CHAPTER 4

The Village as Military Outpost

Song of the Valley

Rest comes to the weary
And refreshment to the toiler
A pale night spreads
On the fields of the Valley of Jezreel.
Dew below and the moon above,
From Beit Alpha to Nahalal

Mist envelops Mount Gilboa
A horse gallops from shadow to shadow.
A shout rises upwards
From the fields of the Valley of Jezreel.
Who shot and who fell
Between Beit Alpha and Nahalal

Refrain:
Oh, oh, from night to night
Silence in Jezreel
Sleep, O valley, splendid land
We stand guard over you.
—NATAN ALTERMAN

ALTHOUGH earlier designs of Jewish villages did not seriously or effectively take self-defense into account, this concern became paramount in the 1930s. Responding to the increasing outbreaks of conflict and growing competition with the country's Arabs, planners gave unanticipated preference to the kibbutz as the instrument for expanding settlement. For approximately twenty years, from the mid-1930s through the early 1950s, the kibbutz was the spearhead of Zionist settlement policy. After the establishment of the state when an army

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was available to defend borders, the moshav displaced the kibbutz, again becoming the preferred model. Thus, the colony of 100 families was shaped not only by religion, ideology, and economics but, eventually, also by compelling strategic and political considerations that evolved from the growing conflict with Palestine's Arab population.

First the *Haganah* (Defense—the leading pre-state military organization), prior to Independence, and then the Israeli army, at its highest command level, have engaged actively in planning villages. From the 1880s to 1948, the process of planning that began with the imaginations of visionaries proceeded to the drawing boards of professional experts and planners and finally to the map rooms of military strategists. The involvement of the military continues to be a peculiar feature of Israeli national planning at the beginning of the twenty-first century. It is especially strategic considerations that contributed to making Israel exceptional in modern village development. Israel is the only noncommunist country that adopted collective farming as the preferred form for organizing agriculture. Zionist planners recognized that such communities, particularly the kibbutz, were well-suited to perform police and security functions, and the design of these Zionist villages was then further altered to root their population in a hostile countryside and to enable pioneers to hold their gains in a protracted and increasingly violent contest.[1]

As noted earlier, the process of establishing Jews in villages was not straightforward. Preconceived ideas had to be reexamined, modified, and abandoned even as innovative strategies were invented and implemented. The early planners of the moshava, moshav, and kibbutz did not anticipate the transformation of villages into military outposts. Defense requirements and strategic advantages were not even discussed until about half a century into the process of planting Zionist villages across the landscape of Eretz Israel. The crucial period for considerations of defense was the twenty years from the 1930s into the first decade of the state. Prior to this time, means to reduce the vulnerability of Jewish settlements were not evident in their design. Beginning with the outbreak of sustained Arab attacks in 1936, a new type of settlement emerged with the appearance and purpose of a military outpost. After the first decade of Independence the military function of these settlements was greatly diminished, because the new state now maintained an army to defend borders. Moreover, the successful Sinai Campaign of 1956 reduced the threat from the regular armies of neighboring Arab states and from irregular infiltrators (*fedayeen*), so there was less need

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for settlements, particularly along the Egyptian border. Israel's successes in the 1967 Six-Day War reduced the strategic role of border kibbutzim even further.

The emergence of the kibbutz as the preferred mode of colonization for particularly strategic purposes is readily apparent in comparative data. Between 1927 and 1935, 31 moshavim, 22 moshavoth, and 8 middle-class agricultural settlements were established—but only 20 kibbutzim.[2] During 1936–1939, 80 settlements were laid out in the Sharon coastal plain between Tel Aviv and Haifa and in the Judean Mountains leading to Jerusalem. It is during this period that the kibbutz emerges as the preferred village model. From 1943 to 1948, another 80 settlements were established—56 kibbutzim and 24 moshavim. In the five years after Independence 213 settlements, of which 79 were kibbutzim, were founded and most of these were planted along Israel's armistice lines. The strategic function of kibbutzim was crucial. The War of Independence did not yield internationally recognized borders with neighboring states. It resulted in armistice lines that were often tense with the threat of armed violence by intruders if not actual invasion of a regular enemy army. The kibbutz was the village designated to define and maintain borders in the face of this continuing danger.[3]

The evolution of the defensive character of the Zionist village is reflected in the innovations in the design of the moshav and kibbutz. Prior to the First World War, most settlements had no walls and were open to the surrounding countryside. Village streets and paths led into the fields or joined with the few roads that crossed the countryside. There were virtually no walls or other structural means for self-defense. Planting small groups of pioneers in distant and isolated locales became increasingly risky by the 1920s. In response to the changing circumstances, Richard Kauffmann, one of the leading planners for the WZO to emerge during this decade, planned in 1921 the moshav Nahalal with a clearly defensive design. The circular form offered security advantages even as it limited the size of the village. Figure 4.1, a photograph taken in 1997, indicates how resistant to change was the initial design.

By the mid-1930s, the kibbutz superseded the moshav as the preferred settlement, and a crucial reason for the change is reflected in its design. With the increasing incidence of violence against Jewish rural settlements, walls were erected. The result was the "stockade and tower" design that characterized the kibbutzim built over the next decade or until Independence. Figure 4.2, a photograph of Ein Gev under

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4.1. Nahalal, 1997. Courtesy of the National Photo Collection, Government Press Office. Photo by Moshe Milner.

construction in 1937, not only illustrates the fundamental design features but the popular place that the kibbutz captured in the public imagination. Volunteers from settlements and even distant cities came to this remote site on the shores of the Sea of Galilee at a prearranged time and in the course of a night and a day erected the tower and walls with prefabricated parts they had carried with them.

This growing attention to security led to the formulation of the "Security Principles in the Planning of Agricultural Settlements and Workers' Villages," drafted during the War of Independence by the Settlement Department of the Operations Branch of the General Staff.[4] This document defined where settlements were to be located, and how they should be organized and constructed. The rationale grew out of the cumulative experience in planting frontier colonies during the pre-state period. As we shall see when we consider "Israeli Villages" in Chapter 10, these principles were refined further in post-Independence Israel through the design of the unique "rurban" villages established in Judea and Samaria, or the West Bank, after the Six-Day War of June 1967.

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4.2. Volunteers erecting the stockade and tower at kibbutz Ein Gev, 1937. Courtesy of the National Photo Collection, Government Press Office. Photo by Zoltan Kluger.

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Nahalal, planted in the eastern end of the Jezreel Valley, offers a preview of how the need to defend an outlying settlement affected design. The inner ring housed the village center and the educational, social, and technical services the settlers required as well as homes for resident artisans. In the outer ring were the farmhouses attached to medium-sized plots. Along the spokes of the wheel Kauffmann designated sections for irrigation and farmyards. Dry farming took place on larger plots farther away from the houses. Together with the social and economic benefits of this layout, there are carefully planned defensive advantages. Buildings, principally the cowsheds that were shared by two neighbors, are erected parallel to the ring road and serve as a protective barrier. Moreover, bunkers are located but a few paces from the cowsheds. In effect these form an outer wall. The community is thus concentrated together at the hub in a manifestly defensive position, with the fields radiating out from the protected core. Only in 1952, when there was no longer a security threat, did planners recommend breaking through the ring and relocating the buildings according to strictly agricultural requirements.[5] Kauffmann's plan was "closed." The design explicitly limited the opportunities for expansion, in keeping with the thinking of contemporary European planners, particularly proponents of Ebenezer Howard's garden city concept. Additional population would have to be accommodated in other controlled communities.[6]

The circular form was not unique to Jewish Palestine. American pioneers typically set up circular wagon camps to protect themselves when they crossed the West against hostile flat-trajectory, light weapon fire from Native Americans. In the Middle Ages, Germans had located their Rundling villages in frontier regions. The circle of settler homes and structures for work and livestock was a logical choice for isolated villages in frontier regions.

Experience indicated that the ring pattern had limitations. The space between the houses on the outer ring was larger than between those in the inner ring. When an attacker penetrated the outer ring, defenders could find it difficult to discriminate between hostile forces and friendly ones. The army investigated this issue and then instructed planners to site homes in frontier moshavim at no more than 30 or 40 meters from each other. Another solution was organizing settlements according to a star-shaped or finger-shaped plan (Figure 4.3). In this pattern, it was possible to develop flanking fire in the areas between the axes. It was also possible to withdraw from the end axes to the more secure core. Using the image of a ship built with watertight compart-

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4.3. Star-shaped settlements in the Jezreel Valley, 1950s.

ments, it was expected that "even if some compartments are damaged the ship remains afloat." Defense strategy also figured in plans for settlements in the Ta'anakh region in another portion of the Jezreel Valley, designed in the 1950s, which provided for "the possibility of opening flanking fire from two of the units to protect the third and enable a retreat to the common center."[7]

The idea of a compact community in a defensive mode—whether in a ring, a square, or any other shape—was explicit in the design of the kibbutz in the mid-1930s. Indeed, one of the reasons the kibbutz became the preferred means of settlement on the frontier was its organizational structure. Unlike the family-based moshav, the kibbutz encouraged the concentration of living quarters with the children housed together and dining and recreational facilities organized in common. This meant that kibbutz members were concentrated in discrete structures rather than dispersed among the separate farming plots of cooperative or individualistic villages. When the moshav replaced the kibbutz in the 1950s as the predominant form of settlement, planners reduced the space between houses in border settlements in order to impede infiltration by fedayeen. Where such spaces did exist, they were assumed to be tempo-

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rary in the expectation that children of moshav pioneers would eventually establish homes near their parents.

Planning the Kibbutz: Strategic Imperatives

The kibbutz came to the fore in Zionist settlement policy as a consequence of the "disturbances" that began in 1936 and lasted until the outbreak of the Second World War. In 1936, Tel Amal, the first of the "stockade and tower" settlements, was established where the Beit She'an Valley connects with the eastern end of the Jezreel Valley. An initial attempt to settle at this location failed when violence erupted in early 1936. The settlers retreated to a relatively nearby kibbutz, Beit Alpha in the Jezreel Valley, and returned to Beit She'an in the fall of 1936 to reestablish the settlement. They employed a method called *homa 'umigdal* (stockade and tower), which has since become enshrined in heroic versions of the struggle to build the state.[8]

The establishment of this kibbutz became an act of popular resistance and cooperation. With volunteers assisting the small band of actual settlers, in one day they erected a prefabricated settlement that featured a tower with a searchlight and a protective wall around a modest compound. Additional construction was undertaken within the protective shield of the walls and the tower's searchlight. Homa 'umigdal was then replicated in other frontier regions.[9] This initiative was a response both to new dangers and obstacles to settlement in the Palestinian countryside in a period of anti-Jewish violence and to political decisions made in London. In January 1937, the Peel Commission, appointed to cope with the apparently irreconcilable inter-communal conflict in Palestine, proposed dividing Palestine between Jews and Arabs. With the prospect of partition, Zionist planners devised a settlement policy to obtain the most generous borders possible. This entailed the extensive use of settlements as instruments for staking out frontiers. As Moshe Shertok (Sharett), one of the preeminent leaders of the Yishuv, noted, "From the political point of view, I know of no more pressing tasks, no more effective weapon, than founding settlements in [border] areas, and thereby creating facts."[10]

The creation of such "facts" had long been part of settlement policy, but until 1936 ideological conceptions and economic issues had been paramount. Since Arthur Ruppin became director of the WZO office in Palestine in 1908, planners had attempted to create clusters of Jewish

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villages to enhance the security of each. Yet, nothing as strategically comprehensive as the post-1936 settlement policy had ever been undertaken.

"Creating facts" led to an immediate increase in settlement activity. In the five years between 1932 and 1936, on average one settlement was created per month, for a total of sixty-six. During the disturbances and until the outbreak of the Second World War, fifty-three settlements, or nearly two per month, were established under more difficult financial and security conditions. This enormous effort was widely supported by the public at large and by the leadership of the Yishuv, as well as by Zionist leaders abroad.

The results of this policy can be readily seen in maps 4.1 and 4.2. The clustering of settlements in a discernible pattern is a characteristic of Zionist colonization. By and large, since the First Aliyah, Jews had settled in the plains of Eretz Israel: the coastal plain, the Jezreel Valley, the Beit She'an Valley below the Sea of Galilee, and up into the finger of the Upper Galilee. This created the base for the "N" of settlement. With the Arab population located largely in the hills and mountains of Palestine, land could be purchased and settled more readily in the valleys where absentee landlords were willing to sell to Jews. Moreover, Jews often settled in undesirable land such as arid areas or in the swamps of the coast and Lower Galilee. Nevertheless, the pace of acquisition increased during the 1930s despite growing opposition from Arabs and legal restrictions imposed by the British Mandatory government.[11] While small numbers of colonists attempted to move into the mountains including the Golan Heights and areas around Jerusalem, the bulk of settlement activity since the first moshavot was in the lower areas—on the plains and in the valleys. The violence inaugurated in 1936 gave urgency to filling vacant areas within these regions and extending out the boundaries from the already existing "N" of settlement.

- First: Ten kibbutzim were established in the Beit She'an Valley and five in the area on the western and southern shore of the Sea of Galilee. In effect, these clusters, added to existing settlements, represent a drive to break beyond the boundaries designated by the Peel Commission. A Jewish presence along the Jordan could also perform several strategic functions: protect Palestine's most important electric power plant, which had been built by Zionist entrepreneur and engineer Pinhas Ruttenberg on the Jordan south of the Sea of Galilee; ensure access to scarce water resources; and create a Jewish presence

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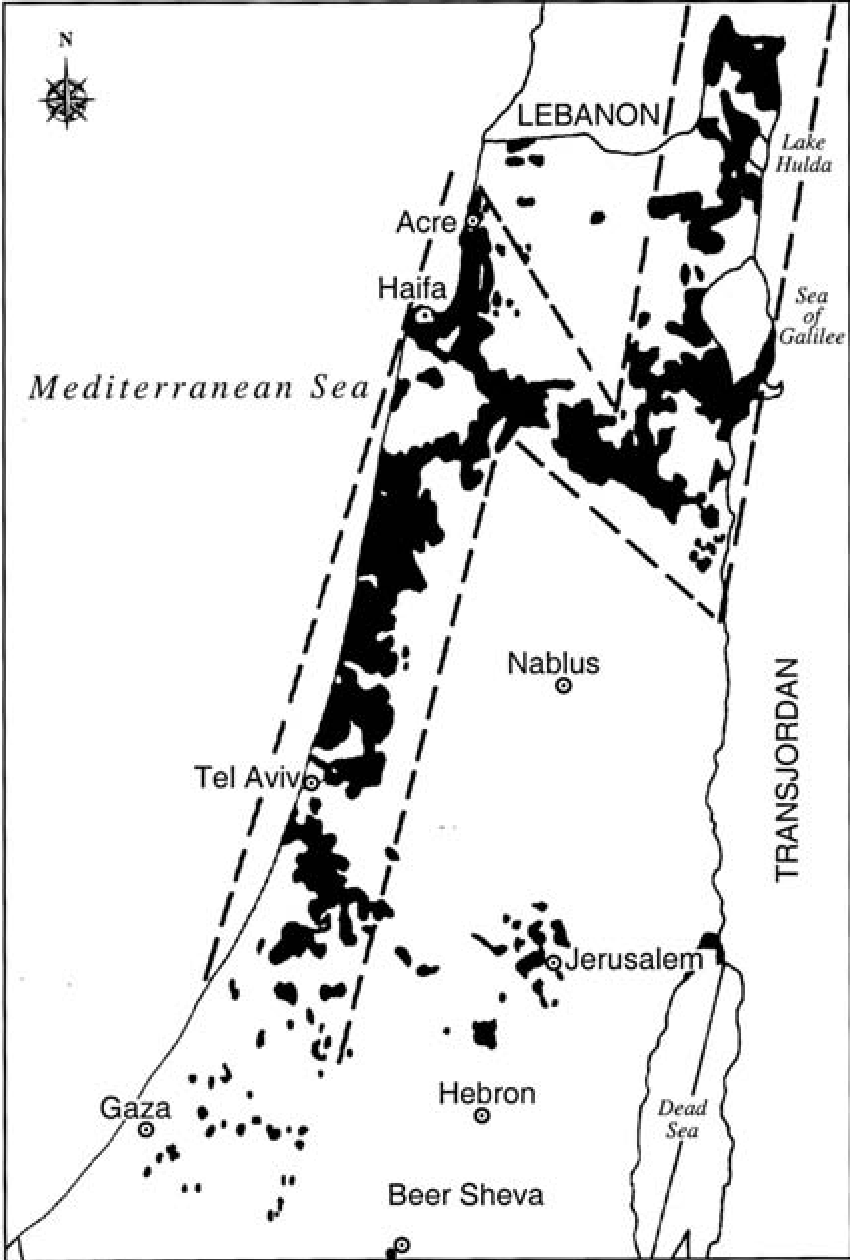

Map 4.1. The "N" of Jewish settlement. The shaded areas within the "N" represent land purchased or settled by Jews prior to Independence. The map also indicates selected purchases and settlements outside this region: near Jerusalem, north of the Dead Sea, the northern Negev and the Western Galilee near the Lebanese border. Zionist planners consciously invested their resources and energies outside the West Bank until after the 1967 war.

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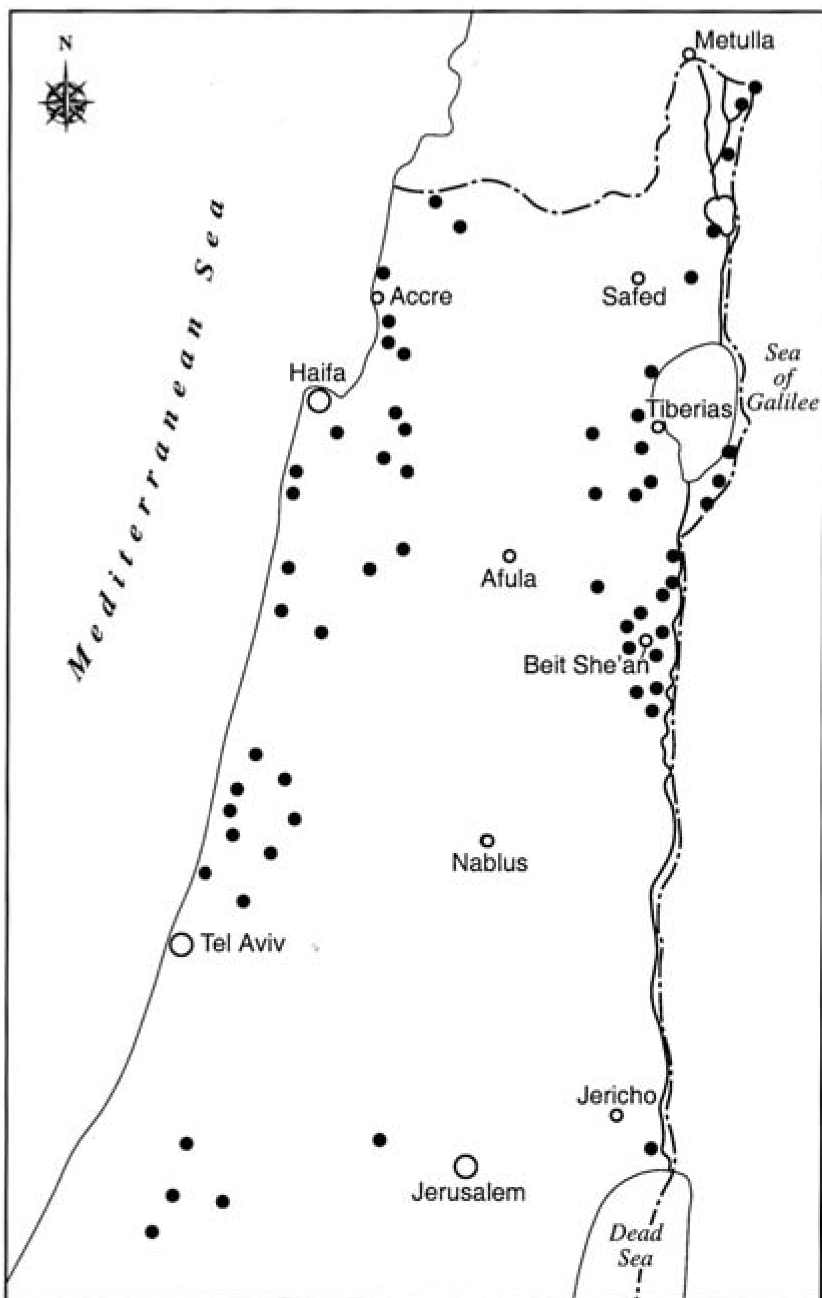

Map 4.2. Sixty new settlements, 1936–1939.

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on the route from the Mediterranean through the Jezreel Valley eastward across to the rich Mosul oilfields in Iraq.

- Second: A cluster of four kibbutzim was established in the area of the Huleh swamp in the Upper Galilee proximate to the Jordan north of the Sea of Galilee. These kibbutzim reinforced a Jewish presence at Lake Huleh, which Jews had a concession from the British to drain. Here, too, there was concern for placing Jewish settlements adjacent to the most important source of water in the region.
- Third: Twelve kibbutzim were established in the region of Haifa extending back to the east and around Haifa Bay to the north, thereby forging links between the city and established Jewish settlements. As we shall see in subsequent discussions, Haifa was a burgeoning urban center perceived by the British and Zionists as potentially the most important commercial and industrial center in the eastern Mediterranean. It was crucial to ensure a strong Jewish presence in this area, and kibbutzim were an important element in this plan.
- Fourth: Zionist colonizers also pushed into the Negev, which the Peel Commission had excluded from a possible Jewish state. Settlement names such as Sha'ar Ha-Negev (gateway to the Negev) and Negba (to the Negev) give expression to their intended function. In one night in 1946, eleven additional kibbutzim were set up to penetrate the region and establish a Jewish presence. This action enabled the incorporation of the Negev into Israel, which both the Peel Commission and later the United Nations had intended to exclude from the territory of a Jewish state.
- Fifth: Regions sparsely populated with Jews but designated by the Peel Commission as potential parts of a Jewish entity became targets of colonization. Thus three kibbutzim were established near the Mediterranean around the solitary moshav of Naharia just below what was to become the border with Lebanon and Israel. Indeed, Hanita (spear), the northernmost kibbutz of the cluster, marked the western border with Lebanon, even as kibbutzim in the Upper Galilee were placed along the eastern border. Similarly, seventeen settlements were established in other important areas in order to achieve an even greater Jewish presence in various sections of the country. For example, two kibbutzim were placed near Kiryat Anavim and Motza, two relatively isolated settlements on the road from the coastal plain to Jerusalem.

The overriding principle was that legal ownership of land alone did not ensure control over territory or a moral right to it. Only actual settlements and the physical presence of Jews who were themselves engaged in productive labor could provide the necessary moral and political weight in the growing controversy over the fate of the country and

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the practical means for realizing and defending political objectives.[12] The kibbutz became the prime instrument in a well-planned campaign to circumvent unfavorable political decisions regarding the future state and to force developments in the desired direction.

It is clear that planners and the public appreciated this. Indeed, the popular reputation and the myth of the kibbutz as the essential avant-garde of colonization probably originated at this time. It was not until the "disturbances" of 1936–1939, when the highly disciplined and motivated graduates of youth movements undertook to expand and defend the frontiers, that the kibbutz became elevated in fact as well as in myth. Idealistic youth answered the call and placed themselves in the service of settling the land, accepting *din ha-tenu'ah* (the decree of the movement) in the arduous and dangerous tasks of pioneering for national purposes. This change in status of the kibbutz and of pioneering reflected a new ethos succinctly expressed by a historian of the kibbutz movement: "A young pioneer who left the kibbutz in 1934 was betraying his friends and his movement. In 1937–9, he would feel that he was also betraying his country."[13]

Anticipating conflict with the local Arab population as well as regular armies from neighboring Arab states, Yishuv authorities exploited the strategic value of kibbutzim and invested in them accordingly. Among the most dramatic applications of the stockade and tower principle occurred during the night of October 5/6, 1946, at the conclusion of Yom Kippur (the Day of Atonement), when eleven groups of settlers built new kibbutzim at selected points in the northern Negev. Most points of embarkation were themselves settlements established between 1937 (Negba and Kfar Warburg) and 1944 (Ruhama). Three had been established as recently as 1943 with the kind of strategic logic that had come to dominate the thinking of planners. In one coordinated campaign, the national authorities set up Gvulot, to the west of Beer-Sheva, Beit Eshel to the east of the city, and Revivim to the south. It is perhaps surprising, then, that by 1947 the kibbutz population reached its zenith, making up about 7 percent of the country's total Jewish population.

Josef Weitz (1890–1976), for many years the chief planner of the Jewish National Fund, proposed this imaginative program for settling the Negev. In 1943, he presented a memorandum to the Yishuv leadership explaining his overall strategy. Although only the three *mitzpim* (observation points) that became the kibbutzim mentioned above—Gvulot, Beit Eshel, and Revivim—were actually established, his plan called for

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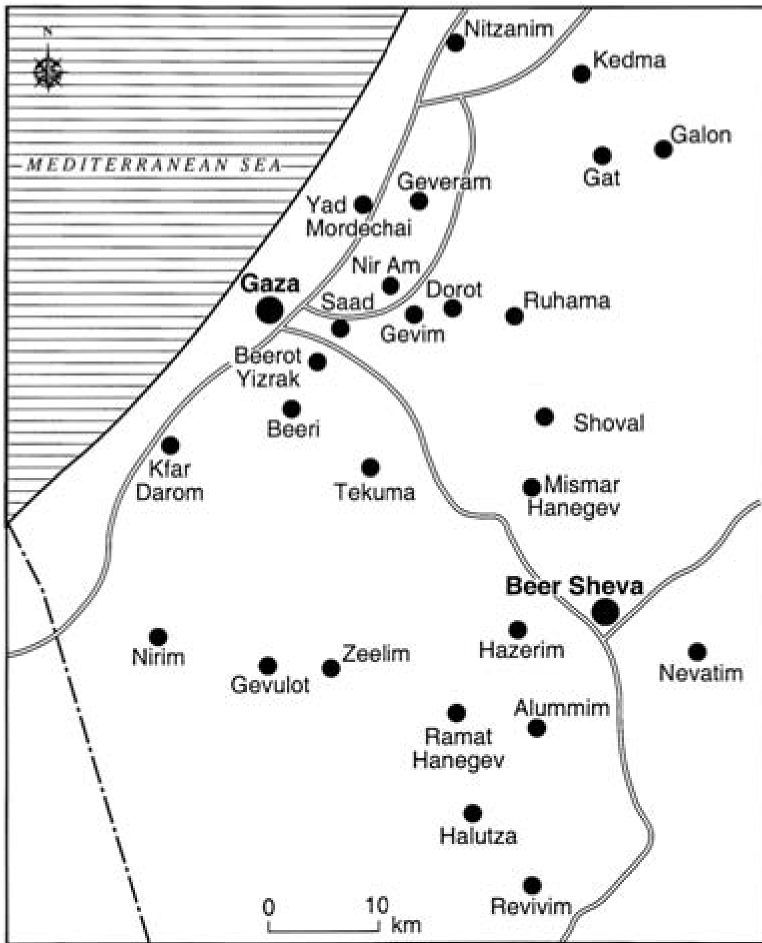

Map 4.3. Settlements established in the Negev desert, 1941–1947.

settling ten mitzpim. He suggested a deviation from the usual stockade and tower design, given the isolated locations, actual numbers of settlers, and other particular needs. Weitz called for fortified enclosures that would have a minimum of buildings, one of which would be at least two stories to provide an overview of the surrounding area. These relatively small structures would include largely public space including a dining room and kitchen, and a room for weapons and ammunition. He also planned for minimally protected structures for animals and farm implements.[14]

The primary purpose of mitzpim was to support the planning of

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additional Jewish settlements. Settlers would be responsible for surveying the land, identifying owners of desirable tracts and negotiating their purchase, planting test crops, and drilling for water. In addition, they would protect themselves. Initially such a community would have only ten or twelve members. They were not expected to be self-sustaining, but rather were to be paid wages by the settlement authorities. An additional five persons might be added if the Mandatory government would give them permission to serve in an official policing capacity. Weitz expected it would take two or three years for the settlers to gain enough information on lands suitable for purchase and on what they might profitably grow. He then anticipated the mitzpim would become permanent kibbutzim. This is, in fact, what happened.[15]

Weitz's strategy coincided with the plans of the leaders of the Yishuv, especially Ben-Gurion, for incorporating the Negev within a Jewish state. The area was not included in the Peel Commission partition plan of 1937 and the United Nations partition plan of 1947. In the War of Independence, Ben-Gurion determined to wrest control of the Negev in accordance with a conception he had held at least since the 1930s. His plan succeeded in large measure because of the presence and infrastructure provided by the mitzpim and kibbutzim.

Indeed, kibbutzim that were established in the western Negev after 1943, such as Kfar Darom, Yad Mordechai, and Negba, played a crucial role in slowing down and ultimately blocking the advance of the Egyptian army headed for Tel Aviv. In addition, the experience of kibbutzim in the Negev was replicated along the borders with Lebanon, Syria, and Jordan, giving rise to the reputation of the kibbutz as the heroic spearhead of Jewish settlement in the struggle to establish the state.[16]

The role of the kibbutz as the key instrument both in defining the borders of Jewish settlement and in defending them was widely and publicly appreciated. To aid in the acquisition and development of land, the Jewish National Fund distributed collection boxes, called "blue boxes," to tens of thousands of homes worldwide. The box shown in Figure 4.4 was sent to thousands of homes in Great Britain during the early 1940s. Significantly, the map on the front accurately displays the extent of Jewish purchases from Arab landowners at that time.

At the same time, it was clear that the same lands were vulnerable. Figure 4.5 depicts youthful pioneers as "the shield of the homeland." This election poster, drawn by kibbutz artist Shraga Weill for a 1949 campaign to the first Knesseth of Mapam, a party strongly identified

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4.4. Jewish National Fund collection box, Britain, early 1940s. Courtesy of the Photo Archive—Jewish National Fund—K.K.L.

with the kibbutz movement, also provides the settlement map that became the basis of the State of Israel. In the background are dots representing the villages that, the poster proclaims, are "strongholds on the country's borders." There was nothing secret or mysterious about the purpose of the kibbutz. Its role in creating the outline of a Jewish state was understood and widely supported.

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4.5. Mapam election poster by Shraga Weill, 1949. Courtesy of the Ben-Gurion Research Center, Sede Boker.

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The Army and the Planners

Aside from such instances as the wall built around the moshava Kfar Tabor, there was little relation between physical design of villages and defense until after the First World War. Settlers depended upon themselves and, in the early stages, also hired guards, generally Bedouins, to protect their produce, property, and families. When this proved inadequate, immigrant Jews who had been active in self-defense organizations in Europe set up counterpart organizations in Palestine: Bar-Giora (named for a Jewish leader who fought the Romans in 70 c.e.) in 1907 and ha-Shomer (The Watchman) in 1909. During and after the First World War, Jews who had served in European armies and Zionist political leaders conceived a permanent, professional force. This departure enjoyed support by Zionist thinkers who urged Jews to take their destiny into their own hands, including self-defense, rather than wait for Divine intervention.

With the transfer of Palestine from Ottoman to British control, the first steps in establishing what would become the Haganah were taken. Yochanan (Eugen) Ratner, a leading figure among Zionist architects in the Yishuv as well as a high-ranking officer, participated in developing the Haganah from its earliest stages and helped transform it into a modern army after Independence.[17] Ratner had acquired military experience in the Russian army and served as an officer before immigrating to Palestine. After immigration, he became a successful practicing and academic architect. The founding dean of the School of Architecture at the Technion in Haifa as well as a senior officer in the Haganah and the Israeli army, he held important posts in the pre-state period. The career of this architect-soldier is a case study for how military concerns interacted with Zionist planning. He served as advisor for security matters in the Settlement Department of the Jewish Agency through various staff and command positions including Head of the Planning Department in the Haganah and in the Israeli Defense Forces during the War of Independence. After the inauguration of statehood, he was not only a professor of architecture but held senior positions on the General Staff, achieving the rank of *'Aluf* (major general).

Ratner's professional involvement with settlement planning began in the aftermath of the 1929 riots when he was invited by Col. Frederick Kisch, Chairman of the Zionist Executive, to tour settlements in order to advise on means for protecting them and to allay the fears of settlers. Like Ratner, Kisch had military experience and relevant professional

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skills. Born in India, he had served as a commander of engineers in a British army camp in northern Africa. In Palestine, neither Kisch nor Ratner could solve the problems they observed. Indeed, in an amusing and revealing anecdote, Ratner recounts the exchange with settlers over the level of defensive planning at the time of the 1929 Arab riots:

> After the initial words of welcome, the representative of the kibbutz, moshav or moshava—it was the same in all of these, the settlers would begin with the following: "Although we are not professional soldiers and do not understand strategy and tactics but . . ." and Kisch would always butt in at precisely this moment and ask: "And do you have a dog?" In this manner Kisch brought things down to earth by getting the discussion directed to priorities and practicalities. . . . The issue of a dog was raised to begin a discussion on a warning system, then moved to water and only later to talk about arms. . . . Incidentally, there were no dogs. So Kisch had to patiently overcome the traditional Jewish hostility to dogs by explaining that for a watchman or guard patrolling at night without an animal was like taking a step towards suicide. . . . The settlers generally paid little attention and believed this was but a way to distract them from their request for arms and a water tower.[18]

After such meetings, Kisch and Ratner would tour the settlement. Often they discovered that an unguarded orchard bordered the homes of the settlers or that a wadi was so nearby that an infiltrator could enter the community unobserved. Wherever they went they encouraged settlers to take steps to protect themselves, especially by constructing fences and changing the location of buildings. When settlers turned the conversation back to armaments, searchlights, and better buildings, Kisch reluctantly informed them that there was not enough money. He could offer only canines, not cannons.

By 1936, funds had become available. In addition, Ratner and his colleagues had begun to develop technologies and concepts that led to the stockade and tower design and subsequent refinements. Ratner moved up the ladder of the relatively limited professional corps of officers who shaped the Israeli army and its operational doctrines. In the early 1950s, he was a leading advocate of a strategy for fortifying small outposts, including kibbutzim, that could secure internal lines and serve as staging areas for defense or assault by small, flexible, and mobile forces. This strategy built on the role that villages played in expanding and defending designated territories. These ideas were shared

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by many Palmach (Pelugot Mahatz, or "shock troops"—the striking arm of the Haganah) and Haganah officers who participated in the kibbutz experience.[19]

From the late nineteenth century through the establishment of the state, the Zionist village underwent a continual and insistent process of evolution and adaptation. Initial colonization was by communities of religious or traditional Jews in moshavoth. In the twentieth century, planners struggled to maintain the most efficient number of settlers in small communal villages, the moshav and kibbutz. Sidestepping the modern age of individualism and mechanization, they drew on insights gleaned from feudal Europe. When strategic needs became paramount, particularly the kibbutz was transformed into an efficient instrument in the political and military struggle that extended into statehood. As villages of one type were supplanted by another to meet new challenges, successive generations of planners and pioneers gradually populated, cultivated, and transformed the landscape of Eretz Israel with hundreds of productive and defensible colonies. Abjuring patterns of agricultural settlement found elsewhere in the modern world, Zionist colonizers maintained their commitment to villages of modest size as they designed communities that would reinforce shared national aspirations.

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