



JERUSALEM QUARTERLY

84

Winter 2020



HOME AND HOUSE (Part 2) INTIMACIES AND MATERIAL POLITICS

“We Built This Country”

Palestinian Citizens in Israel’s Construction Industry, 1948–73
Nimrod Ben Zeev

Migrants, Residents, and the Cost of Illegal Home-Making in Mandate Palestine

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Sabrien Amrov

An Honest Broker?

The American Consul in Jerusalem, Otis A. Glazebrook (1914–20)
Roberto Mazza

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EDITORIAL

Home and House

(Part 2)

Intimacies and Material Politics

At the top right of the cover photo of this second special issue of *JQ* on Palestinian homes and houses, a villager, posing on the upper ledge of a burly stone house, stares intently into the camera. One may be drawn in to speculate: The masculine performance of his posture is palpable: body slightly bent forward, and arms crossed over a raised knee as if surveying a field of victory. His confident half-smile sends a clear message, “This house and the family that calls it home are the great achievements of my life.” For most Palestinian men like him in the hill region of Palestine (and beyond), owning a stone house and raising a big family have long been the two most important measures of success.

At the top left of the photograph, the man’s mother also stares directly into the camera lens of the famous Palestinian vernacular photographer, Khalil Raad,¹ who took the picture in the early twentieth century. It is difficult to read her expression. Her left hand covers the bottom half of her face as if she is unsure whether she wants to be photographed, and her features are darkened by the shadow of the long white scarf shielding her from the intense sun. Nevertheless, her status as an equal to her son is made clear by the subtle, but no less commanding position she also holds on the second-floor ledge, albeit, sitting on the other side of the hefty stone stairs that bisect the house. Everyone, surely, must realize that her son’s success is owed, in no small measure, to her stubborn survival, hard labor, and dedication to his welfare during the most difficult

period in living memory: the horrors of massive death and starvation that devastated the Eastern Mediterranean in World War I. Hers is a generation of female rural inhabitants who are still mostly invisible to our eyes, but whose role in knitting a durable fabric of house and home proved foundational to the ability of Palestinians to challenge the onslaught of British colonialism and Zionist settlement in the first half of the twentieth century.



The wife, standing at the foot of the stairs, centers the bottom half of the photograph. With an animated smile that seems to draw energy from the eight children around her, she also stares directly at the camera with a natural confidence and strength. The youngest child is perched on the ledge of her shoulders and the oldest is already in teacher mode exercising authority over her younger siblings who stare intently back at her. Considering the high death rate of both mothers and infants during childbirth in early twentieth-century Palestine, her endurance and vitality are impressive, to say the least. With their house standing strong behind her, she had every reason to imagine a better future for her children.

The real star of the photograph, however, is the house itself. The silent keeper of generational memory and the visible manifestation of indigeneity as belonging, it fills the photographic space with its limestone muscles. Locally quarried, it is of the earth, by the family, and for the collectivity. The eye is slowly drawn to the people-free inverted triangle at the center of the image, bounded by the spatial arrangement of the wife, the husband, and the mother-in-law. Occupying this center point are the

elaborately carved door and window headstones featuring stars, crescent moons, and lattice lines. The aesthetic effects of chisel and hammer work which effaced the stone's unruly protrusions and exposed what was always hidden underneath, testify to the deeply intimate relationship between the lithic and the human, between house and home. The triangle is obviously a point of pride for the owners, as well as of keen interest to Mr. Raad, who painted this scene with his camera. Newer than the rest of the structure (note the vegetation emerging between the older stone work on the top right side of the frame), the room(s) behind the door and window are likely a more recent addition to an older and more massive extended family house. The addition projects a mobile rootedness that carries within it many potential futures driven by the apparent prosperity, dynamism, and fecundity of the family that lives in it. Anchored by the stone house, it is not surprising that the husband, wife, mother-in-law, and many of the children stare back at the camera lens without hesitation, dissipating the power relationship between the photographer and the photographed. It is as if they are saying: "We are here, right where we belong."

It is heartbreaking to imagine the fate of the house and the family; especially the children, who would be young men and women by the time of the 1936–39 revolt, and tragically destined to enter the abyss of 1948 precisely when they should have been celebrating new additions to the family house to accommodate their own offspring. Between 1921 when the British Mandate for Palestine officially began and 1948 when the Mandate ended, their homeland was violently transformed and then ethnically cleansed and dynamited. Some may not have survived the violence of British counterinsurgency campaigns or the Zionist military conquest, which were replete with indiscriminate killing and demolitions of the built environment. Some may have become refugees, never to return. Still others may have continued to live on their ancestral land, but under the suffocating weight of hostile states dedicated to their elimination as a rights-bearing political community.

The fact is, we do not know what happened to the people or the house in the photograph. We do not even know who they were, how they are related, whether this is a family house, or who built this structure.²

The preceding speculative reading of the image is not meant to romanticize, but to seed the imagination about the changing relationship between house and home in twentieth-century Palestine. This is by way of introducing the second set of peer-reviewed articles culled from the sixth annual workshop of New Directions in Palestinian Studies (NDPS), held in March 2019 at Brown University on the theme of "Palestinian Homes and Houses: Subjectivities and Materialities," and organized by Beshara Doumani and Alex Winder.

The editorial in the previous issue (*JQ* 83) identified many of the intellectual and political stakes of this theme and introduced three articles that ranged from the late Ottoman period to the present, and from merchant homes in Bethlehem to planned neighborhoods and Airbnb in Ramallah. The four peer reviewed articles in this issue (*JQ* 84) – Nimrod Ben Zeev on newly-minted "Palestinian citizens of Israel" working in the Israeli construction industry after 1948; Lauren Banko on home-

making by regional migrants in Mandate Palestine; Heidi Morrison on the trauma of Palestinian children whose homes were invaded by Israeli military forces in the Second Intifada; and Sabrien Amrov on the representation of Palestinian domestic space in the Israel Museum – contribute to widening the range of this important line of inquiry. Although they draw on different disciplines and theoretical frames, they all touch on the intimacies and material politics generated by the relationship between house and home, specifically, the act of “home-making.”

The stories the authors tell are painful to contemplate, but they all contain glimmers of hope. Nimrod Ben Zeev’s article, “‘We Built This Country’: Palestinian Citizens in Israel’s Construction Industry, 1948–1973,” blends ethnographic, oral history, and archival research methods to follow the lives of Palestinian citizens of Israel in the Israeli construction industry, as well as the impact their experiences had on their lives and on those of their families and communities. The transformation of many (men), like the husband in the cover image, from native agriculturalists and artisans into racialized migrant workers without ever leaving the homeland, speaks to displacement in place and the gendered political economy of the construction industry. Of course, the building of settlers’ homes by indigenous people is a common irony in modern history. Yet, like all ironies, this process is filled with ambiguities, contingencies, heroic everyday struggles, and unintended consequences. Ben Zeev sensitively examines the gendered homemaking politics as embodied in the actual construction by construction workers of their own homes in an attempt to remake themselves, their families, and their communities after the Nakba.

This speculative reading of the cover photograph is not seduced by how its composition seems to flatten the notion of Palestine and the Palestinians to a depoliticized and sanitized form of authentic peasant utopia that is rudely interrupted, then erased, by a violent settler colonial process. Around the time the picture was taken, Palestine was indeed shaken up by riots against British occupation and Zionist encroachment. But the 1920s also heralded a period of rapid urbanization, intensive economic activity after the hiatus of the First World War, and the laying of the institutional infrastructure of a colonial state with borders, currency, and passports. Important but overlooked participants in the process are the thousands of economic migrants and refugees who entered Palestine from the surrounding region in search of livelihoods and a safe haven. They went on to strike roots through working as laborers and establishing businesses, as well as through owning homes and establishing families. At the same time, many had to contend with a British colonial state that cast them as illegal and sought to deport them. Lauren Banko’s “Migrants, Residents, and the Cost of Illegal Home-making in Mandate Palestine” shines a light on a diverse population completely elided by the national and settler colonial binaries that dominate knowledge production on Mandate Palestine. Through petitions, letters, and bureaucratic records, Banko constructs a series of intimate and moving microhistories of ordinary migrants and refugees – Lebanese, Syrian, Iraqi, Greek, Armenian, and others – for whom Palestine became a home and a haven. The material and affective investments of home-making by those whom the

colonial state deemed as “non-citizens,” only deepened and made more poignant the efforts to resist deportation. Banko’s innovative line of inquiry requires scholars to think more deeply and openly about the nature of the colonial state, about the social history of Palestine, and about the meanings of home during the transition from empire to nation state.

These intimacies of the relationship between house and home, like the pitch-black spaces behind the three stone arches at the bottom of the cover image, are largely hidden behind a thick veil. But the next two authors found innovative ways of seeing. Heidi Morrison’s “Unchilding by Domicidal Assault: Narrating Experiences of Home during the Second Intifada” draws on multiple interviews with Palestinians who were children during the Second Intifada, as well as Nadera Shalhoub-Kevorkian’s concept of unchilding, to analyze the trauma left by Israeli military assaults during that uprising, which invaded and destroyed Palestinians’ home spaces. Poignantly written and creatively structured as an architectural walkthrough – from liminal spaces, like windows, doors, and rooftops that marked the boundaries between interior and exterior, to those like the bed, associated with home’s innermost sanctuary – the essay takes the reader deep into the memories, experiences, and feelings of Palestinians whose lives were scarred by Israel’s violence during the Second Intifada.

Sabrien Amrov, in “Virtual Reality Encounters at the Israel Museum: Palestinian Homes and Heartland,” uses the Israeli artist Daniel Landau’s virtual reality (VR) installation *Visitors* as an entry point to explore the relationship between intimacy, scale, and the domestic. In *Visitors*, museumgoers are able to “enter” (via VR technology) two homes, one belonging to an Israeli family in Modi‘in settlement and the other belonging to a Palestinian family in Husan village. Not only does the installation produce a sense of symmetry between the homes that belies the asymmetrical relationship between the colonizer and the colonized, but, Amrov argues, it seeks in the domestic sphere a “cultural” rather than “political” space within which intimacy is possible. Amrov draws on a feminist tradition to delink intimacy and domesticity and reintroduce politics into the home – especially in Palestinian homes that are subject to persistent campaigns of de-development, destruction, invasion, and other forms of settler-colonial violence.

By contrast, Nadim Bawalsa reflects in “Teta Nabiha’s” on the kind of intimate encounters, primarily those with his mother, that emerge as he attempts to visit the home of his great-grandmother Nabiha (the grandmother of Edward Said) in the Talbiyya neighborhood of Jerusalem. Bawalsa enlists his family in this project and, in the end, seeks to “reimagine Palestinian narratives of return,” to go beyond loss and sorrow and to account for humor, love, and sentimentality. Bawalsa’s reflection was originally a notable submission to the Ibrahim Dakkak Award for Outstanding Essay on Jerusalem. He is joined in that regard by Hadeel Salameh whose “And They Go on Learning” examines the impact of military rule on children and youth attaining early education.

A different kind of military impact on education is examined by Jihad Suleiman Al Masri in “Maqdisi Ulema Displaced during the Crusades and Their Influence on Intellectual Life in Damascus,” another notable submission to the Dakkak Award in 2020. One effect of the Crusader conquest of Jerusalem, and the atrocities that accompanied it, was the diminution of Jerusalem as an Islamic intellectual and educational center. Yet Jerusalem’s loss was, in a sense, Damascus’s gain, as Maqdisi families – literally “Jerusalemmites,” but with an expansive enough sense of the word to include the Qudama family from the town of Jamma‘il, now known as Jamma‘in, outside Nablus – migrated to Damascus and established themselves as pillars of the intellectual world there. Al Masri indicates the particular impact that the Qudama had as key figures within the Hanbali *madhhab* in Damascus, but also in establishing the Salihyya neighborhood perched to the north of the Old City, on the slopes of Mount Qasiyun.

Meanwhile, in “An Honest Broker?” Roberto Mazza revisits the life and career of Otis Glazebrook, the U.S. consul to Jerusalem during World War I, to address similar kinds of tectonic shifts shaping the region and the Holy City nearly a millennium later. Whereas Glazebrook has in recent years been portrayed by Zionists as an “anti-Zionist,” in this article Mazza shows how the kind of relief and aid projects that developed during the war, and in which Glazebrook played a key role, reconfigured the U.S. role in Jerusalem and, in particular, the U.S. relationship with the city’s Jewish community. Mazza, also the editor of the diary of Antonio de la Cierva y Lewita Conde de Ballobar, the Spanish consul to Jerusalem during World War I, thus provides a nuanced account of the life and career of Glazebrook himself, while also shedding light on the crucial role that World War I played in forging links between U.S. humanitarianism in the Middle East and the growing Zionist movement.

This issue also contains documentation from the Jerusalem Statistical Yearbook of 2020, published annually by the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics indicating trends and patterns in demography, health, labor force, living standards, education, culture, construction, agriculture and land use, and environment. It includes riveting material on such unrecognized issues as domestic violence against married and unmarried women and prevalence of violence against children within the family. Data from the census of 2017 released recently by the PCBS contains significant detailed information on regional differentiations in the occupied territories. Here, we provide main indicators on household composition for the greater Jerusalem localities. The main limitation of these statistical collections, however, is their limited ability to produce data for the whole of Jerusalem, including the localities of the city that came under Israeli control in 1967.

As this issue of the *Jerusalem Quarterly* goes to press, the COVID-19 pandemic has been ravaging the city, and the region, at unprecedented rates. The recent death of our colleague, artist Muhammad Joulani, from cancer complicated by COVID-19, at the age of thirty-seven, reminded us of the reality of shortened mortality for so many others during this time. Joulani became well known and admired for his provocative

paintings of Jerusalem daily life exhibited throughout the public spaces of the city in 2016. Overnight he was dubbed “Banksy of Palestine.” His premature departure is lamented here by Rana Anani in “A Death Foretold.” The obituary is accompanied by Joulani’s last prescient and oracular painting containing his faded image leaving a crowded old city room into a foggy unknown.

Endnotes

- 1 Raad used the spelling “Chalil Raad” professionally, seen here on the sign of his Jaffa Road shop in Jerusalem, online at (paljourneys.org) bit.ly/3jBmjc3 (accessed 28 October 2020).
- 2 The catalogue entry for the photograph has no date and identifies the house (apparently by mistake) as the “Bethany [al-‘Ayzariya]: Tomb of Lazarus,” Raad Catalogue No. R-1921, Institute for Palestine Studies archives.

“We Built This Country”

Palestinian Citizens in Israel’s Construction Industry, 1948–73

Nimrod Ben Zeev

Abstract

This article explores the experiences of Palestinian citizens in Israel’s construction industry in the twenty-five years following the Palestinian Nakba and the establishment of Israel. The article relies primarily on the narratives of thirteen Palestinian individuals who were construction workers, foremen, contractors, organizers, and activists, as well as their family members, interviewed by the author in October 2018. The article utilizes these narratives alongside archival and secondary sources to examine four primary issues: 1) the conditions and considerations that drove Palestinian citizens to effectively become migrant workers in the Israeli job market, specifically in the construction industry; 2) workers’ attempts and experiences of creating spaces of safety and intimacy away from home with their peers and, at times, with their employers; 3) the pressures workers felt to conceal themselves in Jewish spaces because of their racialized hyper-visibility, alongside their experiences of the social invisibility which made their exploitation possible; and 4) how workers and their communities made use of the knowledge, skills, and resources they gained in an industry into which many of them were driven through necessity, to rebuild and reimagine their own communities in the wake of catastrophe and to resist the state’s stranglehold on their development.

Keywords

Labor; oral history; construction; political economy; race; gender and sexuality; home; citizenship; Nakba; military administration.

Who erected the buildings, paved the roads, dug and planted the earth of Israel, other than the Arabs who remained there?

– Emile Habiby, *The Secret Life of Saeed the Pessoptimist* (1974)

In the decades after Israel's establishment and the Palestinian Nakba, Palestinian citizens in Israel – a newly constituted minority in their own homeland, reeling from catastrophe and living its aftermath – played a crucial role in the physical construction of the state responsible for their ongoing dispossession. Israel's initial decades were marked by massive state-directed construction, intended to house unprecedented numbers of Jewish immigrants. Many of these housing projects were built on Palestinian-owned land and the ruins of Palestinian cities, towns, and villages. Construction was a state mission of the highest order.

And yet, during the same period, the archetypal European Jewish Zionist “pioneers” (*halutzim*), the ideal subjects of the then hegemonic Labor Zionist movement, continued their gradual withdrawal from physical labor in construction, a process begun in the final years of the British Mandate. The pre-state era ideals of “Hebrew labor” (*avoda ivrit*) and “building the land” (*binyan ha-aretz*), which had made construction a contested and ideologically celebrated line of work, remained in place.¹ However, the task of carrying out these ideals – frequently characterized by hard physical labor, uncertain employment, and dangerous work – fell upon the state's most marginalized populations, and rapidly became racialized. First, construction drew in Mizrahi Jews (Jews from the Middle East and North Africa), who by 1957 made up roughly 40 percent of the industry's workforce. Then, it increasingly came to depend on Palestinian citizens, who were roughly twice as likely as Jewish citizens to be employed in construction by 1962, and roughly three times as likely by 1971.²

This article explores the experiences of Palestinian citizens in Israel's construction industry in the twenty-five years after 1948. The processes through which Palestinian citizens became disproportionately represented in such racialized and frequently exploitative labor, were part and parcel of their broader marginalization and exclusion: the imposition of a military administration between 1948 and 1966, which restricted their movement and employment; massive land expropriation and unequal resource allocation which curtailed possibilities of economic sustenance and development; and purposeful limitations imposed by the state on the construction and development of Palestinian localities. They both foreshadowed the exploitation of Palestinian subjects from the West Bank and Gaza Strip in the Israeli economy after the 1967 war, and resembled patterns of migrant labor exploitation in other settler-colonial contexts.³ By offering Palestinian citizens “a path to survival,”⁴ Israel's construction industry enrolled their labor in the service of the very structures that exploited and excluded them in the first place.

These structural elements form the backdrop of the present article. The article's foreground, however, is dedicated primarily to exploring what John Chalcraft, in his exploration of Syrian labor migration to Lebanon, described as “the optimism of the

story” of hegemony’s “invisible cage”: how powerful structures, because they require decision-making agency on the part of workers, always leave

a possibility – especially in the context of ceaseless structural and social change, fracture, and contradiction – that such agency [be] put to purposes other than those that [work] to reproduce the dominant form of power.⁵

I argue that although Palestinian citizens who worked in Israel’s construction industry often felt as though they had little alternative, workers and their communities used their place in the industry to circumvent and at times even challenge the Israeli state’s suffocating hold. Through their growing role in building the Jewish state, Palestinian citizens gained knowledge and skills in techniques, materials, and forms of spatial organization which they adapted and introduced into the reconstruction of their homes and towns. These capacities, marshalled in the service of informal arrangements and solutions, were even more instrumental given the state’s purposeful stifling of the development of Palestinian localities. Palestinians also refused the racialization and dehumanization that marked them as out-of-place and undeserving, and relegated them, at best, to Israeli society’s sidelines, hidden in plain sight. Instead, they asserted their humanity and belonging through various means, including bringing their oppression into the public eye.

To explore these experiences, this article relies on oral history interviews conducted with nineteen Palestinian men and women who are former workers, foremen, contractors, labor organizers, and their family members, primarily from the Triangle area and the Galilee.⁶ These interviews are used alongside archival sources, newspapers, and film. Following a brief exposition about the narrators, the article examines the factors that pushed individuals into the construction industry. Then it looks at circumstances surrounding work-life – commuting, dwelling, and the relationship to family, community, and home. My analysis centers workers’ physical and emotional experiences of labor, and the multiplicity of homes – in the affective, discursive, and material dimensions of the word – that they made. These included the houses they built for others, alongside the forms of shelter and homemaking they engaged in for themselves and their communities: from establishing temporary dwellings in harsh conditions and attempting to be at home wherever work took them, to applying the skills, expertise, and income of their labor toward remaking their own homes and those of their communities.

I view Palestinian homemaking in the nascent Israeli state as a deeply political act, akin to what bell hooks has called “construction of [the] homeplace.” “In the face of the brutal harsh reality of racist oppression,” such “homeplaces,” hooks argues, “however fragile and tenuous . . . had a radical political dimension.”⁷ hooks urges us to reevaluate African-American women’s fulfilment of the gendered roles “assigned by sexism” within the home, in light of how they expanded these roles to make the home a shelter, a place of rest, and at times the starting point for revolution. Her notion of constructing the homeplace – focused on material, affective, and intellectual care

and nurturing – defines some of the Palestinian (and at times, Palestinian *and* Jewish) homemaking practices discussed below, particularly those practiced by women. However, my emphasis is primarily on how physical acts of construction, of making homes in the material sense, intertwined with the struggle of Palestinian citizens in Israel to be *at home* in their homeland.

Narrators and Methodology

The individuals I interviewed, all of whom were involved in the Israeli construction industry between 1948 and 1973, are, nonetheless, a diverse group, capturing some of the variety of Palestinian experiences shaped by the industry at the time. All but one of the narrators resided in rural locales during this period. Palestinian urban life was destroyed almost entirely during the Nakba, and the majority of Israel's remaining Palestinian population resided in villages.⁸ Shortly after Israeli independence, the nascent state imposed a military administration upon the roughly 150,000 Palestinian citizens who were able to remain within its boundaries or return to their homes in the years following 1948 and who, for the most part, eventually became Israeli citizens. The military administration, which remained in place until 1966, introduced a permit regime and severe restrictions on Palestinian citizens' movement and employment. Palestinians in Israel thus found themselves cut off from potential markets for their agricultural produce and their labor, and struggling for economic survival.⁹ By the mid-1950s, work in agriculture and construction, primarily in Jewish locales, were by far the most widespread forms of wage-labor among Palestinian citizens, employing mainly men.¹⁰ Some narrators had lifelong careers in the construction industry, others only spent relatively short periods of time in it. Some aligned themselves with the Labor Zionist ruling elite of the period, others were and remain ardent communists. Still others sought to make their own political paths or described relatively little involvement in party politics.

Narrators also differed in their access to education. As a general rule, these differences seem to be generational. Most narrators were only able to complete primary education. Narrators who obtained a high school education did so despite prohibitive costs. High school education itself did not become compulsory or nominally "free" in Israel until 1978. Moreover, institutions of secondary education were generally geographically distant from many Palestinian locales in Israel. As a result, even individuals who obtained a high school education often worked as children to pay for high school expenses.¹¹

My conversations with narrators produced oral histories that are, like any other oral histories, dialogic and collaborative endeavors, shaped by a range of factors: the malleability of narrators' memories and subjectivities, their self-reflexivity, the languages in which the interviews took place, my positionality vis-à-vis interviewees, and the settings and participants. These factors no doubt influenced not only the content of their narratives but also the discourses and cultural contexts upon which they drew

and within which they embedded their narratives. The processes of remembering that oral history interviews require are active processes of reconstruction. These take place within communal and even national memory and ways of remembering, impacted by events that occurred long after those being recalled, and the present in which the remembering occurs.¹²

The semi-structured interviews that inform this article were conducted mostly in Hebrew, in which all narrators are fluent, and which was the primary language in which most of them worked, with parts of the conversations in Arabic. However, some narrators were more comfortable conducting interviews in Arabic. Not coincidentally, the latter were also those whose working lives were conducted primarily in Arabic.

At the beginning of each interview, I discussed my research agenda with the narrators, explaining that our conversations would inform a project that examines the history of construction work and the construction industry and their roles in shaping social hierarchies in twentieth-century Palestine/Israel. Occasionally, this also entailed explaining what led me as an Israeli Jew to be interested in this history and project. Understandably, some individuals were initially more suspicious of my intentions than others. They were cautious not to sound too critical of their experiences with the state or with Jewish employers, coworkers, and management, or hesitant to report on seeking work without permits or on workplace accidents. Others sought to meet what they presumed were my expectations.¹³ That is, as Katherine Borland has noted, narrators “adapted their narratives to account for what they think their audiences already know, what they might care about, what they might be sensitive to.”¹⁴

Most interviews were conducted as one-on-one affairs, usually in a single sitting. In instances in which other people were present during an interview, I have also incorporated their narratives. I did not originally set out to recreate or simulate a setting in which collective storytelling of life histories (what Rosemary Sayigh calls *qussas*) usually takes place.¹⁵ Nonetheless, the dynamics of collective settings – interjections and questions of other participants, even their very presence – doubtlessly impacted the narratives people shared. Such instances of “co-narration” introduced questions I would not have thought to ask and personal and familial histories that I could not have been aware of, at times encouraging participants to share experiences they seemed otherwise hesitant to divulge. At the same time, these multi-participant settings may have also caused people to avoid certain subjects or to frame things differently than they would have one-on-one.¹⁶

Occasionally, collective settings elicited the active narration of individuals aside from the intended “interviewee.” I had originally set out to interview former workers, all of them men. Collective interview settings granted me an invaluable opportunity to hear from workers’ families, particularly their wives. This unplanned introduction of women’s narratives, although limited in number, added new dimensions to my inquiry, reshaping my perspective on how both construction work and homemaking were gendered.

Out of Necessity

Scarcity and want were defining features of life for many of the roughly 150,000 Palestinians who remained within the new Israeli state after 1948, or successfully returned to it in the subsequent months and years. The forced migration of roughly 750,000 people, including most of the Palestinian urban elites and political leadership, left the Palestinian community that remained inside the nascent state “a poorer, more rural, less educated, and largely leaderless shadow of its former self.”¹⁷ As Adel Manna has recently reminded us, having survived the Nakba and being able to remain more or less “in place,” did not mean that survival was not still the primary concern of the new Palestinian minority within Israel.¹⁸

During Israel’s first decades – the period of military administration between 1948 and 1966 and the years immediately following – the survival of Palestinians within it required struggle on many fronts: from the right to remain, to political and civil rights and access to resources, to cultural and political connections with the Arab world.¹⁹ Survival also retained its barest meaning: staying alive, not going hungry, keeping a roof over your family’s head. Governmental land expropriation, discriminatory resource allocation, and restrictions on movement and thus access to markets, meant that families and communities could no longer rely on agriculture for sustenance. Employment became a necessity, but it was hard to come by locally, and work elsewhere – namely, in Jewish localities – required navigating the military administration’s permit regime.

As mentioned above, the geographic and financial inaccessibility of high school education compounded poverty in pushing children into the workforce. “Now I, as a child, there was no high school. We finished primary school. There was a military administration, we can’t leave [the village], and there was hunger. . . . So, we went to work,” Ahmad Masarwa (b. 1939), of ‘Ar‘ara in the Triangle, recalls.²⁰ Munir Qa‘war (b. 1940), of nearby Kafr Qara‘, remembers that, “Israel was just established, there were problems everywhere, and people were hungry. People don’t have [food] to eat.” Munir’s father passed away in 1951; his savings sustained the family until Munir, the eldest of four siblings, finished the eighth grade, “and after that, there is no more money. I have to go to work.”²¹

Work in agriculture was the most readily available source of income for school-aged Palestinians.²² Ahmad Yusuf Masarwa first found work, at the age of thirteen, in Zikhron Ya‘akov, a Jewish settlement roughly twenty kilometers west of ‘Ar‘ara. Munir Qa‘war first found work, at a similar age, in agriculture in Giv‘at ‘Ada, several kilometers from Kafr Qara‘. When his family’s finances were particularly tight, Sadeq Dallasheh (b. 1954) would work alongside his mother in the fields below their village of Bu‘ayna. This, Sadeq recalls, was “the first daily wage I made in my life, I was eight or nine years old.”²³ Of the individuals whose narratives form the basis of this article, only Sadeq and Muhammad Abu Ahmad (b. 1943) of Nazareth graduated from high school. Both recall working in construction during high school, and Sadeq stated that he would have never been able to finance his studies, for which he had to leave

Bu'ayna and rent an apartment in 'Ilabun, without working in construction during summerbreaks.²⁴

While not as widespread as agricultural labor, the construction sector, which faced a shortage of skilled professionals and the housing needs of massive waves of immigration, was among the first to absorb Palestinian workers. As early as October 1949, a British diplomatic report noted that, despite the dominant preference for Jewish employees, "certain Arab elements, such as skilled carpenters and others, whose services are necessary to the authorities, readily find employment in the construction of the new Jewish settlements."²⁵

The Solel Boneh contracting company, a contracting firm first established in the early 1920s as the contracting arm of the Histadrut (the Zionist General Federation of Trade Unions) and one of the most powerful corporations in the state, was an early recruiter in the country's north. Mikhail Haddad (b. 1926) of Tarshiha, who was working in construction in Damascus when the war erupted, found work with Solel Boneh in Tarshiha just after its occupation in 1948. He was employed repairing homes whose Palestinian owners had fled or been driven out, so that they could house new Jewish immigrants.²⁶ Shawqi Khoury (b. 1931) of Fassuta had no prior experience in construction when he began working for Solel Boneh, building the new cooperative agricultural settlement (moshav) Hosen, to Tarshiha's southeast, in 1949. He remembers, however, that those with prior experience and skill were the first to be recruited. His recollections align both with Mikhail Haddad's narrative and the 1949 British diplomatic report cited above, as he notes that "in Tarshiha especially there were excellent craftsmen. . . . [T]here were carpenters, ironworkers. . . . They would be accepted straight away as expert craftsmen."²⁷

Ibrahim Shamshum (b. 1933) of 'Araba followed in his father's footsteps when he first set out to Haifa in 1950 or 1951 hoping to find work in a concrete block factory at the age of seventeen or eighteen. Ibrahim's family had fled their hometown of Nazareth to 'Araba after the fall of Haifa in April 1948. He recalls that for roughly two years "there was no work" in 'Araba, prompting him to leave for Haifa. When I first asked Ibrahim, later a contractor and a leading figure in the 'Araba branch of the Communist Party, how he had started working in construction, he replied, "My father was a master builder" (*mu'allim 'amar*).²⁸ Whenever he explained how he learned a certain skill, Ibrahim referred back to this heritage.²⁹

Most narrators, however, had neither family legacies nor prior experience in construction work. By the time they came to work in construction, they usually had already worked in agriculture or other physical labor.³⁰ What drew most of them to construction work was that, when there was demand for workers, wages were considerably higher than those in any other available occupation. All narrators agreed that wages in construction were higher than those offered in agriculture.³¹ When I asked Ibrahim Zahalqa (b. 1944) of Kafr Qara' if he recalls whether many others in the village also worked in construction when he began working in 1964, he said: "Yes, many. What? There was no work, only this. . . Working at that time, say, in '64 or '65, if we had to work in agriculture it would be four [Israeli] pounds a day . . . And

in construction it was double, double and then some, more than ten pounds [a day].”³²

Muhammad Abu Ahmad, who was secretary of the Construction Workers Association in the Nazareth area from 1963 to 1980, linked the availability of construction jobs to early safety problems in the industry and the widespread denigration of “Arab labor” (*avoda ‘aravit*) in Jewish Israeli culture: “People simply weren’t experts. Like I said, this idea of ‘Arab labor’ didn’t come from nothing. A significant number of these Arab workers who came to construction came because they had no other choice. You work in construction.”³³ Other narrators echoed Ibrahim and Muhammad’s insistence that work in construction was for many, including some who built long careers in the industry, a product of limited choices.³⁴

Narrators’ sense of having no other choice should not be confused with self-denigration. Hurt, discrimination, and frustration surfaced even in the narratives of individuals who at first sought to portray idyllic professional relations between Palestinians and Jews. Yet, narrators never expressed shame in doing work “no one else would.” On the contrary, as Muhammad himself put it, “There’s a common saying: We the Arabs built this country. What are you [the Jews] saying? Who built this country? Who built Haifa? The kibbutzim? The hotels? We the Arabs built this country. . . . What? Doesn’t the country belong to us? Don’t we belong to the country?”³⁵

I mentioned this formulation again when asking Muhammad about the many difficulties workers experienced under the military administration. His reply made explicit the claim’s link to Zionist discourses of citizenship as a basis of rights, even as these had moved away from “building the land” to military service: “It was prominent. We would even say it just like that, openly. We argued, ‘What, what do you have more than me? What, you went to the army? I built the country!’”³⁶ Sadeq Dallaseh drew a related parallel, describing construction work among Palestinian citizens in Israel as akin to “national service” (*sherut leumi*). “National service” is a state-supervised system of voluntary work in pre-approved civil society organizations. It is offered to some citizens as an alternative to Israel’s mandatory military conscription. Such “service” is viewed both as a means for citizens who cannot serve in the military to contribute to the (national) community, and to enjoy at least some of the rights and social and material rewards military service grants.³⁷ The vast majority of Palestinian political parties and civil society organizations in Israel have consistently opposed the participation of Palestinian youth in national service programs, which they view as vehicles for cooptation and neutralization of their civil, economic, and national demands.

Unlike Muhammad Abu Ahmad, who cast construction work as a form of republican participation by comparing it to military service, Sadeq’s comparison emphasized both the ubiquity of construction work, and its material benefits, among Palestinian men in Israel:

One thing remains [constant], it [construction] is a national service. [It is a form of national service] for an Arab. . . . How do I get to this [conclusion]? It’s [like] a national service. I want to go and study at the

university? I need some money to pay tuition. Now, where do I work? The simplest thing, whenever I want, I can find work in construction. It's always like that.³⁸

Sadeq's mention of university tuition is hardly coincidental. Tuition support is a key material benefit given those who serve in the military or in the national service system. Construction, in Sadeq's telling, is comparable to national service for Palestinians not because of its contribution to a nation that is not their own and developed at their expense; rather, it serves a similar function as national service does for some Jewish Israelis in that it provides income that can be used to fund higher education. Greater access to higher education through tuition support has been a central point for those advocating that Palestinians join national service programs en masse. Construction work, Sadeq effectively argues, already functions similarly for some.³⁹

The link between construction work and education as a means of social mobility appears to have been broad. Sadeq himself gained most of his experience in construction between 1970 and 1973, when he worked in the southern port of Eilat and in the Dead Sea to save up for university and later during university breaks. Before this, he had paid his way through high school by working in construction during the summers. Sadeq repeatedly mentioned his parents' emphasis on education, and its influence on him and his siblings. Their mother would meticulously inspect her children's homework each day, only to reveal to them later in life that she was in fact illiterate.⁴⁰ Anis Khoury (b. 1952) of Tarshiha, a career educator and former school principal, worked at Solel Boneh for several years to fund his academic studies.⁴¹ And although Munir Qa'war himself left school at thirteen, he recalls that funding the education of his youngest brother – whose birth in 1953 was part of what drove Munir to seek a job – was an important motivation. Multiple narrators mentioned funding higher education for their children as the consideration behind their continued work in the construction industry. Motivations for work in construction, then, could morph from ad hoc survival to more elaborate considerations of possible futures and social advancement within an individual's lifetime.⁴²

The experiences of Palestinian citizens who worked in Israel's construction industry during the first two and a half decades of the state shaped their attempts at homemaking (and remaking) in various ways. Dire financial need constituted an obvious material connection between the two realms. Meanwhile, rhetoric emphasizing Palestinians' crucial role in Israel's construction industry to reinforce their claims of belonging to the land, and its belonging to them, constituted an ideological and affective connection. By repurposing the state's and Zionism's idioms, Palestinians challenged their marginalization under the new state and broader Zionist attempts to cast doubt on their connection to the land. The following sections highlight how Palestinians working in the construction industry shaped other processes of homemaking engaged in by workers, their families, and their communities – the making of homes away from home and the use of expertise gained in construction work to build and refashion Palestinian homes.

In Search of Home, In Search of Shelter

Throughout Israel's first decades, the unequal distribution of government resources and economic activity drew a relatively clear occupational map: very little work was available in the centers of Palestinian life within Israel.⁴³ Employment required workers to travel and employment sites were often too far or too dangerous to travel to and from on a daily basis. This was particularly true in construction, where in 1961, 81 percent of Palestinian employees commuted to work.⁴⁴ Poor infrastructure and barely existing public transportation in many Arab locales meant that the problem of Palestinian "commuters" (*mutanaqilun*) was a major preoccupation in the pages of *al-Ittihad*, the most important Arabic-language newspaper in the period, published by the Communist Party.⁴⁵ Palestinian citizens who were incorporated into the construction industry during the first decades of the state were forced to make multiple forms of home away from home. They transformed construction sites and fields into temporary dwellings, wrestled with the tensions and contradictions of making themselves at home in effectively segregated Jewish cities and towns, and sometimes even found surrogate families. This section explores these various forms of shelter, and the range of physical and emotional experiences they engendered: dehumanization alongside politicization, the toll of passing alongside the threat of exposure, fragile intimacies alongside alienation, isolation alongside solidarity.⁴⁶

When Ahmad Yusuf Masarwa describes the sleeping arrangements in Zikhron Ya'akov, where he began working in 1952 as a thirteen year old, he refers to "reserving a room in a hotel before you go." He clarifies, "That is, you check in which cowshed your friend is sleeping." The tone of his description shifts rapidly:

I was fourteen, thirteen, fifteen – it was the first time I had the honor of getting to know headlice. You get a job, you dwell in the cowshed, you wake up at five in the morning, water the garden, collect the eggs from the coop, hitch the mule to the wagon, and that's just the yard work. Until you actually start moving to the fields, it doesn't count [as work], what counts is when you first lift the hoe until you put it down . . .

After that, that's when I started understanding what the French Revolution was about, and the exploitation, through having experienced it on your [own] body. You can't understand if you haven't been through that experience. It remains [only as] things that are said. But going through it, at [that] age... [When you're] working and you doubt you'll be paid. And what's more, you're enslaved [*meshu'abad*], you're a tool. You have to [work] from five until six, seven at night. And then you go to Tel Aviv, and there it's only construction, or gardening.⁴⁷

Ahmad, a lifelong political radical, narrates his politicization at a young age as rooted in the felt experiences of exploitative labor: from the difficulty of work itself, through the unsanitary conditions of the cowshed "hotel," to the uncertainty

of payment. These physical hardships reduced Ahmad in his own words to a “tool,” not in control of his own body. Revolutionary politics, he seems to argue, can only be truly understood through experiences like these. Otherwise “it remains [only] things that are said.”

After escaping Zikhron Ya‘akov, Ahmad lived in Yakum, a kibbutz on the Mediterranean coast, for a brief but formative period. He arrived at the invitation of the short-lived Pioneer Arab Youth movement (No‘ar ‘Aravi Halutzi), an initiative for Palestinian youth established by Hashomer Hatzair, a socialist Zionist movement committed, at least outwardly, to a binational vision for the fledgling state. Reaching Yakum, Ahmad and three other teens who arrived with him were given Hebrew names. Ahmad became Zvi. He and fourteen other Palestinian teens lived on the kibbutz, studying, working, and eating with their Jewish peers. Yet, Ahmad noticed that while Jewish teens studied for five hours a day and worked for three, Palestinian teens studied for three and worked for five. Supposedly it was a result of the groups’ different funding sources, but the message was clear to him: Palestinians were considered better served, and better utilized, by dedicating their time to physical labor rather than to learning.⁴⁸ Although he left Yakum disillusioned with the movement, Ahmad’s experiences there were crucial to his ability to navigate the next episode of his life in Tel Aviv. When he first arrived in the city to look for work, he continued presenting himself as Zvi, passing as Jewish. His ability to do so no doubt depended on the cultural and linguistic skills acquired at Yakum.⁴⁹

As Zvi, Ahmad soon exchanged the cowshed “hotels” and kibbutz dormitories for a more hospitable arrangement in Ramat Gan, just outside Tel Aviv. His early experiences there were also a reminder, however, that he, like many Palestinians who were looking for work in Jewish towns at the time, was still very much a child. As he describes them, he becomes visibly emotional:

I started going from place to place. I arrived at a house. An older woman, she takes me on for work. I worked in the yard. She made me food, washed my clothes. There was a pot over a fire [in which she washed the clothes]. She looked for work for me, gave me tools.⁵⁰

That living arrangement was at times more fragile, at least from Ahmad’s perspective, than he initially makes apparent. The woman’s daughter (who later became a friend) was a captain in the Israeli army: “When I was working in the garden, the daughter came, a captain, that’s real military. I was shaking, I couldn’t respond. You have to think of a situation of terror. I had no idea [what to do], I was Zvi then.” Ahmad’s fear of having his true identity exposed by an army officer was well-founded. As a Palestinian from ‘Ar‘ara, his presence and employment in Ramat Gan without a permit were unlawful under military rule. Being caught would have risked his ability to support his family financially. It could also have led to costly fines and even the imprisonment of an adult family member forced to serve a sentence on Ahmad’s behalf.⁵¹

Later, Ahmad “went and wrote a letter” to the woman who took him into her home,

Ms. Levin, telling her “who I am.”⁵² After the 1967 war, Ms. Levin sought out Ahmad to discuss her disillusion with Zionism in the war’s wake. They remained in contact until Ms. Levin’s death. When Ahmad describes their final conversations, the impact of her attitude toward him when he was a youth is evident.

Ahmad: I was in touch with this woman until the end of her days. She has a daughter in Ma‘agan Mikhael [a kibbutz on the Mediterranean coast]. [I] came there [to meet Ms. Levin], and she told me, “Ahmad, what do you want? I’m done” [that is, I am about to die]. I tell her, “That’s your business, but my business is that I can’t forget: you making me a sandwich, washing my clothes, and looking for a job for me.” That was a home [*ze haya bayt*]. It was a refuge from the jungle.

Nimrod: It was an alternative to sleeping in the fields.

Ahmad: No! No! The attitude [*yahas*], first of all. An attitude that just wasn’t there [elsewhere].⁵³

Ahmad was emphatic in correcting my misunderstanding. I had suggested his gratitude toward Ms. Levin was because her house offered greater physical comfort than the typically harsh alternatives. What made Ms. Levin’s house a home for Ahmad, however, was first and foremost the kindness and care she had shown him. “The jungle” was defined not only by its often-inhumane physical conditions, but also by the terror and the invisibility it forced upon Palestinian workers. Ms. Levin saw Ahmad as a full human being, deserving of her kindness, affection, and care. When he revealed his identity to her, Ms. Levin told him she had already realized he was Palestinian long before. Unlike at Yakum, he could be Ahmad with her.⁵⁴

Other such living arrangements fostered various shades of fragile intimacy. At thirteen, Munir Qa‘war left agricultural work in Giv‘at ‘Ada in 1953 and set out to find work in the Tel Aviv area. In Jaffa, he found work and a home of sorts:

I went and found work there in Jaffa with some Bulgarian man. He had thirty-four sheep and he wanted someone to take them out to pasture. . . . He had a woman, and they told me, you’ll get fifty pounds a month and we’ll give you food. And the woman would, the Bulgarians, would make these red peppers filled with bulgur. . . . And we weren’t familiar with this, but I grew used to it since [laughs]. And this woman, I mean, she loved me, loved me so much. Even as a child, I mean . . . her love entered my heart. . . . I worked there, maybe for three weeks or a month [each time], before coming home. And my mom, my mom is here [in Kafr Qara‘] and she’s crying and saying, “How do you manage, son?” And I tell her, “Listen, this is what I want: to work. And that’s that.”⁵⁵

Munir thus assuming an adult role by refuting his mother’s concerns, while recalling the care of the Jewish woman for whom he worked, hinting at the role

the latter fulfilled for him when he was away from home. But other aspects of the relationship seemed to make Munir somewhat uneasy as he moved between the roles of child and adult:

Munir: So, you see, back then there weren't showers like there are now. And there was a warehouse by the [house]. And when once a month I wanted to go back home, she would boil water, the woman, and bring it to me, and she would say, "Listen, I want to help you [bathe]." And I tell her, "No, I'm a big boy already, I can do it myself, even my mother doesn't help me." And I, I'm sorry, I mean, there are people who think, I mean, that this was maybe related to sex. . . . I didn't know what sex was. But I knew, when I grew up, that the woman's intention was good. Her intention wasn't, god forbid, that she would, with a child, um, something. She wanted to help me because she loved me, I mean, as a child. She loved me as a child. Because her whole behavior wasn't a behavior of, of . . .

Nimrod: It was motherly behavior?

Munir: Yes, of a mother. Of mother and child. That's what I tell them.⁵⁶

Munir speaks as though the suggestion that there may have been a sexual component to his relationship with this older Jewish woman, his employer who also functioned as a surrogate mother, sullies a connection he remembers as "pure." The episode itself, meanwhile, demonstrates yet another layer of the emotional and physical vulnerability young Palestinians experienced in their attempts to provide for their families. It also shows how fraught questions of masculinity and sexuality could become for young Palestinian men working away from home.

Munir's vulnerability contrasts with common perceptions of the masculinity and sexuality of Palestinian workers engaged in physical labor in Jewish localities as essentially threatening.⁵⁷ Shawqi Khoury recalls working as a plasterer in Beit Oren, a kibbutz not far from Haifa.

Shawqi: I don't remember exactly how we got to Beit Oren, me and a relative. We worked as plasterers. We had a reputation as excellent plasterers. We went there, we started working in the kibbutz, and they gave us food, a place to sleep, showers, everything was fine. We worked there for some time, and they were very happy. One day they show up and say, "The work is done, go home." We went home, but there was work [still unfinished]. And I didn't know [the] reason [they told us to go]. . . . Thirty years later I meet the construction coordinator of Beit Oren at the Party [Mapai]. He was a party member. He recognized me right away, I didn't so much. [He said] "Hello! Do you remember me? I'm Sha'ul who was the construction coordinator at Kibbutz Beit Oren. Do you know why we drove you out [*girashnu*] from Beit Oren?"

Nimrod: He said, "drove you out"?!

Shawqi: Yes. I said, “I don’t know, I was still only speaking Hebrew half-and-half [at the time].” He [Sha’ul] smiles and laughs. . . . I’m not saying this to [brag], just to say what happened. . . . He [Sha’ul] told me, “Listen you were such a handsome guy, all the women in the kibbutz would look.” [Shawqi laughs] Really! After thirty years! I came to eat bread! I came to look for girls?!⁵⁸

For Shawqi, this anecdote is an opportunity to boast a little about his good looks as a young man (at eighty-eight years of age, he still exudes plenty of charisma and charm). Underlying it, however, was a fear of Palestinians and Jewish Israelis forming romantic relationships and a perception of Palestinian workers as sexual threats and potential predators that needed to be “driven out.” It also places Shawqi’s concerns in stark contrast with those of his employers – he was there “to eat bread” not “to look for girls.”

This cultural fear of the sexualized Palestinian man in the Jewish city is also referenced in *I Am Ahmad*, the pathbreaking short docudrama that Ahmad Masarwa and several partners made based on Ahmad’s experiences in Tel Aviv’s construction industry. As Ahmad’s character walks behind a young Jewish couple on a Tel Aviv street – a scene which, despite the film’s generally empathetic and sympathetic approach to its protagonist, places Ahmad as a looming threat – we hear his internal monologue:

At night in a strange city, you’re alone. You know that no one [there] cares about you. That they absolutely don’t want you here. That they think you are dispensable, and that it would be best if you go somewhere [else]: to Canada, or to America. As long as you’re not here – in their streets; in their homes; in front of their women.⁵⁹

When work took Palestinians to “mixed” cities such as Acre or Haifa, or even areas of Tel Aviv close to Jaffa, they could at times rent a room or an apartment, usually from Palestinian owners. If one brought enough men together, you could rent an apartment, as Shawqi Khoury recalls doing in Acre in 1955.⁶⁰ Ibrahim Shamsun rented a room in Jaffa with six or seven other people in the late 1950s: “There was no kitchen. We cooked in the room, we ate in the room, and we slept in the room. And early in the morning we would go to work in construction.”⁶¹ When Lutf Sulayman (b. 1950) of Bu’ayna was fourteen, he worked in sewage construction in Haifa. He and others rented rooms in the homes of Palestinian families in the city’s Wadi Salib neighborhood.⁶²

Renting an apartment or even a room was not always an option, however. In Jewish cities and towns, where most construction took place, finding property owners who would rent rooms to Arabs could be extremely difficult. Of the narrators, only one – Ahmad Masarwa – reported even having tried to do so. Through trials and tribulations, Ahmad eventually found some success and, as discussed below, eventually made a political cause of creating spaces for himself and other Palestinians in Jewish cities,

particularly Tel Aviv. Before turning to Ahmad's public struggle, however, it is important to look at what he and other workers had to endure.

Multiple narrators reported living on-site during construction – making them effectively the first residents of the homes they were building. Despite finding a job with Solel Boneh, in the years immediately following 1948, Shawqi Khoury also took on work privately. In 1955, he worked in the northern cooperative settlement 'Avdon with fifteen other men from Fassuta. Since none had a permit to work there, they risked the journey to 'Avdon only once every two weeks, riding in the back of a truck covered in a canvas sheet, like cargo. Living conditions at the 'Avdon site evolved as work progressed:

You asked where we would eat? Where we would sleep? . . . Eating, I organized my people from Fassuta. Each one would bring food. We took bulgur, we took lentils, we took all sorts of things. And I told them: guys, instead of each one cooking, I'll cook, I know how. I would cook for fifteen people. We made a wooden table, and they [the workers] would come like soldiers in the army: each one would take his portion. . . . We would sleep under the open sky . . . in the field, on the same site. Until you build one house, place the roof tiles, and go inside. . . . To shower, we would stand on a rock, open the hose, and shower like that. That's how it was. It was like that in several places, and then it started to get better.⁶³

Shawqi remembers the living space he and his peers created in 'Avdon positively. The invocation of a military-style order also indicates the decidedly masculine models through which he recalled their time there. However, the relative freedom experienced in a remote fledgling settlement was difficult to obtain in a Jewish urban context. There, matters of class and racism encroached on workers' attempts to use the worksite as a temporary home. The invisibility forced upon Palestinian workers in these contexts was qualitatively different from that which Shawqi and his peers employed on the back of the truck to and from 'Avdon. No longer a tactic to evade the military administration and its regulations, invisibility was the product of broader social pressures requiring Palestinian workers, as racialized and therefore hyper-visible subjects, to "disappear" at the end of the workday, reappearing only once the next shift began.⁶⁴

When Ibrahim Zahalqa first worked in construction at the age of twenty, he was employed as a plasterer in a complex of sixteen-story buildings in northern Tel Aviv. Ibrahim describes the living arrangements there:

I would sleep on-site, but the person we worked for there, he would say, "Look, the people who live here in Neve Avivim, these are aristocratic people. I mean, these are big people and they have a lot of money, and they want to live where even looking won't disturb them. And [while] you're sleeping here, we don't want you to go outside so that they will see you. [If] you sleep here, stay in the rooms or go somewhere where

they can't see you." It was really like that. . . . Before, there were Druze [workers] there, and they [the neighbors] saw them and made sure they were driven out.⁶⁵

The fate of the Druze workers made it clear to Ibrahim and his colleagues that they should do as their employer and the neighbors demanded. They made themselves, as best they could, invisible. Of course, such "invisibility" could only have been tenuous at best. Throughout the day, their work was extremely visible, audible, and otherwise an assault on the senses, as anyone who has lived close to a massive construction project will attest. The neighbors in Neve Avivim were willing to accept the presence of Palestinians only during working hours. Otherwise, they wanted Ibrahim and his coworkers to be hidden in plain sight.⁶⁶

Indeed, the "Palestinianization" of construction work in Israel arguably was (and remains) dependent on Palestinian workers' invisibility: physically, legally, and culturally. Meanwhile, the products and processes of their work, even their own physical presences in Israel's essentially segregated landscapes, were often hyper-visible. Accordingly, some sought to overturn this regime of invisibility, engaging in what Timothy Pachirat calls "the politics of sight": "organized, concerted attempts to make visible what is hidden and to breach, literally or figuratively, zones of confinement in order to bring about social and political transformation."⁶⁷

In the early 1960s, Ahmad Masarwa enlisted such "politics of sight" to launch a public campaign that would make visible workers like himself and their work. He enlisted private individuals, the controversial Hebrew weekly *ha-'Olam ha-Ze* (This World), and even, with several partners, made *I Am Ahmad*. Ahmad's campaign and the film focused on two types of homes Palestinian construction workers tried to make for themselves in the Jewish city: The first, the encampment, was often the bleakest and most physically harsh, hardly deserving of the moniker "home" at all; the second, renting an apartment or a room in a "Jewish" environment, made the underlying racialization driving Palestinian exclusion perhaps most apparent.

During our conversation, Ahmad recalls taking journalists from *Ha-'Olam Ha-Ze* to workers' encampments in the area by Wadi al-Musrara/the Ayalon River (where Highway 20 runs today), which separated Tel Aviv from its easternmost neighborhoods.⁶⁸ The newspaper, known for its penchant for the shocking and an anti-establishment editorial line, published a story, "A Jungle in the Heart of the City," accompanied by photographs of the encampments. In it, the newspaper's co-editor Shalom Cohen, a leftist Iraqi Jew who was a fierce critic of Israel's Labor Zionist leadership, painted a shocking picture. The workers lived "in conditions fit for animals. . . in the foul-smelling Wadi Musrara." Their beds were made, by "spreading rags on the ground; placing a blanket over the rags; under their head they place their work clothes. In the winter? They place rusted tins over the blanket."⁶⁹

Each of the nine workers sharing a cramped, scorching tin shack in one part of the encampment, Cohen learned, paid seven pounds a month in rent – or a total of sixty-three pounds per shack. Cohen also mentions an industrial cowshed whose owner

realized that Arab tenants paid much better than raising cows and began charging tenants twenty or thirty pounds a month. This arrangement was deemed illegal for fear of spreading disease and terminated. The workers relocated to the adjacent fields.

The captions that accompanied the photographs in the article (figures 1–3) mapped the geography of the encampment onto the spatial division of a contemporary middle-class home, complete with guest room, dining room, bedroom, kitchen, and hallway. They thus explicitly drew a comparison to the kinds of spaces *ha-'Olam ha-Ze's* readers likely inhabited and where they likely read the article. Cohen's choice to narrate the readers' visual tour in this sarcastic manner no doubt intended to throw the severity of the living conditions of Palestinian workers into stark relief.

Cohen's article not only emphasized the harsh conditions of the “tin-neighborhoods” (*shkhunot pahim*) he visited, but also differentiated their genesis from workers' encampments elsewhere. Unlike elsewhere, Cohen argued, the forces creating Tel Aviv's encampments were not economic, but rooted in a culture of racial segregation:



Figure 1. “The Guestroom.” Caption: “The guestroom is a few beds in a field of thorns. The Arab workers sit on the torn mattresses after work, receiving their friends who come visit them from the other end of the field. During work hours they leave a teenager here to guard their belongings.” “Jungel be-Lev ha-‘Ir” [A Jungle in the Heart of the City], *ha-'Olam ha-Ze*, 24 July 1963.

Tel Aviv's jungle is unlike any other. . . . Those who live there are not starving unemployed. Rather, they are workers who do not earn badly, who work more or less regularly, and who are in professions for which there is demand. They could certainly afford to rent a decent room. But they can't. . . . No one will rent to them, because they are Arabs. Part of the force of thousands who work in the hard, physical jobs in Tel Aviv and its surroundings.⁷⁰



Figure 2. “The Dining Room.” Caption: “The dining room of the members of the Galilean ‘Arab al-Sawa’ed tribe is simply furnished: some empty sacks are used as chairs. In the center: the morning newspaper fills the role of the table. The workers cooked the food over a fire in the ‘kitchen’ adjacent to the dining room. After the meal they will move to the bedrooms – a long line of iron beds, which cover about a quarter of the thicket of thorns.” “Jungel be-Lev ha-‘Ir” [A Jungle in the Heart of the City], *ha-Olam ha-Ze*, 24 July 1963.

Cohen relates stories of workers being rejected by property owners once they were revealed to be Arab and neighbors trying to prevent Palestinian renters physically from moving in, with “children and mothers” shouting abuse at them. *I Am Ahmad* also highlights such scenarios. In one scene, Ahmad and a friend, Mahmud, look for a room to rent in Tel Aviv. We are told that they are rejected in six of seven apartments they visited. Approaching the seventh, Mahmud suggests they present themselves with the Mizrahi-sounding Hebrew names Avraham Mizrahi and Yosef Malul of the Lakhish region.⁷¹ Ahmad refuses and walks away, while Mahmud enters the apartment. A shot

of Mahmud's arm opening a window from the inside suggests that, as Avraham, he may have been able to rent it.⁷²

Following the 1963 article in *ha-'Olam ha-Ze*, Ahmad Masarwa's public campaign seemed to have gained some traction. Government officials discussed the question of establishing a government-run company to build accommodations for Palestinian workers in Jewish cities and officially decided to do so in January 1965.⁷³ However, by 25 February 1967, when Shalom Cohen dedicated his regular column to the film *I Am Ahmad*, the government's initiative had dissipated. "Perhaps because the problem was almost completely solved," Cohen writes, "not by building cheap accommodations but by the recession." "The first to be hurt," he clarifies, "were the scores of Arab workers, concentrated mostly in construction. Due to lack of work, they went back to their villages and stayed there."⁷⁴

The 1967 war generated conditions even more conducive to concealment. Shortly after the war, the Israeli construction industry began absorbing Palestinian subjects from the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip as workers. These rapidly eclipsed Palestinians with Israeli citizenship in their share of the industry's workforce. Their exploitation within the construction industry, and in the Israeli labor market in general, took place on an even greater scale, its concealment abetted by even greater degrees of physical, political, and social separation and new forms of racialization.⁷⁵

West Bank and Gaza Strip Palestinians lacked citizenship and the social rights and protections that Palestinian citizens in Israel had gradually won over the previous decades. In one of the tragedies of twentieth-century Palestinian history, just as Palestinians in Israel were gradually relieved of the restrictions of Israel's internal military administration, West Bank and Gaza Palestinians were placed under a new form of military rule. Their relationship with the Israeli labor market was shaped, with even greater intensity, by the same dynamics that shaped Palestinian citizens' participation in the Israeli labor market in the period covered here: land expropriation, de-development, restrictions on movement, and employment.⁷⁶ Jewish Israeli public opinion perceived non-citizen Palestinians as several degrees more foreign and



Figure 3. "The Hallway." Caption: "The hallway between the different residential areas is the bridge of stones and planks across the foul-smelling wadi." "Jungel be-Lev ha-'Ir" [A Jungle in the Heart of the City], *ha-'Olam ha-Ze*, 24 July 1963.

threatening than Palestinian citizens of the state. “Israeli Arabs” (or “the Arabs of Israel”), as the official terminology of the state came to refer to Palestinian citizens, remained targets of suspicion and discrimination, to be sure, but Palestinians of the West Bank and Gaza Strip were more foreign and more suspicious still.⁷⁷

Ahmad’s campaign was as personal as it was political. Like several of the other narrators, he spent a considerable part of his life as a political and public figure. Unlike most of them, however, Ahmad’s political and social circles were often centered in Tel Aviv and around figures on the Jewish radical left.⁷⁸ The names

he mentioned in our conversations were a veritable who’s who of radical Jewish politics and culture in 1960s Tel Aviv. I understand his attempts to fight not only for Palestinian workers’ visibility and rights, but specifically for spaces for them *in* the Jewish city, as tied to his own sense of belonging to Tel Aviv. At one point during our first conversation, he stated, “I’m a Tel Avivian” (*ani Tel Avivi*).⁷⁹

Of the rich textual and audio-visual archive his activism generated, one apparently inconsequential item embodies this personal-political nexus of Ahmad’s homemaking efforts best. On the bottom of an inside page of a December 1967 issue of *ha-‘Olam ha-Ze*, a small nondescript ad (figure 4) reads in Hebrew: “Arab youth. Works and studies in Tel Aviv. Looking for a room. Call during work hours for Ahmad Masarwa, Tel. No. 33264, Tel Aviv.” I asked Ahmad about the ad, which he had not mentioned in our conversations, during a phone call. He explained: “I was tired of being rejected by apartment owners. I thought that being explicit might be the best option, just saying it – ‘Arab youth’ – and seeing what happens.”⁸⁰

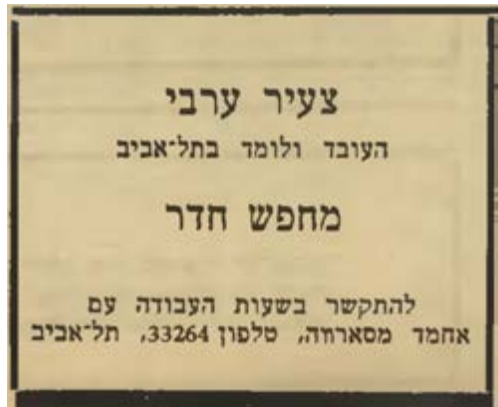


Figure 4. “Arab youth working and studying in Tel Aviv looking for room,” published in *Ha-‘Olam ha-Ze*, 20 December 1967.

Remaking the Home

The fragility of Palestinian existence within Israel during these decades meant that homes away from home could often appear as though hanging on a thread. At the same time, uncertainty and grief in the wake of catastrophe and the host of restrictive policies limiting Palestinian citizens’ ability to build, work, and move, meant that they also needed to make their own homes and communities anew. This remaking was in part a matter of building better lives and better opportunities for themselves and their families. This often included education, as discussed above, but it was also a material process of physical building and rebuilding in the face of poverty and state restrictions.

As part of a broader strategy of “Judaization,” Israeli state policy, enacted by the military administration and the planning organs of the Ministry of the Interior, actively sought to limit Palestinian construction that could expand villages’ built areas onto lands expropriated by the state.⁸¹ An effective ban on such expansion, which annulled previous British planning legislation, was instituted in 1955 by the Regional Planning Committee for the Northern District and then expanded in January 1957. Later that year, the Regional Planning Committee partnered with the military administration to author new local plans for Palestinian localities. These plans defined areas for high-density and low-density construction of dwellings, all within the scope of the existing built areas. The plans were intended to further – and it was hoped, more effectively – curtail villages’ territorial “expansion,” and to encourage internal migration to urban centers as village centers became oversaturated. Moreover, until the late 1960s, most Palestinian localities had no state-recognized local council (*mo’atza mekomit*) and accordingly no locally devised construction town-planning, nor the ability to grant permits for construction.⁸²

These policies in fact achieved the intended overcrowding of Palestinian towns and villages. However, they did not prevent Palestinian citizens from building both within the localities’ built areas and beyond them. To the extent that construction permits were granted in Palestinian localities, they intentionally did not meet the population’s needs. The result, rather than being the hoped-for migration of younger Palestinians to urban centers, however, was the emergence of unpermitted, self-constructed homes both within and beyond the village centers, characterized by a distinct architecture.

Workers, their families, and their communities pooled their resources and the experience, skills, and knowledge workers had gained largely through construction work in the Jewish sector, to craft their own homes. Unable to pay for hired labor, work was done voluntarily by members of the community, thus bridging the technical and material gaps between “traditional” practices of communal building – of the sort captured in a photograph from the Matson Collection (figure 5) – and the housing emergency in which the Palestinian citizens in Israel found themselves.⁸³

Perhaps the epitome of such communal construction efforts was the moment of casting the concrete for a new home’s roof. Even narrators who did not invoke communal construction methods otherwise almost invariably referred to such practices when I presented them with a copy of the chapter discussing construction workers’ songs from ‘Ali al-Khalili’s *Aghani al-‘amal wa-l-‘umal fi Filastin* (Songs of Work and Workers in Palestine). No one recalled the sort of elaborately crafted songs that Khalili discusses from the construction sites they worked on (“No one had the time to sing!” Lutf Sulayman remarked). However, all narrators paused when they read the first line of the limekiln song *Wali’ al-atun* (Fire Up the Kiln). “We say *wali’ al-baton*” (fire up/pour the concrete), Ibrahim Zahalqa said, “So that people don’t tire, everyone starts saying [Ibrahim chants]: *wali’ al-baton wali’*; *wali’ al-baton wali’*.”⁸⁴ Shawqi Khoury also immediately recalled the chant: “This one I know!” he exclaimed, and began singing. He then remembered how both men and women would carry buckets of concrete up ladders to pour it (although when he built his house in Fassuta in

1955, he points out, “There were enough men, so we didn’t have women” working). Ahmad Masarwa, too, began singing, “The workers [here] wouldn’t take wages . . . the neighbors, the workers would come and when we would cast the roof, they would say, *wali‘ al-baton, wali‘*.”⁸⁵



Figure 5. Stereograph of communal building practices in early twentieth-century Palestine. Photographer unknown, “Building Stone House in Village in Hill Country,” Matson Collection, Library of Congress, online at www.loc.gov/pictures/collection/matpc/item/2019694942/ (accessed 22 September 2020).

While such practices invoked a connection to traditional building practices, including the involvement of multiple generations of men and women, narrators also described workers utilizing their expertise in newly acquired professions – formwork, ironwork, electrical work, plumbing, and more. In describing the process, Muhammad Abu Ahmad of Nazareth again shows his penchant, perhaps cultivated through years in the Histadrut, for subverting and laying claim to Zionist tropes. He recalls a representative of the Histadrut’s Culture Department who invoked mutual assistance (*‘ezra hadadit*) as a uniquely Zionist organizational principle. Muhammad responded:

I told him, listen, for us [Palestinians] this mutual assistance was natural. With you, it’s planned. You used your brains [to figure out] what is good for the society in Israel. . . . But for us, it’s natural. He said, “How do you mean?” I said that when someone wants to build a house in our

neighborhood, the people from the neighborhood who do excavations come and do the excavation for the foundations for free. When they're done, everyone who is a formworker comes. . . . Then the ironworker comes. . . . Casting [concrete], everyone comes, everyone gathers: "There's a concrete pouring at Nimrod's, *yalla*, everyone come!" Everyone comes and helps during the concrete casting. When the concrete's done, who's a plasterer in the neighborhood? The plasterer and two others come, in two, three days they finish the plastering – volunteers. Same thing for an electrician, plumbing, carpentry. He asked me, "Is it really like that?" I said, "What do you think, that the Israeli state built our houses? You the Jews had your houses built for you; we built our own. That's *'ezra hadadit*."⁸⁶

This pooling of skills introduced new construction techniques and materials, as well as new spatial arrangements and architectural forms to Palestinian homes within Israel. Studies of post-1948 Palestinian architecture have examined these changes and given the new forms various names: Yosef Jabareen and Hakam Dbiat's "post-traumatic architecture," Yael Allweil's "*sumud* (steadfastness) architecture," and Abed Badran's "crush and transform."⁸⁷ They document the same material and spatial shifts that workers and their families described to me in conversations: a move away from stone construction to reinforced concrete and the increased division of the home into spaces defined according to function in place of the "traditional" single-space home.

Where workers' testimonies diverge from architectural scholarship is in their ability to animate and claim the agency that drove these adaptations, which otherwise appear to be driven primarily by abstract concepts and forces, or forever awaiting their absent planners and architects.⁸⁸ Ibrahim Shamshum holds great pride in his record of construction in 'Araba and in the architectural and technical innovations he introduced to its built environment, starting with his own home:

When we travelled to the city, we became aware of the developments in construction, and we wanted to implement them in our town. For example, if I was building a house, building a beautiful house in Haifa, or in Tel Aviv, or in Jerusalem, I wanted to have a beautiful house here as well. I mean, I, when I built my house, for the first time I thought that the boy should have a room, the girl should have a room, [there should be] a parlor, a bedroom, a kitchen, a bathroom. Before, there wasn't that [kind of construction in 'Araba], very, very little.⁸⁹

Ibrahim repeatedly referred to the expertise he and others gained while working in Tel Aviv and elsewhere as *khibra*, knowledge learned through experience. When he brought this expertise with him back to 'Araba, its application was not limited to introducing internal divisions, whereas homes had until then frequently been constructed around one shared space, but also to technical aspects of the work. "We learned to make concrete bands, how to make columns, how to cast a roof," he explains:

I was one of the first to have such a house and I transmitted the knowledge that I learned to our town. I mean, I'm not an engineer, but I have more experience than an engineer in building houses, in homes. I've seen many very beautiful things when I was working in construction, and I carried many things in my head [*naqalt be-rasi ktir shaghlal*] which we [then] used in 'Araba.⁹⁰

Ibrahim portrays his role, and that of others like him, in changing 'Araba's built landscape as actively and purposefully transmitting innovations "carried" between segregated locations. Although Ibrahim emphasizes the ideas he "carried in his head," which could be understood as an abstract intellectual contribution, these cannot be separated from the embodied skills and capacities he and others acquired and transmitted.

And yet, particularly because the process of building a home relied upon communal support and collective skills, knowledge, and workforce, construction required another resource that poverty and the military administration rendered invaluable: time. Construction workers with relatively stable jobs that allowed them to be home every day found themselves working a "second shift" on a regular basis. "When we started working for Solel Boneh," Shawqi Khoury says, "you would work a regular eight hours. After eight hours, I would go back [home] and help people build for another five or six."⁹¹ For these workers, the first shift of the day was as a salaried worker, often on one of the massive housing projects the Israeli state carried out to house Jewish immigrants during the decades after 1948. The second began after returning home. It was dedicated to building homes and communities anew in the wake of the Nakba and in the face of ongoing dispossession and marginalization.

Unlike the first shift, which saw Palestinian men working in an almost entirely masculinized construction industry, the second shift fostered the defiance of these increasingly rigid gendered boundaries. Palestinian women were integral to the (re) construction work carried during on the second shift. And although many women at the time were not employed in salaried work, they were engaged in multiple forms of unpaid labor both in and outside the home: It was their second shift, too.⁹²

William Andraos (b. 1943), from Tarshiha, began working for Solel Boneh in 1960. Our conversation took place in the presence of his wife, their daughter-in-law, and Anis and Layla Khoury, who introduced me to William. This format, between an interview and a family gathering, seemed less than ideal, but the dynamic between the Andraos couple, known as Abu Jamil and Umm Jamil, produced some of the most fascinating narratives in which I took part. After Abu Jamil described how difficult work was and decried the waning of his physical strength, Umm Jamil interjected:

Umm Jamil: Listen, after work, after four, he would come back home, when we were building the house here. . . . After he would come back, at four thirty, I would cook, he would eat, drink a cup of coffee, and then start working [again]. Everything by hand. I helped him.

Abu Jamil: We built this building, me and my wife.

Umm Jamil: This whole building, this house, he built.⁹³

While Abu Jamil sought to share the credit for building their home, Umm Jamil seemed hesitant to emphasize her role. Our conversation then moved onto the specifics of the construction of the Andraos home, from details regarding the flooring, to the amount of time certain tasks took. Anis and Layla also interjected occasionally, explaining, “This was how things were done,” that is, cooperatively and voluntarily, in contrast to how they perceived commercial construction in Tarshiha now. Then Anis, who had worked under Abu Jamil at Solel Boneh in the late 1960s, brought the conversation back to the Andraos couple’s joint work. This time, with both Anis and Abu Jamil gently insisting on discussing the construction process as one in which the Andraos couple shared, Umm Jamil was more forthcoming about her experience. As she spoke, she increasingly underscored how her role in their home’s construction defied the otherwise distinct gendering of construction work:

Anis Khoury: He and his wife [built the house].

Abu Jamil: Me and my wife.

Umm Jamil: I’m his assistant [Umm Jamil uses the term *‘ozer*, the Hebrew word for a male assistant].

Nimrod: That’s really interesting. Tell me what you did when you were building the house together.

Umm Jamil: I did every task . . . In our roof we have this beam . . .

Abu Jamil: A hanging beam . . .

Umm Jamil: Over on that side it used to be very high, so I would dress up like that [like a male worker], with pants and everything, and I would go like this with my stomach [Umm Jamil mimics dragging herself on her stomach] and grab it [the beam] from above, and after that he would do the formwork.

Nimrod: So, you did everything? You were assistant form maker, assistant ironworker [I continued using the male gendered term for assistant]?

Umm Jamil: I did more than a young man! [Umm Jamil laughs] I had to!

Abu Jamil: I would tell her, “Make this for me.” . . . She would make the sand, the gravel, sand, and cement. I would mix it, she starts handing it to me, and I would cast the pillars. Me and her. Me and her . . .

Umm Jamil: The kids were [about] ten years old, the little one was still

little, the other was older. I would give them a small bucket and tell them, “Help me. Do like this [Umm Jamil mimics pouring sand]. Once you’ve done ten each, I’ll give you a popsicle.”⁹⁴

Umm Jamil’s initial use of the masculine-gendered Hebrew term for assistant, *‘ozer*, could be understood as a slip of the tongue, or as reflective of the perceived improbability of gendering the role female. However, understanding her use of the term as a “mistake” itself seems improbable once her description turns to her physical experience of the work – wearing a male worker’s clothing, crawling on her stomach to grab the ceiling beam – and culminates in the claim that she “did more than a young man!” Rather, Umm Jamil’s gender reversal in the narration reflects her keen and playful awareness of how she and Abu Jamil had defied the gendered division of labor.

Her description of how their children also participated in the construction allows her to segue into clarifying that for her, too, building the house was a second shift job. Already a mother of three when they began construction, she recalls doing housework during the day (“all by hand . . . hard tasks”), making dinner, and “then, after four . . . *‘ozer banyan*” (assistant builder – Umm Jamil laughs, having invoked the reversal again).⁹⁵ Thus, it was not only the skills Abu Jamil learned at Solel Boneh or the help of other community members that allowed the Andraos family to build their home despite meagre means. Umm Jamil and Abu Jamil’s temporary suspension of the gendering of construction as masculine labor, and Umm Jamil’s willingness to take on physical tasks she herself saw as masculine, was crucial.

Narrators frequently described the emergence of these homemaking practices primarily in terms of financial necessity. However, in its defiance of state policies that sought to curtail Palestinian construction, building homes in the second shift was already a political act. This was made amply clear when the state stepped in via its military administration and actively targeted Palestinian construction for demolition. In such instances, construction workers’ skills could place them at the frontline of opposition to the state. Ibrahim Shamsun, recalls one such event in ‘Araba that almost cost him his life:

One day, in 1957, they [the military administration] destroyed a house here in ‘Araba, saying that it was built without a permit. And we wanted to build it, my friends and me. The entire party [Communist Party members in ‘Araba] and I were able to gather the whole village and we decided to help them build it [the house]. That same day we started building it again, we built it that same day, and when we started casting the concrete, the police, the military police came and they beat me nearly to death. To the point that my mother was told that day, “Ibrahim is dead.”⁹⁶

While this was the worst beating Ibrahim suffered during his many years of activism, it was not his first time being arrested for challenging policies he viewed as unjust.⁹⁷ Nor was it the last time the military administration tried to curtail his building activities in ‘Araba. In 1964, the administration prevented him from completing the

construction of his own house, he says, for a period of “a whole year, twelve months.” Finally, Ibrahim called forty or so of his “groups of comrades” (*jama ‘at rifaqi*). “We cast the roof in four hours,” he laughs.⁹⁸



Figure 6. Ibrahim Shamshum and friends gathering around a cement mixer during the construction of Ibrahim’s house, 1965. Photo courtesy of the Shamshum family.

Conclusion

The incorporation of many Palestinian men into Israel’s nascent construction industry was overdetermined by an array of historical events and processes stemming from the Nakba and the subsequent policies of the Israeli state. Economic distress, land expropriation, restrictions on employment and movement, and curtailment of educational and professional prospects all left Palestinians with little choice as to employment. The construction industry’s absorption of so many Palestinian men eager to find work was part of the industry’s racialization, whereby physical labor gradually became dominated first by Mizrahi Jews and then by Palestinian Arabs, as Jews of European origins moved into managerial positions and professionalized occupations.

Unsurprisingly, then, the history of this incorporation from the perspective of Palestinian construction workers is one of dangerous and difficult work, harsh living conditions, and child and teenage labor. It is also a history of their encounter with their

own racialization – of being cast as a threat, sexually and otherwise; being forced to hide in plain sight; and experiencing the dangers and humiliations of segregation. At the same time, however, narratives of workers and their families surface other facets of this history. A history of personal and communal ingenuity, of relationships built, and of remarkable capacities to adapt – materially, culturally, and socially – not merely to survive harsh conditions borne of oppression, but to challenge, change, and overcome them. Not only refusing to let go of home and homeland, but constantly finding new ways to remake and reclaim it.

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Epigraph

Emile Habiby, *The Secret Life of Saeed: The Pessoptimist*, trans. Salma Khadra Jayyusi and Trevor LeGassick (New York: Interlink, 2001), 81.

Endnotes

1 Both of these ideas were central to the Labor Zionist vision that dominated the Zionist movement during the period of British rule in Palestine, between 1918 and 1948. “Hebrew labor,” according to which Jews in Palestine were meant to engage in all forms of labor, particularly labor considered manual and productive, was considered a crucial component in the creation of a “new Jew” – able-bodied, masculine, and wholly antithetical to the frail “diaspora Jew.” It also had a more concrete economic role, buttressing the creation of a separate, independent Jewish economy and the foundations of a state. The related

ideal of “building the land,” of physically transforming Palestine into a Jewish homeland through construction, was equally important. Multiple works have discussed these ideals; Lockman and Bernstein, in particular, devote attention to the competition and attempts at cooperation between Jews and Palestinian Arabs in the construction and construction materials industry. See: Eric Zakim, *To Build and Be Built: Landscape, Literature, and the Construction of Zionist Identity* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006); Deborah S. Bernstein, *Constructing Boundaries: Jewish and Arab Workers in Mandatory Palestine* (Albany, NY: SUNY

- Press, 2000); Zachary Lockman, *Comrades and Enemies: Arab and Jewish Workers in Palestine, 1906–1948* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996); Gershon Shafir, *Land, Labor, and the Origins of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict, 1882–1914* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996); and Anita Shapira, *Ha-Ma'avak ha nikhzav: 'avoda 'Ivrit, 1929–1939* [Futile Struggle: The Jewish Labor Controversy, 1929–1939] (Tel Aviv: Hakibbutz Hameuchad, 1977).
- 2 For the data regarding the percentage of Mizrahi Jews (classified under the heading of “Asian and African born”) in different industries, see Central Bureau of Statistics, *Labor Force Surveys (1957)* (Hebrew) (Jerusalem: Central Bureau of Statistics, 1959), 40, cited in K. J. Mann, J. H. Abramson, A. Nitzan, and Ruth Goldberg, “Epidemiology of Disabling Work Injuries in Israel,” *Archives of Environmental Health* 9, no. 4 (1964): 511. There is some confusion regarding the statistics for Palestinian citizens in the Israeli workforce. In his seminal *The Arabs in Israel*, Sabri Jiryis presents data based on the *Statistical Abstract of Israel*. For most years, Jiryis calculates the number of Palestinians in the labor force based strictly on data provided in the *Abstract* (by deducting the number of Jews in the labor force from the overall labor force, since no separate statistics are given for Palestinians). However, for 1962, there is a considerable gap between the number Jiryis provides and the results of this calculation. Accordingly, the percentage of Palestinian workforce employed in construction and public works in Jiryis’s calculation for 1962 is 19.1 percent, while a calculation according to the data in the 1963 *Abstract* shows it to be 16.2 percent. Jiryis’s figure for the percentage of Jews in the labor force employed in construction for 1962 (8.9 percent) is, however, more accurate than the rounded-up figure of 9 percent provided in the *Abstract*. See: Sabri Jiryis, *The Arabs in Israel* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1976), 304–5; and Central Bureau of Statistics, *Statistical Abstract of Israel 1963* (Jerusalem: Central Bureau of Statistics, 1963), 498–501. For the intra-Jewish division of labor that placed Mizrahi Jewish immigrants at the lowest rungs of the occupational ladder, see: Aziza Khazzoom, *Shifting Ethnic Boundaries and Inequality in Israel: Or, How the Polish Peddler Became a German Intellectual* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2008); and Deborah Bernstein and Shlomo Swirski, “The Rapid Economic Development of Israel and the Emergence of the Ethnic Division of Labour,” *British Journal of Sociology* 33, no. 1 (1982): 64–85.
 - 3 Leila Farsakh, *Palestinian Labour Migration to Israel: Labour, Land, and Occupation* (London: Routledge, 2005); Juval Portugali, *Implicate Relations: Society and Space in the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict* (Dordrecht: Springer Netherlands, 1993); and Harold Wolpe, “Capitalism and Cheap Labour-Power in South Africa: From Segregation to Apartheid,” *Economy and Society* 1, no. 4 (1 November 1972): 425–56.
 - 4 Raja Khalidi, *The Arab Economy in Israel: The Dynamics of a Region’s Development* (London: Croom Helm, 1988), 145.
 - 5 John Chalcraft, *The Invisible Cage: Syrian Migrant Workers in Lebanon* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2008), 231–32.
 - 6 Following the mass forced migration of Palestinians from 1947 to 1949, the Galilee (seized by Israeli armed forces during the 1947–49 war) and the Triangle (also known as the Little Triangle, annexed in May 1949 according to Israel’s armistice agreement with Jordan) were home to the vast majority of Palestinians who became citizens of Israel. Shira Robinson, *Citizen Strangers: Palestinians and the Birth of Israel’s Liberal Settler State* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2013), 38–40, 84–85. Oral history is an essential tool for incorporating non-elite narratives into historical scholarship, its value coming both from the experiences conveyed and the manners in which they are conveyed – what Rosemary Sayigh referred to as a contribution “both substantive and stylistic.” This has been particularly true in the case of twentieth century Palestinian history and historiography. See, for example: Palestinian Oral History Archive, online at libraries.aub.edu.lb (accessed 26 August 2019); al-Nakba’s Oral History Project, online at www.palestineremembered.com/OralHistory (accessed 26 August 2019); Rochelle Davis, *Palestinian Village Histories: Geographies of the Displaced* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2011); Ahmad H. Sa’di and Lila Abu-Lughod, eds., *Nakba: Palestine, 1948, and the Claims of Memory* (New

- York: Columbia University Press, 2007); and Rosemary Sayigh, "Palestinian Camp Women as Tellers of History," *Journal of Palestine Studies* 27, no. 2 (Winter 1998): 42–58.
- 7 See bell hooks, "Homeplace: A Site of Resistance," in *Yearning: Race, Gender, and Cultural Politics* (New York: Routledge, 2015). For a discussion of theoretical approaches to the home and its relationship to racialization, see Helen Ngo, *The Habits of Racism: A Phenomenology of Racism and Racialized Embodiment* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2017), chapter 3.
 - 8 Robinson, *Citizen Strangers*, 30–33; Ilan Pappé, *The Forgotten Palestinians: A History of the Palestinians in Israel* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2011), 25–27. Muhammad Abu Ahmad was the only narrator who lived in Nazareth, the only remaining Arab town within Israel after the Nakba. However, narrators who were teens or young adults before the Mandate's end spent periods of time in Haifa and even Beirut and Damascus, returning to rural towns and villages in 1948 as a direct result of the upheaval of the Nakba. Author interviews with Mikhail Haddad, Tarshiha, 21 October 2018, and Shawqi Khoury, Tarshiha, 21 October 2018. On rural–urban migration during the Mandate, see: Na'ama Ben Ze'ev, "I Came Naïve from the Village": On Palestinian Urbanism and Ruralism in Haifa under the British Mandate," *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* 47, no. 2 (2020): 264–81; Na'ama Ben Ze'ev, "Sites of Assimilation into Urban Life: Rural Migrants' Clubs in Haifa under the Mandate, 1939–1948," *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 42, no. 1 (2014): 114–33; Charles Anderson, "From Petition to Confrontation: The Palestinian National Movement and the Rise of Mass Politics, 1929–1939" (PhD diss., New York University, 2013), 532–549; and Mahmoud Yazbak, "From Poverty to Revolt: Economic Factors in the Outbreak of the 1936 Rebellion in Palestine," *Middle Eastern Studies* 36, no. 3 (July 2000): 93–113.
 - 9 On the experiences of Palestinian citizens in Israel, and the state's mechanisms of control in these initial decades, see: Lana Tatour, "Citizenship as Domination: Settler Colonialism and the Making of Palestinian Citizenship in Israel," *Arab Studies Journal* 27, no. 2 (Fall 2019): 8–39; Adel Manna', *Nakba ve-hisardut: sipuram shel ha-Palestinim she-notru be-Haifa uva-Galil, 1948–1956* [Nakba and Survival: The Story of the Palestinians Who Remained in Haifa and Galilee, 1948–1956] (Tel Aviv: Van Leer Institute and Hakibbutz Hameuchad, 2017); Leena Dallahseh, "Troubled Waters: Citizenship and Colonial Zionism in Nazareth," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 47, no. 3 (August 2015): 467–87; Arnon Yehuda Degani, "The Decline and Fall of the Israeli Military Government, 1948–1966: A Case of Settler-Colonial Consolidation?" *Settler Colonial Studies* 5, no. 1 (2 January 2015): 84–99; Yael Berda, "Colonial Legacy and Administrative Memory: The Legal Construction of Citizenship in India, Israel, and Cyprus" (PhD diss., Princeton University, 2014); Robinson, *Citizen Strangers*; and Jiryis, *Arabs in Israel*.
 - 10 Jiryis, *Arabs in Israel*, 304–5.
 - 11 Majid al-Haj's 1995 study of the Arab education system in Israel remains the most comprehensive, and elucidates Palestinian citizens' limited access to education, particularly secondary education, well into the 1970s. However, it offers little data on the proportion of students that continued on to secondary education (beginning with the ninth grade) during the period of the military administration or immediately after. Majid al-Haj, *Education, Empowerment, and Control: The Case of the Arabs in Israel* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1995). Documents and reports in the files of the government Committee for the Employment and Vocational Training Problems of Arab Youth, appointed by the Ministry of Labor in 1961, include some useful information. It appears that as of 1960, roughly 70 percent of Arab children completed the eighth grade, with some children forced to leave school as early as the fifth grade. A letter from the Ministry of Education claims that 44 percent of Arab students who completed the eighth grade in the 1958–59 school year continued onto secondary school the following year. However, the committee's eventual report places this figure at less than 30 percent. See Mahmoud Abbasi, "Matzav ha-no'ar ha-'Aravi be-Yisrael" [The State of Arab Youth in Israel], undated; Eliezer Shmueli, Ministry of Education and Culture, to A. Meron, Department of Youth and Vocational Education, Ministry of Labor,

- 19 September 1961; and “Dua’h ha-va’ada l-va’ayot ta’asuka ve-hakhshara miktzo’it le-no’ar ‘Aravi” [Report of the Committee for the Employment and Vocational Training Problems of Arab Youth], 30 November 1961, in Israel State Archives (ISA), ha-Va’ada le-Va’ayot Ta’asuka ve-Hakhshara Miktzo’it le-No’ar ‘Aravi (Committee for the Occupational and Professional Training Problems of Arab Youth), Records of the Ministry of Economy and Industry, GL-2/61713 (ISA-moital-moital-0010bbt). Among Palestinian women she interviewed in Lebanese camps, Rosemary Sayigh identified a similar educational difference between those born before 1942 and those born after. See Sayigh, “Palestinian Camp Women,” 43.
- 12 On the theoretical underpinnings of oral history, see Lynn Abrams, *Oral History Theory* (London: Routledge, 2016).
- 13 For example, Na’im ‘Issa and ‘Abd al-Rahman Sarsour from Kafr Qasim, whose narratives are not analyzed in this article as they focus more on work in the nearby stone quarries, opened their conversation with me by half-asking, half-stating, “So you want to know about the massacre?”—referring to the October 1956 massacre of forty-eight Kafr Qasim residents by Israeli border police. When I clarified that, while I was also interested in their recollections and experiences of the massacre, I was hoping that our conversation would focus on their memories of work in the town’s and other area quarries, both were somewhat surprised. A researcher coming to the Kafr Qasim Senior Citizens Center to ask residents about their memories of the 1950s and 1960s, they seem to have assumed, was most probably there to hear about the town’s infamous tragedy. Author interview with Na’im ‘Issa and ‘Abd al-Rahman Sarsour, Kafr Qasim, 18 October 2018.
- 14 Katherine Borland, “Co-Narration, Intersubjectivity, and the Listener in Family Storytelling,” *Journal of American Folklore* 130, no. 518 (2017): 444.
- 15 Sayigh, “Palestinian Camp Women,” 42–44.
- 16 Borland, “Co-Narration.”
- 17 Robinson, *Citizen Strangers*, 30.
- 18 Manna’, *Nakba ve-hisardut*. Manna’'s book was published in Arabic by the Institute of Palestine Studies in 2016 as *Nakba wa baqa’ : hikayat Filastiniyyin zalamu fi Haifa wa-l-Jalil*. An English translation is forthcoming.
- 19 See: Maha Nassar, *Brothers Apart: Palestinian Citizens of Israel and the Arab World* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2017); Dallaseh, “Troubled Waters”; Manna, *Nakba and Survival*; and Robinson, *Citizen Strangers*. An older body of scholarship deals primarily with the economic realities of Palestinians in Israel, including during the state’s first decades: Aziz Haidar, *On the Margins: The Arab Population in the Israeli Economy* (London: Hurst, 1995); Noah Lewin-Epstein and Moshe Semyonov, *The Arab Minority in Israel’s Economy: Patterns of Ethnic Inequality* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1993); and Khalidi, *Palestinian Economy*.
- 20 Author interview with Ahmad Yusuf Masarwa, ‘Ar’ara, 10 October 2018.
- 21 Author interview with Munir Qa’war, Kafr Qara’, 13 October 2018.
- 22 During Israel’s first decade, the percentage of Palestinians employed in agriculture was around or above 50 percent; this decreased in the second decade to around 40 percent and, by the early 1970s, to just over 20 percent. See: Lewin-Epstein and Semyonov, *Arab Minority*, 47–51; Khalidi, *Arab Economy*, 113–25; and Jiryis, *Arabs in Israel*.
- 23 Author interviews with Ahmad Yusuf Masarwa, ‘Ara’ara, 10 October 2018, and Sadeq Dallaseh, 19 October 2018.
- 24 Author interviews with Sadeq Dallaseh, Bu’ayna, 19 October 2018, and Muhammad Abu Ahmad, Nazareth, 20 October 2018.
- 25 Alexander Knox Helm to Ernest Bevin, 31 October 1949, the National Archives of the United Kingdom (TNA) FO (Foreign Office) 371/75268. Knox Helm’s observation hints at what multiple works have since established: that during Israel’s first decade, Zionist institutions and leadership, now at the helm of a state apparatus, were for the first time able to successfully implement the policy of Hebrew labor that labor Zionists had pursued since the final years of Ottoman rule. Khalidi, *Arab Economy*, 34–49, 145; Michael Shalev, *Labour and the Political Economy in Israel* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), 34–42; Zeev Rosenhek, “The Political Dynamics of a Segmented Labour Market: Palestinian Citizens, Palestinians from the Occupied Territories and Migrant Workers in Israel,” *Acta Sociologica* 46, no. 3 (September 2003): 234–38; and Zachary Lockman, “Land, Labor and the Logic of Zionism: A Critical

- Engagement with Gershon Shafir,” *Settler Colonial Studies* 2, no. 1 (January 2012): 28.
- 26 Author interview with Mikhail Haddad, Tarshiha, 21 October 2018. Mikhail’s story, poignant as it may be, was not unique. Palestinians elsewhere were also employed in renovating and even demolishing the homes of their neighbors-turned-refugees to make way for new Jewish immigrants. Andrew Ross presents the narrative of Jiryis Sakas of Kafir Yassif, whose father, an experienced builder and quarry owner, worked in demolition and construction for Solel Boneh in his hometown of al-Birwa, only a few years after he and his family were driven from it. Andrew Ross, *Stone Men: The Palestinians Who Built Israel* (London: Verso, 2019), 41–45.
- 27 Author interview with Shawqi Khoury, Tarshiha, 21 October 2018.
- 28 Author interview with Ibrahim Shamshum, ‘Araba, 12 October 2018.
- 29 Author interview with Ibrahim Shamshum, ‘Araba, 12 October 2018.
- 30 Ahmad Yusuf Masarwa, for example, mentions working in gardening for a period of time. Interview with Ahmad Yusuf Masarwa, ‘Ar‘ara, 10 October 2018.
- 31 Muhammad Abu Ahmad, who was secretary of the Construction Workers Association in the Nazareth area from 1963 to 1980, mentioned agriculture’s seasonality as another reason why construction was preferred. However, as Bernstein and Swirski, and some narrators I interviewed, note, employment in construction was hardly stable and could easily be considered “seasonal,” if for different reasons. Author interview with Muhammad Abu Ahmad, Nazareth, 20 October 2018; and Bernstein and Swirski, “Rapid Economic Development,” 72–73.
- 32 Author interview with Ibrahim Zahalqa, Kafir Qara’, 7 October 2018.
- 33 Author interview with Muhammad Abu Ahmad, Nazareth, 20 October 2018.
- 34 Author interviews with Ahmad Yusuf Masarwa, ‘Ar‘ara, 10 October 2018, and Shawqi Khoury, Tarshiha, 21 October 2018.
- 35 Author interview with Muhammad Abu Ahmad, Nazareth, 20 October 2018. In his seminal 1974 novel *The Secret Life of Saeed the Pessoptimist* (New York: Interlink, 2001), Emile Habiby expresses a similar sentiment (see epigraph to this article).
- 36 Author interview with Muhammad Abu Ahmad, Nazareth, 20 October 2018. On the ethno-nationalist republican citizenship model in the Yishuv and Israel, see Gershon Shafir and Yoav Peled, *Being Israeli: The Dynamics of Multiple Citizenship* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002). On historical cycles of “militarization” and the social and political “convertibility” of military service, see Yagil Levy, “Social Convertibility and Militarism: Evaluations of the Development of Military-Society Relations in Israel in the Early 2000s,” *Journal of Political and Military Sociology* 31, no. 1 (Summer 2003), 73–80.
- 37 The national service system was introduced in 1971 to allow religious Jewish women to perform service other than Israel’s mandatory military conscription. Palestinian citizens in Israel are legally required to serve in the military; however, the state has refrained from conscripting the vast majority of its Palestinian citizens (aside from Druze men), and only a small number typically volunteer for service. At least since the late 1980s, various political parties and organizations have advocated that Palestinian citizens be required or permitted to volunteer for national service. Both right-wing and liberal groups have promoted such proposals, typically arguing, according to their political orientation, that certain rights should be conditional upon such service or that Palestinian citizens should not be blocked from the rights and material advantages it provides. See: Suhad Daher-Nashif, “Trapped Escape: Young Palestinian Women and the Israeli National-Civic Service,” *Arab Studies Journal* 25, no. 2 (Fall 2017): 34–58; Rhoda Kanaaneh, *Surrounded: Palestinian Soldiers in the Israeli Military* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2009); and Moshe Sherer, “National Service in Israel: Motivations, Volunteer Characteristics, and Levels of Content,” *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly* 33, no. 1 (March 2004): 94–95.
- 38 Author interview with Sadeq Dallashah, Bu‘ayna, 19 October 2018.
- 39 Kanaaneh, *Surrounded*, 32–34; Janaan Bsoul, “Ha-Sherut ha-Leumi Hu Kli le-’Iluf ‘Aravim Tze’irim” [National Service Is a Tool for Taming Young Arabs], *TheMarker*, 26 November 2015, online at www.themarker.com/career/1.2784783 (accessed 23 August 2019). Palestinian poet and playwright Ayman Kamel Agbaria recently

- drew a similar parallel: explaining that after high school and before going to university he worked in construction, Agbaria joked, “Construction work is like a year of public service for us.” Vered Lee, “The Palestinian Poet Who Refuses to Be the Court Jester of Israeli Literature,” *Haaretz*, 6 February 2020, online at (haaretz.com) bit.ly/2IqJBVh (accessed 1 April 2020). I thank Orit Bashkin for calling this interview to my attention.
- 40 Author interview with Sadeq Dallasheh, Bu’ayna, 19 October 2018.
- 41 Informal conversation with Anis and Layla Khoury, Tarshiha, 21 October 2018.
- 42 Author interview with Munir Qa’war, Kafr Qara’, 13 October 2018.
- 43 See Haidar, *On the Margins*, chapter 5.
- 44 Haidar, *On the Margins*, 94.
- 45 See, for example: *al-Ittihad*, 17 January 1963, 2; *al-Ittihad*, 27 March 1964, 5; and *al-Ittihad*, 22 May 1964, 6. See also: Haidar, *On the Margins*, 110–12; Khalidi, *Arab Economy*, 141–45; and Naama Blatman-Thomas, “Commuting for Rights: Circular Mobilities and Regional Identities of Palestinians in a Jewish-Israeli Town,” *Geoforum* 78 (January 2017): 22–32.
- 46 Housing for migrant laborers, and its effects on social, cultural, political and gender issues, is an issue that arises in multiple colonial and post-colonial contexts. See: Jane Bristol-Rhys, “Socio-Spatial Boundaries in Abu Dhabi,” in *Migrant Labor in the Persian Gulf*, ed. Mehran Kamrava and Zahra Babar (New York: Columbia University Press, 2012), 59–84; Julie Greene, *The Canal Builders: Making America’s Empire at the Panama Canal* (New York: Penguin Press, 2009); Luise White, *The Comforts of Home: Prostitution in Colonial Nairobi* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1990); and Mike Davis, *Planet of Slums* (London: Verso, 2006).
- 47 Author interview with Ahmad Yusuf Masarwa, ‘Ar’ara, 10 October 2018.
- 48 Author interview with Ahmad Yusuf Masarwa, ‘Ar’ara, 10 October 2018. On the Pioneer Arab Youth, including interviews with Ahmad and other participants in the movement, see Ayelet Bechar, “When Arabs Were Invited to Live the Zionist Dream,” *Haaretz*, 26 July 2019, online at (haaretz.com) bit.ly/33XBcRH (accessed 24 August 2019).
- 49 Adopting a Hebrew-sounding name in order to pass as Jewish, particularly in the workplace, remains a practice among Palestinians working in Jewish locales in Israel/Palestine. See, for example, Andreas Hackl, “Immersive Invisibility in the Settler-Colonial City: The Conditional Inclusion of Palestinians in Tel Aviv,” *American Ethnologist* 45, no. 3 (2018): 346. For other works which explore questions of passing in Israel/Palestine, see: Judit Druks, “Passing As . . . in *Arab Labor* by Sayed Kashua on Israeli TV,” *Third Text* (18 March 2020); Liora Sion, “Passing as Hybrid: Arab-Palestinian Teachers in Jewish Schools,” *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 37, no. 14 (December 2014): 2636–52; Orna Sasson-Levy and Avi Shoshana, “‘Passing’ as (Non) Ethnic: The Israeli Version of Acting White,” *Sociological Inquiry* 83, no. 3 (2013): 448–72; Gil Hochberg, “To Be or Not to Be an Israeli Arab: Sayed Kashua and the Prospect of Minority Speech-Acts,” *Comparative Literature* 62, no. 1 (2010): 68–88; and Carol Bardenstein, “Cross/Cast: Passing in Israeli and Palestinian Cinema,” in *Palestine, Israel, and the Politics of Popular Culture*, eds. Rebecca L. Stein and Ted Swedenburg (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2005): 99–125.
- 50 Author interview with Ahmad Yusuf Masarwa, ‘Ar’ara, 10 October 2018.
- 51 Robinson, *Citizen Strangers*, 42–45.
- 52 Author interview with Ahmad Yusuf Masarwa, ‘Ar’ara, 10 October 2018.
- 53 Author interview with Ahmad Yusuf Masarwa, ‘Ar’ara, 10 October 2018.
- 54 In this sense, Ms. Levin had provided Ahmad with a “homeplace” as hooks defines it – a humanizing place of nurture, care, and rest. See hooks, “Homeplace.”
- 55 Author interview with Munir Qa’war, Kafr Qara’, 13 October 2018.
- 56 Author interview with Munir Qa’war, Kafr Qara’, 13 October 2018.
- 57 A considerable body of scholarship has investigated perceptions of the racialized “other” and the “native” as a sexual threat in colonial and settler colonial contexts. See, for example: Jacquelyn Dowd Hall, *Revolt against Chivalry: Jessie Daniel Ames and the Women’s Campaign against Lynching* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993); Jock McCulloch, *Black Peril, White Virtue: Sexual Crime in Southern Rhodesia, 1902–1935* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2000); Ann Laura Stoler, *Carnal Knowledge and Imperial Power: Race and*

- the Intimate in Colonial Rule* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002); and Anna Clark, *Desire: A History of European Sexuality* (London: Routledge, 2019).
- 58 Author interview with Shawqi Khoury, Tarshiha, 21 October 2018.
- 59 *Ani Ahmad* [I Am Ahmad], directed by Avshalom Katz, 1966. Concern over Palestinian men in Jewish spaces dates back to the Mandate and is amply represented in Israeli film and literature. See: Yosefa Loshitzky, *Identity Politics on the Israeli Screen* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2001); and Yochai Oppenheimer, *Me'ever la-Gader: Yitzug ha-'Aravim ba-Siporet ha-'Ivrit u-ha-Yisraelit (1906–2005)* [Barriers: The Representation of the Arab in Hebrew and Israeli Fiction, 1906–2005] (Tel Aviv: 'Am 'Oved, 2008).
- 60 Author interview with Shawqi Khoury, Tarshiha, 21 October 2018. A report on youth between ages twelve and seventeen in Nazareth, authored as part of the work of the government's Committee for the Employment and Vocational Training Problems of Arab Youth in late 1961, and dealing primarily with young teenagers employed in coffee shops, restaurants, and retail locations, mentions instances of up to fifteen teenagers sharing a room in Haifa during the winter months, when sleeping outside became no longer possible. "Skira 'al Matzav ha-No'ar be-Natzrat, Gilim [*sic*] 12–17" [Overview of the State of Youth in Nazareth, Ages 12–17], undated, ISA-moital-moital-0010bbt [RG 2/GL-2/61713].
- 61 Author interview with Ibrahim Shamshum, 'Araba, 12 October 2018.
- 62 Author interview with Lutf Sulayman, Bu'ayna, 19 October 2018.
- 63 Author interview with Shawqi Khoury, Tarshiha, 21 October 2018.
- 64 Helen Ngo notes that both Frantz Fanon and George Yancy's theorization of the hyper-visibility of racialized bodies, particularly those of Black men, is "usually bound with associations of danger and violence," resulting in an alienation from one's own body. Without facilely equating experiences of blackness in the colonial metropole or the United States and Palestinianness in Israel/Palestine, it is nonetheless important, in my view, to acknowledge their similarities and draw upon the critical insights of scholars of race who focus on blackness. Ngo, *Habits of Racism*, chapter 2; George Yancy, *Black Bodies, White Gazes: The Continuing Significance of Race* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2008); and Frantz Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks* (New York: Grove Press, 2008).
- 65 Author interview with Ibrahim Zahalqa, Kafr Qara', 7 October 2018.
- 66 I borrow the term "hidden in plain sight" from Timothy Pachirat, *Every Twelve Seconds: Industrialized Slaughter and the Politics of Sight* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2011). On "immersive invisibility," which primarily middle-class Palestinian citizens experience and practice in contemporary Tel Aviv, see Hackl, "Immersive Invisibility."
- 67 Pachirat, *Every Twelve Seconds*, 23. "Invisible labor/work" has for some time now been the object of considerable study. Originally applied in the 1980s to describe unpaid work carried out primarily by women and not recognized as labor, the concept has since expanded to encompass unrecognized emotional and habitual components of labor, so-called "virtual" and production labor carried out remotely and hidden from consumers, the purposeful erasure of workers' racial/ethnic identities in certain industries, physically sequestered forms of work, and more. The concept's expanding scope has been accompanied by attempts to better define it as an analytic category. Erin Hatton suggests that invisible work/labor be defined as "labor that is economically devalued through three intersecting sociological mechanisms . . . cultural, legal, and spatial mechanisms of invisibility – which operate in different ways and to different degrees." Palestinian citizens' work in Israel's construction industry clearly demonstrates the intersectional and mutually constitutive workings of all three mechanisms. See: Erin Hatton, "Mechanisms of Invisibility: Rethinking the Concept of Invisible Work," *Work, Employment, and Society* 31, no. 2 (2017): 336–51; Marion G. Crain, Winifred R. Poster, and Miriam A. Cherry, eds., *Invisible Labor: Hidden Work in the Contemporary World* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2016); Jill Esbenshade, "The 'Crisis' over Day Labor: The Politics of Visibility and Public Space," *WorkingUSA* 3, no. 6 (March–April 2000): 27–70; Arlie Russel Hochschild, *The Managed Heart: Commercialization of Human Feeling* (Berkeley: University of

- California Press, 2012); and Arlene Kaplan Daniels, "Invisible Work," *Social Problems* 34, no. 5 (December 1987): 403–15.
- 68 Author interview with Ahmad Yusuf Masarwa, 'Ar'ara, 10 October 2018.
- 69 "Jungel be-Lev ha-'Ir" [A Jungle in the Heart of the City], *ha-'Olam ha-Ze*, 24 July 1963, 10–11. The article does not credit a writer, but Shalom Cohen revealed his authorship in a later column. See Shalom Cohen, "Kor'e Yakar" [Dear Reader], *ha-'Olam ha-Ze*, 15 February 1967, 2.
- 70 "Jungel be-Lev ha-'Ir," 10–11.
- 71 From the mid-1950s until the early 1960s, the Israeli government undertook a mass project of settling primarily Mizrahi Jews in the Lakhish region. See Smadar Sharon, "*Kakh kovshim moledet*": *tikhnun u-yishuv hevel Lakhish be-shnot ha-hamishim* ["And Thus a Homeland is Conquered": Planning and Settlement in 1950s Lakhish Region] (Haifa: Pardes Hotza'a la-Or, 2017).
- 72 The practice of passing as Jewish is highlighted elsewhere in the film, when Ahmad Sabr Masarwa, the narrator, relates the story of another Palestinian worker, Jamal, who after being beaten by Jewish coworkers at a factory, started presenting himself as Yitzhak and wearing a Star of David necklace. Ahmad Yusuf Masarwa, as noted above, presented himself as Zvi for a prolonged period as a teenager. Ahmad's refusal to "pass" in the film, in contrast to his real-life experiences, calls attention to the sense of loss that accompanies passing, despite the social, economic, and political gains it offers. See Allyson Hobbs, *A Chosen Exile: A History of Racial Passing in American Life* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2014).
- 73 *Ha-Olam ha-Ze*, 13 January 1965, 26.
- 74 Cohen, "Kor'e Yakar." What Cohen describes in the article, Palestinian workers being the first to be hurt by the recession, seems to have been part of a broader discriminatory phenomenon. Several narrators mentioned events when Palestinian workers were singled out as "the first to go" at times when project managers decided to fire workers due to financial conditions. Author interviews with Muhammad Abu Ahmad, Nazareth, 20 October 2018, and Shawqi Khoury, Tarshiha, 21 October 2018.
- 75 Farsakh, *Palestinian Labour Migration*; and Portugali, *Implicate Relations*.
- 76 Yael Berda, *Living Emergency: Israel's Permit Regime in the Occupied West Bank* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2017); Sara M. Roy, *The Gaza Strip: The Political Economy of De-Development* (Washington: Institute for Palestine Studies, 2016); Farsakh, *Palestinian Labour Migration*; and Portugali, *Implicate Relations*.
- 77 On the term "Israeli Arabs," see Dan Rabinowitz and Khawla Abu-Baker, *Coffins on Our Shoulders: The Experience of the Palestinian Citizens of Israel* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005), 43–44.
- 78 Early on Ahmad was involved with Uri Avneri and Shalom Cohen's *ha-'Olam ha-Ze – Koah Hadash* (This World – A New Force) party, which fielded candidates for the Israeli Knesset in 1965 and 1969, and with the Socialist Organization in Israel (more commonly known by the name of its monthly publication, *Matzpen*), an organization founded in 1962 by former members of the Communist party pushed out due to their criticism of the Soviet Union. Author interview with Ahmad Yusuf Masarwa, 'Ar'ara, 10 October 2018.
- 79 Today, Ahmad refuses a politics of separation in Israel/Palestine, using a Yiddish expression to drive the point further still: "I don't believe in a matter of Arabs and Jews, and not in two states. It's all – you don't know Yiddish do you? It's all *kalle kanyes* [someone with no skill or knowledge]. Because you can't separate. If you ask me, my whole being used to be the friends in Tel Aviv. [When people] ask my wife how I look so well, she says, 'It's because of his friends.'" Author interview with Ahmad Yusuf Masarwa, 'Ar'ara, 10 October 2018.
- 80 *Ha-'Olam ha-Ze*, 20 December 1967, 4; author communication with Ahmad Yusuf Masarwa, 6 February 2019.
- 81 Oren Yiftachel, *Ethnocracy: Land and Identity Politics in Israel/Palestine* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006); and Ghazi Falah, "Israeli 'Judaization' Policy in the Galilee," *Journal of Palestine Studies* 20, no. 4 (Summer 1991): 69–85.
- 82 Yair Bäuml, "Israel's Military Rule over Its Palestinian Citizens (1948–1968): Shaping the Israeli Segregation System," in *Israel and its Palestinian Citizens: Ethnic Privileges in the Jewish State*, ed. Nadim N. Rouhana and Sahar S. Huneidi (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 118; Yosef Jabareen

- and Hakam Dbiat, *Adrikhalut ve-orientalizm ba-aretz* [Architecture and Orientalism in the Country] (Haifa: ha-Merkaz le-Heker ha-‘Ir ve-ha-Ezor, 2014), 261; Yair Bäuml, *Tzel kahol lavan: mediniyut ha-mimsad ha-Isra’eli u-pe‘ulotav be-kerev ha-ezrahim ha-‘Aravim be-Israel: ha-shanim ha-me‘atzvot, 1958–1968* [A Blue and White Shadow: The Israeli Establishment’s Policy and Actions among Its Arab Citizens: The Formative Years, 1958–1968] (Haifa: Pardes, 2007), 142–45; and Rassem Khamaisi, *Mi-tikhnun magbil le-tikhnun mefateah ba-yishuvim ha-‘Aravi‘im be-Israel* [From Restrictive Planning to Developmental Planning in Arab Localities in Israel] (Jerusalem: Floersheimer Institute for Policy Studies, 1993), 8–12.
- 83 For studies of “traditional” Palestinian construction methods and house types, see: Ron Fuchs, “The Palestinian Arab House and the Islamic ‘Primitive Hut,’” *Muqarnas* 15 (1998): 157–77; and Tawfiq Canaan, *The Palestinian Arab House: Its Architecture and Its Folklore* (Jerusalem: Syrian Orphanage Press, 1933). Recent works call particular attention to the reliance on self-construction among Palestinian citizens in Israel following the Nakba. See: Abed Badran, *Space Design, Making and Tectonics in Palestinian Architecture in Israel: Impacts of the Israeli Project* (PhD diss., Cardiff University, 2017); Yael Allweil, *Homeland: Zionism as Housing Regime, 1860–2011* (New York: Routledge, 2017), especially chapter 7; and Jabareen and Dbiat, *Adrikhalut*, especially chapter 6.
- 84 ‘Ali al-Khalili, *Aghani al-‘amal wa-l-‘umal fi-Filastin* [Songs of Labor and Laborers in Palestine] (Beirut: Dar Ibn Khaldun, 1980), 88–89; author interviews with Ibrahim Zahalqa, Kafir Qara’, 7 October 2018, and Lutf Sulayman, Bu‘ayna, 19 October 2018. Basma Fahoum has called my attention to another variation of this song, *Wali‘ al-babur*. This iteration was sung by children in anticipation of the starting of any kind of engine or gas stove/burner (*babur*). “*Wali‘ . . .*” thus sits at a sung juncture between carbon-hungry systems – limekilns, motor engines, stoves, and concrete.
- 85 Author interviews with Ahmad Yusuf Masarwa, ‘Ar‘ara, 10 October 2018; Shawqi Khoury, Tarshiha, 21 October 2018; and Sadeq Dallahseh, Bu‘ayna, 19 October 2018.
- 86 Author interview with Muhammad Abu Ahmad, Nazareth, 20 October 2018.
- 87 For the single-space village house, see: Allweil, *Homeland*, 88–92; Jabareen and Dbiat, *Adrikhalut*, 246–53; and Fuchs, “Palestinian Arab House,” 158–62. For new “types” of architecture which emerged in Palestinian villages in Israel in the wake of 1948, see: Badran, *Space Design*, 389–419; Allweil, *Homeland*, 208–13; and Jabareen and Dbiat, *Adrikhalut*, 288–300. Of the three works, only Jabareen and Dbiat’s mentions the preponderance of “skilled local manpower in the construction industry,” listed among the “advantages” of what they term the “post-traumatic model” of Palestinian housing.
- 88 In this sense, these narratives allow us to follow Farha Ghannam’s suggestion to examine modern built environments as the product not only of “planners and political figures,” but also of what she calls, following Michel de Certeau, “the ordinary practitioners of the city.” Although Ghannam’s research focuses on the Cairene metropolis and on forced migrations driven by development economics, there are notable similarities in the practices and perceptions of what constitutes “modern” housing among the residents of the northeastern Cairo neighborhood of al-Zawiya al-Hamra and the individuals I interviewed. Farha Ghannam, *Remaking the Modern: Space, Relocation, and the Politics of Identity in a Global Cairo* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002).
- 89 Author interview with Ibrahim Shamshum, ‘Araba, 12 October 2018.
- 90 Author interview with Ibrahim Shamshum, ‘Araba, 12 October 2018.
- 91 Author interview with Shawqi Khoury, Tarshiha, 21 October 2018.
- 92 Arlie Hochschild originally developed the concept of the second shift to describe how American women remained responsible for most labor at home (child-rearing, care, and other forms of “housework”) despite their dramatic incorporation into the U.S. workforce. Hochschild observed that many women found themselves working two “shifts” on a daily basis – one as salaried employees, the second at home. The Palestinian case shows the rise of similarly institutionalized second shifts, driven by discrimination, in different historical circumstances and in different forms. Arlie Russel Hochschild, *The Second Shift: Working Families and the Revolution at Home*, with Anne Machung, 3rd ed. (New York: Penguin Books, 2012 [1989]).

- 93 Author interview with Abu Jamil and Umm Jamil Andraos, Tarshiha, 22 October 2018.
- 94 Author interview with Abu Jamil and Umm Jamil Andraos, Tarshiha, 22 October 2018.
- 95 Author interview with Abu Jamil and Umm Jamil Andraos, Tarshiha, 22 October 2018.
- 96 Author interview with Ibrahim Shamshum, ‘Araba, 12 October 2018. The intensity of the military’s violence that day received considerable coverage from the Arabic and Hebrew Communist press in particular. On 2 July 1957, a day after the events, both *al-Ittihad* and *Kol ha-‘Am* (Voice of the People) reported what had taken place in ‘Araba on their front pages and *al-Ittihad* stated that the police behaved with “intense brutality that evoked the dreadful memory of Kafr Qasim.” “Asalat dima’ al-qarawiyin al-‘Arab fi ‘udwan athim bashi’: al-i’tida’ yashmal al-nisa’ wa-l-‘ajaza fi ‘Araba wayusib thalatha bi-jirah khatira” [The Blood of the Arab Villagers Flowed in Criminal Ugly Aggression: The Assault Engulfed Women and the Weak in ‘Araba and Caused Severe Injuries to Three], *al-Ittihad*, 2 July 1957, 1; and “Hitpar‘ut akhzarit shel ha-mishtara hatzva’it neged toshvei kfar ‘Araba” [A Vicious Rampage by the Military Policy against the Residents of ‘Araba Village], *Kol Ha-‘Am*, 2 July 1957, 1. The Hebrew daily *Ma‘ariv*, meanwhile, reported on the police’s dispatch to ‘Araba, following “several warnings,” without mention of violence or arrests. “Shotrim huz’aku la-kfar ‘Araba” [Police Called to ‘Araba Village], *Ma‘ariv*, 2 July 1957, 3.
- 97 He and several other Communist Party members in ‘Araba were arrested multiple times for organizing a protest against the “education tax” which the state levied solely on Palestinian citizens. Author interview with Ibrahim Shamshum, ‘Araba, 12 October 2018; *Kol ha-‘Am*, 11 October 1955, 2. For more on the “education tax,” see al-Haj, *Education*, 62–64.
- 98 Author interview with Ibrahim Shamshum, ‘Araba, 12 October 2018.

Migrants, Residents, and the Cost of Illegal Home-Making in Mandate Palestine

Lauren Banko

Abstract

This article seeks to underscore the need for a broader historical framework for understanding belonging in Mandate Palestine in order to incorporate non-settler migrants. Using the notion of “home” and situating physical houses and structures of home, I investigate the stories of certain migrants who came to Palestine not as part of the settler-colonial, Zionist movement but nonetheless with the hope to settle and reside there alongside and within Arab societies and communities. These individuals, from a variety of socio-economic backgrounds and situations, positioned themselves as “indigenous” in order to maintain their homes and residences in the territory. I interrogate the physical realities and emotional sentiments of “home” as Palestine transitioned from an imperial to a national space. As part of this transition, many of these migrants came to be classified by the British authorities as illegally resident in Palestine. Unable to claim any legal status of indigeneity and not entirely able to integrate themselves as settlers, both more prosperous migrants and more marginalized migrants made articulated intimate pleas and legitimizations of belonging. Ultimately, the histories here lead to the question of how historians of the Mandate can know who is “at home” in Palestine during the decades before the Nakba and who gets to make that determination.

Keywords

Mandate; immigration; settler colonialism; deportation; residence; petitions; Syrian Arabs; orphans; gender.

In 1946, Muhammad Mustafa Y., a native of Hama in Syria and a resident of Jaffa for the previous sixteen years, received a deportation order issued by the Palestine government. Muhammad had arrived in Palestine in 1930, joining his mother and brother who had lived in Jaffa since the 1920s. According to the Mandate's attorney-general, the police and government based the deportation order on Muhammad's lack of respect for the law "since he has obviously been evading the frontier controls for many years."¹ In other words, the government deemed Muhammad an illegal migrant, having entered Palestine without legal permission. Addressing the Mandate's high commissioner in a response to the deportation order, Muhammad refuted the notion he was a migrant, illegal or otherwise, and insisted, "I am [of] Palestinian nationality at present." He begged the authorities to postpone the order, arguing that his wife had just given birth and the family could hardly be expected to return on foot to Syria, a place where they had no family, job prospects, or house. The emotional struggle against the prospect of deportation impacted Muhammad's wider family, too. His brother, 'Abd al-Ghani, a lawful permanent resident of Palestine, submitted an appeal to the high commissioner and the colonial secretary in London. 'Abd al-Ghani wrote that although the family originated in Syria, he and his mother had permanent residence in Jaffa. He owned a barbershop and another commercial storefront there, and Muhammad worked as his brother's "right hand man" in both. Referencing the brothers' elderly mother, 'Abd al-Ghani stressed: "We live here as one family and one heart." If Muhammad had to leave Palestine, he would be ruined financially and materially, especially since he had no ties to anyone living in Syria nor a home there.²

Muhammad's story is one of many varied and striking pleas by migrants to remain at "home" during the Mandate period. Palestine became a magnet for temporary laborers from Syria and Egypt after 1918, but the history of migration for manual, agricultural, or infrastructure work between regions in Greater Syria and throughout the eastern Mediterranean stretches back further.³ From the nineteenth to the mid-twentieth century, migrant workers and refugees not only made their homes in cities and towns across the Levant, but "made" cities and towns themselves. From villages such as Samakh and Caesarea settled by Algerian and Bosnian Muslims respectively, to Amman, settled by Circassian refugees, "homeland" became a flexible concept for individuals and communities on the move in the industrialized late nineteenth century.⁴

The rapid industrialization in Palestine's coastal cities contributed to new labor migration patterns after 1918, and the British Army regularly employed Iraqi and Egyptian Arabs for infrastructure projects. Older migration patterns continued to ferry non-Palestinians, such as Druze and other Arabs from the Hawran (southern Syrian region east of the Golan), into Palestine for seasonal agricultural work.⁵ The booming citrus industry required agricultural labor and labor in the form of lightermen and stevedores to load cases of the fruit to export after the harvest. Often the migration patterns of Arabs born on the other side of the post-World War I borders were not so different from those of rural Palestinians who traveled to the coast for work.⁶ Meanwhile, Armenians and other refugees and displaced migrants also came to

Palestine to settle with relatives or to start life anew, and Middle Eastern Jews came for employment prospects, familial ties, or refuge.

Some migrant laborers who came to Palestine for employment spent their formative late adolescence and early adulthood living in mostly rented homes or rooms in villages, towns, and cities. With the transition in the early twentieth century from seasonal, male-dominated labor migration in the agricultural sector to longer-term, low-wage employment spurred by industrialization and urbanization along the coast of Palestine, Lebanon, Syria, and Egypt, male workers more frequently brought wives and children with them or married and settled in host territories. Refugees, too, such as Armenians and, later, Greeks settled in Palestine and took on jobs. Displaced persons and entire families, such as Middle Eastern Jews from Iraq, did the same. Like migrant workers, these individuals made their home in Palestine while the Mandate administration viewed their presence as contrary to immigration laws, categorizing them as illegal immigrants unauthorized to reside in the territory and thus liable for deportation.

In this article, I interrogate the physical realities and emotional sentiments of “home” in Palestine as this territory transitioned from an imperial to a national space, using microhistories to understand how migrants and deportees who were part of this nationalizing-space defended their connection to it. Despite the romanticization and sensationalism that can characterize stories of immigrants and deported migrants, I am concerned with such individuals as “ordinary” people. The homes described here belonged to less prosperous migrants and refugees who settled in Palestine. The article addresses how these individuals and families dealt with the administrative structures of the state in the 1930s and 1940s even as the government classified them as “illegal.” It is concerned with the sense of home as the place *for which* – rather than *from which* – migrants left. Maggie Leung eloquently describes the multiple tangible and metaphorical notions of “home” as

particularly intriguing for those who are often *en route*, crossing borders, embedded in webs of always transforming social relations . . . who are identified with multiple places. For some in migrancy, “home” is where they originally come from, a place of nostalgia; for others, “home” is the place for which they have left, a new way of life; some make home in their migrancy . . . while some have multiple homes.⁷

Home, in the cases I describe, is to be distinguished from *homeland*. For migrants, these two places are not one and the same.⁸

The migrants whose histories are explored here cannot be neatly identified as Zionist Jews or as Palestinian Arabs. Yet, they identified with the *space* of Palestine as its rightful residents. I argue that neither nationalist narratives (in which Mandate Palestine is inhabited by Jews and Palestinians) nor settler colonial narratives (in which Mandate Palestine is inhabited by settlers and indigenous Arabic-speakers) fully account for the complexity of lives lived in Palestine in which Armenians, Syrians, Lebanese, Iraqis, Greeks, and others participated in social, economic, and

political spheres. These people were not at home in Palestine because they were not its native sons (*abna' al-balad*), nor were they colonists (who crafted themselves as natives through their settlement of Eretz Yisra'el). Rather, they made their homes there out of choice or necessity and appealed to a notion of citizenship and belonging that was not rooted in historical connections or birth but rather their residence in and use of Palestine's space.

This article traces three main understandings of this belonging to "home." First, migrants laid claim to residence and belonging by virtue of civic participation: individuals identified as productive members of society through employment, trade, or ownership of businesses and thus their payment of taxes and contribution to the economy and society. Second, they understood Palestine as their home simply because they had been there a long time and put down roots by having children and owning houses. Finally, displaced migrants, especially refugees and orphans, had no other "home" whether in physical reality or in their memories with which to associate themselves. Darryl Li has pointed out with regard to the Bosnian population of pre-1948 Palestine that such migrants "enriched" the category of "Palestinian."⁹ Accounting for these lives troubles nationalist assumptions of a natural link between people and their home(land). Through migrants' responses to deportation and removal as chronicled through documentary material, the following sections interrogate who decides how one's place of residence in Palestine can actually become home. Meanwhile, both migrants' evocations of home and the Mandate legislation targeting and differentiating migrants were inflected by gender and class.

A growing historiography of late Ottoman and Mandate Palestine devotes attention to groups who do not fit into the Palestinian Arab/Jew dichotomy, including Sephardim and Middle Eastern Jews.¹⁰ While Palestinian and Arab historians and sociologists have long used the framework of settler colonialism to demonstrate the development of structures of power and dispossession before and after 1948, this framing obscures a plethora of experiences, histories, agencies, and meaningful interactions by Palestine's residents with each other, with outsiders, and with those structures of power.¹¹ More recent approaches emphasize and are threaded through with the narratives and consequences of settler colonialism, including its impact on peasants, Bedouin, urban-dwellers, the middle classes, and citizenship as a legal status.¹² Yet, as nationalist and settler-colonial approaches remain the hegemonic and dominant counter-hegemonic terms of reference, respectively, in histories of the Mandate and 1948, the experiences of individuals who straddle or fit outside of their categories of analysis remain obscured, or at best ill-defined.

Finally, this article considers larger questions of how the history of Palestine and settler colonialism are written and why these questions matter. How might expanding the category of "indigenous" help us try to understand *non-settler migration* into Palestine? Indigeneity here does not only correspond to birth in Palestine nor to genealogy and ancestry. Rather, the non-migrant and non-settler, whether born in Palestine or not, maintains a connection to the land itself and a belonging to social formations that operate exclusively in places considered Palestinian or part of

Palestine. At the same time, the settler/indigenous binary is not black and white; it is a historically imposed structure rather than an essential characteristic of Palestine's societal makeup and relations. Indigenous and non-indigenous are imperfect terms because most of the migrants under consideration were local to different parts of the Ottoman Empire, and so are not settler-migrants in the traditional sense, but integrated into Palestinian localities and defined themselves in relation to these localities' existing social and cultural landscape, rather than a settler one.

Yet the terms do matter here, in part because Mandate officials' understanding of who could claim indigenous status in Palestine shaped the distribution of rights to reside there, and in part because this distribution of rights produced the settler-colonial structure into which migrants were absorbed. Thus, I ask to what extent formerly-Ottoman Arabs from Syria, for instance, who appear in the cases presented below, present themselves as *indigenous* in the context of their residency in Palestine. What of Iraqi or Egyptian Arabs or Armenians from Anatolia? None are indigenous to Palestine in the sense that it was their birthplace, and this left them vulnerable to deportation even after decades of residence. More complex still is the situation of Jews from Syria, Lebanon, Iraq, Kurdistan, and elsewhere who came to Palestine for work, as refugees or to be near family. Their migration was not motivated by Zionism and they, too, faced deportation for illegal residence. Should we view these individuals and families as settlers or migrants?¹³ As Jewish migrants, many inevitably became part of a settler society even as others' experiences of deportation and losing homes can be viewed in the same light as those of Armenian or Syrian migrants.¹⁴

The efforts of Mandate authorities to remove from Palestine those deemed to have no legal claim to residency produced a paper trail of petitions, letters, court cases, and transcripts of in-person pleas against deportation orders. These sources communicate knowledge gained through visceral experience by marginalized migrants, what Joan Scott calls "evidence of experience."¹⁵ They allow for a reassessment of the relationship between mobile persons and the state, including how states differentiate between migrant groups and how this difference operated in terms of policies on residence and deportation. Such documents also illuminate migrants' views of the colonial state in Palestine, as they assumed roles as advocates to make claims on houses and homes. In doing so, they offer a counterpoint to the bureaucratic classifications that British officials inscribed onto migrants in order to separate them from indigenous Palestinians and Zionist settlers. Petitions also contained personal and intimate details, painting a picture of everyday life and the realities faced by migrants.¹⁶ Responses to petitions, letters, and court cases also offer opportunities to examine the ways in which Palestine's officials used language and imagery to legitimize the legislation on citizenship and residency and to unpack Mandate officials' interpretations of their own legislation.

The article first briefly contextualizes the link between immigration and deportation policies in British-administered Palestine, and how these together impacted migrants. I then turn to the invocations of "home" – in both its physical and emotional meanings – in the testimonies and pleas of migrants facing deportation. The article assesses the

ways class, gender, and extended family structures were intimately linked to the kinds of belonging articulated by those seeking to remain in Palestine. Here, home is evoked in varied ways by workers and capitalists, pregnant women and single men, parents and their children, as well as by different communities. Homes appear in archival documents as material structures of belonging, emotional and physical investments, and manifestations of livelihoods. After the inauguration of deportation policies in the 1930s, homes and storefronts also became sites of potential incrimination; applications for permits to build, repair, or extend such structures inadvertently exposed applicants as residing in Palestine without permission. These sites also politicized the home for migrants and noncitizens.¹⁷ Such insights have been difficult to recover in colonial settings generally, and in the case of Mandate Palestine have often been subsumed within the struggles within and between nationalist movements.¹⁸

Immigration, Residency, and Deportation

Deportations served several purposes across the colonial world beginning in earnest in the late nineteenth century. Deportation functioned as a practice of power, as well as a form of social engineering in settler colonial states.¹⁹ They also established deported individuals as unfit for citizenship or continued residence in a particular territory.²⁰ The increased mobility of peoples across the Middle East and North Africa in the years before and after World War I, meanwhile, clashed with new methods of controlling mobility in the region, and across Europe and the Americas, too. From 1920, deportation policy in Palestine evolved to reinforce immigration regulations and citizenship legislation in keeping with the British commitment to favor the establishment of a Jewish national home, first articulated in the Balfour Declaration of 1917 and later written into the Mandate charter.

In 1920, the new head of the civil administration in Palestine, High Commissioner Herbert Samuel, issued the first Immigration Ordinance. Although successive Mandate administrators amended the 1920 ordinance, its core retained the preference for European Jewish immigrants over others (including Jews and non-Jews from Arab or former Ottoman territories). The most secure path to immigration was laid out for those of certain independent financial means – measured by holdings in land, business, stocks or savings – as well as members of certain professions, as long as they, too, proved financial independence and the existence of jobs in their sector.²¹ Through a quota system, Jewish workers with employment prospects in Palestine could apply for immigration certificates whose number was determined each quarter. British authorities granted the Zionist Organization the exclusive right to manage the approval and distribution of permits to Jewish applicants.²²

This left Arab and other non-Jewish workers with limited legal routes to enter and remain indefinitely in Palestine. Most foreign laborers and travelers could not legally settle in Palestine for more than three months.²³ Once in Palestine, temporary workers and travelers who met one of certain specific immigration categories could apply for

permanent leave to remain, offering a chance to naturalize as a Palestinian citizen. How many did so is uncertain: naturalization records do not show whether applicants came to Palestine initially as workers or travelers, although their visa class is often given. Some migrants, alongside refugees and extended family of Palestinian citizens, simply overstayed their permission and made Palestine their home.

A new legal framework imposed throughout British colonial territories by the early twentieth century required documentary proof of citizenship (such as birth certificates or passports) to legally enter a country for either travel or work.²⁴ Manual laborers did not normally carry birth certificates, let alone passports, when they crossed Palestine's borders. When found in Palestine without these documents, they could be deported. Similarly, when noncitizen residents left their homes in Palestine and crossed borders to visit family or conduct business, for example, they forfeited their legal claims to habitual residence.²⁵ In Palestine, deportations increased after 1933 when the government, on advice from the police and the Department of Immigration, began prosecuting persons for undocumented presence. Migrants apprehended by authorities soon after crossing a frontier could be expelled without any legal proceedings, even though this did not necessarily mean that they had only just entered Palestine. In cases of residents of long standing who had merely traveled to a neighboring territory, the quick deportation left no time to inform family or employers, gather belongings from their homes, or arrange for those homes (or other property) to be sold or looked after. In most cases, swift police and Immigration Department action meant that deportees would be removed to a neighboring country where they had no home.

To be lawfully settled in Palestine, and thus eligible for naturalization, an individual needed to have a valid visa that allowed for settlement, and must have lived in Palestine for an uninterrupted period of at least two of the three years immediately preceding their application. Immigration officials meticulously checked applicants' passports to verify whether they had resided elsewhere during that timeframe or held travel documents issued by another state.²⁶ For those unable to naturalize, the administration in 1941 instituted an amnesty for all "illegal" migrants who had entered Palestine before August 1933, had no police record, and had never left the territory since first entering. While in theory the amnesty was a step toward regularizing the status of thousands of long-term resident migrants and their families, in reality it did little to prevent deportation. Migrants and displaced persons who had entered Palestine without permission before August 1933 had no record with frontier control officials that could verify their dates of arrival. Anyone caught without proof of continuous and uninterrupted residence faced removal. In addition, any migrant convicted of even a minor infraction was not eligible for amnesty.

Documentation was thus central to the government's attempts to deport migrants from Palestine, as well as migrants' attempts to mediate social and political relationships with the state and local authorities. In cases of deportation, individuals presented a range of documents to argue against their removal: deeds to show ownership of their homes or storefronts, identity cards (although cards did not come into wider use until after 1938), birth certificates, mukhtars' certificates, statements from employers,

colleagues, religious authorities, and neighbors. Migrants produced documents not only to try to satisfy the letter of the law, but to make emotional and commonsensical arguments about their establishment of Palestine as their home, and to evoke the loss (material and affective) if they were to be removed from that home.²⁷ Socio-economic background played a significant role here: migrants who could not produce deeds of homeownership, or who could not afford lawyers to help gather pages of paperwork to back up petitions, could not mount successful cases against removal. Labor migrants who overstayed work visas or entered Palestine without permission may have had nothing to prove “connection” with their residences. Even though their petitions demonstrate a desperate reliance on meager incomes, immigration officials easily dismissed their pleas to rescind deportation orders.

Evocations of Home, Livelihood, and Family

Migrants from varied backgrounds perceived and argued on behalf of Palestine as their home for different reasons. Class, gender, and family situation were all intimately linked to the articulations of belonging by actors who sought to remain in their homes legally. The following section introduces the “belonging” discourses mobilized in migrants’ petitions, letters, and statements made to Mandate authorities. In doing so, it also underscores the motivations that led migrants of different backgrounds, including ethno-religious backgrounds, to make Palestine their home.

Noncitizen Arabs and non-Arabs, including Middle Eastern Jewish migrants, built their homes, businesses, and families in Palestine despite lacking legal permission to reside within the Mandate’s borders. The experiences of the journey to Palestine, and of building homes and houses once settled, differed for migrants according to class, family ties, and financial situation. As elsewhere, power differentials within migrant communities ensured that wealthy migrants, displaced migrants, and seasonal or unskilled laborers did not share homogenous goals, outlooks, or perceptions of their original or adopted homes.²⁸ Yet, neither the more affluent nor the less prosperous migrants whose stories are cited here expressed a desire to return to the places that the Palestine authorities insisted to be their homes. Over time, noncitizens’ structures of home acquired financial, personal, and social meaning as they also offered their inhabitants a direct connection with the physical space of Palestine. This link, as well as the time, money, and care devoted to homes, businesses, and the local economy – in other words, migrants’ contributions – manifested itself in the language of citizenship, belonging, and homeland in migrants’ and residents’ challenges to deportation orders.

More affluent migrants who entered Palestine without a legal visa, or who overstayed their temporary visa, often had the means to set up their homes with larger families, while they also sought permission to remain in Palestine in order to tend to their businesses. It was not uncommon for these individuals to have children while in Palestine. They raised young families in the social and educational landscapes of towns and cities, thus creating familial as well as employment roots in those places.

Some of them promoted their “capitalist” skills and backgrounds and their civic participation to demonstrate their contribution to the Palestinian economy and society.

Muhammad J., a Syrian merchant who came to Palestine in 1939, applied for naturalization in 1942. As evidence of his residence for two out of the preceding three years, he submitted to the Department of Immigration the birth certificates for three of his four children born in Palestine and a certificate of lease for his house in Haifa. A mukhtar in Haifa and a building materials merchant company provided letters of recommendation for Muhammad to the effect that he had resided continuously in Palestine for two of the previous three years. But by his own admission, Muhammad had been outside of Palestine for 279 days over the previous two years.²⁹ This should have disqualified his application since immigration regulations stressed continuous residence during applicants’ time in Palestine. Muhammad’s application, however, was approved and he received naturalization even though he did not meet the residency qualifications.

While some Middle Eastern Jews faced removal from Palestine if they entered without permission, those of a certain socio-economic background had a better chance at convincing immigration and police authorities that their home was indeed in the territory. Dr. Mehdi L., an Iranian Jewish merchant, entered Palestine in 1933 and settled in Tel Aviv. He worked as a merchant, often traveling to Europe on business related to pharmacy stock. In 1948, as violence spread throughout Palestine in anticipation of British withdrawal, Mandate officials frustrated Mehdi’s return after a business trip. Mehdi eventually crossed back in Palestine, but authorities questioned why he should be able to remain there. Finding no evidence to answer the latter query, migration officials emphasized that Mehdi had an established business in Iran as well as a home there. Mehdi, in response, pleaded to be able to continue traveling to and from Palestine. He stressed that his son attended school in Palestine, he owned his house there outright, and had been a resident for fifteen years. As a compromise, the Immigration Department asked that Mehdi promise to liquidate his business in Iran and sell his home there in order to be recognized as a permanent resident of Palestine.³⁰

Less prosperous migrants and manual or temporary laborers were often less successful in their efforts to gain legal residency or citizenship, but they nevertheless made claims based on long-standing residence and contribution to society. The discourse of a right to remain in one’s home on account of long-standing residence is particularly strong in petitions against removal by those who entered Palestine in the mid-1920s or earlier.³¹ Sudanese-born Ahmad K. arrived in Palestine at the end of World War I. He worked for the British Army at Haifa from 1918 until the late 1920s before becoming a storekeeper for the Haifa–Baghdad Road Company, a position he continued to hold in the 1940s. After several applications for recognition as a lawful resident and requests for a Sudanese passport through the Egyptian Consulate in Jerusalem, in 1942 the government issued him a deportation order. In pleading with the chief secretary of the Mandate government to be allowed to stay in Haifa, Ahmad stressed that he had never changed his residence during his long time in Palestine.

In a separate petition to the high commissioner, Ahmad implored that he be granted permanent residency “in the name of humanities and the British Justice [*sic*].”³² In his petitions, Ahmad included declarations from employers and a mukhtar to confirm that, in his own words, “I am in no way an immigrant.” Ahmad, then nearly sixty years old, begged the government to consider that in his twenty-four years in Haifa he “never committed any punishable act whatsoever,” had never depended on “any benevolent institution,” and “always earned my living honorably and by the sweat of my brow.”³³ Through his contributions to Palestine, the place became home. The petitions and evidence came to naught: the deportation order forced Ahmad from the home he had made over decades in Haifa.

Others sought to impress upon Mandate authorities the destabilizing and downright devastating impact that deportation would have on them and their families. ‘Abd al-Hasan A., his wife and their four children, all under thirteen years old, abandoned their home and any possessions they could not carry with them after he received a deportation order from the Palestine Police. ‘Abd al-Hasan entered Palestine from Lebanon in the late 1930s seeking work. He spent ten years employed as a barber in Haifa, where he raised his young family, before going on trial for contravention of the Immigration Ordinance. In 1947, facing the overland return to Lebanon with his children and belongings, ‘Abd al-Hasan begged the Mandate government to understand: “I am a very poor man and there is nothing in this world that I own. All my relations with the Lebanon have been severed since my entry into Palestine.”³⁴ In his petition, he addressed his clean record and that the “inevitable result of my deportation will be the starvation of my family to death.” He pleaded that the government allow his family to remain in Palestine to enable him to earn a living “for this unfortunate family.” Another meaning of home emerges through ‘Abd al-Hasan’s narrative: Palestine became home through establishing a family there, by marrying and having children. Men faced with deportation mention their wives and mothers frequently in their claims to Palestine as home. Men whose wives gave birth in Palestine emphasized this in their appeals to legitimize their *jus sanguinis* connection to the physical space of the Mandate. In some petitions against deportation, children born in Palestine are depicted as Palestinian. Minors, too, used the same argument against forced removal: their birth in a territory entitled them to citizenship. By the 1930s, district officials and mukhtars dutifully recorded births across Palestine and families received certificates. Although they were no guarantee against deportation, birth certificates offered documentary evidence to home that men and women without children could not procure.

Women also migrated to Palestine to make new homes for themselves or with their children. Saltiya B., who faced removal from her home in Palestine in the early 1940s, was, like other women, disadvantaged by immigration, residence, and nationality legislation as she attempted to claim Palestine as her home.³⁵ Saltiya had taken her husband’s Transjordanian nationality upon marriage and, until 1925, lived with her husband and his family in Transjordan. However, her husband disappeared suddenly – supposedly for America – and left Saltiya and her infant child behind.

Saltiya traveled with her daughter to Jerusalem to search for her husband and prevent his departure. Unsuccessful, she remained in Palestine for nearly two decades, raising her daughter and living in her own home in Jerusalem during these years. Since her husband had not legally divorced her before leaving, Saltiya retained Transjordanian nationality. In 1943, she applied for recognition as a Palestinian citizen under Article 1 of the Palestine Citizenship Order-in-Council claiming she was a Turkish (that is, Ottoman) subject habitually resident in Palestine in 1925, the date the order came into effect. However, the Immigration Department declined her request because she was married to a Transjordanian at the time the citizenship order came into law.³⁶ Saltiya fervently maintained her right to remain in her home in Palestine with her daughter as a resident and citizen and used precedents set by other women to advocate for herself. Her petition to the High Commissioner referenced a 1939 case, in which the Department of Immigration granted passports to a woman and her son in a similar situation. The woman's husband had also left the family to travel abroad prior to 1925 and never returned. The department deemed the wife and son no longer "bound" to the husband's nationality due to the lapse of time and lack of contact from him. Saltiya stressed that Nada, her own daughter, had "the full right" to claim a passport and continue to live in Palestine for the same reasons. Despite the appeal, the High Commissioner refused to give the case further consideration.³⁷ Both women were forced to leave the only home they had known for twenty years.

Chahlah S. N., an Iraqi Jewish woman, had entered Palestine on a one-year traveler visa in 1939, but gave birth there before the visa expired. She sent an urgent request for permission to stay for an additional year, insisting that Palestine as her home and, as she wrote, she could not travel back to Iraq so soon after giving birth. Here, though, Chahlah's predicament differs from that of many Arab Muslim migrants, particularly women like Saltiya, who made similar requests to stay in their homes on the basis of long residence in Palestine. And although Chahlah did not have Palestinian citizenship, her husband did. She asked to be exempt from immigration rules meant to prevent the overstay of travelers and promised the government that she intended to legally enter Palestine once she recovered.³⁸ According to later correspondence, Palestine's High Commissioner granted Chahlah an exemption.

In the cases of 'Abd al-Hasan, Saltiya, and others from the late 1930s and 1940s, the chief secretary informed migrants they could submit applications for legal residence through the Department of Immigration after leaving Palestine. This, of course, did not take into consideration the emotional, financial, and personal toll of uprooting one's home and crossing the border to face uncertainty in territories that were no longer familiar (if they had ever been so). The harm that deportation caused to non-affluent migrants likely meant they could not afford to try to return legally to Palestine. For those from neighboring states, proximity did not equate with an easy deportation. Men and women both, especially those with families in Palestine, faced return to towns and villages they had not seen for years or even decades. For others, the very idea of return was precluded by the destruction and mass displacement of war.

Orphans and Refugees

For orphans and refugees – often one and the same – deportation meant statelessness in the most literal sense. Orphan and refugee narratives, including their emphasis on Palestine as “home,” illuminate under-studied complexities of the interwar period’s transition from an imperial to national order, a transition that cannot be neatly contained by nationalist or settler colonial frameworks. Both frames obscure the experiences of orphans and refugees who found homes in Palestine before and immediately after World War I.³⁹ From World War I through the early 1940s, multiple waves of refugees attempted to settle in Palestine. Initially, the largest group were Armenians fleeing war and genocide. Within this group, orphans without documents, families, or homes fled from Anatolia to Syria and Lebanon and on to Palestine. During World War II, refugees from Greece arrived in Palestine for what government and humanitarian organizations anticipated to be a short stay. For wartime and interwar displaced persons, Palestine became home. Moreover, these displaced migrants had no alternate “home” into which to be deported. The following section explores the processes of settlement and the making of home by refugees and orphans.

Unlike in Syria and Lebanon, where the French conferred Syrian or Lebanese citizenship on Armenian refugees from the mid-1920s, the Palestine Mandate authorities did not offer refugees citizenship or automatic permanent residence.⁴⁰ Armenian refugees who came to Palestine received support from the small Armenian community that had existed prior to the large-scale massacres of Armenians during World War I. The Armenian Church, cultural organizations, and political leaders aimed to reconstruct institutions for Armenians in Palestine.⁴¹ This support helped Armenian refugees establish their homes in Palestine, opening small craft shops and integrating themselves into the Palestinian Arab community. Armenians used these institutions and the support provided to them to make claims to Jerusalem and other parts of the territory as home. Even so, many refugees remained poor. Some found work as low-wage craftsmen, but others remained unemployed and the threat of deportation was intertwined with their economic precarity. Unlike poor migrants from other Arab states, the statelessness of Armenians compounded their precarity. They remained outside the nationalizing indigenous community and they could not be incorporated into the settler colonial Zionist one.

While groups of Armenian refugees made their homes in Jerusalem, many had no identity documents to prove they were, in fact, Armenians who fled from Anatolia in 1915. Without such documentation, they faced the threat of deportation – and, thus, loss of their homes and businesses. In the 1930s, some Armenians acquired Palestinian citizenship by naturalization while others requested identity certificates from the Armenian Patriarchate in Jerusalem.⁴² Clearly, however, the question of many Armenians’ status in Palestine remained unresolved. Though the exact figures of settled Armenians deported by the Palestine administration are not clear, that they faced this outcome is in striking contrast to their treatment by the French in Syria and Lebanon.

In 1943, police in Haifa arrested Yacoub T., twenty-seven years old, when he could not produce evidence of what he insisted to be his long domicile in Palestine. While not made explicit, Yacoub appears to have entered Palestine as an unaccompanied orphan. Yacoub claimed that he had arrived in Palestine as a child in 1922 and Haifa's Armenian vicar stated that he lived in Haifa since at least 1925.⁴³ Yacoub first worked as a shoemaker in the market during his teenage years, and then in a repair shop where he slept on the premises.⁴⁴ He wrote to the chief secretary and stressed his continuous residence and roots through his employment in Palestine for over twelve years; the fact that he had no relatives in Syria, Lebanon, or Turkey; and, importantly, that he had no legal right to reside in those countries after a long residence outside of them.⁴⁵ But Yacoub was unable to prove certain details of his residence in Palestine to the satisfaction of the Mandate authorities. According to the police's Criminal Investigation Department (CID), he refused to give details of his country of origin or any references of people known to him in that country.⁴⁶ Of course, as an Armenian refugee born at the time of the genocide, it would have been extremely difficult for Yacoub to produce references from a refugee camp he left at seven years old or from the Armenian region of the Ottoman Empire where he was born. Nor were authorities convinced by the vicar's testimony. According to the CID: "Past experience has shown that the Armenian Shoemakers at Haifa cannot be relied on [*sic*] their statements in so far as illegal immigrants are concerned."⁴⁷ Yacoub continued to argue his case to remain domiciled in his shop. He succeeded after two years of uncertainty and repeated petitions and testimonies: the administration rescinded the deportation order and recognized his long-standing residence.

From the early 1940s, Palestine also served as a place of refuge for thousands escaping the Axis powers' occupation of Greece. Greeks, mainly but not exclusively those from the Aegean, settled in refugee camps in Palestine, Egypt, and Syria under the auspices of the Middle East Relief and Refugee Administration (MERRA). Nusayrat camp, south of Gaza, housed most of these refugees in Palestine, and the Center for Greek Refugees in Jerusalem provided aid and assistance. By the mid-1940s, complaints against the camp's management, the quality of the aid, and the structures themselves flooded in from refugees, including women who, being without work, were forced to remain day and night inside Nusayrat camp. The Palestine Mandate government lamented the shortage of housing for these refugees, as Greek institutions pressed for all displaced persons, but especially women, to be moved from tents into proper houses. The Greek Orthodox Patriarchate opened several convents to refugees because the Mandate's director of immigration refused to lease other homes in Jerusalem for their use.⁴⁸ Over time, numerous Greek refugees left the camp to reside with relatives in homes in Jerusalem, contrary to British rules.

Not all Greeks entered Palestine through MERRA channels or settled in Nusayrat. Although Greek wartime refugees could not legally be deported back to Greece, they remained vulnerable if they did not carry documentation that proved their legal residence in Palestine or if their life histories reflected more complex realities of mobility and migration. For example, Costas C., who had arrived in Palestine at age

twenty-five after the German occupation of Greece in 1941, requested an extension of stay in 1944. Costas had been born in Cyprus and the director of migration notified him that he had to leave Palestine and return to Cyprus. Costas explained that, although he held a British passport due to his birth in Cyprus, he had left Cyprus for Greece at age fourteen. While the ongoing war made it impossible to return to Greece, he wished to remain in Palestine. He had no relatives in Cyprus and regarded it “as nothing more than a strange country.”⁴⁹ In Palestine, he supported himself financially and could claim monthly credit. None of this moved the authorities, however, and Costas eventually left Palestine under threat of deportation.

In large part, cases of deportation in the 1940s were linked to wider British efforts to prevent unauthorized Jewish immigration.⁵⁰ Yet these seemed to engender a broader anti-illegal immigrant sentiment, and cases of long-term residents whose presence predated the war apparently irked certain British officials. In part, this can be traced to the Foreign Office’s long-standing view that noncitizens drained imperial resources, a cost that should be prevented if at all possible. Refugees and orphans, especially those not claimed by nationalizing states, posed potentially significant drains on welfare, housing, and other forms of assistance. To Mandate authorities, an easy solution was to ensure displaced and stateless persons not settle permanently in Palestine or establish homes or families there. Refugees, for their part, wrote petitions and challenged authorities from positions of individual marginalization. What appears to have bolstered these challenges was the solidarity of non-state actors such as churches to pressure the British to reconsider certain cases.

Conclusion

Syrian-born Muhammad Mustafa Y., whose case opened this article, sought to resist deportation through emotional evocations of Palestine as home to his extended family. The family appears to have worked their way up the socio-economic ladder from working-class origins and, as discussed above, tried to persuade the Mandate administration to rescind Muhammad’s deportation order so as not to ruin their small shops and family life. They hoped to ensure that Muhammad would not be sent to Syria where no home, family, or job awaited him. In fact, Muhammad admitted that his first entry to Palestine in 1930 was unauthorized, but he nonetheless felt entitled to stay due to his decade-and-a-half-long residence there, his marriage to a Palestinian wife, and his three Palestine-born children. Because Muhammad traveled to and from Syria in the intervening years, and the government considered every reentry to be illegal, the authorities determined he could not possibly regard Palestine as his true home. On account of that stance, neither the high commissioner nor the CID would reconsider deportation. For the government, such visits abroad meant that an individual’s connection to Palestine was not strong enough to warrant permanent legal domicile – to allow this space to be “home.” Muhammad’s brother requested the deportation be postponed in order to allow Muhammad to leave Palestine of his own will and apply

to the Department of Immigration to return as a lawful, permanent resident. The plea fell on deaf ears. Rather than face a forced deportation, Muhammad “voluntarily” left his home in Palestine bound for Syria along with his wife and children.⁵¹

Here, we return to the question of how historians can know who is “at home” in Palestine during the decades before the Nakba, and who gets to make that determination. The histories and experiences offered here demonstrate that despite individuals’ efforts to successfully prove that Palestine was their home, ultimately the Mandate bureaucracy determined who could claim home in Palestine. Administrators did this sometimes pointedly and in an intentionally harsh way, and other times detachedly by following procedure and precedent. Those who held identity papers or could articulate capitalist contributions could be at home in Palestine, but those decisions naturally left out precarious migrants and those who had already been displaced previously. At the same time, pleas by working-class or less well-off migrants to houses, storefronts, spouses, children, and parents in Palestine rarely received consideration by colonial officials. Like imperial and national governments across the world, the British in Palestine had no appetite to provide relief for persons they did not consider Palestinian (whether indigenous Arabs or Zionist settlers). Legislation backed up this distaste: immigration and citizenship regulations did not offer displaced persons, refugees, and migrants at the bottom of the economic ladder any route toward legal, permanent residence.

The microhistories of migrants in Mandate Palestine – as individuals, within families, and as members of communities – underscore the fact that struggles for home and questions of homeland in Mandate Palestine did not pertain only to Palestinian Arabs and Zionist Jews. Thousands of noncitizens living in Palestine felt the impact of settler colonialism, manifested in immigration policies and evictions, before 1948. In ways different from those of indigenous Palestinian Arabs, the men and women separated from their homes in Palestine by deportation pushed back against these processes by claiming their sense of identity through their material houses within the physical space of the Mandate, and emphasizing their families living, perhaps even born, in those houses. Most of the time these efforts yielded no positive results, but other times they did. When they succeeded, “home” had the possibility to become a concrete, if temporary, place of belonging for non-Zionist migrants.

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Endnotes

- 1 Muhammad Eil Yasin to Commissioner for Migration and Statistics, 17 May 1946, Israel State Archives [ISA] 256/64-2.
- 2 Abdul Ghani El Yasin to Chief Secretary, 25 June 1946, ISA 256/64-2.
- 3 Susynne McElrone reassesses the historical concept of rootedness of *fellahin* in Ottoman Palestine by using court records and other methods to demonstrate the extraordinary mobility of villagers: Susynne McElrone, "Villagers on the Move: Re-thinking Fallahin Rootedness in Late-Ottoman Palestine," *Jerusalem Quarterly* 54 (2013): 56–68.
- 4 For more, see Mustafa Abbasi, "Samakh: The Rise and Fall of a Palestinian Arab Town on the Shores of the Galilee," *Holy Land Studies* 12 (April 2013): 91–108; Nina Seferović and Darryl Li, "The Herzegovinian Muslim Colony in Caesarea, Palestine," *Journal of Palestine Studies* 45 (Autumn 2015): 76–83; Vladimir Hamed-Troyansky, "Circassian Refugees and the Making of Amman, 1878–1914," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 49 (2017): 605–623; Kemal H. Karpat, "The Migration of the Bosnian Muslims to the Ottoman State, 1878–1914: An Account Based on Turkish Sources," in *Ottoman Bosnia: A History in Peril*, ed. Markus Koller and Kemal H. Karpat (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 2004), 121–40. A broad study can be found in Ulrike Freitag, Malte Fuhrmann, Nora Lafi, and Florian Riedler, eds., *The City in the Ottoman Empire: Migration and the Making of Urban Modernity* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2011).
- 5 Lauren Banko, "Keeping Out the 'Undesirable Elements': The Treatment of Communists, Transients, Criminals, and the Ill in Mandate Palestine," *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 47 (December 2019): 1153–80.
- 6 One recent study of the rural-to-urban migration pattern by Palestinians can be found in Na'ama Ben Ze'ev, "'I Came Naïve from the Village': On Palestinian Urbanism and Ruralism in Haifa under British Mandate," *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* 47 (2020): 264–81. See also Rachel Taqu, "Peasants into Workmen: Internal Labor Migration and the Arab Village Community under the Mandate," in *Palestinian Society and Politics*, ed. Joel S. Migdal (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980), 261–86.
- 7 Maggi W. H. Leung, "Notions of Home among Diaspora Chinese in Germany," in *The Chinese Diaspora: Space, Place, Mobility, and Identity*, ed. Laurence J. C. Ma and Carolyn Cartier (New York: Rowman and Littlefield), 240.
- 8 Takeyuki Tsuda writes that transnational migration and dispersion created the need to separate the meaning of homeland, a place of origin and emotional attachment, from home, a stable residence that is comfortable, secure, and familiar. Takeyuki Tsuda, "When Home is Not the Homeland: The Case of Japanese Brazilian Ethnic Return Migration," in *Homecomings: Unsettling Paths of Return*, eds. Fran Markowitz and Anders H. Stefansson (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2004), 125.
- 9 Darryl Li, "Translator's Preface: A Note on Settler Colonialism," *Journal of Palestine Studies* 45 (Autumn 2015): 69–75.
- 10 See, for instance, the following newer works in English: Abigail Jacobson and Moshe Naor, *Oriental Neighbors: Middle Eastern Jews and Arabs in Mandatory Palestine* (Waltham, MA: Brandeis University Press, 2016); Orit Bashkin, *Impossible Exodus: Iraqi Jews in Israel* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2017); Lior D. Sternfeld, *Between Iran and Zion: Jewish Histories of Twentieth Century Iran* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2018); Liora R. Halperin, *Babel in Zion: Jews, Nationalism and Language Diversity in Palestine, 1920–1948* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2015); and Jonathan Marc Gribetz, *Defining Neighbors: Religion, Race, and the Early Zionist-Arab Encounter* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2014).
- 11 Faye Sayegh, "Zionist Colonialism in Palestine (1965)," *Settler Colonial Studies* 2 (2012): 206–25. Gershon Shafir also historicized the Zionist processes of settler colonialism in *Land, Labor and the Origins of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict 1882–1914* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), which has since been critiqued by both Israeli and Palestinian scholars including from the framework of capital and class. For instance, see Amir Locker Biletzki, "Rethinking Settler Colonialism: A Marxist Critique of Gershon Shafir," *Rethinking Marxism* 30 (2018): 441–61.
- 12 One should first start with the entire special

- issue of *Settler Colonial Studies* on the topic as an important and nuanced critical inquiry, borne out of a 2011 conference at SOAS, London, beginning with the preface: Omar Jabary Salamanca, Mezna Qato, Kareem Rabie, Sobhi Samour, “Past in Present: Settler Colonialism in Palestine,” *Settler Colonial Studies* 2 (2012): 1–9; and Nadim Rouhana and Areej Sabbagh-Khoury, “Settler Colonial Citizenship: Conceptualizing the Relationship between Israel and its Palestinian Citizens,” *Settler Colonial Studies* 5 (2014): 205–25. Even the work of Rouhana and Sabbagh-Khoury on counter-memory of settler colonialism leaves out the memories of groups not explicitly defined as Palestinian Arab or Jewish/Zionist: Nadim M. Rouhana and Areej Sabbagh-Khoury, “Memory and the Return of History in a Settler-Colonial Context: the case of Palestinians in Israel,” in *Israel and Its Palestinian Citizens: Ethnic Privileges in the Jewish State*, ed. Nadim M. Rouhana (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 393–432. On citizenship and settler colonialism, recent excellent work includes: Shira Robinson, *Citizen Strangers: Palestinians and the Birth of Israel’s Liberal Settler State* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2014); Lana Tatour, “Citizenship as Domination: Settled Colonialism and the Making of Palestinian Citizenship in Israel,” *Arab Studies Journal* 27 (Fall 2019): 8–39; Lana Tatour, “The Culturalisation of Indigeneity: The Palestinian-Bedouin of the Naqab and Indigenous Rights,” *International Journal of Human Rights* 23 (2019): 1569–93; Rana Barakat, “Writing/Righting Palestine Studies: Settler Colonialism, Indigenous Sovereignty, and Resisting the Ghost(s) of History,” *Settler Colonial Studies* 8 (2018): 349–63; Leena Dallasheh, “Troubled Waters: Citizenship and Colonial Zionism in Nazareth,” *International Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* 47 (August 2015): 467–87; and Ronit Lentin, *Traces of Racial Exception: Racializing Israeli Settler Colonialism* (London: Bloomsbury, 2018).
- 13 Different historiographies claim Middle Eastern Jews in the context of Palestine. Hillel Cohen argued that Palestine’s indigenous Jewish population became increasingly Zionist after 1929, with the help of Revisionist propaganda; see Hillel Cohen, *1929: Year Zero of the Arab Israeli Conflict* (Waltham, MA: Brandeis University Press, 2015). Abigail Jacobson and Moshe Naor have shown that Sephardic Jews in Palestine swayed toward Zionist ideologies for social and economic reasons even earlier; see Abigail Jacobson and Moshe Naor, *Oriental Neighbors: Middle Eastern Jews and Arabs in Mandatory Palestine* (Waltham, MA: Brandeis University Press, 2016). For Ella Shohat and Tom Segev, they are victims of Zionism, or, as Ehud Ein-Gil and Moshe Machover state, Middle Eastern Jews were “colonization fodder” and “human material”; see Ella Shohat, “Sephardim in Israel: Zionism from the Standpoint of its Victims,” *Social Text* 19–20 (Autumn 1988): 1–35; Tom Segev, *1949: The First Israelis* (New York: Free Press, 1986); and Ehud Ein-Gil and Moshe Machover, “Zionism and Oriental Jews: Dialectic of Exploitation and Co-optation,” *Race and Class* 50 (2008): 6276.
 - 14 Yuval Evri and Hagar Kotef argue that Jewish natives of Palestine who had experienced a “shared indigenesness” in the pre-Zionist period became, as a result of the structure that Zionism imposed in Palestine, settlers *without* moving. Thus, we might think of some Jewish migrants as fitting into this shared indigenesness, while others following the same path that Evri and Kotef describe. Yuval Evri and Hagar Kotef, “When Does a Native Become a Settler? (with Apologies to Zreik and Mamdani),” *Constellations* (2020): 2–3.
 - 15 Joan W. Scott, “The Evidence of Experience,” *Critical Inquiry* 17 (Summer 1991): 776–77.
 - 16 On reading petitions to colonial authorities for details of everyday life, see, for example, Chima J. Korieh, “‘May It Please Your Honor’: Letters of Petition as Historical Evidence in an African Colonial Context,” *History in Africa* 37 (2010): 83–106.
 - 17 Tanweer Fazal describes how “social exclusion, problems of assimilation, denial of citizenship entitlements . . . become critical ingredients of analysis” of Bihari migrants’ homes; the migrant’s home “is a domain of politics, too, where the worker, denied his or her full citizenship in migrant locations, seeks to exercise in the more familial world of home.” Tanweer Fazal, “Migrant, Home, and Politics: Bihari Labour in the Metropolis,” *Indian Anthropologist* 46 (July–December 2016): 93–95.
 - 18 In her study of the era of decolonization of colonial Africa, for example, Lynn Schler notes that historians have little information on

- how the working classes in Nigeria at the end of British rule understood the opportunities for making claims from colonial regimes, especially as they related to identity and mobility. Lynn Schler, “‘The Stated Facts Do Not Seem to Be True’: The Contested Process of Repatriation in British Colonial Nigeria,” *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 42 (2014): 137.
- 19 See William Walters, “Deportation, Expulsion, and the International Police of Aliens,” *Citizenship Studies* 6 (July 2002): 265–92; and Jean P. Smith, “From Promising Settler to Undesirable Migrant: The Deportation of British-born Migrants from Mental Hospitals in Interwar Australia and South Africa,” *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 46 (April 2018): 502–23.
 - 20 Bridget Anderson, Matthew J. Gibney, and Emanuela Paoletti, “Citizenship, Deportation, and the Boundaries of Belonging,” *Citizenship Studies* 15 (August 2011): 548.
 - 21 Immigration Ordinance amendments, 15 September 1932, ISA 6571/2-ጌ.
 - 22 Moshe Mossek, *Palestine Immigration Policy under Sir Herbert Samuel: British, Zionist, and Arab Attitudes* (London: Frank Cass, 1978), 5–6. Middle Eastern Jews occupied a liminal space in Palestine during the Mandate. Except for Iraqi Jews after the mid-1930s and Jews from Yemen, these communities did not generally qualify for immigrant certificates offered by the Zionist Organization. The Zionist leadership in Palestine, especially through the Jewish Agency, did petition for the entry and naturalization of numerous Arabic-speaking Jews, but this was done on a case-by-case basis and the Jewish Agency never called for a blanket entry policy for Middle Eastern Jews. On the other hand, especially during the early years of the Mandate, most had little need to associate with Zionist institutions, as they spoke Arabic and were integrated into regional labor markets under Ottoman rule.
 - 23 Immigration Ordinance, 1941, ISA 223/27-ጌ.
 - 24 Taylor C. Sherman, “Migration, Citizenship, and Belonging in Hyderabad (Deccan), 1946–1956,” *Modern Asian Studies* 45 (2011): 83.
 - 25 In Palestine, as in other cases across the British Empire, Europe, and the Americas, “in the absence of any identity papers, the documentary regime was entirely reliant upon self-identification of individuals,” and when such identifications did not fit legal requirements or could not be verified, their holders faced deportation. Sherman, “Migration,” 101.
 - 26 Instruction, Commissioner for Migration and Statistics, 25 February 1937, ISA 4910/6-ጌ.
 - 27 Sanaa Alimia asks us to consider how documents, especially identity cards, evoke meaning in daily life, and how they are experienced by their subjects, including as mediators of relationships with state agents. Sanaa Alimia, “Performing the Afghanistan-Pakistan Border through Refugee ID Cards,” *Geopolitics* 24 (2018): 22.
 - 28 Leung, “Notions of Home,” 239.
 - 29 Mohamed Jounha Jandali: Application for Palestinian Citizenship, ISA 6924/40-ጌ.
 - 30 Application for a return visa for Palestine, 15 February 1948, ISA 2342/041-ጌ.
 - 31 See, for example, the case of Syrian-born Abdul Rahman Majbur. In February 1948, as violence flared in Palestine, Majbur requested citizenship, arguing: “I am eligible for such Palestinian Title [*sic*] by my said residence” in Palestine since 1926. Petition, Abdul Rahman Majbur to Chief Secretary, February 1948, ISA 244/21-ጌ.
 - 32 Letter, Ahmad Arabi Khalil to Chief Secretary, 13 April 1942, ISA 226/40-ጌ.
 - 33 Petition, Ahmad Arabi Khalil to High Commissioner, 9 March 1942; and Khalil to Chief Secretary, 9 June 1942, ISA 226/40-ጌ. In interwar France, Mary Dewhurst Lewis highlights how long-term immigrants and children of migrants in Marseille contended with the understanding by police officials of nationality as having a “social content.” Antisocial behavior including criminalized acts of petty theft turned working class migrants into persons characterized as rejecting society and social norms and morals. Even unemployment positioned migrants as suspect. Such behavior marked a person as *not* national or natural, turning him or her into a stranger. Migrant-strangers who did not fit what police saw to be a solid national and moral profile became more vulnerable to legal exclusion and, ultimately, expulsion. See Mary Dewhurst Lewis, “The Strangeness of Foreigners: Policing Migration and Nation in Interwar Marseille,” *French Politics, Culture and Society* 20 (Fall 2002): 66.
 - 34 Petition by Abdel Hassan Haji Ali to Chief Secretary, 8 January 1947, ISA 257/40-ጌ.
 - 35 Letter, Office of Commissioner for Migration

- and Statistics to Chief Secretary, 13 October 1943, ISA 252/60-ռ.
- 36 Letter, Office of Commissioner for Migration and Statistics to Chief Secretary, 13 October 1943, ISA 252/60-ռ.
- 37 Petition from Saltiya Abdallah El Baqsa and Nada Elias Odeh Khudari Qaqish, Jerusalem [undated], ISA 252/60-ռ.
- 38 Correspondence from Commissioner of Migration and Statistics, 21 September 1940, ISA 224/38-ռ.
- 39 These frameworks also do little to extrapolate larger historical transformations that refugees both shaped and were shaped by, and readings of refugee positionality, on both the environmental scale and the creation of humanitarian discourses. Readings into these broader reflections regarding Armenian refugees and orphans can be found in Samuel Dolbee, “The Desert at the End of Empire: An Environmental History of the Armenian Genocide,” *Past and Present* 247 (May 2020): 197–233; and Rebecca Jinks, “‘Marks Hard to Erase’: The Troubled Reclamation of ‘Absorbed’ Armenian Women, 1919–1927,” *American Historical Review* 123 (February 2018): 86–123.
- 40 Nicola Migliorino, *(Re)constructing Armenia in Lebanon and Syria: Ethnocultural Diversity and the State in the Aftermath of a Refugee Crisis* (New York: Berghahn, 2008), 54.
- 41 Sossie Andézian, “A New Ethno-Religious Entity in British Mandate Palestine: The Armenian Catholic Community,” *Études arméniennes contemporaines* 9 (September 2017): 117. As Nicola Migliorino has shown, from “the very start of their new life as refugees, the Armenians worked hard to reconstruct an Armenian world in the post-Ottoman Levant,” a world which included new Armenian residential quarters of towns, rebuilt Armenian churches, and new Armenian cultural and social institutions. Migliorino, *(Re)constructing Armenia*, 45–50.
- 42 The Armenian church leaders in Jerusalem stepped in to make certificates confirming individuals’ birth, baptism, and marital status. Andézian, “New Ethno-Religious Entity,” 131–33.
- 43 Correspondence on deportation of Yacoub Krikar Terzakian to Chief Secretary, 21 January 1943, ISA 255/34-ռ.
- 44 Correspondence from Haifa District Commissioner, February 1943, ISA 255/34-ռ.
- 45 Letter from Yacoub Terzakian to Chief Secretary, 12 November 1942, ISA 255/34-ռ.
- 46 CID Headquarters to Chief Secretary, 11 January 1943, ISA 255/34-ռ.
- 47 CID Headquarters to Chief Secretary, 11 January 1943, ISA 255/34-ռ.
- 48 File: Leasing of houses for Greek refugees, 1944, ISA 114/27-ռ.
- 49 Petition Walid Salah, advocate to High Commissioner, 7 January 1944, ISA 224/38-ռ.
- 50 Both academic and personal studies on the 1939 White Paper and its impact can be found in Fritz Liebreich, *Britain’s Naval and Political Reaction to the Illegal Immigration of Jews to Palestine, 1945–49* (London: Routledge, 2004); Arie J. Kochavi, “The Struggle against Jewish Immigration to Palestine,” *Middle Eastern Studies* 34 (1998): 146–167; Louise London, *Whitehall and the Jews, 1933–1948* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001); Stuart A. Cohen, “Imperial Policing against Illegal Immigration: The Royal Navy and Palestine, 1945–48,” *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 22 (1994): 275–93; and former High Commissioner Alan Cunningham’s “Palestine: Last Days of the Mandate,” *International Affairs* 24 (October 1948): 481–90.
- 51 Letter in file on deportation of Muhammad Mustafa El Yasin and family, 7 August 1946, ISA 256/64-ռ.

Unchilding by Domicidal Assault

Narrating Experiences of Home during the Second Intifada

Heidi Morrison

Abstract

Trauma resulting from Israeli violence is embedded in the life stories narrated by Palestinians. Oral histories recorded with Palestinians who grew up during the Second Intifada reveal that the home is a central and critical location for Palestinians to trace their memories of war. It is in the intimate spaces of the home that such trauma is exposed. Though rarely addressed in mainstream news and academic publications, the Palestinian home is never immune from violence related to the larger armed conflict, and this has a particularly harmful impact on home's youngest inhabitants. Israeli attacks on the home are part of a larger process of unchilding, that is, Israel's use of Palestinian children as political capital.

Keywords

Unchilding; children; oral history; home; second Intifada; narration; memory; and trauma.

I belong there. I have many memories. I was born as everyone is born.

I have a mother, a house with many windows, brothers, friends, and a prison cell

with a chilly window!

— Mahmud Darwish, "I Belong There," in *Unfortunately, It Was Paradise*

In “I Belong There,”¹ windows are a conduit for Palestinian poet Mahmoud Darwish to express the significance of home in a world plagued by war, exile, and imprisonment. The drafty window in his prison cell, which represents the chill and isolation of captivity, is contrasted with the abundance of windows in his house, where he has roots and family: a place to belong. In this article, I ask how Palestinians’ memories of the architectural features of their childhood home can help us reframe conventional academic approaches to Palestinian childhood trauma. As scholars begin to question biomedical approaches to trauma that decontextualize their experiences – the widely-used Trauma History Questionnaire, for example, uses a yes/no checklist to assess types and severity of trauma, while charts of mental health symptoms based on the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders draw on universal typologies – analysis of rooftops, windows, doors, and beds, absent from standard medical journals, may offer an additionally useful way to understand the impact of violence. Israel’s targeting of the home fuels and sustains unchilding, the ongoing, violent, and systematic targeting of children to affirm control and achieve political goals.² Palestinians’ memories of their childhood homes thus provide access points into childhood traumatic experiences and insights into the dynamics of unchilding in Palestine.³

Generations of Palestinian children have grown up experiencing political violence. Typical studies of Palestinian children measure trauma by charting clinical symptoms such as bedwetting and nightmares,⁴ but such studies fall short in the ability to understand the deeply intimate spaces in which traumatic memory resides and manifests. My work draws from nearly ten years of oral-history interviews with Palestinians who grew up during the Second Intifada. My interview cohort consists of twelve Palestinians who were between the ages of six and fourteen at the start of the Second Intifada and are currently between the ages of twenty-four and thirty-two. They are from Jenin, Ramallah, Jerusalem, Qalqilya, Balata, Nablus, the Jordan Valley, Bethlehem, and Hebron.⁵ My cohort is intentionally small because rich communication not only takes time to emerge but also requires multi-part interviews with individuals as well as shorter interviews with family members, friends, and associates.⁶ Oral history captures both semantic memory (facts, ideas, knowledge, concepts) and episodic memory (experiences), of which the latter sheds light on the social, historic, and cultural context in which individuals make meaning of trauma. I use narrative analysis to discern patterns and structures in the narrative of traumatic childhood experiences in these interviews.

These interviews demonstrate consistencies in how Palestinians remember their childhood home: Israeli violence permeated its most mundane, most intimate spaces. Palestinians who grew up during the Second Intifada customarily reference the infamous Muhammad al-Durra incident, in which a Palestinian father’s attempts to shield his son from Israeli gunfire, to no avail, were caught on film; however, Palestinians fill their oral histories with other incidents not considered worthy of headlines. This article takes a metaphorical and analytical “tour” through children’s homes during the Second Intifada, beginning broadly with the home’s infrastructure,

then meandering from the rooftop down past the windows and front door and into the home's interior space, inspecting numerous household objects and ending in the most intimate space: the bed.

Situating the Home in Studies of Palestinian Childhood Trauma

Research into Palestinian childhood trauma has undergone major shifts in the last decade, owing in large part to Palestinian mental health experts questioning conventional trauma paradigms.⁷ Within Palestinian studies, many psychology researchers are now questioning the biomedicalization and pathologization of Palestinian trauma, which uses Western testing instruments to diagnose post-traumatic stress disorder PTSD and treats PTSD exclusively as a mental illness.⁸ Instead, these researchers view trauma in its local context, largely requiring a political rather than a medical solution. Nadera Shalhoub-Kevorkian articulates the particular impact on Palestinian children as a process of “unchildering,” in which “the twisted logic of necropolitics . . . becomes inscribed . . . on children’s living, maimed, and dead bodies, on children who are always already illegitimate nonsubjects.”⁹

According to Shalhoub-Kevorkian, unchilding operates through global and local politics as well as through the “disruption of the intimate.”¹⁰ The intimate can refer to the body, as well as more generally to everyday civilian life, which scholars of Palestine are increasingly examining from historical and contemporary perspectives.¹¹ The biopolitics of the Israeli occupation means that the state maintains a level of control over Palestinian bodies.¹² But Israel’s infiltration of the everyday also makes domestic places, playgrounds, and schools battlegrounds as much as political offices, airways, and military command centers. Obvious and conventional causes of wartime distress, such as confrontations with the enemy soldiers and falling bombs, are thus not the only ways in which Palestinian children experience trauma.

The idea that the architecture of the home can be an access point into trauma is based on the notion that “place” is constructed. “Place” is made through the relationships people have with the space that surrounds them. That is, space becomes place when people give it meaning. Place is thus more than the tangible space that objects occupy: it has social and emotional, non-geometric, dimensions as well.¹³ Since individuals continually interact with their surrounding geography, this process of construction is not unidirectional; rather, place plays a role in self-formation as people’s identities develop in relation to places. During childhood, when the brain is in its most sensitive phase of development, places leave lasting imprints on a person’s memory. Visual, tactile, and auditory experiences perceived by our senses become imprinted on the mind.¹⁴ As Edward Said writes about his childhood, “It is geography – especially in the displaced form of departures, arrivals, farewells, exile, nostalgia, homesickness, belonging, and travel itself – that is at the core of my memories of those early years.”¹⁵ Traumatic memories are often experienced corporeally, and memory not only resides inside the brain, but is also distributed across non-neural systems.

Home is topophilic, a place that engenders feelings.¹⁶ When a person describes their home, they are also describing aspects of themselves.¹⁷ “The house is ‘the topography of our intimate being,’ both the repository of memory and the lodging of the soul – in many ways simply the space in our own heads,” writes Gillian Darley on Gaston Bachelard’s *The Poetics of Space*.¹⁸ The emotional relevance of the childhood home means that memories of it follow the child into adulthood, with long-term impacts on well-being. French philosopher Gaston Bachelard maintains that the home is a human’s first universe and leaves a physical imprint on the human psyche.¹⁹ For example, psychosocial feelings of security, belonging, love, and rootedness may be attached to memories of the architecture and furniture of the childhood home. The home is not just a place of comfort, safety, sanctuary, and love, but also of tension, inequalities, conflict, and pain. Home does not mean the same thing to all, but operates at “a variety of overlapping scales indicating how and where people feel a sense of belonging.”²⁰ Thus, in diverse ways, the home plays a crucial role in children’s lives with long-term effects. It is where they create routines, form identities, and develop relationships and a sense of belonging.

War can turn the home into what anthropologist Marc Augé calls a non-place, a space that people cannot use to consolidate their identity and build personal connections.²¹ War can keep a population feeling perpetually unsettled in their lived space. Further, war can exacerbate already existing dysfunctions, violence, and inequalities in the home.²² Israel has, since its founding, used space as a weapon in its ongoing war on Palestinians.²³ Following the Nakba, Israeli militarization suffused everyday Palestinian life such that “the simple fact of being-at-home constituted, according to the Israeli state, an act of terrorism and an incitement to violence.”²⁴ Yet, in recognizing Israel’s sophisticated system of spatial control, it is important not to fetishize it by rendering such violence abstract.²⁵ Palestinian houses are under constant Israeli surveillance and subject to Israeli attack.²⁶ During the second intifada, Israel turned Palestinian buildings into “layer cakes” with Israeli soldiers stationed both above and below a floor where Palestinians were trapped.²⁷ One of Israel’s micro-tactical techniques was to “move through walls” by blasting holes vertically through ceilings and roofs and horizontally through walls.²⁸ Israeli soldiers occupied homes and used them as military posts for weeks at a time. Sometimes they gave residents the chance to leave and find refuge elsewhere, but at other times they forced the residents to stay locked in one room of the home.

Israel’s assault on Palestinian houses during the Second Intifada disrupted the foundations of well-being that are generally nurtured in the home, such as solid family structures, routines, calmness, and a sense of rootedness.²⁹ From an early age Palestinian children understood that they should leave or disappear from their lived-space. Shalhoub-Kevorkian writes that Israel’s “domicidal ideology” (that is, attacking the home) is a mode of “eliminatory unchilding” and “the cutting [of] the body of the family into parts.”³⁰ Israel’s practice of home imprisonment, for example, forces many parents to become jailers of their children in their own home. “The cruel penetration into the family’s togetherness and safety is an attempt to paralyze the

ability of parents to be present for their children,” she writes.³¹ During the Second Intifada, Israeli soldiers violated not just Palestinian homes, but Palestinian families and Palestinian souls.

As Palestinians recall the Second Intifada, they often describe experiences in jarring contradiction to their expectations of what life should be like. Palestinians commonly remarked that they did not live a “normal childhood” or that their childhood was “stolen.” Mustafa said he did not move from childhood to youth “in a proper way.”³² After a particularly trying encounter with Israeli soldiers as a child, Nur says that she broke down crying and shouted, “I am just a kid!”³³ Her cry conveys a feeling that Israeli soldiers see Palestinian children as bodies, not as children.³⁴ Israeli criminal legislation in the occupied territories has at times lowered the age of majority for Palestinians, legally robbing them of their childhood.³⁵

By no means does this article intend to imply that Israel fully succeeds in its endeavors to abort healthy child development. Multiple forces impact children’s responses to trauma and children are resilient (although the resiliency narrative has its own problems beyond the scope of this paper).³⁶ There is no single home experience; rather, they vary by age, class, gender, and geographic location. Children’s well-being in contexts of political violence is strongly associated with their parents’ mode of parenting.³⁷ For some children, the home is already dysfunctional (with or without war); not all Palestinian homes are peaceful and nurturing sanctuaries were it not for Israeli intrusion. Still, life stories of Palestinians reveal painful memories of Israeli violence in the most unexpected spaces, from pillows to front doors to stoves. My oral history interviews with Palestinians sought to capture their life stories as they chose to tell them, letting the events of the Second Intifada or incidents involving their homes fall where they may. What emerges is clear and consistent memories of trauma embedded in intimate, domestic spaces.

Infrastructure

Although the home is often considered the private sphere for families, life inside the home is dependent on public systems. The home is a “technical terminal tied to a vast network of sewers, mains, cables, and lines.”³⁸ During the Second Intifada, Palestinians experienced intensified attacks on urban infrastructure, which affected home life. Disrupted connections to water, power, and communications systems prohibited, to various degrees, bathing, cooking, and even reading and homework. Ghada, from Jenin, remembers electricity cuts occurring throughout the Second Intifada, which made it difficult for her family across the West Bank to keep one another informed about their safety.³⁹ Closures of towns and villages, home demolitions, and restrictions on electricity and water – all forms of collective punishment Israel uses against Palestinians in the occupied territories⁴⁰ – had uneven effects across the Palestinian community, owing to the various modalities of home-making. Such conditions were the worst for communities that already suffered from poor infrastructure, such as those living in refugee camps.

Palestinian Bedouin communities were among the hardest hit by infrastructural warfare. Israel has simultaneously forced a sedentary existence upon the Bedouins, who traditionally engaged in nomadic or semi-nomadic pastoralism, but also made such settlement impossible, as Israeli law does not recognize Bedouins' historical claims to their lands.⁴¹ Bedouins are thus forced to live in precarious limbo without access to basic amenities. These outlying areas in which Bedouins live are also areas subject to settler expansion. Israeli law simultaneously backs settlers' rights to live in these areas (despite international law) and allows for the razing of Bedouins' houses and community buildings.

Qays grew up in a Bedouin community during the Second Intifada; his family survived on the barest of minimums. They had drastically reduced usage of their small generator because of limited access to the main electrical grid. The cost of hauling in tanks of water skyrocketed. Israeli bulldozers dug up soil from around his family encampment, then used it to block access to roads and pastures. One night, bulldozers destroyed his family's tents and hauled them away in a truck. Qays describes the scene after the tent demolition: "And we just stayed sitting. Bare. All we saw were cars in the distance going in and out of settlements that we were not allowed to get in. We had no place to go."⁴² Qays paints a powerful image of the terrain of war in Palestine and its juxtapositions. On one side is his family, empty-handed and homeless, sitting on the dirt. They are peripatetic people now frozen in place. On the other side, Israeli settlements brim with life. Thus, the settlers remained (and remain) connected, wired, and mobile, while the Bedouins are left in arrested conditions.

Israeli medical professionals have warned of the health dangers of living in unrecognized villages. Yet these same professionals turn a blind eye to the structural racism that has obliterated infrastructure and services there in the first place.⁴³ The implication is that Palestinians need Israel to "save" them from their own backwardness. In this way, Israeli attacks on the infrastructure of Bedouin communities, such as that described by Qays, perpetuate an Israeli narrative that demonizes Palestinian parents as unable to nurture and protect their children. Such assaults undermine these communities' ability to care for their children, and thus fit within a broader spectrum of Israeli policies of unchilding.

Roof

Roofs are an essential part of a home, even if they do not come immediately to mind as part of its lived space. The roof's primary job is to provide overhead protection from climatic elements, and its shape and design generally reflect the local climate. In Palestine, roofs are typically flat, which allow them to become open-air extensions of the home: a space for drinking tea and smoking a water pipe, a place to keep animals (pigeons, chickens, watchdogs), the location for water tanks or a catchment for water to fill the cistern, and an airy expanse for line drying clothes. During the intifada, the roof also took on a role in warfare. Israeli soldiers took over roofs as strategic points and sniping positions and demolished rooftop water tanks and solar

panels. Palestinians regularly ascended to their roofs for a view that would allow them to assess the situation in their neighborhood and take a breath of fresh air as respite from the suffocation of curfew. Overlooking the neighborhood from one's roof functioned for some as a statement of ownership and identity. (One need only observe the many flags kept on rooftops by Israeli settlers compared to the difficulties Palestinians experience in attempting to raise flags in urban areas of Jerusalem and Hebron.) Sometimes, Palestinians used rooftops to throw stones at Israeli soldiers in the streets below.

Muhannad's childhood memories in the Balata refugee camp describe the roof as a site of both domesticity and battle. Muhannad captures this duality in a story about two young Palestinian men, Omar and Ali, killed by Israelis on top of a neighbor's roof. Muhannad recalls:

There were two friends, Omar and Ali, they were like brothers. They ate together, drank together. They went to each other's homes all the time. They were very brave young men. They liked to throw stones. They pelted the soldiers with stones. They made slings. God rest their souls. One afternoon, an Israeli jeep passed and they threw stones. Before anything happened, their mother looked at them through the window and said, "Come down. Don't stay up there. The soldiers are out to kill. This is a dangerous situation." They said, "Don't worry about us." They did not listen to her. They drank tea and smoked. Omar was killed in his neck. It went in here and out here [gesturing]. Ali, God bless him, was killed in his stomach.⁴⁴

In Muhannad's account of the incident it is not clear what the two friends were doing on the rooftop at the time they were murdered. Were they throwing stones at the Israeli soldiers? Or were they drinking tea and smoking? The coherence of Muhannad's recollection of the events is of less concern here than his mixing of events in time and place. It is at points of unevenness and imperfection in narratives – those elements that, in the words of Ann Stoler, "disallow neat stories" and "muddy the waters" – where truths unravel.⁴⁵ In Muhannad's memory of these rooftop events, Israeli violence coexists with domestic recreation. He does not remember their death as something that happened to them while they were passively drinking tea and smoking, but instead remembers it in relation to their resistance to Israel (throwing stones). Even in their lived space at home, they could not relax.

Architecturally speaking, the roof represents impermeability, yet in Muhannad's memory, the roof is a membrane through which Israeli violence seeps from the outside world into the inside. A young man in Jerusalem, Munir, sums up the problem when he says, "Even if you run to your home, he [the soldier] will get to your home and take you with him."⁴⁶ When Amir was a little boy in Jenin, he believed that the Israelis had labeled him a resistance leader. Fearing that they would target him at any moment and in any place, he used to ask his father, "Please, Dad, do me a favor and hide me. They are coming to kill me."⁴⁷ One time when Amir heard bullets he ran and hid behind the

water tank on the roof, leaving his parents to search for him for hours. In bittersweet irony, Amir felt protected on the roof as he cowered behind the giant water tank, yet in reality he remained more exposed than ever to bullets from above. Muhannad's memory of the roof reflects the process of unchilding during the intifada, leaving children no safe place to avoid experiencing violence. Even the idea of going to the rooftop to get fresh air was a violent prospect under curfew, exposing children to stray bullets and devastating sights of neighborhood conditions.

Windows

Like rooftops, windows are liminal zones, existing simultaneously on the outside and inside of the home. From a window, the dwelling's inhabitants monitor public space from a protected vantage point. Passersby or neighbors do not always know when or if they are being watched from someone on the other side. Sometimes those on the outside catch glimpses of domestic life through windows; inhabitants expose themselves to the outside when they draw back curtains and blinds or open windowpanes. The sense of vulnerability attached to the window is tempered by an unspoken covenant: neither side will pry by looking longer or peering more deeply than is socially accepted into the other's exposed life. Windows can also serve as portals of communication, drawing people together from the inside and outside or between different houses. Liminality can thus produce a certain sense of comradeship.⁴⁸ This can be seen, for example, in the excerpt from "I Belong There" quoted at the start, where Mahmud Darwish draws parallels between friends and family, and windows. For as potentially vulnerable as windows make people, they also can connote trust in one's surroundings.

Israeli violence threatens this sense of comradeship that windows can represent. In many parts of the West Bank, Israeli occupying forces loom outside the window. This was particularly true during the Second Intifada, when Israeli bullets passed through windows and into homes. One mother in the Old City of Nablus recalls the danger she associated with widows during the Second Intifada: "I was helpless. All the children were young. What could I do? I used to sit and think and cry, but never show them [my emotions]. I would think to myself, 'What if my son looks out the window and they shoot him?'"⁴⁹ Wahid, who grew up in Hebron, recalls, "The problem with the intifada was that the wrong that was happening was excessive. For example, when there was shooting it would reach the windows and homes. You could not stand up in the home and you had to lay down on the floor. They [Israeli soldiers] would shoot randomly."⁵⁰ Wahid seems to accept a certain degree of necessary violence in war, but draws the line at the interior of the home. With his description of a child laying prostrate in a house, blocking out the external world at all costs, Wahid reverses the notion of windows as openings to the outside world. The child is overpowered by the window, losing his footing, both literally in the context of the intifada and metaphorically in the development from infancy to adulthood.

In situations where Israeli soldiers occupied Palestinian houses and turned them into military bases, windows were also dangerous for children. When Hanadi, of

Ramallah, was eleven years old, her family fled to a relative's home as soon as they got word that the Israeli soldiers had taken over neighbors' homes and forced the occupants of each abode into one room. Hanadi's family stayed with a relative for two weeks while Israeli soldiers used her home as a base of operations and an observation point. When she returned with her family, it had been turned upside down. She said she noticed holes in her curtains: "They kept the windows closed and the curtains closed. But they cut the curtains so they could point their guns through them and watch to the outside."⁵¹ Curtains are customarily opened or closed to reflect desired boundaries of privacy (though, of course, there can always be a discreet line of sight from either side). In the situation Hanadi describes, privacy is unequally distributed between the two sides. People on the outside are turned into targets of Israeli weapons and, because of the Israelis' ability to observe the street undetected, possible sources of intelligence could later be used to threaten them and undermine social ties. Under normal circumstances, the greatest danger posed by an open curtain might simply be a nosy neighbor looking for gossip; during the intifada, a perforated curtain could represent death.

Omar describes how Israeli bullets through the window of his family's home in downtown Jenin killed his mother when he was sixteen:

During the intifada, in 2005, I went to work [in a car workshop] there in Ramallah because my family situation was not good and my father was injured. When I was going back from Ramallah to Jenin at the end of the month at 'Anabta checkpoint, the soldiers took me to the settlement. They were drinking and things like this. And they started to beat me. I was young these days. They broke my nose – until today, my nose is not healed completely – and they beat my hand. They beat my hand. I stayed in bed for more than two months. Of course they used the cigarettes to burn me too. I used to be afraid at first when I was young, but later I got used to the situation [mistreatment by occupying Israeli soldiers] and it became normal. This is our daily life . . . this is normal. After that, when I came back from Ramallah, the soldier went to the neighborhood and my mother was standing in the window and she was shot and she was martyred immediately. She was still alive when I was beaten. They were coming after our neighbor and she was standing in the window and she was injured. That was the beginning of 2005. I was awake. We were awake because the soldiers were surrounding the neighborhood. We were all awake. I am the oldest one in the home now. I am in charge of all my brothers.⁵²

Omar conflates the violence of the beating with the violence of his mother's death, which both mark the intifada (and 2005 in particular) as a period of trauma. After explaining how his mother died, Omar turned his thoughts immediately to the fact that his mother was alive during and after the beating. In his narration, he reimposes the timeline of events about the beating, correcting himself from being pulled away

by thoughts of his mother. This comment creates a sense of disjointedness in the narrative. Many victims of trauma have trouble organizing their memories of the past. The comment could imply Omar's relief that his mother lived long enough to help him recover from the beating or his disappointment that she lived long enough to know about the beating. In either case, the comment alludes to maternal love, referencing a time when his mother was there for him. However traumatic, the beating represents a time when he had not yet been thrust prematurely into the role of parent to his siblings and himself. In many respects, the bullet through the window took away any semblance of normality. Earlier in the interview he confides that there was a time when he used to have a childlike fear of war, but that was before trauma became the norm, hardening him into an adult in a child's body. The toll of unchilding does not go unnoticed by the children themselves.⁵³

In this disrupted world, windows can lose their functional role in the home. Households lose the customary distinctions between day and night signaled by the uncovering or covering of windows. Parents may not open windows to let in fresh air; children may not vie among each other for the chance to turn window shutters, feeling the morning sunrays on their cheeks, or sit perched in windowsills calling out to friends playing in the street below. In periods of curfew, when a child opens a curtain, it was likely only to glean information about looming threats and the neighborhood conditions. Nur recalls, "I used to go back and forth in the home looking through windows. They [Israeli soldiers] may be standing in the trees and they may have had guns and they may have shot at me."⁵⁴ Trees as military observation points and sniper perches are the reality of unchilding. As the parents of Hala, a young woman from Qalqiliya, told their children, "The walls have ears."⁵⁵ Home becomes a cage. Hana states, "If they [children] open the window of the home, they see the [separation] wall. If they listen to the TV, they hear the occupation. All their life is about the occupation."⁵⁶ In a world of unchilding, windows were not vantage points to see fresh horizons. Instead, they were quite literally dead ends: sites entailing the end of lives.

Israel's weaponization of windows perpetuates distrust in the younger generation, by making them feel unsafe in their own home and unprotected by their family. Palestinian Counseling Center (PCC) psychologist Dr. Shadi Jaber describes the long-term impacts of distrust on Palestinians:

Loss of trust is a collective feature and it becomes an individual feature. I can say that the Palestinians in general feel mistrusting. They feel mistrusting of the world. The international law says something and nobody is putting this in action. It is mistrust that the world is not protecting us, nobody is protecting us. They don't trust people; they don't trust systems. You internalize what you hear and what you see and it affects you to the point that you will even start mistrusting your neighbor, your brother.⁵⁷

One role of parents in their children's lives is to, metaphorically speaking, "open the window" of hope for their children. When parents have to "pull the curtain closed"

on their children, this shades children's ability to imagine a better life ahead. In "I Belong There," Darwish finds some relief in his prison cell by recollecting mental images of seagulls, waves, and meadows: "a panorama of my own." During the Second Intifada, the panoramas for children were grim, remaining embedded in their memories into adulthood.

Front Door

"Borderlines of any sort, physical or symbolic, are manifestations of cognitive classifications," explains anthropologist of architecture Irene Cieraad.⁵⁸ The front door separates the interior of the house from the street, making it a transitional space leading from public to private, a threshold between the outside world and the inside world.⁵⁹ There are rituals linked to spaces of transition and, conventionally, transitions of status at the front door are ritually controlled and marked by tacit agreement.⁶⁰ Rituals of reception may include: a knock (or other form of announcement), recognition or introduction, exchange of greetings, and invitation/permission to enter. Rituals of passage normally spell out hierarchies in space. Not everyone can succeed in crossing thresholds.⁶¹ Such rituals also send the message that the visitor is entering a new social structure, with its own set of rules and expectations. Bypassing these rituals at the door undermines the host's dominion over the home. When Israeli soldiers demolish front doors to enter homes, they violate rituals that govern this transition. In many Palestinians' memories, the front door is a reminder of home invasions and arrests, which often occur in the middle of the night. In their memories of the Second Intifada, narrators connect the front door to assaults on personal privacy and the body.

During the 2002 Israeli invasion of Jenin's refugee camp, which resulted in the leveling of the central neighborhood, Israeli soldiers took over strategically located homes. Israeli soldiers locked Hamza and twenty members of his extended family, including children and a pregnant mother, in a single bathroom inside their home for three days. The family sat trapped inside while the soldiers oversaw atrocities in the camp. The bathroom door dividing the twenty-one family members from the soldiers took on an important role. It became, in a sense, the new front door for the family: it divided their cramped personal space in the bathroom from the Israeli soldiers occupying the rest of the house. Hamza's mother's memories of this experience focus on the heat, overcrowding, physical discomfort, and lack of food. However, Hamza's memories focus on his confusion about what was happening in the rest of the house. He describes hearing foreign sounds on the other side of the bathroom door, particularly the Israeli soldiers speaking Hebrew and mercenaries speaking what he perceived to be a Lebanese Arabic dialect. Hamza explains the profound sense of alienation he felt within his own home, "[I felt] afraid. Scared. I was scared mostly from their shouting and loud voices. One [family member in our room] knocked on the door and asked permission to leave to use another bathroom [in privacy]. The Israelis shouted and then they brought him a pan. Only once in a while could we leave to use the toilet."⁶² Forcing the family members to excrete their bodily waste in front

of one another and into cookware drove home the message that the soldiers now set the rules in the home. The soldiers arbitrarily allowed the private use of the restroom, which only furthered Hamza's feelings of vulnerability. Hamza's family finally left the bathroom (and the home altogether) when they heard the Israeli soldiers broadcast evacuation announcements from loudspeakers throughout the neighborhood. In their exit, the front door reversed its customary role as a barrier protecting domestic space into a portal to escape violated domestic space.

The most horrific experience for Amani during the Second Intifada occurred when Israeli soldiers demolished her house in Jenin with the family still inside. Amani tragically lost her younger brother in this ordeal and endured prolonged hospitalization for her own injuries. When she describes her painful memories of that night, Amani includes details linked to the front door. She says, "They did not knock on the door. They kicked a big stone into it. They said, 'In three seconds, if you don't come out, we will destroy the home.'"⁶³ Within the broader context of murder, injury, and home demolition, the soldiers' lack of a knock on the front door seems relatively insignificant. However, in Amani's memory, the use of a stone instead of a knock to get the family's attention was important; it symbolized the violence of the home destruction itself. Amani also recalled the precise time limit (three seconds) that the Israeli soldiers gave the home's inhabitants to evacuate, offering no opportunity to open the front door and permit their entry, ignoring and disregarding Palestinian sovereignty over their domestic and private spheres. Amani's description of the otherwise minor events that played out at the front door before the catastrophic home demolition captures her memories of the soldiers' disrespect for the family's sovereignty over their home.

During the Second Intifada it was not uncommon for Israeli soldiers to bang on front doors in the middle of the night as a way of rousing inhabitants before a house raid. Often Israeli soldiers shouted for all the men in the house to come out to the street, forcing them to face the wall in their underwear, hands tied. It was common practice for soldiers to enter before women could properly cover themselves; sometimes soldiers forced women to remove headscarves (supposedly to verify that they were not men in disguise).⁶⁴ Mahasan recalls the night Israeli soldiers came to arrest one of her brothers at their family home in Bethlehem:

They [the Israeli soldiers] surrounded the home. They came and knocked on the front door. My father opened the door and they pushed him with their guns. My father was just standing there and staring at them, smoking. They forced all my brothers to walk naked [in their underwear] and told my mother to go without her scarf. They called my brother who they wanted to arrest by his name. They knew his name. They hit him continuously on his head and just pushed him in the jeep. He was naked, just with underwear.⁶⁵

In Mahasan's memory, the presence of Israeli soldiers at the front door is linked to the hypervisibility of the Palestinian body. Israeli soldiers exercised control and domination via the bare Palestinian body. This corporal violence is much the same as

what occurs at checkpoints, where Palestinian bodies are sorted according to sex (and at times forced to remove clothing or otherwise bare themselves).⁶⁶ What Mahasan witnessed at her doorstep included elements of unchilding: the treatment of bodies as threats that need to be controlled, the inflicting of pain on the flesh, and the lack of a place for children to safeguard their bodies. Further, when Mahasan says that her father “was just standing there and staring at them, smoking,” she conveys a sense of helplessness on his part. As part of unchilding, Israel undermines Palestinian social structure by stripping parents or other adult family members of their ability to protect and nurture their children and provide safety and order in the home.⁶⁷

During the Second Intifada, Hanadi and her family were forced to leave their home when Israeli soldiers occupied it for a week and then left it in shambles. The first family member to return was her grandmother, who found the front door missing altogether. Hanadi explains: “First my grandmother walked back home. We called her on the way asking if she had her key. She said, ‘I don’t need a key . . . I don’t need a key [to the home], it is destroyed, so I don’t need a key to get in.’ . . . She was pretty heart-broken.”⁶⁸ Hanadi’s grandmother turned around and left when she saw the extent of damage the Israeli soldiers had done. Hanadi mentioned that the Israeli soldiers left the back door to the home standing, but with an imprint of a soldier’s boot on it.

The grandmother’s words (“I don’t need a key”) convey a sense of resignation and defeat: a continuation of the Nakba. Destruction in the present can evoke deep-rooted legacies of loss, what Ahmad Sa’di and Lila Abu-Lughod describe as “an existentially felt relationship of the past to the present, one potentially unfolding itself into a future.”⁶⁹ In Palestinian culture, grandmothers are traditionally holders of keys of homes lost in 1948. The symbolism of the key is manifold: it is a reminder of the expulsion of more than seven hundred thousand Palestinian Arabs from their homes during the founding of the state of Israel, and a symbol of Palestinians’ right to return to these homes and, more generally, to reclaim the property stolen during and after the 1948 and 1967 wars. The removal of the front door and the wreckage of the home’s interior undermined the grandmother’s efforts to undo some of this damage by recreating family unity, privacy, and integrity in the home.⁷⁰

Dining Area and Kitchen

Palestinian mothers often speak of their homes as vessels of unity, love, care, and hope, expressed through the rituals of cooking, meeting, and maintaining social and familial ties.⁷¹ The dining area and kitchen are places where these activities come together. They therefore became targets of domicidal assault during the Second Intifada. For example, one young woman from the Balata refugee camp recalls that when Israeli soldiers entered a home looking for someone, they often poured the salt, sugar, rice, and flour on the floor and then covered it with oil and kerosene to ruin it.⁷² A mother from Jenin recalls the Israeli soldiers who occupied her home helping themselves to the bread on her dining-room table,⁷³ and another woman recalls soldiers opening refrigerator doors during home searches.⁷⁴

Memories are multisensory, so trauma may be embedded in the smell of bread or the sight of sugar. Children in particular are more prone than adults to experiencing the world through their senses because they might not yet have developed the language capacity to fully articulate what they experienced, been fully aware of what happened, been given permission to speak about it, or learned what it meant. Nonetheless they feel trauma in their bodies: “They viscerally experience the impact of their environment on their own well-being.”⁷⁵ Because of food’s ubiquity and its sensory qualities, traces of traumatic memory are often intertwined with it, and especially with staples. Israeli settler colonialism cements its power through a variety of spheres, including sensory phenomenon – the sights and smells of occupation.⁷⁶

A young man from Balata connects the routine practice of domestic cooking with fear of Israeli soldiers. After describing Israeli soldiers searching a neighborhood friend’s house during the intifada, Muhannad’s thoughts turn to his family’s reaction: “We were terrified. We said: ‘Will they [Israeli soldiers] come [here too]? Will they come in the house?’”⁷⁷ Muhannad went on: “What would be your feelings if you were in the kitchen boiling an egg or a potato and suddenly you found behind you a soldier sniffing? What would be your feelings? What would be the fear that overtakes you?”⁷⁸ Muhannad describes the oppressive occupation as one that works through overt surveillance, even in the kitchen.

One mother in Ramallah recalls how she could not even feed her children in peace:

I remember one night I was feeding them [the children]; they were so young. They were sitting around a small table and a soldier came knocking on the door and he was screaming. He said, “If you don’t open the door, I will blow it open.” I heard that the neighbors got out, so I felt a bit safe. So I opened the door. I remember the look on my children’s face. My son had a piece of bread that he was going to eat, but he dropped it very slowly, as he was terrified even to move his hand.⁷⁹

As in other cultures, bread is for many Palestinians a symbol of maternal love and nurture. Mahmud Darwish opens his poem “To My Mother,” for example, with the line: “I long for my mother’s bread.”⁸⁰ The mother quoted above averted the threat of explosives, but it is almost as if the boy’s fallen bread represents a breach to motherhood itself: she could not protect her son from extreme fear. While a little boy dropping a piece of bread is itself far from a calamity, it remains seared in his mother’s memory as evidence of unchilding by domicidal assault.

Atmosphere

Although domestic atmosphere is hard to study empirically, it is nonetheless an inherent part of habitation.⁸¹ For many Palestinians, feeling “at home” means feeling safe. Palestinians often hang the evil eye or hand of Fatima on or near front doors to ward off harm. My interlocutors explained repeatedly that Israeli home invasions disrupted not just the physical home, but the *feeling* of home.

When Israeli soldiers turned Ghada's home into a military post during the April 2002 invasion of Jenin, she was denied her place of refuge from Israel's occupation. Ghada describes the change in home atmosphere she felt the moment she opened the front door to her home after the Israeli soldiers' departure:

We opened the door and it is rubbish. It's not our home. They peed on the ground. They used my bed and my sister's bed. They slept there and the smell was very bad. They just used it freely, as if it was their house and they could do whatever they wanted with it. I felt like I never met people like this [before]. They broke also the door of my mother's room because my mother's room looks directly at Jenin camp. They broke it and they broke all the windows after they left. They destroyed 50 percent of our home and you know, as I told you, my father was not good financially so we were in bad problems. They destroyed our home. We were very shocked.⁸²

Ghada indicates that the home is more than just the structure or the items within it. The arrangement and order of items in the house no longer represented her family's identity. The house as a sanctuary from impurities and the contamination of the outside world was defiled. The disarray and filth that Ghada confronted in her home environment struck her at a visceral level:

This was the first time we saw the occupation inside our home. We felt then we were really occupied. [It was worse than] even my struggle to [find food to] feed my family and what I saw happening in the camp. When they invaded our home, it was real evidence of the occupation. I felt like now we were occupied. Now we were witness to what they were doing. I felt like they were doing this inside my home, even though I was not a combatant. I was just a little child. And my father and my family were just Palestinians. They just wanted peace. They were not doing anything. They were not holding guns, they were not.⁸³

Ghada remembers the home invasion as an ultimate form of military occupation, more invasive than any other interaction with soldiers. It is as if the occupation of her home not only destroyed a domestic space of refuge, but was also a direct blow to the core of her selfhood, a violation of the sanctity of her personal sovereignty and her inherent dignity as a human being. She felt violated materially, personally, intimately, and bodily. She concludes her story with these words: "I feel like the occupation really occupied me before it occupied Palestine."⁸⁴ The occupation of Palestine did not have full meaning for Ghada until the occupation of her home, which was also the occupation of her selfhood – or, metaphorically speaking, her inner atmosphere.

Bed

The objects in a home can orient people toward the past, present, or future in different ways at different times. For example, young couples may link the furniture they buy

to the creation of a new family. Expectant parents may connect purchases of children's accessories to a baby's arrival. People demonstrate their social status to friends and relatives by means of the quality and quantity of home décor. The value of household objects comes from their relationship with the owner. Identities are wrapped up in household objects, which serve as "clues and signs" to our existence.⁸⁵ The bed is one such household object that recurs in my interviews with Palestinians.

Beds are often the ultimate "personal domestic sanctuary" within the sanctuary of the home.⁸⁶ The bed is where people go to enter a state of unconsciousness that puts them at their most vulnerable.⁸⁷ Sleeping and dreaming are fundamental to physical and mental health. In childhood, the bed can be the site of the maternal tucking-in and a place to hide for safety when afraid. A popular lullaby (Fairuz's *Yalla Tnam Rima*) sung in Palestine depicts a sleeping baby ("the beautiful rose") protected by her mother and father. (Palestinian singer Amal Murkus's *Bhallelak* is of the same genre.) During the intifada, however, Palestinians acidly remarked that Israelis could spy even on their dreams.⁸⁸

When asked to describe any violence she experienced in childhood, Nur's thoughts turn to several incidents that took place in the bedrooms of her family home during the Second Intifada. Nur's younger brother slept with shoes next to his bed because of the constant threat of an Israeli night invasion. It was common practice for Israeli soldiers to rouse children from homes about to be bulldozed; there are accounts from the 2002 Israeli massacre in Jenin of children walking barefoot across trash and rotting corpses.⁸⁹ Nur's parents often put cotton balls in their children's ears to allow them to sleep better through the disruptive noises of gunfire and bombing. Nur recalls watching from the opposite side of her home as a bomb destroyed her bedroom:

The first time I saw the bomb [in the sky], I was not afraid. I was just looking at it like nothing would happen. I was just staring. But when the bomb came in the direction of my home, that was the moment I felt scared. I knew that everything in the world has life and life is good. The moon has a life, so it's beautiful. The sun in the morning is beautiful. So why does the bomb have life, but it's not beautiful?⁹⁰

Nur could not reconcile the beauty she usually associated with life with the deadliness of the falling bomb. It was as if the experience prematurely awakened her to the world's harshness.

In describing her return to a home destroyed by the soldiers who had occupied it during the Second Intifada, Hanadi noted the bed mattresses in particular. The home she returned to was unrecognizable, with picture frames on the ground, books destroyed, curtains cut with peepholes, and soldiers' names inscribed in soot on the walls. It was common for soldiers to carry out such destruction in homes they occupied, with reports of soldiers stomping on religious symbols in homes as well.⁹¹ Hanadi recalls with detail the impact of the home occupation on the mattresses: they were moved around, slept in, stained with mud, and saturated with urine.⁹² It was as

though the soldiers had not only defiled the innermost sanctuary of the home, but had marked their territory.⁹³

Conclusion

War scholar Carolyn Nordstrom writes that a nuanced perspective on violence moves beyond the gruesome physical acts of brutality that are so often the focus of journalistic reports, official statements, and popular movies to encompass the deeper and more enduring violence of “destruction of home and humanity, of hope and future, of valued traditions and the integrity of the community.”⁹⁴ Through Palestinians’ life narratives, we are afforded an opportunity to expand the customary way war is represented. In these narratives, the home emerges as a site of unchilding. By examining different domestic spaces one by one, this article argues that Palestinians’ memories of the home serve to explicate in detail the wounds of war on children. This is not a call for diagnostic manuals and handbooks on mental health to start referencing windows, beds, and doors in their checklist of trauma symptoms; but there is an urgent need to recognize the profound danger children face in their very homes. In this article, “home” was taken to mean the architectural space where one lives. If we expand home’s meaning, we see that unchilding reaches also into the soil, leaves, and sky: the architecture of the world. As Darwish concludes his poem “I Belong There”: “I have learned and dismantled all the words in order to draw from them a single word: *Home*.”

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Epigraph

Mahmoud Darwish, *Unfortunately, It Was Paradise: Selected Poems* (University of California Press, 2003).

Endnotes

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- “This significance attached to the institution of the family explains the right to respect for family life, a right recognized in peacetime and in wartime, both internationally and domestically.” Orna Ben-Naftali, “K: Kinship” in Orna Ben-Naftali, Michael Sfar, and Hedi Viterbo, eds., *The ABCs of the OPT: A Legal Lexicon of the Israeli Control over the Occupied Palestinian Territories* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018).
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Virtual Reality Encounters at the Israel Museum

Palestinian Homes and Heartlands

Sabrien Amrov

Abstract

This essay discusses the relationship between intimacy and violence in the context of colonial oppression. Drawing from geographical literature on spatial intimacies, the article delves into the specific ways Israel targets socio-spatial entities while deploying and targeting intimacy. It does so through an analysis of *Visitors*, a virtual reality installation at Israel Museum that abolishes the social and political realities of Palestinians, which are juxtaposed with the settler colonial violence that daily targets Palestinian homes outside the borders of the Israel Museum. The author argues that home as a site of analysis can shed light on how political representations become mapped out and framed in the case of Palestinians, making explicit the relationship between the geography of home and the politics of representation. While Landau's exhibition is meant to bridge a social gap between two people, his ideological assumptions, seemingly divergent from the state of Israel, remain infused by settler colonial politics of fear and racial superiority.

Keywords

Intimacy; scale; home; virtual reality; museum; Daniel Landau.

It seems proper that those who create art in a civilization of quasi-barbarism, which has made so many homeless, should themselves be poets unhoused and wanderers across language. Eccentric, aloof, nostalgic, deliberately untimely....

– George Steiner, *Extraterritorial*

Between May 2018 and April 2019, Israeli artist Daniel Landau curated an encounter. He sliced a room in half inside the Israel Museum in West Jerusalem, turning the space into a virtual reality (VR) installation entitled *Visitors*, and recreated two living rooms of two different families – one Palestinian and one Israeli – facing each other. The museum pamphlet identifies them as one ‘Jewish’ family, the Avidan-Levis, and one “Arab” family, the Sabatins. Two families living just a few dozen kilometers apart from each other but never meeting, separated by the apartheid wall that divides the West Bank and Jerusalem. The Sabatins live in the village of Husan in the West Bank and the Avidan-Levis reside in Modi‘in, an urban settlement between Jerusalem and Tel Aviv. *Visitors* brings together the interiors of their homes, inviting museum guests to experience an artificial intimate encounter between a Jewish settler family and a Palestinian one.

As part of their *I to Eye* exhibition series, the museum advertises the installation as an opportunity for guests using VR headsets “to ‘meet’ members of both families up close and hear from them about what connects and divides them. This installation allows you to examine the gaps between the families, to imagine a meeting between them, and to cross the boundary between the real and the virtual.”¹ This entails watching prerecorded sound bites through the VR headset. Family members from each household share thoughts about music, family, and their perceptions of the other; as guests move from one side of the room to the other, they leave one home to enter the second.

The artwork is conceived of as a rare opportunity to think through the possibilities of “being together.”² Via the curation of home, Landau attempts to highlight cultural similarities between the two families through an encounter he hopes to be “transformative.”³ Transformative experience theory, upon which Landau bases his work, posits that artworks ought to provide “meaning and value to future experience. They modify our ways of perceiving the world, thus leaving us and the world itself irrevocably changed.”⁴ Guests of the Israel Museum, then, should leave *Visitors* not only enchanted by the piece’s aesthetic qualities, but fundamentally transported into another person’s everyday life. By visiting the rooms, hearing the family members speak, or touching the furniture, Landau understands the encounter brought by the VR installation as transformative because it should theoretically generate an embodied experience for self-reflection for museum guests. Landau wants guests to relate differently to their everyday lives and how they perceive themselves and others.

Here, he uses the home as the locus of encounter to produce an image of the Palestinian that will allow for an intimate encounter, albeit protected and curated, for the majority Israeli guests inside the Israel Museum in West Jerusalem.⁵ Meanwhile, outside the doors of the state-funded museum, which stretches fifty thousand square

meters over the hills of Jerusalem,⁶ real life encounters between Israeli authorities and Palestinians are not difficult to *imagine*. They occur daily and often involve the home: evictions, bombings, home demolitions, and arrests of Palestinians, as young as six years old, in their sleep. For the Israeli settler colonial state, Palestinian homes are treated as extensions of its occupation and ergo subject to state violence. Beyond the physical infrastructure of home, Israel's nation-state project relies on the constant erasure and denial of a homeland for Palestinians.⁷

Considering the VR installation inside the Israel Museum together with the systematic state violence against Palestinian homes occurring simultaneously outside its walls, I examine how the emphasis on home, even as a site of mutual understanding and “coexistence,” allows Israelis – including the Israeli left⁸ – to lay claim to the Palestinian private sphere, while they remain subjects of a broader condition of settler colonialism. Through the lens of intimacy, I argue that home as a site of analysis can shed light on how political representations get mapped out and framed in the case of Palestinians. In order to engage in this line of inquiry, it is crucial to think about the simultaneity of one site inside the Israel Museum, consisting of a VR installation that stars a Palestinian home beside an Israeli one, and a constellation of sites – Palestinian homes outside the confinement of the museum – as they entail a mediation on everyday life of Palestinian homing.



Figure 1. Museum visitors viewing Daniel Landau's *Visitors* media installation, 2018. Photo by author.

How can the concept of home be utilized as both a political and cultural tool by an Israeli artist and what are the ideological underpinnings and social-political impacts of this brand of “being together” through a curated encounter? To answer these questions, I build on a conception of spatial intimacies grounded in cultural and

feminist geography to make explicit the relationship between geography of home and the politics of representation. While Landau's exhibition is meant to bridge a social gap between two people, his ideological assumptions, seemingly divergent from the state of Israel, remain infused by settler colonial politics of fear and racial superiority. Israeli representation of Palestinians often entails containing and confining the figure of the Palestinians to imageries palatable to Jewish citizens of Israel. I start with an overview of the intention of the installation at the Israel Museum, followed by an overview of the relationship between home and intimacy. I conclude the paper with a mediation on how the understanding of home as target, cultural trope, and lived experience sheds light on the politics of representation of Palestinians.

Spatial Intimacies and the Home

“Home is the heart of a person's identity, that is where it is constructed. That is where, I believe, despite all the challenges we have, it is a place where you nourish so much about who you are,” explained Landau when I asked him why he chose home as the locus of encounter for his installation. He continued:

95 percent happens at home . . . It is a place where your culture [manifests], in terms of how you invite people who come to your home. There are not enough metaphors to describe how meaningful a home is, be it a womb, be it a place where nurture is.⁹

In this psycho-spatial description of home, Landau assumes that the physical space in which people live is necessarily a place where an individual or family feels safe enough to be laid bare and receive visitors. The home is heartland – the center of a person's vital support system. The artist also insists here on the fundamental role home plays in shaping a person and how a person receives the self and Other.¹⁰ For Landau, the productive work that home generates as both metaphorical concept and as an art interface is primarily affective – concerned with the embodied subjectivity of people in their various modes of attachments in social life.¹¹ A transformative encounter entails a moment that pulls you to see differently, to engage the Other in a novel way, a way that would otherwise seem impossible to consider. For Landau, that type of possibility can be promoted through simulated spatial intimacy.

Similar articulation of the home can be found in critical feminist literature. Ethnographic work by Palestinian scholars Nadera Shalhoub-Kevorkian and Sarah Ihmoud, for example, reveals how “the home space and the homeland are critical places of being and becoming. Homing works as a powerful force that gives voice, spreads love, and maintains continuities.”¹² In her essay “Homeplace,” bell hooks writes about the ability of home to be a place where all Black people can be “subjects, not objects . . . where we could restore to ourselves the dignity denied us on the outside in the public world.”¹³ The lived experience of Black Americans outside the home fundamentally shaped the social practices of nurture and care inside it, which

allows them to once again go back “outside” and face white supremacy. Similarly, Ara Wilson’s research on homes and suburbs marries the concept of intimacy and infrastructure to draw attention to how material-symbolic assemblages are produced, managed, and interrupted by and through intimate social relations in fields of power.¹⁴ Wilson makes visible the ways in which bathrooms, garage doors, and other elements of suburban domestic architecture are part and parcel of the global circulations of power and reveal the work of neoliberal capitalist ideology at an intimate level.

The crucial distinction between Landau’s formulation and feminist writers like Shalhoub-Kevorkian, Ihmoud, hooks, and Wilson is how the latter convey the importance of the dialectal relationship between home and power. When hooks writes, for example, about the nurture and care that Black women like her grandmother ensured inside the home, she highlights that these practices are not a natural course of human inscription. These roles are assigned through patriarchal and racial power dynamics at a specific historical conjuncture. Black women lived, understood, and identified the inequalities at home, but also engaged in practices of care, grappling with the power dynamics inside and outside the home and their desire to provide for their loved ones. Similarly, seeing Palestinian homes as sites of resistance, as Shalhoub-Kevorkian and Ihmoud suggest, need not fetishize Palestinian spaces, but rather highlights the political reality that Palestinian families and individuals face. Shalhoub-Kevorkian and Ihmoud write: “As the Zionist state continues its logic of elimination, invading and destroying our homes in its attempt to destroy our social fabric and family ties and erase our memory and identity as a people, we center home as a site of the struggle of memory against forgetting.”¹⁵ Homes are not born as sites of resistance out of natural design, but out of a necessity to preserve what is under attack – and that work is a burden of colonialism, labor that could be otherwise directed. In other words, the *raison d’être* of Palestinian homes is not to be sites or infrastructure of resistance; however, they are made such by Israel’s imposition of settler colonial violence that extends into Palestinians’ physical homes. In addition, for Palestinians inside the West Bank, Gaza, Apartheid Israel, and beyond, the experience of home does not stop or start with themes such as *hospitality* (the direct translation of the Hebrew title of the exhibition, *hachnasat orchim*) and *visitors* (the English title). Palestinian homes are also sites of celebrations, declarations of status, family feuds, competitions over who has the bigger home or garden, and so on. They are also places of distance, far away and, for many in exile, unapproachable. They are intimate sites of fragmentation and unification.

Home is a vessel into which individuals and societies breathe meaning, but also a site that reflects and manifests the circulation of power across different scales. As a vernacular term, intimacy describes relationships that are (or give the impression of being) physically or emotionally close – personal, sexual, private, caring, loving. But the emergence of intimacy as an analytical frame, at least in recent feminist and critical geography, attempts to unsettle this fixing of the scale of the intimate.¹⁶ A process-based view of scale (in which scale is produced, not given) allows us to think about social relations, power struggles, and resistance in different sites rather

than hold a deterministic view that assigns to home an apolitical and fixed character. Contrary to what is suggested in *Visitors*, the settler colonial power dynamic cannot be suspended as a prerequisite for “transformative encounters” through spatial intimacy.

Intimacy relies on social and spatial relations that are fundamentally relational. By delinking intimacy and domesticity, it is possible to trace the reverberations of intimacy without limiting its manifestations to the body or the household or to the here and now. Geraldine Pratt and Victoria Rosner highlight how intimacy – sexual, familial, and other types of attachments – is not limited to personal or private affairs: social, economic, and political worlds are built around personal attachments and are thus equally part of the formulation of the intimate.¹⁷ How these types of attachments make people public and create multilayered identities and subjectivities is part of the work intimacy fulfils.¹⁸ Laurent Berlant argues that intimacy “poses a question of scale that links the instability of individual lives to the trajectories of the collective.”¹⁹ These trajectories (toward past, present, and future conditions) must include the political, social, and cultural conditions of the collective.

Intimacy, in such a reading, is not locked down to a specific time and place but is an analytical lens that allows greater sensitivity to how material and non-material aspects work in concert in the production of social relations. Affect theory allows us to move from obsessing over a public versus private binary to investigating what work is done by relegating the intimate as a category to the private sphere, shifting attention “to structures of bifurcation rather than binaries.”²⁰ Doing so allows us to think about the reverberation and circulation of power through an affective dimension – humans are not interpellated only through and with their minds, but through their senses, feelings, and emotions – and challenges the romanticization of personal space as necessarily safe.²¹ Instead, intimacy is about intense engagement with the different modes of attachment that produce social life at various scales.

The genesis of *Visitors* was in many ways intimate for Landau. Initially, the exhibition was meant to showcase a story of childhood friendship with a Palestinian from al-‘Isawiyya, a Palestinian neighborhood in East Jerusalem, across from French Hill, where Landau grew up. “We grew up as friends, before the First Intifada. There were a lot of divides, and finally we weren’t able to maintain our relationship as friends.”²² Ultimately, however, Landau explained that approaching this personal story was “too painful” and “did not feel right.” Instead, Landau chose to represent two families that did not hold any personal connections to each other. In his curation, Landau resorts to identity politics to make the case for a personal experience that is stripped from a narrative that highlights the intimate relationship between colonizer and colonized. In his story, there is an important connection between intimacy and violence. A settler colonial state impedes the ability to relate at different levels, including in friendship. It interrupts the ability to forge relations the same way its Apartheid wall cuts through Palestinian towns and cities. This relationship between violence and intimacy, which Landau attempts to stifle, comes back in an alternative form in this installation.

The installation is curated so as to eliminate any point upon which the reality of

Palestinian lived experience can intrude. By aiming to set politics aside, there is a deliberate attempt to produce a definition of the cultural that is apolitical. Landau falls into two fundamentally dangerous readings of the intimate and of culture. On the one hand, he pits private life against public life and pushes the fantasy that private life is the real, the authentic, the untouched against “collective life: the surreal, the elsewhere, the fallen, the irrelevant.”²³ He also attempts to redefine the relationship of Arabs with Jews, replacing one category of identity (Palestinian) for another (Arab) in order to negotiate a sense of familiarity that upholds, or at least doesn’t unsettle, the ideological underpinnings of colonial power in defining the borders of the human.²⁴ In other words, there is a desire to see the Other only on terms already violently established.

Home, Intimacy, and the Other

Visitors simultaneously employs a logic of sameness and attempts to demonstrate a clear physical separation between the more “modern” Jewish home and the “traditional” Arab home. This is done through an almost perfect spatial symmetry in the two homes: the placement of chairs, the carpets, the cabinets are the same in each. It is as though the two homes are architectural mirrors of each other except for the material-symbolic markers of cultural difference. Cultural diversity within the Palestinian home is reduced to three nargilas on a mantle and a wall of stone (the same size and shape as a wall of wood in the Jewish Israeli home). Relying on Orientalist tropes of what the Arab home should look like, Landau creates a sense of familiarity not with reality, but with already existing ideas that Israelis hold of Palestinians.

This presentation rearticulates the problematic imaginary of a two-sided, balanced conflict, rooted in ignorance of the other. This discourse posits that Palestinians and Israelis do not know each other and this lack of knowledge creates fear and distance. This liberal fantasy supposes that the Palestinian-Israeli conflict is solvable if the two peoples just learned to know one another. It thus erases the intimate and violent encroaching of Israeli military occupation of Palestinian everyday life. It also denies the productive and political work that intimacy, as a lens through which to access social life, does in order to understand the circulation of power. It presents Israeli and Palestinian difference as one of cultural distinction, rather than a difference of power and a relationship of a colonizing state to an indigenous population, thereby foreclosing more robust possibilities for exploring the cultural, historical, and political difference that we might actually find in Palestinian and Jewish Israeli homes. Sameness is emphasized only in the limits of the kinship (family) and the ability to be hospitable. Sameness is promoted when lived experience is stripped from the curation.

Through this symmetrical presentation, *Visitors* avoids addressing Israeli settler colonialism and instead pushes forward the idea that if Israeli Jews look close enough in the Palestinian heartland that is the home, they can see themselves: “Their family isn’t different from our family.”²⁵ This sameness offers the safety to relate. Inviting a majority Jewish audience to understand Palestinians as an extension or an alternative

reading of their Jewishness also suggests obliquely that Palestinians are not human unless Israeli Jews see themselves inside of them. This is done, in part, by centering the Arab in Palestinian Arab identity to remind Arab Jews of their own Arabness. Landau believes it is important for Israelis to recognize: “More than half of us are actually Arab and there are anxieties people feel when you remind them of this.” That Landau sees the home space as capable of provoking this reminder is in part based on a reading of home as personal or family space, and therefore a kind of depoliticized space where sameness can emerge. It is only when we emerge from these spaces that politics act upon us and make us different. While home can indeed be sanctuary, it is not a refuge from politics; instead, as hooks notes, home is produced by (and produces) politics. An art practice of “solidarity” that refuses to acknowledge this in order to emphasize “sameness” is ultimately an art practice of erasure.

In the installation, for example, the father of the Avidan-Levi family further emphasizes the Orientalist trope of the hospitable Arab:

First of all, regarding hospitality, I was hosted by Arab families and I know what hospitality is like for them. It is about receiving guests, in a very warm, embracing, and accepting manner and I think I learned more from them about hospitality than I learned at home.²⁶

Raji Sabatin, too, is invited to talk about the difference between an “Eastern Jew” (*yahudi sharqi*) and a “Western Jew” (*yahudi gharbi*). He shares:

In all honestly, I see a difference between the social interaction with the Eastern Jew versus the Western Jew. You can say that the Eastern Jew is close to you, in some respects, in terms of your norms and way of life. For example, you can work an entire day at the house of the Western Jew, and he will never invite you for a coffee. The Eastern Jew will maybe invite you for food.²⁷

By asking the patriarchs of both families to speak about this Eastern-Western distinction, *Visitors* recycles an Orientalist trope, using imperial categories of differentiation to evoke the Arabness of Jewish Israelis. This reinforces the very ideological underpinnings that sustain Zionism.

The process of divorcing Arabness from Jewishness and pitting each against the other is indeed a colonial legacy, and one that has served the Zionist project since its inception. Zionism is a product of European ideologies of racial superiority, and it appropriated European racial formations and re-articulated them inwardly toward different groups within the Jewish community.²⁸ These racial formations denied many Jews their Arabness; but how can this violence, and its temporality and spatiality, be examined without also accounting for Palestinian lived experiences?²⁹ Today, these colonial formations continue to hold material consequences for Palestinians that they do not for Israeli Jews of Arab origin. As Lana Tatour reminds us, “Palestinians – as opposed to all Jewish populations regardless of their marginal position in Israeli society – are neither part of the settler collective agency, nor the multiethnic make-

up of Israeli society.”⁷³⁰ Questions of perpetual homelessness, homes besieged and demolished, exile and denial of return to home are at the heart of the Palestinian political struggle and interpersonal dealings of Palestinian life at all levels. Homelessness is not a metaphor for many Palestinians, nor can it be relegated to the personal, private, or individual; it is collective, historically contingent, and persistent. In this sense, censoring parts of Palestinians’ lived experiences of home to produce a narrative of sameness allows Israelis to claim ownership over Palestinian representation. There is no room to appreciate both the richness and the incommensurability of cultural and social differences between families.



Figure 2. Still image from drone footage of the exteriors of both homes; on the left, the Jewish settler family’s home; on the right, the Palestinian family’s home. Daniel Landau, *Visitors*, 2018.

This lack of consideration is also demonstrated in the installation’s use of drone footage of both homes side by side. On the main wall of the installation, the exterior of the Avidan-Levis home presents as a modern looking structure sitting on a well-maintained street while the Sabatin home is topped by a makeshift roof held together with the help of old tires (see figure 2). Like the room divided in perfect symmetry, the footage on the backdrop wall of the installation showcases the materiality of the two homes from their exteriors without acknowledging the settler colonial context. Husan, where the Sabatins reside, is situated 6.5 kilometers west of Bethlehem, adjacent to the 1949 Armistice Line (the Green Line). After the Oslo Accords, Husan was divided into areas B and C – with 12.6 percent of the land under shared Palestinian Authority and Israeli control, and 87.4 percent under full Israeli security control, respectively. It is constantly subject to home invasions and night raids by the Israeli military. Its residents face a 40 percent unemployment rate, and 60 percent of Husan’s economy relies on the Israeli labor market. Husan also suffers from a lack of proper water supply

and sewage infrastructure. Yet no element of the installation – the spatial separation, the bird’s-eye-view of the exterior of the homes, the pamphlet presentation of the installation – links settler colonialism and the experience of home; thus, the interiors and exteriors of its homes are divorced from the larger infrastructures in which they are embedded.

The decision to decontextualize is not unfamiliar in cultural and archival representation of Palestinians. Edward Said and Jean Mohr, for example, published *After the Last Sky* to protest the conditions imposed on Said’s proposal that Mohr’s photographs of Palestinians be exhibited at the Geneva site of the 1983 United Nations International Conference on the Question of Palestine. The display was approved on the one condition that “no writing can be displayed with them. No legends, no explanations.”³¹ Palestinians could only be represented without context.

Visitors adds a virtual reality element to this dynamic, turning the intimacy (and violence) of the gaze into the intimacy-violence of a multisensory experience. Museum guests are invited to *hear* the Other, to *feel* as though inside their home, and promised an *authentic* experience of intimacy. Landau posits this as essential to the experience of the (Jewish Israeli) museum-goer:

My virtual reality is not driven by escapism, to go to fantasy or to escape realities. I think about it as a travel ticket to maybe some places that sometimes are not possible in reality . . . The fact that you, in such an accessible way, in such a cultural way, get to be invited into an Arab family’s home in the West Bank, is not something that can happen every day. And so, this encounter is supposed to raise important questions and, hopefully, help reflective and reflexive process[es].³²

Yet, museum guests are offered access without accountability. Virtual reality is often sold as an opportunity for *real* participation because of its ability to stimulate the senses simultaneously: you hear, you see, you feel the objects. But as Ariella Azoulay writes, “Active participation should mean to resist the assumption that the insecurity of the lives of those photographed is unrelated to your own status and mode of being as a citizen of a given political regime.”³³ There is no confrontation here as Palestinians are present in representation, but absent in conversation. What does it mean to have permission to experience the Other without reciprocity and engage in a one-sided negotiation of belonging? What kind of privilege is denied and foreclosed to the Other? These questions are at the center of colonial relationalities.

Colonial Relationalities and Withheld Humanity

This flattening out of the power dynamic is further articulated in the narrative arc of the Palestinian family. Guests meet the Palestinian family on Israeli terms. It is only by articulating a kind of Palestinian identity denuded of politics that Landau curates an intimate space between the two people. Raji Sabatin, a fifty-six-year-old Palestinian,

has, according to Landau, a long history of resisting Israeli military occupation:

There is a lot of material that could [be] very explosive from Raji Sabatin: he was in prison, his sister is paralyzed from a shot by an Israeli sniper, [his] brother was a terrorist, he also has what we call blood on his hands. There is a lot of bleeding leads there . . . that I could have pushed . . . but I came with very little intentions.³⁴

Instead, Raji embodies the trope of the redeemed Arab: a native who had been embedded in a culture of violence and savagery but was able to leave it behind. As Landau explains:

Raji is a very special person. He was a terrorist but became a peace activist. So he lives behind the wall, but he kind of has a special position in the Palestinian society where everybody knows that he has Jews and Arabs meeting at his home promoting coexistence. And so, we got to meet him.³⁵

In Landau's description, racial, Orientalist, and colonial logics mingle: Raji was once a "terrorist" (embodying the racialized criminalization of Palestinian insurgency) but became a "peace activist" (illustrating the ability of Arabs to ascend toward enlightenment, civilization, progress). Spatial intimacy – both in the installation and outside it – is permitted because of Raji's "transformation." Landau exceptionalizes Raji and his story, presenting him as the token Arab who extended a hand, choosing peace and demonstrating kindness, and who therefore, hopefully, can be a beacon of hope. Raji is allowed attention and offered spotlight because he fits the liberal idea of the Arab who left violence for peace. The museum-goer is offered intimacy with Raji because of the safety represented by his redemption from a violent past.

There is no attempt to question, by contrast, the affective impacts of being a settler in Israel for the family in Modi'in. The intimate, here, is not only the sphere of individual subjectification, but also a site of ordering populations, dividing the modern world into those areas from which "modern liberal subjects" emerge and those that are deemed irrelevant because "they do not produce 'value' legible within modern classifications."³⁶ In neither instance is there an attempt to unsettle the colonial relationship between Israelis and Palestinians. Instead, the colonial violence that subjugates Palestinians, and which allows Israelis to become rights-bearing citizens of liberal democracy and global renderings of humanity, is subsumed within narratives of hospitality, kindness, and progress.³⁷

The installation invites Israelis to see themselves in Palestinians (as Arabs) – not just their homes, but their culture and their identity – abstracted from material political reality. Landau's reading of spatial intimacies suggests that culture can be disentangled from class, structural oppression, environmental context, and myriad other factors from which Palestinians must be removed in order to be brought close. Landau reasons:

My understanding of the forces here . . . it's really [as] much about West, East, technology, backwardness, postcolonialism. You know, you have to read Frantz Fanon, you have to understand Edward Said, to understand that there are a lot of forces to diminish the Arab identity within Israeli society . . . Really, half of us – our parents, our grandparents – spoke Arabic, enjoy Arab culture, are practically much more connected to the East as opposed to the West, which, by the way, a half a century ago was on the verge of terminating the entire Jewry of Europe.³⁸

Landau understands that the path to decolonization in Palestine requires undoing Zionism's Orientalism, but remains primarily focused on how that impacts Jews as citizens of Israel. Raji, his family, and their home serve to reassure museum guests of their humanity without pushing them to think about the Palestinian experience. Despite identifying the importance of anticolonial writers such as Frantz Fanon and Edward Said, Landau's installation perpetuates the ethos of colonialism and reaffirms an essentialized East/West dichotomy.³⁹

Decolonization is, in a sense, not just about highlighting how Palestinians are being identified, but the social, political, and cultural conditions that bring people to represent us in particular ways. Decolonial work is not just about revealing what the colonizer does to the colonized, but about understanding the underlining ideologies that guide their mode of being in the world. Stuart Hall writes that identities “actually come from outside, they are the way in which we are recognized and then come to step into the place of the recognitions which others gives us.”⁴⁰ As social beings, we do not have full control on how we are being perceived and read. Landau's attempt to alter the ways in which Israelis understand themselves ends up reinforcing the logic of elimination and civilizing mission with which he seems to be grappling. This is not to suggest that Israelis' attempts to relate to Palestinians is necessarily doomed to fail. Rather, the teleological matter in which Landau narrates the story of Raji shows how affective concepts such as “transformative experience” and “reflexivity” can leave intact the racist ideologies and logics of elimination that permeate colonial relationalities. Ultimately, Landau presents a story of a Palestinian man saved from his violent past, creating a sense of security for the Jewish audience, but at the same time, producing a particular kind of Palestinian worthy of intimacy: the ex-terrorist, the redeemed Arab, the compliant moral subject.⁴¹

State Targeting of Intimacy

Unlike the latent racial superiority present in Landau's exhibition, the Israeli state has openly targeted – in policy and practice – Palestinian homes. Israeli state violence against Palestinian homes is motivated by an implicit understanding of the fundamental affective role homes play.⁴² Israel targets Palestinian homes because of their ability to produce and generate intimacies that extend beyond the narrow conception of home as domestic space. An attack on home is also an attack on the possibilities of collective

life.⁴³ This attempted annihilation also illuminates the connection between the spatial and the temporal: an attack on home as a spatial site is also a violation of Palestinians' visions of their past, present, and future. Irrespective of where a Palestinian home is located, a process of alienation takes place when Israelis knock on your door to warn you of the demolition, when you have to live in the house knowing what is coming, when you witness the demolition, and when you stand after the fact. Or when Palestinians in Gaza received an SMS message announcing that they are about to be bombed. And for Palestinians living in the global diaspora, whose number is estimated at more than six million and many of whom are forbidden to enter Palestine by Israeli authorities, this alienation reverberates transnationally.

Destruction of these infrastructures and the violent interruption of their relationship with Palestinians is part of a systematic process of de-homefying – destroying, rupturing, harassing, fragmenting, and defamiliarizing – spaces of intimacy that is part and parcel of the making of the Israeli state. Israel systematically targets Palestinian homes via evictions and demolitions. Israeli bureaucracy orders Palestinians to demolish their own homes if they cannot afford demolition by the state. From 2004 until 30 April 2020, under the “No Permit to Build” policy, 1,007 Palestinian residential units were demolished in East Jerusalem, just twenty minutes from the Israel Museum.⁴⁴ From 2006 until 30 April 2020, Israel demolished at least 1,552 more Palestinian residential units in the West Bank (not including East Jerusalem). The Civil Administration demolished another 1,630 non-residential structures in the West Bank (excluding East Jerusalem) between January 2012 and 30 April 2020.⁴⁵ The Israeli army and Israeli settlers frequently invade and take over Palestinian homes for operations, for annexation, and for extrajudicial killings. Jewish settlers target Palestinian homes and subject their residents to daily bullying and intimidation in so-called “price tag” (*tag mechir*) attacks.

In the West Bank, a Palestinian home can be demolished if owned by a Palestinian suspected of a crime. In Gaza, the right of civilian's homes to be sanctuaries has been eroded during a siege that has now lasted over a decade. Israeli military forces put out infographics that identify Palestinian homes as spaces of violence and war-making.⁴⁶ In Jerusalem, paramilitary police frequently invade Palestinian homes to conduct violent arrests, even making it into a reality television show. Recently, one of these shows – *Jerusalem District* – was cancelled after one of the producers planted weapons inside a Palestinian home.⁴⁷ Here we can see Israelis' sense of entitlement to impose and (re)create their collective psycho-social obsession with the danger of the Palestinian home onto real life. Against this backdrop, when Landau invites Israelis to visit a Palestinian home (virtually), he asks them to simulate entry into a place otherwise identified *as a threat*, while never acknowledging that it is, in fact, constantly *under threat*. Whether consciously or unconsciously, the use of VR – like watching reality television – offers a form of protection.

In working to build a homeland for the Jewish people in Palestine, the Israeli state paints Palestinian homes as violent places. *Visitors* suggests that curating a gaze inside a Palestinian home will allow museum guests to see it as a safe place, thereby

making its Palestinian inhabitants worthy Others. While the state is interested in stripping Palestinians of their homes, the artist experiments in stripping the home of Palestinian lived experience in the name of “transformative encounters.” The practice of violence is different, but the source is the same. Disappearance, in this sense, is not only about dispossession but also about a long process of extermination that entails making Palestinians feel like foreigners in their land and in their homes. State policy is interested in making what Henri Lefebvre calls habitation – or being together – difficult. It ruptures intimacy at different scales. While this logic of elimination is clear and unrestrained in state practices, it travels within Israeli society and infuses it at different levels. Landau is indicative of a broader narrative that emerges from liberal Israeli circles of welcoming Palestinians as though they are *visitors*, denying in subtle (and sometimes not so subtle) ways the relationship of Palestinians with the land. Landau is not wrong to evoke the psycho-emotional aspects of home – what he fails to acknowledge is that by stripping the story from the collective realities of both subjects in the exhibition, he engages in a false exercise of empathy that denies the multifaceted political and social realities at play.

Home as Target, Cultural Trope, and Lived Experience

The concept of home is a powerful metaphor, yet home is also a profoundly material site. Its material importance has been magnified not just in Palestine but around the world, as people were urged to shelter inside their homes to avoid contracting or transmitting the novel coronavirus COVID-19. Governments – democratic and otherwise – urged citizens to “stay home, stay safe.” This takes for granted the notion that sheltering at home is an option equally available to all, and that, in a world overtaken by unmanageable uncertainty, home is the safest place. Now more than ever, home takes on a visceral quality.

Introducing intimacy as both a subject targeted by state violence and a lens through which to read this state violence unsettles the reduction of Palestinian homes to sites of threat and disaster in the representation of Palestinian subjectivity. Thinking about intimacy not as the absence of political realities, but rather as a fundamental hermeneutic tool to understand the category of the human in relation to the circulation of power, allows for multiscale analysis of the circulation of power. All forms of violent oppression exert control through intimate emotional and psychological registers. And violent oppression can come in crude manifestations – geographical exile, house demolitions in East Jerusalem, bombing entire family compounds in Gaza, evictions from family homes followed by Jewish settler take-over – but it can also come in the form of commitments to a symmetry that does not exist in the name of creating a simulation of intimacy formulated through a narrow and limited definition of identity. By abstracting the Palestinian home from its socio-political conditions, *Visitors* represents a version of the Palestinian that is palpable for the Israeli museum guest. The installation sees the Palestinian population only

if they are remorseful and acknowledges the worthiness of Palestinians as humans only in relation to how close (or far) their social-cultural material ways are to those of Israel's Jewish population.

Israeli state practices and popular culture produce an entire psycho-geographic world – an entire representational map of Palestinians – through and against Palestinian homes. By this I mean that there is a systematic process, state-sanctioned and otherwise, of laying claim over Palestinian homes without the consideration of the lived experiences of Palestinians, let alone their right to rights. Landau is not naïve to describe the home as a foundational infrastructure for a person. Engaging conceptually with intimacy not as the absence of political realities in encounters with the Other, as Landau's VR installation entices us to do, but rather as a foundational hermeneutic tool to understand how actors (re)produce the category of the *human* in relation to the circulation of power, as Lisa Lowe suggests, can prove to be both a productive analytical rubric and catalyst for a progressive anti-colonial relationality.

The connection between Israel's systematic targeting of Palestinian homes – through settler colonial ownership laws, military violence, and representation – and the various mode in which it gets picked up by different actors (journalists, artists, academics) in their reading of Palestinians and their home – is a site of important future inquiry. Some critics might argue that *Visitors* is merely a poorly executed art piece. Others might suggest that devoting time and energy to such projects is a waste of time, which only gives further exposure to what is evidently problematic. However, as Ilan Pappé suggested at a recent conference on Palestine held in Istanbul, taking the time to examine and evaluate, in anthropological terms, the work of Israeli liberals provides us a lens to understand the “overall moral rhythm of a society.”⁴⁸ Notably, Landau's work was also picked up by international media outlets such as the *Guardian*, BBC, CBC, and al-Jazeera,⁴⁹ who all suggested that *Visitors* was an interesting experiment in empathy through an intimate encounter – without critical inquiry into the underlining ideological assumptions.

In her essay on homeplace, bell hooks quotes Vietnamese Buddhist monk Thich Nhat Han who said that “resistance, at root, must mean more than resistance against war. It is a resistance against all kinds of things that are like war So perhaps, resistance means opposition to being invaded, occupied, assaulted and destroyed by the system.”⁵⁰ The framing that strips Palestinians of their lived experience in order to make them palatable is a kind of thing that is like war, with material reverberations. Daniel Landau may genuinely take seriously the idea of “being together.” Yet it is this sincerity that is dangerous. If Israelis like him can only *see* Palestinians, and accept them as human, in museum-protected installations, guarded by a VR headset, what hope is there for genuine, reciprocal, and intimate respect that is so necessary for the transformative futures of both peoples. If the anticolonial project is one not limited to establishing symmetry between colonizer and colonized, but fundamentally invested in reconfiguring the relationship between them, then the work for transformative futures cannot reduce the home to a cultural trope or a target, but must consider it in all its complexity and contradictions.

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Epigraph

Quoted in Edward Said, “Reflections on Exile,” *Reflections on Exile and Other Literary and Cultural Essays* (London: Granta, 2000), 174, excerpt online at granta.com/reflections-on-exile/ (accessed 11 October 2020).

Endnotes

- 1 “I to Eye, Together or Alone,” Israel Museum, Jerusalem, 2019, online at imj.org.il/en/content/i-eyetogether-or-alone (accessed 22 June 2020).
- 2 Author interview with Daniel Landau, February 2019.
- 3 Author interview with Daniel Landau, February 2019.
- 4 Philip W. Jackson, *John Dewey and the Lessons of Art* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1998), 33.
- 5 Landau explains that most of the museum visitors were Jewish Israelis; for the few Palestinians from the West Bank who did visit, namely the Sabatin family, he had to request special permits from Israeli authorities allowing them to attend the showcase.
- 6 The architect behind the Israel Museum appropriated the design pattern specific to Palestinian culture for his design. On the museum’s domination of culture and land, see Eran Neuman, “Al Mansfeld and the Interpretation of the Israel Museum,” *Journal of Architecture* 20, no. 5 (2015): 803–30.
- 7 See, for example: Rashid Khalidi, *The Hundred Years’ War on Palestine: A History of Settler Colonialism and Resistance, 1917–2017* (New York: Metropolitan Books, 2020); Walid Khalidi, ed., *All That Remains: The Palestinian Villages Occupied and Depopulated by Israel in 1948* (Washington: Institute for Palestine Studies, 1991); Ilan Pappé, *The Forgotten Palestinians: A History of the Palestinians in Israel* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2011); Edward Said, *The Question of Palestine* (New York: Times Books, 1980); and Magid Shihade, “Settler Colonialism and Conflict: The Israeli State and Its Palestinian Subjects,” *Settler Colonial Studies* 2, no. 1 (2012): 108–23.
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- 11 Kathleen Stewart, *Ordinary Affects* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2007).
- 12 Nadera Shalhoub-Kevorkian and Sarah Ihmoud, “Exiled at Home: Writing Return and the Palestinian Home,” *Biography* 37 (2014): 377–97.
- 13 bell hooks, “Homeplace (a Site of Resistance),” in *Available Means: An Anthology of Women’s Rhetoric(s)*, ed. Joy Ritchie and Kate Ronald (Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1990), 383–90, quote at 384.
- 14 Ara Wilson, “Intimacy,” in *The Global and the Intimate: Feminism in Our Time*, ed. Geraldine Pratt and Victoria Rosner (New York: Columbia University Press, 2012), 31–56.

- 15 Shalhoub-Kevorkian and Ihmoud, “Exiled at Home.”
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- 17 Geraldine Pratt and Victoria Rosner, “The Global and the Intimate,” *Women’s Studies Quarterly* 34, no. 1–2 (2006): 13–24
- 18 Lisa Lowe specifically also uses intimacy to emphasize a sense of self in close connection to others, or as Natalie Oswin and Eric Olund put it, “It is the sphere in which we become who we are, the space in which the self emerges.” Challenging the normative definition of the human brought by liberal colonialism and imperialism, Lowe wants readers to think about residual forms of intimacy (the ones that are documented as banal, if even considered) in a way to “reveal this proximity” of what might appear to be geographically and conceptually distant sites. For Lowe, a conversation about intimacy is a conversation about both spatial and temporal proximity to reveal the formation of powers. See Lisa Lowe, *The Intimacies of Four Continents* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2015), quote at xx; and Natalie Oswin and Eric Olund, “Governing Intimacy,” *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 28 (February 2010): 60–67, quote at 60.
- 19 Lauren Berlant, “Intimacy: A Special Issue,” *Critical Inquiry* 24, no. 2 (1998): 282.
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- 23 Berlant, “Intimacy,” 283.
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- 31 Edward W. Said and Jean Mohr, *After the Last Sky: Palestinian Lives* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999), 3.
- 32 Author interview with Daniel Landau, February 2019.
- 33 Miki Kratsman and Ariella Azoulay, *The Resolution of the Suspect* (Santa Fe, NM: Radius Books, 2016), 28.
- 34 Author interview with Daniel Landau, February 2019.
- 35 Author interview with Daniel Landau, February 2019.
- 36 Lowe, *Intimacies of Four Continents*, 17–18.
- 37 On the epistemological legacies of colonialism in present understandings of humanity, see Wynter, “Unsettling the Coloniality.” Randall Williams, in his critique of human rights and rights-bearing citizens, writes, “As long as the power to confer or withhold the recognition of the Other’s humanity remains a decision made elsewhere, there will be no substantial alteration of the material conditions that serve as the basis for the very possibility of a distinction between the human and the inhuman.” Randall Williams, *The Divided World: Human Rights and Its Violence* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2010), 100.
- 38 Author interview with Daniel Landau,

- February 2019.
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- 40 Stuart Hall, "Negotiating Caribbean Identities," *New Left Review* 1, 209 (January/February 1995): 8.
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An Honest Broker? The American Consul in Jerusalem, Otis A. Glazebrook (1914–20)

Roberto Mazza

Abstract

U.S. humanitarian activity in Jerusalem, and Palestine as a whole, from the early nineteenth century onward challenges the traditional view that the United States played a relatively marginal role in the region until the end of World War II. This article argues that American aid, initially understood as a religious duty of individuals, was transformed into an organized form of aid that served as a form of soft power in the region. The agency of U.S. consul Otis Glazebrook is under scrutiny in this article and its analysis shows the fundamental role he played in this shift. Individual aid was superseded by institutional help and the shift was embodied in the aid and relief sent to the Jews. Eventually U.S. institutional aid during the war paved the way for formal support for Zionism and the notion that only Jews (and especially American Jews, who thought of themselves as agents of innovation) could lead Palestine into modernity. While Glazebrook was arguably not a supporter of political Zionism, his agency led America and Zionism to meet each other and initiate a lasting relationship.

Keywords

Jerusalem; American consul; First World War; Zionism; humanitarianism; relief; American Colony.

U.S. humanitarian activity in Jerusalem, and Palestine as a whole, from the early nineteenth century onward challenges the traditional view that the United States played a relatively marginal role in the region

until the end of World War II. Prior to World War I, however, the link between the United States and Palestine was one that mainly depended upon individuals rather than institutions.¹ Americans viewed Palestine and Jerusalem through a biblical lens, and American Christian settlers grew in numbers, coming to Jerusalem in response to messianic expectations.² However, U.S. missionaries in Jerusalem never gained the prominence they did in Lebanon and other parts of the Ottoman Empire. This shaped the official U.S. government role in Palestine: U.S. consuls, though they served individuals and even communities that had moved to Jerusalem for religious reasons, were not much concerned with missionaries per se.³ The U.S. consulate in Jerusalem was thus less active than other states' diplomatic institutions in Palestine.⁴ Given the relative unimportance of the position from a diplomatic perspective, U.S. consuls were for the most part entrepreneurs or scholars who saw their appointment as a way to advance their personal business.⁵

Consular activity did, however, still shape relations in Palestine. U.S. consuls were responsible for maintaining the records of U.S. citizens and protecting nationals residing within the consular jurisdiction of Jerusalem, including American protégés. The consul also registered the births, marriages, and deaths of U.S. citizens, issued passports, and provided a large range of services, such as supplying U.S. companies with business reports. Consuls also performed legal functions such as handling claims filed in the United States against U.S. citizens residing in Jerusalem.⁶ Since many of the U.S. consuls were ordained Protestant clergymen, missionaries and Christian settlers were, unsurprisingly, the most important recipients of consular help, although pilgrims and tourists visiting the Holy Land frequently became beneficiaries as well.⁷

Relations between Jewish communities in Palestine and U.S. officials were strained during the Ottoman period, in part because the United States was associated with missionary activity that included, as part of its objectives, the conversion of Jews to Christianity. The general failure of this project, however, eased relations between U.S. consuls and Jewish communities. (Indeed, the first U.S. consul to Jerusalem, Warder Cresson, appointed in May 1844, went the other direction, converting to Judaism and establishing a Jewish agricultural colony near Jerusalem.)⁸ Several Jewish communities in Palestine claimed U.S. protection, particularly in Jerusalem, Safad, and Tiberias, and under capitulatory rights U.S. consuls often granted citizenship or protection to non-American Jews.⁹ American Jews attempted to establish a community, or *kolel*, for Jews from the American diaspora in Jerusalem in 1879. However, it was not until 1896 that the Kolel America Tiferet Yerushalayim (the American Congregation Pride of Jerusalem) was officially established, leading to a reorganization of the substantial *halukka* funds received from the United States.¹⁰

The humanitarian crisis created by World War I altered this state of affairs. U.S. institutional aid during the war paved the way for formal support for Zionism and the notion that only Jews (and especially American Jews, who thought of themselves as agents of innovation) could lead Palestine into modernity.¹¹ After the war, U.S. involvement in the region became more institutionalized and more organized,

ultimately taking the form of a strong American paternalism without the cruelty of a colonial occupation.¹² The U.S. consul in Jerusalem during World War I, Otis Glazebrook, played – perhaps unwittingly, but effectively – a central role in these fundamental shifts. Glazebrook, a retired pastor, became U.S. consul in 1914. He had hoped to spend his remaining years quietly in the Holy Land, but the outbreak of World War I unexpectedly thrust him into a crucial, active role in managing the crises that beset that region.

Glazebrook's activity, as U.S. consul and as an American Christian, illuminate a bond forged between the United States and the Holy Land through its Jewish communities.¹³ Glazebrook's appointment represented a shift toward the formalization of what had previously been merely personal bonds between individuals in the United States and the Holy Land. At the outbreak of the war, this relationship could have developed in a number of directions, but the war and the work of the Zionist Organization in Britain and the United States not only resulted in the Balfour Declaration, but also drove the relationship between the United States and the Holy Land toward an American-Jewish entente that would solidify over the following decades.¹⁴ Although several historians of late Ottoman and early British Palestine have discussed the U.S. consul's involvement in the distribution of aid to local Jewish communities, his role as an intercommunal and intracommunal broker has been generally overlooked.¹⁵ The most detailed examination of Glazebrook's role, written by Frank Manuel in 1949, paints Glazebrook as a colorless diplomat, naïve and somewhat anti-Zionist. Though Manuel does mention Glazebrook's enormous labor on behalf of Palestine's Jewish community, he suggests that the consul was not acting on his own initiative, but was compelled by the U.S. government.¹⁶ Evidence from the archives of the Alpha Tau Omega fraternity and the U.S. National Archives, however, illuminate Glazebrook's role in shifting the U.S. role toward an institutionalized support of Palestine's Jewish community couched in humanitarian terms, and thus offering a new chronology of the United States' support for Zionism that recognizes World War I, rather than World War II, as the foundational moment in this support.¹⁷

The United States, the Ottoman Empire, and Palestine

Relations between the United States and the Middle East date back to the early years of the republic. Before World War I, however, Ottoman Palestine held no great importance for most Americans.¹⁸ Many knew of Palestine as the biblical Holy Land. For a smaller group, it was a supplier of and potential market for commercial goods. At the beginning of the twentieth century, U.S. president William Howard Taft inaugurated an aggressive trade policy known as “dollar diplomacy,” which made the Ottoman Empire a more palatable market. By the outbreak of World War I, exports to the United States accounted for 23 percent of total Ottoman exports – it is, however, hard to determine exports from Palestine, specifically – though the Ottoman Empire accounted for less than 1 percent of annual U.S. exports.¹⁹ Compared with German, British, French, Russian, and Italian investments, however, U.S. trade remained negligible.²⁰

Some Americans have had some personal interactions with inhabitants of Ottoman Palestine. At the turn of the nineteenth century, many Palestinians migrated to the United States for short periods – seeking money and avoiding military service – while Jewish communities in Palestine had begun to receive charitable support from Jewish-American institutions and were experiencing the first benefits of small but significant American investments in Palestine. But most Americans would have found it nearly impossible to find Palestine on a map.²¹

The activities of American missionaries in the Middle East may have been the most significant element in bilateral Ottoman–U.S. relations.²² Having failed to convert the region’s inhabitants, American missionaries turned to improving the temporal conditions of the population through education and medical care. They opened educational and charitable institutions as an alternative way to establish their presence and influence. These became a source of competition with Ottoman institutions and other educational enterprises and played a significant role in the development of the *nahda* (the Arab cultural awakening), thus serving as a source of tension between the United States and the Ottoman Empire.²³

Perhaps even more importantly, these missionaries shaped U.S. perceptions of the Ottoman Empire. Edward Earle, a professor at Columbia University, asserted in 1929 that “for almost a century, American public opinion concerning the Near East was formed by the missionaries. If American opinion has been uninformed, misinformed, and prejudiced, the missionaries are largely to blame.”²⁴ By the outbreak of World War I, American prejudices against Arab Muslims and even Arab Christians had already become widespread due to missionary activity at the end of the nineteenth century. In the 1890s, missionary reports on the “Armenian troubles” exaggerated the number of casualties and the level of material destruction. Muslim deaths were never reported, reinforcing the image of the “ignorant, ruthless, unspeakable, and terrible Turks.”²⁵ Public outrage over the oppression of Armenian Christians and other minorities, including Jews, led to the portrayal of Turks as brutal agents of persecution and produced a more generalized antipathy toward Islam and Muslims.²⁶

Missionaries also provided unprecedented humanitarian relief to the Christian population of the Ottoman Empire during World War I.²⁷ Humanitarian assistance, however, was not neutral, and Enver Pasha considered them as adversaries who were trying to divide the population of the empire.²⁸ The war also brought on new understandings of humanitarianism. Keith David Watenpaugh argues that nineteenth-century humanitarianism sought to alleviate the suffering of others in obedience to moral and religious duty, often – as with U.S. Protestants – in hopes of converting the recipients of aid.²⁹ The humanitarianism ushered in by World War I, on the other hand, was envisioned as a permanent, institutional, neutral, and secular institution created to address and understand the roots of human suffering.³⁰ Glazebrook’s consular career spanned these two periods and we can see in his approach a blend of these two kinds of humanitarianism, making his career as a humanitarian actor particularly valuable as a window into this transition.

Otis Glazebrook's Biography

Otis Allan Glazebrook was born on 13 October 1845 in Richmond, Virginia, to Larkin Glazebrook, a prominent social and financial leader, and America Henley Bullington.³¹ At fifteen, Glazebrook entered Randolph Macon College while preparing to become a cadet at West Point. With the outbreak of the U.S. Civil War in 1861, he secured an appointment as a cadet at the Virginia Military Institute, during which time he served as a corporal in the Confederate army and fought in the Battle of New Market in 1864. Demoralized and troubled by his war experiences, he established a youth organization at the end of the hostilities, the Alpha Tau Omega fraternity, aiming to reunite the North and South in brotherhood. After Glazebrook graduated from VMI in June 1865, he decided to go into the legal profession. The following year, he married Virginia Calvert Key Smith, and in 1867, their first son was born. Shortly afterward, Glazebrook entered the ministry in the Episcopal Church, and they left for Alexandria, Virginia, where he studied at the Virginia Episcopal Seminary.

As a pastor, he served first in Virginia, then Baltimore, and later New Jersey. In 1885, Glazebrook was appointed rector of St. John's Protestant Episcopal Church in Elizabeth, New Jersey, and also served as chaplain of the 3rd New Jersey Regiment. At the outbreak of the Spanish-American War in 1898, he was recalled into army service, though it is not clear whether he saw military action.³² As a Freemason, Glazebrook also served as the chaplain of the Grand Lodge of Masons of New Jersey and similar organizations, eventually receiving the Order of the Holy Sepulchre. In his exceptional, diverse career, Glazebrook remained the leader of the Alpha Tau Omega fraternity, which continued its expansion nationwide, until his appointment as U.S. consul in Jerusalem in 1914.

In 1906, his wife Virginia died and although his personal attachment to his land and work changed, he kept serving as the rector of St. John's in Elizabeth until 1912. Upon retirement in 1914, Glazebrook was selected for diplomatic service by his friend, U.S. president Woodrow Wilson. The scant sources available suggests that their friendship developed through church and academic activities in New Jersey. Wilson became the president of Princeton University in 1902, and also belonged to the Phi Kappa Psi fraternity, which espoused values of humanitarianism and brotherhood in common with Alpha Tau Omega.³³ Glazebrook supported Wilson's candidacy for governor of New Jersey in 1910 and then president in 1912. In February 1914, Truman appointed Glazebrook, then sixty-nine years old, as U.S. consul to Jerusalem; by April, he was in Jerusalem.³⁴ The new job was a dream come true for the former pastor. Glazebrook saw it as a partial retirement from parochial service that would allow him to indulge in biblical studies while protecting U.S. interests.³⁵ He even remarried in Jerusalem, wedding Emmaline Rumford, an American.

The quiet life Glazebrook had envisioned was soon complicated by the outbreak of war in Europe and Ottoman entry on the side of the Central Powers. In Jerusalem, Glazebrook was responsible for caring for the small American community in Palestine, but as time went on he extended his protection over citizens of other

countries (Palestinian Muslims did not represent a major concern for Glazebrook) and played a major role in aiding various religious communities in the city, particularly the Jewish community.³⁶ In May 1917, with the United States' entry into World War I and the rupture of diplomatic relations between the U.S. government and the Ottomans, Glazebrook left Palestine. After a relatively short period back in the United States, Glazebrook returned to Jerusalem in December 1918, where he remained for two more years.



Figure 1. U.S. consul Otis A. Glazebrook (center, wearing top hat) in Jerusalem with his staff. Virginia Military Institute Archives, Photographic Collection 0003693, online at (digitalcollections.vmi.edu) bit.ly/2GWGXWG (accessed 27 September 2020).

At the end of 1920, at the age of seventy-five, Glazebrook accepted a new diplomatic appointment in Nice, France, where he served as U.S. consul until 1929, guarding the interests of American tourists and businessmen travelling throughout southern France. In 1930, Emmaline died and Glazebrook's health began to deteriorate, and his son Otis Glazebrook, Jr., decided he should return to the United States. Glazebrook fell gravely ill on the return voyage, and died at sea on 26 April 1931, a few hours before reaching New York.³⁷

Consular Activity during the War

U.S. consuls wrote annual and special reports on local government issues, the population, and the economy, and thus, from his appointment as consul in 1914 until he left in 1917, Glazebrook reported with great detail on the events taking place in Palestine. These included political developments, the effects of the war, and the socioeconomic crisis that afflicted the different communities living in Jerusalem. Glazebrook was also in the position of managing multiple relationships: with other foreign communities and governments in Palestine, with the U.S. government in Istanbul and Washington, with the Ottoman government, with the U.S. business community, and with the various efforts to provide humanitarian aid and relief to Jerusalem's population.

With the outbreak of the war, Glazebrook was charged, as representative of a neutral party, with the protection of the interests and the property of England, France, Italy, Russia, Belgium, and Switzerland. Glazebrook noted: "Not only are their archives in my possession, but their consulates, cathedrals, institutional home and hospitals. Complications are constantly arising in the responsibility of their subjects still in and near Jerusalem."³⁸ In an August 1915 report to the State Department, Glazebrook clarified the magnitude of his mission:

My duties have not only involved diplomacy, judicature, philanthropy, and great personal risks, but also that for which I have thought I was the least qualified, the management of finance and practical banking. . . . At times I have had the responsibility of more gold in cash than all the banks in this section put together.³⁹

Given the particular sensitivity, and added responsibility, of Glazebrook's position, it is unsurprising that he coordinated closely with other U.S. officials. In particular, Glazebrook kept U.S. ambassador to Constantinople Henry Morgenthau, Sr., actively informed of developments in Palestine. The U.S. consul consistently sent detailed reports to his superior in Constantinople on a variety of subjects, despite Ottoman censorship.⁴⁰ Glazebrook and Morgenthau both closely monitored the evolving conditions of Jews in the Ottoman Empire and in Palestine specifically. They pressured Ottoman authorities, reminding them that many Jews were Ottoman citizens. In early 1915, Morgenthau wrote to remind Glazebrook of his friendship with Cemal Pasha

and instructed the consul to keep pressuring the Ottoman general to protect the Jewish community in Palestine.⁴¹ Relations with local Ottoman authorities were complex but mutually respectful. Zeki Bey, then the military commander of Jerusalem, described Glazebrook as “not only a consul of man’s appointment, but of God’s, a perfect gentleman and the ideal diplomat,”⁴² while Glazebrook gushed that he had “received much kindness here at the hands of the people in general and the officials in particular with whom I have managed to establish influential and close relations.”⁴³

Throughout the war, Glazebrook also sought to maintain his normal consular role, dealing with U.S. citizens outside and within Palestine. U.S. companies requested information about business opportunities in the region, and Glazebrook’s responses are revealing of the circumstances of Jerusalem in the final days of Ottoman rule. In September 1916, the American Film Company, considering expanding its distribution in Palestine, asked Glazebrook about the number of cinemas, the types of pictures typically shown, public reception of these films, ticket prices, and the duties paid to the local administration.⁴⁴ Thus, for example, we know that there was one cinema in the city, managed by Samuel Feige. It was open only on Saturdays; showed mainly short films from Germany and the occasional American film; and the average audience was three hundred people, with three different classes of tickets sold.⁴⁵ As mentioned above, U.S. trade with Palestine had been minimal, and it remained difficult during the war. Glazebrook attributed this to “the long credits granted by European competitors and the great distance that separates [the U.S. from Palestine], as well as the lack of direct steamship connection that has been the greatest drawback.”⁴⁶ In the same letter, though, Glazebrook looked optimistically to the future and pushed American businesses to engage further in Palestinian trade.

Economic opportunity is less evident in Glazebrook’s reports than economic crisis, however. On 17 November 1914, Glazebrook reported on a discouraging trend: the increasing cost of living in Jerusalem.⁴⁷ The following year’s report was more dramatic as prices continued to rise, not only due to the war but also to the infamous locust invasion in the summer 1915 “which ravaged everything that was green.”⁴⁸ The population of Jerusalem, in particular, was relatively precarious even before the war, as it included a relatively large number of individuals – including elderly residents who came to live out their remaining days in the Holy Land – who were dependent on charity. The U.S. consular report for 1913, for example, described “the strange spectacle” of the city’s population growing despite the fact that Jerusalem had no “developed commerce nor an industry worthy of the name to attract its immigrants . . . with the result that the population without work exists principally on charity, which is sent from all parts of the world.”⁴⁹ The wartime conditions exacerbated the vulnerability of this population.

Glazebrook reported on the charitable services provided by foreigners, including Americans, to the local population, including the Jewish community. Glazebrook described, for example, the activities of Nathan Straus, an American Jew who operated a soup kitchen, a workroom, and a health bureau in Jerusalem, mainly serving the local Jewish community.⁵⁰ But under the wartime conditions, those in need increasingly

turned to official actors as well. In an informal report, Glazebrook noted that the “consulate is besieged from early morning to late at night for all varieties of requests. The staff is kept constantly active.”⁵¹ Indeed, the U.S. consulate became a hub for distributing services to U.S. citizens and others. Glazebrook took evident pride in this role, writing, “American relief is wonderful in its assistance to the destitute of the Holy Land.”⁵² At this point, the primary motivation for U.S. aid was humanitarian rather than political. Nonetheless, a link between religion, philanthropy, and power was forged – one that would have lasting influence.⁵³ In a report of 1915 on the situation of Jerusalem during the war and with a particular focus on the Jews in the city, Glazebrook stated: “It is the unquestioned belief of the entire community that the Food Relief accomplished an unprecedented good, materially and morally, not only relieving extreme bodily want, but creating a feeling of good will and fellowship manifested in a spirit of friendly reciprocity never before existing in this city and consular district.”⁵⁴

Glazebrook was directly involved in the distribution of food and aid to the religious communities of Palestine. At the start of 1915, Glazebrook, along with Captain Benton C. Decker of the USS *Tennessee*, petitioned Ambassador Morgenthau to ship food and aid from the United States to the Jewish community in Palestine and Jewish refugees in Alexandria, Egypt. This request was met, and in May 1915, the USS *Vulcan* eventually unloaded its food cargo in Palestine and distribution began to both Jewish and non-Jewish communities.⁵⁵ Each community had its own distribution committee; Glazebrook sat on the Jewish community’s Va’ad ha-Makolet (Food Committee) and received information on the other committees in Jerusalem.⁵⁶ In their excellent discussions of the wartime distribution of food and aid, Abigail Jacobson and Caitlin Carenen document the extent of Glazebrook’s involvement in the distribution of aid to the Jews of Palestine, as well as his role as mediator among the various Jewish communities.⁵⁷ Effectively Glazebrook came to use a form of soft power or “welfare politics” dictated by his personal interest in the Jews, the support he received from his superiors – in particular Henry Morgenthau U.S. Ambassador in Constantinople, and his deep Christian faith. Despite this role, the question of Glazebrook’s views of Palestine’s Jews, and especially of Zionism, remain a matter of some contest.

Glazebrook and Zionism

In the past decade, a number of Israeli bloggers have expressed a new interest in Otis Glazebrook. For the most part, they have focused their attention on a photograph taken by the American Colony photography department, now part of the Matson Collection at the U.S. Library of Congress, which allegedly shows Glazebrook actively participating in an anti-Zionist demonstration.⁵⁸ It is hard, if not impossible, to identify the consul among the crowd in the image, but the caption suggests he was being lifted up on the shoulders of Arab demonstrators. Some recent commentators also seem ready to echo Manuel’s claim that Glazebrook was an anti-Zionist who

feared Zionism's potential to provoke conflict between Zionists and Arabs, as well as the spread of Bolshevism in Palestine by Russian Jews. Yet no evidence is brought forward by any of these authors.



Figure 2. "Anti-Zionist demonstration before the U.S. consulate, carrying Dr. Glazebrook on their shoulders, 27 February 1920." Library of Congress LC-DIG-ppmsca-13291-00128 (digital file from original, page 44, no. 128), online at (loc.gov) bit.ly/3iQjX93 (accessed 27 September 2020).

Yet identifying Glazebrook as "anti-Zionist" obscures more than it illuminates. Instead, it might be argued that Glazebrook supported a *type* of Zionism that centered around religious and humanitarian attempts to alleviate the suffering of Jews.⁵⁹ In a 1915 report, Glazebrook drew no distinction between Zionists and the other Jews in Palestine and stated that the destruction of the Zionist movement would deal a major blow to the religious aspirations of Jews throughout the world. Paradoxically, this position convinced secular labor Zionists that the consul was an anti-Zionist.⁶⁰ Glazebrook understood the Zionist movement as the interest in reviving the Hebrew language, and he attributed to this no political aspirations.⁶¹ Glazebrook saw Zionism as a humanitarian movement with no political goals, at least not while the war continued, and claimed that Zionists had done nothing to indicate either intent or expectation of establishing a Jewish government.⁶² Instead, he expressed to a Jewish audience his readiness "to do for you anything in my power" because of the universally admirable

qualities he saw in Jewish mutual support, which in his words represented “the common characteristic and common aspiration of the peoples of the earth, nowhere more conspicuously seen than among the Hebrews of the Holy City: brotherhood and love of men.”⁶³ Political Zionism – in the form of supporting the establishment of a Jewish entity in Palestine based on the work of pioneers – was not in keeping with the goals of the Protestant diplomacy or missionary work that Glazebrook embraced.⁶⁴ Looking at the support provided to the Jews throughout the war, however, we can see how U.S. involvement in Palestine grew due to the influence of the Jewish American and European Zionist organizations.⁶⁵

Prior to the outbreak of World War I, the attitude of the U.S. State Department was unfriendly to Zionism and the increasing Jewish population in Palestine.⁶⁶ Yet the general U.S. view of Palestine was undergoing a shift in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. Scholars of America–Holy Land studies have suggested that Americans in this period began to see the Holy Land through the prism of their own history, in which Zion was understood to be the land of their “fathers.”⁶⁷ For Americans like Wilson and Glazebrook, the land of the Bible was a sort of idyllic alternative to the modern United States, an echo of preindustrial America.⁶⁸ American Christians in the Holy Land were expected to be lifted out of their ordinary lives. The affinity of American Jews for the Holy Land was also linked to their American environment: both were promised lands.⁶⁹ With the appointment of Morgenthau as U.S. ambassador in Constantinople, U.S. interests and humanitarian interests in the Jews of Palestine converged.⁷⁰ Morgenthau, Jewish but not a Zionist, nevertheless expressed concern for his coreligionists and saw the relief of Palestine’s Jews as an American responsibility.

Michael Oren has argued that the United States treated the suffering of Ottoman Jews the same as the suffering of Armenians, but there were notable differences: American Jews were able to support their coreligionists through the remittance of money; and Ottoman Jews had not been subjected to racial policies meant to annihilate an entire population, as in the case of the Armenians.⁷¹ In spring 1917, Cemal Pasha ordered the evacuation of Jaffa. Many thought this policy targeted Jaffa’s Jewish community, as German Jewish and Austrian Jewish residents were “invited” to leave, while other German and Austrian nationals were allowed to remain if they chose.⁷² About nine thousand Jewish residents were relocated: many left for nearby colonies and others moved to the Jewish colonies in upper Galilee. Claims that Palestine’s Jewish community stood on the verge of annihilation, however, reached Europe and, more importantly, the United States, receiving little scrutiny because of their accordance with prevailing negative views of the Ottomans. The incident received diplomatic attention: the Spanish consul, the Conde de Ballobar, investigated the matter and the British invited Glazebrook to write a report.⁷³ Before leaving Jerusalem in May 1917, after diplomatic ties between the Ottoman Empire and the United States were severed, Glazebrook stated that “acts of violence said to have been committed against the Jewish population of Jaffa are grossly exaggerated.”⁷⁴ All sources available note that Glazebrook petitioned Ottoman authorities to protect the Jews in Palestine. His

personal friendship with Cemal Pasha, which had served Glazebrook so well in the past, seems to have helped in this case, too.

During the war, American Zionism existed in two main factions: those like U.S. Supreme Court Justice Louis Brandeis who argued for more direct intervention with explicitly political goals in mind, and others like Morgenthau who wanted to avoid political commitments. Wilson's election allowed Brandeis to urge the U.S. government to take a more active role in support of political Zionism, tipping the balance in its favor. Wilson's support of the Balfour Declaration gave Zionists powerful leverage to influence American Jews and convert to political Zionism those who did not yet support the movement.⁷⁵ Glazebrook and missionaries in general supported the principle of self-determination, but not ethnic nationalism. Political Zionism was perceived as a potentially separatist nationalism that was both secular and incompatible with Christian objectives in the region, making it a threat to interethnic and interreligious coexistence.⁷⁶ This ideological shift *within* American Zionism had a significant impact on the U.S. role in Palestine. In a January 1925 interview with an American newspaper, Glazebrook spoke highly of the newly appointed British high commissioner in Palestine, Herbert Samuel, but refused to discuss Zionism.⁷⁷ This refusal should not be read as antipathy for Zionism, but as evidence of the emerging distance between the Jews with and for whom Glazebrook endeavored in Palestine, and the Zionists who were, by the war's end, imbued with political aspirations expressed in and emboldened by the Balfour Declaration.

Glazebrook represented those who, motivated by personal religious beliefs, considered it their duty to help Jews in recognition of a conviction that the Jews were part of a divine plan to redeem humanity. Scholars' and bloggers' description of Glazebrook's politics as anti-Zionist indicates a misreading of the latter's position but also a reduction of Zionism to its purely political dimension, effectively eliding its cultural and humanitarian variants. Glazebrook's postwar reports show that he was concerned with the new brand of political Zionism introduced in Palestine, and openly supported by the U.S. government. A growing awareness and concern with the emerging Arab-Zionist conflict, though, clearly does not equate to anti-Zionism.

Conclusion

As Keith David Watenpaugh has argued, charitable actors in the early twentieth century practiced two predominant forms of humanitarianism.⁷⁸ The first urged support of the needy by appealing to a sense of ethical and religious duty. The second came to have a symbiotic relationship with colonialism. Abigail Jacobson reached similar conclusions specific to Palestine, arguing that the politics of welfare linked humanitarianism and political power, creating a lasting legacy still visible in Israel today.⁷⁹ As U.S. consul in Jerusalem during a crucial period – of local upheaval, regional transition, and global transformation – Otis Glazebrook played an important role in the transition from welfare humanitarianism to the institutional use of welfare

as a tool of political action and soft power, laying a foundation for American political dominance in Palestine and the broader Middle East in subsequent decades.

The U.S. financial aid administered by Glazebrook helped to consolidate the Zionist movement, and institutionalized U.S. support for it, by making a clear choice to support one community in Palestine – the Zionists – over others. In time, this gave the United States a unique position of power and influence in Palestine.⁸⁰ For the Zionist movement, wartime developments consolidated the support of American Zionists, while Britain's endorsement embodied in the Balfour Declaration cemented the primacy of political Zionism. Although Glazebrook seems to have been largely forgotten or, if he is recalled at all, remembered as an enemy of Zionism, Zionists should consider Glazebrook an ally, if not one of their own.

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Endnotes

- 1 Eli Lederhendler, "Foreword: America and Zion," in *America and Zion: Essays and Papers in Memory of Moshe Davis*, ed. Eli Lederhendler and Jonathan D. Sarna (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2002), 12.
- 2 According to Lawrence Davidson, the American perception of Palestine was theocratized: a biblical land for biblical people. Lawrence Davidson, *America's Palestine: Popular and Official Perceptions from Balfour to Israeli Statehood* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2001), 9. The American Colony in Jerusalem is a prominent example of U.S. Christians' settlement in Palestine. See: Jane Fletcher Geniesse, *American Priestess: The Extraordinary Story of Anna Spafford and the American Colony in Jerusalem* (New York: Doubleday, 2008); Helga Dudman and Ruth Kark, *The American Colony: Scenes From a Jerusalem Saga* (Jerusalem: Carta, 1998); Eric Dinsmore Matsson, *The American Colony of Jerusalem: A Brief Outline* (Menton, France: E. D. Matsson, 1992); Bertha Spafford Vester, *Our Jerusalem* (New York: Doubleday, 1950); and Millette Shamir, "'Our Jerusalem': Americans in the Holy Land and Protestant Narratives of National Entitlement," *American Quarterly* 55, no. 1 (March 2003): 29–60.
- 3 Ruth Kark, *American Consuls in the Holy Land, 1832–1914* (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1994), 214.
- 4 In 1856, the United States formally established a Palestine consular district and John Warren Gorham opened the first consulate inside the city walls. At the end of the nineteenth century, the consulate moved outside the walls, first to a building on the Street of the Prophets and later on Mamilla Street. Frank E. Manuel, *The Realities of American-Palestine Relations* (Washington: Public Affairs Press, 1949), 12; Yehoshua Ben-Arieh, *Jerusalem in the 19th Century: The Old City* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1984), 280.
- 5 For example, Selah Merrill, who served thrice as U.S. consul in Jerusalem (1882–85, 1891–94, 1898–1907), was a businessman but also an archeologist who worked for the American Palestine Exploration Society. See Kark, *American Consuls*, 51; and Shalom Goldman, *God's Sacred Tongue: Hebrew and American Imagination* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003), 208–27.
- 6 Kark, *American Consuls*, 281.
- 7 Goldman, *God's Sacred Tongue*, 213.
- 8 Manuel, *Realities*, 10–11.
- 9 Moshe Davis, *America and the Holy Land* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1995), 24.
- 10 Kark, *American Consuls*, 229.
- 11 See Jacob Norris, *Land of Progress: Palestine in the Age of Colonial Development, 1905–1948* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013).

- 12 Keith David Watenpaugh, *Bread from Stones: The Middle East and the Making of Modern Humanitarianism* (Oakland: University of California Press, 2015), 56. See Abbas Amanat and Magnus Bernhardsson argue that the “disinterested benevolence” of American missionaries in the nineteenth century was slowly replaced after World War I by a “benevolent hegemony.” The hope of recasting the Middle East in the American image remained, however. Abbas Amanat and Magnus T. Bernhardsson, eds., *U.S.–Middle East Historical Encounters: A Critical Survey* (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 2007).
- 13 This bond today is largely represented by Evangelicals or Christian Zionists. While Glazebrook and contemporary Christian Zionists may share certain doctrines and expectations – anticipating the Second Coming of Jesus through the restoration of the Jews to Palestine, for example – they differ significantly with regard to the extent of U.S. intervention and support for the Jews.
- 14 The relationship between Zionists in Britain and the United States, on the one hand, and Jewish communities in Palestine was complex and at the same time one of interdependence. The war allowed Zionists to shape their relationship with local communities through aid (monetary and otherwise). Scholars like Abigail Jacobson and Michelle Campos have demonstrated how Zionists eventually emerged as representatives of local Jewish communities in Palestine. See: Abigail Jacobson, “American ‘Welfare Politics’: American Involvement in Jerusalem during World War I,” *Israel Studies* 18, no. 1 (Spring 2013): 56–76; and Michelle Campos, *Ottoman Brothers. Muslims, Christians, and Jews in Early Twentieth-Century Palestine* (Stanford University Press, 2010).
- 15 Abigail Jacobson in particular has argued that the politics of welfare established by American missionaries, led in Jerusalem by the American Colony and Otis Glazebrook, should be located within the larger context of the Israeli-Palestinian relationship. See Jacobson, “American ‘Welfare Politics’”; and Albert Lucas, “American Jewish Relief in the World War,” *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 79 (September 1918): 221–28.
- 16 See Manuel, *Realities*, ch. 4 (119–59). Despite a thorough bibliography, Manuel – a historian who taught at Brandeis and New York University, among other institutions – does not list the primary sources he used in his account, and his portrayal of Glazebrook seems to have sprung from political claims rather than historical research. Manuel’s work shows the lack of reliable research on U.S.–Palestine relations in the transitional period from Ottoman to British rule. On Manuel’s biography, see online at ([lts.brandeis.edu](http://lts.brandeis.edu/bit.ly/317bAzP)) bit.ly/317bAzP (accessed 22 January 2014).
- 17 A significant literature highlights the unbalanced role played by the United States in favor of Israel since the 1950s. See, for example: Charles Smith, *Palestine and the Arab-Israeli Conflict: A History with Documents* (Boston: Bedford-St. Martin’s, 2013); Ian J. Bickerton and Clara L. Klausner, *A History of the Arab-Israeli Conflict* (Boston: Prentice Hall, 2010); Mark Tessler, *A History of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2009); Naseer Aruri, *Dishonest Broker: The U.S. Role in Israel and Palestine* (Cambridge, MA: South End Press, 2003); and Rashid Khalidi, *The Hundred Years War on Palestine: A History of Settler Colonialism and Resistance, 1917–2017* (New York: Metropolitan Books, 2020). Abigail Jacobson, however, argues that the war played a major role in the growing involvement of the United States in Palestine. See Abigail Jacobson, *From Empire to Empire: Jerusalem between Ottoman and British Rule* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2011), 44–47.
- 18 Rashid Khalidi argues that, until 1917, the United States held only modest cultural, educational, and missionary interest in the Middle East. Rashid Khalidi, *Resurrecting Empire: Western Footprints and America’s Perilous Path in the Middle East* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2004), 118–19. See also Michael Oren, *Power, Faith, and Fantasy: America in the Middle East, 1776 to the Present* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2008), 356–57.
- 19 Joseph L. Grabill, *Protestant Diplomacy and the Near East: Missionary Influence on American Policy, 1870–1927* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1971), 38.
- 20 Kark, *American Consuls*, 68–74.
- 21 Oren, *Power, Faith, and Fantasy*, 10–11.
- 22 Several important works deal with the emergence and development of missionary activity in the Middle East, its failure to

- convert locals to Christianity, and its role in fostering nationalistic ideas throughout the region. See, for example: Ussama Makdisi, *Artillery of Heaven: American Missionaries and the Failed Conversion of the Middle East* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2008); Grabill, *Protestant Diplomacy*; and Eleanor H. Tejirian and Reeva Spector Simon, *Conflict, Conquest, and Conversion: Two Thousands Years of Christian Missions in the Middle East* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2012).
- 23 A. Patrick, "A Secular Reformation."
 - 24 Edward Mead Earle, "American Missions in the Near East," *Foreign Affairs* 7, no. 3 (April 1929): 398–417.
 - 25 Justin McCarthy, "Missionaries and the American Image of the Turks," in *Turkish-American Relations: Past, Present, and Future*, ed. Mustafa Aydin and Çağrı Erhan (London: Routledge, 2004), 26–48, quote at 29.
 - 26 McCarthy, "Missionaries and the American Image"; Roberto Mazza, ed., *Jerusalem in World War One: The Palestine Diary of a European Consul* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2011), 20.
 - 27 Tejirian and Simon, *Conflict, Conquest, and Conversion*, 173.
 - 28 Hans-Lukas Kieser, *Nearest East: American Millennialism and Mission to the Middle East* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press), 91.
 - 29 Watenpugh, *Bread from Stones*, 4–5. The "politics of welfare" that Abigail Jacobson describes resemble the prewar humanitarianism of Watenpugh's formulation. Though I believe there are some relevant differences between "politics of welfare" and "humanitarianism," in this article I used each term according to the sources quoted.
 - 30 A clear and full articulation of this later humanitarianism (which borrowed from earlier American missionary and humanitarian traditions) is U.S. president Harry Truman's Point Four Program. See Grabill, *Protestant Diplomacy and the Near East*, 79; *Department of State Bulletin*, 30 January 1949, 123.
 - 31 Biographical information about Otis Glazebrook is available at the Alpha Tau Omega (ATO) Archives, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, Series no. 41/93/2, Box 1. A brief biographical sketch can also be found in Kark, *American Consuls*, 333–34. Other information on Glazebrook was gathered by Charles L. Allen, "Founder Glazebrook Dies at Sea," *The Palm* 51, no. 3 (June 1931): 201–4.
 - 32 It has only been reported that he was in a camp for a month awaiting orders to go to Cuba.
 - 33 Phi Kappa Psi recently removed Wilson's name from the biennial "leadership school" that coincides with district council meetings, signaling an effort to "reinforce Phi [Kappa] Psi's commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion, and to making the brotherhood a safe and welcoming place for all." See Drake DelosSantons, "Phi Kappa Psi Responds to Controversy over President Woodrow Wilson," 30 June 2020 (updated 22 July 2020), online at (phikappapsi.com) bit.ly/33XDDU1 (accessed 28 July 2020). It would be interesting to see if ATO rethinks the role of individuals like Glazebrook.
 - 34 On 2 February 1914, Secretary of State William Jennings Bryan informed Glazebrook that "the President desired him to accept the appointment as U.S. consul to Jerusalem." Glazebrook was officially commissioned as consul on 18 February. ATO Archives, Series no. 41/93/2, Box 1, Letter from the Department of State, 27 February 1914.
 - 35 Allen, "Founder Glazebrook," 202.
 - 36 Jacobson, *From Empire to Empire*, 46.
 - 37 Several press clippings report the news of Glazebrook's death. ATO Archives, Series no. 41/93/2, Box 1.
 - 38 ATO Archives, Series no. 41/93/2, Box 1, Chronicle of consular activity, 1 July 1915, Jerusalem.
 - 39 ATO Archives, Series no. 41/93/2, Box 1, Glazebrook to State Department, 7 August 1915. His concerns in this respect were shared by his Spanish equivalent, Antonio de la Cierva y Lewita, the Conde de Ballobar, who suffered several attacks of nervous exhaustion by 1918 due to the added burden. Mazza, *Jerusalem in World War One*, 194.
 - 40 U.S. Naval Archives and Records Administration (NARA), Consular Post, vol. 73, Glazebrook to Morgenthau, 11 February 1915, Jerusalem.
 - 41 NARA, Consular Post, vol. 70A, Morgenthau to Glazebrook, 30 March 1915, Istanbul.
 - 42 ATO Archives, Series no. 41/93/2, Box 1, "The Moslem Estimate of Dr. Glazebrook."
 - 43 ATO Archives, Series no. 41/93/2, Box 1, Glazebrook to State Department, 7 August 1915.

- 44 NARA, Consular Post, vol. 81, American Film Company to Glazebrook, 12 September 1916, New York.
- 45 NARA, Consular Post, vol. 81, Glazebrook to American Film Company, 9 December 1916, Jerusalem.
- 46 NARA, Consular Post, vol. 90, Glazebrook to the Philadelphia Foreign Trade Corporation, 10 March 1920, Jerusalem.
- 47 NARA, Consular Post, vol. 69A, Glazebrook to State Department, 17 November 1914, Jerusalem.
- 48 NARA, Consular Post, vol. 73, Glazebrook to State Department, 3 November 1915, Jerusalem.
- 49 NARA, Consular Post, vol. 69, Commerce and Industries Report, 13 March 1914, Jerusalem.
- 50 NARA, Consular Post, vol. 69A, Glazebrook to American Embassy in Istanbul, 2 October 1915, Jerusalem.
- 51 ATO Archives, Series no. 41/93/2, Box 1, Chronicle of consular activity, 1 January 1915, Jerusalem.
- 52 ATO Archives, Series no. 41/93/2, Box 1, Chronicle of consular activity, 18 January 1915, Jerusalem.
- 53 This combination would become particularly significant after 1948, when the United States supplanted Britain's as the most influential foreign power. See Jacobson, "American 'Welfare Politics,'" 68–70.
- 54 NARA, Consular Post, RG 84, vol. 72, Otis Glazebrook to the State Department, "Increase in Cost of Living Caused by War," 3 November 1915
- 55 Manuel, *Realities*, 140–42.
- 56 Jacobson, *From Empire to Empire*, 46. See also NARA, Consular Post, vol. 72, Glazebrook to Morgenthau, 29 May 1915, Jerusalem.
- 57 See: Jacobson, "American 'Welfare Politics'"; and Caitlin Carenen, "Zionism and American Jewish Relief Efforts in Palestine during World War I," *American Jewish Archives Journal* 69, no. 2 (2017): 1–30.
- 58 See, for example: Yisrael Medad, "It's All Rocks and Riots," *Israel, Jews, and Judaism* (blog), 26 February 2012, online at (israeljewishjudaism.blogspot.com) bit.ly/2175zwc (accessed 31 August 2020); "U.S. Diplomat Opposed the Zionist Idea in 1920," *Israel's History – A Picture a Day* (blog), 2 August 2011, online at www.israeldailypicture.com/2011/08/us-diplomat-opposed-zionist-idea-in.html (accessed 31 August 2020 via web.archive.org); "U.S. Diplomat Opposed the Zionist Idea in 1920," *America and Palestine's Jews: Photographic History of American Involvement in the Holy Land 1850–1948* (blog), 1 December 2013, online at (ameicainpalestine.blogspot.com) bit.ly/371Fg5k (accessed 31 August 2020); and Jack Schwartzwald, "The King-Crane Report of 1919 and 'the People Immediately Concerned,'" *Jewish Magazine* (October/November 2012), online at www.jewishmag.com/169mag/king-crane-report/king-crane-report.htm (accessed 31 August 2020).
- 59 At the beginning of the twentieth century, Zionism was an ideology defined in different ways according to politics and religion: Political Zionism as established by Theodor Herzl aimed at the creation of a Jewish entity; Labor Zionism, while seeking the creation of a Jewish state, also promoted the idea of class struggle and redemption of the land; and cultural Zionism as founded by Ahad Ha'am focused on Jewish culture and history, but not necessarily the creation of a Jewish state. Christian Zionists, too, supported political Zionism with the purpose to establish a Jewish entity in Palestine in order to foster the Second Coming of Jesus.
- 60 NARA, Consular Post (microfilm) Roll 43, Report on the Conditions in Palestine with Reference to Zionism, Alexandria, Egypt, 10 February 1915, 13.
- 61 Alter Levin wrote an article on *HaSheourt*, a Hebrew daily published in Jerusalem, stating: "Dr. Glazebrook is a sincere friend of the Jews, understands their national grief and is appreciative of their glorious past and spiritual aspirations." ATO Archives, Series no. 41/93/2, Box 1. While this is indirect evidence, it is clear that Glazebrook was understood as someone who supported the Jews from a perspective of cultural Zionism but not in terms of political goals. It is also important to recall that Glazebrook was founder of Alpha Tau Omega, which espoused reconciliation – a principle at odds with political Zionism.
- 62 NARA, Consular Post (microfilm) Roll 43, Report on the Conditions in Palestine with Reference to Zionism, Alexandria, Egypt, 10 February 1915, 13–14.
- 63 Extract from the daily Hebrew papers of Jerusalem, in ATO Archives, Series no. 41/93/2, Box 1. According to Alter Levin,

- who reported this quote in his capacity as correspondent for the American Chamber of Commerce for the Levant, Glazebrook delivered these words during a visit to a synagogue (though the exact place and date are not given).
- 64 Michael Brown, *The Israeli-American Connection: Its Roots in the Yishuv, 1914–1945* (Detroit: Wayne State University, 1996), 31; and Kieser, *Nearest East*, 93.
- 65 The inhabitants of the region, with some exceptions, preferred U.S. intervention in the region rather than British or French rule. See Andrew Patrick, *America's Forgotten Middle East Initiative: The King-Crane Commission of 1919* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2015).
- 66 Manuel, *The Realities of American-Palestine Relations*, 115.
- 67 Lederhendler, "Foreword," 18.
- 68 Lederhendler, "Foreword," 12.
- 69 Lederhendler, "Foreword," 15.
- 70 Manuel, *Realities*, 116.
- 71 Oren, *Power, Faith, and Fantasy*, 359. As the recent work of Benny Morris and Dror Ze'evi shows, it is naïve (or disingenuous) to argue that Jews and Armenians were treated in the same way. See Benny Morris and Dror Ze'evi, *The Thirty-Year Genocide: Turkey's Destruction of Its Christian Minorities, 1894–1924* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2019).
- 72 Isaiah Friedman, *Germany, Turkey, and Zionism, 1897–1918* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977), 347–48.
- 73 Mazza, *Jerusalem in World War One*, 20–21.
- 74 See the copy of a note from the Dutch Foreign Office to Balfour, 10 August 1917, The Hague, found in the National Archives of the United Kingdom, Foreign Office 371/3055.
- 75 Manuel, *Realities*, 162–79; James Renton, *The Zionist Masquerade: The Birth of the Anglo-Zionist Alliance, 1914–1918* (Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 143–48.
- 76 Kieser, *Nearest East*, 108–9.
- 77 ATO Archives, Series no. 41/93/2, Box 1, "Turks Not So Bad, Minister Asserts," January 1925.
- 78 Keith David Watenpugh, "The League of Nations Rescue of Armenian Genocide Survivors and the Making of Modern Humanitarianism, 1920–1927," *American Historical Review* 115, no. 5 (December 2010): 1315–39. See also Watenpugh, *Bread from Stones*, 1–29.
- 79 Jacobson, "American 'Welfare Politics,'" 70–71.
- 80 Though it is beyond the scope of this article, the King-Crane Commission, had its recommendations been acted upon, could have significantly shifted the role of the United States in the region, and in Palestine specifically. On the King-Crane Commission, see Patrick, *America's Forgotten Middle East Initiative*.

And They Go On Learning

Hadeel Salameh

Abstract

This essay examines the difficulties for children and youth in attaining an education while living under Israeli military occupation. It focuses on three Palestinian students in the West Bank who shared their experiences with the author about their trials of getting to and staying in school, their limited opportunities for gaining higher education, and their sense of well-being, to demonstrate the impact of military occupation on their daily student life.

Keywords

Palestine; Palestinians; West Bank; education; school; student; university; Israeli occupation; conflict; tear gas.

“You can’t breathe, you feel suffocated, and your eyes burn so much it hurts to open them. If you’re too close to the [tear-gas] grenade when it explodes, you may become blinded by the gas,” Ayman Taha, a senior at the Al-Quds University in Abu Dis, told me. This is the reality of committing to an education for many Palestinian students living under occupation.

For many students, it is difficult to commit to an education while living under occupation. Of course, there is a long and complex history regarding the Palestinian-Israeli conflict that led to these problems and so many others. Israel’s perceived security needs have been used to justify most of the measures taken in the occupied territories that have made getting an education so difficult for Palestinian students. The Oslo Accords, signed in 1993 between

Editor’s Note

A notable contribution to the Ibrahim Dakkak Award for Outstanding Essay on Jerusalem 2020 Round.

Israel and the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO,) were an effort to establish temporary governance arrangements that would lead to a final treaty for a stable future for Palestinians and Israelis. But since then, Palestinian land has remained separated into islands segregated as Areas A, B, and C, with Area C making up sixty-two percent of the West Bank. Areas A and B are islands of small areas made difficult to move between, which makes an education more of a challenge (figure 1). The result of this segregation of land and power is further restraint on Palestinian mobility, including denied access to large parts of their land.

Ayman helped me to understand how students in Palestine must commit to difficulties of travel in order to attain an education.¹ Students cannot regularly cross checkpoint borders or circumnavigate the “separation” wall Israel built within the Palestinian territories in order to attend their schools. The Palestinian Authority has had to compensate by developing more schools and universities nearer to their homes. In light of this increased effort to provide education for students, there are now thirteen universities throughout Areas A, B, and C, one in almost every city in Palestine.

Ayman told me how at the Abu Dis campus of Al-Quds University, located near Jerusalem in Area B of the West Bank, Israeli soldiers disrupt students and professors every two to three weeks by throwing tear-gas grenades and firing rubber-tipped bullets. Avoiding eye contact over our video call, Ayman took a deep breath and shrugged, “I don’t know why they did this to us,” he said. From his tone, it seemed that he was reluctant to accept the situation but felt unable to do anything about it.

Just a few weeks before, Ayman’s friend had been shot twice in the back by rubber bullets. He had been running away from the soldiers and trying to take cover when he fell to the ground. “When the army men come to our schools, we go home. Nobody is permitted to stay. All classes are canceled,” Ayman said. The military operations on campus occur regularly, so often that as a student at Abu Dis, Ayman became “used to it.” As Ayman described the visits by the Israeli military forces, it seemed the procedures were meticulously regulated to employ policies of humiliation, arrests, and attacks, all of which seemed to have nothing to do with security. These unannounced procedures happen so often they have become the norm.

Tear gas was first used as a chemical weapon during World War I, for short-term effects rather than permanent disabilities. Since then, it has become widely used by law enforcement agencies as a means for dispersing mobs, rioters, and armed suspects, but often also against non-violent protestors. Ayman and his friends do not take part in “mobs or riots.” They do not go to school armed. They do not try to cause trouble.

Due to the common deployment of gas grenades at universities in the West Bank, faculty frequently warn prospective students that applying to Al-Quds means they understand the risks and the effects of exposure to tear gas, which can cause injuries that result in hospitalization. Kamilah Moore, a Mondoweiss reporter, writes that from 2012 to 2014 alone over five thousand tear-gas canisters and bullets were shot into Al-Quds University, and more than 2,400 Palestinians were injured.² But these injuries are only one way of how students are affected by the occupation.



Restrictions on Palestinian Access in the West Bank

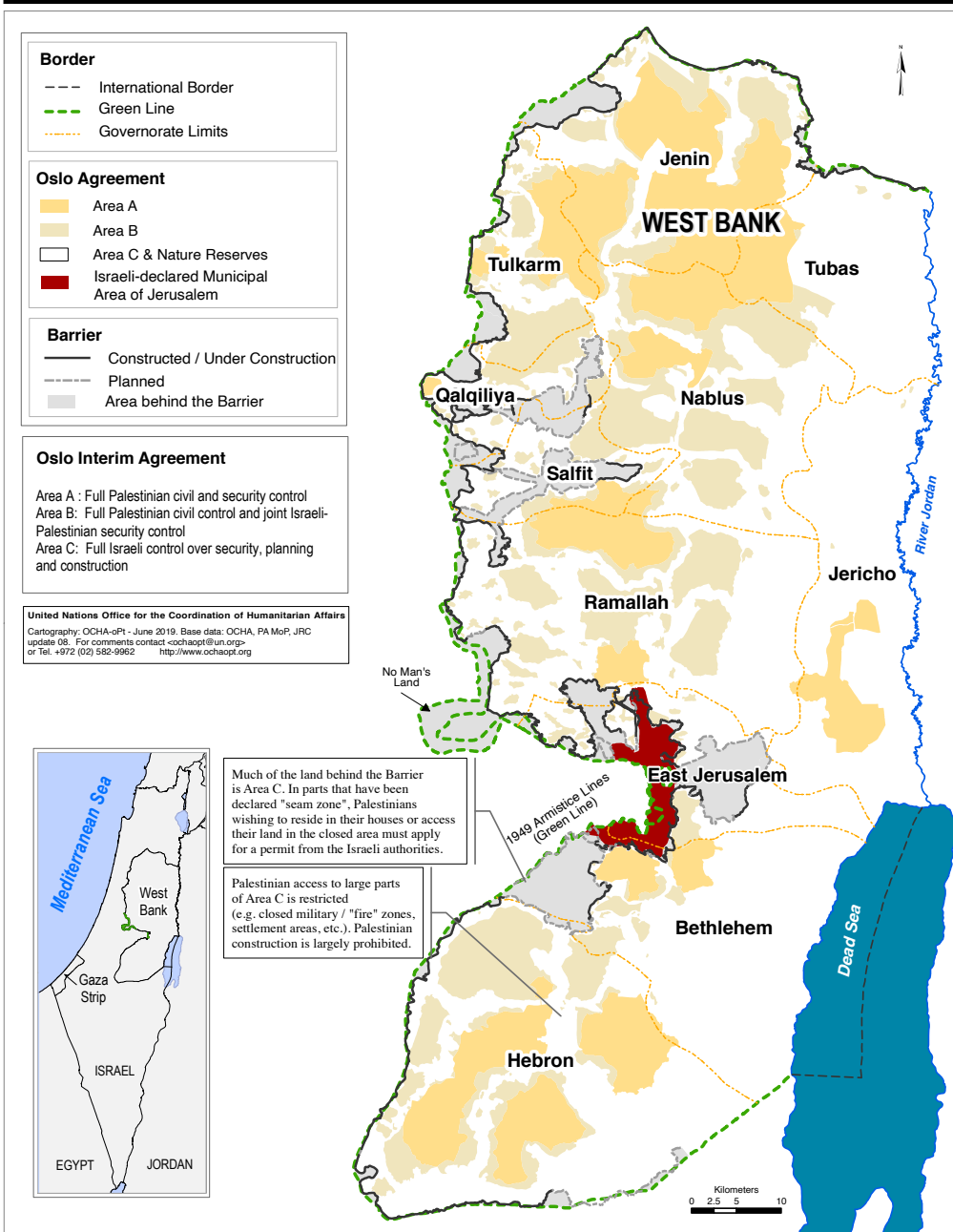


Figure 1. United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, "Restrictions on Palestinian Access in the West Bank," June 2010, online at (reliefweb.int) bit.ly/3iYcMvf (accessed 29 September 2020).

Students who are not willing to risk their lives for school simply drop out of college. Studies have shown that during the 2014 academic year, for example, over one thousand students cancelled their registration from universities. Likewise, over twelve thousand students were forced to leave their campuses at least three times during the course of the academic year due to violence from Israeli military forces.³ Students must ultimately decide to risk their lives in order to receive schooling under occupation or remain uneducated from a schooling system.

Sometimes it is not the violence, but the harassment and humiliation by soldiers that is discouraging. In 2013, Ayman and several friends left Ramallah to go home to Bidya, a flourishing village compared to many others situated in the West Bank. On their way back they were stopped at the Za'atara checkpoint near Nablus, where soldiers searched their bags. They poured all of the clothes and school supplies from their bags to the ground, laughed, and ordered the group of friends to pick up their belongings. After they had picked up everything and handed the bags back to the soldiers for another inspection, they were allowed to leave.

As Ayman told me this story on our video call, he again would not look me in the eyes, as if to distance himself from me, so I could not see the depth of his emotions about what he was saying. I thought about Ayman and his friends: the sight of growing teenagers hunched over to pick up soiled toothbrushes, dirtied laundry, and academic essays at the command of boys their same age, who were pointing weapons at them. I looked at him for a few moments in an effort to show him I understood his humiliation. But when he kept his gaze elsewhere, I thought perhaps only by experiencing such a situation could a person understand the struggle of it.

I came to the realization that Israel not only occupies Palestinian land, but also Palestinian thought. Israel uses its military to systematically dehumanize Palestinians. The torment inflicted by the Israeli army at checkpoints has nothing to do with security or disobedience. Rather, it seems a matter of everyday harassment delivered to students like Ayman and his friends as a way to make their educational process as difficult as possible. While humiliation is not Israel's official policy, it is an undeniable consequence of the matrix of control that Palestinians must face. It results in a stream of emotional and psychological disturbances among pupils, including functional impairment, that cause resort to coping strategies and trigger posttraumatic symptoms in schoolchildren.⁴ In the case of Ayman, one can see how the Israeli army belittles students and how humiliation can erode a person's self-esteem.

Regardless of the difficulties, some students are convinced to remain and learn. Their attitudes, determination, and perseverance made me respect and admire them. "The occupation doesn't discourage me from my education," said Sally Taha, Ayman's sister. She spoke confidently, fully aware of the poor living standards that she and her brothers' face, as well as the negative impacts occupational forces have on her peers. I sensed in her smile a passion to share experiences.

Sally and her brothers grew up in Bidya. Located near the pre-1967 borders of the state of Israel, now part of Area A, Bidya is much safer than other areas of Palestine. Despite this, there are signs that warn, "Area A is Dangerous to Your Lives and

Entrance is illegal for Israelis under Israeli law.” There is not as much violence in Area A as suggested by the Israeli government, leaving Sally and many Palestinians to feel that these laws are not for security reasons, but rather to disallow Israelis from seeing how the Palestinian people live, and how they are made to struggle.

She explained how the occupation restricted her from opportunities. “The places we could go, our field trips, were controlled. We never went to Jerusalem or the beach because the occupation doesn’t allow us into those areas of our country,” she said. Despite restrictions, Sally feels that her determination and passion to attain knowledge never eroded. “But [the occupation does] not deter us from our education. We’re always ready to learn,” she said. Sally’s persistence to learn in a constrained environment surprised me. She maintains excitement for learning, balanced with a justified fear.

She does not always feel safe going to school: “Of course, every now and then I got scared, but only when political events happened or when a person’s death was publicized.” These times are when settlers enter Bidya. Even then, they only come at night. Sally shared how in mid-October 2014, five-year-old Inas Khalil was run over by a settler vehicle as she walked home from kindergarten. “A car was seen changing direction in order to drive towards Inas; he [the settler] hit her and left,” she said. The image of settlers, each shouldered with weapons provided for by the Israeli government, is a fixture in the Palestinian psyche as a stark threat to Palestinian security.

Tensions have always been high between Israelis and Palestinians, but the placement of settlers on confiscated Palestinian land has brought a tremendous escalation in violence. Many settlers are aggressive toward Palestinians as a means to push them off the land.

In early summer 2014, a month before Israel’s unprecedented assault on Gaza, three Israeli teenagers, Naftali Fraenkel, Gilad Shaer, and Eyal Yifrah, were kidnapped and murdered.⁵ The aftermath became a nightmare for Palestinians. Israeli settlers constantly surrounded Palestinians wherever they found them, and were quick to throw rocks at their cars. The settlers never entered Abu Dis campus, but they were always near the university as Ayman made his way to college each day, instilling a fear in him and his friends that discouraged them from attending summer classes as often as they would have otherwise. In early July sixteen-year old Mohammad Abu Khdeir was kidnapped and killed by a group of settlers who forced him to drink gasoline and then set him on fire.⁶ Referring to the killing, Ayman reflected, “Those days we were really scared to go to our classes because a Palestinian boy had been murdered. We were afraid we would get hurt too if we were spotted.”

Along with physical danger, the dire economic situation for Palestinians limits opportunities. Due to the occupation, there is an inability of workers to reach their place of work because of checkpoints, closure of villages, and complications with marketing products.⁷ With few local work options, Ayman said, “I feel like I have to either work in Israel or abroad to make a living after graduation, so I want to continue in America because I feel like there are always opportunities there.” Ayman said that

he refuses to work in Israel because he does not want to contribute to the oppression of the Palestinian people. Many other Palestinian students who had to drop out of college resort to looking for work in Israel. Sally put it this way, "They have to work there because there is no work here. The [Israeli] government makes sure our economy stays flat so we will continue to need our occupiers." Unfortunately, the reality of an education is that it is often costly and made possible only at the loss of a student's ability to continue living in his or her homeland.

Not until Sally went to Birzeit University, about twenty kilometers north of Jerusalem, did she start to feel that the occupation shaped her education more prominently. She noticed that many students were unable to attend college because they lacked enough money for tuition. Unlike other Palestinian students who need to stand an average of two to three hours at checkpoints every day to get to school, Sally had been fortunate that living in Area A meant little to no interference. But when she traveled to Ramallah to attend college, she began to notice that change. "When I went to Birzeit there were always roads blocked. It made us reach campus late. We were almost always late to class, and often missed the beginning of the lectures," she said.

Eventually Sally decided to leave home earlier to allow more time to find a different route to campus. The bus drivers also made it difficult since most drivers will not depart until the bus is full. Sometimes it would take anywhere from one to two hours, making it difficult for Sally to gauge the time to begin her commute. When that solution consistently failed, Sally made friends with a Palestinian woman who drove to Ramallah every day for work. "She was nice enough to give me a ride to campus," Sally said. While reflecting back on the experience, Sally seems far from bitter; she said she misses more than anything else the moments she had with the woman who drove her to campus.

In Palestine the time of *tawjihi*, or matriculation exams, is undoubtedly the most critical time for high school seniors, since these exams determine possible career paths. For Sally, it was a time of excitement as well as stress from the pressure to do well on her exams. What made studying most difficult, according to Sally, was the daily news. Her parents had the news on constantly, so hearing about the day's events was inevitable for Sally as she walked to the sofa or kitchen. "I needed study breaks, but the news would always get to me," she said.

The world around her seemed to be falling apart; Egypt, Syria, and other countries were in turmoil. And there was always Palestine's news. "The news here wasn't any different than usual. We're used to Palestinian deaths, but dealing with it does not get easier," Sally said. It bothered her when her subconscious brought up images of dead children rather than how numbers fit into equations, and it was difficult to constantly shift her focus to her class material. It bothered her that her parents flipped through channels, witnessed war and turmoil, and were incapable of doing anything about it but watch. What disturbed Sally the most was that she knew people worldwide were watching; yet the international community seemed quiet.

When Sally graduated high school with a 97.5 percent on her *tawjihi* exams, the world seemed to change, or perhaps her world changed. She began to feel anything

was possible. In Palestine, the higher the exam score a student receives, the wider the range of future opportunities. “Everyone expected me to be a doctor or engineer, but I wanted to do something related to psychology or human development – I want to help people.” I asked Sally to describe her desire to help people; I learned that while she always envisioned herself reaching out to others, she did not feel she could benefit others while under occupation. She felt that she could best help Palestinians, Muslims, and women by continuing her studies abroad. She shared with me how she planned to marry and move to the United States in December. “I really want to help people internationally when I go there, as a Muslim woman and as a Palestinian. I want to help people so that I can break stereotypes and reach people abroad,” she said. “I never really realized what I wanted to do with my life until the opportunity to go to America was possible.” Smiling, Sally’s gaze was steadfast, her shoulders were lifted, and her spirits high.

Unfortunately, not all students share the emotional strength that Sally has when it comes to dealing with the occupation forces. Depression and withdrawal from social involvement are common among Palestinian youth. Thirty percent of school-aged Palestinian children have developed posttraumatic stress disorder, according to one study by physicians.⁸ Other research has shown that the occurrence of attention deficit hyperactivity disorder among school-aged children increased during the Second Intifada.⁹ Clearly the politics of the region heavily affects student health. When I spoke briefly to Mustafa Taha, Ayman and Sally’s younger brother, I asked him to tell me about his average day at school, I noticed that he slowly straightened up in his seat and moved his hand to his chin. He took a moment to think about how to express his daily activities and looked me in the eyes. “I don’t do anything,” he said.

School is when he can spend time with his friends, more than anything else. “I reach school after the first bell rings, that’s typical. I’m always late to school, and usually, I go back to sleep once class starts,” Mustafa told me. But two days prior to our conversation, he did not go back to sleep after the first bell because the hallways were in an uproar of students holding back one another from a fight. He was unsure what his peers were fighting about, but they stopped fighting and seemed to get along when the principal came out to end the disruption. “One kid picked up the garbage can and put it over the principal’s head. It was funny, everyone laughed,” he said. When asked if the fight disrupted him from class, he said, “No, I’m used to it.”

What Mustafa could never get used to is waking up early every morning, he told me jokingly. I laughed along with him but Sally shook her head, “Take this [interview] more seriously,” she told him. In the living room behind Sally and Mustafa hung a portrait of Yasser Arafat, the late president of the Palestinian Authority. His image, in the center of the room, a symbol of the aspiration for Palestinian liberation.

After a while Sally left the room and Mustafa opened up to me. He told me that he loves school, he loves to learn and he wakes up excited to take part in an intellectual environment. The problem is that he feels discouraged. Almost no other students Mustafa’s age show enthusiasm for learning. I asked him why he thought that was true and he said that there is a lack of motivation. He believes that his parents do not

pay as much attention to his own schooling as they should. “I can’t wait until it’s my turn to go through tawjihi, then I’ll show my parents and everyone that I am actually smart,” he said. It was apparent that he needed encouragement. I tried to assure him that his parents already do think he’s smart, that everybody who knows him does.

When I told Mustafa that his family cares greatly for his success, he shook his head as though I did not understand. He explained how school is perhaps his favorite time of day, because of his friends, of being away from home, and most of all because of the opportunity. He feels that if one day he woke up and, for whatever reason, was unable to attend school he would feel lost because he would remain where he is. “I want to move forward, I think most students do. Our parents want us to as well but it’s difficult to stay on track here because nobody asks,” Mustafa said. He looked sad and hesitant to say more. He moved his hands up in the air, placed them behind his head, and took a deep breath: “There’s too much going on here for anyone to ask.”



2020: Six years have passed since my interviews with Ayman, Sally, and Mustafa. Ayman graduated from Al-Quds University and now has his own law clinic in Bidya. Sally found a home in the United States, where she worked for some time with the Pennsylvania Immigrant and Refugee Women’s Network (PAIRWN), realizing her efforts to help others, and Mustafa, who earned an 89.6 percent on his tawjihi exams, graduated from Al-Najah University and is now studying to apprentice at a law firm. He says he will never stop studying.

Hadeel Salameh is a Palestinian-American writer with an MFA in fiction from Bowling Green State University and BA from the University of Pittsburgh. Her work has appeared in Torrid Literary Journal, Drunk Monkeys online magazine, Apogee journal, Anchor (Still Harbor) online magazine, Muftah online magazine, and the publication SLAB: Sound and Literary Art Book, ed. Morgan Cahn (Slippery Rock University of Pennsylvania, 2012). She is working on finishing a novel about the Palestinian diaspora.

Endnotes

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Maqdisi Ulama Displaced during the Crusades and Their Influence on Intellectual Life in Damascus

Jehad Suleiman Salem Al Masri

Abstract

The cultural movement in Jerusalem stagnated following the migration of most of its scholars to the city of Damascus to escape from atrocities and massacres committed by the Crusaders. Meanwhile, the city of Damascus, which enjoyed security and stability during that period, became a homeland for construction, training, and cultural production, especially after the scientific and cultural centers in Jerusalem were destroyed by the Crusader occupation. Sultan Nur al-Din Mahmud Zangi was famous for his efforts in establishing schools and scientific centers, and known for his sponsorship and appreciation of scholars and students. Thanks to the efforts of the Qudama family Hanbalis, the city of Damascus became a famous scientific center in al-Mashriq al-Islami attended by scholars and seekers of knowledge from all over the Islamic world at that time, especially after the Jerusalemite scholars established al-Salihyya neighborhood in Damascus.

Keywords

Crusaders; Jerusalem; Damascus; al-Salahiyya; al-Qudama; Nur al-Din Zangi; Hanbalis; ulama.

Editor's Note

A notable contribution to the Ibrahim Dakkak Award for Outstanding Essay on Jerusalem, 2020 Round.

After the Crusaders conquered Jerusalem in 1099 CE (492 AH), they committed massacres in the city, slaughtering many of the residents on ethnic and religious grounds.¹ Contemporary sources describe horrific scenes, with such gruesome bloodshed that Crusader

chroniclers themselves expressed shock at its excess.² William of Tyre (d.1185) – archbishop of Tyre, chancellor of the Kingdom of Jerusalem, and a renowned Crusader chronicler – described the massacre of July 1099: “It was impossible to look upon the vast numbers of the slain without horror... Still more dreadful was it to gaze upon the victors themselves, dripping with blood from head to foot, an ominous sight which brought terror to all who met them.”³ Fulcher de Chartes, Foucher of Chartres (d. 1127), a French priest and historian who accompanied the first Crusades, wrote that around ten thousand people were massacred in al-Aqsa compound.⁴ Muslim historians put the number of dead at more than seventy thousand, including imams, ulama, Sufis, and other worshippers, many of whom had sought refuge from the Crusaders’ wrath near the holy sites.⁵ Among the Muslim ulama killed in the massacre were: the imam, Abu al-Qasim al-Maqdisi; Makki ibn ‘Abd al-Salam ibn al-Husayn al-Ramli, the mufti of the Shafi‘i school of jurisprudence (Madhhab); jurist Abu Bakr Muhammad ibn Ahmad al-Tusi; judge Abu al-Qasim Sa’d ibn Ahmad ibn Muhammad al-Nasawi; jurist Daysam ibn Mujahid al-Nadri al-Maqdisi; and judge ‘Abd al-Jabbar ibn Ahmad ibn Yusuf al-Razi.⁶

News of the massacre at al-Aqsa, as well as other massacres, sparked waves of flight of residents from Jerusalem and its surroundings, who were already living under harsh conditions that affected all aspects of their lives. Frankish kings, feudal princes, and clergymen imposed additional taxes and fees, after settling in Jerusalem and other areas they had conquered, seized property and belongings as per the Law of Conquest, confiscated crops and livestock, and forced people to work as serfs and slaves.⁷ These oppressive policies had a particularly negative impact on peasants. Some were forced to abandon their land because of the burden of taxes, some were conscripted to serve the Crusaders’ army, and others sought refuge after the Franks seized their lands.⁸

The Franks also enforced a settlement policy in and around Jerusalem, which brought new settlers from European countries, as well as local Christians, to establish villages and agricultural communities in the Holy Land.⁹ These settlements were intended to make up for the shortage in human labor, rebuild the abandoned or evacuated villages and increase the revenues of the cavalry and clergymen fief.¹⁰ When, for example, Baldwin I (d. 1118), king of the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem, realized the imminent danger facing the Holy City because of the lack of men available to defend its entrances, gates, and towers from sudden attacks, he encouraged Christian communities east of the Jordan to immigrate to Jerusalem.¹¹

Despite his short reign (1099–1100), Godfrey of Bouillon (d. 1100), first ruler of the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem, known as *advocatus* (defender or protector) of the Holy Sepulchre, established the foundations of feudalism in the Holy Land, bestowing on the church more than twenty villages belonging to Jerusalem. Under his brother, Baldwin I, king of Jerusalem (1100–1118), the features of the feudal system became even clearer. Baldwin I introduced an inheritance law whereby fiefs granted to feudal lords in the kingdom were handed down to their descendants. This was meant to ensure that the kingdom would benefit from the land and its financial resources, which increased the area of settlements in the Holy Land.¹²

Peasants, especially landowners, were the most affected by the Frankish settlement policy, which often meant vast stretches of their agricultural lands or other properties being taken from them and given to the new settlers. The people of Kafr Malik, located within the fief of Nablus in 1128, were forced to relocate to the village of Bayt Furik, for example, and their lands were transferred to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre.¹³ In 1114, King Baldwin I granted al-Ram village to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, and Latin clergymen built an important settlement there called Ramathes.¹⁴

Scholarly life and Islamic practices were suspended, too, and religious freedoms were repressed and mosques converted into churches. Education in the the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem was limited to religious education and restricted to churches.¹⁵ Meanwhile, the Franks remained closed upon themselves, as their communities did not integrate or assimilate with the locals despite their long period of rule.

The adverse conditions that prevailed in Jerusalem and neighboring areas during Frankish rule drove many of its ulama to consider emigration, as they were no longer able to engage in scholarship and feared for their lives. Among those who looked to make their lives elsewhere was the Qudama family, whose patriarch, the pious shaykh Abu al-‘Abbas al-Maqdisi, Ahmad ibn Muhammad ibn Qudama ibn Miqdam al-Jama‘ili al-Salihi (d.1163), decided to leave his village of Jama‘il (better known today as Jama‘in) for Damascus.¹⁶ Shaykh Ahmad took this decision after it came to his knowledge that he and his family were in danger. He had been inciting peasants to rebel and urging them to embrace their faith and abandon working for the Franks, mobilizing people against repressive taxes, exploitation, and serfdom. Shaykh Ahmad’s lessons and speeches were becoming increasingly popular, attracting people from neighboring villages.¹⁷ Eventually, his conduct became a source of concern for Balian of ‘Ibilin (known as Balian ibn Barisan) (d. 1193), the Crusader ruler of Nablus, who plotted to have him assassinated. However, one of Balian’s entourage informed Shaykh Ahmad of the scheme, and he fled for Damascus, which was ruled by Sultan Nur al-Din Mahmud Zangi (d. 1174), known for his fairness and for spearheading the fight against the Crusaders.

In 1156, the first convoy of the Qudama family arrived in Damascus, with Shaykh Ahmad at its head. As soon as he arrived, Shaykh Ahmad sent for his son, Shaykh Abu ‘Umar al-Maqdisi, Muhammad ibn Ahmad ibn Muhammad ibn Qudama al-Jama‘ili al-Salihi (d. 1210), who brought the rest of the family to Damascus quickly, despite the difficult journey. Several scholars from the Qudama family arrived with this wave of immigrants, which was followed by further waves from five villages near Jerusalem.¹⁸ Balian, the son of Barisan d‘Ibilin (Balian ibn Barzan) (d. 1193) reputation as one of the Frankish rulers most abusive and exploitative of Muslims, played a role in the migration.¹⁹ And apparently the Qudama family inspired others in neighboring villages to relocate to Damascus. These immigrants later became known as Maqdisis (Jerusalemites), although most of them were peasants from villages around Nablus, including Marda, Yasuf, Dayr ‘Urif, al-Sawiyya, Jit, Zayta, Qarawa, Dayr Istiyya, and others.²⁰

When the Qudama family first arrived in Damascus they were hosted by the

Hanabali family in Abu Salih mosque.²¹ The Hanbalis were caretakers of the mosque and family members led prayers there.²² The Qudama family may have chosen to stay with them because both families followed the same *madhhab* (a school of Islamic jurisprudence). Moreover, tensions seemed to be growing between the Qudama family and the Hanbalis. Apparently, Shaykh Ahmad ibn Qudama al-Maqdisi had begun to gain a following and the Hanbalis feared that he would take over the mosque and its endowment (waqf). This resulted in several quarrels between the two families; finally, the Hanbali family complained to Sultan Nur al-Din. When they went to make their complaint, the Sultan was sitting with his chief judge, Sharaf al-Din ibn Abi ‘Asrun, ‘Abdallah ibn Muhammad ibn Hibat-Allah al-Tamimi (d. 1189) a follower of the Shafi’i school who was not overly fond of the Hanbali family. Ibn Abi ‘Asrun grasped the opportunity to commend the immigrants, many of whom knew the Quran by heart, and Sultan Nur al-Din was so impressed he transferred the mosque and its waqf to the Qudama family.²³

However, Shaykh Ahmad found this gift contrary to his purpose for coming to Damascus, as he had not come to compete with others over earthly possessions.²⁴ Thus, he left the mosque and moved outside the protected confines of the walled city of Damascus to the slopes of Mount Qasiyun. (An outbreak of disease in Damascus may have also encouraged the Qudama family to move to a more remote area.)²⁵ He settled with his family on a remote arid mountain, where wild beasts roamed and the only human inhabitants protected themselves behind fortifications. With their move to the mountain, a new era of this family’s life began. As Shaykh Ahmad’s fame spread and his name became well known, his visitors increased; he even impressed Sultan Nur al-Din, who started to visit him frequently, forging a close relationship with the “Jerusalemite” immigrants, and offering them support.²⁶

Little by little, the core of a neighborhood started to develop outside the gates of Damascus on the slopes of Mount Qasiyun. This neighborhood became known as al-Salihyya, named after Mount Qasiyun, which was also known as the mountain of the Salihin (the virtuous ones); it was also said to have been named after Abu Salih mosque, where the Qudama family stayed upon their arrival in Damascus.²⁷ The Qudama family built a home that came to be known as Dayr al-Hanabila (the sanctuary of the Hanbalis),²⁸ and a school, al-Madrasa al-Hanbaliyya al-‘Umariyya,²⁹ named after Shaykh Abu ‘Umar.³⁰ It was a large school, supported by numerous endowments and offering a wide array of services. The school’s dormitories accommodated three hundred sixty poor students.³¹ Further establishments arose around it, turning al-Salihyya into a hub for social, religious, and educational organizations, all of which were provided for by endowments (awqaf).³²

The Qudama family also played a visible and influential role in spreading the Hanbali Madhhab in the Levant.³³ Members of the family authored several books that are still considered main Hanbali references to this day, especially those written by Muwaffaq al-Din al-Maqdisi, ‘Abdallah ibn Ahmad ibn Muhammad ibn Qudama al-Jama’ili al-Salihi (d. 1223). The most important of ibn Qudama’s works are: *al-Mughni*, an important reference book in Hanbali jurisprudence; *al-Mughni*, on the

jurisprudence of the imam Ahmad ibn Hanbal; and *Rawdat al-Nazir wa Jannat al-Munazir*, on the principles of Islamic jurisprudence (Usul al-Fiqh).³⁴ Members of the Qudama family in al-Salihiyya also founded schools for hadith, a field in which the Qudamas were considered pillars, renowned for their writing, teaching, and interpretation.³⁵ They also contributed to a women's intellectual renaissance in that period, as women from the Qudama family participated in establishing religious and educational centers and establishing endowments to support them. They also attended seminars and participated in teaching women the Quran and hadith.³⁶

Meanwhile, under its long subjection to the Franks, scholarship in Jerusalem withered away. Classes in al-Aqsa Mosque were abandoned, as were educational activities in other Muslim schools. Crusader rule also slowed the construction and development of educational establishments and prompted the immigration of ulama and students to neighboring centers, like Cairo, Baghdad, and Damascus, that were more stable and secure. Further, many scholars refrained from going to Jerusalem because most religious and educational institutions were controlled by the Franks, while others (and the awqaf that supported them) were destroyed.³⁷ Most Latin and Orientalist sources agree that the communities of the Latin East did not seek to become intellectual and cultural beacons in the Islamic world, nor were they concerned with leaving behind any monuments in this regard; rather, their goals were centered around warfare, religion, and trade.³⁸ Jacques de Vitry (d. 1240), a French Crusade chronicler and bishop of Acre, described a Holy Land full of newcomers who indulged in a life of luxury and latitudes, and made wild claims of priests abandoning their faith and nuns turning to prostitution and indulging in lust, larceny, gambling, and drinking. According to de Vitry, these fallen figures desecrated the Holy Land with countless sins and accumulated unimaginable wealth.³⁹

The immigration of the Qudama family, among them many ulama and other prominent figures in the Hanbali school of jurisprudence, from Jama'il in Mount Nablus to Damascus in 1156 is clear evidence of the deterioration of scholarship in and around Jerusalem under Crusader rule, and even the danger that Muslim scholars faced there.⁴⁰ Yet, the waves of migration of which the Qudamas were a part also contributed to reviving the scholarly environment in Damascus. The establishment of al-Salihiyya neighborhood during the rule of Nur al-Din Zangi, and the educational institutions built in this period and after, can be attributed to the immigration of the Qudama family to Damascus. Exiled due to the repression of the Crusader regime in Jerusalem and its surroundings, they sought and contributed to more stable and secure hubs of scholarship in Damascus.⁴¹

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Endnotes

- 1 Alan Tami, "L'art de la guerre au temps des croisades (491/1098–589/1193): Du théocentrisme irrationnel aux influences mutuelles et adaptations pragmatiques dans le domaine militaire" (PhD diss., Université Michel de Montaigne-Bordeaux III, 2012), 114; Rasha 'Abd al-Fattah Muhammad Husayn, "al-Athar al-ijtima'iyya lil-hurub al-salibiyyah: dirasa 'ala mujtami'at bilad al-Sham" [The social effects of the Crusades: a study of societies in the Levant] (MA thesis, Zagazig University, 2006), 41.
- 2 See, for example, William of Tyre, *al-Hurub al-salibiyya* [The Crusades], trans. Hassan Habashi (Cairo: al-Hay'a al-Misriyya al-'amma lil-kitab, 1992), vol. 2, 126. A famous contemporary account of this horrible massacre and other crimes committed by the Franks is "Qasidat al-Munfarijah" [Poem of Relief] by Abu al-Fadil al-Turzi, Yusuf ibn Muhammad Yusuf al-Tilmisani (Ibn al-Nahwi) (d. 1119 AD), though some attribute it to Imam Hijjat al-Islam Abu Hamid al-Ghazali, Muhammad ibn Muhammad al-Tusi al-Naysaburi (d. 1111). See also: Jamal Muhammad Salim Khalifa, "Hay'at 'ulama wa fuqaha' al-Sham: dirasa fi takwinihim al-ijtima'i wa al-iqtisadi wa al-'ilmi wa atharuh fi muwajihat al-ghazu al-salibi (491–690 AH/1097–1291 AD)" [Ulama and jurists of Damascus: a study of their social, economic, and scholarly formation and its role in confronting the Crusader invasion (491–690 AH/1097–1291 AD)] (PhD diss., Zagazig University, 2005), 270; and Javier Albarrán Iruela, "El renacimiento del yihad desde la conquista cruzada de Jerusalén hasta la muerte de Nur Ad-Din," *Revista del Departamento de Historia* (Universidad de Castilla-La Mancha, España), no. 3 (2014): 204.
- 3 William of Tyre, *al-Hurub al-salibiyya*, vol. 2, 127.
- 4 Fulcher de Chartres, *al-Istitan al-salibi fi Filastin: tarikh al-hamla ila bayt al-Maqdis (1095–1137 AD)* [The Crusader settlement of Palestine: a history of the expedition to Jerusalem], trans. Qasim 'Abduh Qasim (Cairo: Dar al-shuruq, 2001), vol. 1, 136–37.
- 5 'Izz al-Din ibn al-Athir, 'Ali ibn Muhammad ibn 'Abd al-Karim al-Jazrai al-Mosuli al-Shibani (d. 630 AH/1232 AD) writes: "The Crusaders killed in al-Aqsa Mosque more than seventy thousand people, including imams, ulama, worshippers, and Sufis who left their homes and countries to live near al-Aqsa Mosque"; see Ibn al-Athir, *al-Kamil fi al-tarikh* [Complete account of history], ed. Muhammad Yusuf al-Daqqaq (Beirut: dar al-kutub al-'ilmiyya, 2003), vol. 9, 9. Mujir al-Din al-Ulaymi, 'Abd al-Rahman ibn Muhammad ibn 'Abd al-Rahman al-'Umari al-Maqdisi al-Hanbali (d. 928 AH/1522 AD) also writes that "more than seventy thousand people were killed," in *al-Uns al-jalil bi-tarikh al-Quds wa al-Khalil* [The splendid intimacy of the history of Jerusalem and Hebron], ed. 'Adnan Yunis 'Abd Majid Abu Tabbana (Hebron: Maktabat dandis, 1999), vol. 1, 447. It seems that the Crusader accounts are more accurate with regard to the number of dead. The area of Jerusalem was roughly one square kilometer and according to Nasir Khusraw in Safarnama, the population at the time was around twenty thousand, many of whom fled the city when they learned of the Crusaders' approach; see Muhammad Sami Ahmad Immtair, "al-Haya al-iqtisadiyya fi bayt al-Maqdis wa jiwariha fi fatrat al-hurub al-salibiyya (492–583 AH/1099–1187 AD)" [Economic life in Jerusalem and its vicinity in the Crusader period (492–583 AH/1099–1187 AD)] (MA thesis, al-Najah National University, 2010), 48.
- 6 Ibn Taghri Birdi, Jamal al-Din Yusuf Atabiki (d.874 AH/1470 AD), *al-Nujum al-zahira fi muluk Misr wa al-Qahira* [Bright stars among the kings of Egypt and Cairo] (Cairo: al-Mu'assasa al-Misriyya, 1963), vol. 5, 164; see also: Khalifa, "Hay'at 'ulama'," 268.
- 7 See: Immtair, "al-Haya al-iqtisadiyya," 125–42; de Chartres, *al-Istitan al-salibi*; William of Tyre, *al-hurub al-salibiyya*, vol.2, 128; Joshua Prawer, *al-Istitan al-salibi fi Filastin: mamlakat bayt al-Maqdis al-latiniyya* [The Latin Kingdom in Jerusalem: European colonialism in the Middle Ages], trans. 'Abd Hafiz 'Abd al-Khaliq al-Bana (Cairo: 'ayn lil-dirasat wa al-buhuth al-insaniyya, 2001), 56; Husam Hilmi Yusuf al-Agha, "al-Awda' al-ijtima'iyya fi Filastin zaman al-hurub al-salibiyya (492–690 h./1099–1291 m.) [social conditions in Palestine during the Crusades (492–690 AH/1099–1291 AD)] (MA thesis, Islamic University of Gaza, 2007), 92–93; and Hadia Dajani-Shakeel, "Displacement of the Palestinians during the Crusades," *Muslim World Journal* 68, no. 3 (July 1978): 157–75.

- 8 Jihad Suleiman Salem al-Masri, "al-Ta'lim fi bilad al-Sham fi al-'ahd al-Ayyubi (570-648 AH/1174-1250 AD)" [Education in the Levant in the Ayyubid period (570-648 AH/1174-1250 AD)] (MA thesis., Al al-Bayt University, Jordan, 1999), 44.
- 9 For more on the Crusaders' colonial policy in the Holy Land and the Levant, see Immtair, "al-Haya al-iqtisadiyya," 54-68.
- 10 Prawer, *al-Istitan al-salibi*, 60, 93, 107; Husayn, "al-Athar al-ijtima'iyya," 47-49; Immtair, "al-Haya al-iqtisadiyya," 54-68.
- 11 Prawer, *al-Istitan al-salibi*, 60; de Chartres, *al-Istitan al-salibi*, 166, see also: Immtair, "al-Haya al-iqtisadiyya," 54-55; al-Agha, "al-Awda' al-ijtima'iyya," 106-107.
- 12 Prawer, *al-Istitan al-salibi*, 93. On the Franks' feudalism in the Holy Land, see Husayn, "al-Athar al-ijtima'iyya," 115-17.
- 13 al-Agha, "al-Awda' al-ijtima'iyya," 71, 95, 122, 196.
- 14 Immtair, "al-Hayah al-iqtisadiyya," 61.
- 15 al-Agha, "al-Awda' al-ijtima'iyya," 265.
- 16 Shams al-Din ibn Tulun, Muhammad ibn 'Ali ibn Khamarwaya al-Dimashqi al-Salihi al-Hanafi (d.953 AH/1546 AD), *al-Qala'id al-jawhariyya fi tarikh al-salihiyya* [The bejeweled necklace of the history of al-salihiyya], ed. Muhammad Ahmad Dahman (Damascus: mujamma' al-lugha al-'Arabiyya, 1980), vol. 1, 250, see also: Hatim Mahamid, *Franks' Effects on Islamic Spirit, Religious and Cultural Characters in Medieval Syria*, Nebula 4, no. 1 (March 2007): 167; and Ibrahim al-Zaybaq, "A'ilat ibn Qudama al-Maqdisiyya wa dawruha fi bina' salihyyat Dimashq wa nashr al-madhhab al-hanbali" [The Jerusalemite ibn Qudama family and its role in building salihyya of Damascus and the spread of the Hanbali madhhab], Mu'assasat Filastin lil-thaqafa, 16 January 2007, online at www.thaqafa.org/site/pages/details.aspx?itemid=2142#.X3-D-5NKjBI (accessed 8 October 2020).
- 17 Ibn Tulun, *al-Qala'id al-jawhariyya*, vol.1, 67-68; see also: al-Agha, "al-Awda' al-ijtima'iyya," 264; Shakir Mustafa, *Madinat lil-'ilm: al-Qudama wa al-salihiyya* [A city for knowledge: the Qudama family and al-salihiyya] (Damascus: dar tlass lil-dirasat, 1997), 12; Lu'ay Ibrahim Sulayman Bawa'na, "Dawr al-'ulama' al-Muslimin fi muqawamat al-ghazu al-faranji al-salibi lil-Mashriq al-Islami (490-648 AH/1097-1250 AD)" [The role of the Muslim ulama in resisting the Frankish Crusader invasion of the Islamic East] (PhD diss., University of Jordan, 2006), 80-81; Khalifa, "Hay'at 'ulama'," 299.
- 18 Ibn Tulun, *al-Qala'id al-jawhariyya*, vol. 1, 70-76, see also: Bawa'na, "Dawr al-'ulama'," 81-82; Daniella Talmon-Heller, "The Shaykh and the Community: Popular Hanbalite Islam in 12th-13th Century Jabal Nablus and Jabal Qasyun," *Studia Islamica* 79 (1994): 103-120; and Khalifa, "Hay'at 'ulama'," 116-19.
- 19 On Balian's policies against Jama'il's population, see Ibn Tulun, *al-Qala'id al-jawhariyya*, vol.1, 67.
- 20 Mahamid, "Franks' Effect," 169-70; Mustafa, *Madinat lil-'ilm*, 54; Salah al-Din al-Munjid, "al-Laji'un al-Maqadisa ila Dimashq ba'd al-ghazu al-faranji wa nata'ij hijratihim" [Jerusalemite refugees in Damascus after the Frankish invasion and the effects], in *al-Mu'tamar al-dawli al-thalith li-tarikh Bilad al-Sham* [hird international conference on the history of Bilad al-Sham] (Amman/Irbid: University of Jordan/Yarmuk University, 1983), vol. 3, 719-20; and al-Agha, "al-Awda' al-ijtima'iyya," 93-94.
- 21 Abu Salih Mosque was named after the pious shaykh Abu Salih Mifiih ibn 'Abdallah al-Hanbali (530 AH/1136 AD), who endowed it to the Hanbalis. See: Ibn Tulun, *al-Qala'id al-jawhariyya*, vol. 1, 65, 250-52; and Khalid Kabir 'Allal, "al-Haraka al-'ilmiyya al-Hanbaliyya wa atharuha fi al-mashriq al-Islami khilal al-qarnayn 6-7 AH/12-13 AD" [The Hanbali scholarly movement and its impact in the Islamic East during the 6th-7th centuries AH/12th-13th centuries AD] (PhD diss., Universit  d'Alger, 2003), 185-86; and Bawa'na, "Dawr al-'ulama'," 82.
- 22 Ibn Tulun, *al-Qala'id al-jawhariyya*, vol. 1, 79; al-Munjid, "al-Laji'un al-Maqadisa," 715; and al-Zaybaq, "A'ilat ibn Qudama."
- 23 Ibn Tulun, *al-Qala'id al-jawhariyya*, vol. 1, 79-80, see also Bawa'na, "Dawr al-'ulama'," 82-83.
- 24 Ibn Tulun, *al-Qala'id al-jawhariyya*, vol. 1, 80, see also Khalifa, "Hay'at 'ulama'," 117-19; and al-Zaybaq, "A'ilat ibn Qudama."
- 25 Ibn Tulun, *al-Qala'id al-jawhariyya*, vol. 1, 66, see also: Yusuf Ibrahim al-Zamili, "al-Awda' al-siyasiyya fi Bayt al-Maqdis wa in'akasatuha 'ala al-hayat al-'ilmiyya wa al-thaqafiyya bi-Dimashq fi fatrat al-hurub al-salibiyya" [The political situation in Jerusalem and its repercussions on the

- scholarly and cultural life of Damascus during the Crusades], in *al-Marakiz al-thaqafiyya wa al-'ilmiyya fi al-'alam al-'Arabi 'abra al-'usur* [Cultural and intellectual centers in the Arab world throughout the ages] (Cairo: ittihad al-mu'arikhin al-'Arab, November 2001), vol. 9, 385.
- 26 Ibn Tulun, *al-Qala'id al-jawhariyya*, vol. 1, 82; and Bawa'na, "Dawr al-'ulama'," 83.
- 27 Ibn Tulun, *al-Qala'id al-jawhariyya*, vol. 1, 66; 'Abd al-Qadir Badran, *Munadamat al-atlal wa musamarat al-khayal* [Intimacy of Remnants and Conversations of Imagination], ed. Zuhayr al-Shawish (Beirut: al-maktab al-islami lil-tiba'a wa al-nashr, 1985), 247; and Hasan Shmaysani, *Madaris Dimashq fi al-'asr al-Ayyubi* [Damascus schools in the Ayyubid era] (Beirut: dar al-afaq al-jadida, 1983), 101; Toru Miura, "The Salihyya Quarter in the Suburbs of Damascus: Its Formation, Structure, and Transformation in the Ayyubid and Mamluk Periods," *Bulletin d'études orientales* 47 (1995): 29–81.
- 28 Dayr al-Hanabila was also known as Dayr al-Salihin and Dayr al-Maqadisa. Ibn Tulun, *al-Qala'id al-jawhariyya*, vol. 1, 253, see also: Mahamid, "Franks' Effect," 16; and al-Munjid, "al-Laji'un al-Maqadisa," 716.
- 29 For more on al-Madrasa al-Hanbaliyya al-'Umariyya, founded by Shaykh Abu 'Umar al-Maqdisi, Muhammad ibn Ahmad ibn Muhammad ibn Qudama al-Jama'ili al-Salihi al-Hanbali (607 AH/1210 AD). See Ibn Tulun, *al-Qala'id al-jawhariyya*, vol. 1, 248–74; see also: Mahamid, "Franks' Effect," 168; Badran, *Munadamat al-atlal*, 244–47; Shmaysani, *Madaris Dimashq*, 100–3; and Allal, "al-Haraka al-'ilmiyya," 210–212.
- 30 Ibn Tulun, *al-Qala'id al-jawhariyya*, vol. 1, 249.
- 31 Ibn Tulun, *al-Qala'id al-jawhariyya*, vol. 1, 273. Besides Ibn Tulun, other historical sources paid particular attention to the school, given its prominence in al-Salihiya, detailing the shaykhs who taught there and its endowments, libraries, and other benefits and services that it offered; see Badran, *Munadamat al-atlal*, 244–47.
- 32 For more on the role of waqf in establishing and financing mosques and schools in al-Salihiya in Damascus. See: Allal, "al-Haraka al-'ilmiyya," 182–188, 207–219; Miura, "Salihyya," 181–89.
- 33 The Hanbali madhhab was weakened in Jerusalem and grew stronger in Damascus as a result of the immigration to Damascus of the Hanbali Shirazi ulama and their followers from the families of Qudama, Miflih, Ghanim, and others during the Crusader period. Khalifa, "Hay'at 'Ulama'," 118.
- 34 Bawa'na, "Dawr al-'ulama'," 86.
- 35 al-Zamili, "al-Awda' al-siyasiyya," 386; al-Masri, "al-Ta'lim fi bilad al-Sham," 95–96; and al-Zaybaq, "'A'ilat ibn Qudama."
- 36 See: Bawa'na, "Dawr al-'ulama'," 86; and Talmon-Heller, "Shaykh and the Community," 103–20.
- 37 Fu'ad 'Abd Rahim al-Duwaykat, "Dawr al-mar'a al-maqdisiyya fi khidmat 'ulum al-hadith fi al-'asrayn al-Ayyubi wa al-Mamluki" [Jerusalemite women's role in the service of hadith scholarship during the Ayyubid and Mamluk eras], *Dirasat: Human and Social Sciences* 43, no. 1 (2016): 54.
- 38 Mahamid, "Franks' Effect," 173; Husayn, "al-Athar al-ijtima'iyya," 73, 78.
- 39 Jacques de Vitry, *Tarikh bayt al-Maqdis* [The History of Jerusalem], trans. Sa'id 'Abdallah al-Bishawi (Amman: dar al-shuruq, 1998), 134–36.
- 40 al-Masri, "al-Ta'lim fi Bilad al-Sham" 122–23. For more on the ulama of the Qudama family. See: Bawa'na, "Dawr al-'ulama'," 86; and Talmon-Heller, "Shaykh and the Community," 103–20.
- 41 Al Masri, "al-Ta'lim fi Bilad al-Sham," 35. Ulama and scholars moved to Damascus from several cities: Jerusalem, escaping the Crusader's invasion; Baghdad, escaping the Mongol invasion; Medina, escaping the dire economic situation and Shi'i control over religious institutions; and Andalusia and Morocco, escaping the turbulence after the fall of the Umayyad rule. Salah Adalaziz Salamah, "Medina in the Ayyubid Period and the Shi'a Influence upon It" (PhD diss., University of Leeds, 2008), 285.

LETTER FROM JERUSALEM

Teta Nabiha's

Nadim Bawalsa

Abstract

“Teta Nabiha’s” is an account of return to Palestine written in creative prose. The essay offers a personalized, non-fictional narrative of the Said family home in Talbiyya, Jerusalem, which my mother’s grandparents, Nabiha and Boulos, built with their cousin Wadie in the 1930s, and to which they never returned following their flight from Palestine in late 1947. On the one hand, “Teta Nabiha’s” is a story of the family home itself, and what has become of it since its confiscation by the Israeli state in 1948. On the other, it is a literary account of our return – my mother, brother, stepfather, and me – in late 2011 to Talbiyya and to what remains of Teta Nabiha’s. Using a combination of secondary source research, family photographs, satellite imagery, descriptive prose, dialogue, and a mix of literary styles, “Teta Nabiha’s” seeks to reimagine Palestinian narratives of return in a way that goes beyond loss and sorrow to imaginatively explore an altogether new tone of Palestinian literature infused with humor, love, sentimentality, creativity, and hope.

Keywords

Palestine; Palestinians; Jerusalem; return; Israeli occupation; Nakba; Talbiyya; Ramallah.

Editor’s Note

This version was developed out of a notable contribution to the Ibrahim Dakkak Award for Outstanding Essay on Jerusalem, 2020 Round.

This letter is about Nabiha Said, my great-grandmother, and her home in Jerusalem, the one taken from her and to which she never returned. It is a story about her granddaughter Dina, my

mother, whose return to Teta Nabiha's I orchestrated in December 2011. This is a narrative of our ongoing displacement and exile from the house Teta Nabiha built as a family home with her brother Wadie in the early 1930s. It is a narrative of our return, my mother, brother, and me, to Talbiyya and to what became of Teta Nabiha's, now locatable on electronic maps at "10 Brenner Street." With this written record, I affirm the permanence of Teta Nabiha and her descendants in the limestone walls and halls of so-called "10 Brenner Street."



Figure 1. Teta Nabiha and her youngest children twins, Robert (left) and Albert (right), my grandfather. Jerusalem, 1930s. Said family collection.

Teta Nabiha's was confiscated by the Israeli state in 1948, though neither Teta Nabiha, her brother Wadie, nor any of their children were there to witness it. They had already left Jerusalem for Cairo in anticipation of the war, and like hundreds of thousands of Palestinians still in exile, they have not been able to return to their home which remains where they built it, in Talbiyya. Today, and like most of historic Palestine, Talbiyya is thoroughly Judaized, its Palestinian origins meticulously effaced. But like us, our limestone walls, marble floors, and terracotta roofs remain standing, remain Palestinian.

In the early 1980s, Menachem Begin gave the house to the International Christian Embassy, a right-wing evangelical organization established in 1980 to support the Zionist state, and when the organization relocated in the 1990s, Amidar Public Housing was granted the property. In the early 2000s, Talbeia Properties, a real estate company, purchased the property from Amidar, and shortly thereafter in 2005, American financiers and brothers, Arthur and Michael Fried, bought it from Talbeia Properties.¹ Wasting no time, the Fried brothers hired an architect to add two more floors to the edifice, transforming Teta Nabiha's into a five-story condominium apartment building to be managed as short-term family vacation rentals.² I shudder to think how Teta Nabiha would have felt to learn of the irony that the family home she built with her brother was bought and redesigned by brothers who rented it to vacationing families.



Figure 2. Left to right: Teta Sylvia, my grandmother; Teta Nabiha, my great-grandmother; and Dido Albert, my grandfather. Manhasset, NY, 1960s. Author's personal collection.

The Fried brothers also purchased 90 percent of the properties of Talbiyya from Talbeia Properties, but the house at “10 Brenner Street” is the one that caused them the most trouble. In December 2011, two other brothers, Eyal and Oded Baruch, sued the Frieds, their neighbors on Brenner Street, over alleged construction violations.³ Evidently, when the Frieds began redeveloping Teta Nabiha’s, the Baruchs took the opportunity to complain to the Jerusalem municipality about a wall separating the two properties that they claimed trespassed on their land. In a legal battle that dragged on for months, Talbeia Properties, intervening on behalf of the Frieds, submitted that the wall in question had “been there for 80 years” and that the building was marked for preservation.⁴ Indeed, eighty years ago, Nabiha’s children, Yousef, Evelyn, George, Albert, and Robert, and their cousins Edward, Rosemary, Jean, Joyce, and Grace were playing around the house’s limestone *sur* and on the stairs that led to the breezy porch.

While the Baruchs were preparing to take the Frieds to court in the late autumn of 2011, I was preparing to take my second fieldwork trip to Jerusalem for my dissertation. My advisor at New York University drew a makeshift map for me on a lined piece of paper on how to find Teta Nabiha’s. “Of course, I know the Said house!” he exclaimed. I had never been. I also had a plan to take my mother with me. She had not been to Jerusalem in over a decade, and she had never seen her family home. “It’s too painful, mama. I can’t,” she would say each time I egged her on about the importance of using our new American passports to return to Palestine. “It’s poetic justice, mama,” I would insist. And once I had the makeshift map to our home in hand, she simply could not get herself to refuse. She, too, was desperate to meet her family home.

That winter was cold, but not at the Allenby crossing in the Jordan Valley. The occupation authorities processed my mother, brother, stepfather, and me within an hour. Undoubtedly, traveling as a family with our stepfather, a white American, and with finite reservations at the luxurious American Colony hotel, eased their suspicions about the purpose or length of our stay, and so we were spared the usual hours of interrogation. Certainly, we did not show them our map that would reunite us with our family home, the one Dina retained glimpses of in her photographic memory. About Teta Nabiha’s, she recalled a photograph her father kept from the late 1930s of Robert, his fraternal twin, posing on the running board of a car with the newly completed home in the background. On the road, the house stood alone, with still barren plots of land adjacent to it. Talbiyya was being born.

Our arrival in Jerusalem was magnificent. Chariot-like, our triumphal taxi ascended the aged hills of the Jordan Valley to reveal the Dome of the Rock, struck brilliantly by a ray of light ripping through thick late December clouds, and thus made visible miles away across the wide valley to our left. Here we were, entering our city despite the occupying state’s best efforts to keep us out. Surely, we had already won. Yes, we arrived in Jerusalem on American passports we acquired through our American stepfather, we were staying at the American Colony hotel, and I had in my pocket a makeshift map to our family home drawn by my American doctoral advisor. How tenuous, how fraught, was our homecoming. Nonetheless, we were here.



Figure 3. Robert, my grandfather's fraternal twin, posing for a photograph outside the Said family home. Talbiyya, Jerusalem, 1940s. Said family collection.

Wednesday, 28 December 2011, was overcast in Jerusalem, so that morning, I felt dismayed that we would not experience Teta Nabiha's in its sunlit glory. Dina had often talked about the house's limestone exterior, that emblem of Jerusalem's beauty. If only those clouds would part. After breakfast, we sluggishly walked up Nablus Road from the American Colony toward King David Street in West Jerusalem where we would rent our own chariot to visit the Mount of Olives, Talbiyya, and Ramallah that day. My brother Sami and I sighed as Nablus Road steadily inclined towards the YMCA in East Jerusalem. We are not morning people, and we certainly do not appreciate cold mornings. But Dina was exuberant. She, too, cannot bear the cold, but that morning, she was frenetic, concealing a mixture of excitement, anxiety, and heartache with overpreparedness. For the cold, she put on her nylon leggings and a pair of wool socks underneath her trousers and brown leather boots, and layered her torso thickly with a long-sleeved thermal turtleneck, fleece sweater, and wool coat. She was ready.

Once the entrance to the YMCA was visible to our right, Dina stopped and asked if we had time for a quick detour. She had been speaking rather incessantly that morning, in her characteristic stream of consciousness, and we had been anticipating her endearing quirks to exceed expectations throughout this trip. But today was about

Dina. She could do whatever she wanted. “Of course, *habibti!* Take us wherever you want!” Her husband Kelly, unfailingly supportive, answered on our behalf. She walked us a few steps back and, to the right, pointed at a church through an arched opening in the wall. “This is St. George’s, guys. Mama and Papa married here.” Sami and I, waking up now, froze under the opulent archway and, with our lips inadvertently parting, scanned the peaceful courtyard within and the ominous medieval tower in the background. “Mama! ‘*Anjad?!*’” “Of course! Come, let’s go inside.”

As we entered the church, Dina at once transformed into a carefree child, taking Kelly’s hand and pulling him gleefully toward the back pews. Facing the altar, she locked her arm in his, and proceeded down the aisle as a bride would with her father. Her smile grew bigger with each step, and we could hear her giggle from the back of the church. “*Yee*, I’ve always wanted to walk down the aisle where my parents did!” At the altar, she stopped, turned around, and, for the first time in my life, asked me to take her photograph. She hates being photographed. Her grin swallowed her face as I snapped the photograph of her, standing properly as a schoolgirl would, at the altar where her late parents had wed. Sami and I were transfixed. We had never seen our mother like this, and we never thought we would be standing where Teta Sylvia and Dido Albert married.

We took a family photo at the Mount of Olives that is now framed in each of our homes. All around us huddled tens of impressionable tourists and their abrasive tour guides. Sami and I took some more photos, attempting panoramas, and Dina sat quietly, pensively, on a limestone bench to smoke her late-morning cigarette. Kelly examined the oblong map of the city corresponding to our view at the edge of the cliff above the cemetery. He always appreciated a captioned illustration. But this was not the moment we came to Jerusalem to experience. Countless families, many of whom were also returning exiled Palestinians on tourist visas like us, had been here and had taken these photos, had examined this map, and had smoked cigarettes admiring the majestic view of the holy city, mourning what was once ours. Teta Nabiha and her children were not here. Nonetheless, we were moved, and Dina asked to go back to the hotel for a rest before the remainder of our afternoon.

She had one more cigarette at the entrance to the American Colony before we left for Talbiyya. Kelly kept her company while Sami and I waited in the car, me in the driver’s seat, and Sami behind me. I pulled out the map from my pocket and examined it once more. Sokolov Square was our destination, depicted as an oval in the center of my advisor’s illustration. The square was the main feature in the map, and he had drawn a road representing King David Street that we were to follow from the north as we descended upon Sokolov. “It’s on the western side of the square, at the intersection of Sokolov Street and another. I can’t remember the name of the street, but you’ll see it as you drive around the square,” he assured me. I had marked the intersection with an emphatic star, and as Sami and I sat in the car waiting, I gazed at that star and felt I was offering my family the most meaningful gift. I, the aspiring scholar and historian of Palestine, was responsible for the map, for pushing for our trip to Palestine, for driving us to Talbiyya, and for finding Teta Nabiha’s. At once, I felt both

pride and trepidation. *What if we cannot find it? What if it is unrecognizable and this devastates mama? I will have made her come for nothing.*

My heart beat faster as I forced myself to reconcile my pride and fear; in a moment, I would need to drive. Behind me, Sami said nothing, drooping in his seat, perhaps unconsciously conserving energy for what was to come. Dina and Kelly walked towards the car and I gulped, mostly air. She got in next to Sami as Kelly sat beside me. “Ready boys?” She asked with pep in her voice. “*Akeed, habibti mama. Let’s take you home!*” I replied as I drove the car to the Colony’s gated exit. “So, we’ll drive south on King David Street past the YMCA in West Jerusalem until we reach the intersection at Jabotinsky Street,” I began as we approached highway 60, soon to cross to the west side. Articulating our plans verbally helped ease my anxiety. “We’ll then take a right into Talbiyya and Sokolov Square should be right there!” “All right!” Kelly said excitedly. I looked at Dina in the rearview mirror. “*Shoo mama, keefik?*” She was looking out her window with a soft smile, visible only by the lifted sides of her mouth. She took a quick breath and looked at me, as though awakening from a daze. Smiling wider, she offered, “*Mneeha, habibi, mneeha.*”

Sokolov Square was a park.⁵ Pine trees lined it, and along the outline of the park, we admired rows of limestone houses, built in the 1920s and 1930s as Talbiyya was becoming a tony neighborhood. “*Ya bayyeh, how beautiful,*” Dina said. “This was all for Palestinians, guys. We built this whole area. *Akh, they took it all.*” From inside the park, we heard the laughter of Israeli children, layered in down coats and warm boots, playing in sand pits, on swings, and down slides. Dina asked me to park the car. “But mama, we still need to drive around the square. I think it’s on the other side.” “No, stop here. I’d like to walk.” I obliged. Kelly and I were the first to leave the car. Dina and Sami were notoriously slower, and we knew not to wait. We began walking along circular Sokolov Street, me with my map in hand, and Kelly beside me with his hands as usual half-tucked in his front pockets. We looked in every direction. I knew I would not know the house, but I was hoping the perpendicular street would be clear and we would see only one house where it met Sokolov, and it would be that house.



Figure 4. From left to right: my stepfather Kelly, me, my brother Sami, and our mother Dina. Mount of Olives, Jerusalem, December 2011. Author’s personal collection.



Figure 5. Teta Nabiha's sons on the steps to their home in Talbiyya, early 1940s. Top row, left to right: George and Yousef. Bottom row, left to right: Robert and Albert. Not pictured is Evelyn, Nabiha's only daughter. Said family collection.

“Papa!” Dina screamed. Stunned, Kelly and I turned around to see Dina wailing in the street, bringing her hands from over her head to cover her face. “Papa, I’m here! Papa!” She fell to the street, landing on her right hip. Her right hand left her face and met the cold asphalt for balance, as her left expanded across her face, still covering both eyes, tears slowly puddling between her fingers. Sami dropped beside her and put his hands on her shoulders. He looked up where she had been looking before she collapsed. There was a structure under construction behind a limestone barrier a few meters ahead and around a bend. Kelly and I were approaching it when we heard her scream, but we could not see what it was behind the trees and construction material. Retreating now, we came to Dina’s side, lifted her up, and looked at the construction site behind the ancient wall. “Mama, is that the house?” Sami asked. Between gasps for air, Dina managed: “Yes, that’s our *sur*.” She recognized it from the photographs. Suddenly, I was not the gifter or the scholar. I was the exiled Palestinian returning home with his exiled mother. *Why had I not anticipated Dina’s pain? Why had I not anticipated what this would be like?* I was not prepared.

Dina’s cries escalated and deepened, like a mourner’s during a funeral. The few passers-by looked at us with confusion and alarm, but no one approached us. We lifted Dina and slowly walked her to the limestone wall that outlined the park, directly across from Teta Nabiha’s *sur*. Her legs gave out again, but Kelly held her up. We stood her against the wall, and some minutes later, she gradually began to recover her breath. Kelly and Sami stood on either side of her, and Sami reached for a cigarette from her purse. He lit one for her, then another for himself. As they stood there, fuming through their lips and nostrils, their faces were grey, expressionless. *How could today be anything but cloudy?* There was no place for the sun here.

Facing the façade that stood atop Teta Nabiha’s nest, my breath grew heavy. I looked up to the fourth and fifth floors of the new condominium flats, hollow still with stacks of tiles piled around the renovated window frames, and saw two men approach the edge to look at us. They were construction workers, Palestinians. One of them shook his head slowly, while the other stood beside him, arms folded, motionless. They had heard Dina’s cries for her Papa. They knew who we were, returners, and they recognized the spectacle below. I locked eyes with one of them, and he tilted his



Figure 6. Said family house remodeled. October 2019. Author’s personal collection.

head downwards. I felt helpless then. There was absolutely nothing any of us could do. We were stuck there, trapped. *This is return.*

After what felt like an eternity, Dina spoke. “*Khalas.* Take me to my mother’s house in Ramallah.” She dropped her shrunken cigarette on the sidewalk and squashed it with her boot. Kelly put his arm around her and began escorting her to the car. Sami, mostly frozen still against the park perimeter, began thawing and dragging his feet behind them. I stood in the middle of the sidewalk facing Teta Nabiha’s, cracking each of my knuckles robotically. My breathing became faster, and my throat locked. I looked up at the workers, behind me into the park at the children playing, and all around at the occupied homes of my family’s neighbors. I clasped my icy hands to stop myself from cracking my fingers and looked up the street, where Dina was walking, her head resting on Kelly’s left shoulder. She was stumbling a little, but Kelly had her. I looked back up at the two workers, but this time, my eyebrows scrunched up at my temple. I was certain they felt shame with their pity. *How dare you be part of this?* I turned around to face the park. I saw mothers chatting as their children swung and slid. Though they did not see me, I gave them the same stare. *How dare you play amidst our ruins?* And for all the ignorance in the world, I knew they knew where they were, and what they took. I marched to the car and drove my family away from this place.



Figure 7. Screenshot of Google Street View for Said family house, now locatable at “10 Brenner Street,” seen here under construction, October 2011. Sokolov Square seen to the left, online at ([google.com](https://www.google.com/maps/@31.8611111,34.8011111,15z)) bit.ly/311PhLJ (accessed 20 September 2020).

The sun is bright on this Sunday afternoon, 13 October 2019. Twenty-six degrees outside, Ramallahs are anxiously awaiting the breezy autumn weather. I could be outside enjoying the heat wave, but thoughts of Teta Nabiha’s preoccupy me. Lying in bed with my laptop, I enter “10 Brenner St.” into Google Maps and find the “street view” option is available. As Google adjusts its satellites to transport me twenty

kilometers south, my breath quickens. The image that appears shows a park. *This is Sokolov Square*. There is a woman, frozen in time, pushing her baby cart up the sidewalk across the street from the park. It is a sunny day in Google. *We walked along that sidewalk*. I adjust the street view to face Teta Nabiha's at the corner of the intersecting streets and see a façade that looks familiar. I zoom in on the unique balconies which form a vertical line along the right side of the building. They are semi-circles encapsulating dark, tinted windows. *I know these balconies*. I grab my phone to search for a photograph my brother sent me months prior while on a visit to Amman. He had taken a photograph of the original photograph Dina recollected from her childhood, the one of her uncle Robert reclining on the running board of a car before their newly-completed home. Robert's widow had it in her apartment in Amman. I find the photograph in my phone and I see those balconies on the right side of the edifice. Breathless, my eyelids freeze open.

When I regain focus, my eyes travel to the bottom of the Google "street view" page in search of a date. October 2011. We had visited two months later in December, when the Baruchs were arranging to sue the Frieds, when an architect was renovating the façade. I take screen shots of these frozen images of Teta Nabiha's and send them to Dina, now retired in Florida. In our Skype call, I can see she is getting exasperated. "*Khalas habibi*, I mourned my grandmother and father on that day in December. I don't want to relive it." "I understand, *habibti* mama. Sorry to bring this up again." "*Ma'lesh habibi*, you don't have to move on. For me, Teta and Papa aren't there anymore. They're in me, and they're in you and Sami." I look down at my lap to have a moment with myself as I crack both my pinky knuckles simultaneously with my thumbs. Exhaling gently, I look up to see my mother's face. She's also looking down, breathing slowly. But she's not cracking her knuckles; she's picking at her cuticles, as she does when pensive. "*Tayyib, habibti* mama. I think I'll go for a walk. It's warm out today." "*Akh, ya niyyalak*, you get to walk those streets!" She begins, still working on her fingers. "I do love it here," I smile. She looks up at me, grinning now. "I know the feeling, *habibi*."

Nadim Bawalsa is a historian of Palestine. He earned a joint doctorate in History and Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies from New York University in 2017.

Endnotes

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| <p>1 Nimrod Bousso, "American Owners of Luxury Jerusalem Property Benefit from Ties to Netanyahu Bureau," <i>Haaretz</i>, 14 November 2013, online at (haaretz.com) bit.ly/3nGy1FP (accessed 18 September 2020).</p> <p>2 Bousso, "American Owners."</p> | <p>3 Bousso, "American Owners."</p> <p>4 Bousso, "American Owners."</p> <p>5 The official name of the square is Chille Square. The street encircling it is Sokolov Street.</p> |
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OBITUARY

A Death Foretold

The Life and Art of Mohammad Joulani

Rana Anani

Abstract

A tribute to artist Mohammad Joulani, who passed away at the age of 37 on October 2nd, 2020. Joulani was a young Jerusalemite artist, known for his irrepressible smile and compassionate spirit. He harbored a bewildered soul and persistently posed questions about the validity of art, drawing himself into his paintings to search for answers. He painted Jerusalem, the city that he belonged to physically and spiritually and attempted at bringing art and inspiration to the doorstep of the very people who form the fabric of the city, but exist at its margins.

Keywords

Art; Palestine; Jerusalem; Mohammad Joulani; Palestinian Art; Contemporary Art; Painting.

What is death? It is not the absence of people. It means to wake up to find the dead body on strike. It is a sarcastic strike and an open unnegotiable individual civil disobedience The dead body is not afraid anymore of laws, diseases, pandemics, starvation, poverty or wealth. He is not afraid of armies, weapons or poisons. Even death itself cannot scare him anymore, simply because he died, and it is over. He defeated death by dying. Died as if he found an eternal solution for himself It is not possible for a sane person to leave eternal rest after having tasted its sweetness and return to life's repulsiveness, anxiety, and dread.¹

Mohammed Ben Meloud, "The Death"

On Friday, 2 October 2020, the Palestinian artist Mohammad Joulani passed away at the age of thirty-seven. Eight months before he died, he shared a long text about death on his Facebook page. Little did he know at the time, how soon he would himself experience death.

Joulani was a dear colleague known for his irrepressible smile and his kind and compassionate spirit. As an artist, he spent time in search of his inner self. Behind his open childish face, his large warm smile, and his bright passionate eyes, he harbored a bewildered soul. He persistently attempted to understand his role as an artist, and often posed questions about the validity of art, drawing himself into his paintings to search for answers.



Figure 1. Untitled, Mohammad Joulani, 2017, oil on canvas.

In one of his artworks, the one most shared by his colleagues after his departure, Joulani captured himself leaving his studio door, shadowed by a ghostly reflection on the side. Describing it in 2017, he writes:

Here I am. I leave my artwork in order to write about it. I move away and look at my ghost turning his back on his daily workshop, and I get confused. Confused, I reach out to the painting to return myself back to it, without knowing what I want exactly; is it a description of doubt when it was an idea, or is it a description of doubt after it has consumed itself and taken a shape. Shall I attempt in this artwork to revive the balance between reality and fiction, or shall I try to kill and destroy them both.

Was Degas right when he said: ‘One sees what one wants to see. It is false, and that falsity is the foundation of art.’²

Joulani was born in Jerusalem in 1985. He received his BA in fine arts from Al Quds University in 2009, and was an MA student in contemporary arts at Bezalel Art Academy when he died. He also taught visual arts at Al Quds University and more recently at the Friends School in Ramallah (2016–18). He received second prize in the Ismail Shammout Fine Arts competition (2016), was awarded a six-month residency at the Cité Internationale des Arts in Paris (2018), and participated in the Insight of China program (2018), and the Mediterranea 18 Young Artists Biennale in Albania (2017).

Joulani was a Jerusalemite artist par excellence, belonging to the city physically and spiritually, and often painted his own perspective of it. In *Regular Day* exhibition (2016), he portrayed his beloved Jerusalem in a series of artworks depicting his experience of living a “normal day” in a city full of contradictions. The exhibition, accompanied by audio recordings of everyday city noise, focused on the daily rhythm of people’s lives rather than the city’s silent stones and landscapes: a rhythm of love, intimacy, security searches, checkpoints, daily arrests, and the endless sense of waiting for something to happen.



Figure 2. Mohammad Joulani in his studio, a photo by Ahed Izhiman, 2017.

Colorful Arabic decorative tiles and traditional coffee shop chairs were two symbols that Joulani used when painting the city in various works. While the first image emphasizes the beauty and history of Jerusalem, the second reflects a monotonous life, full of repetition, helplessness, and frustration. He observed this monotony (and replicated it in several paintings) in the daily practice at traditional coffee shops of stacking chairs at the end of the business day.

Joulani exhibited his art in the neighborhoods of Jerusalem through several projects. In *On the Roof*, part of an intervention from Al Hoash in the Qalandiya International 2019, Joulani – assisted by the community – cleaned and painted a number of rooftops in the Old City in bright vibrant colors, bringing art and inspiration to the doorstep of the very people who form the fabric of the city, but exist at its margins.

His last project depicted the isolation due to the COVID-19 pandemic, commissioned by the French Institute in Jerusalem for the exhibition *Epidemic Diary* in early summer 2020.³ It consisted of three artworks that functioned as a diary during isolation. He put himself in the center of all three paintings, wearing a mask, revealing one eye and covering the other with heavy brush strokes. His eye, directed at the viewer, reveals worry, mixed with anxiety and confidence. In the second painting, he painted himself painting the first; and in the third painting, he is painting the second, allowing the series of paintings to function as a reflective mirror with endless images inside an image, in an infinite loop of time.

Joulani's projects constitute an intimate portrait stemming from his own life experience, and from the concerns, anxieties, and ambitions of his generation, in a city left alone to its fate under a brutal occupation. His *Still Standing* sculpture of a man upright with one leg and missing large chunks of his body might sum up how he felt and understood his life and the life of his generation. Yet the title suggests persistence and determination in a future journey.

Rest in Peace, Mohammad Joulani.

Rana Anani is a researcher and writer on visual arts and culture. She has held several positions as an art professional, including head of communication at the Palestinian Museum, project manager of Qalandiya International, coordinator of the Palestinian Pavilion at the 2018 Cannes Film Festival, and associate curator of the 2017 Sharjah Biennale 13 off-site project in Ramallah.

Endnotes

- 1 Mohammed Ben Meloud, "Al-Mawt?" [The Death], 20 July 2019, online at (antolgy.com) bit.ly/37SKINF (accessed 23 October 2020).
- 2 Mohammad Joulani, 4 September 2017, online at (facebook.com) bit.ly/37SKrVx

- (accessed 27 October 2020).
- 3 "Epidemic Diary," Institut Français, Jerusalem, online at www.institutfrancais-jerusalem.org/blog/2020/06/20/epidemic-diary/ (accessed 27 October 2020).

FACTS & FIGURES

Jerusalem Statistical Yearbook 2020

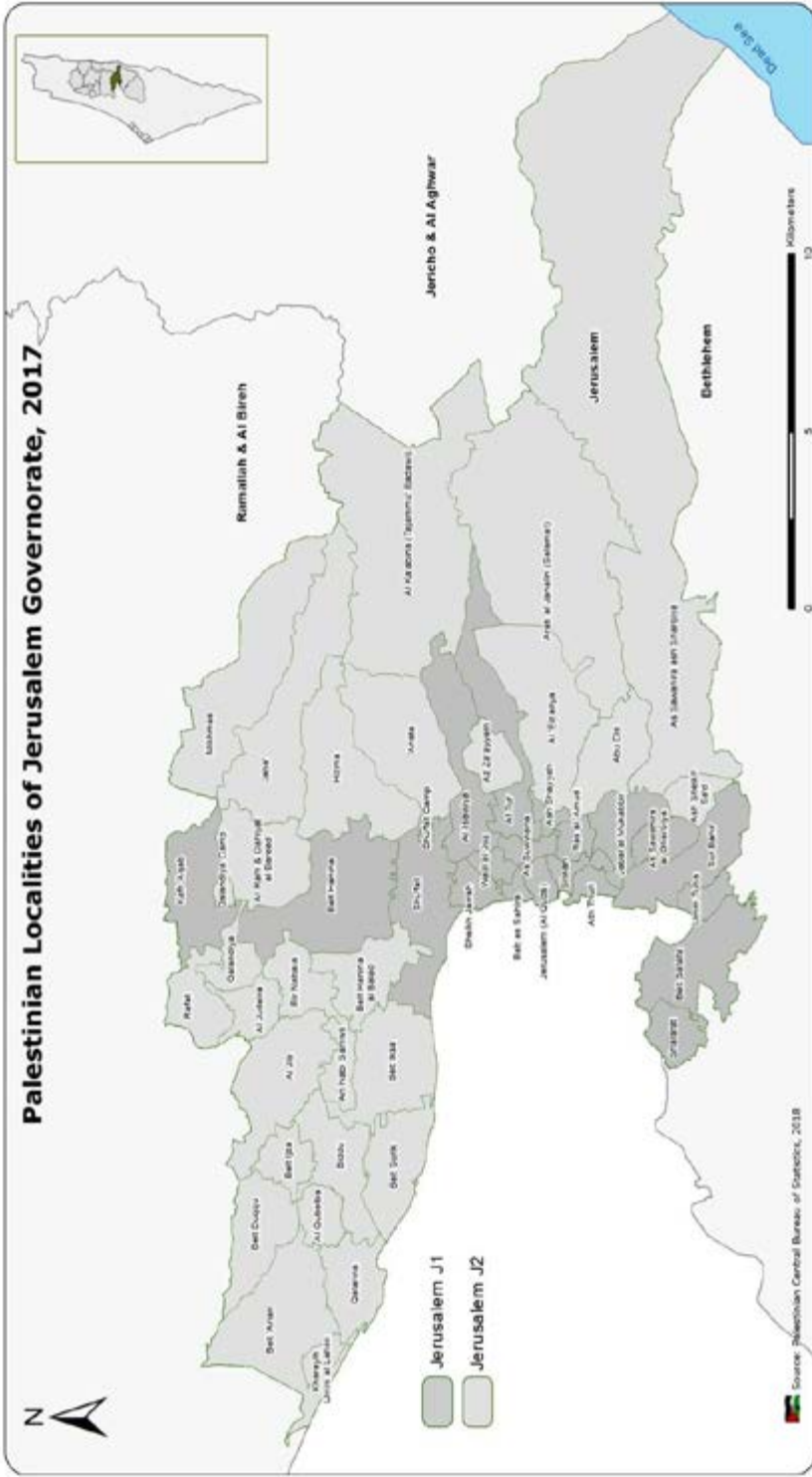
Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics

Reflecting the fragmented situation in Palestine, PCBS divides its Jerusalem data into two areas, as follows:

- *Area J1 comprises those parts of Jerusalem which were annexed forcibly by Israel following its occupation of the West Bank in 1967, including: Bayt Hanina, Bayt Safafa, al-'Isawiyya, Jabal al-Mukabbir, Jerusalem (comprising Bab al-Sahira, Ras al-'Amud, Shaykh Jarrah, al-Shayyah, al-Suwwana, al-Tur, and Wadi al-Jawz), al-Sawahira al-Gharbiyya, Sharafat, Shu'fat, Shu'fat refugee camp, Silwan, Sur Bahir, al-Thawri, and Umm Tuba.*
- *Area J2 comprises the remaining parts of the governorate, namely: Abu Dis, 'Anata, 'Arab al-Jahalin, Bayt 'Anan, Bayt Duqqu, Bayt Hanina al-Balad, Bayt Ijza, Bayt Iksa, Bayt Surik, Biddu, Bir Nabala, Hizma, al-'Ayzariyya, Jaba', Jaba' (Tajammu' Badawi), al-Ka'abina (Tajammu' Badawi), Kafr 'Aqab, Kharayib Umm al-Lahim, Mikhmas, al-Nabi Samwil, Qalandiya, Qalandiya refugee camp, Qatanna, al-Qubayba, Rafat, al-Ram and Dahiyat al-Barid, al-Sawahira al-Sharqiyya, and al-Za'ayim. Qalandiya, Qalandiya refugee camp, Qatanna, al-Qubayba, Rafat, al-Ram and Dahiyat al-Barid, al-Sawahira al-Sharqiyya, and al-Za'ayim.*

Editor's Note

The following represents a summary statistical survey of the Jerusalem governorate produced annually by the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS). *JQ* thanks PCBS for providing this key document to *JQ* readers. The full statistical yearbook for 2020 can be found online at www.pcbs.gov.ps.



Population

- The estimated population of the Jerusalem Governorate in mid-2019 was about 451,584 people. The estimated population in the governorate represented 9.1 percent of the total population in Palestine and 15.1 percent of the total population in the West Bank.
- In 2018, the sex ratio in the Jerusalem Governorate was 107.6 males per 100 females.

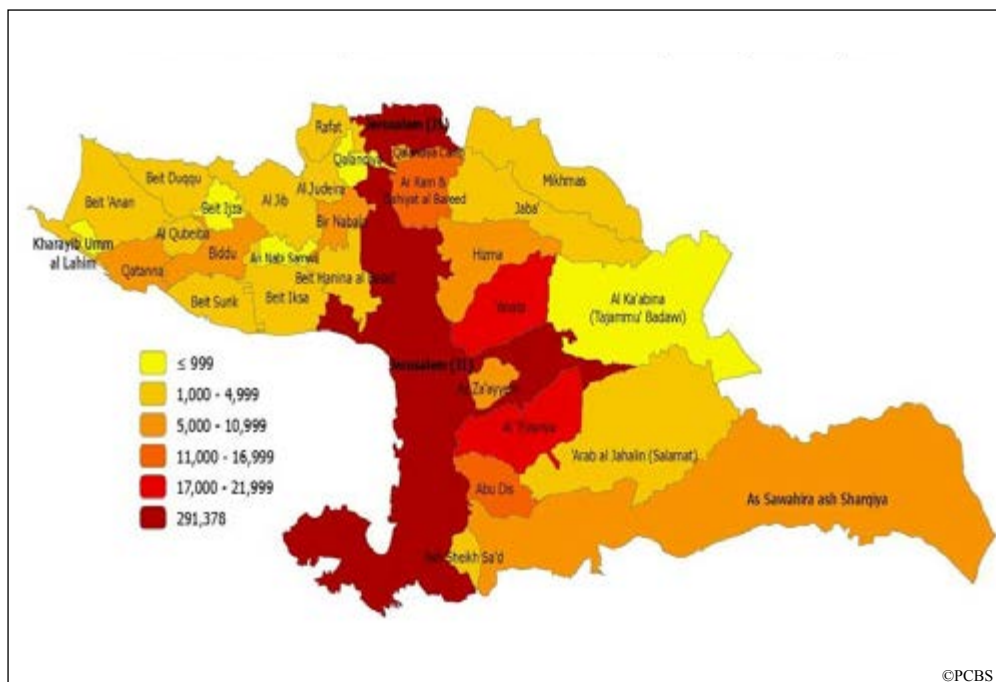


Figure 1. Estimated Population in Jerusalem Governorate by Locality, Mid-Year 2019

Vital Statistics

- The number of registered live births in the Jerusalem Governorate with Palestinian ID cards was 3,475 in 2014, 3,615 in 2015, 3,637 in 2016, 3,601 in 2017, and 3,706 in 2018. Registered deaths for the same years were 309, 318, 361, 341, and 291, respectively.
- 3,239 marriage contracts were signed in shari'a courts and churches in the Jerusalem Governorate in 2018.
- There were 595 divorce cases in shari'a courts in Jerusalem Governorate in 2018.

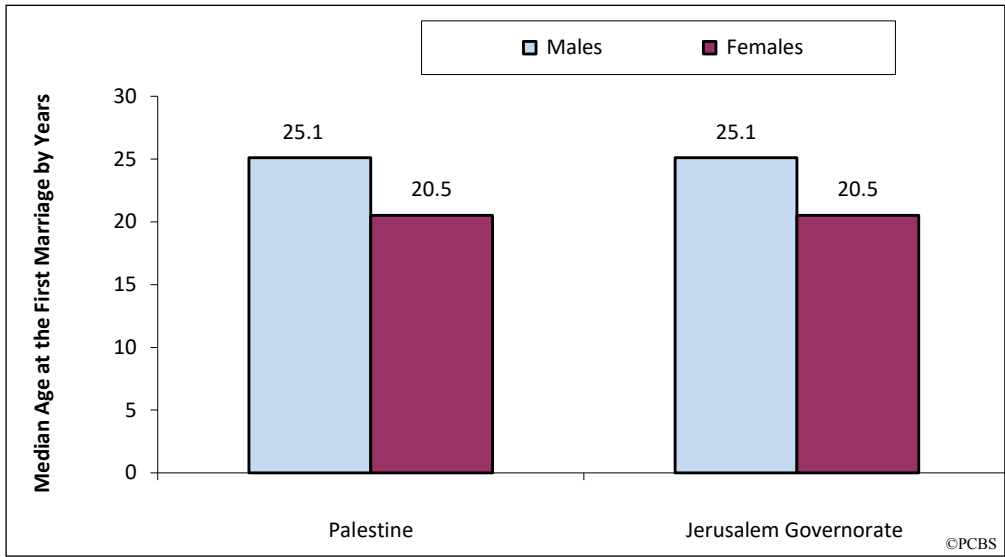


Figure 2. Median Age at First Marriage in Palestine and Jerusalem Governorate by Sex, 2018

Health

- There were seven hospitals in the Jerusalem Governorate with 716 beds in 2018.
- The total number of discharges from Jerusalem hospitals was 80,478 in 2018.
- The total number of hospitalization days in the Jerusalem hospitals was 222,275 in 2018.
- The bed occupancy rate in the Jerusalem hospitals was 85.1 percent in 2018.
- In 2017, around 79.7 percent of individuals in the Jerusalem Governorate (J2) reported having health insurance.
- The percentage of the Palestinian population with disabilities in the Jerusalem Governorate (J2) was 1.8 percent in 2017.

Labor Force

- The labor force participation rate of individuals (15 years and above) in the Jerusalem Governorate was 35.8 percent in 2019 (60.4 percent for males and 12.2 percent for females).
- The unemployment rate in the Jerusalem Governorate of individuals (15 years and above) was 6.8 percent in 2019.
- Employment rate in the Jerusalem Governorate of individuals (15 years and above) was 93.2 percent in 2019.

- Employed individuals in the Jerusalem Governorate distributed by employment status in 2019 were as follows: 5.4 percent employer, 9.9 percent self-employed, 84.3 percent wage employee, and 0.4 percent unpaid family member.

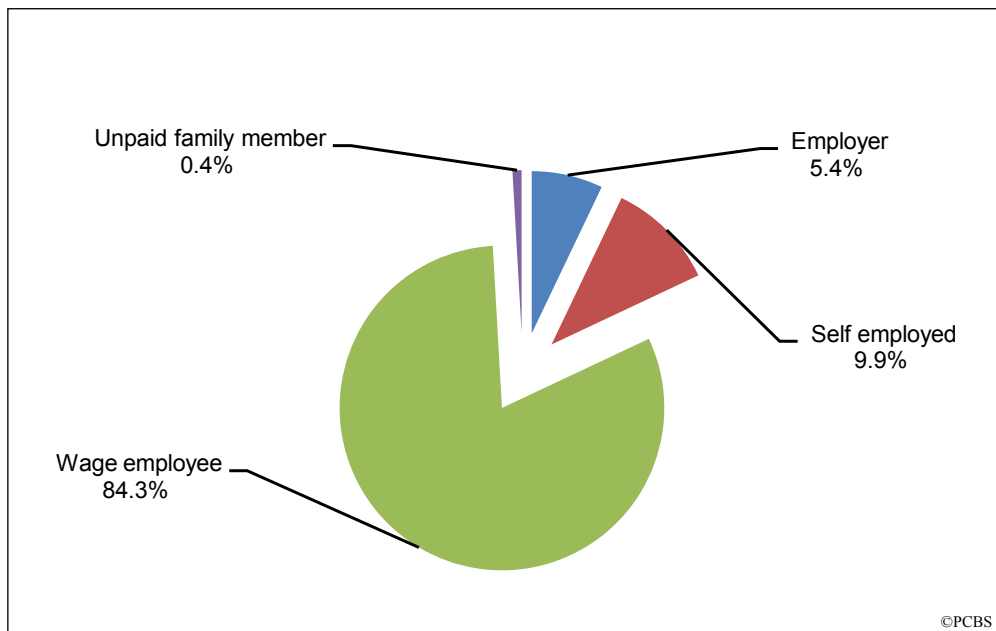


Figure 3. Distribution of Employed Individuals from Jerusalem Governorate by Employment Status, 2019 (%)

Living Standards

- Income from wages earned from employment in Israel was the main source of household income for 41.6 percent of households in the Jerusalem Governorate in 2018. Income from the private sector made up 21.4 percent, and income from national insurance allowances was the main source of income for 17.2 percent. Wages from the government sector represented 4.5 percent of households in the Jerusalem Governorate.
- Around 5.3 percent of Palestinian households in the Jerusalem Governorate from a household point of view described their standard of living as well, 85.1 percent described it as “fairly good”, 8.9 percent as poor and 0.7 percent as very poor in 2018.

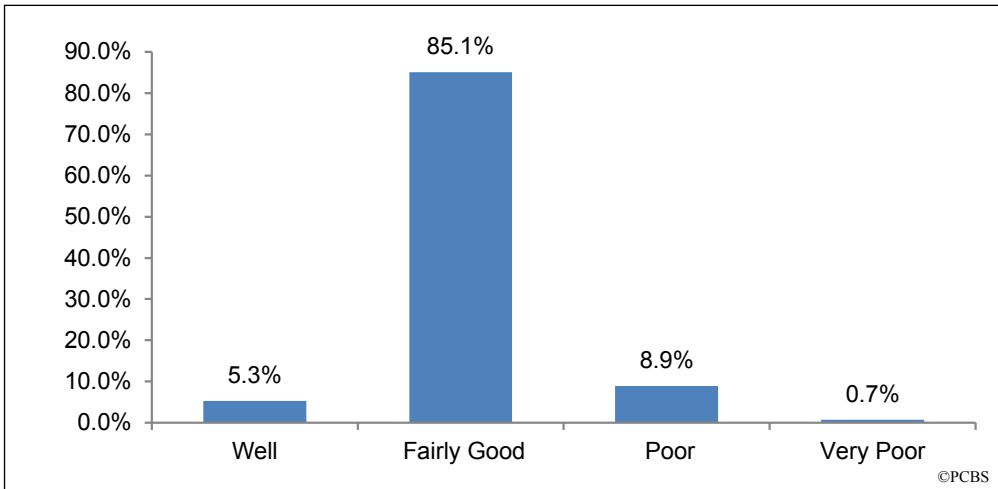


Figure 4. Distribution of Palestinian Households in Jerusalem Governorate by Living Standard from Household Point of View, 2018 (%)

Education

1. Schools¹

- In scholastic year 2019/2020, there were 265 schools.
- In scholastic year 2019/2020, there were 73,887 school students: 35,990 males and 37,897 females.
- In scholastic year 2019/2020, the average number of students per teacher was 15.8 in government schools, 22.5 in UNRWA schools and 15.6 in private schools.
- In scholastic year 2019/2020, the average number of students per class was 21.8 in government schools, 30.1 in UNRWA schools and 23.5 in private schools.

2. Higher Education²

- In scholastic year 2018/2019, there were 12,446 university students: 4,857 males and 7,589 females.
- In scholastic year 2018/2019, there were 259 college students: 29 males and 230 females.
- In scholastic year 2017/2018, there were 2,805 university graduates: 1,148 males and 1,657 females.

1 Data excludes Municipality and Culture Committee Schools in Jerusalem, and data for the academic year 2019/2020 are preliminary data.

2 Universities include traditional universities and university colleges. The number of students represents all students affiliated with these universities from the different governorates.

- In scholastic year 2017/2018, there were 129 college graduates: 18 males and 111 females.

Culture

- In 2019, there were 53 cultural centers operating in Jerusalem Governorate.
- In 2019, there were 4 museums operating in Jerusalem Governorate.
- In 2019, there were 2 theaters operating in Jerusalem Governorate.
- In 2018, there were 116 mosques operating in Jerusalem Governorate.

Information Society

- In 2019, 41.0 percent of households in Jerusalem Governorate owned a computer (desktop, laptop, or tablet).
- In 2019, 36.4 percent of households in Jerusalem Governorate used a Palestinian internet service compared to 71.1 percent who used an Israeli internet service.

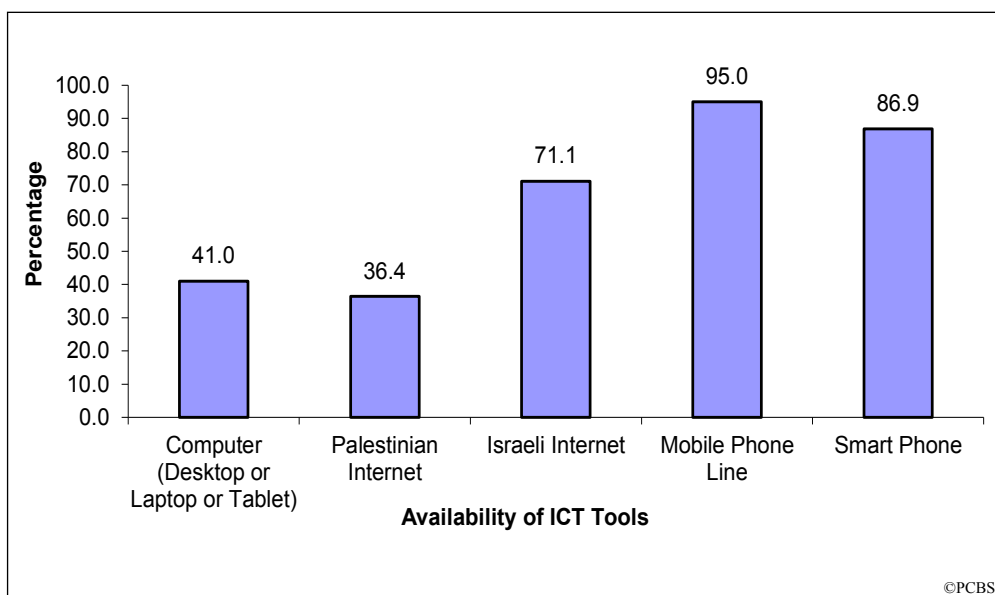


Figure 5. Palestinian Households in Jerusalem Governorate by Availability of ICT Tools, 2019 (%)

Buildings

- The number of buildings in the Jerusalem Governorate that were counted during the period from 16/09/2017 to 31/10/2017 was 40,745 buildings, of which 17,989 were in Jerusalem (J1), and 22,756 in Jerusalem (J2).

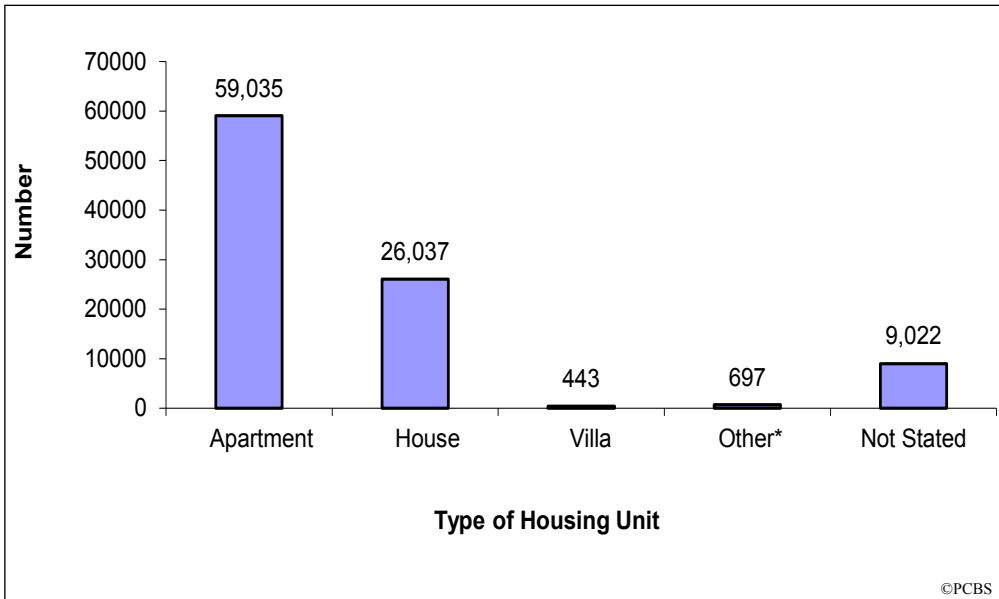


Figure 8. Households in Jerusalem Governorate by Type of Housing Unit, 2017
 *Includes: independent room, tent, and marginal.

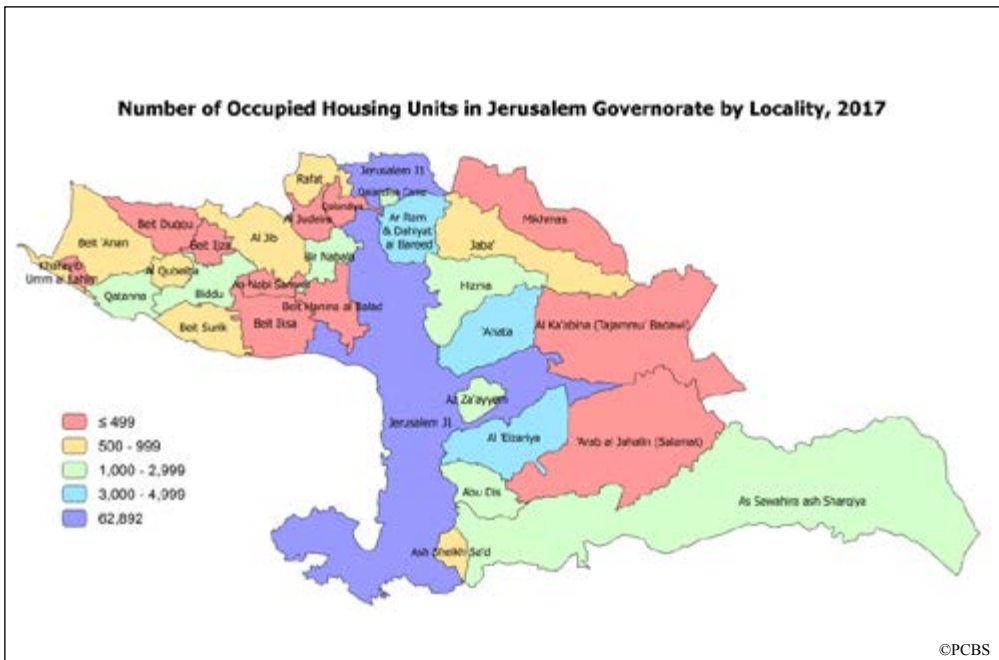


Figure 9. Occupied Households in Jerusalem Governorate by Locality, 2017

Agriculture and Land Use

1. Agriculture

- 8.6 percent of households in Jerusalem Governorate had a garden as of 24 March 2015.
- 98.2 percent of households with a garden in the Jerusalem Governorate utilized it for agricultural activities during agricultural year 2013/2014.
- 3.5 percent of households in Jerusalem Governorate reared livestock (domestic) as of 24 March 2015.

2. Population Density

- The total area of Jerusalem Governorate is 345 km².
- The population density in Jerusalem Governorate was 1,293 (capita/km²) at mid-year 2019.

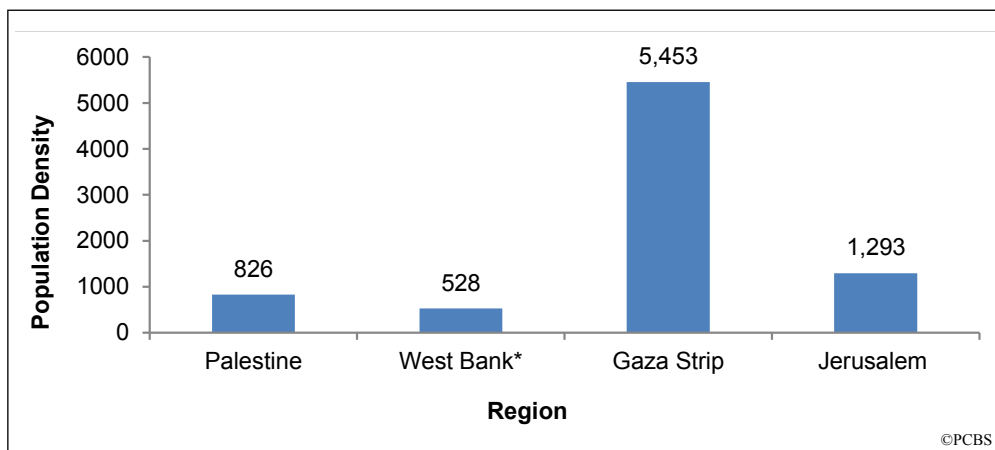


Figure 10. Population Density (capita/km²) by Region, Mid-Year 2019

*Data include Jerusalem Governorate.

Environment and Natural Resources

1. Water

- 22,476 households in the Jerusalem Governorate (J2) were supplied with drinking water through the public water network, 466 households were supplied with drinking water through bottled water, and 136 households used rainwater to supply water during 2017.

2. Electricity

- During the year 2017, the number of housing units in the Jerusalem Governorate (J2), which were supplied with electricity through a public electricity network, was about 22,974 housing units, 315 housing units through a special generator, 22 housing units without electricity, and 9,031 housing units with non-stated source of electricity.

3. Solid Waste

- 21,721 housing units in the Jerusalem Governorate (J2) during the year 2017 disposed of solid waste by throwing it in the nearest container, 1,488 housing units disposed of solid waste by burning, and 87 housing units by throwing them randomly.

4. Type of Toilet Facility Used by the Household

- 8,928 housing units in Jerusalem Governorate (J2) used flush to piped sewer system in 2017, and 7,954 used flush to septic porous tank, while 6,097 of the inhabited housing units used flush to septic tight tank.

Violence

- Psychological violence is the most abundant type of violence practiced against currently married or ever married women (18–64 years) in Jerusalem Governorate, 35.2 percent in 2019.
- The prevalence of violence against children aged (12–17 years) within the family by a parent was 26.2 percent in Jerusalem Governorate in 2019.

Establishments

- In 2017, there were 9,704 establishments operating in the private sector, non-governmental organizations, and government companies in the Jerusalem Governorate. Those establishments employed 34,786 employed persons, of whom 15,604 were in Jerusalem (J2) and 19,182 in Jerusalem (J1).
- In 2017, there were 10,227 establishments operating in the Jerusalem Governorate classified by main economic activity: 5,326 in wholesale and retail trade; 2,693 repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles; 1,239 in manufacturing; and 969 in other service activities.



Figure 11. Operating Establishments in Jerusalem Governorate by Locality, 2017

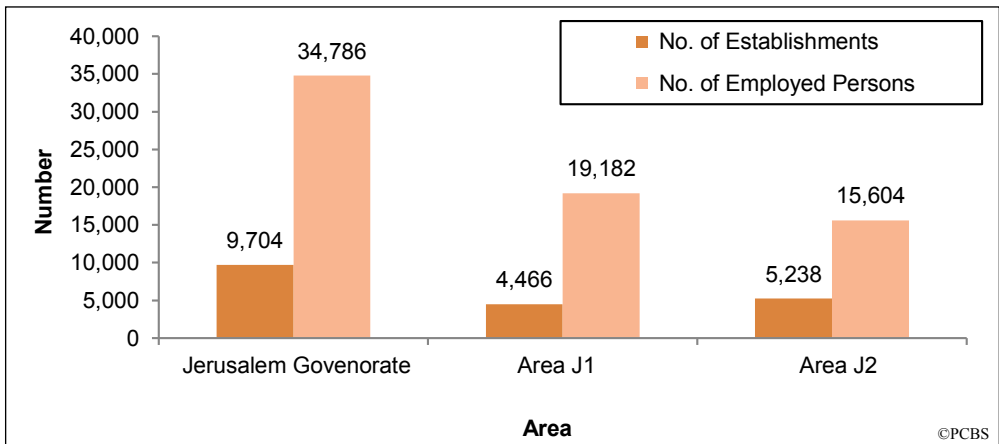


Figure 12. Operating Establishments and Employed Persons in the Private Sector, Non-Governmental Organization Sector, and Government Companies in Jerusalem Governorate by Area, 2017

National Accounts

- In the Jerusalem Governorate (J1), the gross value added at current prices was USD 1,321.6 million for 2018 compared with USD 1,316.2 million in 2017.

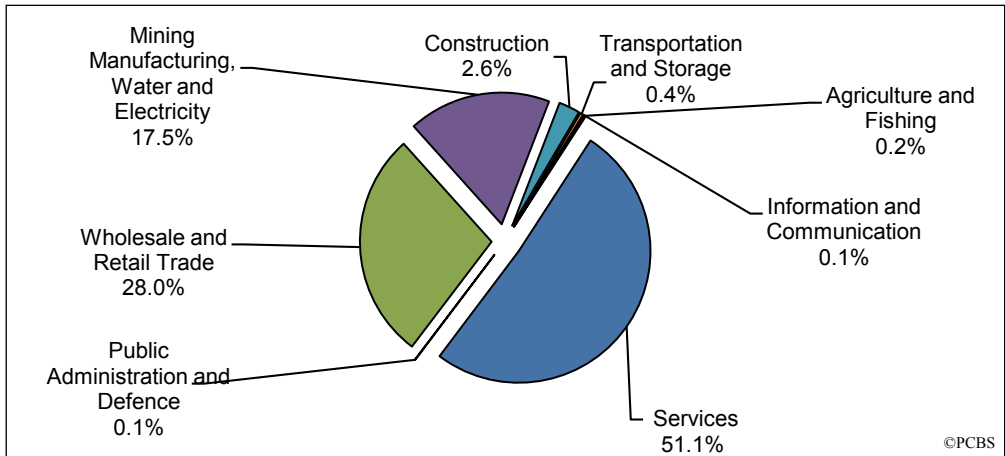


Figure 13. Distribution of Value Added* in Jerusalem Governorate (J1) by Economic Activity, 2018 (%)
 *Value added within national accounts includes all value added incurred from all economic sectors including the informal sector.

Consumer Prices

- The consumer price index in Jerusalem Governorate (J1) increased by 1.37 percent in 2019 compared with 2018, and by 1.04 percent in 2018 compared with 2017.

Transportation and Telecommunication

1. Transportation Outside Establishments

- There were 114 vehicles engaged in this sector in the Jerusalem Governorate with 118 employees in 2019.
- The output value of those vehicles was USD 5.7 million in 2019.
- The value added realized by the transportation outside establishments was USD 3.3 million in 2019.

2. Transportation and Storage

- There were 189 establishments operating in the Jerusalem Governorate in 2018.
- There were 712 employed persons in this sector in the Jerusalem Governorate in 2018.
- The output value in Jerusalem Governorate was USD 8.5 million in 2018.
- The value added realized by the transportation and storage was USD 5.0 million in 2018.

3. Information and Telecommunication

- There were 44 establishments operating in the Jerusalem Governorate in 2018.
- There were 58 employed persons in this sector in the Jerusalem Governorate in 2018.
- The output value in the Jerusalem Governorate was USD 2.1 million in 2018.
- The value added realized by the information and telecommunication activities was USD 1.7 million in 2018.

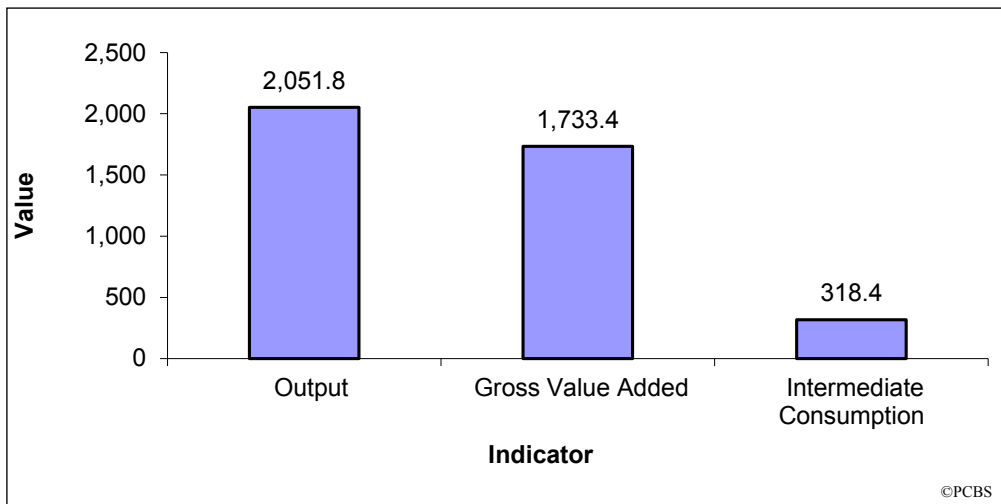


Figure 14. Main Economic Indicators for Information and Telecommunication Activities in Jerusalem Governorate, 2018 (Value in USD thousands)

Construction Sector

- 106 building licenses were issued in the Jerusalem Governorate (J2) with an area of 71.1 thousand m² in 2019.
- There were 23 licenses issued for non-residential purposes in the Jerusalem Governorate (J2) with an area of 19.4 thousand m² in 2019.
- The output value in construction activities in the Jerusalem Governorate was USD 20.9 million in 2018.
- The value added realized by the construction activities was USD 16.8 million in 2018.

Industrial Sector

1. Industrial Activities

- The output value of those enterprises was USD 518.7 million in 2018.
- The value added realized by the industrial sector was USD 343.3 million in 2018.

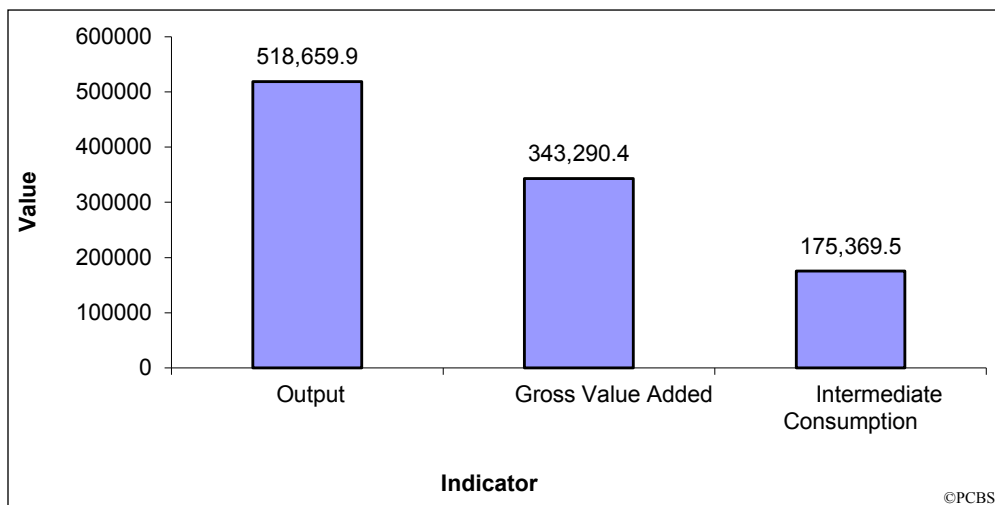


Figure 15. Main Economic Indicators for Industrial Activities in Jerusalem Governorate, 2018 (Value in 1000 USD)

2. Olive Presses

- There were three operating olive presses in the Jerusalem Governorate with sixteen employees in 2019.
- The output value of those presses was USD 260.7 thousand.
- The value added realized by the olive presses sector was USD 205.2 thousand.

Tourism

- There were 19 hotels in operation that responded to the hotel survey at the end of the year 2019 with 987 rooms and 2,199 beds in the Jerusalem Governorate.
- Average number of employees in the Jerusalem governorate hotels was 652 in 2019.

Services Sector

- There were 3,053 establishments operating in the Jerusalem Governorate in 2018.
- There was 16,343 employed persons in this sector in the Jerusalem Governorate in 2018.

- The output value in Jerusalem Governorate was USD 654.5 million in 2018.
- The value added realized by the services sector was USD 492.6 million in 2018.

Internal Trade

- There were 4,345 establishments operating in the Jerusalem Governorate in 2018.
- There were 10,081 employed persons in this activity in the Jerusalem Governorate in 2018.
- The output value in Jerusalem Governorate was USD 581.2 million in 2018.
- The value added realized by internal trade activities was USD 457.7 million in 2018.

Registered Foreign Trade

- The total value of registered imports of goods to Jerusalem Governorate increased in 2018 by 9 percent compared to 2017 and reached USD 399.1 million.
- The total value of registered exports of goods from Jerusalem Governorate slightly decreased in 2018 by 0.9 percent compared to 2017 and reached USD 92 million.

Israeli Violations

- 26 settlements, 16 of them in (J1), were constructed on confiscated land in the Jerusalem Governorate in 2018.
- In 2018, there were about 311,462 settlers in settlements in the Jerusalem Governorate, 228,614 of which were in (J1).
- A total of 14,650 Jerusalem ID cards were confiscated between 1967 and 2019.
- Israeli authorities demolished 2,146 houses in the Jerusalem Governorate in the period 1967–2019.

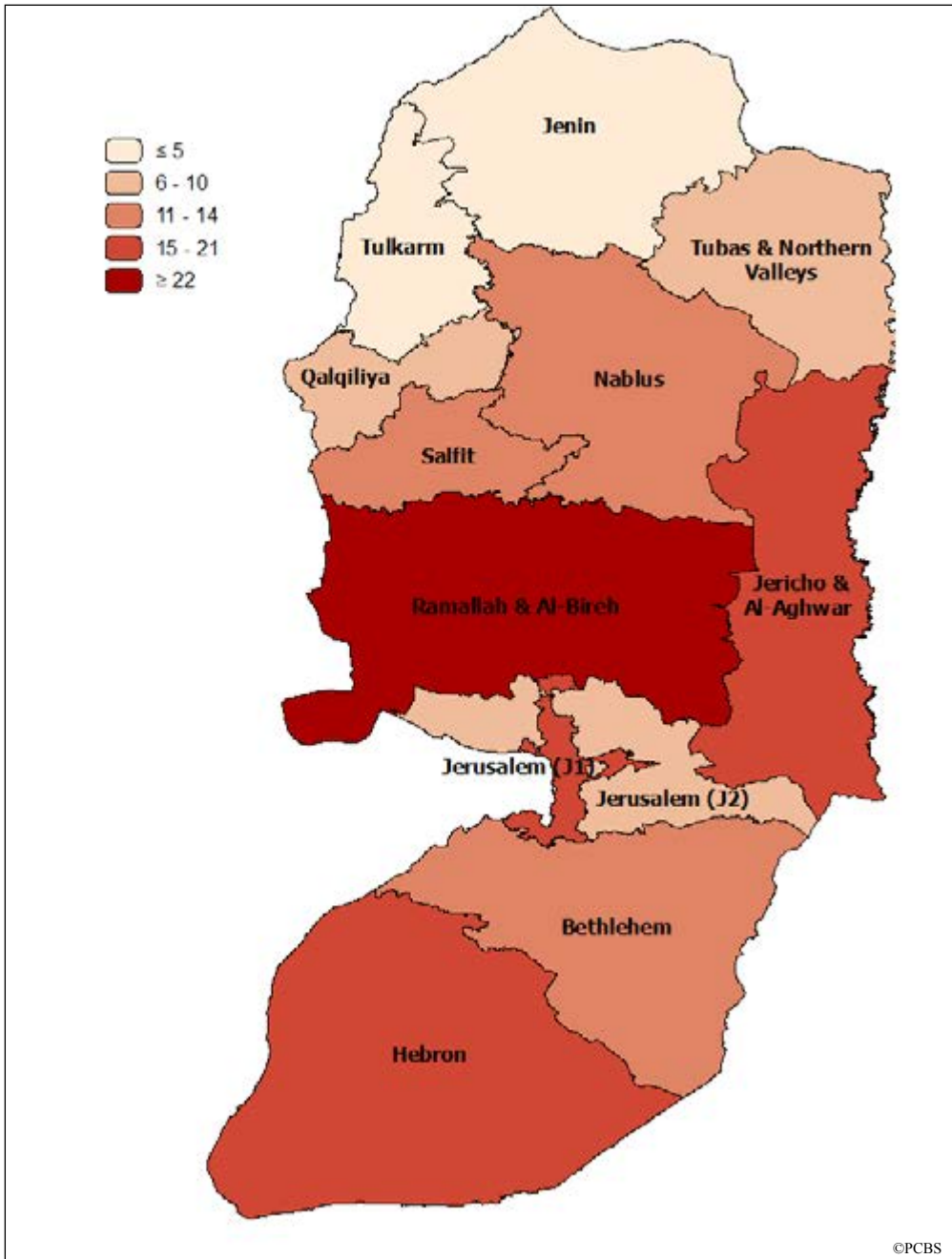


Figure 16. Settlements in the West Bank, by Governorate, 2018

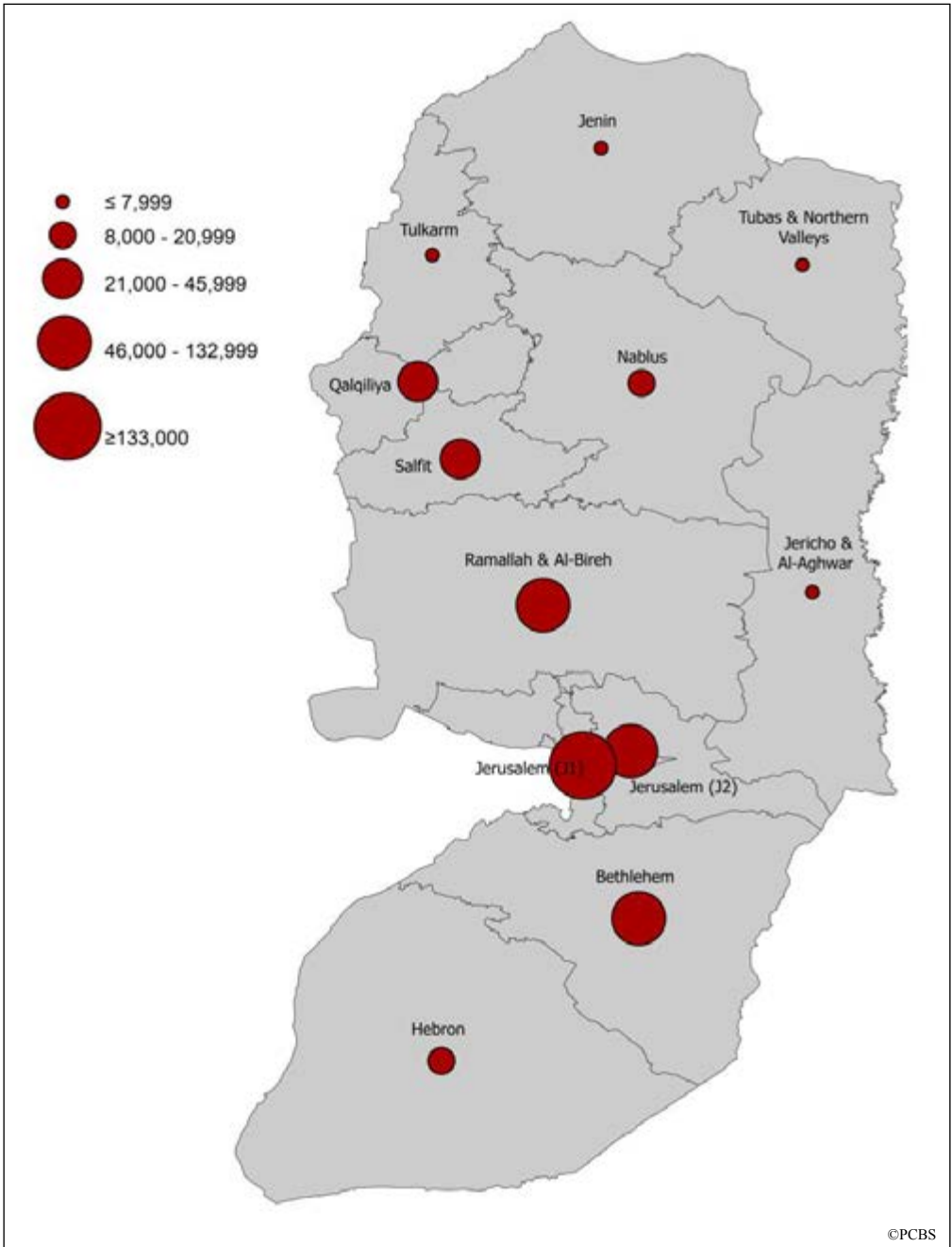


Figure 17. Settlers in the West Bank, by Governorate, 2018

FACTS & FIGURES

Population, Housing and Establishments Census 2017

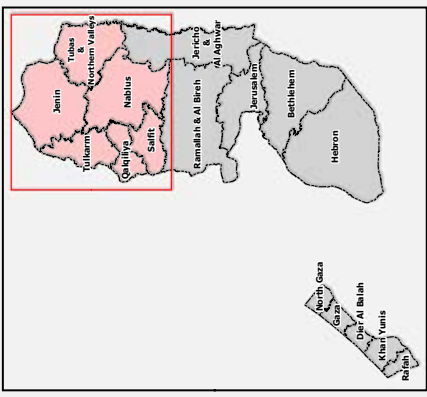
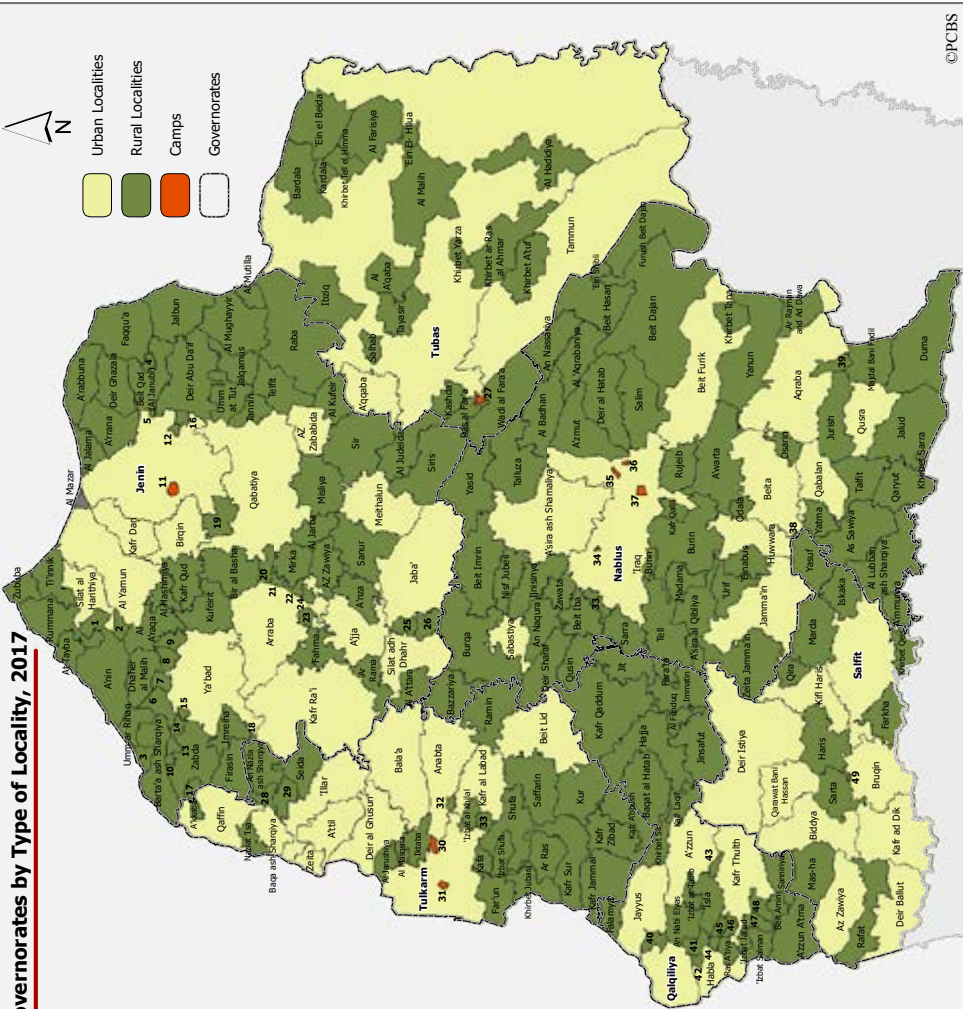
Main Indicators by Type of Locality

Palestinian Central Bureau of
Statistics

Editor's Note

JQ thanks the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS) for providing this key document to *JQ* readers. The full report can be found online at www.pcbs.

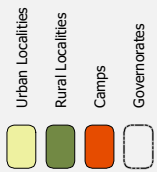
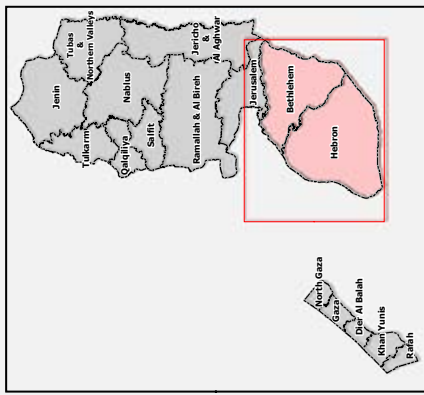
Palestinian Localities in West Bank Northern Governorates by Type of Locality, 2017



Meaningful Numbers on the Map

1	Al-Saida	18	Khater Al Hamam	35	A'Skar Camp (al Qadim)
2	Khibet Suni	19	Ash Shuhada (Mothath)	36	A'Skar Camp (al Jabed)
3	Khibet Abdallah al Yans	20	Al Halia (Rafat)	37	Balata Camp
4	Mash'at Beit Qad (Ash Shamal)	21	Ad Damayra	38	Zitara
5	Al Jameilat	22	Wadi Diloq	39	Al-Hawad and Tall al Khawassa
6	Tura al Gharbiya	23	Farma al Jadoa	40	At'ab al Ramadin ash Shamal
7	Tura ash Sharqiya	24	Al Mansura	41	At'ab Abu Farfa
8	Nabat ash Sheikh Zaid	25	Al A'asaa	42	At'ab al Ramadin al Jamal
9	At Tarem	26	Khibet Tall al Hirma	43	At'ab Al-Khuleh
10	Khibet al Murar al Gharbiya	27	El Fara's Camp	44	Wadi al Ra'ith
11	Jenin Camp	28	An Naba al Warda	45	Rae at Tira
12	At'ab (Al Gharbiya)	29	An Naba al Gharbiya	46	Ad Dabab
13	Khibet al Murar ash Sharqiya	30	Nur Shams Camp	47	Al-Mudawwar
14	Umm Dar	31	Tulkarm Camp	48	Tibat al A'at'ar
15	Al Khiljan	32	Tibat Abu Khumash	49	Ibbat Abu Adem
16	Wadi al 'Dab' (Kha ash Sharqiya)	33	Beit Wazan		
17	Dhabeer al A'bad	34	'En Beit al Ma Camp		

Palestinian Localities in West Bank Southern Governorates by Type of Locality, 2017

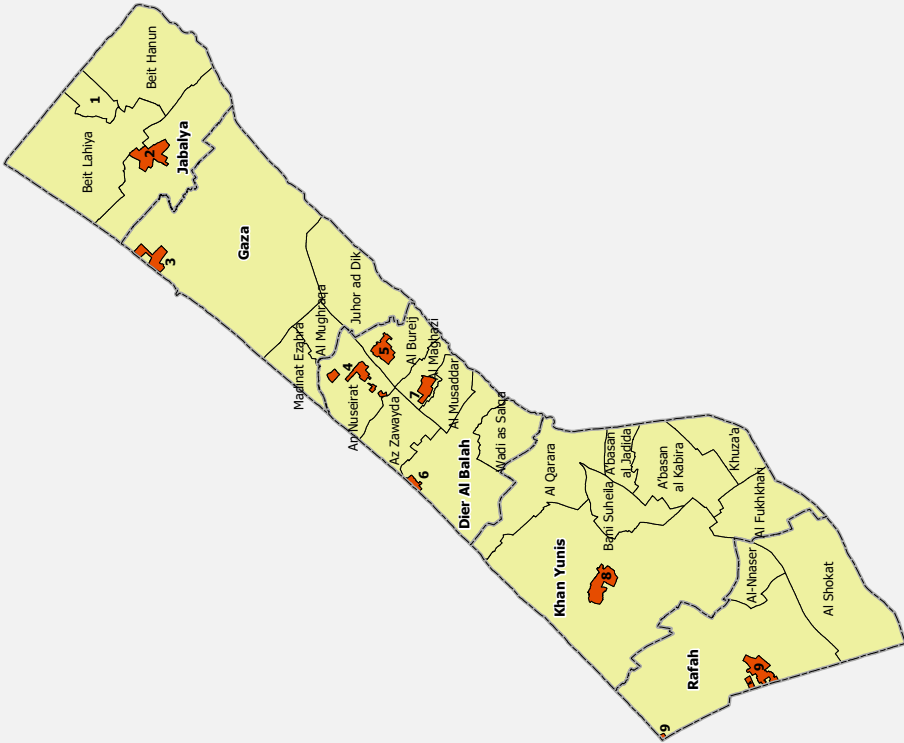
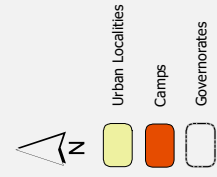
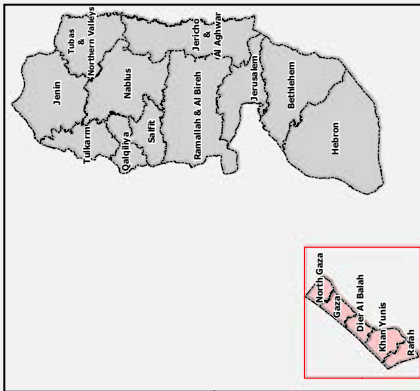


Meaningful Numbers on the Map

1	Yafsa Camp	19	Al-Hakim	37	Wadi ash-Shajra
2	Khalat an-Nayran	20	Umm Salama	38	Deir Raith
3	Al-Fata Camp	21	Al-Hanitha	39	Deir al-'Asaf al-Fuqa
4	Al-Khas	22	Wadi Imrihamed	40	Beit al-Ruqah at Tahla
5	Al-Hadashiya	23	Khibat Tuq'	41	Beit Misim
6	Khalat Hamaneh	24	Al-Anab Camp	42	Beit Yera
7	BT Orah	25	Shuyub al-Arab	43	Umm al-Haqban
8	Ad-Daba	26	Umm al-Bum	44	Khalat Nayya
9	Ad-Duwa Camp	27	Beit Madrum	45	Umm al-'Anad (Cohen Wadi Emay)
10	Khalat al-Baluta	28	El-Baram	46	Ar-Rafayya and Al-Dair
11	Wadi Rithal	29	El-Bawani (Agahat Irqel)	47	Umm al-Safra (Abu-Shaban)
12	Khalat Sakariya	30	Hama	48	At-Tuwani
13	Khalat al-Haddad	31	Al-Nuwaraq	49	Ar-Rabec
14	Al-Nara	32	Tarama	50	Al-Medra
15	Wadi an-Nis	33	Al-Fawar Camp	51	Khibat Asiri (Al-Fawa and Al-Talbi)
16	Junt ash-Sharfa	34	Mereh al-Baqar	52	Qawwas
17	Khalat-Yana	35	Habat al-Fawar	53	Herbat an-Nabi
18	Mereh-Halala	36	Deir al-'Asaf at Tahla	54	Khibat al-Kharaba



Palestinian Localities in Gaza Strip Governorates by Type of Locality, 2017



Meaningful Numbers on the Map

- 1 Um Al-Nnaser (Al Qaraya al Badawiya)
- 2 Jabalya Camp
- 3 Ash Shati' Camp
- 4 An Nuseirat Camp
- 5 Al Burej Camp
- 6 Dier al Balah Camp
- 7 Al Maghazal Camp
- 8 Khan Yunis Camp
- 9 Rafah Camp



Table 1: Selected Indicators in Palestine by Region and Type of Locality, 2017

Region	No. of Housing Units	No. of Buildings	No. of Establishments**	Average Household Size	No. of Private Households	Females*	Males*	Both Sexes*
Palestine	1,129,265	627,383	148,974	5.1	929,221	2,348,052	2,433,196	4,781,248
Urban	858,904	449,044	122,030	5.1	714,659	1,812,347	1,879,627	3,691,974
Rural	186,170	133,807	15,869	4.9	140,568	340,582	354,714	695,296
Camps	84,191	44,532	11,075	5.3	73,994	195,123	198,855	393,978
West Bank	726,144	441,280	101,517	4.8	594,511	1,411,664	1,470,293	2,881,957
Urban	507,299	290,396	81,661	4.7	424,852	1,001,579	1,043,945	2,045,524
Rural	186,170	133,807	15,869	4.9	140,568	340,582	354,714	695,296
Camps	32,675	17,077	3,987	4.8	29,091	69,503	71,634	141,137
Gaza Strip	403,121	186,103	47,457	5.6	334,710	936,388	962,903	1,899,291
Urban	351,605	158,648	40,369	5.6	289,807	810,768	835,682	1,646,450
Camps	51,516	27,455	7,088	5.6	44,903	125,620	127,221	252,841

*Note: Includes actually counted population in Palestine, in addition to the uncounted population estimates based on to post enumeration survey results.

**Includes Number of Operating Establishments in the Private Sector, Non Governmental Organization Sector and Government Companies

Table 10: Localities in Jerusalem Governorate by Type of Locality and Selected Indicators, 2017

Locality	No. of Housing Units	No. of Buildings	No. of Establishments**	Average Household Size	No. of Private Households	Females*	Males*	Both Sexes*	Locality Type	Locality
Jerusalem Governorate	63,290	40,745	9,704	4.4	95,234	209,844	225,909	435,753		
Urban	45,336	32,136	8,193	4.3	81,833	178,495	192,872	371,367	1	
Rural	15,353	6,798	948	4.5	9,230	21,745	22,695	44,440	2	
Camps	2,601	1,811	563	4.7	4,171	9,604	10,342	19,946	3	
Jerusalem (J1)	-	17,989	4,466	4.5	62,892	136,361	144,802	281,163		
Jerusalem (J2)	63,290	22,756	5,238	4.1	32,342	73,483	81,107	154,590		
Rafat	1,012	442	61	5.0	553	1,451	1,490	2,941	2	401870
Mikhmas	697	447	21	4.4	291	748	615	1,363	2	401885
Qalandiya Camp	2,601	1,005	202	4.6	1,694	4,087	4,249	8,336	3	401900
Qalandiya	279	124	14	3.9	137	269	303	572	2	401915
Beit Duqqu	540	337	30	4.6	361	854	900	1,754	2	401930
Jaba'	1,055	514	37	5.4	689	1,899	2,022	3,921	2	401935
Al Judeira	795	307	69	5.4	457	1,324	1,310	2,634	2	401940
Ar Ram & Dahiyat al Bareed	10,595	2,635	1,059	3.1	4,016	6,833	8,981	15,814	1	401945
Beit 'Anan	1,318	742	97	4.4	910	2,074	2,136	4,210	1	401950
Al Jib	1,403	613	139	4.9	799	2,049	2,083	4,132	2	401955
Bir Nabala	3,159	876	238	4.3	1,089	2,954	3,050	6,004	1	401960
Beit Ijza	265	124	9	4.9	165	411	443	854	2	401965
Al Qubeiba	1,247	642	159	4.7	771	1,894	1,982	3,876	2	401980
Kharayib Umm al Lahim	110	58	5	5.3	72	206	195	401	2	401985
Biddu	2,199	975	286	5.2	1,498	3,971	4,260	8,231	1	401995
An Nabi Samwil	66	41	1	4.5	49	118	116	234	2	402000
Hizma	2,276	987	239	5.0	1,336	3,497	3,621	7,118	2	402005
Beit Hanina al Balad	563	245	6	4.8	218	544	563	1,107	2	402010
Qatanna	1,812	1,101	65	4.8	1,388	3,353	3,628	6,981	1	402015
Beit Surik	1,107	491	58	5.0	757	1,976	2,049	4,025	1	402020
Beit Iksa	727	385	29	4.9	345	874	899	1,773	2	402025
'Anata	6,891	2,066	690	3.4	3,889	7,411	9,508	16,919	1	402040
al-Ka'abina (Tajammu' Badawi)	192	192	0	5.2	157	412	446	858	2	402045
al-Za'ayim	2,439	464	84	3.1	1,923	2,933	3,337	6,270	2	402065
al- 'Ayzariyya	9,936	2,793	1,086	3.8	4,231	10,096	11,079	21,175	1	402100
Abu Dis	5,618	2,117	398	4.1	2,325	5,941	6,310	12,251	1	402120
Arab al-Jahalin (Salamat)	493	339	13	5.2	336	896	960	1,856	2	402125
As Sawahira ash Sharqiya	2,701	1,157	111	4.5	1,315	3,042	3,162	6,204	1	402145
Ash Sheikh Sa'd	1,194	537	32	4.6	571	1,366	1,410	2,776	2	402160

*Note: Includes actually counted population in Palestine, in addition to the uncounted population estimates based on to post enumeration survey results.

**Includes Number of Operating Establishments in the Private Sector, Non Governmental Organization Sector and Government Companies

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- Spelling: American English according to Merriam-Webster.
- Text style: Refer to *Chicago Manual of Style* (CMOS) for all questions regarding punctuation, capitalization, and font style.
- Transliteration of Arabic, Hebrew, and Turkish names and words should follow the style recommended by the *International Journal for Middle East Studies*, but modified for Arabic transliteration, by omitting all diacritical marks except for the 'ayn and hamza.
- Citations should be in the form of endnotes and written in full (CMOS) as in the original source, with transliteration if needed.
- Any photos (minimum 600 dpi), charts, graphs, and other artwork should be camera-ready format. The author should provide captions and credits, and indicate the preferred placement in the manuscript. The author is responsible for securing permission to reproduce copyrighted materials.



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The Ibrahim Dakkak Award for Outstanding Essay on Jerusalem is an annual award launched by the *Jerusalem Quarterly* in 2017 to commemorate the memory and work of Ibrahim Dakkak (1929–2016), Jerusalem architect, activist, political leader, and former chairman of the Advisory Board.

It is awarded for an outstanding submission that addresses either contemporary or historical issues relating to Jerusalem. A committee selected by the *Jerusalem Quarterly* determines the winning essay. The author will be awarded a prize of U.S. \$1,000 and the essay will be published in the *Jerusalem Quarterly*.


Essays submitted for consideration should be based on original research and must not have been previously published elsewhere. They should be 4,000 to 5,000 words in length (including endnotes), preceded by an abstract of no more than 200 words, and up to 10 keywords.

If the submitted article is in Arabic, the abstract and keywords should be in English.

Any images should be submitted as separate files with a resolution of 600 dpi minimum, if possible. Submitted images must have copyright clearance from owners, and have captions that are clear and accurate.

Please submit essays and a short bio (including current or previous affiliation with a recognized university, research institution, or non-governmental organization that conducts research) via email to jq@palestine-studies.org, mentioning the Award.

The deadline for submissions is **31 October** of each year.





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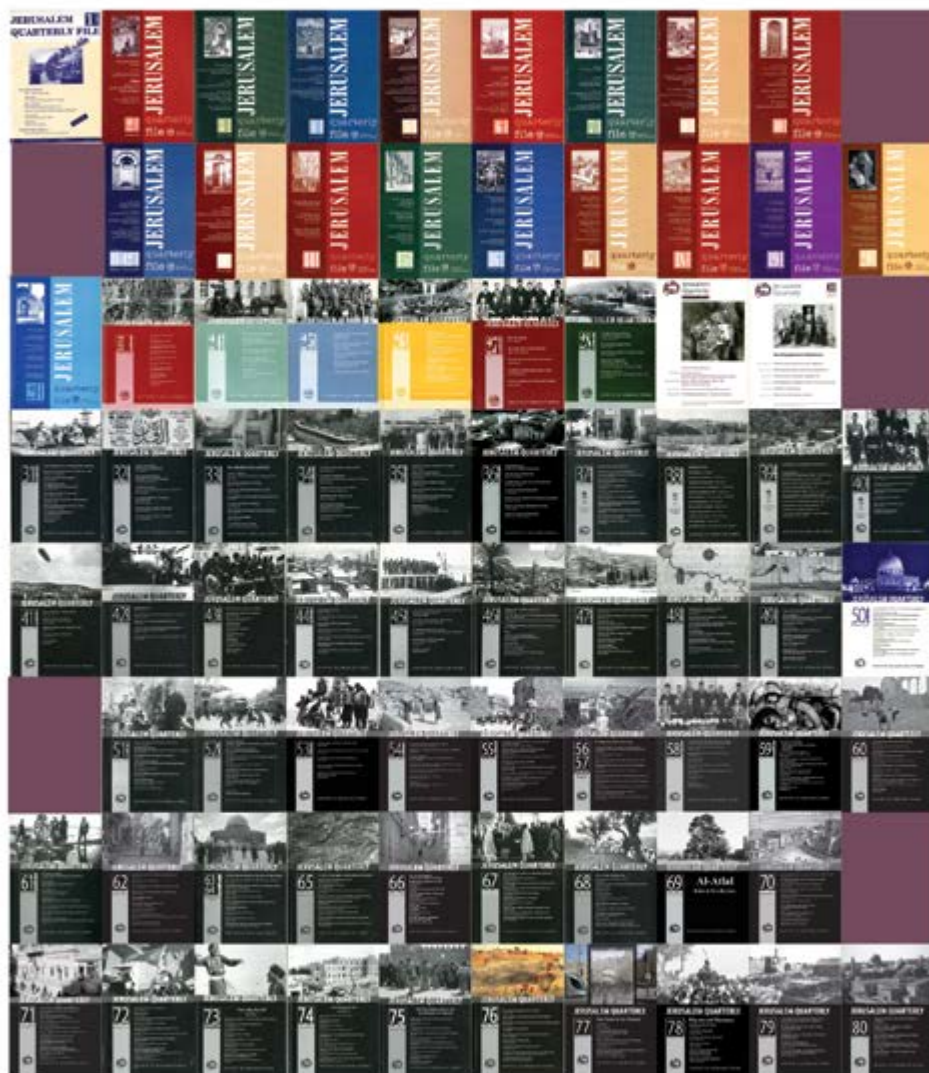
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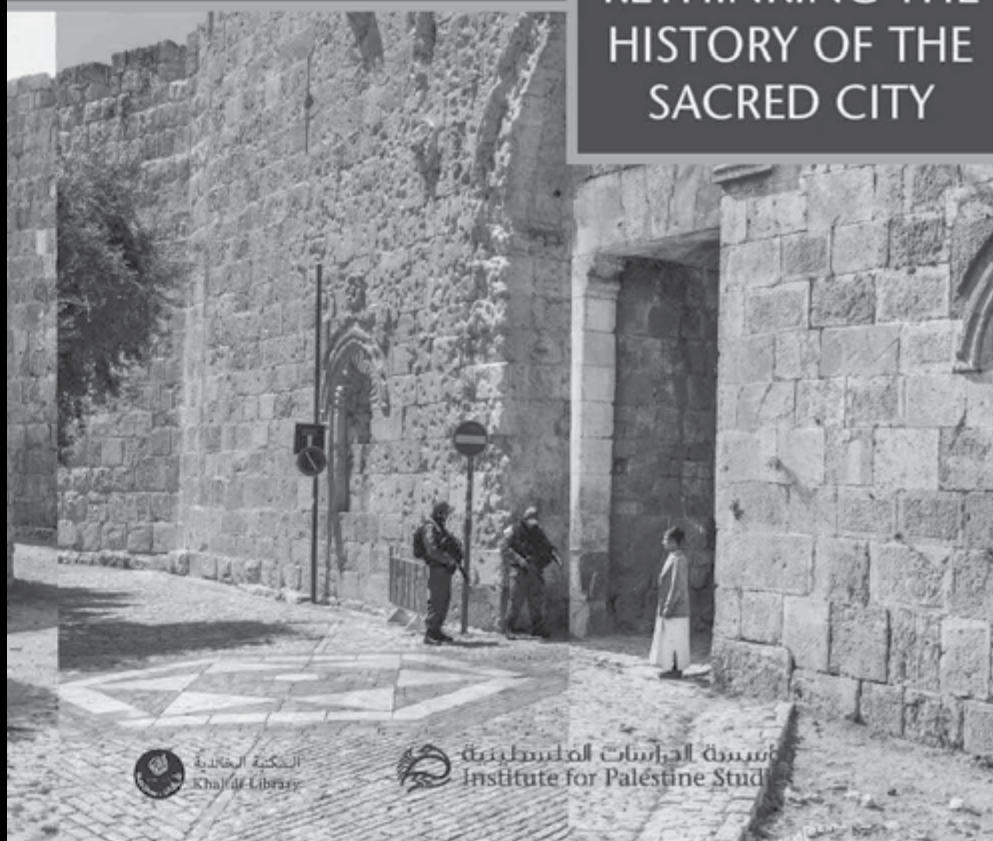
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