreel Valley and across Israel, supported by Tarbut's growing national network of volunteers, artists and educators.³

Capital of the Valley, the city is undergoing an impressive development boom and the implementation of public and social services is needed. Planned by Richard Kauffmann in 1925, this city is a focal point for the Jezreel Valley, at the crossroad of the north-south axis from Jenin to Nazareth and the east-west axis from Haifa to Damascus. Located in the birthplace of modern settlements, the implementation of a regional centre will nurture the cooperation between the urban centre and its hinterland, i.e. Arab villages, *moshavim* and *kibbutzim*.

Fig. 3 A social palace for the Jezreel Valley
 (GIS, CBS, Tabenkin Archive, Wikipedia)





The Tarbut School Project

Tarbut movement is currently under discussion with the municipality of Afula to crystallise their community and social activities in an educational campus. Future catalyser for the development of the whole region, Tarbut intends first to define a minimal structural framework ensuring their social activities by rehabilitating an abandoned high school into a social hub. In a second phase, they plan to have a vertical extension allowing the members of their community to live altogether according to their ideals.

This regional centre in the field of culture and art will refuse no one. Giving proper embodiment to a social phenomenon, this campus is a reflection for a contemporary society. Manifesto and mediator of a collective society, this school of life will organise values and principles, acting for a harmony between different cultures. Balancing cooperative forces and individual forces within the community of a people, this building will not be a theory of style, but rather a system for organising life.

Real social palace, this community is looking for adapted solutions. In order to have a deeper understanding on how these collective communities can make a difference when dealing with the pressing social issues of the day, a collaboration with Tarbut movement will give a part of the answer from an architectural point of view.

Fig. 4-7 Abandoned school
Amal School, Afula, 2017 (Tarbut Movement)



Lexicon

Aliyah

Aliyah (literally “ascent”) is the immigration of Jews from the diaspora to the Land of Israel.

Eretz-Israel

Eretz-Israel (literally “Land of Israel”) was the traditional Jewish name for an area of indefinite geographical extension in the Southern Levant.

Fellah

The *Fellah* (literally “ploughman, tiller”; plural *Fellahin*) is an Arab farmer or agricultural labourer in the Middle East and North Africa.

HaKibbutz HaMeuhad

HaKibbutz HaMeuhad (literally “The United Kibbutz”) had been formed in 1927 by the union of several *kibbutz* bodies.

Halutz

The *halutz* (literally “pioneer”; plural *halutzim*) is the term referring to a Jew who immigrates to the region of Palestine and creates Jewish settlements.

Hashomer Hatzair

Hashomer Hatzair (literally “The Young Guard”) is a socialist-Zionist Jewish youth movement founded in 1913.

Histadrut

Histadrut (General Organization of Workers in Israel) is an Israeli labour organisation that includes workers in the cooperative and collective agricultural settlements as well as in most industries.

Kibbutz

A *kibbutz* (literally “gathering, clustering”, plural *kibbutzim*) is a collective community in Israel traditionally based on agriculture.

Kibbutz Artzi

Kibbutz Artzi (literally “Nationwide Kibbutz”) was a *kibbutz* movement associated with the *Hashomer Hatzair* youth movement, and the *Mapam* political party.

Kvutza

Kvutza (literally “communal settlement”; plural *kvutzot*) was a word used during pre-state Israel in reference to communal life.

Mapam

Mapam, acronym for *Miflegget HaPoalim HaMeuhedet* (literally “United Workers Party”), was a left-wing political party in Israel.

Mitzpe Gvulot

Mitzpe Gvulot (literally “borders lookout”) was established in 1943 and was the first of the three lookouts in the Negev region.

Moshav

The *moshav* (literally “settlement, village”; plural *moshavim*) is a type of cooperative agricultural community of individual farms.

Nahal

Nahal, acronym of *Noar Halutzi Lohem* (literally “Fighting Pioneer Youth”) refers to a paramilitary Israel Defense Forces program combining military service and the establishment of agricultural settlements, often in peripheral areas.

Zionism

Zionism is a nationalist political movement of Jews and Jewish culture that supports the re-establishment of a Jewish homeland in the territory defined as the historic Land of Israel.

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Fig. 1 Degania archive
Local archive, Degania, 2017

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