Time, Stateness, and the Other in Development Plans for Sahel El---Batuf/ Bikat Beit Netofa

Ethnographic Engagements
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What can we learn from the intersections of temporalities of natural-cultural resources as domains of “stateness”, or how the state re---enforces its being? This paper engages this question by examining a decades---long conflict over the agricultural development of El---Batuf in the Galilee region. This valley’s agricultural land, mostly owned by Palestinian citizens of Israel, is considered by state officials to be a unique landscape and rare ecosystem representing traditional agricultural patterns and wetland habitats, which have become scarce in Israel.

Based on ethnography of the state’s planning processes, I argue for multilayers of how time and temporality are used as multidimensional and creative governing mechanisms of El---Batuf space. Time and temporality are enacted in bureaucratic and epistemic control within planning procedures, as well as in the spacetime representation of the Palestinian agriculturalist as the “other”. By such analysis, I propose a step beyond the previous scholarly insight of multiple or dual temporalities enacted between the state and an indigenous community. Following Barad (2007), I suggest that indeed matter comes to matter in these multilayered uses of time and temporality as mechanisms of stateness and spacetime mattering in El---Batuf/Bikat Beit Netofa.