Palestinian University Students

Narrating Life Under Occupation

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I confirm that the work submitted in this thesis is my own and that the thesis presented is the one on which I expect to be examined.

Signed: _____

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Abstract

While Palestine is one of the most contested areas of the world, this thesis argues that the complexities of Palestinian narratives are rarely fully heard. It documents how Palestinian university students narrate their lives under occupation for a foreign audience, arguing that motivations for participating in the research affected the narratives shared. Some argued that they were resisting the illegal Israeli occupation by taking part and sharing stories designed to encourage an international audience to oppose it. Others condemned foreign intervention and constructed Muslim resistance as essential for Palestinian liberation. The thesis shows how participants constructed place in the interviews in ways that strengthened the messages they sought to convey and it explores the precarity in their accounts of how they negotiate the threat of imprisonment and death at the hands of the Israeli army. It argues that participants drew on historical claims to Palestine to emphasise their belonging to the land and steadfastness in order to appeal for international support for their cause, or to explain their desire to 'wipe out' the State of Israel. The thesis examines the accounts of students who argue that the occupation is pushing young Palestinians to want to leave Palestine and those who said they wanted to leave. It argues that they underline the importance of ending the occupation. The empirical chapters conclude by exploring how the participants expressed their desires for the future, arguing that some pinned their hopes on international support, some drew hope from their religious beliefs, while others saw Palestinian activism as the only way to achieve their goals. The thesis concludes that the participants' narratives

of resistance were more important as a means of them 'getting by' and continuing to remain steadfast than they were an effective means of working towards bringing an end to the occupation.

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PART 1

Contextualising the Research

Introduction

Exploring Palestinian Students' Narratives on Life Under Occupation

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I love Palestine very much. My point of view, that I can help Palestine by getting its image in the world better. By meeting people like you … talking with them about our situation. Of course they should go back home and talk about what they are seeing here. When they say Palestinians are suffering from what occupation armies do and still do to the Palestinians, my point of view that this could help Palestinians. I know this won't help very much, but actually it would help ... a little and that's good for me.

Rami[2] encapsulated the issues at the heart of this research on Palestinian university students describing their lives under Israeli occupation. When I interviewed him he was an energetic 21-year-old computer engineering student at An-Najah University in the West Bank city of Nablus who was passionate about trying to contribute to efforts to end the occupation. Like Rami, many of the other participants said this research was an opportunity to improve the image of Palestinians and educate people internationally about the effects of the occupation on Palestine. They described this as their resistance. While their motivation was to help the Palestinian cause, i.e. the Palestinian struggle for

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[2] 'Rami' is the pseudonym that the participant chose for himself.

liberation, they were often vague about how improving their image and raising awareness internationally would achieve this.

Drawing on the language used by the participants, I use an inclusive definition of resistance in this research, one that does not refer solely to direct action, such as protests, but includes the idea of resisting the occupation as 'part of life for people focused on going forward and keeping their hope in a more just and human future alive' (Rijke and van Teeffelen, 2014, p.92). This broader definition of resistance can encompass the idea of sharing narratives[3], or stories, with foreigners as resistance, which some of the participants described as a way in which they took a stand against the occupation. It is not surprising that many of the participants sought to engage with people abroad as part of what they termed their resistance because their generation has 'contributed to the strengthening of solidarity movements' and is increasingly engaged with the transnational global justice and solidarity movement (Richter-Devroe, 2012, p.114). In the Palestinian context 'the issue of generation is 'evolving' and 'dynamic', 'subject not only to the workings of memory, but also to an ever-shifting matrix of social forces operating under changing conditions of possibility,' (Collins, 2004, p.9).

Throughout the analysis of the accounts in the thesis I focus on the students as active agents. The concept of agency is contested in the social sciences (Emirbayer and Mische, 1998). Rather than rehearsing the debate here, I will outline how I will be using the term. I use agency to refer to individuals being able to 'exert control over and give direction to

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[3] See pp. 15-17 for a discussion of how the term 'narratives' is used in this thesis.

the course of their lives' (Biesta and Tedder, 2006, p.9) within the constraints that are necessarily imposed on them by structures outside of their control. I use the term to refer to 'the capacity of actors to critically shape their own responsiveness' to situations (Emirbayer and Mische, 1998, p.971). In approaching the participants as active agents, I avoid what Rema Hammami (2010) describes as the common problem of scholars treating Palestinians as passive victims in their descriptions of how Israel creates inequality by imposing its 'regime of control and territorial incarceration' on the West Bank (2010, p.37). Hammami suggests that to a 'remarkable' extent analysts, radical geographers and political thinkers 'have been incapable of recognizing any form of Palestinian agency when representing the unfolding of these processes of inequality in the occupied territories,' (2010, pp.37-8).

Avi Shlaim (2009, ix) describes the Israeli-Palestinian conflict as 'one of the most bitter, protracted, violent and seemingly intractable conflicts of modern times.' The fact that foreign powers have played a central role in the conflict since its inception, makes it all the more complex. For example, as early as 1917, Lord Arthur Balfour, then British Foreign Minister, issued the Balfour Declaration, promising British support for 'the establishment of a national home for the Jewish people in Palestine' (Shlaim, 2009, p.4).

The 1948 War that resulted in the creation of the State of Israel turned 'at least 80 percent of the Palestinians who lived in the major part of Palestine upon which Israel was established' into refugees (Sa'di and Abu-Lughod, 2007, p.3). Palestinians call this the *Nakba*, or disaster.

This, and the Israeli 'military occupation of the rest of Palestine in 1967' (Taraki, 2006, xi) following the Six-Day War between Israel and the Egyptian, Syrian and Jordanian armies in June that year are 'defining moments in modern Palestinian political history,' (Taraki, 2006, xi). See the glossary for definitions of the key terms used in this thesis and see the short timeline of the conflict for a succinct chronology. In the years since 1967, there has been 'the ubiquitous dynamic of repression and resistance, a constant element in the relation between occupier and occupied,' (Taraki, 2006, xxix).

> Imprisonment, exile, house demolitions, curfews, house arrests, and myriad other measures (including bombings of civilian areas from war planes) devised by the Israeli army have affected practically every household in Palestine. These measures are very sensitive to fluctuations in local and regional politics (Taraki, 2006, xxix).

For many decades Palestinians in the Occupied Palestinian Territories have lived 'in a state of protracted war' (Taraki, 2006, xxx). '[T]he ubiquitous state of being on an emergency footing … is always there, and the awareness that Palestinian existence and identity in the land are under threat is very much a part of the dominant Palestinian ethos,' (Taraki, 2006, xxx).

The ongoing Israeli occupation, increasing illegal Israeli settlements and the failure of peace talks have led a number of Palestinians, Jewish liberals and international scholars and activists to argue that the proposed 'two-state solution' to the conflict in which a

Palestinian state would be created alongside the State of Israeli is

unfeasible. Instead they suggest that the only viable option is one state in

which Palestinians and Israelis would live together (for example, see

Halper, 2012; Makdisi, 2012; Tilley, 2010; Abunimah, 2007).

Some young Palestinians are exploring alternative possibilities for

the future of Palestine, such as the 'one-state solution' (Richter-Devroe,

2012), although it is not advocated by Israel or the international

community (Khalidi, 2010, xxxviii). As a generation, they are in the

process of forging new ways of negotiating Palestinian identities and the

'politics of belonging' (Yuval-Davis, 2013) and exploring possibilities for

the future. As Collins (2004, p.17) argues, 'a generational reading of

Palestinian nationalism reveals a recurring pattern in which emerging

generations, reacting to various threats on the macropolitical level

(colonialism, war, diaspora), regularly challenge existing political

hierarchies and orthodoxies, push for the exploration of alternative

strategies of resistance, and also embody new possibilities in terms of

political identity.'

This political climate in which possibilities for the future of Palestine

are being debated as 'facts on the ground' render a two-state solution

increasingly unlikely, makes it a timely moment to conduct research with

Palestinian university students. By virtue of their youth, the students who

participated in this research are part of an emerging generation of

Palestinians that often challenges established political ways of thinking

about the future and how to resolve the conflict (cf Collins, 2004). As

university students, they are also a privileged minority, as only about 28

percent of women and 26 percent of men in Palestine enrol in higher education (Fannoun, 2008). The critical thinking skills the participants will be developing on their courses means they are well positioned to be able critically to engage with issues of resistance and the future of Palestine. These are issues the thesis will explore as it examines how Palestinian university students narrate their lives under occupation and discuss their hopes and aspirations for the future of Palestine for a foreign audience.

The research journey

When I began studying for my Masters in Social Research as part of an ESRC-funded 1+3 award at Goldsmiths, University of London, I joined the student-run Palestine Twinning Campaign. For my PhD thesis I had intended to conduct a comparative study of African Caribbean girls attending supplementary schools and pupil referral units in London. However, after working with the campaign to raise awareness about the illegal Israeli occupation of Palestine and taking part in video calls with Palestinian students in the West Bank who argued that being able to tell their stories internationally was an important part of their resistance, I began to think about changing the focus of my research to Palestinian students.

My interest in Palestine began more than a decade ago when I became friends with Palestinian refugees while living in Syria for a year as part of my studies for a BA in Arabic and Modern Middle Studies. I still remember meeting Palestinian grandparents, hearing their stories and being shown treasured keys to former Palestinian homes and faded maps of historical Palestine. I will never forget the image on Damascene streets

of young Palestinian children dressed in military garb, wearing the black and white kūfiyya, or scarf, that has become a symbol of Palestinian nationalism, and armed with plastic guns. Nor will I forget the conversations with the sons of an activist family who said they would go back to Palestine and fight when they grew up.

In 2010 I made my first visit to Palestine with the Palestine Twinning Campaign. From our accommodation in Beit Sahour, we went on a tour of 'the Wall' and some refugee camps and we visited other Palestinian towns and villages, including Nablus, Hebron and Bethlehem. As we travelled around Palestine, we met students, student activists and some older Palestinian activists and organisations campaigning against the occupation. I was inspired by the narratives of the people I listened to and particularly by the energy of the students who felt strongly that it was crucial to draw attention to the lived experiences of Palestinians and the injustice of the occupation.

My interest in exploring the narratives of young Palestinians further, and my recognition of the centrality of narratives to lives informed my approach to this thesis. Through continual storytelling people recount, order, structure and make sense of their experiences (Moen, 2006) and construct their identities (Riessman, 2008). People depend on stories to help them understand the world and how they are positioned in it (cf. Selbin, 2009). Stories make 'the abstract concrete, the complex more manageable, and … reduce the immense complexity of the world, involving our daily lives, to human-sized matters,' (Selbin, 2009, p.30). I decided to conduct research with Palestinian university students to

explore their narratives about their lives under occupation. In this thesis I understand personal narrative to refer both to 'brief, topically specific stories organized around characters, setting, and plot. These are discrete stories told in response to single questions; they recapitulate specific events the narrator witnessed or experienced' (Riessman, 2013, p.172) and 'long sections of talk – extended accounts of lives in context that develop over the course of single or multiple research interviews,' (Riessman, 2008, p.6). I am also interested in 'small stories,' those told in passing, in everyday encounters (Bamberg, 2004, p.356). Ann Phoenix (2008, pp.64-65) argues that analysing small stories allows a focus on

how people build their narratives and the performative work done by the narratives. This allows insights into the dilemmas and troubled subject positions speakers negotiate as they tell their stories (Billig, 1991; Wetherell, 1998) and so into their understandings of current consensus about what it is acceptable to say and do in their local and national cultures.

In exploring narratives, the thesis also explores 'master narratives' that set up 'sequences of actions and events as routines and as such have a tendency to "normalize" and "naturalize" – with the consequence that the more we as subjects become engaged in these routines, the more we become subjected to them' (Bamberg, 2004, p.360). While master narratives 'constrain and delineate the agency of subjects, seemingly reducing the range of actions', they also 'give guidance and direction to the everyday actions of subjects' (Bamberg, 2004, p.360). Michael Bamberg argues that

without this guidance and sense of direction, we would be lost.
It is in this way that master or dominant narratives are not
automatically hegemonic and that complicity with them does
not automatically result in being complicit with or supportive of
hegemonic power-knowledge complexes (2004, p.360).

In this research it was also important to explore counter narratives,
specifically how master narratives were invoked by participants 'and set
up against what counts as "counter"' (Bamberg, 2004). Bamberg argues
that '[s]peakers never totally step outside the dominating framework of the
master narrative, but always remain somewhat complicit and work with
components and parts of the existent frame "from within"' (2004, p.363).

When I conducted interviews for my thesis on my second visit to
Palestine in 2010, my political commitment to telling Palestinian stories
was a starting point for explaining my research to potential participants.
My decision to conduct this research stemmed from my opposition to the
occupation and my belief in the importance of listening to, and critically
engaging with, Palestinians' narratives. Les Back and Nirmal Puwar
(2012, p.14) argue that '[s]ociology has a public responsibility to pay
attention to vulnerable and precarious lives' and that it is important to
place 'critical evaluation and ethical judgement at the centre of research
craft' (2012, p.15). As will be seen in this research, these are principles to
which I am committed.

The participants in this research knew at the outset that I was
against the occupation and this was the context in which we sat down to

audio record our research encounters. However, in the process of conducting, and later analysing, the interviews, it became clear that while politically well-meaning, my initial aims were rather naïve. I realised that I could not fully capture the lived experiences of Palestinian university students through explicit assertions in interviews alone. I became aware that the value of the data I was collecting lay as much in exploring what may have led the participants to take part in the research and examining the work they were doing with their narratives, as in the content of their stories. I could not, therefore, treat language as a transparent window onto meaning and political action (Potter and Wetherell, 1987), but had to see it instead as both productive of meanings and a means of achieving both interactional goals and of speaking to the outside world.

The interviews on which this thesis is based were conducted for what I had initially intended to be a pilot study in the West Bank. However, in discussion with my supervisors it was decided that the rich material I had collected should form the data for this thesis. This gave me longer to analyse the participants' accounts, however, it did not give me the opportunity to ask further questions about the participants' backgrounds that I came to realise would have been useful for contextualising the research as I began deeper analysis of the interviews.

As will be argued in the chapters that follow, some of the participants considered their involvement in the research to constitute part

of their efforts to resist the occupation and Zionist[4] narratives. They presented narratives designed to counter those of the Zionist settler colonial project that deny the Palestinians' historical claims on the land (Pappe, 2013) and in some cases participants directly appealed for international support for the Palestinian cause. John Collins (2011, x) argues that writing and speaking about Palestine in an effort to contribute to the struggle for social justice can be an 'act of rebellion given that the forces aligned in support of Israel's settler colonial project have traditionally been quite successful at policing the borders of acceptable discourse.'

By sharing their stories with a foreign researcher some of the participants made it clear that they hoped they would reach and inspire an international audience to speak out against the occupation, some saw it as an opportunity to promote a devout Muslim narrative of resistance and others saw it as an opportunity to reject foreign interference in favour of Palestinian activism. In the interviews the participants were talking to me, and through me to an imagined broader international audience, as well as sometimes working out new versions of their stories. The interviews were thus performative spaces, where the participants were doing identity work and political advocacy (Butler, 2004), as well as spaces where they told personal stories. Julie Peteet (2005, xi) argues that Palestinians see the social scientist, she specifically refers to the 'anthropologist', 'as someone who will record and circulate their stories to a broader audience'. As will

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[4] Zionism is a nationalist movement that 'used the strategy of a settler colonial project in Palestine as the main instrument for achieving for the Jews a state that claimed to represent the Jews all over the world' (Yuval-Davis and Hakim, 2015, p. 3).

be discussed further in chapter three (Stories as resistance: contrasting

rhetorical approaches), this thesis contributes to the literature on

Palestinian narratives by exploring how students narrate their lives and

constructions of themselves to an interested foreign researcher. It

analyses the techniques and processes involved in the students trying to

persuade an international audience for particular purposes.

Given that this was an exploratory study, designed to examine how

young educated Palestinians narrated their lives under occupation I sought

to recruit Palestinian University students. I omitted potential Palestinian

participants who were only studying in Palestine over the summer but were

based elsewhere as I wanted students who were living with the daily realities

of life under occupation. I aimed to recruit a range of students, from different

socio-economic backgrounds and equal numbers of young men and young

women, so that gendered patterns would be open to scrutiny. The design of

the study was a case study approach that allowed intensive focus on what

each participant said as well as an examination of commonalities and

differences between the sample members. I therefore aimed to recruit 28

participants in order to have a large enough sample for such comparisons,

while allowing detailed attention on each case.

After a pilot interview with a Palestinian post-doctoral researcher in

London who had studied at Birzeit University, I interviewed 28 Palestinian

university students in the West Bank, 14 Muslim young women[5], 13

Muslim young men and one Christian young man who described himself

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[5] This includes one young woman (her pseudonym was Noor) who withdrew from the research part-way through a joint interview. I have therefore not included any of her comments in the research.

as 'proud of his Arab Islamic culture and heritage.' While this data was initially collected for a pilot study, on discussion with my supervisors when I returned to London it was decided that this number of interviews gave me rich material, while still allowing me time to analyse the interviews in depth. Another trip to conduct a similar number of interviews would not have allowed me sufficient time to analyse, translate and engage with the rich material that participants had already generously shared. There are a wide range of views on what constitutes an appropriate number of interviews for a particular research project (Baker and Edwards, 2012). Given that I was taking more of an idiographic approach, building a 'broader argument from an understanding of particularity,' and not treating my participants as representative of the population, I felt that it was important to have sufficient variations of circumstance and participants, while allowing myself enough time to analyse the interviews creatively and interpretatively (Mason, 2012).

I had planned to have an exclusively Muslim sample as I sought to build on some of the issues raised in my Masters research on young Somali Muslims, but after long conversations with Wadee'[6], the only Christian participant, I felt that his narratives would enrich the thesis and I asked him to participate. While I had a thought-provoking discussion in a joint interview with a participant who selected the pseudonym Layla, I have not included her in the research because the topics we discussed are not relevant for this research. Years after the original face-to-face interviews, a couple of the participants reflected on their participation in

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[6] The pseudonym he chose.

the research and the current situation in Palestine in response to emailed questions. Their comments are explored in the conclusion to this thesis.

The participants, all of whom are identified by pseudonyms they chose themselves, came from different socio-economic backgrounds, family units and geographic areas. Some students had parents who were professionals, including: a lawyer, a dentist, a senior official in an international charity, university lecturers and journalists, while others were the children of parents who were in low-paid jobs, including small-scale farming, or out of work. Some of the participants lived with both of their parents, while others lived with their mothers after family breakdown or bereavement and one participant lived with her grandparents. Some of the participants lived in cities, such as: Ramallah, Nablus, Hebron, Qalqilya and Tulkarm, while others lived in small villages, which I have not named to avoid the possible identification of the participants. A couple of the affluent participants had lived in the United States and the family of one of them had property both there and in Palestine.

Of the 27 participants who agreed for me to use their narratives in this research, six studied at An-Najah University in Nablus, twenty studied at Birzeit University in Birzeit, where I stayed while conducting my fieldwork, and one, Lateefa, studied at Al-Quds Open University. Lateefa was included in this research because I got to know her through one of her relatives who was studying at Birzeit. Birzeit is the oldest university in the Occupied Palestinian Territories (Carter, 2009) and its student elections are widely considered to be 'a barometer for Palestinian public opinion' (Ma'an, 2015), which makes it an apposite research site to elicit

student narratives. An-Najah and Birzeit are the top two universities in the Occupied Palestinian Territories (Top Universities, 2015). I chose to interview students at these institutions because of their prestige and the relationships I had established with students at each university. The connections I had established enabled me to use snowball sampling, which entailed asking those who participated to suggest potential participants who met my selection criteria (Ritchie and Lewis, 2008). To aid the analysis of the interviews I recorded each one with a digital voice recorder. Details about the participants can be seen in Table 1: List of Participants.

In summer 2010, I attended the Palestine Arabic Studies (PAS) Programme at Birzeit University, which put me in touch with students at the university. The process of recruiting the sample was somewhat akin to preparation for ethnographic work. I spent a period of two weeks attending classes and student events and getting to know some of the students before explaining my research to them and getting their informed consent to take part in the study. I recruited some young women and young men students in this way and asked these first participants and others I met to ask other Palestinian university students whether they would be willing to take part in the study. This process of snowballing enabled me to recruit further university students, including friends and relatives of the first members of the sample. Through some of these initial contacts I was also able to attend an English class for Palestinian university students at Birzeit, where I met some young women who also agreed to participate in the research. While on the PAS programme I found out about projects, not affiliated with the university, that were designed to raise awareness about the situation in Palestine and I

went on some trips and tours, where I met other Birzeit students who I was then able to interview. I also frequented a local café where some students at Birzeit University worked. I became friends with them and some of them agreed to be interviewed.

In Nablus the young people who agreed to participate in the research were all connected to a young woman studying at An-Najah whom I first met on a conference call between An-Najah and Goldsmiths in 2009. I met this young woman in person on my first visit to Palestine with the Goldsmiths University Palestine Twinning Campaign and met her again and later interviewed her on a return visit to the West Bank. She was seen as a young leader and trusted by her peers, which made it much easier for me to gain the trust of the university students I met through her. She also helped me to gain access to the university which, unlike the Birzeit campus, I could not enter without a chaperone and permission from officials.

As an African Caribbean young woman researcher from London who speaks modern standard Arabic, rather than the Palestinian dialect, I was seen by Palestinian students as somewhat strange. I occupied at once a privileged position as a British postgraduate and an inferiorised positioning in Arab racialised hierarchies that construct black people as inferior (cf. Abulhawa, 2013). I would argue that this strangeness or otherness facilitated the recruitment and interviewing of participants as I was not seen as threatening or as allied to any particular political position. However, the way in which I spoke Arabic may have distanced me from some of the participants who were not comfortable in that register.

Gender, however, differentiated the recruitment of the participants. A number of devout Muslim young men students approached on my behalf declined invitations to participate, but conversely my gender facilitated access to young women participants. I was about a decade older than the youngest participants, but the age gap seemed to have made no appreciable difference to the sorts of accounts I got from the younger students in comparison with those produced by those who were in their twenties.

In the actual interviews a variety of other differences between me and other students may have made a difference to how comfortable the participants felt about talking to me. For example, as I was a fellow student, many of the participants talked to me as a member of their peer group. Some of the participants identified with me as someone coming from a Christian background and so being a 'person of the book'. They suggested that there were commonalities between us on account of this, which made them more comfortable sharing their narratives with me. While I looked at the transcripts to see if my racialisation had an impact on the participants' accounts, there were no points at which this was visible and where I felt that I was interpellated into a racialised positioning. In one-to-one interviews, it was religion that appeared to be most salient. Even this, however, did not prevent the participants from sharing rich narratives that explored religion.

The students who participated in this research had all lived through the second intifada and had personal memories of it. They also had collective memories from their grandparents, parents and other relatives

of: the first intifada, or uprising; the Six-Day War in which Palestinians from the West Bank, eastern Jerusalem and Gaza were expelled in what Palestinians term the *Naksa,* or 'setback'; and the Nakba. At the time of the interviews they lived under occupation, as most of them had their entire lives, and they had just witnessed Israel's raid on the Gaza flotilla that had attempted to break the blockade on Gaza to bring humanitarian aid to Gazans (Booth, 2010), something mentioned by a few of the participants (for example, Montaser and Mohamed Hosen). It was in this context that I interviewed them and that they remembered and shared narratives about their experiences; personal and collective narratives that struggled with and against the present-day realities of life under occupation (Matar, 2011).

Through stories or narratives people convey what history means to them (Portelli, 1997). For the Palestinians sharing collective and personal memories of Palestinian life and land before the Israeli occupation and remembering their rights, which are enshrined in international law and United Nations resolutions, is a crucial part of keeping the struggle for liberation alive (Allen, 2006). The importance for some Palestinians of sharing stories about the oppression of life under occupation with outside audiences, coupled with Israel's efforts to deter foreigners from exploring the effects of its illegal occupation on Palestinian life, renders researching Palestinians in the West Bank both political and contentious (Matar, 2011).

The outline of the chapters

This thesis is separated into seven substantive chapters. The first, (Narrating Palestinian Lives: A Critical Review), examines the narrative-based approaches to presenting Palestinian lives that have helped inform this research. I examine three approaches to engaging with Palestinian narratives from scholars and activists who oppose the occupation, paying particular attention to the ways in which Palestinian voices are treated. The chapter is separated into three main parts that each considers a different kind of claim about the voices of Palestinians in narrative-based literature and how politics is imbricated in this.

The second chapter, (Listening to Palestinian lives: methodological and political issues), is a methodological framing chapter that outlines how I conducted the interviews and analysed transcripts. It begins with a discussion of the methods used and then focuses on the methodological and epistemological questions raised by the research. It discusses the surprises and moments of breach I encountered in the interview process. It also outlines how I am treating the narratives. The chapter seeks to outline the assumptions and theoretical underpinnings of this research, highlighting its main focus and pointing towards the contribution it seeks to make.

The third chapter, (Stories as resistance: contrasting rhetorical approaches), contextualises those that follow by exploring the different ways in which Palestinian students saw this research as an opportunity to resist the illegal Israeli occupation and/or to promote or defend their ideological approach to resistance. Some participants assumed the role of

political agents by sharing stories designed to encourage an international audience to oppose the Israeli occupation. This was in contrast to the narratives of participants who used the interviews to condemn foreign intervention, with some advocating secular political resistance and some devout Muslim students calling for Muslim resistance in order to achieve Palestinian liberation. The chapter will argue that the students' narratives revealed three key structures of rhetoric, one with a predominantly secular outward focus, one with a secular internal focus and one with a religious internal focus.

The fourth chapter, (Making Palestine: narrating the architecture of occupation and precarity), examines narratives that were at once personal and collective about negotiating what Eyal Weizman (2007) terms 'the architecture of occupation', and precarity in Palestine. It considers narratives that convey a sense of being imprisoned, restricted and impotent and stories that express feelings of anger, longing and humiliation due to the architecture of occupation and restrictive policies. It argues that the students shaped their narratives in ways that could help to increase opposition to the occupation. The second part explores how the participants conveyed a sense of living in a condition of precarity under occupation. It discusses narratives about negotiating the constant threat of imprisonment and death and argues that they evoke what I term the 'condition of temporary life' in which Palestinians under occupation live in anticipation of their lives and/or social worlds being interrupted. The third part, an extended conclusion, argues that in their accounts the participants brought to life (and in that sense 'made') a Palestine that was

constraining and precarious in order to convey their experiences of life under occupation, raise awareness and elicit international condemnation of the oppressive occupation. It argues that some sought to do this in order to increase support for the international movement against the occupation, while others sought to get recognition for what they are forced to endure, but rather than aiming to mobilise international support, they used the interviews to emphasise their agency and express confidence that the Palestinians themselves would be victorious.

The fifth chapter, (Staking Claims to Palestine and Refusing to Give in), explores the ways in which the participants drew on historical claims to Palestine and scripts of Palestinianness to emphasise the strength of their belonging to the land in order to appeal for international support for their cause, or to explain their desire to get rid of the State of Israel and, in some cases, expel Israeli Jews. This chapter is divided into two parts. The first, 'Establishing historical and emotional rootedness', explores how the participants drew on their collective memories to stake claims to Palestine by sharing stories about the importance of their family's land and the trauma of being forced from it. It also examines narratives about their determination to remain steadfast and not give in. The second, 'Narratives of intergenerational resistance', explores the ways in which the participants drew on collective memories of resistance, and narrated their own resistance efforts, to show their commitment to Palestine and remaining on their land. It argues that in highlighting the courageous resistance efforts of successive generations of Palestinians in the face of the might of the State of Israel, the participants conveyed the

determination of the Palestinian people to end the occupation and their refusal to give in. In doing so they invited both criticism of Israel and respect and empathy for how they are dealing with an intensely difficult situation.

The sixth chapter, (Beyond *Sumūd*: The Question of Leaving), explores the tension between nationalist narratives that call for Palestinians to stay and resist the occupation by demonstrating *sumūd*[7] (steadfastness) and the fact that some young Palestinians leave or want to leave. It analyses narratives about young people wanting to go abroad as a result of the damage done to their sense of belonging by the conditions of life under occupation and argues that in sharing them the participants underlined why it is imperative that the occupation is brought to an end. The Israeli colonial project means that Palestinian steadfastness is critical for the Palestinian cause. However, the fact that it limits opportunities and compounds what some consider to be challenging societal factors, such as patriarchy and conservatism, increases the appeal of life abroad and puts some young people into a conflictual position where they find it hard to demonstrate sumūd.

The seventh chapter, (Hope for the future), explores the participants' narratives about the future, looking at how they draw on hope and/or faith to formulate future visions that they construct as helping them to live their lives. The chapter is the culmination of the preceding empirical chapters in that in articulating their hopes and/or expectations for the

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[7] This is defined more extensively in chapter 5.

future the participants underlined what led them to agree to participate in the research and share their stories. Some of the participants said they put their hopes in international resistance movements and they decided to participate in the research in an effort to inspire more foreigners to support those movements, seeing me as a conduit for their messages. Their participation itself was an embodiment of the hope that talking to an international audience could make a difference. A couple of the participants said that they drew hope from secular Palestinian resistance and spoke against the idea of foreign involvement in the Palestinian cause. Others said their faith in God gave them confidence that they would be victorious, or that the occupation would end (even though the cycles of conflict would continue). These participants used the interviews as a platform to emphasise their faith and strength as Muslims, making the point that the solution to the conflict would come from within.

The thesis concludes that the participants' narratives reflected their motivations for participating in the research. It argues that some of them sought to encourage support for international resistance efforts through their participation, while others spoke out against foreign intervention in the Palestinian cause. While some participants focused on non-violent resistance, others drew on their interpretations of Islam in an attempt to justify uncompromising and violent positions vis-à-vis the State of Israel and Israeli Jews. The thesis concludes that engaging in different forms of resistance helped the participants to 'get by' (Allen, 2008) the hardship of life under occupation and remain steadfast. It suggests that for some of the participants, the sharing of narratives designed to bolster support for

the Palestinian cause as part of resistance efforts not only helped the

participants to 'get by', but also functioned as a source of hope. The

conclusion argues that the role resistance played in helping participants to

maintain hope was arguably more important than the contribution the

forms of resistance the participants mentioned made to efforts to end the

occupation. The conclusion explores the wider implications of this

research within the current context of increasing tension in the Occupied

Palestinian Territories and it analyses the narratives of two participants,

Rami and Wadee', who reflected on the situation in Palestine and the

interview process years after the original interviews.

I am grateful to all of the Palestinian university students who made

this research possible by generously giving their time and trusting me

enough to share their stories with me, stories that were at times painful

and harrowing. I have taken pains to contextualise their narratives in such

a way that I hope none of them would consider my portrayal of their

stories to be a betrayal (Back, 2012b).

Chapter 1

Narrating Palestinian Lives: A Critical Review

Introduction

The literature on Palestine and the Palestinians is too vast to explore

meaningfully here. Instead I will briefly outline some of the core areas of

writing in this area in English, before moving on to explore literature on

Palestinian narratives at greater length. Unsurprisingly, there is an

extensive body of works on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, such as Shlaim

(2009) and Noam Chomsky (1999), and there are numerous texts on

different aspects of the Israeli occupation, including those by Neve

Gordon (2008); Lori Allen (2008), Weizman (2007) and Sari Hanafi

(2004). There is also considerable literature on Palestinian history and

memory, including works by Ilan Pappe (2006); Rosemary Sayigh (1998);

Ahmad Sa'di and Lila Abu-Lughod (2007) and Ted Swedenburg (2003).

There are also many works on religion and politics in Palestine, for

example, works by Khaled Hroub (2006) and Michael Irving Jensen

(2009), and texts on Palestinian resistance, including those by Helena

Lindholm Schulz (1999) and Rashid Khalidi (2007). There is also

extensive writing on the Palestinians, such as the work of Peteet (2005)

and Sayigh (2007).

This chapter critically reviews literature on the narratives of

Palestinians in the Occupied Palestinian Territories, the Middle East more

broadly and further afield written in, or translated into, English. Reviewing

literature that focuses on Palestinian narratives is important in a context in

which the 'borders of acceptable discourse' are often successfully policed

by supporters of Israel's settler colonial project (Collins, 2011). The chapter explores the epistemological problem of how to treat Palestinian narratives. It highlights how Palestinian narratives are approached in different ways in different genres of literature. In the genres of activism and human rights, narratives tend to be treated as evidence, in keeping with the aims of these genres. This is also the case for some scholarly writing on narratives. In some journalistic genres narratives are left to speak for themselves without comment or analysis, an approach also adopted by some social scientists. In the genre of social-science literature one approach is to highlight the 'constructedness' of narratives and argue that their value lies in what they reveal about the teller and the conditions of the telling, which is where I would situate my research.

As Nur Masalha (2012, p.10) argues, '[c]ollective memory, remembering and narrating of the conflict have constituted a key site of the ongoing struggle,' and this is reflected in both the literature on Palestinian narratives and in the narratives Palestinian students shared in this research. The politics in which research on Palestine is steeped is reflected in the ways in which scholars approach both the analysis and presentation of their research. In this chapter I examine three approaches to engaging with Palestinian narratives from activists, human rights workers, journalists and scholars who oppose the occupation, paying particular attention to the ways in which Palestinian voices are treated. The chapter is separated into three main parts that each considers a different kind of claim about the voices of Palestinians in narrative-based literature and how politics is imbricated in this.

For Palestinians, the Nakba, or catastrophe, is 'the baseline for personal histories and the sorting of generations' (Abu-Lughod and Sa'di, 2007, p.5). Through narratives Palestinians describe their experiences to themselves and others and these narratives help them to make sense of the significant rupture in their lives caused by the Nakba and subsequent experiences (cf. Moen, 2006). Diana Allan (2007, p.255) argues that '[w]ithin the matrix of Palestinian memory, narratives about the Nakba have emerged as a symbolic lynchpin of collective identity and the bedrock of nationalism'. She argues that Palestinian intellectuals, activists, and scholars of Palestine studies have worked to consolidate the nationalist discourse.

There has been an increased focus on narratives in the social sciences in the past two decades (Riessman, 2008; Squire, Andrews and Tamboukou, 2008). This 'narrative turn' is part of a renewed emphasis on human agency, context and the importance of language in how meaning is negotiated and identity constructed in day-to-day life (Davis, 2002). As will be seen in subsequent parts, taking a narrative approach facilitates describing, understanding and explaining key aspects of Palestinian social life (cf. Squire et al., 2008). It also allows insights into both individual and social change and into 'different and sometimes contradictory layers of meaning' that can be brought into dialogue with each other (Squire et al., 2008, p.1).

Claire Hemmings (2011, p.2) argues that storytelling has a 'political grammar'. The idea that politics both structures and constrains how people tell their stories, and the range of interpretations that are made

possible, makes it all the more important to study Palestinian narratives. The Nakba and the continued Israeli occupation mean that politics are foregrounded in Palestinian life and so are central to narratives and their rhetorical structures.

Molly Andrews (2007, p.8) describes political narratives as the 'stories people tell about how the world works, how they explain the engines of political change, and the role they see themselves, and … their group, as playing in this ongoing struggle'. As Andrews argues, 'political narratives engage the imagination, not only in constructing stories about the past and the present, but in helping to articulate a vision of an alternative world,' (2014, p.86) and they play a key role in realising social change (Andrews, 2014; Squire et al., 2008). Narratives and 'speaking out' can inspire political mobilisation, which is why narratives are shared at the start of social movements (Riessman, 2008). The grammar of political stories means that people use rhetorical, or argumentative devices when expressing their opinions and, in doing so, simultaneously present arguments designed to counter possible rebuttals (Billig, 2003). The recognition that rhetoric always contains contrary themes, a defence in advance against possible attack (prolepsis), is a major contribution of Michael Billig's theorisation of rhetoric.

Through narratives and making memories public, Palestinians assert their 'political and moral claims to justice, redress, and the right to return,' (Abu-Lughod and Sa'di, 2007, p.1). Understanding how political narratives function is particularly important for this thesis as the participants shared narratives that were very much about constructing the

past and present in ways that helped them to contextualise their visions of the future and/or call for support to help them realise those alternative visions.

Political narratives, like narratives in general, are central to identities at an individual and group level. Through them people establish boundaries and relationships between themselves and others (Andrews, 2014; Riessman, 2008). Just as stories never exist in isolation, but rather are relational, relying on bonds with the stories of individuals and communities to be 'tellable', '[p]olitical stories, even when they relate to individual experience, are never just the property of isolated selves,' (Andrews, 2014, p.87). They play important roles in Palestinian communities and society. This can be seen in the ways in which human rights groups bring foreigners to sites of Israeli attacks to witness the devastation while listening to narratives about what happened (see Allen, 2009, p.168). Andrews argues that

> Political narratives play a critical role in creating and recreating history – at the level of the individual, the community, and the nation. In as much as identity is inextricably linked to story, and is forever a project in the making, political narratives are, by extension, a mechanism through which the past is reformulated in light of a desired future (2014, p.88).

In this way, political narratives play an important role in Palestinian identity construction. 'Through the use of political narratives, we tell our selves and others who we are … Our group-identity claims rest upon our stories,' (Andrews, 2014, p.88). Through narratives Palestinians stake claims to

belonging in their homeland, countering Israeli attempts to undermine that belonging. Nur Masalha (2012, p.89) argues that '[t]he founding myths of Israel have dictated the conceptual removal of Palestinians before, during and after their physical removal in 1948.' He argues that '[t]he de-Arabisation of Palestine, the erasure of Palestinian history and elimination of the Palestinians' collective memory by the Israeli state are no less violent than the ethnic cleansing of the Palestinians in 1948 and the destruction of historic Palestine'[8].

The process of conducting interview research in Palestine and analysing Palestinian narratives necessarily raises issues of affect and emotion, which are integral to the Palestinian situation and the discourses that the participants shared with me. Affect is notoriously difficult to define because it 'cannot be fully realised in language' (Shouse, 2005, http://journal.media-culture.org.au/0512/03-shouse.php) and is therefore often used in such close conjunction with 'emotion' to appear almost synonymous. Eric Shouse (2005) argues that '[a]n affect is a non-conscious experience of intensity; it is a moment of unformed and unstructured potential'.

Margaret Wetherell (2012, p.4) defines it as '*embodied meaning-making',* which is most often 'something that could be understood as *human emotion*'. She argues that '[i]t is the discursive that very frequently makes affect powerful, makes it radical and provides the means for affect to travel,' (2012, p.19) because there are 'affective-discursive loops', which suggest that '[t]he rhetoric and narratives of unfairness, loss and

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[8] Historic Palestine refers to British mandatory Palestine.

infringement create and intensify the emotion. Bile rises and this then reinforces the rhetorical and narrative trajectory. It goes round and round,' (2012, p.7). This notion of 'affective-discursive loops' is helpful in the study of Palestinian narratives in that many of these are constituted through narratives of loss and oppression that produce intense affect that is embodied and produces action, including discourses, regardless of whether or not the resulting emotion is consciously recognised.

Wetherell (2012) argues that while 'affective practices' may concern an individual or be played out in small groups, they can also be distributed across groups of different sizes, involving communal celebrations, shared jokes, or collective complaining. This notion fits with Sara Ahmed's (2004) argument that emotions do not reside in people, but serve to bind them together, working as a form of capital.

> In such affective economies, emotions *do things*, and they align individuals with communities – or bodily space with social space – through the very intensity of their attachments. Rather than seeing emotions as psychological dispositions, we need to consider how they work, in concrete and particular ways, to mediate the relationship between the psychic and the social, and between the individual and the collective (Ahmed, 2004, p.119).

These ideas are helpful for the current study in that the individual narratives are intricately interlinked with communal, including national, narratives that are affectively marked. In keeping with approaches that focus on language, the narratives produced were constructive; the

participants did things with language and, as Ahmed suggests, with the emotions that were intricately interlinked with the narratives.

In the study of affect it is important to examine power relations and to consider the relations that an affective practice makes, enacts, disrupts and reinforces as well as whose emotions are deemed acceptable and whose are rejected (Wetherell, 2012). These are questions with which this thesis seeks to engage as it explores the students' narratives about their lives under occupation.

What is striking about narratives in the social sciences is that scholars understand narratives and approach narrative enquiry in a variety of different ways. For this research I had to navigate my way through the broad range of approaches to arrive at one that best suited my data and fit with my epistemological positioning. In order to clarify my approach I explored the ways in which activists, human rights workers and researchers employ narratives in the study of Palestinian lives. The analysis of the literature in the remaining sections of this chapter shows three different approaches. I have employed this tripartite typification because each of the ways in which narratives are employed in the Palestinian situation produces different effects. However, some scholars explore similar themes in contrasting ways, which will be seen in the exploration of texts by Nadera Shalhoub-Kevorkian (2003) and Lotte Buch (2010), which are examined in different sections.

This chapter explores the epistemological problem of how to treat Palestinian narratives. Through highlighting the approaches of different genres of literature on Palestinian lives it seeks to explain how I arrived at

the decision that treating narratives as constructed was the approach that best suits this research and my epistemological positioning. The first part, 'Treating narratives as evidence,' explores the ways in which in human rights, activism and some scholarly literature the voices of Palestinians are used to illustrate what life is like in Palestine or to support particular arguments about the injustice of the occupation. It argues that some human rights workers, activists, journalists and scholars focus on narrators telling stories about 'events' they experienced and treat the narratives as 'evidence' to strengthen human-rights claims, mobilise international support for the Palestinian cause or raise awareness among audiences respectively. The second part, 'Letting the narratives speak for themselves,' considers the approach common in some journalistic genres of including narratives without analysis or comment to allow readers to draw their own conclusions about the stories shared in order to privilege participants' agency. I give most attention to the third part, 'Recognising the complexity of Palestinian narratives,' as it explores the work of scholars who highlight the 'constructedness' of narratives and argue that their value lies beyond the extent to which they can be proven to be true and is located instead in what they reveal about the teller and the conditions of the telling, which is where I would situate my research. The conclusion considers the implications of the literature for my research and highlights the contribution this thesis seeks to make.

In parts one and two I have included literature from different genres, rather than solely academic literature, because it deepens understandings of how and why narratives by Palestinians are used and presented in particular ways. Part one explores literature by activists,

human rights workers and scholars separately, considering how their work fits within their respective genres. Part two examines literature by an academic, an editor and a journalist and the literature in the final part is exclusively scholarly, engaging with issues that preoccupy some social scientists.

Palestinian University Students Narrating Life Under Occupation

PART 1: Treating narratives as evidence

Some human rights workers, activists and scholars use Palestinian participants as sources and treat their narratives as evidence of what life under occupation is like. They do this in order to privilege the ways in which Palestinians represent themselves, strengthen human-rights claims, raise awareness about the injustice of the Israeli occupation and/or persuade the international community to oppose it. Collins (2004, p.12) argues that Palestinians' stories have generally been treated 'as documents assumed to bear an unassailable truth-value deriving from a particular relationship to experienced events.' In this section I will argue that while the intentions of the activists, human rights workers and scholars who adopt this approach are often laudable, the assumptions inherent in it are problematic because narratives are complex and cannot provide a window into the past.

In this part, I consider the ways in which some human rights workers, activists and researchers who treat Palestinian accounts as evidence do not question the accuracy of the narratives or attend to how the nature of eliciting the stories may have affected the narratives shared.

I examine the ways in which narratives are used to illustrate the political points that activists wish to make and furthermore, how they are used as testimonies in human rights literature. I then consider the ways in which they are used to illustrate aspects of Palestinian social life in scholarly literature.

In keeping with their genre, activists aim to have maximum impact on their audiences by not questioning the accuracy or veracity of their participants' narratives or exploring how the nature of eliciting the narratives may have affected the stories shared. For example, Chris Jones and Michael Lavalette (2011) take a Palestinian narratives-as-evidence approach in an effort to prioritise the ways in which participants represent themselves, rather than exploring the narratives as socially-situated accounts.

The simple way in which Jones and Lavalette (2011) present their narratives makes the texts accessible to those with limited or no knowledge of the situation in Palestine. The participants' narratives are highlighted by the authors as evidence of the harsh realities of life under occupation, which is likely to rouse empathy for the Palestinians and frustration at the occupation. This can be seen in the following example where they make a statement about the danger of Palestinian life under occupation and then use a participant quotation to illustrate this.

> The overwhelming reality of life in the West Bank is that it is
> dangerous and unpredictable for its entire people. As Kareem,
> a 17 year old student from Jenin told us, "I don't believe that
> young people are particular targets for the Israelis. The

occupation affects everyone here without exception" (2011, p.36).

By combining their statement about the precariousness of life in Palestine with Kareem's assertion to the same effect, Jones and Lavalette seek to substantiate their argument with the opinion of a Palestinian 'witness' whose narrative is designed to elicit empathy and mobilise the international community.

Similarly, in the genre of Palestinian human rights literature, narratives are treated as testimonies, their accuracy is not questioned, nor is the effect of the ways in which narratives are elicited explored. For example, Catherine Cook et al. (2004) treat narratives as testimonies as they quote affidavits from Palestinian child detainees and case study reports to illustrate the experiences of Palestinian child prisoners in a text that seeks to explore the issue of child detention and to suggest ways to bring the practice to an end.

In a similar way to Jones and Lavalette (2011) and Cook et al. (2004), the scholars Aouragh (2011); Rita Giacaman and Penny Johnson (2013); Thomas Ricks (2006); Shalhoub-Kevorkian (2003); Penny Johnson et al. (2009) and Lamis Abu Nahleh (2006) use participant comments to illustrate the points they make, but do not analyse them beyond discussing the significance of the ideas expressed. In this way, they too treat Palestinian narratives as evidence. This approach can be seen in the way in which Aouragh describes her interviews as confirming things that happened. For example, she says 'Interviews with refugees in the camps and with Palestinian students in Amman and Irbid confirmed

instances of repression during protests in solidarity with Palestine,'
(Aouragh, 2011, p.81).

Similarly, Giacaman and Johnson treat the narratives the mothers
and wives of Palestinian political prisoners' shared with them as evidence,
arguing that they 'provide telling insights not only into their own
experiences, but also into the Israeli colonial present and its uneasy
shadow in the Palestinian political field,' (2013, p.55). The way in which
they use narratives to illustrate the points they make about life in Palestine
can be seen when they say that '[o]ne prisoner's mother from a northern
West Bank town succinctly summed up how the ordeal of a prison visit
distorts daily life,' (p.62). Just like Jones and Lavalette (2011) they use
narratives to make and/or strengthen their assertions about life in
Palestine.

Ricks (2006), who explores how Palestinian high school girls
negotiated the violence of the Israeli occupation and engaged in
nonviolent resistance during the first and second intifadas, and Shalhoub-
Kevorkian (2003) also treat Palestinian narratives as evidence. Shalhoub-
Kevorkian (2003, p.391) uses the narratives of mothers of Palestinian
martyrs who participated in 'an empowerment group' to counter depictions
that have been commonly seen in popular media of mothers joyous at the
death of their children. Shalhoub-Kevorkian (2003, p.393), who sees her
research as activism, argues that when their children are killed Palestinian
mothers are expected to suppress their sorrow and to '"ululate" in
celebration' and that they have been denied national and international

recognition of the loss and pain they have experienced, which her research seeks to redress.

Similarly, Shalhoub-Kevorkian (2004) also treats narratives as testimonies when she presents the stories she was told as part of multidisciplinary research that focused on listening closely to the 'ordeals' Palestinian women in conflict areas go through in order to inspire others to help prevent further human rights violations. She explains that one of the research aims was to document and disseminate Palestinian women's narratives about war crimes in their own words (2004). In a similar way, Khawla Abu-Baker (2004) uses Palestinian narratives as evidence of the effects of the Israeli occupation on Palestinian lives. Abu-Baker argues that case studies are '[t]he best way to comprehend the multiple losses incurred by Palestinian families, and their psychological effect,' (Abu-Baker, 2004, p.61).

Margaret Keck and Kathryn Sikkink (1998, cited in Gready, 2008, p.138) argue that 'activists interpret facts and testimony, usually framing issues simply, in terms of right and wrong, because their purpose is to persuade people and stimulate them to act.' This is the approach taken by a number of the activists, human rights workers and researchers in this section. While this can be powerful in terms of mobilising popular opinion, from a social sciences perspective and for those keen to read more critically, there are some limitations of taking everything participants say at face value. Doing so does not take account of the fact that participants, like people in general, sometimes misremember, exaggerate, distort facts,

omit or forget important pieces of information or lie. This is problematic if accounts are being presented as truths and used as evidence.

While a number of the activists and researchers above treated Palestinian narratives as evidence that supported their activism, some scholars used narratives to illustrate aspects of Palestinian life and, where relevant, set this against a backdrop of Israeli occupation. For example, Penny Johnson et al. (2009) use narratives to illustrate the differences between marriage arrangements and wedding celebrations in Palestine during the first and second intifada. They assert that '[i]n the second intifada, even more than the first, violence and insecurity are never far away, but again the hostile environment is met with the resolve to "go on as usual",' (2009, p.28). They quote a participant's comments about holding an engagement party despite an impending curfew to illustrate this. The participant said '[w]e had rented a hall. We sneaked there, watching out for bulldozers,' (2008, p.28), indicating that they did not let the insecurity prevent them from celebrating the engagement.

In a similar way, Abu Nahleh (2006, p.109), who sought 'to understand the changes in family dynamics and relations in the context of war,' used case studies to illustrate the effects of the occupation on Palestinian families. For instance, she gives the example of a young man who prevents soldiers breaking down his family's garage door and gets taken as a human shield as he assumes the role of the '"man of the family"'. After quoting the young man, she reiterated the details of his narrative as fact, saying 'not only did Saleh risk going around with the

Israeli soldiers with an M-16 pointed to his head, but he also risked giving them wrong information to their inquiries' (2006, p.121).

What this critical review of the literature shows is that activists, human rights workers and some researchers sometimes use Palestinian narratives as evidence of the oppressiveness of the occupation. The narratives are also used to illustrate particular aspects of Palestinian social life and/or history. However, as Nur Masalha argues, '[o]ral history, like written documentation, is never free from factual error and has to be treated critically,' (2012, p.211). Inaccuracies in Palestinian narratives presented as fact to further political arguments can be used to undermine literature on Palestinian lives because if the value of a narrative is constructed as deriving from its truth, it loses value when that truth is called into question. The veracity of accounts would not be significant if they were being studied as moral tales, however, as I shall argue.

Many of the activists and researchers in this section chose to take a narratives-as-evidence approach, in keeping with the activist and human rights genres, in order to make powerful political interventions in what they rightly see as an unjust situation. Others used accounts to illustrate aspects of Palestinian social life. This approach raises methodological, ontological and epistemological questions with which the texts do not engage. In critiquing the approach taken by the researchers and activists in this section I am not questioning the injustice of the occupation or their desire to highlight it, but rather I wish to draw attention to the limitations of the particular ways in which they try to do this.

Treating narratives as evidence does not explore how the participants told their stories, what led them to share stories in the ways that they did and how context affects both how narratives are produced and analysed. As will be seen in part three, narrating life under occupation can be contentious, with Palestinians facing conflicting demands from nationalists and international human rights advocates. It is, therefore, important that researchers offer insights into the effect of a particular kind of research encounter on the narratives elicited. However, given the purposes of much of the literature in this part, it would have been inappropriate for many of the activists and researchers to do this. The next part explores the work of journalists and scholars who also treat Palestinian narratives as evidence. Unlike the researchers and activists in this section, however, they leave the narratives to speak for themselves.

PART 2: Letting the narratives speak for themselves

The researchers, editor and journalist whose texts are explored below shared narratives without analysis and refrained from drawing conclusions about the stories their participants told. This part argues that, as in some of the literature explored in part one, this approach was taken in order to privilege the agency of Palestinians who shared their stories, rather than potentially objectifying them by acting as the arbiters on the value of what has been shared (see Malek and Hoke, 2014; Matar, 2011; Ghandour, 2010).

The works explored in this section contextualise the narratives with introductions that highlight the hardships and obstacles presented by the occupation and then let the narratives 'speak for themselves'. In taking

this approach the authors of these texts avoid some of the critiques of the ways in which activists use testimony that can result in local people losing control over their stories in international campaigns (Keck and Sikkink, 1998, cited in Gready, 2008). However, in letting the narratives speak for themselves they do not offer their readers insights that would help them to appreciate the complexity and significance of the specific narratives. This part begins by exploring the work of the academic Dina Matar (2011) who critically engages with the complexity of narratives in the prologue of her text and then presents her participants' narratives without analysis or conclusion in order to avoid imposing her interpretations on her readers. It then explores the work of the academic Zeina Ghandour (2010) who also lets Palestinian narratives speak for themselves, before examining a text by the editor Cate Malek and human rights journalist Mateo Hoke (2014) who also present Palestinian narratives without analysis or conclusions.

In her work Matar (2011, xi) seeks 'to tell a personal history of the Palestinians, in their own words' in order to recognise their agency as 'actors' instead of presenting them as victims. While Matar presents narratives to the reader without analyses or conclusions, she critically engages with the nature of narratives in the prologue to her text, helpfully recognising that they are situated and partial and that the narratives she shares need to be read with awareness of the context of the telling and narrating. Like the texts in the final part of this chapter, Matar's text is reflexive, recognising that 'telling and remembering are continuous processes of provisional and partial reconstruction of personal and

collective history that struggle with and against a still-contested present,'
(p.2).

Matar treats her narratives as 'remembered personal narratives
that … provide a dense and intimate ethnographic story of what it means
to be Palestinian in the twenty-first century,' (p.5). While she
acknowledges that 'remembered experiences and truth do not necessarily
overlap,' (p.6) she tries to establish validity by attempting to corroborate
the statements and details, such as dates and place names, in her
participants' narratives with other documents and recorded histories. The
richness of Matar's contextualising of the narratives in her text is valuable
and I draw on her work as I seek to contextualise the narratives I include
in this thesis. She argues that her narratives are 'fragmented
compositions of experience and existence, self-consciously staged
testimonials that occasionally contain, along with the individual's
experience, the assertiveness and stridency of the collective Palestinian
nationalist stance and rhetoric,' (p.7). She is aware that in some of the
stories shared by her participants there is also silencing about events or
Palestinian inaction, failures or violence that the participants felt ashamed
of or guilty about. These are important points that are pertinent for my
research as the participants revealed that there were things they felt
unable to say in a recorded interview and sometimes also silenced each
other. I explore this further both in part three and in chapter two, Listening
to Palestinian Lives: Methodological and Political Issues.

Matar raises some of the themes in her narratives before she
presents them, but it is not clear what each of the narratives was in

response to, which means the reader cannot see how Matar's interests and questions have helped to shape the particular narratives she elicited. Matar decided not to discuss the narratives after she shared them and she chose to conclude the book with an epilogue that brought the history up to date, rather than to present a 'discursive conclusion,' so as not to achieve closure or impose her interpretation of the narratives on her readers (p.17). However, in taking this approach she denies her readers the advantage of her knowledge of both her participants and the material they shared. Furthermore, she leaves it to her readers to interrogate the narratives and draw their own conclusions about their significance, when she may be better placed to do this or to at least raise questions for her readers to think about. Given how critically-engaged and insightful Matar's introduction is, her analysis of the narratives she shares would have been invaluable. While, therefore, Matar is clearly insightful about epistemology, the absence of those insights in the analytic sections arguably limits the utility of the accounts she shares. There has been much debate in feminist circles about the notion of 'giving voice' and 'speaking from experience'. Much of this debate makes clear that neither is possible in pure, unmediated ways. The absence of an analytic voice thus leaves it unclear how Matar's participants' accounts are to be understood.

In her text on domination in Mandate Palestine, Zeina Ghandour (2010) includes oral testimonies 'without interpretive exegesis or analytic interpellation – from colonized peoples, thereby allowing previously silenced human subjects to speak for and of themselves' (Comaroff, 2010, ix-x). Ghandour (2010, p.5) argues that she made the decision to avoid interpreting, explaining or presenting analytic commentary on the 'deeply

moving material from native sources' that she came across in an effort to avoid detracting from the narratives and to prevent them from losing their subtlety.

Similarly, Malek and Hoke (2014) present narratives from a wide variety of Palestinians with no analysis or conclusions in keeping with their genre of human rights journalism. They argued that they hoped the narratives 'provide readers with a more nuanced and humanized understanding of life on the ground in Palestine, as well as inspiration to take a more active interest in peace – and the role of foreign influence – in the region.' They said they searched for stories that might surprise them in order to surprise their readers, irrespective of how limited or extensive the reader's knowledge of the situation in Palestine is. They asserted that their text offers insights into 'the experience of growing up and making a life under military occupation' (p.17). Like Matar and Ghandour (2010), they do not seek to influence the ways in which the narratives they present are read.

The discussion above has shown that some scholars and human rights journalists contextualise and then share Palestinian narratives, but refrain from analysing them and drawing conclusions in order to highlight the agency of their participants. In taking this approach they avoid the charge of manipulating the data to further their political agendas or of presenting their work in ways that mean participants feel they have lost control over their narratives (see Keck and Sikkink, 1998, cited in Gready, 2008). However, 'narratives don't speak for themselves, offering a window into an "essential self."' (Riessman, 2008, p.3). Rather, as Catherine

Kohler Riessman (2008) argues, the careful interpretation that narrative

analysis provides is required for an appreciation of their complexity. In

presenting narratives as evidence without analysis, Matar (2011),

Ghandour (2010) and Malek and Hoke (2014), like many of the

researchers and activists in part one, do not guide the reader through the

narratives or offer insights and analyses to help them make sense of the

accounts and their significance. Consequently, their readers do not get a

full appreciation of the richness and complexity of the narratives shared.

The next section examines an approach to Palestinian narratives that

avoids the pitfalls highlighted in parts one and two by exploring the

complexity of narratives and the numerous factors that affect how they

should be read.

Part 3: Recognising the complexity of Palestinian narratives

This part examines the approaches of scholars who explore the

complexity and 'constructedness' of Palestinian narratives and present

participant accounts in ways that recognise that their value lies beyond

the extent to which they can be proven to be true and is located instead in

what they reveal about the teller and the conditions of the telling. The

researchers in this part examine how participants told their stories, what

led them to share stories in the ways that they did and how context affects

both how narratives are produced and analysed (Kassem, 2011; Buch,

2010; Allen, 2009; Witteborn, 2007; Feldman, 2006; Collins, 2004;

Swedenburg, 2003). This section begins by exploring the work of

researchers who study the process of memory and how it affects

narratives. It then explores how researchers who focus on the complexity

of narratives approach the question of truth and accuracy in their narratives and how they conceptualise silences. It considers reflexivity in terms of how both the positioning of participants and researchers affect the narratives shared. It then examines the ways in which researchers conceive of participant narratives as co-constructions that are produced in conjunction with both the researcher, existing narratives, and where relevant, others present when the narratives are elicited. It ends with a discussion of how researchers conceptualise the ways in which politics pervades Palestinian narratives.

Fatma Kassem (2011), who explores how memory operates in her research with Palestinian women in Israel, and John Collins, who examines the narratives of the 'intifada generation', argue that rather than being valuable because they preserve the past, oral sources are important because they reveal how from a present-day position narrators attempt to give meaning to, or produce, the past. In the same way, Allan (2007, p.258) argues that the narratives Palestinians in the Shatila camp in Lebanon shared with her about what happened in their villages in the Nakba, 'suggested that the past is, in crucial ways, being remembered through the lens of present suffering.' Similarly, in his research on Palestinian memories of the Great Revolt, the Palestinian uprising between 1936 and 1939 against British rule in mandatory Palestine, Swedenburg (2003, p.3) considers how popular memories 'had been reconfigured, over time and in the context of the tumultuous and difficult struggle for national identity'. In the same way, in research on different generations of Palestinian women from the Shatila camp in Lebanon,

Sayigh (1998) argues that the degree of detail in memories of the exodus in the Nakba 'signals not only the significance assigned to it retrospectively – as historic mistake, rupture from Palestine and beginning of exile, precursor of other tragedies – but also suggests processes of collective memory formation as individual stories were told and retold in refugee gatherings' (Sayigh, 1998, p.45).

Janette Habashi's analysis of her ethnographic study and interviews with Palestinian children in the West Bank also critically engages with the ways in which the narrating of historical narratives is intertwined with the narrator's understanding of the present. She argues that Palestinian children are able to 'pass on personal and national narratives of previous generations with their own personal understanding whereby it serves the meaning of their roles in the current circumstances,' (2013, p.426). As Humphries and Khalili (2007, p.208) argue, '[t]o remember is not simply to retrieve stories and images out of the storehouse of memory, but rather to reconstruct, reinterpret, and represent events for specific audiences and in specific contexts.' This is an important point because it underlines the fact that rather than presenting windows into the past, memory work and narratives reflect the present-day concerns of participants and how these intersect with those of the researcher. Furthermore, it draws attention to participants' agency as they shape their narratives in particular ways for specific purposes. I explore this when analysing the narratives shared in this research.

In analysing their fieldwork with Palestinians in Israel and Lebanon, existing oral histories and secondary sources, Isabelle Humphries and Laleh Khalili (2007, p.216) give an example of the past being idealised

retrospectively due to subsequent traumatic events and hardship. They argue that the pre-Nakba past was 'retrospectively idealized' because the violent rupture of the Nakba and the dispossession and hardship that ensued caused 'a profound sense of dislocation, loss and even nostalgia' (p.216). In the same way, Sayigh (2007) argues that significance can be attributed to events, such as the Nakba, retrospectively. Similarly, Ilana Feldman (2006), who conducted ethnographic research in Gaza in 1998 and 1999 while researching the British Mandate (1917-1967) and the Egyptian administration (1948-1967), argues insightfully that when people remember the forced migration of Palestinians in 1948 'it is with the knowledge of the more than 50 years of dispossession that have followed. It is with the knowledge also of more than 30 years of Israeli occupation of the Gaza Strip that followed the 1967 war. These intervening years, these perpetuating sorrows, surely shape these narratives' (p.15).

In the same way, Aitemad Muhanna, who explored the effects of Gazans living in prolonged chronic insecurity and uncertainty on gender, recognises that narratives do not 'necessarily reflect an accurate portrayal of the past' (p.56) and highlights the processes at work when narratives are shared. Rather than treating narratives as windows into the past, Sayigh (2007) considers how stories are crafted through repetition into the versions shared with her. Furthermore, Allan (2007, p.259) argues that 'strategies of performance and persuasion point to an economy of memory, in which particular versions of the past become standardized and circulate almost as commodities.' Similarly, Collins argues that those he interviewed drew on 'available narrative models' in similar ways when

they constructed particular stories (2004, p.135). These analyses are significant because they point to the ways in which narratives change and develop over time with repetition, and in conjunction with others, to the extent that some narratives are at once individual and collective. This is one important aspect of the complexity of Palestinian narratives with which most of the researchers and activists in parts one and two did not engage. However, this is something I explore in this thesis. For example, in chapter four, I examine the ways in which the students drew on 'available narrative models' in similar ways when they narrated the architecture of occupation and the precarity of life in Palestine. In chapter seven, I explore how some participants drew on 'available narrative models' in similar ways when they discussed the need for Palestinians to act as 'one hand' in order to get rid of the Israeli occupation.

The question of truth and accuracy in narratives has been explored by a number of researchers. In contrast to texts in which the truth of narratives is uncritically taken as given, Collins, who adopts a 'popular memory approach' in order to examine 'the complexity of the discursive universe within which Palestinians tell their own stories' (2004, p.22), approaches the question of 'truth' by considering it to be indivisible from the 'process of interpretation,' (p.12). He shows variations in accounts and argues that the narratives his participants shared 'may or may not correspond to the "factuality" of the events and relationships' they describe (2004, p.123). In contrast to the approaches taken in earlier parts of this chapter, this approach does not construct the narratives as precise accounts of events and therefore does not leave them open to rejection on the grounds of inconsistencies or errors. Instead, it allows for a rich

exploration of why particular accounts were shared and what led to the variations in accounts.

In her text Kassem (2011) discusses what her participants 'believed', without suggesting that she accepted their assertions as fact. Similarly, Feldman (2006) suggests that the value of the narratives she analyses is not dependent on their accuracy when she writes 'as she remembers it' to introduce one woman's account. While this does not present the recollection that follows as fact, it highlights the importance of analysing it and taking it seriously nonetheless (p.25). Palestinian narratives allow important insights into Palestinian social life, even when there are factual errors in accounts. This can be seen in Feldman's work.

> Dating this story is a bit difficult. Based on what Ibrahim told me about his career trajectory, it would seem to have happened in the mid1950s, but drip irrigation (to which the pipe with holes refers) was not developed until the 1960s. He may be conflating memories of different events, certainly possible given the prevalence of stealing as a practice. For my purposes here, the significance of the story lies in what it reveals both about the ordinariness of this practice and about changing relations with lost lands, (2006, p.33).

Feldman, therefore, suggests possible reasons for the inaccuracies in Ibrahim's account. In a similar way, Kassem (2011) offers possible explanations for variations in accounts. She highlights variations in accounts of the death of 'the revolutionary leader of the Upper Galilee region', Abdullah el-Isbah, and says that '[a]gainst documented evidence,

I think my mother insisted that el-Isbah died on the day of her birth as a way of "punishing" him for his attitude towards her coming into the world,' (2011, p.32). Like these researchers, my focus was not on the accuracy of the participants' accounts, but rather on what the narrating of their stories revealed about what they wanted to convey to a foreign audience. Allen (2013, p.28), whose research in the West Bank and Gaza explores what has led Palestinians to 'perceive the inefficacy and even corruption in the human rights system', highlights contradictions between narratives in her text and seeks to explain them. For example, she argues that one participant criticised human rights organisations 'for publishing meaningless reports while doing nothing practical' for the Palestinian cause and then when asked what other work the organisations should carry out he suggests that they should be '"writing reports"' (p.85).

Kassem (2011) and Humphries and Khalili (2007) raise the question of silences in their texts. Kassem (2011) says she analyses silences, attempting to fill in the gaps and exploring why certain narratives were unspoken or unspeakable. She also examines moments of silencing, when the participants' families prevented them from sharing certain narratives. Humphries and Khalili (2007, p.224) also comment on silences, arguing that 'nationalist discourses and practices further construct remembering, through silencing some narratives and authorizing others.' They argue that Palestinian women feel authorised to narrate Nakba stories about material expropriation because they are considered to be central and 'sanctioned'. In research on Palestinian women in the Shatila camp in Lebanon, Sayigh (1998, p.47) argues that '[y]ounger,

politicized, or educated urban women are more likely to censor their accounts.' Some of the participants in this research censored themselves for fear of the repercussions of speaking freely on certain topics, which will be seen in coming chapters. As will be seen in chapter six, the subject of unspeakable narratives was discussed by the participants in this research and a few of the students transgressed by saying the 'unsayable'.

Many of the researchers whose work I explore in this section paid close attention to the ways in which their participants used language, recognising that through their choice of words Palestinians can communicate in complex ways, for example, resisting oppression and claiming belonging. In her research Kassem (2011) does in-depth analysis of the narratives she discusses, paying close attention to the use of language. This can be seen when she argues that one participant uses the name 'Salah al-Din Street', despite the fact that it has been renamed 'Herzl Street', in an effort to resist 'the erasure of Palestinian history,' (p.84) and she argues that at times participants used the plural form of verbs to indicate that 'theirs was a collective experience,' (p.113). I explore my participants' use of language throughout this thesis. For example, in chapter four I look at how participants use the images of 'prison' and 'ghetto' to evoke the claustrophobic oppression of restrictions under occupation and how they use the image of 'death' and living as a dead person in Palestine to convey the precarity of their lives.

Researchers within this category, such as Sayigh (2007), Muhanna (2013), Allan (2007) and Collins (2004), consider how their participants'

positioning and that of the researcher affect the narratives that were

shared. For example, Sayigh (2007), who explores the life stories of

Palestinian refugee women in the Shatila camp in Lebanon, argues that

factors such as generation, original town or village and the extent to which

the women are politically engaged affects their narrative structures. In

terms of the effect of a researcher's positioning on the narratives they

elicit, Muhanna, who explores the effects of Gazans living in prolonged

chronic insecurity and uncertainty on gender, recognises that her

positioning affected the ways in which her participants engaged with her.

She was also aware that her 'personal experiences and memories were

always present during the research process, and in the drafting of the final

text,' (2013, p.26). Similarly, Diana Allan says that she became aware that

what she was 'listening for' was shaped by 'prescribed conventions of

bearing witness' that prioritised among other things, 'emotionally charged

moments in which national narrative and self-narrative intertwine,' (2007,

p.260). Collins argues that the narratives Palestinians share reflect the

type of encounter that takes place and the positioning of the person who

is conducting the interviews. He suggested that Palestinians narrate

particular kinds of stories to human rights case workers who adopt a

'testimonial' model in which the researcher 'specifically encourages

respondents to narrate experiences of suffering and oppression,' (Collins,

2004, p.33) and different types of narratives with researchers like him who

adopt a more open-ended approach that allows 'multiple kinds of

narratives' to emerge (Collins, 2004, p.33). The distinction between the

two types of approaches was in my mind when I conducted my research

and I sought to avoid the 'testimonial' model in favour of the more open narrative model.

In part one, I explored Shalhoub-Kevorkian's (2003) work on how the pain experienced by mothers of Palestinian martyrs contrasts with the popular depictions of joyous bereaved mothers in the media, arguing that she uses her participants' narratives as evidence. However, I highlight the work of Buch who analyses a similar disjuncture between particular Palestinian experiences and popular perceptions in this section because she focuses more on the complexity of narratives. Buch drew on ethnographic research to investigate the gaps between how Palestinian women experience being married to men who are detained in Israeli prisons due to their resistance activities and 'how this is perceived in both the Palestinian meta-narrative and global psychological discourse,' (2010, p.12). In this research there was a similar contrast between some of the participants' personal narratives and Palestinian nationalist discourses and the narratives of international human rights advocates and activists, which will be explored in forthcoming chapters. One example of this was the distinction between the narratives that some of the participants shared about wanting to leave Palestine and Palestinian nationalist narratives and the narratives of international activists on the need for Palestinians to remain steadfast, as will be seen in chapter six.

Researchers who recognise the complexity of narratives argue that rather than being the voice of a sole participant, narratives are co-constructed with the researcher, with existing narratives and, if relevant, with others present when the narratives are elicited (for example, Kassem,

2011; Sayigh, 2007). For instance, the life story method favoured by

Fatma Kassem (2011) understands the voice elicited in the interview to be

'composed of diverse forces working on it and with it, including the voice

of the researcher,' (2011, p.17). Kassem (2011) argues that the narratives

elicited in her interviews are also co-constructed with the involvement of

family members present during the interviews. In a similar way, Sayigh

explores how collective memories are formed and considers how

narratives are co-constructed with audiences, arguing that the process of

co-construction enriches narratives by revealing what the collective

deems important (2007).

In addition to exploring how narratives are co-constructed with

others present at the interview, different researchers highlight the ways in

which participants co-construct existing narratives to which they had

access. This is important as it allows for an exploration of how collective

memory and nationalist narratives influence Palestinian participants,

rather than suggesting that the participants act independently of the

societies and communities of which they are part. Janette Habashi (2013,

p.428) reflects on the role of narratives, arguing that her participants

'created moments of freedom as they co-constructed existing national and

collective memories.' These ideas are particularly important for my

research and I explore how the narratives my participants shared drew on,

and engaged dialogically with, nationalist narratives. Collins argues that

personal narratives 'are constructed through a complex interaction

between individuals and the diverse set of existing narratives to which

they have access,' (2004, p.125). In a similar way, Ilana Feldman (2006)

argued that narratives can be at once personal and national accounts that are intentionally told in this way.

Collins suggests that when Palestinians participate in research with foreigners a Palestinian national identity is co-constructed that emphasises the 'suffering' the Palestinians have to endure so that foreigners have 'evidence' with which to try and influence the international community. He argues that when he considers the encounters he had he sees that

> They can be read as cultural practices through which both parties, by playing a particular role, participate in the constitution of Palestinian national identity. In the presence of "outside" visitors, Palestinians are expected to perform examples of what the visitors view as the essence of "Palestinianness" – namely, stories of suffering and victimization. The visitor, in turn, is expected to observe and record (in writing, on tape or film, in his or her memory) the "evidence" of suffering. (Collins, 2004, p.86)

In the quote above, Collins highlights how politicised the research encounter in Palestine can be. In research on 'over-research' in the Shatila Palestinian refugee camp in Lebanon, Sukarieh and Tannock (2012, p.500) argue that 'Shatila residents say that researchers regularly invoke "serving the Palestinian cause" as a principal reason why they should participate in these researchers' studies'. Furthermore, '[t]he NGOs who act as gatekeepers in the camp also tell residents that research participation is important for "giving voice" and "changing

perceptions" about Palestinian refugees, and thereby improving their conditions,' (Sukarieh and Tannock, 2012, p.500). However, after years of research with few signs of it being linked to positive social change, 'residents say that their expectations about the importance of research have diminished,' (Sukarieh and Tannock, 2012, p.500). I explore the politicised nature of the research encounter in this thesis as I consider the roles the participants and I adopted in relation to each other, cognisant of the fact that the interview could provide an opportunity for them to share their stories with an international audience.

This part concludes by examining the ways in which researchers explore how the political commitments of participants and researchers shape narratives. Allen (2009, p.162) argues that visible evidence of suffering and accompanying narratives are central to Palestinian nationalist representations as Palestinians lay claims to 'their status as deserving of human rights'. She gives an example of a survivor of the Israeli invasion of Jenin in April 2002 showing her wounded leg as she narrated how she was injured. Allen argues that it was an example of a moment when 'the subject is not simply a passive physicality produced by a modern form of sovereignty but one that actively produces a mode of conscious, articulate, albeit disorganized, political discourse,' (p.168). She asserts that '[s]uch messages are directed at diverse local, regional, and international audiences,' (p.168).

Laleh Khalili (2005) also highlights the political work that can be done by Palestinians' narratives. Examining Palestinian commemoration in refugee camps in Lebanon, she argues that at times there are 'heroic'

narratives about memorials and at others the narratives are 'tragic', with both kinds of narrative emerging from and responding to social relations and political contexts and both facing internal and external contestation. She asserts that

> The heroic narratives are mobilizing nationalist rhetorics that constitute the community as the deliberate and self-sacrificing agents of its own fate, that fate being a fully realized and territorialized nation state. Narratives of pain and suffering, on the other hand, tap into an international discourse of human rights and are deployed to compete against other disadvantaged and dispossessed communities for the attention of international human rights institutions (Khalili, 2005, p.31).

Since narratives and their contestation are multiple and complex, the approaches to narrative I discussed in earlier sections cannot disentangle these issues. Like Allen (2009), Khalili argues that narratives of suffering are designed to resonate with international human rights discourses to construct the Palestinians as deprived of the human rights they deserve. However, she also highlighted the ways in which heroic narratives can be mobilizing at a national level.

Collins (2004) examines the ways in which participants share narratives of suffering with internationals in the hope that by doing so they are helping to mobilise internationals to resist the occupation. Collins interrogated the interview dynamics, arguing that the kind of interaction he had with Balata residents was a kind of 'ritual characterized by a kind of symbolic violence – inflicted when the experience of suffering is

narratively re-enacted – and by an uneasy cooperation between visitor and visited,' (p.86). He suggests that his participants decided to participate in the ritual in the expectation that in doing so they were contributing to the suffering being redressed in an imagined future (Collins, 2004).

Allen (2009, p.169) also highlights the 'uneasy' dynamics between international visitors to a site of devastation and those who live there and want foreigners to bear witness.

> Before we could return to the house, a large, red-faced woman emerged, screaming. "Where is the world's conscience?!" she called out. "Who can do this to families?!" she cried. "I haven't slept! There is no security!" She was desperate, her emotions unruly. The outrage in her words of exhortation, lament, and lambaste flummoxed the small knot of foreigners. Her outstretched, upturned arms punctuated her diatribe, making her bulky frame even more formidable. Those who spoke no Arabic stared in perplexed worry as the woman continued, "Where are human rights and international law? Shame on you, shame on you." "You people, write! Write! Please, tell our story!" She was not angry at us, only reminding us of our responsibility. That was what we were there for: to tell Palestinians' story of sleeplessness and insecurity.

In sharing the narrative above, Allen (2009) draws attention to the ways in which some Palestinians use encounters with foreigners to appeal to international notions of human rights. The rhetorical and linguistic devices

that participants use to influence and persuade their audiences are explored by Saskia Witteborn (2007) in research on how Palestinians in the US express themselves and relate to others. These ideas are central to this research as a number of the students who participated said that they did so to appeal to foreigners as part of their resistance, as will be seen in chapter three. Witteborn carried out detailed analysis of life stories, paying close attention to both themes that ran through and across narratives and to how narrators convey meaning, engage, involve and persuade their audiences using linguistic and rhetorical devices such as: direct speech, spatial pointers, pronominal shifts, intensifiers, role reversals and appealing to 'a common humanity'. She gives the example of a narrator who used various means to create 'common bonds' with an American audience and bridge 'different cultural and socio-political identities, values, and expectations' (Witteborn, 2007, p.159) as he talked about the potentially contentious subject of the need for resistance. She also gives the example of this narrator using the role reversal of the audience being unable to feed their children to invite them 'to side with Palestinians and the mission to "*keep resisting until we are free*",' (Witteborn, 2007, p.160 – emphasis in the original). Witteborn highlights the complexity of narratives, arguing that narrators conveyed 'vulnerability' and 'resilience' and that '[n]arrating Palestinian experiences in the public event meant being an activist who informs and convinces people in person of the difficult political and humanitarian situation in Palestine,' (Witteborn, 2007, p.165).

This section has underlined just how complex narratives in general are and how Palestinian narratives are particularly complicated due to the

contentious political situation and the need to bring the illegal Israeli occupation to an end. The political commitment of researchers and activists sometimes takes precedence over the need for rigorous analysis of their participants' accounts, as discussed in the preceding sections. In contrast, this project seeks to maintain a strong political commitment, while also critically engaging with the narratives on which it is based. The scholars whose work I explored in this section recognised that the value of oral sources lies in how they produce the past from the perspective of the present. Implicit in many of their works was the idea that the participants were being agentic as they shaped stories about the past in particular ways for particular purposes. Some of the scholars highlighted the fact that particular accounts of the past can become standardised (Allan, 2007) and that participants sometimes draw on 'available narrative models' in similar ways (Collins, 2004), which is something that recurs in this thesis.

Importantly, the scholars in this part argued that the value of participants' stories was not determined by the extent to which they could be proved to be accurate. Rather they recognised that insights into Palestinian life can be gained by analysing the stories shared and exploring possible reasons for evident inaccuracies or discrepancies in accounts. Scholars raised the issue of silences and some explored what was unsayable, in addition to analysing how language can be used to convey meanings on different levels, for example resisting or claiming belonging through a particular choice of words. They also explored how the positioning of both participants and researchers affects the narratives shared and how narratives can be co-constructed with both others present

in the interview and with nationalist narratives and Palestinian collective memory. This part ended with an exploration of the political work of narratives and a discussion of how participants use narratives in an effort to mobilise internationals, which is central to this research, as will be seen in the conclusion and the chapters that follow. The concluding section of this chapter considers the implications for my research of the approaches to Palestinian narratives discussed in this part.

Conclusion: Interpreting Palestinian Voices

This critical review of the literature has argued that it is important to study narratives of Palestinian lives because they both allow unique insights into Palestinian social life and politics, and are sometimes themselves attempts at political interventions in that some participants seek to effect change by influencing audiences. The existing literature highlights the political role of Palestinian narratives that seek to inspire local and international political mobilisation against the illegal Israeli occupation that persists despite United Nations resolutions that Israel should fully withdraw from the Occupied Territories to allow a Palestinian state to be established.

I identified three main approaches to Palestinian stories that are designed to have particular effects and reflect the different political and methodological commitments of the researchers and the forms of their chosen genres of literature. I highlighted the way in which narratives were treated as testimonies or evidence in the genres of activism and human rights literature. Activists and researchers in these genres sought to use

stories about Palestinian life before the occupation and life under occupation to influence international opinion and mobilise support for international resistance efforts. They helpfully kept their texts simple and accessible, but did not deal with the complexities of narratives as this research seeks to do.

I identified a second approach, letting the narratives speak for themselves, which is common in journalistic genres. Similar to the approach in the first part, the narratives were treated as evidence. However, in contrast to the approach in part one, the editor, journalist and researchers who let the narratives speak for themselves prioritised the agency of their participants by contextualising the narratives and then presenting them to the reader without intervening analysis or conclusions in order to avoid influencing the narratives with their interpretations.

As Riessman (2008) argues, however, narratives do not speak for themselves. The ways in which the narratives were co-constructed, the motivation for participating in the research and many other factors will all have affected the narratives the participants shared. Texts in the second approach, much like those in part one, do not engage with that complexity because their authors avoid analysing the accounts in keeping with the approach of the journalistic genres into which some of the texts fit. While it appears that the narratives in part two are solely produced by the participants or interviewees, what is not explored is how their aims and interests and the interview context will have helped shape the narratives that were elicited. The authors of these texts also do not point their readers to the significance of the narratives, i.e. what they reveal about

the outlook of the participants. Furthermore, like the researchers and activists in part one, Malek and Hoke (2014) do not engage with questions of accuracy and memory work in relation to the stories shared.

In contrast to the approaches in the first two genres of literature, in the third scholarly social sciences genre, the researchers focused on the complexity of narratives, considering how their participants told their stories, what led them to share stories in the ways that they did and how context affected both how the narratives were produced and analysed. These researchers highlighted the complexity of memory, arguing that narrated memories are not accurate reflections of the past, but rather constructions from the perspective of the present. Some of the researchers in this section investigated the political roles that Palestinian narratives played. For example, Allen (2009) explored the ways in which Palestinian narratives, alongside visible evidence of suffering, were used to depict the Palestinians as deserving of the human rights that are denied them; a political discourse designed to mobilise local, regional and international audiences. These themes are of central relevance to the arguments that run through this thesis.

In my research I contextualise the stories my participants told and critically examine the narratives in themselves and in relation to the accounts of other participants and the literature more broadly. There are six key ideas from the literature that are central to this thesis. The first is that memory is a social construction that reflects present-day interests and concerns. I consider how the ways in which the stories participants told about the Nakba, the Naksa and the first and second intifadas

reflected their pain and frustration with the continuing occupation. The second is that the positioning of Palestinian university students affects the stories they share and how they draw on collective memories. I explore how factors such as religious and political beliefs, gender and social class affect the ways in which the participants told their stories and the stories they told. I argue that the differences in the messages the participants sought to share through participating in the research reflected the differences in their positioning. The third is that like Allen (2013), I consider it valuable to analyse contradictions within participant accounts and the instances when participants contradict each other's narratives because this reveals areas of tension, contestation and uncertainty.

Inspired by Kassem (2011) and Humphries and Khalili (2007), the fourth idea that I take from the literature is the importance of being attentive to silences and to canonical narratives (of how life ought to be lived) as these are indicative of the pressures on young Palestinians to characterise their lives in particular ways. The fifth point is that I pay attention to the significance of the ways in which my participants used language, exploring, for example, how word choice helps to evoke a hostile and repressive Palestine. Collins (2004) argued that participants took part in his study in the hope that it would help to improve their lives. This resonates with how a number of the participants in this study reflected on their reasons for participating in this research. Thus this is the sixth point I take from the literature, the idea that for some students participating in the research was part of their efforts to raise awareness about the occupation and increase support for the Palestinian cause.

This thesis investigates how Palestinian university students participated in interviews with me, a foreign researcher. Over the course of the study, it became clear that many of them agreed to take part in order to convey particular messages to an international audience. The thesis therefore draws on examples of Palestinians using interviews and/or encounters with foreigners to highlight, and give impetus to, their legitimate calls for their human rights to be granted (For example, Allen, 2009; Collins, 2004). Rather than this being something that is explored alongside the main research area, I argue that my research makes a contribution to the existing literature by making this the focus of the research. This requires an investigation of the techniques and processes involved in trying to persuade an international audience for particular purposes. This will be explored in the empirical chapters that follow the methodology chapter.

Chapter 2

Listening to Palestinian Lives: Methodological and Political Issues

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Introduction

'By the way, I…I just invited everyone who's just hearing this
record to … to look, err… to see the movie, to watch the movie
"Forgiveness"'.

The comments above from Montaser, a pseudonym chosen by the 22-
year-old English Literature and Translation student at Birzeit University,
reveal that his words are intended for a wider audience than me the
researcher. He also signifies that he is not dependent on me to be a
conduit for his words, deciding to speak to the imagined international
audience himself. His narrative reminds me of Alessandro Portelli's
argument that the presence of a recording device can incline an interview
towards 'monologic public statement' (1997, p.13). It also raises key
questions about how to interpret the narratives in a way that takes into
account the participants' intentions, a subject with which both this chapter
and the thesis engage.

Montaser's narrative provides one example of the ways in which
the interviews were sometimes consciously used for advocacy, which will
be explored further in the next chapter. Like Montaser, who lives in a
village just outside of Birzeit, some of the other participants saw the
interviews as an opportunity for stories about the injustice they suffered to
reach a broader audience and deemed me responsible for ensuring their
words were shared widely with those abroad, who would then hopefully be
inspired to engage in opposing the Israeli occupation. The presence of the

digital recorder may have contributed to this because it indicated that a participant's 'words will be repeated, elsewhere, to an absent undetermined audience,' (Portelli, 1997, p.13).

The ways in which participants sought to use the interviews for different purposes raises questions about how to interpret their accounts on living under occupation. This chapter considers the methodological, epistemological and political issues raised by my research. Palestinians in the West Bank have numerous opportunities to participate in interviews of different kinds (Collins, 2004), which some see as opportunities to resist the occupation by countering prevailing discourses about both Palestinians and the occupation. John Collins (2004, p.3) argues that when he went to Palestine as a PhD candidate in 1996 he was conscious of how saturated Palestine was with academics, and researchers more generally, who form part of what is sometimes called 'the Palestine industry'. Many of those he interviewed had already participated in numerous interviews with journalists, scholars and human rights workers. Sukarieh and Tannock (2012, p.496) discuss the issue of 'over-research' in their work on its effects on the residents of the Shatila refugee camp in Beirut and argue that it is particularly prevalent in communities that have characteristics that include having 'experienced some form of crisis … and/or have engaged in active resistance to the conditions of their poverty and marginalisation'.

In a similar way to Collins's experiences, some of the participants I interviewed said they had been interviewed before, but unlike participants in Sukarieh and Tannock's (2012) research, none of the students who

took part in this research conveyed the idea that they were jaded with taking part in foreign research and a number of them explicitly described taking part in the research as an opportunity. The socio-political context, the political importance for some Palestinians of sharing their experiences under occupation with foreign audiences and the interest from foreigners in recording Palestinians' voices, raised a number of questions about how to treat the narratives elicited in this research, which is the focus of this chapter.

This is a framing chapter that outlines what I was listening for as I conducted the interviews and analysed transcripts. When I began my research I wanted to explore the interplay between the stories Palestinian parents and grandparents told their children about life under occupation, and the young Palestinians' interpretations of their own experiences of life in the occupied West Bank. I felt that exploring the effects of occupation across generations from the perspective of articulate and critically-engaged young Palestinians would contribute to understandings of the effects of living under occupation and thereby in a very small way support movements working to bring the occupation to an end. For this reason I chose to base my research on semi-structured interviews with the participants, starting with a question about what their parents and grandparents told them about life under occupation.

However, when I began analysing the interviews, using a combination of thematic analysis and an examination of how the narratives worked, I recognised how important it was not to treat the participants' accounts simply as truths 'beyond the telling' (Back, 2012a,

p.248) or as representative of young Palestinians living under occupation,
just as it was important not to reduce the participants' emotional,
impassioned narratives to 'fiction'. It became clear that it would be
valuable to analyse the ways in which the participants shaped their stories
and to consider not only how the narratives themselves were constructed,
but also what led the participants to tell the stories they told in the ways
that they did, which chapter three will explore in detail. Understanding the
purported intentions of different participants was central to deciding how
to approach the analysis of the interviews as the messages the students
sought to convey affected the stories they shared and the ways in which
they told their stories.

This chapter begins with a discussion of the methods used. It
outlines the data collection process and highlights the issues raised by
transcribing and translating interviews. For transcription conventions, see
Table 2, and see 'Interviewing in Arabic' for an outline of some of the
issues raised by conducting interviews in Arabic. The chapter then
focuses on the methodological and epistemological questions raised by
the research. It discusses both what I was listening for and the surprises
and moments of breach. It also outlines the status that I am giving the
narratives because the value of research that fails to recognise its
theoretical assumptions is highly questionable (David Silverman, 2013).
This chapter seeks to outline the assumptions and theoretical
underpinnings of this research, highlighting its main focus and pointing
towards the contribution it seeks to make.

PART 1: Methods

At the outset of this research I was interested in how young Palestinians narrated stories about life under occupation passed down to them by their parents, grandparents and other relatives and how they told stories about their own lives. For that reason I conducted semi-structured one-on-one interviews in order to give the participants space to share personal stories about their lives and the stories passed down to them by previous generations. However, in a few cases the students I approached did not want to be interviewed alone and invited their friends to join them, so I conducted a few joint interviews and a small focus group. The reason I selected interviews as my preferred research method is because they allow for an exploration of how participants understand 'their experiences and social worlds,' (Ritchie and Lewis, 2003). Although interviews are 'symbolic interactions', it is still possible to gain 'knowledge of the social world beyond the interaction' (Ritchie and Lewis, 2003, p.140), which is what this research seeks to do.

Silverman describes the approach of selecting participants to interview or for focus groups as 'manufacturing' data rather than 'finding' it in the field (2013, p.31). However, I would argue that research centred on interviews and focus groups is important if the research setting is the best place to access the data that the research seeks to elicit. I would also question whether the term 'manufacturing data' is appropriate when a key research focus is the dynamics and processes of the interview itself.

In each of the research locations I invited the participants to choose the exact site of the interviews, which included the Birzeit University

library, outside on the grounds at Birzeit University, cafés in Birzeit, a friend's flat in Birzeit, a family house near Ramallah, a school building in Nablus and cafés in Nablus. I then asked the participants to select pseudonyms for themselves, which are the names used in this thesis. I invited the participants to decide how to spell their pseudonyms in English because there are multiple variations in the spellings of Arabic names in English and I wanted to give the participants the opportunity to choose for themselves, rather than imposing a particular spelling on them. This is why some of the names used here do not correspond to traditional spellings.

The interviews I conducted were semi-structured in that I had an interview schedule with an opening question 'what did your parents and grandparents tell you about their lives' and suggestions for follow-up questions, but the shape of the interviews was to a large extent determined by the participants and my interactions with them. Some participants responded at length to questions or prompts, while others offered much shorter answers. I did not interrupt the participants while they were sharing their narratives, although at times the interviews were disrupted by friends coming to greet the participants or me.

Writing down the words of others

The data on which this thesis builds were both recorded with a digital voice recorder and transcribed. Although I chose to work with transcripts of my interviews, I recognise that transcribing is interpretive and transcriptions are 'incomplete, partial, and selective,' (Riessman, 2008, p.50). My transcripts exclude certain aspects of speech and they are

constrained by writing conventions and the limits of the page or screen, therefore the representation of speech they provide is only partial. The choices I made about how to represent my participants' speech were informed by both my theoretical commitments and constraints of resources and time (Riessman, 2008).

I transcribed the English interviews and a few of the Arabic interviews and then for reasons of expediency, I paid a Syrian transcriber living in Canada to transcribe the rest of the Arabic interviews, according to conventions I outlined. I selected a Syrian transcriber who was not living in the Middle East, rather than a Palestinian translator to minimise the risk of the transcriber knowing the participants or their families. I also got the transcriber to sign a confidentiality form agreeing not to share the voice recordings or transcriptions with anyone else and to destroy the digital voice files after each transcription. Given that the interviews were voice recorded and not filmed, most of the visual cues were lost, with the exception of those I was able to note down while conducting the interviews. Other aspects of the interviews were not captured by the process of transcription because 'the tone and volume range and the rhythm of popular speech carry implicit meaning and social connotations which are not reproducible in writing,' (Portelli, 1991, p.47). This meant that although a change in intonation can completely change the meaning of a statement, this was not reflected in my transcripts (Portelli, 1991). It was also not possible accurately to capture the pauses or changes in the speed and rhythm of the participants' speech in the transcripts (Portelli,

1991). For this reason I had to listen back to sections of the interviews I was working with for deeper analysis of the texture and mood.

The transcription conventions I used were that every audible word uttered, hesitations, repetition, restarts, interruptions and language switching should be recorded on the page and that all of the interviewer's questions should be included in the transcript. However, I wanted to avoid creating 'a transcript so minutely faithful to sounds that it turns a beautiful speech into an unreadable page,' (Portelli, 1997, p.15). One complication of the transcription process was that I did not feel it was appropriate or ethical to give the transcriber the initial recording that included the participants' pseudonyms and sometimes their actual names, which meant in the case of joint interviews and the focus group I had to go through the recordings a few times to work out who said what. This was particularly difficult when the participants all spoke at once or talked over each other.

Once I had transcriptions of all the interviews I started to read through them and annotate them. In the case of the Arabic interviews, I translated some words or phrases that I was unfamiliar with into English and then began my initial analysis of all the interviews. Generally I analysed the interviews and selected the extracts I wanted to include in each chapter in the original interview language(s) so as not to lose any of the richness of the narratives and in recognition of the fact that translating the interviews into English early in the research process may have broken the bonds between the Palestinian Arabic dialect and Palestinian

identity/culture resulting in the loss of some of the meanings in the text (see Temple and Young, 2004, p.174).

Only after that did I begin working on a polished translation of the Arabic extracts. I initially did this on my own and then with my Arabic teacher. We tried to maintain a balance between ensuring the text was comprehensible, while also staying true to the words uttered and the register used. At times we argued over the most suitable word to use or the appropriate translation of a phrase. It was particularly demanding to come to an agreement over phrases where ellipsis was used in Arabic in such a way that the sentence would have been rendered nonsensical with a direct translation into English or where poetic language was used in Arabic when there was no direct English equivalent. Another researcher presented with the recordings of the Arabic interviews I conducted would produce a different translation as 'there is no single correct translation of a text,' (Temple and Young, 2004, p.165). In the process of working with me on the translation of the Arabic extracts included in my research, my Arabic teacher will also have had an effect on the research because, as Bogusia Temple and Alys Young (2004, p.171) argue, 'the translator makes assumptions about meaning equivalence that make her an analyst and cultural broker as much as a translator.'

The dialogues and how they unfolded

There were a number of themes repeated across the interviews and some that recurred among participants who had similar political or religious outlooks. Unsurprisingly, narratives about the injustice of the occupation ran through all the interviews. There were narratives about the effect of

the Nakba, Naksa and first intifada on Palestinian families elicited by questions seeking to explore what grandparents and parents had told the participants about their lives. There were also stories about the trauma the participants had endured living through the second intifada and negotiating the architecture of occupation. From some participants there were narratives about resisting the occupation, which included resisting through encouraging foreigners to get involved with international resistance movements, and narratives that expressed their determination to stay in Palestine.

Some of the devout Muslim students shared narratives about the importance of resisting the occupation with strong religious convictions that would eventually lead to Muslims being victorious over 'the Jews'. The ways in which participants used the term 'the Jews' in this research ranged from those who sought solely to differentiate between Jewish Israelis and what Israel terms Arab Israelis, most of whom now identify as Palestinian citizens of Israel (Rudoren, 2012), to those who used the term 'the Jews' to connote the 'enemy' against which they as Palestinians have to fight. The fact that Israel defines itself as a Jewish state (Beaumont, 2014) and is occupying Palestine and oppressing the Palestinians complicates an already extremely complex situation. Some of the participants drew on Islam to argue that there would be a global battle between Muslims and Jews until the end of time and some used their readings of religious texts to make essentialist comments about Jews and to express anti-Jewish racism. As Nira Yuval-Davis and Jamie Hakim

(2015, p.3) argue, '[e]very ideological and political religious movement uses a particular interpretation of the religion as its legitimation.'

Karim Murji and John Solomos argue that Robert Miles suggests that 'Jews have been racialized through discourse' (2005, p.11) and they highlight 'the uncertain locations of Jews in racial discourse' (2005, p.17). Miles suggests that racialization refers to

> cultural or political processes or situations where race is invoked as an explanation or a means of understanding … [This] has become the basis for the broader conception of racialization as expressing the ways in which social structures and ideologies become imbued with "racial" meanings, so that social and political issues are conceived along racial lines (Murji and Solomos, 2005, p.11).

In Palestine, the situation is complicated by the fact that some young Palestinians' only experience of Jewish people is as Israeli occupation soldiers and settlers and the fact that many Israeli politicians promote what Stefano Bellin (2015, p.3) terms 'the fallacious identification between Jewishness and Zionism', which can lead to the conflating of the terms 'Jews' and 'Israelis'. It is also complicated by religious conceptualisations of the conflict, which were conceived by some as being a battle between Muslims and Jews (as mentioned above); and by the fact that Jews from anywhere in the world are entitled to immigrate to Israel under the Law of Return and gain Israeli citizenship, whereas first and subsequent generations of Palestinian refugees from the Nakba and Naksa are denied the right of return. The combination of religion and the occupation made it

extremely difficult to decide how to treat narratives about 'the Jews'. In the end, I decided to present the narratives with contextualisation from both within the interview and literature to allow readers to gain an understanding of the subtleties of the different ways in which participants used the term 'the Jews'. Many Palestinians, however, make a point of distinguishing between the Jews as a people and Jewish Israelis, as will be seen in the accounts of a number of the participants in this research.

A few of the participants shared stories that ran counter to nationalist narratives about resisting the occupation and staying in Palestine; some of the participants said they wanted to leave Palestine and live abroad. There were also a range of different narratives about the future of Palestine, elicited by questions about how the participants saw the future. In general it is difficult to make generalised statements about how the interviews unfolded because no two interviews followed the same course, reflecting differences in gender, social class, political and religious commitments, life histories, personalities and interests of the participants.

PART 2: What am I listening for?

Conducting research as someone who opposes the illegal Israeli occupation, it was tempting to treat the narratives as truths about Palestinian life that constitute 'evidence' for an international audience of what it is like for Palestinians to live through injustice (see Collins, 2004 and part one of chapter one). This was all the more the case given how emotionally involved I was with the narratives the participants shared with me and the extent to which I identified with the participants who shared painful and traumatic stories about the oppression of life under occupation

(see Kvale, 1996, p.85). However, the ideas people express do not constitute a 'direct representation of experience' and traumatic experiences, conflicts and unconscious desires can affect how people are able to access and share memories and formulate narratives about their experiences. Furthermore, not everything people say is true, sometimes they 'lie or willingly conceal' (Schiff, 2012, p.38). As Portelli (1991, p.50) argues, 'oral sources tell us not just what people did, but what they wanted to do, what they believed they were doing, and what they now think they did' and participants can use narratives strategically. Recognition of the flaws of uncritically treating Palestinians' stories as evidence that must be true by virtue of how Palestinians are positioned in relation to the occupation (see Collins, 2004, p.12) pushed me to interrogate the narratives further.

When I started to study the interview transcripts I realised that the participants were narrating self-conscious socially-shaped accounts of themselves and their lives to, and in conjunction with, an external audience and that it was important not to treat their accounts simply as truths 'beyond the telling' (Back, 2012a, p.248) or to assume the participants' authenticity could be 'rendered through a faithful transcription' of their voices (Back, 2012a, p.248). It would have been problematic to treat the participants' narratives 'as providing a simple picture of the inside of their heads,' (Silverman, 2013, p.52) because narratives are much more complex than that and theirs reflected the interview context and dynamics. At the same time, treating the participants' accounts as fiction would not have done justice to their powerful and passionate narratives. This raised the important

epistemological question of how to treat the narratives. The rest of the
chapter explores this, beginning with a discussion of what I was listening
for.

In this thesis one of the things I listened for was the ways in which
Palestinian university students used interviews with me, a foreign
researcher, politically. In this context I sought to explore how the
participants' religious and/or political commitments were integral to both
the process of telling their stories and the stories that they told and how
identities were shaped through their stories. Dina Matar (2011, pp.161-2)
argues that 'the very idea of "Palestinian-ness" begins to be visually
performed and mediated' through a process of Palestinians acting as both
witnesses and testifiers of their oppression at the hands of the Israeli
occupation for outside audiences. I was interested in this and in the
scripts the participants drew on as they narrated their lives, described the
Palestinian landscape and told stories of past, present and future.

The stories I was told are likely to have been affected by the fact
that I explained that my research was about young Palestinians'
experiences of belonging in Palestine before starting the interviews
because awareness of a researcher's interests can affect participants'
responses (Silverman, 2013). In the process of conducting and analysing
the research, however, my focus shifted to the different ways in which the
participants narrated their lives, which included discussions of belonging
and marginalisation. Their accounts reflected their awareness that I was a
British outsider eager to learn more about life under occupation, which
was evident in the detailed accounts they gave about negotiating the
occupation and the ways in which they checked that I had understood all

of the details they shared. Portelli (1991) argues that participants often tell researchers what they think the researchers want to hear, thereby revealing their impressions of the researchers. However, as the next chapter shows, the research dynamic can be more complex than this suggests because participants are also agentic. Many of the young Palestinians who participated in this research made concerted efforts to use the interviews as an opportunity to tell stories they wanted me to hear and share, which was in keeping with their political and/or religious commitments. Drawing on their research on 'over-research' in the Shatila refugee camp, Sukarieh and Tannock (2012, p.506) argue that participants 'seek to exert their own agendas in shaping the research process, from wherever it originates'.

Like narratives in general, those of the participants in this research were 'situated and strategic,' designed to give particular impressions of life under occupation in accordance with the various 'circulating discourses and regulatory practices' (Riessman, 2008, p.183) to which the participants had access and/or were subjected. The narratives reflected the varied religious and political views of the participants and they were also gendered. As I conducted interviews and analysed transcripts one of the things I listened for was intentionality; the ways in which the participants consciously shaped their narratives in line with secular nationalist or religious discourses about oppression and resistance. I was also listening for repeated themes, phrases or concepts across interviews. The question of how to interpret narratives is a complex one. Both the interpretations in this research and understandings of the intentions

contained in the narratives were arrived at through a combination of analysing the narratives in the context of relevant literatures, comparing narratives across interviews and comparing narratives within a single account. Where the complexity of accounts merited it I also drew on discursive analysis techniques to facilitate in arriving at nuanced interpretations.

Although many of the narratives shared were about the past – family experiences during the Nakba and first *intifada* and the participants' experiences during the second intifada, I was listening for the ways in which they were also about the present because the remembered past is revised and edited to fit with present-day identities (Riessman, 2008) and understandings. As Brian Schiff (2012, p.40) argues, the way in which we discuss the past is affected by our reading of the present. 'As our lives develop, so too do we develop new reworkings of the meaning of the past. The past is never just the past but, as Cohler (1982) argues, it is always "a presently understood past."' Charles Fernyhough (2014) puts it simply

> What you remember is very much shaped by who you are now
> and how you feel now … How you feel now about your life and
> yourself affects the sorts of things, the kinds of stories that your
> memory will be able to put together.

The stories the participants in this research told and the memories they shared have to be interpreted alongside their varied reactions to the continued occupation and Israeli encroachment on their land after the sacrifices of the intifadas failed to result in progress towards Palestinian liberation. In exploring the participants' narratives, I recognised that they

'*do not merely refer to past experience but create experiences*' (Mattingly, 1998, p.8) for both me as the interviewer and for a broader imagined audience.

Some of the students who participated in the research were explicit about perceiving their participation as part of their efforts to resist the Israeli occupation. As Leslie Marmon Silko argues, stories 'are the tools we need not just to survive, but to overcome,' (Portelli, 1997, pp.40). They can be 'active instruments for changing the world – because there is power in words. They are made of air but leave their mark on material reality,' (Portelli, 1997, pp.40-41). The interviews were seen by some participants as an opportunity to correct erroneous perceptions of Palestinians, which can be seen in the humorous comments Sultan made at the end of an interview when I asked whether there was anything he wanted to add. After an extended narrative about the social problems that need to be addressed in Palestinian society, he said

> We are not like, we are not as backwards as people think, because, because ... we get, we get weird *emails* in the summer program 'I do not mind living in tents!'

> **[Laughs] ... no no no, please tell me that's not true!**

> No, I am talking about an email that we really *got.*

> **'I don't ... I don't mind living in a tent [^]!' [Suppressing laughter]**

> I think it's harder to find a tent than an apartment here **[Laughs]**. Where shall we find you a *tent*?

[Continues laughing]

Sultan took the opportunity to counter some of the stereotypes about 'primitive' Palestinians that he has encountered and he wittily disrupted the power dynamic of superior foreigners seeking to help needy Palestinians by ridiculing the ignorance and superiority inherent in their assumptions. In doing so, he underlined the fact that Palestinians are not inferior to foreigners and demonstrated that he considers the interview to be a potential means to change perceptions. This suggests that throughout the interview he is conscious of the fact that his words are intended for a wider audience and that in part he is performing to that imagined audience.

While Silverman (2013) cautions against building research projects on interviews, he cites Seale who argues that "'interviews can be treated as a "resource" … as long as researchers are aware of the problem of relying on someone else's report, who often has particular interests in presenting a particular version,'" (Silverman, 2013, p.52). Throughout this research I explore the different messages the participants convey and the different impressions they seek to give of life under occupation and I interrogate what leads them to shape their narratives in the ways that they do. At the same time, I am conscious of the fact that 'the actual findings from the data cannot (and should not) be easily separated out from the form of their production,' (Skeggs, Thumim et al., 2008, p.3).

'Memory-Making': Different scripts

The narratives crafted by the participants in this research reflect the fact that 'memory-making' is central to the Palestinian struggle for liberation, as mentioned earlier (Allen, 2006). Some of the participants considered sharing stories and trying to change impressions about Palestine and the Palestinians to be a way to resist the occupation. The ways in which they told stories sometimes drew on recognised political and nationalist scripts designed to counter misrepresentations of both Palestinians and the situation in Palestine.

The participants' narratives reflected the fact that 'memory-making' is a political, collective project that is central to constructing and consolidating Palestinian identities, as well as being a site of struggle between 'dominant and subordinate discourses and histories,' (Matar, 2011, p.9). As Matar (2011, p.2) argues Palestinian narratives

> must be understood in the present context, within which they were told and narrated, and read as sites of struggle between at least two overlapping contests, the internal struggle between popular and official nationalist views and the international struggle between Palestinian and Israeli views of the history of the conflict.

In this thesis I explore the different ways in which, through their narratives, Palestinian students struggled against Israeli readings of the conflict and, depending on their positioning, challenged secular nationalist or Islamist perspectives about how to achieve liberation.

In this thesis some themes were repeated across a number of interviews, as were ways of describing the Palestinian landscape and the condition of Palestinian life, and in some cases these repetitions echoed the literature on Palestine and the Palestinians, which points towards scripts and collective understandings of the Palestinian situation. One example of this was the way in which some of the participants described Palestine as a prison or compared it to a prison, which echoes the literature on Palestine. The first time I visited Palestine in Spring 2010 a friend from Goldsmiths and I had mint tea on the pavement outside a small hotel with a 24-year-old man who was studying at Al-Quds Open University and an older man who was one of the owners of the hotel and both of the men said 'we live in a large prison'. This sentiment was repeated by some of the students who participated in this research. The literature on Palestine also describes the effect of the occupation as turning Palestine into a prison, for example, Tanya Reinhart (2006, p.157) argued that Palestinians have been forced to live in 'a complex system of prisons'. These repetitions suggest that there are popular, collective ways of describing the condition of Palestinian life that seek to capture the oppressiveness of the occupation as they describe its effects on the landscape. This will be explored further in chapter four.

This thesis both interrogates the work the participants' narrations do and considers what might lead to the production of such narratives, treating them as 'creative constructions of the past told in particular circumstances for particular reasons that are not always self-evident, even to the teller,' (Collins, 2004, p.12). In analysing the interviews I explore 'collective memory', not as a psychological reality, but in terms of themes

repeated across the narratives (Passerini, 2012) because the value of what recurs across interviews is not determined by its factual accuracy. 'Sometimes, what is recurrent is a mistake, of either date or information, and this mistake must be explained in its functionality to the narration,' (Passerini, 2012, p.33). As Portelli (1991, p.2) argues, there is value in examining narratives that are factually incorrect since '"wrong" tales' 'allow us to recognize the interests of the tellers, and the dreams and desires beneath them.' In addition to exploring how narratives work and conducting thematic analysis, I have drawn on some discursive analysis techniques in cases where the complexity of an account merited it.

In exploring the narratives, I am also conscious of the fact that what the participants told me as stranger may have differed in many ways from what they shared with their friends or relatives; from the 'facts' they were attempting to remember or describe; and from what they actually thought or did (Harrisson, 1947 cited in Back, 2012b). Erving Goffman (1990, p.69) suggests that people can intentionally create a 'false impression' in everyday life without blatantly lying and he argues that even when a person attempts to create a certain impression, this does not mean that they fully believe in it, which is something I seek to explore in this thesis.

The pressure to conform to dominant ways of being can mean that in the context of an interview, participants present idealised versions of themselves that correspond with societal expectations. Goffman (1990, p.45) argues that 'when the individual presents himself before others, his performance will tend to incorporate and exemplify the officially accredited values of the society, more so, in fact, than does his behaviour

as a whole.' In some cases participants were at pains to highlight their love for Palestine and their commitment to staying in the West Bank lest they seem insufficiently committed to the Palestinian cause, when some of their narratives conveyed ambivalence about the idea of staying. Their narratives will also be a reflection of how well they knew me and the extent to which they felt able to trust me. Some of the participants I saw daily, some weekly, I ate at the homes of some, stayed in the home of one, while others I only met a couple of times or just once.

In this thesis one of the things I was listening for was the ways in which nationalist narratives about Palestinian steadfastness and what it means to be young and Palestinian were reproduced in the participants' narratives as '"[p]rivate memories cannot, in concrete studies, be readily unscrambled from the effects of dominant discourses,"' (Popular Memory Group. 1982, p.211, cited in Collins, 2004, p.22). However, I was also listening for the surprises, the instances where the participants' narratives deviated from nationalist discourses, for the moments when what was said, or not said, was not rehearsed, but rather surprised both participant and interviewer. This will be explored further in the next section.

Moments of opening

While the section above outlined what I was listening for, there was much more than variations of reproduced scripts and self-conscious narratives in the interviews. What I also heard, even from some of the participants who saw the interviews as part of their efforts to resist the occupation, were moments of opening, or breach, where the participants' emotions came out in spite of themselves and they cried, or fought back tears, or

said things that surprised themselves as much as me, or confounded

expectations. I want briefly to explore these moments and their

significance in this thesis.

My first interview with Ahlam in Nablus evoked painful memories

for the 21-year-old Business Management student that she had not

thought about for a long time. She said 'you get to fo-... like I forget about

these stuff most of the time, I never remember them until ... something

happens and and something triggers me to remember them, *really!* So err

...'. Her false start, hesitation and repetition suggest that talking about

remembering traumatic events and episodes puts her in what Wetherell

(1998) terms a troubled subject position, suggesting that it is a struggle to

contain the emotion stirred up by remembering painful episodes. As

Collins (2004, p.10) argues, 'memory can be a site of trauma.'

Ahlam, who lives in Nablus, agreed to be interviewed again.

However, after twenty-minutes of the follow-up interview she had to leave

to greet a guest. She said I could interview her at a later date, but when I

met her in a café in Nablus for the follow-up interview, she invited one of

her young woman friends to be interviewed alongside her and hardly

participated in the interview at all. It seemed like inviting her friend was an

attempt to avoid being the focus of the interview herself. This shows the

extent to which the interview was much more than an exercise in adhering

to a particular script or self-consciously attempting to convey a particular

impression of life under occupation. It was also an unexpected stage for

the re-experiencing of some of the pain and trauma she had lived through.

Ahlam's reluctance to re-live the painful memories that this research

elicited may explain why years later when I asked her to reflect on the interview process and to share her thoughts about the situation now, Ahlam read my message, but did not respond.

The interviews also functioned as a stage where scripts that deviated from regulatory discourses were rehearsed. Counter narratives about marginalisation and exasperation with Palestinian conservatism and/or the Palestinian Authority (PA) and political parties were shared, which will be explored further in chapter seven. Often these narratives were self-conscious, with the participants aware not only of the distance between their narratives and the nationalist position, but also of the gap between the Palestinian identities they constructed and outsiders' expectations of what it means to Palestinian. For example, Nour Ahmad, a final year Sociology student at Birzeit University, said 'Jerusalem, I mean, in my opinion is only a geographic speck and we are stupid to kill each other over it. You must be shocked to hear this talk from a Palestinian girl.' In the context of the interview her dismissive comments about Jerusalem can be read, in part, as the result of her distress and exasperation at the losses her family, and Palestinians in general, have suffered as a result of the occupation. However, her comments could also be seen as an attempt to connect with, or impress, me as an outsider (and other foreigners who may hear her words), whom she may think hold similar views to the one she expressed.

Silences

In the research I was also cognisant of the silences: silences due to people not wanting to participate in the research, preferring to tell me their

stories away from my voice recorder, or not to speak to me at all, and silences as a result of participants wanting to avoid questions or topics they thought could endanger them. The silences highlighted what was at stake for the students who did participate in the research and the risks they took in participating. Passerini (2012, p.33) argues that it is also important to try and interpret the meaning of silences. She suggests that 'silence is always relative, in the sense that it is such in relation to a context or to other sources or to our expectations. These relations must be identified as clearly as possible,' which I seek to do in this thesis.

When I asked Wadee', a Sociology student at Birzeit, whether he was involved in any activism or part of a group planning for a different future, he said 'That's a jail sentence right there if I answer you,' to which I replied 'we'll move on.' Similarly, when I asked Lateefa, one of the young women participants, whether she was interested in politics, she said 'By God, I don't engage in politics much, because as I told you, there are spies everywhere. The walls have ears. I am not able to speak. Politics gives me a headache.' Similarly, Dinar Matar said that one of her Palestinian interviewees in Amman said '"Walls have ears",' (2011, p.60) and another in Damascus said that 'talking would lead only to more persecution and misery,' (2011, p.60). These comments give an indication of the risks participants face if they are open about contentious subjects and Lateefa's remarks suggest that politics is an area where there may be silences or gaps in the interviews.

At both Birzeit and An-Najah universities some of the students I approached did not want to take part in the research and the devout

Muslim young men at Birzeit University, who Sultan identified and approached on my behalf, did not want to be interviewed. However, some of those who did agree to participate changed their minds when they learnt more about what the interviews would entail and one withdrew in the interview itself. For example, one prospective participant who turned up for an interview at the flat where I was staying got agitated and said she could not participate when I said I needed to record the interview and asked her to sign a consent form. However, when I bumped into her and one of her young woman friends at Birzeit University at a later date they talked at length on the subject of my research off the record.

Noor, a 19-year-old woman, participated in a joint interview with a twenty year old called Muhaned who was studying Trade, and then during the interview outside a faculty at Birzeit University she felt uncomfortable and withdrew from the interview, saying she did not want me to use her narratives. Another participant, Muslima, participated in a joint interview with her friend and classmate Salwa, and agreed to take part in a follow-up joint interview, but then did not attend. Salwa said that Muslima's father had advised his daughter not to participate in a second interview. She did not provide details about what led to that advice. While Salwa reported that Muslima still agreed to her narratives being used, she said that Muslima was nervous about having taken part at all. I did not see Muslima again, but her absence from the second interview raised ethical questions about how to treat the narratives she shared in the first interview. On the one hand it could be argued that if, having spoken to her family, she was uncomfortable with participating then none of her narratives should be

used. However, on the other hand, given that she said she was still happy for me to use her powerful and emotional narratives, it would not have done justice to her or her stories to pretend that they were never shared, which was the position I took.

While the silences in this research mean that certain discourses are missing, the silences are also significant in themselves as they reveal the topics that some of the participants were not comfortable discussing with a foreigner in a recorded interview and the pain of engaging with the research questions for some participants. This underlined the importance of analysing the interviews as accounts the participants wished to share with a foreign audience, rather than comprehensive unfiltered accounts of their experiences, as discussed earlier.

The silences that result from fear of talking about their lives also point to the precarity of young Palestinians' positioning in the occupied West Bank and highlight just what was at stake for those who did participate. 'Israel's enduring use of Palestinian collaborators to entrench the occupation and destroy Palestinian resistance' (Cook, 2008) underlines the precarity of the situation for Palestinians in the Occupied Palestinian Territories. Israel's collaboration system depends on 'the low-level informant, who passes on the tidbits of information about neighbors and community leaders on which Israel's system of control depends' (Cook, 2008), making it difficult for Palestinians to know who to trust. Furthermore, the Israeli government, the PA and Hamas have been described as 'unduly limiting free speech through restrictive laws, intimidation and censorship,' (AP, 2012) by the UN's 'independent

investigator on freedom of expression, Frank La Rue,' (AP, 2012), which also affects what some Palestinians feel free to discuss.

Conclusion: How I am treating the narratives

When I began to analyse the narratives of the participants in this research what was striking was that some of the students were explicit about what led them to agree to participate, arguing that taking part provided them with another opportunity to 'resist' the occupation. However, it was difficult to explore the participants' intentions in the analysis of the narratives they shared and the fact that there is no one-to-one correspondence between narratives and experiences, without constructing their narratives as creations divorced from both their present-day and past experiences, which was far from my intention.

In an effort to avoid presenting the narratives in such a way that they appear to have no basis in fact, I argue that while the students' accounts do not necessarily recount past experiences with precision, they provide insights into how the past has affected the present in that they construct the past through a present-day lens. The contribution of this thesis does not depend on each narrative accurately conveying exactly what happened in the past, rather its value lies in exploring what the participants make of their past and current experiences of living under occupation as they seek to convey the ideas about the present and future that they wish to share with a foreign researcher. Thus, I understand the participants' narratives to be much more complex than a simple retelling of their experiences, in line with scholars such as Portelli (1991) and Back (2012a) and those like Collins (2004) in the scholarly genre of literature

that highlights the 'constructedness' of Palestinian narratives and explores what the narratives reveal about the teller and the conditions of the telling. While I share the political commitment of those who seek to highlight the injustice of the occupation through Palestinian narratives, this work falls outside the activist and human rights genres that tend to treat narratives as evidence and the journalistic genre that lets narratives speak for themselves without comment or analysis.

I consider the narratives to be in part strategic, designed to convey certain impressions of Palestine, life under occupation and the young people themselves, while simultaneously conveying a more general sense of the texture of life under occupation, which all of the participants endure.

In the thesis, I investigate how both the Palestinian landscape and Palestinian identities are constructed in the research interview in both strategic and subconscious ways. While Palestine as a geographic place was the site of my interviews, in the course of them a Palestinian landscape fraught with danger and heavy with longing was brought into being, a landscape that was at once designed to elicit empathy, anger at the injustice of the occupation and in many cases commitment to help resist it.

There was more to the stories that were shared than strategic aims, however. I understand the narratives to have lived experiences as the base on which something more complicated was created that fit with the participants' particular take on the interview, their understandings of the present and aspirations for the future. In some of the interviews there were moments of breach or opening when participants deviated from

nationalist scripts and shared narratives about marginality or critiqued the Palestinian socio-political situation. There were moments when the participants' emotions came out and also moments when they censored themselves out of fear of the consequences of speaking freely. The thesis seeks to explore both the narratives that were scripted and the moments of breach or opening.

While each of the stories shared was unique (Portelli, 1991), in some cases they were variations of stories the participants were already telling (Schiff, 2012), stories they wanted external audiences to hear and be affected by as part of the struggle against the illegal Israeli occupation (Matar, 2011). However, in other cases the narratives spoken were not to be shared with any audiences due to fears about the repercussions of having given candid responses to a foreign interviewer. For some of the participants the process of remembering and telling traumatic stories seemed both disturbing and traumatising. All of this was factored into my decisions about how to treat the narratives analytically.

In exploring how the political commitments of the young Palestinian participants affected how they engaged in the research process, this thesis seeks to draw attention to their concerns, desires, hopes and fears, refusing to be complicit in the side-lining of young Palestinian voices. In the chapter that follows I explore the ways in which participants with contrasting political outlooks used their narratives to resist.

The introduction, critical review and methodological and political issues chapters that make up the first part of this thesis contextualised the research by outlining how it came about, what it seeks to do and how it is

situated within the literature on Palestinian narratives. The chapters also presented the methodological and epistemological foundations of the research. Chapter one explained how I arrived at the decision to explore the complexity of the participants' narratives and how their motivations for taking part in the research affected their narratives.

Chapter two discussed the epistemological status that I am giving the accounts in the thesis, arguing that the students' narratives invited a focus on the ways in which they narrated their lives for an expected international audience. It explained why I chose not to persevere with the impossible task of trying to discern how the students actually negotiated life under occupation from their accounts, arguing that my focus was on examining what the interviews signified to different participants. I argued that I would focus on how motivations for taking part in the research affected the stories the participants shared, the ways in which they shaped their narratives and what led them to tell the stories they told in the ways that they did. I suggested that the participants' narratives were in part strategic, designed to convey certain impressions of Palestine, life under occupation and the young people themselves. However, I argued that there was more to the stories that were shared than strategic aims and that in some of the interviews there were moments of breach or opening when participants deviated from nationalist scripts and shared narratives about marginality or critiqued the Palestinian socio-political situation.

The next part, Setting the Scene, will begin with a chapter that explores the participants' contrasting rhetorical approaches to the idea of

resistance. It will argue that the participants' narratives revealed three key structures of rhetoric: one with a predominantly secular outward focus, one with a secular inward focus and the other with a sacred focus on being pious Muslims. It will argue that some participants sought to encourage foreigners to support the Palestinian cause with their narratives, while others rejected the idea of foreign involvement. Some participants advocated secular Palestinian resistance instead, while the devout Muslim participants focused on strengthening their faith in order to overcome what they termed the Jews.

The second chapter of that part examines accounts of the architecture of occupation that are both personal and collective. It will consider narratives that convey a sense of imprisonment, restriction, impotence and feelings of anger, longing and humiliation as a result of the occupation and restrictive policies. It will argue that the students shaped their narratives in ways that would resonate with an international audience and help to recruit support for their positions. It will also explore how the participants conveyed a sense of living in a condition of precarity as they negotiated the constant threat of incarceration and death.

PART 2

Setting the Scene

CHAPTER 3

Stories as Resistance: Contrasting Rhetorical Approaches

Youth in general, and students in particular, play an important

role in boosting the national movement and the struggle against

the Occupation (Jad, 2010b).

Introduction

In the epigraph Islah Jad (2010b) highlights the central role Palestinian

young people and students play in the national resistance movement

against the occupation. Throughout history young people have

'participated, contributed, and even catalyzed important changes in

political systems' (United Nations, no date) and the intifada 'points us to

an understanding of recent Palestinian history in which young people are

central political actors,' (Collins, 2004, p.13). This chapter, and the thesis

more generally, centres on different ways in which Palestinian students

assume the role of political actors by seeking to: change international

perceptions of Palestinians; raise awareness about the effects of the

occupation internationally and promote the approaches to resistance that

they advocate.

Non-violent Palestinian resistance efforts do not receive media

attention in the same way that armed resistance does (O'Connor, 2005).

Nonetheless, there are a variety of forms of non-violent resistance, or

resistance with low-level violence, including the continued protests against

the occupation and Israeli repression in which groups, predominantly of

Palestinian children and young adults, express their opposition to the

repressive occupation (Amnesty International, 2014). Some Palestinian resistance efforts are supported by international activists. For example, the International Solidarity Movement (ISM) is a Palestinian-led movement supported by foreigners that is committed to nonviolent resistance and direct action. Through international volunteers working alongside Palestinians at demonstrations, in villages under attack and in olive groves, ISM seeks to support Palestinian popular resistance (International Solidarity Movement). One well-known site of non-violent Palestinian resistance is the village of Bil'in. In February 2005 residents of the West Bank village, accompanied by foreign activists, began weekly demonstrations against the Wall that Israel was building with a route through Bil'in and neighbouring villages (Abu Rahmeh, 2015). Abdullah Abu Rahmeh (2015), a resident of the village, said the 'recruitment of our friends from abroad in our struggle made things easier for us – as did the fact that Israeli activists joined us.' The residents conveyed Palestinian suffering to the Palestinian and international media and also pursued their opposition to the route of the Wall in the courts. In July 2007, the court ruled that the section of the Wall in Bil'in should be demolished (Abu Rahmeh, 2015).

This chapter contextualises those that follow by exploring the different ways in which Palestinian students saw this research as an opportunity to share their experiences of the hardship of occupation and their views on how to work towards ending it with a foreign audience. Frode Løvlie argues that 'how to liberate Palestine, how much of Palestine to liberate, and who is to liberate Palestine have been issues of contestation between Palestinian liberation movements' (2014, p.103).

This chapter argues that some students considered participating in the research to be an opportunity to resist the illegal Israeli occupation by appealing to foreigners to support the Palestinian cause. However, others rejected the idea of foreign involvement, instead calling for secular Palestinian resistance or seeking to promote or defend a devout Muslim religious approach to resistance. The stories they tell in subsequent chapters and the ways in which they tell them need to be understood in this context. The chapter will argue that the narratives revealed conflicting rhetorical approaches: one that was predominantly secular and outward-looking, one that was secular and inward-looking and one that was determinedly religious with a focus on being pious Muslims.

The participants constructed their accounts using rhetorical devices (cf. Billig, 2003) as 'accounts are suffused with our attempts to persuade each other of the power of our arguments, and … are therefore argumentative in nature,' (Burr, 1995, p.165). Rhetoric involves a struggle over meaning and experience, which is at the heart of this chapter. Everyday use of rhetoric entails employing language creatively and, at the same time, reiteratively, drawing on the rhetorical, common sense resources that are part of society.

Analysing rhetoric entails examining how linguistic devices are used 'to present a justifiable account' that is situated 'within a context of public debate and argument' (Burr, 1995, p.165). Analysing the rhetorical devices on which people draw thus involves examining the language people use, the ways in which they formulate their arguments to counter opposing attitudes, and how they draw on discursive repertoires and

scripts. In this chapter, the examination of the rhetorical devices employed by the participants allows insights into the different ways in which they sought to use the interviews to convey persuasive messages to a foreign audience.

The students in different parts of this chapter drew on incommensurable social scripts as they narrated the conflict. Scripts 'dictate what one should be doing at a particular time and in a particular place if one is to play the role characteristically associated with that script,' (St. Clair, 2008, p.178). As Robert St. Clair argues, '[t]here may be several people involved in the same situation, but they may differ in the roles that they have been given or have chosen to enact,' (St. Clair, 2008, p.178). In the context of the conflict in Palestine, the students in this research have chosen to enact conflicting roles, as will be seen in this chapter and the thesis more broadly.

This chapter draws on Billig's 'rhetorical analysis of argumentation' to study the students' 'patterns of ideology, for it can reveal what is being taken for granted as common-sense,' (2001, p.220). Examining the participants' patterns of discussion and argument makes it possible to study the issues that they are overtly challenging and how they do this discursively, and also what is not challenged or presented as 'unchallengeable' (Billig, 2001, p.220). Billig argues that speakers often seek 'to justify their particular stances by appealing to common values (or rhetorical "topoi"), which they will assume are acceptable to all (Billig, 1987, 1991)' (2001, p.220).

The first part of this chapter examines the narratives of participants who considered participating in the research to be part of their efforts to resist the Israeli occupation by encouraging foreigners to join the international resistance movement. It argues that the rhetorical approach of these participants had a predominantly secular outward focus. Recognising that there is considerable debate about the term 'secular', and how it should be defined, it is important to outline how I am using the term. Drawing on the work of Loren Lybarger (2007), I use the term secular to refer both to the restriction or repression of religion, which was advocated by some participants, and also to the integration of religion within a multi-confessional framework. The second part is divided into two. The substantive first section explores the narratives of devout Muslim students, some of whom opposed foreign intervention related to the Palestinian cause and solely advocated the approach of resisting the occupation through Islam. It argues that their rhetorical approach had a religious and internal focus. The short second section explores the narratives of a participant who eschewed the idea of foreign support for the Palestinian cause, advocating secular Palestinian resistance instead.

This chapter is a story of two halves, those who considered international support to be integral to the success of the Palestinian cause versus those who argued that ending the occupation depended on Palestinian resistance (religious or secular). Nonetheless, the two parts work together to show what the participants were speaking against, i.e. the discourses of peers who held diametrically opposed views. The different parts are also revealing about the contrasting relationships between participant and foreign researcher.

PART 1: Appealing to an international audience

Many of the participants highlighted the ways in which Palestinians, and the situation in Palestine, were misrepresented in the media as a result of Israel's influence internationally, particularly in the US. Some of the participants argued that meeting with internationals, taking part in programmes designed to educate foreigners about the situation in Palestine and participating in interviews destined for a wider international audience were opportunities to counter misconceptions and misinformation about Palestine and the Palestinians. Furthermore, they argued that challenging misconceptions would encourage internationals both to support the Palestinian cause and to campaign for an end to the illegal occupation, which some of the participants considered to be the biggest hope for progress.

The idea that internationals have an important role to play in the Palestinian cause was outlined decades ago by Edward Said (1984, p.254), who argued 'that the "idea" of a Palestinian homeland would have to be enabled by the prior acceptance of a narrative entailing a homeland' in the West. He argued that 'insofar as the West has complementarily endowed Zionism with a role to play in Palestine along with its own, it has stood against the perhaps humble narrative of Palestinians once resident there and now reconstituting themselves in exile in the Occupied Territories' (1984, p.254). Some of the participants in this research sought to challenge the processes whereby the United States, the UK and other leading European countries undermined the Palestinian cause through

their support of Israel, by bringing their narratives of the injustice of life under occupation to the fore.

Given that taking part in the interviews was seen as resistance by a number of the participants, the ways in which they told their stories and the stories they told, or did not tell, were in part strategic, designed to present both Palestinian lives and the situation in Palestine in a way that would encourage empathy, anger at Israeli injustice and support for the Palestinian cause. As they sought to garner the support of foreigners, the participants drew on similar secular scripts.

Implicit in the ways in which the young people in the study constructed their narratives was the idea that the gift of sharing their stories with me should be reciprocated by my sharing their narratives with a broader international audience who would then gain insights into their perspectives and be prepared to take action on their behalf. The expectation of this reciprocity was a central part of the research process for those students who saw the interviews as part of their resistance. The dynamic set up in many of the interviews is akin to what Marcel Mauss (2002) theorises as gift exchange. Discussing the notion of the gift, as developed by Marcel Mauss, Mary Douglas (2002, p.x) argues that 'as far back as we can go in the history of human civilization, the major transfer of goods has been by cycles of obligatory returns of gifts'. In a parallel way, by receiving the gift of participant narratives I entered into a cycle in which I was obliged to share those narratives with the broader foreign audience that the participants hoped to reach.

This part begins by exploring narratives about the distorted image of Palestinians and Palestine. It discusses narratives about the importance of improving the image of Palestinians internationally and explores how the participants considered their participation in the research to be part of that process. The narratives in this and subsequent chapters need to be analysed in this context.

Countering distorted images of Palestine and the Palestinians

A number of the participants expressed anger, frustration and upset at the ways in which the situation in Palestine and Palestinians were presented in the international media. In doing so they problematised dominant characterisations of Palestine and depictions of the Palestinians and made the case for why it is so important to counter them. The students used their accounts to explain why they were committed to working to change international impressions of Palestine and the Palestinians and to influence me as the researcher to share their narratives in ways that could increase international support for the Palestinian cause. In their accounts they raised the problem of international ignorance about the conflict and argued that misconceptions were fuelled by media bias in favour of Israel due to the State's influence on international media. They also highlighted the unjust way in which Israeli lives are constructed as more valuable than Palestinian lives.

Greg Philo and Mike Berry (2004) found that only 9 percent of their main samples of British students in 2001, and 11 percent the following year, knew that it was the Israelis who were occupying Palestine and that the settlers were Israeli. More people from the first sample thought the

Palestinians were the occupiers and settlers. Only 29 percent of the American journalism and media students knew who the occupiers and settlers were and more than half of those who wrote that 'the Palestinians became refugees on the formation of Israel or were "forced from their homes by Israel" also thought that the Palestinians occupied the occupied territories,' (Philo and Berry, 2004, p.218).

Some of the participants in this research used rhetorical devices to highlight the problem of ignorance about the conflict in a way that invited listeners to accept their characterisations. For example, Montaser, a 22-year-old English Literature and Translation student at Birzeit University, dismissed the characterisation of Palestinians as 'bad' and Israelis as 'good' by conveying his incredulity at the idea. In response to the question 'what do you think about countries like the US and the UK and other European governments? How do you think they view you as Palestinians?' Montaser said, speaking in English:

> I think the people in US ... All people, even the Arab people who is living outside Palestine don't know anything about our reality and I just heard before that Isra- the US, the people in USA just think that we are the bad people and Israel people is the just the good people.

Implicit in his comment that 'even the Arab people' outside Palestine are ill-informed about the situation is the idea that they should be better informed. By stating that Americans think Palestinians are bad, while Israelis are good, he both highlights and challenges this problematic and

simplistic misconception and co-opts an expected foreign audience to share his position by making it seem ignorant not to.

Research on TV news coverage of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict conducted by Philo and Berry (2004, p.251) found that 'it was Israeli perspectives which predominated in TV news,' in part due to 'a very well developed system of lobbying and public relations.' A number of the participants said that misconceptions about the Palestinians and the conflict were the result of the Israeli media or media bias in favour of Israel. Rhetorically they spoke against narratives that present the conflict from the perspective of the Israeli state and against Israeli narratives that argue that the media is biased in favour of the Palestinians (cf. Billig, 2003). For example, Rami, the computer engineering student from Tulkarm whose narrative was the opening epigraph of this thesis, argued that misconceptions about Palestinian Muslims' attitudes towards people of other religions were the result of propaganda from the Israeli media. In an English interview he said

> We we we have respect for other ... religion's views. You are Christian, we are loving you, not because you are Christian I hate you, on the contrary and that's what Israel, Israeli media try to convince people that Muslims hate other err religions, but that's not not err fact.

Rami's rhetoric highlights and dismisses what he constructs as the Israeli media's counter position 'that Muslims hates other err religions'. His repetitions and hesitation suggest that talking about the Israeli media presenting distorted characterisations of Muslims puts him in what

Wetherell (1998) terms a troubled subject position, suggesting that the subject stirs up his emotions.

In the same way that Rami said he considered erroneous impressions of Palestinian Muslims to be the result of strategic efforts by the Israeli media, when I asked why Montaser thought Palestinians and Israelis were perceived in the way that they were, the English Literature and Translation student whose epigraph opened chapter 2, said that it was due to Israel's control of the media. As Chomsky (2012) argues, '[b]ias and dishonesty with respect to the oppression of Palestinians is nothing new in Western media and has been widely documented.' I quote the following extract from the interview with Montaser at length because it epitomises the issues with the media that a number of the participants described as a key obstacle to progress. In an interview predominantly in English, he said

> The media are so lying every time. Every time they are just lying to people, outside Palestine. They don't know what's happening here ... Yeah! (pause) it, eh ... Listen ... It's not, err ... I'm not, <I mean>... err err err I'm not shocked about that, or <shocked I mean>, or <surprised. I expect it>. Why? Err, 'cause Israel is just controlling everything: media ...err ... yeah about media, they are controlling the media. So they just made the news, made the ... the everything and they are transferring what they, what is just happening here to the outside world. So they can just lie and people there will believe what TV's just saying. Right? So, how can, how will they feel about us? Or how they

will just, what is their view of us? They don't know what happens

here. They don't know the the the truth.

Montaser highlights the media bias in favour of Israel, which academics

and commentators critical of the Israeli occupation have repeatedly

critiqued. He repeats the idea of Israel lying and controlling the media to

emphasise his argument. When he asks how the international community

will view Palestinians when it is confronted with 'lies' and does not know

'the truth' of the situation, he uses simplistic, emotive language. This

establishes an almost Manichean moral dualism of Israeli lies and

Palestinian truth, which may be designed to illicit anger and empathy,

while at the same time highlighting his own frustration and anger at how

Palestinians are depicted, which is underlined by his repetitions and

hesitations, which indicate a troubled subject position (Wetherell, 1998).

Israel has the support of influential international lobbyists, such as

the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC), which aims 'to

strengthen, protect and promote the U.S.-Israel relationship in ways that

enhance the security of Israel and the United States' (AIPAC, 2013). The

influence of international lobbies is underlined by John Mearsheimer and

Stephen Walt (2006, p.30), who argue that US policy on Israel is driven by

domestic politics and especially 'the activities of the "Israel lobby."' When I

asked Rami what leads to the international community responding to

Israel and the Palestinians in the way that he described, he attributed it to

the international influence of Zionists and Israelis on international

governments and the media.

> Because the Zionists and Israelis all over the world control the governments, the most powerful err ... countries all over the world, so what can we do? They are controlling the media, they are controlling the governments, they are controlling the weapons, they are controlling everything and we are just ... no one with us really.

Rami's repetition of the idea of Israeli control, which he repeats five times in this short extract, emphasises the disparity between Israel's power and implicit Palestinian weakness. In his narrative he characterises Zionists and Israelis as quasi omnipotent. His suggestion that Palestinians are isolated, and his concern that Israelis 'control' the global image of both Palestinians and the situation in Palestine, was echoed by Sultan, who said 'Just they have this media, or the Israeli media to be exact, that distorts, like disrupts the image that they get of here'. He described the effects of this as infuriating, stating that 'I get enraged sometimes, because especially when I talk to people online, like ... when they say "well it's security of Israel," I feel this resentment and enraged and like, "how people cannot see what's going on?"' Sultan dramatizes the comments he hears online that justify Israel's actions as a response to security threats in such a way that it sounds like those with whom he engages online are regurgitating the justifications given by Israeli spokespeople that are often heard in the media.

In their research, Philo and Berry (2004, p.259) found that 'Israeli views such as their need to defend themselves against terrorism were very well represented on the news … and often highlighted to the

exclusion of alternatives.' Similarly, writing amid the summer 2014 assault on Gaza, Martin Shaw said 'Israel's claim to be acting in self-defence is much too easily accepted by western governments and media.' Montaser and Sultan's concern that people abroad do not know what is happening in Palestine and are not supporting the Palestinian cause underlines the outward-looking focus of the participants in this section. This was not the focus of the participants I characterise as devout Muslim young women, however. The participants I characterise as 'devout' because of the ways in which they highlighted their commitment to, and observance of, their faith as of utmost importance in their lives, stressed the importance of being good Muslims for the Palestinian cause, as will be seen in part two.

Some of the participants sought to justify their criticisms of Israel and Israeli bias by appealing to common values they expected to be widely seen as acceptable (cf. Billig, 2001). For example, Rami argued that bias in favour of Israel extended to differences in the ways in which the killing of Palestinians and Israelis is perceived internationally. He appeals to international moral outrage by suggesting that Israel is praised for killing Palestinians. He said 'What can anyone face more than ... being killed or died?' to which I replied 'how do you feel about death?'

> Oh ... Every time ... err ... Israeli occupation armies kill, err kill Palestinians you feel sad, that why why why every time Palestinian killed? ... with hundreds and the world always stands and says 'good Israel, you have a well done job'. But when when when Palestinian people kills one Israeli all the world stands in front of Palestine 'You are terrorists, you are

killing Israelis, you are ... you are ... don't deserve your land, you don't deserve peace. You are ... you are killing peace' and we are doing nothing. It's a normal reaction to what happens in the West Bank and Gaza. You are talking about children and men and women, killed by ... hundreds killed every day and then when ... when ... there's a missile, err ... gets from West Bank or Gaza to Israel err ... settlements, they say that 'you are, you are terrorists you are killing us', what about you? You are killing ... Palestinians every day, every minute and what you are not terrorists? We are terrorists when every Palestinian, instead of one Israeli man or woman, you kill a thousand. Is that fair? I don't think so.

Rami used rhetorical devices such as questions and reported speech to emphasise the injustice of the media responding in different ways to the killing of Palestinians and the killing of Israelis. By dramatising the praise he felt Israel gets for killing hundreds of Palestinians he was able in a chilling way to make the point that Palestinian lives were seen as dispensable and the killing of them was seen as trivial, whereas he argued that the killing of a single Israeli was enough to result in Palestinians being labelled as terrorists who are destroying the peace process. The way in which he shaped his account and used rhetorical devices such as asking the rhetorical question 'is that fair?' before answering 'I don't think so,' invites me and his imagined audience to share his perspective and outlook on the situation in Palestine.

Each year the US sends Israel $3 billion in military aid (Reuters, 2015). Rami characterised this as 'billions of dollars sent to Israel to kill the Palestinians,' which is the way in which US military aid to Israel has been framed in some news articles. For example, Iran's PressTV (2014) published an article entitled 'US provides Israel weapons to kill Palestinians in Gaza.' Rami said

> Err … I'm really upset with the … with the situation because every day we are hearing about billions, billions of dollars sent to Israel to kill the Palestinians. Palestinians killed by Israeli occupation armies every day. We are really upset and we are really … sad [half sigh] about what happens in Palestine, but we cannot do anything … There's a … few people who support Palestine and a *lot* support … Israel.

In the context of Rami using the interview to improve the image of Palestine internationally, as he explained in the epigraph in the introduction to this thesis, the emotive language he uses here, and the suggestion that the reason billions of dollars are sent to Israel is so that the state can kill Palestinians, seem designed to shock, enrage and evoke empathy for the Palestinians, who Rami constructs as powerless with little support, in contrast to his depiction of a well-supported and murderous Israel. The uneven and unjust power dynamics between Israel and the Palestinians were at the forefront of media coverage of the conflict in the summer of 2014 amid Israel's brutal assault on Gaza. For example, writing in *The Guardian* Seumas Milne (2014) said 'The justification is always the same: the security of the occupier must be upheld against the

resistance of the occupied and blockaded population. And at every stage

Israel has had the military, financial and diplomatic support of the west,

the US above all.' Furthermore, the journalist Amira Hass (2014) points

out that in reiterating Israel's right to security arguments, equivalent

Palestinian rights are often not mentioned. She argued that 'in their

passionate declarations on Israel's right to defend itself, EU officials fail to

mention the Palestinians' right to security or protection from the Israeli

army'.

The participants prepared the ground for their arguments about the

need to improve the image of Palestinians internationally by explaining

that the international community has damaging misconceptions, in large

part due to Israel's influence on the international media. The rhetorical

devices they used attempted to discredit Israel's discourses, to highlight

how detrimental distorted accounts are to their cause and to reframe

Palestinians as the victims of Israeli oppression. In doing so, they sought

to make their subsequent arguments about the importance of changing

international perceptions in order to increase support for their cause

resonate more strongly with an international audience.

Improving the image of Palestinians, encouraging international support

> Palestinian human rights representatives place a heavy stress
> on sharing the experience of Palestinian suffering with foreign
> visitors, on opening channels through which foreigners can
> identify and empathize with Palestinians (Allen, 2009, p.167).

This section focuses on how students in this research, like the human

rights representatives Allen describes above, used their narratives about

the oppression of the occupation to appeal to foreigners to empathise with the Palestinian cause. The journalist Ali Abunimah, who co-founded The Electronic Intifada, an online news publication and educational resource about Palestine, argues that 'Palestinians need to refocus efforts to build a broad campaign based on universal principles, one that protests repressive Israeli policies and mobilizes the worldwide support their cause does in fact enjoy' (2006, p.17). Mazin Qumsiyeh argues that 'the Palestinian popular resistance has come to involve internationals, including Israelis, to positive and energizing effect' (2011, p.244).

In response to what some of the participants described as the distorted representation of the Palestinians and the occupation in the international media (discussed in the previous section), some said they were working to improve the image of Palestinians. They were thus speaking against discourses that sought to demonise them and misrepresent the conflict (cf. Billig, 2003). The students saw me as a conduit to the West, something which some of them stated explicitly. Their rhetorical efforts were designed to encourage the international community to support the Palestinian cause, following the failures of the intifadas, and previous resistance efforts, to bring Palestinians closer to liberation. The idea of appealing to an international audience was also present in the second intifada, which Allen (2006, pp.111-112) argues 'was always also an effort to attract global attention and concern for the Palestinians' plight.'

Ahmad, a 23-year-old Civil Engineering student from Qalqilya whose wry sense of humour and playful character masked sadness and deep

frustration, was one of a number of participants who argued that positive international opinion and support were essential for the Palestinian cause.

> The opinion of people who are abroad, what picture they have of me, is important to me because they can help us. But if they have a negative impression of us, that we are the ones in the wrong and the land isn't ours and we are the intruders, this is something I can't, I mean we can't do anything on our own. You see the current media war, we are not like them, so if we don't have people around us, if we don't have the world around us, believing in our cause that it is truly our cause, we won't be able to do anything because the issue of terrorism on television affects us negatively.

Ahmad's argument that positive international opinion is crucial because Palestinians need the international community's support in order to bring an end to the occupation is consistent with the position of Palestinian human rights representatives who stress the need to create opportunities for foreigners to empathise with Palestinians (Allen, 2009). However, Ahmad's comments are vague about precisely who the people abroad are and how they might help the Palestinians. Ahmad, who I got know through seeing him nearly every day when I was in Palestine, and spending time with him and his friends socially, suggested that despite considerable efforts to raise the profile of the Palestinian cause and emphasise the importance of international support, there is a lot of indifference.

> I mean we tried a lot. If you see on the television, often on the news there are people appearing and saying that we must do

that, 'we have the right to education, we have the right to life, we have the right to work, we have the right to live as normal people, oh world you must help us.' Those who believe in our cause try to help us. Very few help, but the rest are not interested.

Ahmad highlights the contrast between Palestinian efforts to emphasise their rights, an idea he repeats four times, what seems like his slight parody of appeals for international support 'oh world you must help us', and the reality of limited help and considerable international indifference. By stating that those who believe in the cause try to help, Ahmad implies that those who don't try to help neither believe in the cause, nor take an interest.

In contrast, Rami sounded less jaded about the prospect of garnering international support through conveying Palestinian perspectives to an international audience. After discussions with some students who were critical about NGOs in Palestine, I asked him how he felt about international organisations in places like Ramallah and he said they were helpful and then seemed directly to appeal to an imagined audience, saying 'I hope that the … the world could hear our voice,' as will be seen below.

Yeah, my ... It's a very, it's a step towards our goals that we are having such international err ... associations in Ramallah and other cities, but I hope that the ... the world could hear our voice, could err **...**, well that we can reach our voice to this world because we have, we have rights.

This extract highlights how important Rami considers it to be for Palestinians to be able to speak to international audiences and demonstrate how deserving their cause is, while it also seems designed to encourage me to share widely the narratives I collected and to convey the importance of the Palestinian cause.

> But we, we need err ... a more powerful movement from, from the world.
>
> **From outside?**
>
> Yeah.
>
> **And what about within?**
>
> There's, there's nothing to do ... the Palestinians, we can't do anything, you're talking about err ...err naked hands err in front of tanks and weapons and anything. What can, what can these do to these? ...
> It's not, it's not err an easy situation, it's it's really complex, complicated
>
> ...

The hesitations and repetitions throughout this extract suggest that talking about the complexity and difficulty caused by the unequal power dynamics between occupier and occupied puts Rami in a troubled subject position (Wetherell, 1998). His suggestion that Palestinians are powerless to stop the Israeli occupation on their own due to the power imbalance reinforces his message that support from the international community is essential.

His use of the phrase 'naked hands' emphasises Palestinian vulnerability. In the context of human rights research on children and the intifada, Collins (2004, p.45) argues that the reason that 'passive victimization' is emphasised is

> clearly related to the audience for whom these texts are generally intended, namely, international readers who are assumed to be in a position to influence events in Israel/Palestine, either by pressuring their own governments to oppose Israeli policies or by contributing to organizations working on behalf of young people (Collins, 2004, p.45).

By emphasising Palestinian powerlessness, rather than highlighting some of the ways in which Palestinians in the West Bank resist the occupation, Rami stressed the importance of international involvement, thereby strengthening his rallying call. He said 'humanity, human rights, anyone feels that human rights is killed in Palestine, should help Palestine'. These comments construct supporting Palestine and Palestinians as a moral obligation for those who recognise that human rights are being violated.

Zarefa Ali argues that '[i]n such a long and unequal struggle to speak and to remember is to resist' (2013, p.11). Some of the participants described talking to foreigners and taking part in the research as one way in which they contribute to the Palestinian cause. As Riessman argues, 'personal narratives can also encourage others to act, speaking out invites political mobilization and change as evidenced by the ways stories invariably circulate in sites where social movements are forming...In a

word, narratives are strategic, functional and purposeful,' (2008, p.8). The ways in which the participants used the interviews as an opportunity to garner support for the Palestinian cause can be seen in Rami and Sultan's narratives below. When I interviewed Rami he was on a summer camp in Nablus that brought Palestinians and forty international visitors together for two weeks and organised activities and trips, including a visit to the Wall. He said

> We are trying to ... to get our image better in the eyes of the internationals. Sending invitations for a lot of internationals all over the world. Don't, don't listen to the Israel media which is trying to distort the image of Palestine. We are trying to get our image shiny and we are trying to let them see the truth and face what Palestinian are facing **[text omitted]**. [9] It's for empowerment. Let them see the real situation in Palestine, not the one which is presented by the Israeli media all over the world.

Rami is keen to present the camp as a space that seeks to address the problem of distorted media reporting about events in Palestine and Israel. Other Palestinian projects have also helped to counter stereotypes about Palestinians. Thomas Ricks (2006) described a school diary writing project that started during the second intifada that encouraged students to communicate what Palestinian life was like to wider audiences, thereby challenging stereotypes. Furthermore, the Ministry of Information started

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[9] Unless otherwise stated, I have omitted text in instances where digressions render narratives difficult to follow and do not sufficiently facilitate the analysis of an extract to warrant their inclusion.

the online Palestine Media Centre service 'to supply professional and up-to-date news and to shape international public opinion on the political realities of Palestine' (Aouragh, 2011, p.163).

Similarly, when I asked Sultan in an English interview, 'do you resist in any way? Do you feel part of a movement or ...,' he said he advocated nonviolent resistance, including boycotting Israeli goods and speaking to foreigners about the political situation in Palestine.

> Err ... I think from *my* way of thinking, I'm ... into peaceful resistance [^]. So for me, boycotting Israeli products is resistance, actually speaking with foreigners about the Palestinian cause and Palestinian question, it's, that's my resistance. Because there are many, many types of resistance – there's cultural, there's economic, there's an armed one and none of these illegitimate the other. Like, armed resistance is an option, intellectual resistance is an option, economic resistance is an option. But, we've tried armed resistance for many years and we've lost so many people and ... we didn't change dramatic- drastically the things round here. So I think we should try other kinds now and I think intellectual one should be the main one, when we raise awareness in the population outside in different countries and we tell them 'what you see in media is almost not *true* and this is our ... our story and we're telling you from *our* point of view and what happened to *us* as people'.

Sultan's argument that the Palestinians should try other forms of resistance is part of a pattern in which emerging generations of Palestinians 'push for the exploration of alternative strategies of resistance, and also embody new possibilities in terms of political identity' (Collins, 2004, p.17). Furthermore, his remarks about the variety of forms of resistance and the need for new approaches reflect Collins's argument that 'most Palestinians, after all, view opposition to Zionism as a long and complex process requiring a flexible toolbox of strategies and tactics that must be adjusted periodically in response to changing local and global conditions of possibility' (2010, p.200). Sultan rehearses what he thinks Palestinians should tell an international audience to counter the negative impression they have of Palestinians and the occupation. Through his dramatisation of this in the interview he simultaneously informs an imagined international audience about problems with media representation of Palestinians. Implicit in his account is the idea that lives could be at stake if non-violent resistance in collaboration with the international community is not successful given that previous armed resistance efforts failed to achieve real gains, but resulted in the loss of Palestinian lives. By shaping his account in this way, he encourages support for non-violent Palestinian resistance efforts by underlining the importance of foreigners engaging with the Palestinian cause.

Sultan also said that non-violent intellectual resistance was more fitting now than the violent resistance of his parents' era due to technological developments.

Now you can just speak directly, it's a different time, we have
different technologies. Now, it's not like ... it's not like we cannot,
like um ... deliver our message to people in universities around
the world, we can do that now. We can do video conferences,
we can videotape what's happening to us, all the violations and
put them online, for the people to see. We are living in a
different time, with different circumstances. It needs different
kinds of *resistance.*

Sultan suggested that there is a singular Palestinian message about
conveying the injustice of the occupation to foreigners, which Palestinians
can now communicate to those in universities in other countries. This
suggests that he also considered the interview to be an opportunity to
convey that message to me and other academics in the UK. When I asked
whether the video conferences and other forms of communication with
foreigners were working, he said that they were raising awareness
amongst people with little or no knowledge of Palestine, including those
who confuse Palestine with Pakistan.

Sultan was one of the only participants who was specific about the
kind of action he thought foreigners could take to help the Palestinian
cause. He used the interview to call for international support for the
boycott of Israel, which is gaining momentum as part of the Boycott
Divestment Sanctions (BDS) movement. By constructing open
confrontation with Israel as illogical and arguing that Palestinians 'should'
have the support of the international community, he invites me and an
imagined international audience to share his perspective.

As time goes by, as technology evolves, as circumstances change ... the kinds of resistance are changing as well. I will *never ever* hold a stone and throw it at a tank, I have better rationale to say it's illogical and nothing will come of it, but I think ... if I boycott *products,* I will make a *change.* Not only *me*, but like... a group of people boycotting will make a difference, when we bring boycott academia we will make a difference **[text omitted [10]]**. We Palestinians should not boycott by ourselves, we should have the support of the international community. Not as leaders, as population.

Sultan said Palestinians should focus on gaining international public support for their cause because in his view the public have the power to change government policy.

We don't care about the *leaders*, because the leaders in the end will submit to the population's *will.* That's why when we raise awareness in other universities about our cause and what's happening, that's why I always say that universities I think it is the fertile land, or the fertile, err ... minds. They are open ... they are open-minded enough to keep talking about these things.

In constructing this narrative about the importance of Palestinians connecting with university students abroad, Sultan will have been conscious of the fact that I was a university student and that his ideas would be shared at one UK university at least through the dissemination

[10] Text omitted to remove an aside that could help to identify Sultan.

of my PhD research. His statement that 'we should have the support of the international community,' and his appeal for support for the academic boycott of Israel can be read as a direct call for support from the 'fertile' minds he mentions. In May 2010, just weeks before I interviewed Sultan, the University and College Union, which represents about 120,000 academic and related staff in UK colleges and universities passed resolutions in support of BDS against Israel (BDS, 2010), which is an example of the kind of action that he suggests will make a difference.

In order to maximise the impact they have on the foreigners they connect with, some of the participants said they were committed to learning more about Palestine so they could be more informative about what life in Palestine is like. Some also suggested that discovering more about Palestine strengthened their sumūd, making them more determined to stay and resist the occupation. In sharing narratives about not giving in and remaining steadfast, the participants presented themselves as strong despite the occupation and worthy of support.

Nimr, an Economics student at An-Najah from Nablus, said that as long as Palestine is occupied he will keep fighting the injustice. He said he boycotts Israeli goods and has recently decided to visit Palestinian towns each week, inspired by the summer camp where I first met him and Rami.

> Now the resistance under the Israeli occupation begins by you getting to know every inch of your country. You know how the people who are in your country, how they think, how ((they cope with life)), how their situation is, you sympathise with them.

> Afterwards you think of different ways to resist. The first thing is
> to know your country.

It seems that this is a message he gained on the summer camp he was attending when I interviewed him, because when I first met him, prior to the camp, he said he was not interested in travelling around Palestine because he meets people from all over Palestine at his university. The following comments are in stark contrast to the views he expressed when we first met.

> I want to visit camps most. I want to see where they come from,
> what happens with them. I want to get to know all the people. If
> you talk with someone, it's not the same as hearing the story
> ((second hand)). When you speak with him you see his feelings.
> You feel with him. That's the one way that you are affected by
> them. When you are *affected*, you know how to be more
> productive and I want to be more productive for this country.

Implicit in Nimr's comment that he wants to be more 'productive' for Palestine is the idea that he wants to do more to help the Palestinian cause. The argument that gaining first-hand knowledge of how other Palestinians experienced life under occupation would make the impact of the stories he shared with foreigners more powerful, seems to have come from the camp, which was in part designed to increase international support for the Palestinian cause.

> I work with many institutes, not institutes <institutions like
> projects that help bring international volunteers to this country,

so> I want to know this country in order to tell them that this is the suffering in this country. If I don't know anything about it how can I talk with credibility? How can someone believe me, correct? I must have credibility. I must have correct information 100 percent. If I go and ask every single person 'how did this happen to you?' 'How did this happen?'

Implicit in Nimr's comments is the idea that he wants to see more of his country to make his resistance, i.e. influencing foreigners to support the Palestinian cause, more powerful and persuasive. The way in which he asks rhetorical questions in this extract and makes assertions about the need for 100 percent correct information from speaking to people in different areas, a new idea for him, suggests that he is reiterating some of what he learnt at the summer camp.

Similarly, Nada, a twenty-year-old English and Marketing student who lived in a very affluent area near Ramallah, described the work that she and other Palestinians are doing in order to be able to inform the international community about the Palestinian cause and influence international opinion. She drew strength from what she described as a 'great, tremendous shift in the popular opinion.'

The public opinion abroad when it comes to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict **[pause]** ...You've seen, like, an extreme kinda shift. You've seen, after ... you would say, let's say the happenings in Gaza ... the public just could *not* be quiet any more, which constantly reminds a lot of us who actually are putting in effort in educating ourselves on all the different

occupations and conflicts and apartheid issues abroad so we could learn how to better present our argument and better present ourselves.

Nada said activists like herself are energised by the way in which the international community has responded to recent events in Palestine and explained that she and other Palestinians are working on what is akin to a better Palestinian public relations strategy. She also highlighted the importance of spreading her message to the widest possible audience.

You try your best to work on a different outcome, a different future, you try to make your connections and you try to get your message across and you hope that you are reaching as large a public as you can.

Her comments implicitly suggest that participating in research destined for a foreign audience is part of her efforts to help secure the 'different future' she mentioned. However, after these comments she expressed concern that it may not work and the Palestinians may continue to be dispossessed.

In conclusion, the participants in this part used a variety of rhetorical devices and drew on common discursive repertoires to argue that Palestinians are being oppressed and that international support is essential in order to bring a much-needed end to the occupation. They reiterated collective narratives that spoke out against dominant Israeli discourses that presented Israel as the victim of Palestinian tyranny and constructed diplomatic and financial support for the State as essential for

its security, which was explored in the first section. Their narratives are in sharp contrast to those of the devout Muslim young women in the next section, one of whom explicitly rejected the idea of foreigners getting involved in the Palestinian cause, and who all argued that their focus should be on their faith.

By arguing that Israel presents a distorted and false impression of the conflict, the participants sought both to discredit the State and to garner support for Palestinians as an oppressed people. The appeal for support was strengthened by arguments in the second section that constructed international support as critical for the Palestinian cause. By arguing that taking part in the research was part of their resistance, participants set up the expectation that the gift of sharing their stories would be reciprocated by action from me in the form of disseminating their accounts widely, and action from those who heard their accounts in the form of supporting their cause. In this way they invoked the reciprocity in Marcel Mauss's (2002) theorisation of gift exchange. However, most of the participants were vague or silent about how foreigners should show their support for the Palestinian cause.

The ways in which some of the participants shared variations of secular scripts in order to give an impression of life in Palestine that would encourage international support, will be explored in the following chapters. These chapters will also explore the moments of opening and breach when what was said deviated from nationalist scripts and was not a variation of stories the participants were already telling.

PART 2a: Rhetoric of Muslim Palestinian resistance

While the students in the first part of this chapter said they participated in the research as part of their resistance efforts in a bid both to raise awareness about living under occupation and to encourage foreigners to support their cause, the devout Muslim young women in this part were less explicit about what motivated them to participate. This part explores what may have prompted them to take part in the research, arguing that they sought to use the interviews as a platform both to stake claims to Palestine and to defend and promote their particular ideological positions, which conflicted with the views expressed in part one. As Brian Schiff argues, through narrating, ideas 'gain substance', becoming more tangible and participants bring their ideas into the present. 'In making present, speakers are making claims about the reality of their experiences or knowledge' (Schiff, 2012, p.37). In doing so, they make an argument for their understanding of reality.

The young women drew on Islam to defend and promote their ideology to me, a foreign researcher representing an imagined foreign audience. The ideology they sought to disseminate called for the importance of a return to Islam in order to be victorious over those they termed 'the Jews'. As discussed earlier, the term 'the Jews' to describe Jewish Israelis is common in Palestine because the only Jews with which most Palestinians in the Occupied Palestinian Territories come into contact are occupation agents. For these devout young women, however, the situation was complicated further by their belief that Islam pits them against 'the Jews'. Some of these participants drew on their

interpretations of Islam to make anti-Jewish assertions, which will be explored later in this part.

One participant expressed opposition to international intervention in the Palestinian cause, speaking against the appeals for international involvement in the first part of this chapter. The fact that the young women used the interviews to promote their ideology affected the narratives they shared and the ways in which they shared their narratives, which will be seen in this and subsequent chapters. They drew on religious scripts to make their rhetorical arguments in contrast to the secular scripts of the students in the previous sections. In this way, they appealed to a greater authority and used the interviews to give insights into their world views, rather than appealing for external support.

In the narratives discussed here, the young women drew on Islam variously to: construct the conflict between Palestinians and Israelis as a religious conflict that was written in the Qur'an and to stake religious claims to Palestine; to argue for the importance of a return to Islam in order to be victorious; to explain how they are working to encourage a return to Islam and to take a defiant position against what they considered to be strategic attempts to distance Palestinian Muslims from their religion. The young women described themselves as pious, thereby giving themselves greater authority to make religiously-informed assertions.

In a group interview with three of the young women (Sarah, Fatima and Zahra) there was disagreement over whether or not they supported the Islamic political party Hamas. While one participant said they supported Hamas, another rejected this idea. This section begins by

exploring how one young woman used the interview to frame the conflict between the Palestinians and the Israelis in religious terms.

Muslima, a second-year Physics student at Birzeit, constructed the conflict between Palestinians and Israelis as an age-old religious one that will have a religious conclusion. She shared her belief that the Jews will oppress the Palestinians before eventually being defeated by them and invoked a sūra, which is a chapter of the Qur'an, and the sunna, which 'comprises the deeds and utterances of the Prophet' (Irving Jensen, 2009, p.198), in support of her argument. Muslima constructed the idea of Palestinian Muslims defeating the Jews as the desirable religious conclusion to the conflict, rather than problematising this framing of the situation. In drawing on a sūra and the sunna, she simultaneously constructed herself as pious by showing her religious knowledge. She had already made a symbolic claim to piety before the interview began by selecting the name 'Muslima', which means Muslim woman, as her pseudonym, suggesting that she wished to be seen as Muslim first and foremost. As will be seen later, by constructing themselves as pious, Muslima and the other participants presented themselves as well-positioned or authorised to make religiously-informed assertions.

Muslima recited a sūra in support of her argument that despite oppression from an enemy that she characterises as 'the Jews', Muslims will triumph in the end. In response to a question on how she feels about what she described as racial discrimination and the Israelis putting chains on Palestinians even though it is their land, Muslima said that it was linked

to religion and started reciting Sūra al-Isrā' (The Night Journey). After the recitation she explained the verses saying:

> In summary, an explanation of these verses means that they talk about the corruption of Jews on earth, I mean that they will corrupt the land and they will be arrogant and they will have a high place and they will be forceful and they will show people many different kinds of torture, but in the end <u>victory</u> and victory will always return to the believers (I mean) it will always return to Muslims. As well as in the Prophet Muhammad's speech, peace be upon him, he says that at the end of time there will be a war between Muslims and Jews, the stone and the tree will speak, so the Jews start to hide behind the tree and the tree will direct the Muslim to him. It will say 'you Muslim, behind me there's a Jew, come and kill him.' Imagine?

In contrast to the narratives of participants in part one, who were careful about referring to Jewish Israelis as Israelis or Zionists, as appropriate, rather than referring to them as 'the Jews' in disparaging ways, Muslima's commentary on the sūra is defiant and racist, suggesting that while Palestinians are oppressed now, in the end they will be victorious over the 'corrupt' and 'arrogant' Jews. She draws on the Qur'an to present 'the Jews' as relentless tyrants who oppress Muslims and will continue to do so until a bloody struggle in which Muslims defeat them. While the participants in part one used their descriptions of the situation in Palestine to contest the discourse of occupation, Muslima draws on the authority of the Qur'an, and Islam more generally, to do this. She may have shared

those verses and that interpretation with me to lend support to her

argument about the importance of Muslim faith in realising Palestinian

liberation and to underline and justify her confident assertions about the

future Palestinian victory. Her commentary may also have been designed

to denigrate or demonise 'the Jews' in an effort to justify the assertion that

Palestinians would one day kill them. The way in which Muslima invokes

the Qur'an is similar to the ways in which it was cited by students Irving

Jensen (2009) interviewed in Gaza. For example, he said that one

participant, Salim, said

> Our religion also tells us in the Koran that we shouldn't have
> any dealings with Jews because they're bad people … Our
> Koran says many things about Jews. About their bad character
> and their bad dealings with other people. They think that as a
> people they rank highest in the world. They are the lords and
> other people are their servants. That's the Jews' problem (2009,
> p.128).

Both Muslima and Salim's interpretations of the Qur'an construct Jews in

essentialist and disparaging ways that may be designed to damage

international perceptions of Jews and consequently to reduce support for

the State of Israel, which defines itself as a Jewish state (Beaumont,

2014). They both seem to be demonstrating 'ethnic absolutism', which

Paul Gilroy (1990, p.115) defines as the

> reductive, essentialist understanding of ethnic and national
> difference which operates through an absolute sense of culture so
> powerful that it is capable of separating people off from each other

and diverting them into social and historical locations that are understood to be mutually impermeable and incommensurable.

Gilroy (1990, p.115) argues that 'those who experience racism themselves may be particularly prone to its lure. They often seize its simple, self-evident truths as a way of rationalizing their subordination and comprehending their own particularity'. Yuval-Davis and Hakim (2015, p.4) argue that there is 'a subaltern, anti-Western "common sense", in which the critique of the local, regional and global role of Israel has been transformed into racialized attitudes to the Jews'. The version of Islam on which the devout young women participants draw reinforces their views on 'the Jews' as an enemy that needs to be defeated.

Muslima speaks against the narratives of the participants in part one who deem foreigners to be helpful for the Palestinian cause. She argues that, on the contrary, those in the West, and specifically those who are not Muslim, are a hindrance, trying to turn Palestinians away from Islam, while she and the other devout Muslim participants consider Islam central to their hopes for an end to the occupation.

Our big problem lies in the ruling regimes (I mean), the rulers who govern our ruling regimes, all of them are secular and they don't want religion at all. (I mean) they are fundamentally supported by the West. Many (I mean) … let's say not by the West, by people who are not Muslims, yes, because that expression is precise, because in the West in reality people (I mean) amazing, but (I mean) the people whose work is to fight

Islam support these rulers and these rulers (I mean) even our rulers exploit us.

Muslima uses the interview as a platform to make the case that faith in Islam is under threat from a concerted international attack and to declare defiantly that in spite of this Muslims will return to Islam and be victorious, by which she means they will defeat 'the Jews'. Muslima uses rhetorical devices to underline her certainty of Muslim victory, employing phrases such as 'this is something we are sure of.' As Schiff (2012, p.37) argues, 'telling makes known. It is declarative. It establishes: *I am this; I know this.*'

But (I mean) today (I mean) the attack on Islam is *very big* and many people are working ((hard)) to try and distance Muslims from their religion. Many charities are really trying to work on this. The entire world is working on this. This (I mean)… I tell you, it's possible for us to say something. We say that if we return to our religion we will be successful. The problem these days is that we are not holding on to our religion in the correct way. Therefore we are not able to realise our victory in the right way. But if we cling to our religion in the right way, we are convinced that we will be victorious. So it's possible that our enemies know this about us, they are trying to distance us from our religion to the extent that they are able, so that what? So that we are not victorious over them. But one day the people will not remain silent at all and the Muslims will not remain in their current situation. One day they will revolt and rise up. They

will return to their religion and victory and success will be ours

again and this is something we are sure of. So praise be to God

of the two worlds that we gain faith in this way, and our faith will

leave us to live happily, working on these things.

This narrative is like a declaration that Palestinians will be victorious, despite concerted efforts to prevent this. In contrast to the narratives in part one that tried to recruit foreigners to support the Palestinian cause, Muslima's narrative can be read as sending the message to foreigners that their unwelcome involvement in Palestine may be hurting the Palestinian cause, but it will not succeed in preventing Palestinian victory. It seems like a defiant reply to what she describes as attempts by the international community to weaken Palestinian resistance by turning Muslims away from Islam; a reply that says 'we know what you are trying to do and it is not going to work.' Jamil Hilal (2010, p.34) outlines a number of different ways in which donor states are involved in the PA's economic affairs and argues that donors provide '"technical assistance" through international experts on projects that inevitably reflected their own agendas.' The perceived threat to Islam from external actors who want to turn Muslims away from their faith is captured by Sara Roy (2000). She argues that the Islamic movement has strategically shifted its focus from the political to the social sector and it has also redefined the long-term threats facing Palestinian society. 'Threats are no longer limited to, or even dominated by, political and military aggression (by Israel and the PNA) against Palestinian land, people and institutions, but now include cultural aggression against Palestinian values, norms and religious beliefs,' (Roy, 2000).

The different rhetorical approaches of the participants in the two parts of this chapter is exemplified by the ways in which students in each part sort to improve themselves in an effort to help the Palestinian cause. Some of the devout Muslim participants saw the interviews as an opportunity to convey a commitment to continue to strengthen their faith, which they constructed as the cornerstone of successful resistance. This was in contrast to the participants in the second section of part one who used the interviews to argue that they were deepening their knowledge of Palestine in order better to recruit foreigners to their cause.

Like Muslima, Fatima argued that Islam must be central to efforts to resist the occupation. She constructed herself and her friends as pious by asserting that they would distance themselves from anyone who approached resisting the occupation from anything other than a devout Islamic perspective. Her assertion pits her against all the participants in the first part of this chapter who did not mention religion in their discussions of their approaches to resistance.

> It's from religion that we resist the occupation. I mean, for example, if we supported someone because of, for example, the religion, and he left the religion even a little bit, we would distance ourselves from him. I mean if her starting point, for example, was not a starting point of religion I mean. The resistance is from religion. I must defend our nation and take up fighting positions in our nation.

Fatima's narrative constructs an image of the ideal Muslim Palestinian drawing on Islam to defend the nation. In telling me what she and her

peers would do, using the first-person plural personal pronoun 'we', she outlines the standards to which she expects them at least publicly to adhere and constructs herself as both pious and committed to ending the occupation. Her position is in opposition to those explored in part one and, juxtaposed with those earlier narratives, it points towards the lack of unity among Palestinians about how best to address the problem of occupation.

As discussed earlier, Muslima also uses the interview as a space in which to emphasise her devotion to Islam. She argued that her work to end the occupation begins with Islam. She starts with her faith and then proselytises.

> I personally, (I mean) I try to work first of all on my religion. I mean as Muslima I work on my religion. I deepen my faith, I strengthen my faith. I seek refuge in God more. I depend on our Lord more. I mean I grow my religious convictions internally then I go out to the people, I go out to the people. I try to spread (I mean), I help them return to our lord and return to their religion in the correct way and in addition to that, (I mean) that I bring up the next generation. I raise the young children who will come to be correct Muslims so that they understand what Islam means. (I mean) unfortunately most people today don't know the correct meaning of Islam. So this is the thing which leaves us still at a far distance, but I know my role as someone who works on the idea that we will return to our religion.

The importance Muslima places on strengthening her faith so that she can encourage others to be good Muslims fits with the Islamist position. As

Irving Jensen (2009, p.55) argues, 'for Islamists the only way to liberate Palestine is to create *sound Muslims*, and it is therefore important that they make themselves visible in civil society. It is here that they have the opportunity to realize their goal.' Similarly, Sara Roy (2000) cited a Hamas political official who argued that 'we must plant the seeds for an Islamic future in the next generation through social change. We must alter the mindset and mentality of people through an Islamic value system. We do this through example and education.' Roy (2000) argues that within the Palestinian Islamic movement a significant change is taking place, 'characterized by a shift in emphasis from political and military action to social/cultural reform and community development work.'

Like Muslima, Salwa, who said she has been on pilgrimage to Saudi Arabia on the 'umra (the lesser pilgrimage), also uses the interview to construct herself as a devout Muslim working to achieve victory over 'the Jews'.

> I grow myself first, after that I go out and tell people that we must get educated and must do jihad and so on. All of this depends on whether we grow up right, we will go out to the world in the right way and be able to defend our nation if we had high confidence in ourselves and high confidence in the people around us of course we will realise victory and will be victorious and will overcome the Jews.

In her account Salwa, a fourth-year English student, suggests that she begins by deepening her own faith before helping to spread the importance of Muslim resistance to other Palestinians. By saying that 'of

course we will realise victory' she makes vanquishing 'the Jews' seem inevitable if Palestinians work together and approach achieving their liberation in the right way, which will be explored further in chapter seven. The interview was an opportunity for her to present Palestinian Muslims as a force to be reckoned with when they come together.

Similarly, Muslima constructed herself as a pious devout Muslim by arguing that her role as a young woman is to raise a new generation of Muslim Palestinians who are committed to returning the land and restoring Islam to its former position, which is consistent with the Hamas ideology.

> I mean now fundamentally we, our work is to raise a generation, to raise small children so that they will grow up and they will have a dream to return the land and return Islam to its correct position. (I mean) in Islam today there are many (I mean) who have given up on Islam. Muslims themselves have given up on Islam.

She cited a hadith in which the Prophet said there remains a group from the umma on the right side of Islam who are clear about ambushing their enemies and who will not be harmed by their enemies 'and it has been said "where are they Oh Prophet of God?" He said "in Jerusalem in the heart of the holy house". Muslima argues that her contribution to bringing about what she constructs as the rightful victory for Palestinians consists of instilling the correct Islamic values in younger Palestinians. This is consistent with the message of Hamas. Irving Jensen (2009, p.52) argues that the Hamas charter

Stresses the need to educate Muslims ideologically: "It [i.e.
Hamas] works through … educating the Islamic people
ideologically, morally and culturally with a view to [Islam]
playing a role in the struggle for liberation, just as it played a
role in vanquishing the crusaders and repelling the Tatars and
thereby saving human civilisation, and this is not difficult for
Allah"'.

The role Muslima has assumed of working to raise a generation is
consistent with Hamas's vision for Muslim women. The Hamas charter, or
covenant, includes Article 17, which states that 'The Moslem woman has
a role no less important than that of the moslem [sic] man in the battle of
liberation. She is the maker of men. Her role in guiding and educating the
new generations is great' (Hamas Covenant, 1988).

In conclusion, from the discussion in the second part (Part 2a) of
this chapter it can be seen that these devout young women viewed the
interviews as an opportunity to publicise their views on the need for a
return to Islam in order to defeat 'the Jews'. In using this term to
characterise their perceived enemy, they show that in their relative
powerlessness they can be essentialising and they demonstrate 'ethnic
absolutism' (Gilroy, 1990), which is probably in part fuelled by their
experience of racism and oppression at the hands of Jewish Israelis (cf
Gilroy, 1990). As Yuval-Davis and Hakim (2015, p.4) argue, there is 'a
sub-altern, anti-Western "common sense"' in which criticism of Israel 'has
been transformed into racialized attitudes to the Jews'.

The devout Muslim participants drew on similar scripts to make their arguments and presented themselves as authorised to argue that Islam is key for Palestinian victory by constructing themselves as devout Muslim young women. They used the interviews as a platform to denigrate Jews, possibly in a bid to weaken foreign support for Israel. In contrast to the participants in the first part of the chapter who, like many Palestinians, focused their critiques on Israel and/or the Zionists, the participants who emphasised how devout they were framed the conflict as a religious battle between Muslims, like themselves, and Jews, about whom they made racist and essentialist comments. For at least one of the devout young women participants, and possibly more, it was also an opportunity to let foreigners know that their interference in Palestine is unwelcome.

What is striking is the stark contrast between the religious discourses of struggle discussed in this part and the secular discourses in the first part of the chapter. Muslima's rejection of the idea of foreign, non-Muslim involvement and the focus of all the devout young women on resolving the conflict through religion are incommensurable with the desire of the participants in part one to encourage foreigners to support their cause through secular resistance, which will be discussed further in the coming chapters, particularly chapter seven. It seemed that in contrast to the way in which I was seen as a means to help recruit foreigners to the Palestinian cause in Part one, the devout young women saw me solely as a means to help publicise their views.

PART 2b: Rhetoric of secular Palestinian resistance

This brief subsection explores the arguments of a participant who advocated secular Palestinian resistance and the 'reunification' of the Arabs and spoke against the ways in which the international media has popularised the Palestinian cause. Løvlie (2014, p.104) argues that 'pan-Arabists claimed that only by uniting under one secular and progressive nation could the Arabs hope to escape their current state of backwardness and modernize, and only then could they hope to defeat Israel and liberate Palestine'. Many Palestinian nationalists adopted the 'secular pan-Arab ideology, often interspersed with different degrees of leftism and revolutionary ideals' (Løvlie, 2014, p.104). Wadee', a Marxist who studied Sociology at Birzeit and was the only Christian participant, spoke against the idea of encouraging foreign involvement in the Palestinian cause, just like Muslima in Part 2a did. However, unlike Muslima, Wadee', who was born in Palestine but spent six years living in the US as a child before returning and attending a top private school in the West Bank, said that Palestinians need to achieve their liberation through secular resistance rather than the Muslim resistance the young women in Part 2a advocated or the outside support sought by those in Part 1.

> [I]f we are to attain freedom, because of the mainstreaming by government bodies, NGOs and world media outlets it is to be *given* as an act of charity and not *taken* as a necessity of humanity and that is a mistake because not always is attaining your goal as important as the method you obtained it in. Get it?

Yeah. Yeah.

It's like a child either working hard to buy a bike or stealing one. Getting a bike was the goal, but by stealing it he didn't learn anything, he didn't pick up on the values and ethics that eventually might help him be a better human being, but working for it would make him a good human being.

Are you talking about-

[Raised voice] Not just attaining it, it's the process of attaining humanity.

Wadee''s anger and frustration in this extract is evident when he cuts me off and raises his voice. For him, the end of the occupation is not the only consideration, rather the way in which it is brought to an end is also important. His impatience and frustration at my attempt to check I had understood him reminded me of the frustration he had expressed when discussing the political situation in Palestine when I went out with him and a group of other Palestinians and foreigners socially on a few occasions in the weeks before the interview.

Wadee' advocated the 'reunification' of Arabs and what he termed 'an end of the political boundaries created, set and still controlled by colonials'. When I asked whether he saw himself 'as one' with his Syrian neighbours, he said 'Definitely. And if Palestine were free, I'd be fighting in Iraq.' Unlike the participants in the first part of this chapter, he advocated violent resistance and bemoaned what he described as the international

media popularising the Palestinian cause and thereby 'killing' violent resistance, which he described as 'the most powerful negotiation tool the Palestinians possess'. He discussed what he termed Palestinian self-sacrifice for their cause and gave examples of what he considered this to be, including 'getting tear-gassed in a peaceful demonstration' or 'blowing yourself up… in a group of settlers, which are called Israeli citizens.' His comments stand out both because he advocates indiscriminate violence against Israelis and because they are in contrast to the increased focus on non-violent Palestinian resistance of recent years (O'Connor, 2005; Hughes-Fraitekh, 2015).

In conclusion, Wadee''s arguments were in stark contrast to those of the participants in part one. While they sought to use the interviews to appeal for foreigners to support the Palestinian cause and nonviolent resistance efforts, he used the interviews to characterise foreign involvement as a hindrance that has undermined what he described as necessary violent resistance. In contrast to the religious resistance of the devout Muslim young women in part 2a, Wadee' advocated secular resistance and the reunification of the Arabs.

Conclusion

This chapter on 'stories as resistance' is a tale of two halves with two very different discourses of struggle. The participants in the first part used the interviews as a platform to appeal both to me as a foreign researcher and to an imagined international audience to join international efforts to resist the illegal Israeli occupation. They drew on similar scripts to make the case that international support is essential if the occupation is to be

brought to an end and they spoke out against discourses that distorted the conflict and implicitly opposed discourses that rejected the idea of foreign involvement in the Palestinian cause (cf. Billig, 2003). The participants sought to resist the occupation through contesting the ways in which the conflict is presented in the media and appealing for international support in a context in which this kind of action is recognised as a form of resistance that complements direct action. What the participants describe is similar to the ways in which the villagers engaged in the Bil'in protests conveyed their experiences of the occupation to international audiences in an effort to garner support for their cause (Abu Rahmeh, 2015). However, with few exceptions, the participants were vague, or silent, about the sort of action foreigners should be engaging in to support the Palestinian cause.

In contrast to this, the young women in the first section of the second part saw the interviews as an opportunity to construct themselves as devout Muslims, thus establishing the credibility needed to promote an ideology that centred on the importance of resisting through Islam. One explicitly spoke against narratives that advocated international involvement in the Palestinian cause, rejecting the ideas expressed by her peers in the first part of the chapter. It would have been interesting to compare the young women's narratives with those of some devout Muslim young men. However, as discussed in the methodology chapter, none of the devout Muslim young men approached on my behalf agreed to participate in the research. In contrast to both the devout young women in the first section of part two, Wadee' in the second section advocated

secular Palestinian resistance and spoke against discourses advocating foreign support for the Palestinian cause, like those shared by the participants in part one.

Despite their contrasting rhetorical approaches, the students in both the first and second parts of the chapter used the interviews to highlight the importance of their particular approach to resisting the occupation. However, the aims of the different groups of students explored here were diametrically opposed and thus how they saw me as a foreign researcher differed. The students in part one appealed to the international community's sense of justice in an effort to encourage them to support the Palestinian cause and viewed me as a conduit for their messages to foreigners who could be recruited to the Palestinian cause. In contrast, the devout young women in the first section of part two called on the religious authority of the Qur'an and the sunna to argue that victory will come from Muslims strengthening their faith and Muslima argued that the Palestinian cause is only hindered by foreigners. It seemed that for these participants my role was limited to helping to disseminate their views. Like the devout young women, Wadee' in the second section of part two advocated Palestinian resistance, rejecting the idea of foreign involvement. However, he advocated secular, rather than religious, resistance. These contrasting patterns of narrating struggle enrich this research because they point to the diversity of views of Palestinian young people and underline the complexity of the idea of resistance.

Allen (2008, p.457) argues that during the second intifada '[t]he kind of agency expressed by most Palestinians was neither military resistance to occupation (Jad 2002; Tamari and Hammami 2001; cf. Abu-Lughod 1990), nor organized resistance to the prevailing political power of the PA or social norms of nationalism.' She describes a kind of agency in which the effects of Israel's efforts to get Palestinians to leave Palestine were deflected 'through adaptation and just getting by' (Allen, 2008, p.456), which entailed what Palestinians sometimes call sumūd, 'a nationalistically inflected form of stoicism' (Allen, 2008, p.456). I argue that for the participants in this study, sharing stories of Muslim or secular resistance, and stories that were themselves considered to be part of resistance efforts, was a way of 'getting by', helping the students to manage the hardship and oppression of life under occupation by working to maintain hope (as will be seen in chapter 7).

In the chapters that follow the commonalities and differences between the ways in which participants of different political and ideological outlooks make place (i.e. construct Palestine) in their interviews, narrate life under occupation and narrate their expectations for the future will be explored. As in this chapter, the following chapters will show that the participants use different languages of resistance. While the majority of the participants use the language of secular resistance, some of the devout Muslim participants use essentialist and sometimes racist formulations within what they present as the language of Muslim resistance. As will be

seen in chapter seven, the incommensurable views of different

groups of Palestinian students highlight the complexity of the Israel-

Palestine conflict and underline how challenging it will be to arrive at

a solution deemed palatable to Palestinians, let alone Palestinians

and Israelis.

Chapter 4

Making Palestine: Narrating the Architecture of Occupation and Precarity

Introduction

The writer Nancy Huddleston Packer argues that 'It's the job of the writer to create a world that entices you in and shows you what's at stake there,' (cited in Burroway et al. 2011, p.164). The participants in this research were not writers, and the stories they shared were not fictional, but in giving accounts of their personal and collective experiences, their roles were akin to those of writers in that they used words to create their worlds for a foreign audience, to bring into being the oppressive Palestine they have to negotiate each day and to show what is at stake if the occupation is allowed to continue.

The students who participated in this research set the scene for their stories about life under occupation by describing the landscape of Palestine and their place within it. This chapter explores their descriptions of how they negotiated the architecture of occupation, and living in Palestine more generally, in ways they hoped would resonate with an international audience and lead to condemnation of the Israeli occupation. It argues that the students' narratives about the oppressive architecture and the dangers inherent in living in Palestine were at once individual and collective. Weizman (2007, p.5), who uses the term the 'architecture of occupation', describes how planning and architecture in the Occupied Palestinian Territories 'have become tactical tools and the means of dispossession'. He argues that Palestinians are subjected to a process

whereby 'their environment is unpredictably and continuously refashioned, tightening around them like a noose.' While the participants in this research did not use the term 'the architecture of occupation' themselves, it is helpful as a shorthand for the physical structures of the occupation that the participants described, such as checkpoints and the Wall.

The intertwining of the collective and the personal is something that narrative analysts routinely find. Rice (2002), for example, suggests that the story of an individual life is understood in relation to, and produced from, the collective stories that constitute a culture and produce narrative histories and ideals. In narratives, people reinterpret and appropriate collective narratives that pre-exist their accounts. In the stories shared by participants in this research, it is possible to see how they locate themselves and their experiences in Palestinian history and society and, therefore, what matters to them. Richardson (1990, p.26) puts this well when he suggests that 'the individual response to the well-told collective story is "That's my story. I am not alone"'. Stories thus provide an interpretive entry point to understanding the intersection between self and society (Andrews et al., 2008).

Implicit in the stories told by the participants in this study was the idea that they were describing the collective social condition of life under occupation and, indeed, the accounts they gave were consistent in many ways and could be said to add to the stock of shared Palestinian narratives. The ways in which they shared their stories with me resembled how Nakba stories are frequently told. In describing Palestinians' descriptions of the Nakba, Lena Jayyusi (2007, p.110) suggests that,

'[e]ach new tale is an echo within the echo, focusing and conjuring the collective predicament through the individual, and ramifying the significances and symbolic meanings of the individual experience through the collective.' This chapter analyses some of the commonalities in the participants' accounts, examining the ways in which they told their stories. Taken together, the accounts built upon and buttressed collective narratives to convey a heavy sense of the repressive restrictions of the architecture of occupation and the conditions of precarity in which they as individuals and Palestinians collectively live. Judith Butler defines precarity as the 'politically induced condition of maximized vulnerability and exposure for populations exposed to arbitrary state violence and to other forms of aggression that are not enacted by states and against which states do not offer adequate protection' (2009b, ii). At its essence precarity is about social circumstances that are highly uncertain and unstable (Waite, 2009). A sense of Palestinian vulnerability and the uncertainty of life in Palestine pervaded the interviews.

This chapter, in contrast to the work that Hammami (2010) critiques for presenting Palestinians as passive victims, explores the ways in which the participants employed agency as they sought to engage a foreign audience. As Andrews (2007, p.3) argues, 'stories are never told in a vacuum' and people communicate implicit political worldviews through the stories they tell about their lives and the wider social and political context and the stories that are 'tellable' by particular people at particular times. These interviews provided an opportunity for the participants to share their

views about the occupation and its oppressive architecture with a foreign audience.

Given that the interview setting was Palestine and the students' rationale for participating was to convey a sense of what it is like to live there, it was not surprising that they conveyed a sense of place. They described the restrictions they faced, expressed their consequent sadness, frustration, anger, fear and insecurity and vividly constructed their experiences of enduring conditions of precarity. However, a consideration of their narratives raises epistemological issues about the relationship between what is said and what is done more sharply than for many research projects since the participants were talking about their place in one of the world's most high-profile conflicts.

As with much qualitative interview research, it is not possible to establish with certainty the veracity of a particular student's account and their narratives 'may or may not correspond to the "factuality" of the events and relationships' they describe (Collins, 2004, p.123). Nonetheless, it is possible to establish that the stories in this research are feasible by contextualising them within the whole corpus of accounts and academic and media analyses and it is also possible to establish the emotional tone of the accounts. Much of what the participants said can be corroborated by secondary sources that highlight the oppressive circumstances in which Palestinians live and the narratives they shared were clearly shaped by their experiences and interpretations of events.

Irrespective of whether the details in the accounts can be proved accurate, their richness lies in what they reveal about the participants'

shared understandings of everyday life in Palestine and the collective messages they wished to convey to a foreign audience. These issues are explored in this chapter. In the chapters that follow, as in the previous chapter, the participants' accounts often differ, in ways that sometimes conflict. This chapter, however, addresses issues on which the participants were in concert. It brings together narratives that convey similar messages about the conditions of life in Palestine, even from participants with contrasting world views and outlooks. I argue that the similarities in the accounts suggest that the effects of the architecture of occupation and repressive conditions in Palestine were pervasive and experienced and narrated in similar ways, constituting an important area of common ground.

The chapter is separated into three main parts. The first examines accounts of the architecture of occupation that are both personal and collective. It considers narratives that convey a sense of imprisonment, restriction, impotence and feelings of anger, longing and humiliation as a result of the occupation and restrictive policies. It argues that the students shaped their narratives in ways that would resonate with an international audience and help to recruit support for their positions. The second part explores how the participants conveyed a sense of living in a condition of precarity. It first discusses narratives about negotiating the constant threat of incarceration and then considers stories about living with the continual threat of death.

The third and final part of the chapter, an extended conclusion, argues that the participants narrated particular versions of Palestine into

being. In producing accounts such as those explored in this chapter, they vividly brought to life (and in that sense 'made') a Palestine that was constraining and precarious. They did so in order to share their experiences of the oppressive occupation, raise awareness and elicit international condemnation. It argues that in this way some of the participants sought to increase support for the international movement against the occupation. This fits with the ways in which some Palestinians are seeking to achieve political mobilisation by reaching audiences outside Palestine, such as through social media or the cultural industries (Salem, 2014; McDonald, 2006). Others sought to get recognition for what Palestinians are forced to endure, but rather than aiming to mobilise international support, they emphasised their agency and some expressed confidence that the Palestinians would be victorious without outside help.

PART 1: The Collective Experience of the Architecture of Occupation

Israel uses planning and architecture in the West Bank as 'tactical tools' to dispossess the Palestinians (Weizman, 2007). Under their 'regime of "erratic occupation", Palestinian life, property and political rights are constantly violated not only by the frequent actions of the Israeli military, but by a process in which their environment is unpredictably and continuously refashioned,' (2007, p.5). Weizman argues that Israel encourages 'structured chaos' in the Occupied Palestinian Territories, 'in which the – often deliberate –selective absence of government intervention promotes an unregulated process of violent dispossession,' (2007, p.5). Given the pervasive oppressive consequences of the

'architecture of occupation' that Weizman documents, it is not surprising that architecture was a central theme in the narratives in this study.

All the students told stories that were at once personal and collective about the effects of the occupation on the Palestinian landscape and on their lives. They used evocative descriptions and narratives about trying to negotiate the oppressiveness of the architecture of occupation and Israeli policies. In doing so, they aimed to raise awareness of their situation, engage foreign audiences and elicit empathy for the Palestinians. The Wall that Israel has built through the West Bank 'to separate Jewish settlements and Israeli cities from Palestinian towns and villages' (Weizman, 2007, p.161) was a recurrent theme in their narratives. I have included some photographs I took of sections of the Wall in this chapter to add some visual contextualisation to the narratives the participants shared. The images provide a glimpse of the architecture of occupation that the participants evoke in their narratives.

Figure 4.1 – Photograph of a section of the Wall by Aisha Phoenix, 2010

The image above shows the vast ugly concrete slabs that constitute part

of the Wall that was started by Israel in 2002. The Wall has annexed

Palestinian land and created sealed enclaves of some West Bank towns.

It comprises '8-metrehigh concrete slabs, electronic fences, barbed wire,

radar, cameras, deep trenches, observation posts and patrol roads'

(Weizman, 2007, p.161). The Wall pictured here completely obscures the

landscape on the other side of it from view.

The participants in this study were old enough to remember a time

before the Wall. They highlighted its oppressiveness, describing its effects

as turning the West Bank into a prison or a ghetto. Their narratives

express a collective sense of anger, impotence, longing and/or humiliation

in reaction to experiences related to the Wall, checkpoints and other restrictions to Palestinian movement. As the participants constructed their accounts about the architecture of occupation they drew on 'available narrative models' in similar ways (c.f. Collins, 2004, p.135), offering a collective account of the conditions of Palestinian everyday experience. They drew on a common discursive repertoire to describe the oppression they faced and underlined the collectiveness of their experiences of injustice as warranting international attention.

Three of the students described the Wall as having transformed the West Bank into a prison, turning Palestinians into prisoners and their land into a jail. For example, Zahra said 'I feel that we're prisoners in a big prison, but it's forbidden for us to go outside this environment,' and Muhaned, whose father was imprisoned in administrative detention[11] for seven years, said 'we only have one difference between us and prisoners in prison cells, that we can't see that we remain in one room, but we can move but we are in a big prison behind the Wall.' He said 'It's our big prison'. In response to the question, 'what did you feel when you heard about the Wall?' Aisha, a 21-year-old from Ramallah who studied English Literature at Birzeit, said

> The Wall? Oh! ... I was like feeling ... so sad about that and I knew that it would be like, it would turn Palestine into a big prison and now we are in a big jail. You can say we are in a big jail because where- wherever you go you either find

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[11] Addameer (2014) defines administrative detention as 'a procedure that allows the Israeli military to hold prisoners indefinitely on secret information without charging them or allowing them to stand trial'.

checkpoints or the Wall. And the Wall is all around Palestine,

so wherever you go you would find it, you would face it.

Aisha's repetition of the idea that 'wherever you go you will' be confronted

by the Wall, evoked a claustrophobic, stifling Palestine that epitomised

constraint. The pronominal switch to 'you' in 'wherever *you* go…' (my

emphasis) invited the audience to imagine themselves living trapped

behind the Wall.

These students' descriptions of the West Bank as a prison draw on

a common discursive repertoire to encapsulate a collective experience of

feeling trapped and detained and echo the ways in which a number of

theorists and activists have characterised the effect of the Wall on

Palestine (for example, Pappe, 2008). Rita Giacaman and Penny Johnson

(2013, p.55) argue that in the last decade characterisations of 'life as

prison' and of Palestine as a 'big prison' have gained currency. The

metaphor of prison is evocative and powerful as it conjures up images of

punishment, oppression and being trapped. In drawing on this popular

imagery to describe the effect of the Wall on Palestine, the participants'

accounts reflect both their lived experiences and the currency of the

metaphor in Palestinian society and internationally. In describing their

homeland in this emotive way, these participants' accounts were,

therefore, at once personal and political.

In keeping with the accounts above, twenty-year-old Sultan[12] also

described the architecture of occupation in a starkly negative, evocative

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[12] Sultan's circumstances make him quite distinctive. I have therefore chosen to limit my descriptions of him to help avoid identification.

way that drew on a discursive repertoire common in the literature on Palestine, as will be seen below. However, rather than arguing that the Wall has turned the West Bank into a prison, he said that it has turned the West Bank into a series of ghettoes.

> Most people when they hear about the Wall, they think it's around the West Bank and it's not, it's around Palestinian cities and they think it's one wall, it's not, it's several walls, each wall is around a different city in Palestine. So what do you expect when you have all people of Jericho living inside a wall? Wouldn't you call that a ghetto? When you have to have permission to get out and in through the Wall, that's the definition of a ghetto! A place which had walls that all the Jews were forced to live in and they had like a curfew and they should go back in and they should have a per-, a permission to get out of the ghetto. It's the same idea. It's literally what was happening to the Jews, they're just doing it to us. They were living in ghettos, now they are forcing us to live in ghettoes. They used to live in the Diaspora, now we are living in the Diaspora. It's quite simple.

Sultan used his narrative to dispel some misconceptions about the Wall. As with the metaphor of prison, his description of the Wall creating a series of ghettoes not only conveyed his experience of it, but also drew on an emotive historical discursive repertoire to convey a sense of the collective Palestinian condition of oppression that is captured in literature on the occupation. Academics also use the notion of the ghetto to describe the oppressive effects of the Wall on the West Bank and

Palestinians. For example, Etienne Balibar (2004, p.11) argues that 'the enclaves between the green line and the separation wall such as Qalqilya are ghettoes' and the journalist Jonathan Cook uses similar terms, arguing that 'Israel's corralling of the Palestinian population into ever-shrinking ghettoes in the occupied territories has required the enforcement of severe restrictions on Palestinian movement,' (2010, p.167). Sultan did more than protest against the effect of the Wall on the Palestinians, however. In arguing that 'the Jews' were treating Palestinians in the way in which they themselves were once treated, he appealed to the moral outrage that the historic treatment of the Jewish people rightly elicits, inviting an international audience to feel outraged at how the Palestinians are being treated now. In doing so he sought to legitimise criticism of Israel by arguing that while Jewish people have been victimised, they are now the oppressors.

While Sultan's narrative constitutes a clear example of Polletta's (2002) notion of recruitment of support through political narratives, some of the participants' narratives fitted with her notion that political narratives stimulate emotions, such as anger, pain or empathy, that serve to mobilize people to action. The students expressed how the architecture of occupation made them feel and described the pain, anger, frustration and feelings of impotence it elicited in ways that seemed designed to stimulate emotions in their audience and, in some cases, mobilise that audience into action.

In sharing their emotional reactions these students asserted their agency as young Palestinians, letting foreigners know how the

architecture of occupation affected them individually and how their individual experience is also collective. There are similarities, or echoes, that contributed to a sense of a collective experience of the Wall in the accounts that follow, however, there are also subtle but significant differences in how the participants used their accounts. One participant eschewed characterising Palestinians as victims by stating that in spite of how they are being treated now, they will be victorious, while others used their descriptions of the negative effects of the Wall on Palestinian lives and communities to make indirect appeals for international support.

Salwa, the fourth-year English student who said Palestinians would overcome the Jews in the previous chapter, described her astonishment and upset when she first heard about the Wall. However, she avoided characterising Palestinians as victims by expressing the belief that they will be victorious in the future. She did this by adding a coda to her account in which she resisted seeing the 'tragedy' of the Wall as permanent by expressing a shared belief in the future victory of the Palestinians.

> When I heard about the Wall for the first time, it was very near the village I live in, and it astonished us a lot how they wanted to divide two towns. I mean I had neighbours, one day they will be in two completely different countries. They took a lot of land, the residents would always go to the Wall and resist. Even a lot of my cousins have been shot and imprisoned because of all these things. The Wall was really upsetting. They took a lot of

land, but we …, we believe that victory will come, ah, but the

Wall is a tragedy, it's a really big tragedy.

Salwa described how Palestine is dissected by the architecture of occupation and fraught with danger for those who resist. Her declared belief in victory functioned both as a source of pious hope that made the pain of the occupation and its architecture seem more manageable, and as a show of strength; she constructed an unspecified collective ('we') as certain of victory. In her framing of the situation, Salwa constructed 'victory', i.e. defeating 'the Jews', as a legitimate response to the injustice of occupation, one that was independent of foreign interference. However, as will be seen in chapter seven, her assertion that 'we believe that victory will come' does not reflect a universally-held Palestinian position, nor is the way in which she frames the situation in terms of victory and defeat universally accepted by Palestinians.

Like Salwa, Zahra stressed that the Palestinian experience of the architecture of occupation was collective and avoided characterising Palestinians as victims. In response to the question, 'and when you think about the Wall?', she said the Wall 'really annoys me. I mean it blocks us off from areas, I mean it doesn't let us walk freely.' She repeated this idea, saying 'I mean it really irritates us, and it doesn't look nice.' In expressing annoyance in addition to upset, she avoided characterising herself as a passive victim of the occupation, instead asserting her opposition to the Wall. Her repetition of 'us' conveyed a sense of Palestinians as collectively affected by, and opposing, the Wall.

In contrast to the belief expressed by Salwa and some of the other participants that 'victory' would be realised by devout Muslims and was not dependent on outside intervention, which will be discussed further in the final empirical chapter (seven), some of the other participants sought to mobilise foreigners' emotions in their narratives in an effort to garner international support for the Palestinian cause. For example, Nada asked rhetorical questions to challenge her audience to consider the implications of the Wall and the fact that it continues to be extended without effective international opposition.

> With all of the travel restrictions that we go through now, there's going to be a 10-foot wall between the 11 percent of Palestine that is left? What's going on? How come until today governments aren't standing up? The country has been so ... you have settlements between cities ... that small village is going to be trapped in by a wall. This wall is to protect us [sic] supposedly, a bombing still occurred and they still continue with the illusion that it's being built for their safety. It's being built on our land for their safety. You can see a bit of the Wall over there and a bit of the Wall over there and you're like, my God, what's going on? It's not something that you can get used to because it's still advancing and it's still being allowed to advance. You don't know what to say to that. A ten-foot concrete wall.

Nada's comments underlined the injustice and contradictions of a situation where a wall purportedly for the security of Israeli Jews was being built on Palestinian land. Implicit in her comments was the idea that it was

outrageous that the Wall was being allowed to advance. This, coupled

with the rhetorical question 'How come until today governments aren't

standing up?', alerted listeners to the fact that international governments

should put a stop to it and served as an appeal to the morality and sense

of social justice of internationals, more of whom she hoped would support

the Palestinian cause. It was a call to a particular course of action that

fitted with Polletta's (2002) ideas about the importance of narratives in

recruiting supporters and stimulating emotions that can mobilise them.

Nada's narrative also fits with Collins' (2004) argument that participants

share narratives of suffering with internationals in the hope that by doing

so they are helping to mobilise internationals to resist the occupation.

Figure 4.2 – Photograph of the Wall by Aisha Phoenix, 2010

Figure 4.3 - Photograph of the Wall by Aisha Phoenix, 2010

Figure 4.4 - Photograph of the Wall by Aisha Phoenix, 2010

These images show different sections of the Wall. The first shows an imposing section of vast concrete slabs next to farmland, while the second is a close-up of some razor wire and the third is an expanse of razor wire snaking along the landscape.

Some of the participants' descriptions of the restrictions imposed on them by the occupation and its oppressive architecture conveyed a strong sense of collective impotence, echoing the way in which the literature describes the impact of conditions in Palestine on the Palestinians. For example, Lateefa said checkpoints have a negative effect on Palestinians because of all the things they prevent them from doing.

Of course it has a negative effect on us that you're not able to go to your university, you're not able to help the sick if you had

someone sick, you're not able to help your child if he was, of

course, suffering from a crisis, or suffering from a health problem.

I mean they call it like a crisis, which is when, for example, you're

not able to save him. Or sometimes the ambulance comes **[text**

omitted] to take the child or take the person who is ill, they don't

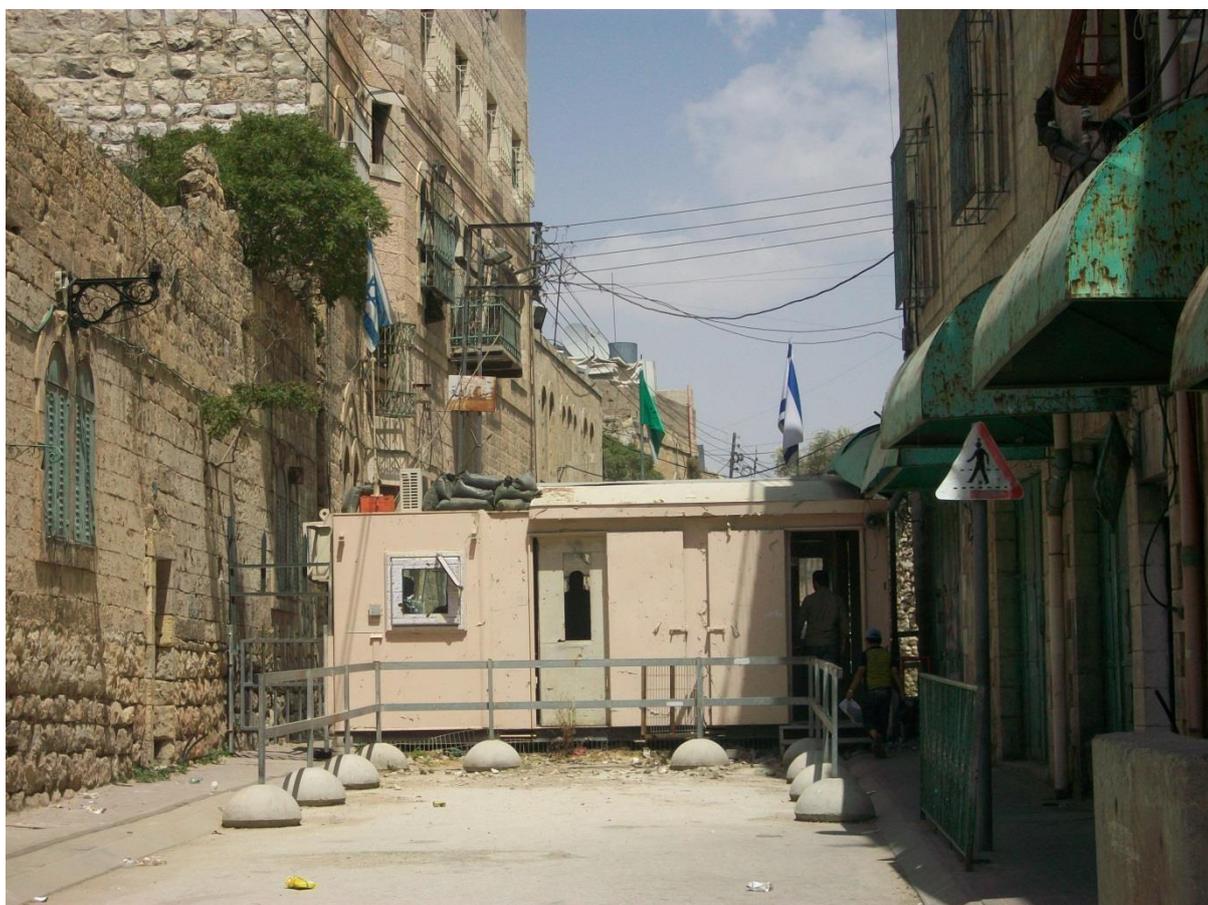let it pass sometimes during the Intifada and Israel's war on

Gaza.

Figure 4.5 - **Photograph of a checkpoint in Hebron by Aisha Phoenix, 2010**

This is a photograph of an Israeli military checkpoint in the West Bank city of Hebron.

Lateefa repeated the idea that 'you're not able to' four times to emphasise

the restrictions and lack of autonomy that Israeli checkpoints impose on

Palestinians and explained that the consequences can be deadly when ambulances are not allowed access to sick people, as happened during the Intifada and Israel's war on Gaza. By switching to the second person pronoun, 'you', to describe a situation where parents are unable to save their children, Lateefa appealed directly to the humanity of the international audience. The role reversal in switching person invited the audience emotionally to imagine being unable to meet the 'fundamental human need' of protecting their children and thereby encouraged them to 'side with the Palestinians,' (see Witteborn, 2007, p.160).

Her comments capture one of the dangerous effects of the occupation and the policies and practices that sustain it. This is also explored in the literature, for example, Saree Makdisi argues that 'many seriously wounded people have died while waiting in lines at Israeli checkpoints, or simply while kept waiting by soldiers on routine interdiction patrols, or as a result of other unnecessary delays imposed by Israeli soldiers,' (2008, p.50). Similarly, Annie Pfingst and Marsha Rosengarten (2012, p.107) argue that it is not uncommon for Red Crescent ambulances to be held up, or even refused passage to villages or towns as they negotiate their way across more than 500 barriers to movement … across the West Bank and East Jerusalem (UN OCHA, 2010, 2011). Once having reached the patient, and in the process of ferrying him or her to a critically needed medical service, it is usual for the delays noted above to be repeated and intensified. There are many recorded instances where patients, including women in labour and their newborn infants, die during the hours they are held at a checkpoint.

The Israeli system of checkpoints 'is aimed at ensuring Israeli control over the lives of the Palestinians' (Laor, 2004). Not surprisingly then, some of the participants, such as Montaser, characterised Israeli-imposed restrictions as interrupting normal life and questioned whether Palestinian life was liveable in these circumstances.

> How can we just live in these conditions? How? I just, maybe my sister who is just studying in Nablus, in err ... in An-Najah university. Tomorrow in Huwara checkpoint, they just close the checkpoint and no one in or out to Nablus and my sister just stays there for months or weeks or I don't know and we just cannot see, cannot see her.

Montaser's exasperation at the lack of control Palestinians confronted by checkpoints have over their situation and the uncertainty that this causes was encapsulated in his rhetorical question, 'how can Palestinians live in these conditions?' He invited an international audience to see Palestinian life under occupation as unbearable, which will be discussed further in chapter six.

In addition to narratives about the feelings of pain, anger and impotence that the architecture of occupation stirs up, there were also narratives that conveyed a sense of humiliation at being made to navigate checkpoints and other restrictions. For example, in response to a question about his experiences of living under occupation, Sultan, who lives in East Jerusalem, described the experience of passing through checkpoints as 'everyday humiliation.' He characterised this as

> [G]oing through checkpoints ... and being asked 'where are you going and where have you come from?' And ... Sometimes that you have to ... like if it was like, if you were on foot, like walking through the checkpoint, sometimes you have to raise your shirt like twenty metres away from the checkpoint to see that you are not like wearing an explosive belt or something. It's annoying because you have to go through this every day and the soldiers they know you live there and they know you are coming and going every day, but they like ignore that fact.

In describing Palestine as a place where Israeli soldiers routinely degrade Palestinians and force them to occupy an infantilised positioning he used similar language to literature that discusses the architecture of occupation. For example, Jones and Lavalette (2011, p.67) argue that '[c]heckpoints … cause anxiety and fear and above all humiliate and frustrate'. Similarly, Nubar Hovsepian (2004) argues that every day Palestinians experience the humiliation that Sultan highlighted. By describing his experiences in the way that he did, Sultan made an appeal to those who share his sense of moral outrage at the injustice of the situation.

Most of the participants in this research described situations where Palestinians were prevented from meeting their practical needs, such as being able to move and/or study freely, as seen in the examples above. Many of them also discussed the injustice of being deprived of the opportunity to fulfil their spiritual needs, as seen in Sultan's comments below.

> Only people over forty are allowed to go to Al-Aqsa mosque on Fridays. So what, like people under forty don't they have ... don't they have that need? In their own right, every single one has his own right to perform his spiritual needs. I'm not spi- I'm not religious, I don't care, but other people are religious, they care, it's part of who they are, it's part of what makes them good people is to pray and to have this bond with God.

Sultan used a rhetorical question to emphasise how unjust it is that Palestinian Muslims are deprived of the opportunity to worship freely. He used the internationally-recognised language of rights to underline how significant it is that so many Palestinians are being denied the right to worship at one of their holiest sites, Al-Aqsa. In drawing on that vocabulary, Sultan appealed to the morality of the foreigners who he hopes will read or hear his words.

A number of participants described their intense longing to go to places the occupation, its architecture and policies prevented them from visiting. For some, it was also the injustice of Muslims being prevented from praying in Al-Aqsa, which Sultan described above, that they considered frustrating. For example, Yousef, a fourth-year Sociology student at Birzeit, said

> I must visit it. I must pray in Al-Aqsa. This is what I strive for and this is my life's wish to enter Al-Aqsa, but I haven't been able to and I am still suffering. Many foreigners come here and are able to enter. They come for three days, they are able to go to Jerusalem, but I am 22 years old and I am not able to enter for

one day. As far as I'm concerned this is very painful because I

am not able to enter in order to pray in Jerusalem, in order to

see Jerusalem, in order to see al-Aqsa from inside and outside,

in order to walk in Jerusalem in her streets and see her quarters

and houses.

Yousef's repetition of 'must' as he expressed the necessity of going to Al-Aqsa, and his comment that doing so was his 'life's wish,' conveyed deep longing for something he described as essential, but was prevented from doing by the occupation. His comments suggest he felt an even greater sense of injustice because foreigners on short trips were allowed privileges he was not afforded despite living in Palestine all his life. Later he repeated this idea, stating 'I feel pain when I mean a foreigner comes here, I mean for a week or three days and is able to enter, and I am 22 years old and I am not able to enter Jerusalem for one day. Of course I feel pain and I work very hard to enter Jerusalem, I still work very hard.' There was sadness coupled with anger and some resentment in these lines that implicated me as someone who was a visitor to Palestine and who has visited Jerusalem and the holy sites that Yousef, and many other Palestinians, were prevented from visiting.

Overall, the narratives discussed here work together to convey a sense of Palestine under occupation as a place where the Palestinians are trapped and severely restricted, a place that leaves them sad, angry, humiliated and filled with longing. Given that the focus of this part has been on the architecture of occupation and restrictions in the West Bank, which affect all Palestinians, it is unsurprising that they shared accounts

that were both personal (as in Yousef's irritation and upset about being prevented from going to the Al-Aqsa mosque) and collective. The participants used a combination of emotive language and stark descriptions to convey to an international audience a sense of both the Palestinian landscape with its imposing and exclusionary borders and the condition of living under occupation. In doing so they underlined the fact that they were agents and not the passive victims that they are sometimes characterised as (c.f. Hammami, 2010).

For some of the participants, talking to an outsider about the repressive architecture of occupation and the complex feelings it elicited was part of their efforts to resist the occupation by raising the awareness of, and emotionally engaging, an international audience. In this way their narratives were at once personal and national accounts that were intentionally told as such (c.f. Feldman, 2006). The next part of the chapter examines narratives about how the occupation produces precarity in Palestine because Palestinians have to negotiate the threat of arrest or the ever-present fear that they will be killed by Israeli soldiers or settlers.

PART 2: The Precarity of life in Palestine

The occupation of Palestine maximises the vulnerability of the Palestinians and exposes them to arbitrary violence from the state and settlers in ways that constitute the condition of precarity (Butler, 2009b, ii, Pfingst and Rosengarten, 2012). Unsurprisingly then, the participants characterised their lives as full of uncertainty and vulnerability and said they lived with the constant threat that they would be subjected to arbitrary detention, violence and Israeli killings. For them, Palestine could be a

frightening place where Palestinian boys and men could be arrested and imprisoned for indeterminate lengths of time, irrespective of whether they had done anything to warrant detention, and Palestinians could be killed by Israeli soldiers or settlers at any moment. The same ideas were repeated across their accounts in subtly different ways, which suggests that the accounts were at once personal and reflective of a collective condition. As Collins argues, personal narratives 'are constructed through a complex interaction between individuals and the diverse set of existing narratives to which they have access,' (2004, p.125).

The first section of this part discusses the gendered accounts of the constant threat of imprisonment. The Palestinian young women in the sample did not discuss incarceration as particularly threatening to them, while the Palestinian young men expressed the idea that they could be imprisoned at any time. Two of the young women made this gendered distinction explicit. The section ends by exploring one young man's account of his experience of incarceration. The second section examines narratives about how Palestinian young women and men live with the threat of being killed. While the overarching point the students made was the same – that their lives are in constant danger – there were subtle differences in how they conveyed this. Fear was at the forefront of some participants' accounts. They discussed the routineness or mundanity of the killing of Palestinians as making it impossible to imagine a future. For other participants, personal losses were highlighted to emphasise Palestinian vulnerability. Taken together, the participants' narratives worked to convey a sense of the danger and uncertainty that epitomise precarity in Palestine. However, each of their individual narratives did this

in a slightly different way. This part analyses some of the linguistic and rhetorical devices that the participants used in an effort to convey the precarity of life in Palestine in a way that resonated with an international audience. Both the 'uncertainty and instability' (that characterise precarity Waite, 2009, p.416) were palpable in the participants' narratives discussed here.

The continual threat of arrest

Israel arrests thousands of Palestinians each year, amounting to approximately 800,000 Palestinians since 1967 (Addameer, 2014). Maya Rosenfeld (2011) argues that this is indicative of the State's 'policy of mass imprisonment' and how it is central to the way in which the occupation is structured (cited in Giacaman and Johnson, 2013, p.56). In the nine years following the start of the Second Intifada (October 2000 to November 2009) Israel incarcerated about 69,000 Palestinians, including 7,800 children and 850 women (Rosenfeld, 2011 in Giacaman and Johnson, 2013) and, according to the prisoner support and human rights association Addameer, there were 5,935 Palestinian political prisoners in Israeli prisons and detention centres on January 1, 2011. Of these 207 were 'administrative detainees'. Palestinian men are at a much greater risk of imprisonment than are women. According to Addameer, only 37 of the more than 5,000 Palestinians imprisoned as of January 1, 2011 were women (Addameer, 2011).

The significant threat of arrest faced by Palestinian men was reflected in the accounts young men gave about living with the constant anxiety that they would be imprisoned and in young women's descriptions of the threats faced by their male friends and relatives. A number of

participants conveyed a sense of Palestinian men (and boys) facing the constant threat of imprisonment and the possibility of incarceration, irrespective of whether they had done anything to warrant it. Their narratives described Palestine as a frightening place where there was constant insecurity and Israelis acted with impunity.

In the extract below, Nimr draws on the example of friends who were incarcerated to underline the extent to which Palestinians are at risk of imprisonment.

> But also one remains frightened. I mean it's possible to make any mistake, talk with someone, walk with someone, I mean I have friends, only because they walked with someone under suspicion, they were incarcerated for three or four years, around that, but I am not frightened of anything. I mean whatever they want, they do.

The tension between Nimr's comment that 'one remains frightened' and his assertion that he was 'not frightened of anything,' suggests that there was a conflict between conveying a sense of the situation as fear-inducing for Palestinians and resisting characterisations that would position him as a victim and perhaps impugn his masculinity by characterising him as fearful. Allen (2008, p.473) suggests that for Palestinians living under occupation, rejecting fear can be a form of resistance or coping. She argues that 'Palestinians in some contexts lived through violence, and intentionally confronted it as a means of *sumud* (stoicism, staying power). They also sometimes lived through it with no nationalist value attached, simply getting by as an everyday embodied, material practice'. The unjust

situation Nimr described, where just being seen with the wrong person could result in years in prison, conflicts with liberal ideals about the right to liberty. His characterisation of the Israeli state as a law unto itself, 'whatever they want, they do,' carried with it an implicit criticism of the injustice of occupation policies and practices.

In a similar way, Kareem, who is half Serbian and moved to Palestine with his family in his teens, said he had 'friends who were imprisoned and released and imprisoned.' However, unlike Nimr who said he was not frightened of anything, Kareem suggested that the incarceration of his friends contributed to his own sense of vulnerability. He described how he felt when his friends were imprisoned.

> It's a strange feeling. The feeling that with cause or without cause someone could be put in prison. My feeling is that it's possible that tomorrow my turn comes and I'm put in prison. That tomorrow the life I live with my family I may not be able to live because I'm imprisoned for example.

Kareem highlighted the 'uncertainty' that is the essence of Louise Waite's (2009) description of precarity (outlined above) when he stated that it was possible that tomorrow his life could be interrupted by imprisonment. Implicit in his comment was the idea that the burden of imprisonment was something that the Palestinians have to bear collectively, that to be a Palestinian young man like him and his friends entailed being prepared to take a turn at being in jail. Kareem's characterisation of the uncertainty he faced as 'tomorrow' his daily life could be interrupted by imprisonment, evoked a sense of 'normal life' as temporary and susceptible to being

ended at any time by incarceration. Like Kareem, Montaser also suggested that the arrest of Palestinians could be arbitrary. He said 'they arrest people err… and anytime they like. Like I just want to arrest you because you are Palestinian and I don't like you, so I will arrest you. That's it. No reasons.'

Husam, a twenty-year-old from Ramallah who was studying Accounting at Birzeit, conveyed a similar sense of the uncertainty and danger that the Palestinians have to negotiate, but he said that due to the threat of arbitrary arrest Palestinians have to curtail their movements. In an extract with lots of switching between Arabic and English and repetition across languages he used the second person to argue that 'if you leave your house at night, it's possible <soldier, Israel soldier take you to prison> prison, you <you must stay early in your home>,' and invited the reader to imagine having to impose curfews on themselves just to avoid being imprisoned. Maria Cecilia Velásquez (2010, p.20) argues that codeswitching, or switching between languages, is influenced by 'factors such as participants' common knowledge of both languages' since '[i]nterlocutors adapt language to their needs and utterances are directly related' to context (Velásquez, 2010, p.20). Codeswitching can be used for emphasis (Lowi, 2005), as in the extract above where Husam shifts between Arabic and English to emphasise the danger Palestinians face if they do not go home early. The repetition of the word 'prison' across languages serves to stress the threat of prison that Palestinians face.

Rather than suggesting that they themselves faced the threat of imprisonment, two of the young women participants argued that

Palestinian boys and/or men were vulnerable to arbitrary Israeli arrests and both expressed indignation at the injustice of this. Lateefa said that boys and young men in general were vulnerable to arrest, while Zahra suggested that it is particularly devout Muslim men who face the constant threat of arrest.

Catherine Cook et al. (2004, p.4) found that in the vast majority of cases, children detained as political prisoners 'are accused of throwing stones at soldiers or at Israelis who have illegally settled in the West Bank, East Jerusalem and Gaza Strip.' Lateefa used her narrative to highlight the injustice of this, stating that, in her experience, Palestinian children are incarcerated for long periods of time for trying symbolically to resist the occupation by throwing stones.

> Young children of fifteen years and thirteen years and nine years and (I mean) their ages range from between fifteen years and 25 years. I mean children at the start of life. (I mean) life is still in front of them, ((they're)) still to achieve the best ((in life)), but they put them in prison <just> because they threw a small stone. They imprisoned them for a period of a year, two years and sometimes 15 years, ((or)) he spends the rest of his life in prison.

Lateefa invited moral condemnation of the treatment of Palestinian children by emphasising how their vulnerability, youth ('at the start of life') and promise ('still to achieve the best') did not protect them from years of incarceration. Later in the interview she explicitly condemned the Israeli army when she said 'but a person merely throws a small stone, they

sentence him to between five years and 15 years. Despicable or not despicable?' Her use of repetition in this rhetorical question suggested that she not only considered the Israeli army's actions to be unacceptable, but that she also expected me, and a wider imagined international audience, to share her view, which carried with it an implicit call for a course of action (Polletta, 2002).

Lateefa described the Israeli army as regularly terrorising her village at night, seizing people and disturbing the entire village. She argued that spies help the Israeli army to come and seize people, creating the impression that her village was a place with both internal and external threats, which was something her family mentioned when I visited their village and had lunch at their home.

> They come to our village and they take people. In a week they come and take ten people, sometimes two, sometimes three. They come and take them from their homes. Of course, there are spies who are <spy> they help them to carry out their task. We have a neighbour in our neighbourhood who was seized by the Jews and then they came to our quarter at 2.30am and threw stun grenades to create a loud noise to disturb people and wake them up of course. And we were carrying out the dawn prayer and when we finished we heard a sound as though there was a grenade. I stopped…and said to myself 'has Israel started to bomb our little village?'

Lateefa conveys a chilling sense of temporary life in her description of the Israeli army seizing people from her village each week. The regular

disturbances and incarceration mean that the villagers live in anticipation of their lives and/or social worlds being interrupted. Lateefa did not talk explicitly about her own fear during the night raids. However, implicit in her comments was the idea that stun grenades in the middle of the night are terrifying for villagers who recognise that they are relatively defenceless (a 'little village') before the might of the State of Israel. Lateefa's account of the imprisonment of children and traumatising night raids resonates with research on the incarceration of children. For example, Defence for Children International Palestine (DCI-Palestine, p.7) conducted research with 311 Palestinian children in military detention and said the children's testimonies 'reveal that the majority of children are detained in the middle of the night in what are typically described as terrifying raids conducted by the army.'

Lateefa gave further details about the Israeli raid on her village that she mentioned above, arguing that it terrorised the children.

> They came and disturbed the entire village and they disturbed the children. Whoever has small children, I mean those children always feel a sort of fear, not like the grown-ups. I may have a strong heart, but for a child who is three or 13 months or two years or one and a half, I mean from my point of view this is not good. In my opinion it disturbs and causes fear in the children. Even when the children get older, some children, when they grow up they still have fear inside them from the Israelis. They are not able to defend their land.

By asserting that Palestinian children grow up with 'fear inside them', Lateefa suggests that the trauma the children experience has serious, lasting consequences. Furthermore, implicitly she suggests that Israeli actions are causing psychological damage to Palestinian children that denies them their rights, as enshrined in the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Article 19 of the Convention includes the stipulation that state parties must take appropriate measures to protect children from 'all forms of physical or mental violence'. Lateefa took an explicitly moral stance against the unjust treatment she described, (stating that 'this is not good'), and invited her audience (both present and imagined) to do the same.

Rather than focusing on the threat of imprisonment faced by boys and young men in general, Zahra argued that religious men and those who oppose the occupation were particularly vulnerable to imprisonment: 'every religious young person, every young person against the occupation, every young person who is not pleased with the situation will certainly be imprisoned.' Zahra's description of the inevitability of religious, Muslim men being arrested contributed to the impression that the Palestinians have been forced into a condition of temporary life where interruptions to their social worlds are inevitable. She said that her brother, who is religious, was imprisoned for three years from 2005, when he was studying for his tawjihi high-school exams. 'All the young men of the mosque, all I mean the young religious men were imprisoned in our village … the number of prisoners reached 32 in the same year, yes, and all of them were young men.'

Zahra conveyed the indiscriminate nature of Palestinian imprisonment through both the breadth of the examples she gave of incarcerations and her description of those at risk of being imprisoned, which included children; the muezzin, who makes the call to prayer; religious men with long beards and '[t]hose with leanings towards Hamas, who say anything about Hamas, about political groups and parties.' She characterised the imprisonment of those with long beards as indiscriminate and indicative of the widespread targeting of devout men.

In contrast to the young women's stories about the threat of imprisonment faced by others, Ahmad and Wadee' shared narratives about their own imprisonment, describing the uncertainty of being incarcerated with no knowledge of when they would be released. Ahmad said 'I was frightened because I didn't know what would happen. I mean it was possible that I would stay in prison for ten years and possible I leave today. So you don't know.' Similarly, Wadee', who doesn't know why he was incarcerated, said

> But then jail was very confusing because I never understood what was in the court hearings because it was all in Hebrew. Translation was horrible, you can't contact your lawyers. I was denied parental visits. So I really didn't know how long I was staying. So yeah, it was pretty confusing. Renewals were pretty disappointing, to say the least …

The accounts of both young men conveyed a sense of the precarity of life in Palestine. Ahmad said that after being imprisoned for a month, 'they said to me, 'oh, we are <sorry>, you can go. We have nothing on you.

That's it, <ok> you can go.' For Ahmad, however, that month of imprisonment meant that he missed his final examinations, something that he considered a deliberate ruse to prevent him from gaining qualifications. The idea that young Palestinian men are sometimes arrested in order to impede their educational chances was commonly reported by the students in this study. In telling me about it, Ahmad highlighted the injustice of being denied the right to education and sought to mobilise emotions and recruit support for the Palestinian cause through the drama and vividness of his narrative.

The account that Wadee' gave of being subjected to administrative detention by Israel twice was traumatic. Like Ahmad, he said that his education was affected because the first time he was incarcerated during his finals and lost that term and the second time he was incarcerated for six months and three days. When I asked him how administrative detention affected his life, he said, speaking in English

> It delayed my education, traumatised the fuck out of me. I was posttraumatic. Other than the three semesters I missed at school because I was in jail – the one I was taking, and summer of course, and the fall semester afterwards – I had to also not take the semester after that because I was attending counselling for post-traumatic stress syndrome because it had created an ADD[13], a learning disability, that didn't enable me to continue my studies. That's just the educational aspect of it,

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[13] Attention deficit disorder.

other than the social and financial. Basically it affects every aspect of your life. So…

When I asked what the conditions of interrogation and jail were like, Wadee' gave a detailed and stark account. I quote it at length because it is vividly evocative and an example of the experience of incarceration to which many of the participants in this section feared they would be subjected.

> Interrogation there was no sunlight, you couldn't tell time. Food was horrible, cells were dirty, blankets were dirty. I ended up with like three skin infections, a lip infection, haemorrhoids, a severed nerve in my neck. I had post-traumatic stress syndrome, that was in interrogation and I lost 10.5 kilos in the few-week period that I stayed. Jail was slightly better but only because you got to mix with other humans. I was in the Negev so we had insect problems. Umm, not termites, I don't know what you would call them. Ticks, the things that bite humans, really horrible. Lots of ticks, snakes, scorpions, mosquitoes, flies. You name it, we had it. Like you'd wake up and you'd hear someone screaming because he had a Scorpion in his shoe. I remember once in the kitchen the cook found like a snake that was a metre and a half, a metre and 75-centimetres long. Had to chase it out of the sector. Cats, cats snuck in every now and then. It's pretty dirty. It really was not a healthy situation to live in and I was in administrative detention that also has, that also

creates a lot of psychological stress because I was arrested,

but I didn't know what I did. So it wasn't really a fun experience.

In sharing this vivid and traumatic account Wadee' makes an appeal to

the emotions of an audience whom he would reasonably expect to

condemn the inhumane treatment he describes.

In different ways the narratives in this section described

experiences in which the Palestinians, and particularly Palestinian men

and boys, face the constant threat of imprisonment. Through their stories

the participants appealed to the international community's sense of

justice. The young men at the start of this section described the

precariousness of their situation, with the possibility of arrest at any time.

The narratives of two of the young women participants, Lateefa and

Zahra, contributed to the sense that concerns about the unjust

imprisonment of Palestinian boys and men are widely held. The accounts

that Ahmad and Wadee' gave of the circumstances of their incarceration

and their experiences whilst imprisoned underlined why the prospect of

imprisonment instilled such fear in their peers.

Taken together, the different narratives discussed here convey the

insecurity and uncertainty that epitomise the condition of precarity in the

West Bank. They contribute to a sense of a condition of temporary life,

where the Palestinians' daily lives and/or social worlds may be interrupted

at any time by imprisonment. The condition of temporary life they describe

blurs the distinction between everyday life and imprisonment because

even outside prison the Palestinians are not free to assume that their daily

lives and social worlds will continue without interruption and therefore

what they feel able to do, and how they can imagine their lives and futures, are both constrained. The sense of the temporariness and insecurity of everyday life conveyed by the participants' narratives is even more pronounced in the next section, which explores accounts of the constant threat of death.

The constant threat of death

Pfingst and Rosengarten argue that Israel considers all Palestinians 'potential combatants' even in their own homeland, which justifies the Israel Defense Forces' (IDF) code of ethics to allow Palestinians 'to be shot at, maimed or killed' (2012, p.112). While there was a clear gendered distinction between the narratives that suggested that men were at much greater risk of arbitrary imprisonment than their women counterparts, the students described both women and men as vulnerable to being killed by Israelis. A number of participants expressed the fear that they could be killed at any time by Israeli soldiers or settlers and they graphically conveyed the trauma of the situation in ways that could mobilise opposition to the occupation.

This section begins by exploring the narratives of participants who highlighted the dangers that Palestinians are forced to endure under occupation, considering the fear this induces and how it is sustained. It then explores how participants articulate the condition of living with the constant threat of death, before analysing how experiences of the killing of friends contributes to the sense that life is transitory. Throughout this section I develop the argument that Israeli policies and practices

contribute to a condition of temporary life where life has a transitory, impermanent quality.

Through his narrative, Muhammad, a third-year Engineering student at An-Najah, described Palestine as a place of constant danger where Palestinians can be killed as they go about their daily lives, the effect of which was a paralysing fear. In response to the question 'And do you feel that a lot?', which sought to elicit further comments about Muhammad's narrative about feeling stressed, fearful and unable to sleep when 'the Jews' come to his town at night, he said

> [T]here is no safety, because there isn't, (I mean), for example you are stopped at the checkpoint, if you make a mistake or you make a movement that they think is suspicious, it's possible that they will shoot you. So it keeps you, for example, you want to walk to the checkpoint, it keeps you fearful, inactive. (I mean) you can't carry out your life in a natural way because anything they see they may feel that it's wrong, straight away, it's possible that they may shoot you.

Muhammad's use of the conditional (it's possible) to discuss the danger of being shot emphasised the conditional nature of his life and his description of arbitrary Israeli shootings and incessant fear epitomises Butler's definition of precarity (2009b). His pronominal switch to the second person, 'you', throughout this passage served to pull his audience (most immediately me) in to imagine being forced to live in constant fear of death in a condition of precarity that prevented normal life.

Similarly, Montaser highlighted the precarity of the Palestinian condition when he said that Israeli soldiers or settlers could shoot at Palestinians 'any time' they want and that 'sometimes they just stop the cars and taxis and open the door and just start to kill *people*.' Implicit in his narrative, which was elicited when I asked 'what happened' in response to his comments about settlers killing people in taxis, was the idea that both regular killings, and media reports of them, helped to sustain the Palestinians' sense of danger. He said that if you listen to the radio, 'I think every day you can hear someone is just killed by settlers or soldier, everyday – or maybe once in a week ... So, they can just do it.' While Montaser was unsure about the frequency of Israeli killings, he described them as frequent and suggested that the killing of Palestinians was seen as insignificant ('[s]o, they can just do it'). His account shows the importance of the media to his understanding of the situation and consequently to his narratives.

Montaser described the condition of precarity where, in addition to being subjected to arbitrary violence from the State of Israel, Palestinians are not adequately protected from the violence of Israeli settlers. His account drew attention to an injustice that is also highlighted by human rights organisations. For example, the Israeli Information Center for Human Rights in the Occupied Territories (B'Tselem) argues that the Israeli authorities 'do not do enough to prevent Israeli civilians from attacking Palestinians, their property and their lands,' (B'Tselem, no date). They suggest that the Israeli authorities have adopted an 'unofficial' policy of responding to these kinds of attacks in a 'conciliatory' and 'lenient' way.

Some of the participants argued that it was impossible for them to imagine a future life because the killing of Palestinians was routine, as can be seen in the accounts of Nimr and Lateefa. Nimr, for example, described the West Bank as a dangerous place for Palestinians whose lives he suggested Israeli soldiers consider to be dispensable. Following his comments that 'if you want to kill me, kill me,' I asked Nimr whether he thought life in the West Bank was dangerous. He said

> In my opinion, I always tell my friends, Palestinians are born with a death sentence, when a Palestinian is born you are given a death sentence … the area here is dangerous. It's possible to die at any moment here, it's possible that it will happen to you, the soldier comes and he feels like shooting you, shooting you is ordinary, nothing.

Through his use of the phrase 'born with a death sentence,' Nimr suggested that in the Palestinian imaginary rather than planning for future life, the Palestinians are waiting to die. Like Nimr, Lateefa used emotive language about death to emphasise the condition of precarity that Palestinians are forced to endure. While for Nimr it was a 'death sentence,' for Lateefa the Palestinians live like dead people.

> Like a dead person you live in Palestine. I mean if you don't die today, you'll die tomorrow and if you don't die tomorrow, you'll die the day after tomorrow. I mean it's possible that you'll die at any moment. I mean we can't guarantee that we'll live until the age of thirty or the age of forty. You're not able to put your head on the pillow and say I'll sleep at night peacefully. At any

moment, in any moment you'll find the Jews around your house, around your neighbours, above your head sometimes while you're sleeping. This is all I have.

Both Nimr and Lateefa's narratives were rhetorically compelling and described the condition of temporary life where perpetual insecurity and danger mean the future cannot be taken for granted and life has a transitory quality. Rather than being firmly rooted in life and forward-looking, the Palestinians in these participants' characterisations are like life squatters, temporarily occupying lives, but aware that they may soon be killed, or, as in Lateefa's narrative, they are hardly alive at all. These ideas about Palestinian lives being seen as dispensable, or Palestinians being like dead people, remind me of both Butler's argument that 'specific lives cannot be apprehended as injured or lost if they are not first apprehended as living,' (2009, p.1) and her argument that lives are 'never lived … in the full sense' if they are not conceived of as lives in particular epistemological frames. What can be keenly felt in the narratives is the idea that there is no refuge from feelings of potential imminent danger and the condition of temporary life.

When I asked Nimr 'are you afraid of death?' he replied 'no'. It is important to note how he shows agency at several points in his narrative by negotiating the contradictions of giving an account that highlighted the extreme danger inherent in living in Palestine, and the fear this induces, while eschewing fear in relation to himself. Butler argues that 'we have always to link precarity with forms of social and political agency where that is possible,' (2012, p.168). The apparent contradictions make sense when

we consider that for Nimr, the interview was an opportunity to garner support for the Palestinian cause. He therefore assumed the role of a young Palestinian resisting the occupation by describing how horrendous it was, while showing how Palestinians were being victimised. Similarly, Lateefa's assertion in the interview that she 'may have a strong heart,' suggests that like Nimr she is also determined not to construct herself as a passive victim.

Some of the participants told stories about the actual killing of their friends by Israelis, rather than the potential threat, to emphasise Palestinian vulnerability and the conditions of precarity and temporary life in which they live. For example, Muhaned focused on the importance of making the most of each moment due to the uncertainty about how long Palestinians will each live because one of his friends was killed.

> We must live our moments, because the next moment a person doesn't know what will happen to him, I mean it's possible that you're walking and that's it, I mean a settler comes and doesn't like the look of you, that's it, I mean he shoots you and you're martyred and you put yourself in God's hands, I mean at any moment it's possible that someone among us could be martyred.

As with Nimr and Lateefa then, Muhaned also described the condition of temporary life and precarity for Palestinians.

> Just like that there was a small problem between him and my brother and we got angry with each other. And the next day he

was martyred. So when he was martyred (I mean) I didn't have

time to (I mean) even to apologise.

Muhaned's explanation highlights how a friend there one day, may not be alive the next. By framing the death of his friend as martyrdom, rather than stating that he was killed, Muhaned refused to attribute power to the Israelis.

Like Muhaned, Ahlam shared a story about the killing of a friend that highlighted Palestinian vulnerability that is characteristic of the condition of precarity. She shared a moving personal narrative about the sick daughter of a family friend being shot and killed on the way to the hospital one night. Her account seemed to bring the pain and indignation of this event directly into the present as it faltered and she stumbled over, and repeated, words.

The other story that really … struck me during the second intifada was a friend of ours, a friend of the family lost his two-year-old daughter. She was sick at night and they live in a village near Nablus and he and his err … niece went <I mean> wanted to take his daughter to the *hospital* and they, like the … their car got shot, <I mean> got raided by the Israelis and his daughter got killed, his cou- his niece was injured, until now she has a permanent injury, and err he was injured, not as severe <I mean>, he lost his daughter.

Implicit in Ahlam's tragic narrative was the idea that Palestinians' lives were so dispensable that not only could a sick toddler be denied urgent medical attention, but she could also be shot and killed while trying to get

to the hospital. In sharing such a painful personal story Ahlam conveyed the human cost of living under occupation and appealed to the humanity of an international audience who would be horrified by it. Ahlam's moving account was painful for her to share, as evidenced by the pained expression on her face and her hesitations, which suggest that talking about this tragedy put her in a troubled subject position (Wetherell, 1998). It was also painful to hear. With simple, matter-of-fact language she conveyed a sense of Palestinian lives being turned upside down because of uncompromising Israeli brutality. The effect was a haunting narrative that underlined the need for, and urgency of, international action.

In different ways the narratives and accounts in this part conveyed a sense of the uncertainty and insecurity of life under occupation that characterise the conditions of precarity and temporary life. The participants shared narratives about the threat of imprisonment that Palestinian men face and the arbitrariness of killings by Israeli soldiers or settlers. Some of their accounts overtly expressed the fear that they would be killed; some characterised the killing of Palestinians as routine and suggested that this meant that their lives were overshadowed by the possibility of death, which implicitly made it impossible for them to imagine a future life. Others highlighted the killing of their friends to emphasise Palestinian vulnerability. Through their powerful, emotive narratives the participants in this part sought to convey a sense of the relentless, oppressive pressure of living in a condition of temporary life and thereby to mobilise their listeners' emotions and recruit support for the Palestinian cause. Their collective narratives served to place Palestinian experience,

the brutality of which has been well documented, into a human scale comprehensible to a wider audience.

Conclusion: Making Palestine

Nicky Gregson and Gillian Rose (2000, p.434) argue that space 'needs to be thought of as brought into being through performances and as a performative articulation of power'. This inspired me to theorise that the participants in this research made Palestine in their narratives in order to give an international audience a sense of both the conditions in Palestine and their personal and collective experiences of negotiating the architecture of occupation. Giving the example of seeing a Palestinian taxi driver look small against the Wall the size of a 'Tyrannosaurus Rex', Cate Malek (2015) said 'I wanted to give that experience to people who can't come,' to Palestine. For the participants in this research, the interviews were an opportunity to share their experiences with an international audience in a way that would resonate with foreigners and bring that experience to life. As Doreen Massey (2008, p.9) argues, '[t]he spatial is political' and relational. It is 'always in the process of being made. It is never finished; never closed. Perhaps we could imagine space as a simultaneity of stories-so-far' (Massey, 2008, p.9). While Massey explores how *physical* places are constituted through stories, my theorisation helps to conceptualise the ways in which through the stories the participants shared they made a *discursive* Palestine (Davis, 2002; Rice, 2002) that helped to make the place and their experiences of living in it comprehensible to both themselves and an international audience.

Through the accounts the students shared, they discursively brought into being an inhospitable, hostile and precarious Palestine that could raise awareness about the conditions of life under occupation. Their narratives worked together to create a sense of an oppressive collective condition. Those participants who sought to use their interviews to inform foreigners about the occupation and elicit support for their cause may have hoped that their accounts would serve as 'evidence' that underlined the Palestinian 'status as deserving of human rights' (Allen, 2009, p.162). Collins suggests that when Palestinians participate in research with foreigners a Palestinian national identity is co-constructed that emphasises the 'suffering' the Palestinians have to endure so that foreigners have 'evidence' with which to try and influence people internationally. This is important since '[n]arratives of pain and suffering … tap into an international discourse of human rights and are deployed to compete against other disadvantaged and dispossessed communities for the attention of international human rights institutions,' (Khalili, 2005, p.31).

Sarah Pink (2012, p.6) argues that in the making of places 'everyday life and activism are implicated.' As this chapter has argued, a number of students shared stories about the architecture of occupation and oppressive Israeli policies and practices as part of their activism or resistance. They brought Palestine to life in their interviews through their stories about negotiating the oppressive Wall, Israeli checkpoints and restrictions, and reports of their constant fear of imprisonment or death at the hands of the Israelis; all of which affect how the Palestinians are able

to live in their homeland. In 'making' an oppressive Palestine in their interviews they struggled against dominant Israeli discourses that downplay the effect of the occupation and its architecture on Palestinian lives. Tim Cresswell suggests that conceptualising place as performed and practiced facilitates thinking of it 'in radically open and non-essentialized ways, where place is constantly struggled over and reimagined in practical ways,' (2015, p.71). The students' accounts made Palestine legible as a restrictive, frightening and dangerous place of struggle, simultaneously making themselves legible as Palestinians, i.e. a people who struggle and have a history of struggle.

The implications of the analyses presented in this chapter are that the participants' characterisations of the threat of imprisonment and the threat of death showed that they were compelled to focus on the present and the past as there were no guarantees about the future of their social worlds and lives. This has served to produce what I have called a condition of temporary life, where provisionality and impermanence condition, and call into question, their very being. This is particularly striking and ironic given that all the participants were students and so studying to improve their future chances.

There was a palpable sense of constant danger in the narratives, with the participants acutely aware of the fragility of their human condition and the inevitability of death in ways that could be viewed as similar to being terminally ill or on death row. Rather than presenting themselves as passive victims, however, the young people spoke out against oppressive Israeli policies and practices and used the stories of their experiences to

raise awareness among internationals and elicit moral condemnation of the occupation. They emphasised their agency as they sought to control how their homeland was depicted, in contrast to dominant Israeli discourses that seek to obscure, deny or erase the Palestinian experience (Pappe, 2006).

The narratives discussed here set the scene for the narratives and accounts explored in future chapters about wanting to stay in, or leave, Palestine and hopes for the future. Despite significant differences between the students, their narratives about the architecture of occupation and the condition of precarity were similar, drawing on similar themes, expressions and discursive repertoires as part of a collective narrative that conveyed a sense of a collective condition and set the scene for a foreign audience. The negative effect of the architecture of occupation and conditions in Palestine constituted an area around which the participants' narratives could cohere, bringing them together unanimous in their opposition to the occupation and united in their attempts to convey the injustice of the occupation to an international audience. As Løvlie argues, 'the conflict with Israel constitutes a major uniting force for Palestinians,' (2014, p.102). However, this is in stark contrast to the divergent views they expressed in much of the rest of the thesis, as was seen in the previous chapter and as will be seen in the following chapters, where their accounts are often in contestation with each other.

This part began by exploring how the students conceived of the research as an opportunity to resist the occupation in different ways. For some of them participating was itself a part of their resistance as it

allowed them to raise awareness about the occupation amongst foreigners and to use rhetorical devices to try and recruit international support for the Palestinian cause. For others it was an opportunity to speak out against the idea of foreign involvement, with some calling for secular Palestinian resistance and others striving for liberation through Muslim resistance.

The second part of the chapter examined how the participants 'made' Palestine in their narratives through their descriptions of negotiating the architecture of occupation and the precarity of life under occupation. It argued that the conditions of precarity the participants are forced to endure mean that many of them live in a condition of temporary life where their lives could be interrupted (by prison) or ended at any time. In making Palestine, the students set the scene for their narratives about: staking claims to Palestine, generations of resistance, wanting to leave Palestine and the future, which will be the focus of part three.

PART 3

Staying or Leaving?

Chapter 5

Staking Claims to Palestine and Refusing to Give in

Introduction

This chapter explores how the students discursively staked claims to their homeland in opposition to dominant Israeli narratives that reject Palestinian claims on the land. It argues that their accounts sought to show how important Palestine and resistance are to the Palestinians and Palestinian identity in ways that added urgency to the messages they shared in chapter three about the importance of foreign support; Muslim piety or Palestinian secular resistance for the Palestinian cause. Adding to the discursive work of the participants in chapter three, part one, who spoke against Israeli media bias and distorted accounts of the conflict, the students constructed a Palestinian version of history that contested the dominant Israeli historical discourse (Gren, 2002) and the Israeli policy of 'memoricide', which Ilan Pappe describes as 'the erasure of the history of one people in order to write that of another people's over it,' (2006, p.231). Nadia Abu El-Haj (2001, p.18) argues that Israeli archaeology erased Palestinian claims to the land.

> Through the very nature of archaeology's historical practice, epistemological commitments, and evidentiary terrain, it helped to realize an intrinsically Jewish space, continuously substantiating the land's own identity and purpose as having been and as *needing to be* the Jewish national home. In so doing the work of archaeology erased other geographies. Most

centrally, it effaced Arab/Palestinian claims to and presences within the very same place.

Sa'di and Abu-Lughod (2007, p.5) argue that 'the political nature of the deliberate erasure' of the Palestinians' story has contributed to 'the stubborn dissidence of their memory-work,' which can be seen in the narratives of the participants in this chapter and the thesis more broadly.

The students drew on collective memories to construct the land and the unjust way in which their families were forced from it in the Nakba and Naksa as central to their Palestinianness. They also highlighted sumūd and resistance as integral to what it means to be Palestinian, thereby conveying to a foreign audience why it is so important that they remain in Palestine and resist the occupation. As Rich Wiles and Nidal Azza (2012) argue, family and community resistance is a powerful way to affirm the Palestinian national identity that helps to keep the national struggle alive.

The narratives in this chapter also show the importance of the intergenerational transmission of stories about how Palestinian lives were affected by the occupation for the formation of Palestinian identities that embody a sense of struggle. The journalist and activist Abunimah outlines how narratives about Palestinian lives and experiences before and after the Nakba contribute to 'a strong sense of identity'.

> For Palestinians, a strong sense of identity is passed via the narrative, expressed through the memories of their parents and grandparents of life before their exodus from Palestine, and of the losses and anguish of their existence after it. Every

Palestinian can tell such a story, at once both deeply personal,

and yet readily recognizable to all other Palestinians as

embodying a common experience. The personal narrative is the

national (2007, no pagination).

Similarly, Khaldun Bshara (2012, p.137) captures the centrality of the

Nakba to Palestinianness and its inherent sense of struggle, arguing that

the catastrophe of 1948 that resulted in Palestinian displacement 'was in

essence what brought their distinctive identity to light.' He argues that

rather than being an end in and of itself, the identity 'is a *call and a frame*

for collective action and organization,' (Bshara, 2012, p.137). In keeping

with this, the chapter suggests that the participants shared the narratives

examined here both because of their importance to their lives and to what

it means to be Palestinian, and to persuade an international audience of

the Palestinians' legitimate claims on the land. This was important for the

participants who sought to increase international support for the

Palestinian cause through participating in the research. It was also

important for those who sought to discourage foreign involvement in

favour of Palestinian resistance and for those who sought to contextualise

their desire to get rid of the State of Israel and, in some cases, expel

Israeli Jews.

This chapter is divided into two parts. The first, 'Establishing

historical and emotional rootedness', explores how the participants staked

claims to Palestine by drawing on their collective memories to share

stories about the importance of their family's land and the trauma of being

forced from it. It also examines narratives about their determination to

remain steadfast and not give in. It suggests that both sets of narratives

work to counter Israeli discourses that deny Palestinian claims on the

land.

The second, 'Narratives of intergenerational resistance', explores

the ways in which the participants drew on collective memories of

resistance, and narrated their own resistance efforts, to show their

commitment to Palestine and remaining on their land. The students

highlighted the courageous resistance efforts of successive generations of

Palestinians confronted by the might of the State of Israel. In doing so,

they conveyed their refusal to give in and their determination as a people

to end the occupation. This invited both criticism of Israel and respect and

empathy for how the Palestinians are dealing with an impossible situation.

PART 1: Establishing historical and emotional rootedness

This part explores how the students used narratives to convey to a foreign

audience the importance of their homeland and the Nakba in the

Palestinian collective memory and their centrality to what it means to be

Palestinian. I argue that in sharing stories about the trauma and injustice

of Palestinians being forced from land that means so much to them with

an international audience, the participants appealed for justice, highlighted

their claims on the land and underlined what their struggle is about.

The students established strong historic connections with Palestine

by narrating stories their grandparents and other relatives told them about

being forced from their land in the Nakba, or disaster, of 1948 when 'at

least 80 percent of the Palestinians who lived in the major part of

Palestine upon which Israel was established ... became refugees' (Abu-Lughod and Sa'di, 2007, p.3) and through sharing stories about the events of 1967 when Israel fought the 'Six-Day War' with its Arab neighbours and captured the rest of Palestine (Cook 2008). Although 'the Nakba' is often used to refer specifically to the events of 1948, some scholars argue that the disaster did not end in 1948, but rather continues into the present, making terms such as the 'continuing Nakba' more appropriate (For example, Ali, 2013). Baroud (2012) argues that the Nakba 'never truly finished' and that '[e]very day is another manifestation of the same protracted al-Nakba that has lasted 65 years now.' Joseph Massad (2008) goes even further, arguing not only that 'the ongoing Nakba …continues to destroy Palestine and the Palestinians,' but that it dates back to 1881 'when the Jewish colonization of Palestine started.'

Stories about the trauma the Palestinians have suffered since the start of the Nakba formed part of the participants' collective memory and were central to their sense of themselves as Palestinians (Abunimah, 2007). Paul Antze and Michael Lambek (1996, xxii) argue that 'every nation must construct a past for itself. In the memory of that past, trauma plays a role, whether suppressed … or commemorated.' For many Palestinians it is important to mark the trauma of events like the Nakba and the Naksa by commemorating them. Nakba Day is marked annually on May 15 and Naksa Day is June 5. Zarefa Ali (2013, p.11) argues that different forms of commemorating the catastrophe of 1948 'construct the memory of the Nakba as something that can potentially mobilize

Palestinians to resist and fight against the Zionist colonization of Palestine.'

Some of the participants in this research suggested that being passed down stories of the Nakba, Naksa and subsequent events made them more determined to resist the occupation. When asked what their parents and grandparents told them about their lives, most of the students (re)told stories they were told about the Nakba, and the events of 1967. In the following extract from a joint interview with Muslima and Salwa, Salwa suggests that the stories passed down to her generation have made them more committed to resistance. The extract below follows Salwa's narration of the story of her grandparents being forced from their village in 1967. This account is in a sequence of Muslima and Salwa's narratives that follow my opening question about what their grandparents told the young women about their lives.

> And we would always see my grandfather go to the land and remain there crying that 'this isn't my land, I want my land, I want to return to my land'. And it was, in their opinion, a very painful experience and it is an experience they passed down to us even through the story. We didn't see it but our ancestors narrated it to us and we were affected by it as if we did see it. And we, now (I mean), we try to make it easy for them, for my grandfather and grandmother and my aunt who is present, I mean we tell them that we are not going to stop.

Salwa dramatizes her grandfather's words using direct speech to help build credibility and draw both me and Muslima into the pain and longing

of her account of his grief since the loss of his land (cf. Riessman, 2008, p.112). Her narrative evokes the collective Palestinian pain about the Nakba and subsequent loss of Palestinian land. In telling me that grief is passed down the generations she evokes the nationalist discourse about the importance of intergenerational transmission of stories about the Nakba and subsequent events.

Bshara (2012, p.124) highlights the myriad ways in which stories about the losses the Palestinians have suffered are passed down the generations. Drawing on work with Palestinian refugees he argues that in order to give an account of their memory and spatial practices, it is important that we 'understand the nature of their loss (as traumatic), and how this loss has been passed on from elder to younger generations through different processes (such as commemoration, narrative, kinship, and camp's construction).' The passing down of the desire for *al-awda,* or the return to the lands the Palestinians were forced to leave, and the importance the students placed on sumūd, which is considered integral to Palestinianness, reflects the fact that 'we live not just our own lives but the longings of our century,' (Berger, 2005, p.67). Ali captures this when she argues that

> It is the next generation of refugees who have been making films, organizing the collection of testimonials, trying to grasp the meaning of the Nakba, while at the same time fighting forgetfulness and making public claims on behalf of their parents' suffering (2013, p.55).

In sharing narratives about young Palestinians telling older generations they are not going to give in, Salwa is able simultaneously to convey to a foreign audience her generation's commitment to getting their land back and the significance of the land to Palestinians across generational divides, which will be explored further in part two. Her narrative evokes the Palestinian character of sumūd, which Mustafa Barghouthi (2009, p.18) describes as 'never – ever – giving in. ... It is about our being beaten and abused in every way known to humanity, only to get back up with our heads held high.' Raneen Al-Arja (2009, p.48) suggests that sumūd relates to 'how, despite the terrible situation, Palestinians are determined to stay in Palestine, challenge the odds, foster a sense of hope, and work diligently to build a better future'. It describes a strategy that calls on Palestinians to oppose the occupation by stubbornly and steadfastly, staying on their land and continuing with their everyday routines in the face of potential death and destruction (Richter-Devroe, 2008, Hassan, 2013). For most of the participants in this research it was important to convey their resolute steadfastness to an international audience. There were, however, some exceptions, which will be explored in the following chapter.

Salwa's comment that she did not experience what her grandparents went through, but that the stories were narrated in such a way that 'we were affected by it as if we did see it,' conveyed the nationalist message that through stories the next generations of Palestinians have acquired a shared sense of belonging to the land that has been taken away and furthermore, a sense of duty to remember and

not give in. Drawing on work with Palestinian refugees, Bshara (2012, p.122) argues that their 'inability to forget has become a moral obligation, especially in the absence of social and political support of the refugees' cause.' Furthermore, Allen (2006, p.128) argues that 'for Palestinians, remembering their recent past, the lands and livelihoods that had been theirs, and the rights guaranteed them by international bodies, is vital to sustaining their national struggle.'

In a similar way to Salwa, Muhaned suggested that the importance of sumūd and resistance is passed down the generations in the form of a commitment to regaining land occupied by Israel. His narrative constructs this as an integral part of what it means to be Palestinian.

The generation before me used to say that ((the land)) will return in my grandfather's generation and my father's generation. Now if I say 'if it doesn't return in my generation, never mind, (I mean) but the generation after me.' And so now our role, ((is to keep)) our grandfathers' [will] that we don't give up. <Okay> this was a huge grief for my beloved grandfather? No, the opposite because my grandfather tried and my father tried and I am trying to return our land. But until now we have reached ((higher)) levels, still we are a bit far from our goal. But in our mind (I mean) there's nothing that could ease the Palestinian conscience, except when his land is returned to him. So we (I mean) it's our duty as young Palestinians, our generation is young as they say, we have a duty, which is our national duty, that we are concerned first of all with our Palestinian identity which is our land, the unity of our people and if God wills, our

liberation. (I mean) if it's not in our generation, it will be in the generation that follows.

Muhaned uses the first person plural 'we' to talk about himself and other Palestinians, which conveys the idea that he belongs to an 'imagined community' of Palestinians (cf. Anderson, 1991). He argues that like his father and grandfather before him, he is committed to what he suggests is the national duty of Palestinians, getting back their land, which he describes as the Palestinian identity. His confident assertion that the land will be returned, even if it is not in his lifetime, conveys to his audience (me, his friend Noor, and an imagined broader foreign audience) the idea that the Palestinians are not defeated, but have a sense of purpose and are determined to get their land back.

In the joint interview with Salwa, Muslima staged an example of attachment to Palestine being transmitted from one generation to the next. She used direct speech to dramatise how a sense of belonging to the land was passed down to her by her father. She described being ten or eleven at the start of the second intifada when Ariel Sharon entered the Haram al-Sharif where the al-Aqsa mosque is located and how frightened she was when she heard the gun shots from her house. She said that after that she told her father

'Come on, come on, that's enough. We want to leave here, we want to go. We don't want to remain. (I mean) we don't want to stay in this country. (I mean) there's shooting and killing in this one, let's go and live somewhere else.' So dad said to me 'where do you want to go?' So I said to him 'to any place but let's not stay here, (I mean) I'm

scared.' … so I said to him 'let's go to Saudi Arabia.' He said to me 'Saudi Arabia is very hot. Now what's nicer Saudi Arabia or here?' I said to him 'here'. .. I said to him 'okay, let's go to Jordan.' Except he said to me 'Jordan? Now you want to exchange the sea that we have and Yaffa and lovely places that we go to here and you want to go and live in Jordan? There's no sea there, it's far from the sea.' And so like that he started to convince me of things that I was little and didn't understand, but I mean it's possible that it was something still not very grown in us, the thing of belonging to our land.

Muslima's dialogic and heteroglossic narrative positions her in a moral drama about learning what it means to be a good Palestinian (cf. Riessman, 2008). By staging a conversation between herself and her father, Muslima, who said she would die rather than leave her country now, conveys the tension between the fear and dislocation that the occupation has produced, and the process in which the previous generation was able to make the desire to stay in Palestine seem logical through rousing national pride and hence a sense of belonging to Palestine. Her use of 'us' and 'our' in her comment that 'it is possible that it was something still not very grown in us, the thing of belonging to our land,' suggests that she wants to convey the idea that belonging to the land is passed down the generations at a collective level and is something that increases as Palestinians grow up. In giving an account of love and commitment to Palestine being passed down the generations she counters Israeli discourses that seek to reject or undermine Palestinian claims to their homeland.

Through their narratives the participants also highlighted the importance of Palestine as the home of the Palestinians and outlined the threat posed by the occupation. In doing so, they underlined the need for action to bring an end to the occupation in accordance with their arguments in chapter three. The concept of home is central to developing and maintaining identities as it is a crucial site for the inter-generational transmission of history and memory (Kassem, 2011). The term evokes both the personal and the collective, being 'at once a private and a public political space,' (Kassem, 2011, p.235). Fatma Kassem (2011, p.190) argues that for the Palestinian women who participated in her research, home was connected to the idea of loss and destruction and it was 'a site of resistance to the Israeli occupation,' and a site of commemoration, safeguarding and celebrating history through narrative and memory. She argues that 'home is concrete and physical, but always imagined and deeply symbolic,' (2011, p.235).

In response to the question 'How do you feel living in the West Bank?' Rami described the importance of home and feeling at home in spite of the hardship of living under occupation. He said

> Err it's nice and not nice at the same time. Nice because you are living in your home with your family, seeing them every day. Okay, it's very tough … err conditions, but it's okay, finally when you, when you come back home you say 'home sweet home' of course and you sit in between your family, talking about this day, you're gonna be very happy.

Rami emphasised the positive associations of the homeland and home by saying how 'nice' it is to live in Palestine and using the phrase 'home sweet home.' In doing so, and arguing that Palestinians will be 'very happy' as they sit amongst their families, he emphasised the strength of Palestinians' identifications with their land and how important it is to them. His use of the word home evokes both the place in which he lives with his family and Palestine as a homeland. Drawing on the work of Fog Olwig, Nina Gren (2002, p.9) argues that while it can be helpful to differentiate between 'home as a place' and 'home as an abstract entity,' with the latter 'expressed through narratives and symbolic interchange, … these two aspects of home mutually reinforce and implicate one another. … [Thus] the national home of Palestine may reinforce and implicate the home of a family, and vice versa,' (Gren, 2002, p.9). While Rami said living in the West Bank is nice, he also said it is 'not nice' because the Israelis are trying to force Palestinians from their homeland. In this way he highlighted what is at stake if the occupation is allowed to continue and underlined the importance of working to try and end the occupation. This will be explored further in chapter six.

The checkpoints and architecture of occupation that impede Palestinians as they attempt to navigate their way around the Occupied Palestinian Territories (as discussed in chapter four) may be part of a policy designed to weaken Palestinian belonging and encourage the 'transfer' of the Palestinian people (Hanafi, 2009), which Nur Masalha argues is a euphemism for ethnic cleansing (2012). For Rami and many others it seemed important to make it known that this policy does not lessen their resolve to remain steadfast and stay in Palestine. Rami said

'we will never leave our *lands*, 'cause they are *ours*. No one wants to leave his land and just go away 'cause of these things.' In response to the question 'what does the land mean to you?' He said

> It's my home, it's like my home. Palestinian land is like my home [spoken quickly and with urgency]. When someone tries to take my home from me, I won't let him …I was born here, my my my grandfather was born here and his grandfather was born here. We we are related to this this land, by soul, by by everything. Your spirit will be, will be in this land. You can't leave this land and go away.

Like Muslima, Rami constructs belonging as inextricably linked to intergenerational rootedness to the land and he establishes himself as having a legitimate claim to Palestine by stating that his great great grandfather was born there. He describes himself as belonging to Palestine in its entirety rather than a specific town or village and stated in English that 'any place in Palestine I can feel home.' By stating that his soul and spirit are in the land Rami suggests that he has a spiritual connection to Palestine that makes him all the more determined not to leave. In some ways his narrative can be read as making a case to me and an imagined international audience for why it is so important that he resists any attempts to dispossess him and oust him from his home. The numerous repetitions and restarts in this short extract suggest that discussing the importance of Palestine and the need to remain steadfast stirs up emotions in Rami, putting him in a 'troubled subject position' (Wetherell, 1998). It is poignant that despite his determination to stay in

Palestine when I interviewed him in 2010, Rami now lives in Dubai, as will be seen in the conclusion of this thesis.

Some of the family stories the students shared about relatives living through the Nakba and/or the Six-Day War mentioned family members who had retained treasured keys or deeds to their former homes and/or had visited their pre-1948 homes in ways that served to memorialise these ancestral homes and repetitively staked claims to belonging (cf. Gren, 2002). For example, Muhaned said 'There are people among us today, and I can bring you people also, who have kept the keys to their houses. My grandmother till this day carries the key to her house.' When I lived in Syria from 2001 to 2002 I became friends with a number of Palestinian refugees and can still vividly remember being shown treasured keys to the homes the grandparents had been forced to leave behind. There is poignant symbolism in still possessing the key to a home on land to which one no longer has access, a key to a home that may no longer exist. Holding on to these keys and treasuring them is a declaration of the refusal to forget the past or to give up on Palestinian rights and it serves as another way in which Palestinians stake claims to their homeland. Toulen Touq (no date) argues that '[t]he keys have been passed on from generation to generation as a keepsake – as a memory of their lost homes and as lasting symbols of their desired "right to return"' and Bshara (no date) argues that 'the key has become par excellence *"The Symbol,"* that signifies both "loss" and "resistance".'

Sign-wise, the rusty old keys have come to "suggest" oppression, alienation, and estrangement from ones' own

property, in [sic] the same time it suggests resistance and the possibility of return. It is imperative to note that the key is part of a system of objects that includes land deeds, old cartographies, and old photographs. All signify exile and the longing to return (Bshara, no date).

The passing down of these important symbolic commemorative objects from generation to generation not only links the past to the present and fights against the erasure of Palestinian history (Ali, 2013), but it also has important future meanings, for example there is a key memorial at the Aida refugee camp in the West Bank that 'is meant to say to the Palestine children; "*here is your return key, make sure you complete the mission,*"' (Bshara, no date).

For some Palestinians it is possible to visit the villages they were forced to leave in the Nakba. Some visit around the time of the annual commemoration of the Nakba and share stories of life in historic Palestine (al-Arabiya, 2013). Muhaned described and dramatised a visit to his family's pre-1948 land with his grandparents. The way in which he narrated the visit emphasised the strength of Palestinian attachment to historical Palestine.

We entered, we went, we saw, we visited our town. Now when we entered our town, my grandmother it was and my grandfather, there was nothing. There was a settlement, after the settlement there was empty space. All of the houses that were built in the time of my grandfather and grandmother were destroyed. Now my grandmother sat on the walls of her house,

> my grandfather began to tell me 'this is the house of my brother here, house of our neighbour here, house of someone here, father of someone here.'

The direct speech in the extract above makes it easier to visualise Muhaned on a tour of his grandparents' town. By using the pronoun 'someone' in the phrase 'house of someone here, father of someone here,' he conveys the extent of the expulsion. He said his grandmother told him stories of what life was like when they lived there and then she began to cry. Painful commemorative visits vividly illustrate for the younger generation family stories of dispossession of homes and land they owned. Muhaned, who described his family and grandparents as 'refugees from '48', said that most of the stories that he was told were about the family's lands in 1948 and the days of the occupation when they were expelled and the suffering they endured. Through the use of the words 'our town' in the extract above Muhaned both staked claim to his family's lost land and conveyed a sense of belonging to it, a belonging that he implicitly constructs as strengthened by his family taking him to visit the land and telling him stories about their lives there. Muhaned's account conveys how connected the stories that help to give him a sense of belonging are to the trauma and pain caused by the attempts of the Israeli occupying forces to undermine that belonging. In highlighting the injustice suffered by his family and Palestinians in general, Muhaned invites an imagined foreign audience to condemn the occupation.

However, the participants' efforts to stake claims to belonging in Palestine in their interviews were not solely against a backdrop of

occupation. Some of the participants sought to stress their sense of belonging because it was contested by other Palestinians and in one case by internationals. For example, Nada, who grew up in both Palestine and the United States and whose mother is Palestinian American, said that because she has homes in Palestine and the US and has not always been fluent in Arabic, her peers questioned how Palestinian she was.

> So, a lot of times I will hear something, because my Arabic, my Arabic wasn't as strong as it is now, so sometimes I talk to my friends in English and so I'd hear a snide remark, as in … err 'isn't she Palestinian? Why doesn't she speak with her mother tongue?' And, you know at that point I turn around and all I have to say to it is, you know, 'I express myself, my beliefs and my *love* for this *land* better in English. It doesn't take away anything from what I feel towards it'.

Nada invited empathy by dramatising and rehearsing the kind of taunts to which she is subjected and her riposte, which highlights both her passion for her country and her pain at having her Palestinianness challenged. The questioning of how Palestinian Nada is, coupled with her recognition of her privileged position as someone with dual nationality and family property in the United States, seems to have made her more determined to express her Palestinian identity. She demonstrated this privately, by getting a tattoo of an olive tree on her hip to symbolise her steadfastness to Palestine. Alexandra Rijke and Toine van Teeffelen (2014, p.87) argue that '[t]he olive tree with its deep roots in the land, bearing fruits only after several years of growth, became a widely used metaphorical expression

of *sumud*. Jill Fisher argues that '[b]y inscribing established symbols on the body, the tattooee is identifying him/herself as part of a given group,' (2002, p.100). Through her tattoo Nada identifies herself as a steadfast Palestinian. It is significant that she chose the indelible inscription of a tattoo to express an enduring commitment to her homeland. Her olive tree is an example of the ways in which tattoos can be 'a form of political resistance' (Atkinson, 2003, pp.56-60 cited in Martin, 2013, p.6). Nada also emphasised her Palestinian identity publicly by sharing the narratives she shared in this research and participating in resistance campaigns, which will be discussed in part two.

Figure 5.1: Photo of the tattoo on Nada's hip by Aisha Phoenix, 2010

The narratives in this part conveyed the importance of storying (or historying) (c.f. Motamedi Fraser, 2012) to the students who participated in this research and Palestinians more generally. A repeated theme in their narratives was how a sense of belonging strong enough to withstand the pressures of occupation was passed down the generations. Many of the participants argued that their sense of belonging and commitment to sumūd were more resolute as a result of the way in which narratives of pain and loss were transmitted and loss commemorated. Through narratives about the importance of commemorative objects such as keys and deeds; Palestine as home; being taught to love Palestine as previous generations do and the importance of not giving up, the participants highlighted the power of storying in the intergenerational transmission of Palestinian belonging and staked claims to Palestine that countered Israel's attempts to erase Palestinians' connections with their homeland through its policy of 'memoricide' (Pappe, 2006).

The students sought to have a powerful effect on a foreign audience through the narratives they shared, aware of the power of narratives from their own personal experiences of being affected by their relatives' stories about life in historic Palestine, the trauma of the Nakba and subsequent oppression. Just as Ali (2013) argues that the intergenerational transmission of memories of the Nakba is what fuels younger generations of Palestinians to insist on the right of return, the participants whose narratives are the focus of this chapter suggested that hearing their family stories about the loss of their land made them more determined to resist. The next part of this chapter considers how the

participants used narratives about different generations resisting the occupation to highlight both how integral resistance is to what it means to be Palestinian and to underline Palestinian determination to bring the occupation to an end.

PART 2: Narratives of intergenerational resistance

This part explores how the participants constructed resistance as an integral part of being Palestinian, thereby conveying how important resisting the occupation is to them. It also examines accounts of students following in the footsteps of their grandparents and parents who actively resisted the occupation and argues that implicitly these participants constructed themselves as continuing a legacy of trying to bring the occupation to an end.

A number of participants characterised resistance as central to what it means to be Palestinian. For example, when I asked Sultan whether he resisted in any way, or considered himself to be part of a resistance movement, he characterised resistance as part of being Palestinian.

> There's the mentality of defending my *land*, of my people going through *hell*, of my ... past experiences, of my grandparents' stories and everything. It all comes into one mentality that forces Palestinians to keep fighting on and on and on, or resisting.

Implicit in Sultan's narrative is the idea that there is a collective Palestinian 'mentality' of tirelessly resisting the occupation that is driven

by the ordeals to which Palestinians have been subjected and the power of narratives passed down the generations, as explored in part one. Similarly, Mohamed Hosen, a twenty-five year old postgraduate student studying the Islamic History of the Arabs at Birzeit, said that '[e]very thought of every Palestinian is connected with how to end the occupation, forever.' Through his use of hyperbole he stresses how pervasive thoughts of resistance are for the Palestinians and how resistance itself is an integral part of being Palestinian.

Some of the participants proudly described how their families resisted the occupation before the students were born and presented their own resistance efforts alongside those of earlier generations. The ways in which they did this suggested that they considered themselves to be continuing the legacy of their families and of the Palestinian people more broadly. For example, Nada described the stories her parents and grandmother told her about how they resisted the occupation when they were young as stories that helped to educate her about the occupation before she started school. She said that like the generations before her, she now participates in resistance campaigns, working to raise awareness internationally about life under occupation. It seems that for Nada, resistance (and narratives about resistance) may also be a way of staking claim to her Palestinian identity, which is contested by some of her peers and some of the foreigners she encounters in Palestine and abroad (as discussed in the previous section).

As will be seen below, Nada gave accounts of some of the ways in which her grandmother, mother and father resisted the occupation, before

giving examples of her own efforts to resist the occupation. Nada talked with pride about her grandmother, who was a child during the 1936 Revolt and would make up songs with other girls that expressed their support and encouragement for the nationalists. She also said that her mother, who moved to Palestine aged 16 or 17, was politically active:

> (I mean) even then, this was prior to the first intifada. You know there was conflict constantly rising. And err ... You know the students at the university were extremely active, even prior to the first Intifada ... So she'd remember herself throwing stones as well, and running away, and being pulled by the hair by the soldiers ...

Nada's narrative about her mother's involvement in resisting the Israeli occupation during the first intifada characterises her mother as courageous and evokes the bravery of young Palestinians confronted by the might of the Israeli state. Her description of her mother's resistance fits with the resistance of young women noted in Ramallah, Beit Jala and Bethlehem. Thomas Ricks (2006, p.90) said that observers in those areas 'have noted that high school girls confronted Israeli soldiers both verbally and with stones day and night throughout the first Intifada'. Speaking in English, Nada said that before she was born her father had also thrown stones at soldiers and narrated an incident in which he and her uncle were injured.

> He had gone and thrown stones at the soldiers and he was running back and it was the night prior to his final exam and he

> jumped over a fence and broke his leg ... no no no, my uncle
> broke his leg, my father broke his collar bone.

Nada said that her father was later imprisoned on spurious allegations that he organised a youth resistance movement and he was in prison when she was born. After sharing narratives that presented her parents as courageously resisting the occupation, Nada describes herself as implicitly courageous for engaging in the kind of resistance that can result in Palestinians facing administrative detention.

> I mean some of the stuff that I do, just as simple as you know the speaking tours that I might go on talking about how right to education is being denied, ah, me speaking publicly about the occupation and the apartheid wall and how it's horrible and stating different facts, **[quick intake of breath]** hanging up posters, taking part in demonstrations, you could be sentenced to administrative detention due to that.

In sharing this narrative Nada constructs herself and her peers as courageous in pursuing their rights and working to end the occupation despite the considerable risks this entails. This serves as a reminder to the international community of the precarity young Palestinians face and underlines Nada's call for international support for the Palestinian cause. Ramz, a fourth year studying Sociology and Translating, also highlighted the dangers Palestinians face if they resist the occupation. He said he participated in a peaceful demonstration that started outside Birzeit University, where he studied, but that he and the other students on the demonstration were tear gassed and shot at.

Nada also said she participates in peaceful demonstrations and she informs international delegations about what student life is like and Birzeit University's Right to Education campaign. She said that for the past two years she has organised a day of festivities for the children of political prisoners, which she said rouses the suspicion of Israeli soldiers when she travels.

> So we try and call these villages, these camps, usually call Qalandia and ... as many camps, of the refugee camps as we can to get them to come. And so all these are kinda like red flags. 'She's, she's, you know, organising an open day a day of festivity for 200 children of political prisoners, she's going err to different countries speaking about the Palestinian cause, she's doing this, this,' so they're red flags.

Given that Nada describes herself as politically engaged and highlights her participation in resistance campaigns in an interview where she also constructs her Palestinian identity as contested by both other Palestinians and some of the foreigners she encounters, her narratives of resistance could be read as serving an important role in addition to those mentioned previously. They provide a way of her asserting her Palestinianness to a foreigner and an imagined audience of potentially sceptical foreigners. Dina Matar (2011, p.162) argues that '[t]he practice of Palestinians acting as witnesses to their own oppression and testifying for the benefit of outside audiences is a crucial mechanism through which the very idea of 'Palestinian-ness' begins to be visually performed and mediated and

perhaps reified in new ways.' Nada said it is hard to see herself as anything but Palestinian.

> When I *was* in the UK on the speaking tour I remember I felt *so insulted* when people would initially think that I was American or my mother was of American origin, or anything of that kind and so, after the first couple of meetings that I would be in, the first questions would always be 'so where are you from?' And you, they kind of, because they were all Palestinian activists and they were pro-Palestinians, they were like 'Why would they send an American to speak to us instead of a Palestinian student?' And so my answer would be 'no, I am Palestinian, but both my parents are in blah blah blah.' So after the first couple of meetings I learnt that okay, introduce yourself. 'Nada you are Palestinian, born and raised in Palestine and stuff like that', so that no one would get any kind of other image of me. Because that's who I am. That's ... being Palestinian has made me what I am today …

What Nada describes is consistent with the first impression she made on a group of foreign and Palestinian students when I first met her. Her strong American accent, haircut, clothes and loud confidence set her apart from most of the other young Palestinian women in the group. In her narrative, Nada constructs resistance as one way in which she could stake claims to her Palestinian identity in the face of comments from other Palestinians who used to question how Palestinian she was when her Arabic was not fluent. However, the narratives above suggest that

resistance also exposed her to questioning from politically-engaged foreigners about whether she is really Palestinian.

In a similar way to Nada, Ahlam, a young woman from Nablus, said that both of her parents were politically active and her father was imprisoned when she was a baby. She described herself as being politically engaged as she grew up, but said that she only fully recognised the abnormality of life under occupation when she got into activism. Speaking in English she said

> I grew up listening to ... to err *revolutionary* songs, reading for Mahmoud Darwish. Going to err ... to events like Nakba, Naksa, everything, but I *didn't feel* ... like I know there was something, as a kid I knew there was something going on, but it felt *normal* in a sense ... err ... because I I've never left the country until I was ... *eighteen*, or *s-seventeen*. So all this, these things felt *normal*. Like the first strike on *that* mountain I saw a helicopter *bombing* a a place in front of me ... but ... but ... and my father used ... like it happened *several* times, but my father used to ... My my mother would be *really* scared, so she would keep us in a ... in a ... in a room, and my father would be *encouraging* us to listen to that voice, to get used to it and and making it feel like a normal thing 'cause this is the only way to *deal* with it, to *live* with it and the day and the nights of of of not being able to sleep because of the *sound* of the bombing was really, was *really* err ... really you get used to it. The first time I remember seeing a bulldozer coming into my *street* felt like a *nightmare*

'cause this is the first time you hear this *heavy ...* metal thing

moving on the *ground* and you ... the whole ground is shaking

under, *beneath* you and you get to fo-... like I forget about this

stuff most of the time, I never remember it until ... something

happens and and something triggers me to remember it, **really!**

So err ... but as I told you it felt normal *until* I err ... I was intro-

introduced to activism in <I mean> ... in the right way.

In her narrative Ahlam describes some of the traditions of resistance that influenced her when she was growing up, including listening to revolutionary songs, reading the works of the Palestinian poet and author Mahmoud Darwish, and attending events to commemorate the Nakba and Naksa. Wiles and Azza (2012) argue that '[w]ithin Palestinian households and families the world over, the traditions of resistance – whether through the preparation of traditional foods, the reading to new generations of the works of Kanafani and Darwish … or any of the innumerable other ways in which resistance manifests – continue to live on and be celebrated,' (Wiles and Azza, 2012). Ahlam said she channelled the trauma of her childhood experiences into political activism after she overcame what she considered to be gendered societal restrictions that impede women's activism. Sayigh (2014) argues that the mobilisation of Palestinian women 'must be viewed through an interacting system of constraints' that include 'those imposed by the Arab environment (laws, controls, socio-cultural atmosphere)'. In terms of the women's movement in the Occupied Palestinian Territories, Sayigh (2014) argues that 'women have been to a large extent self-mobilised, responding in different ways to Israeli

repression, the absence of national authority, and the inadequacy of all public services.' For Ahlam, the interview was a space in which to condemn the occupation and also to challenge aspects of the social order that jarred with her feminist politics.

Like this was all stored in a *place* in my mind and I knew that something needed to be done with it, but I had to get *rid* of the social *burden* that restricted me from being an *activist*.

What?

Like the social, as a *female*, like being an activist is not something that females would do *here*, or be *allowed* to. Err ... And you have to, you have to free yourself from these burdens at first, get to know more, get to know more about err your history, like *more* details besides your personal stories, err *meet* people and *know* about other struggles and know that this is *not* normal. Because occupation *is* normalized ... to a certain extent and internally we are *colonised* and ahh ... programmed that this is a normal *situation* to *be* in. But err ... when you, when you become, it's not about when you become an activist, it's when you ... you realise that it is not *normal*, that *all* these stories rush into your mind like 'oh, this is ... this is ... this is not supposed to be *happening* to *me*, why *me*,' or 'why my *family*', because most of the people I would hear them saying all during these events like 'This is what God has written for us, this is what we're supposed, supposed to be happen, we have to ... to settle with it'. *No!* and I came out to the realis- and realised that this is not something you have to live

with, this is something you have to stand up for, <I mean> to stand up against it **[exhales audibly]**.

Through her narrative Ahlam raised the idea that the inhumane way in which the Palestinians are being treated under occupation has become 'normalised' when in fact the treatment to which they are subjected is anything but normal. Allen (2006, p.125) encapsulates this eloquently when she argues that 'while the saturation of daily life with death and the filling of social space with its memorialization is part of what has routinized violence, at the same time, there are reminders, in private conversation and public ceremony, that the desecration of humanity that occurs through violence is outrageous, and the fact that these repeated deaths have become "normal" is a perversion of how life should be.' Rather than lamenting or accepting their supposed fate as divinely ordained, Ahlam argues that Palestinians must resist the occupation actively, which for her included educating foreigners about the conflict and the importance of the Palestinian cause. Recognising the abnormality of the situation, rather than accepting it as normal, allows space for hope for 'normality' in the future, which will be explored further in chapter seven.

Through their narratives the participants in this section suggest that the importance of sumūd and resistance is passed down the generations in Palestinian families and at a societal level more generally and they construct sumūd and resistance as integral to what it is to be Palestinian. They constructed their commitment to resisting the occupation as both bolstering their Palestinian identities and an integral part of those

identities, which helped them to stake claims to Palestine in the face of an occupation that seeks to undermine those claims.

Two of the students gave accounts of how their parents and grandparents resisted the occupation, which helped the young women both to establish themselves as belonging to politically-engaged families that remain steadfast and to underline their own commitment to resisting the occupation. Through sharing their narratives the participants expressed their agency as young actors determined to help effect change.

Conclusion

In conclusion, Palestinians are faced with the challenge of trying to resist the occupation and retain a strong sense of belonging to their homeland in the face of Israeli oppression and 'memoricide', which attempt to undermine their sense of rootedness. The participants recognised that in order to encourage international support for the Palestinian cause, or defend their desire to get rid of the State of Israel, it was necessary to establish both the importance of the land to them as a people and their legitimate claims on it. One way in which they sought to do this was through participating in this research and sharing stories about the love they have for their homeland; the trauma families suffered when they were forced to leave it and how their very essence as Palestinians is intertwined with their history and the need to remain steadfast and resist the occupation.

The chapter explored the ways in which the students used narratives about commemorative visits to historic Palestine and symbols

such as keys and deeds to explain to a foreign audience how important it is for Palestinians both to commemorate the losses they have suffered since the start of the Nakba and to stake claims to Palestine. These narratives, coupled with family stories, formed part of their accounts of how the determination to return is passed down the generations. In sharing stories about being forced from cherished land and narratives in which love of the land, sumūd and resistance were central to conceptions of what it means to be Palestinian, the participants staked claims to Palestine and made it clear that they had no intention of giving up, particularly as to do so would call into question their Palestinian identities. The idea that there is a moral obligation to remain steadfast ran through the narratives, as in the literature.

Implicit in the students' accounts was the idea that resisting the occupation helps to make the trauma of what the Palestinians have suffered and continue to suffer more bearable. Some participants suggested that they could watch their grandparents in distress about what they have been through and everything they have lost only because they were determined to continue the fight to end the occupation and return their land.

Through narratives about resistance the participants in the second part of this chapter were able to emphasise their agency, and that of their parents and grandparents, even as they highlighted the ways in which the occupation sought to victimise them. The narratives about young women resisting were particularly powerful in the context of a patriarchal society that puts greater constraints on women than men. Both of the young

women in part two constructed themselves as following in the footsteps of mothers (and fathers) who courageously resisted the occupation, thereby constructing Palestinians as courageous in the face of the might of Israel.

Some of the participants presented themselves, and the Palestinians more generally, as indefatigable in the pursuit of liberation, despite the fact that there has been no real progress for the Palestinians and the expansion of illegal settlements continues to complicate the idea of a just peace. I would suggest that some of the participants thought it was important to present themselves in this way in order to avoid characterising Palestinians as weak or defeated in contrast to some of the literature on Palestine that has been critiqued for presenting the Palestinians as victims, or not recognising their agency (see Hammami, 2010). It is also possible that in declaring their determination to continue resisting, they attempt to preclude the possibility of giving up. The idea that the Palestinians will not give up was not the position of all the participants, however. The following chapter will explore narratives from participants who are considering leaving Palestine if progress is not made on the question of Palestine and the occupation is not brought to an end.

Chapter 6

Beyond *Sumūd*: The Question of Leaving

Introduction

This chapter explores the tension between nationalist discourses that call

for Palestinians to stay and resist the occupation by demonstrating sumūd

and the fact that some young Palestinians leave or want to leave. It

analyses narratives about young people wanting to go abroad as a result

of the damage done to their sense of belonging by the conditions of life

under occupation and argues that in sharing them the participants

underlined why it is imperative that the occupation is brought to an end.

The context in which the participants shared stories about themselves or

their peers wanting to leave Palestine is one in which Palestinians are

subjected to considerable violence from Israeli soldiers. In recent years

there has been 'a mounting toll of deaths and injuries of Palestinians as a

result of shooting or other violence by Israeli soldiers outside the context

of armed conflict' (Amnesty International, 2014, p.5). The Israeli colonial

project means that Palestinian steadfastness is critical for the Palestinian

cause. However, the fact that the occupation oppresses Palestinians,

limits opportunities and compounds what some consider to be challenging

societal factors, such as patriarchy and conservatism, increases the

appeal of life abroad and puts some young people into a conflictual

position where they find it hard to demonstrate sumūd.

The first part of the chapter focuses on participants who described

their peers' weakened sense of belonging to Palestine as a threat to the

Palestinian cause and morally reprehensible. In highlighting this

consequence of the occupation they underlined the importance of national (and international) attempts to resist the occupation. Some of these participants characterised Israeli policies as designed to oust Palestinians from their land and therefore constructed leaving as capitulation to Israeli designs. Their narratives fit with the body of literature that analyses and describes how Israel seeks to make the conditions of life under occupation so difficult for Palestinians that they feel compelled to leave. For example, Hanafi (2009) uses the term 'spacio-cide' to describe how Israel targets the space in which Palestinians live in order to make the 'voluntary' 'transfer' of the Palestinian population inevitable; Stephen Graham (2002) uses the term 'urbicide,' to explain 'the deliberate denial or killing of the city – the systematic destruction of the modern urban home', and Baruch Kimmerling (2002, p.3) explores the 'politicide' of the Palestinian people, which he defines as a process that seeks to achieve 'the dissolution – or, at the very least, a great weakening – of the Palestinian people's existence as a legitimate social, political, and economic entity.'

The participants in the first part of the chapter sought to focus critical attention on Israel's destructive policies and warned of the dangers of allowing Israel to continue with them. However, they also criticised those peers whom they characterised as giving up and wanting to leave, for damaging the Palestinian cause by helping Israel achieve its goal of ousting Palestinians from their land. They were particularly damning about those whom they considered to be privileging their individual aspirations over their collective responsibility to the nation.

The first part of the chapter explores the political, moral and identity work constructed within these participants' accounts, drawing on Ahmed's (2004) work on 'affective economies' and Wetherell's (2012) work on the discursive circulation of affect. It argues that as affect circulates in Palestine it adds value to those committed to sumūd, who are accorded higher status as Palestinians and whose claims to belonging are legitimated. The circulation of narratives about the importance of sumūd, and how they are connected to what it means to be Palestinian, reinforces an 'affective-discursive loop' (Wetherell, 2012) in which these narratives intensify and gain traction. Affect is not decontextualized, but is in iterative relationship with histories and practices. Affect that relates to sumūd entails '"emotional quotation" or "affective citation" (Wetherell, 2012, p.23). It draws on established Palestinian practices that celebrate the idea of being steadfast in order to sustain a collective commitment to demonstrating sumūd as crucial for the Palestinian cause. The 'affective economy' (Ahmed, 2004) means that the intensity of the emotions of those who express their commitment to remaining in Palestine and those who voice their anger and/or disappointment in those who do not, serve to bind them together. The ways in which the narratives and affect work together can be seen in the narratives of the participants in the first part of this chapter.

In contrast, this circulating of affect marginalises those who leave, or discuss the possibility of leaving, whose claims to Palestinian belonging are questioned. The participants who are the focus of the second part of the chapter expressed the desire to leave Palestine, or said they were thinking about leaving because of: the effect of the occupation on their lives; societal factors and/or personal aspirations. While some attributed

the desire to leave to the different ways in which the occupation

threatened their sense of belonging, (which they framed in a variety of

ways), others highlighted the lack of opportunities for young people and

the stifling nature of patriarchy or conservatism, which they found overly

restrictive. Through sharing their narratives these participants underlined

what is at stake if the occupation is not brought to an end, how depleting

of their emotional resources it is and the complexity of their negotiations

about whether they should stay or leave. The 'affective-discursive loops'

in these participants' accounts function in such a way that the emotion is

intensified by '[t]he rhetoric and narratives of unfairness, loss and

infringement' (Wetherell, 2012, p.7). As Wetherell argues, '[b]ile rises and

this then reinforces the rhetorical and narrative trajectory. It goes round

and round' (2012, p.7) in such a way that the sense of injustice is

intensified. This can be seen in the narratives of the participants in the

second part of the chapter who were contemplating leaving Palestine.

The seven participants who said they wanted to leave, or were

considering leaving Palestine, gave three sets of accounts. One group

said that they were thinking about going abroad for reasons related to the

ways in which the occupation undermined their sense of belonging in

Palestine. In a context where a number of participants said they

participated in the research in part to inspire the international community

to support the resistance movement, I argue that these narratives served

to underline the importance of ending the occupation and consequently

strengthened the appeal for international support. The second group of

students who wanted to leave Palestine said they found the conservative

patriarchal society oppressive and the third group wanted to pursue opportunities abroad.

The intricacy of negotiations over whether to stay or leave Palestine can be seen in the fact that some of the participants in part one who were critical about their peers who left Palestine, or wanted to leave, were themselves considering moving abroad. Taken together, the narratives in both parts of the chapter highlight the complexity of the issue of sumūd for young Palestinians. They reveal tensions between a sense of collective duty to the nation and the pursuit of individual needs or personal aspirations that young Palestinian students negotiated in what sometimes appeared to be contradictory ways. Those whose narratives were of sumūd, constructed their sense of rootedness and identities as Palestinians in opposition to those peers whom they saw as wanting to leave and, hence, as figurations symbolising betrayal and capitulation.

PART 1: Young people pursuing opportunities abroad

The participants who constructed sumūd as essential for achieving Palestinian liberation expressed deep concern about peers who they argued had given up on resistance and their nation. Some suggested that the sense of belonging to Palestine that the young are 'supposed' to have has been broken by the occupation. Others criticised their peers for responding to the lack of opportunities in Palestine caused by the occupation by seeking opportunities abroad and thereby prioritising their individual aspirations over the needs of the nation, as in the following extract from Nada.

> Because a lot of the youth here now really have given up. They
> *want* to leave, they want to build what they call a better life and
> a lot of the connections that the youth are supposed to have with
> Palestine, the way that it was with our ancestors is starting to
> *weaken*.

There is an implicit sense of Palestinian life as a struggle in Nada's comment that 'a lot of the youth … have given up.' It would seem that she is describing a shift from what Berger (2006) terms 'undefeated despair' to a sense of defeat. Nada, who is from an upper-class Palestinian family, characterises Palestinian youth as inadequate in contrast to their idealised ancestors who had the requisite strong attachment to the land. Her description emerges from a context in which older generations of Palestinians stress the importance of the land and remaining steadfast. This is highlighted by Sophie Richter-Devroe (2012) and Nina Gren (2002) who discuss the efforts of older generations of Palestinians to emphasise their attachment to the land. Richter-Devroe found that '[w]hen talking about returning to their village of origin, refugees older than 65 of age [sic], i.e. those who fled during the Nakba tend to take a romantic homesick view, stressing their attachment to the (home-)land,' (2012, p.107). Similarly, Nina Gren (2002) argues that older generations convey their attachment to the land in their emotional descriptions of what they have lost, which convey their longing and underline the importance of return and struggle.

Nada's statement that the youth are 'supposed' to have connections with Palestine (as their ancestors did), reflects the dominance of this idea in Palestinian society, which Halim Barakat highlights when he claims that for the Palestinians 'the home and the land are markers of identity that one is forbidden

to abandon,' (Kassem, 2011, p. 234). Nada also drew on collective narratives and expectations about sumūd (Richter-Devroe, 2008), (explored in the previous chapter), and suggested that these young people are failing to meet them.

> I mean it's sad to see all these grandparents in refugee camps, their final days, weeks and months, still begging to go back to their homes, to their *land* and see the youth that are living here *now* so anxious to get *out*, which is something that has been masterly designed and created and we are put in such an environment that actually *wants* the youth to feel that way by the occupation. They *want* them to kinda feel finally frustrated. It would make things much easier for them.

Nada contrasted the desire to return of Palestinians forced from their homes with what she described as the eagerness of her generation to leave. There was implicit criticism and distress in her unfavourable characterisations that idealised the Nakba generation and pathologised her contemporaries. Her narrative marked the emotion for me and an expected international audience as part of the narratives that circulate about the affective impact of their histories. Her comments point to an affective economy in which Palestinian young people who want to leave Palestine are valued less than their ancestors who are striving to return.

Nada characterised her peers as 'so anxious to get out' due to what she considered to be the calculated efforts of the Israeli occupiers to make them feel so frustrated that they want to leave. Allen (2008, p.456)

argues that '[w]hen a variety of forms of violence are being mobilized to encourage, if not force, people to leave, the deflection of these measures through adaptation and just getting by becomes crucial,'. Saleh Abdel Jawad (2001) argues that Israel's measures 'have generated a climate of fear, anxiety, and unbearable depression and frustration,' and he suggests that '[s]imply to go on living under these conditions demands a high degree of personal sacrifice and commitment to the national cause.'

While Nada's narratives invited criticism of Israeli efforts to oust the Palestinians, she was also critical of her peers, suggesting they lacked the requisite commitment to the Palestinian cause. Her critical comments about peers who want to leave Palestine need to be read in the context of her privileged position as a young woman with dual Palestinian and American citizenship from an affluent family. Nada was taken to live in the United States, where her family has property, to get away from the danger of the second intifada. Unlike many of the peers she describes as 'anxious' to leave Palestine, she has the option to leave if the situation in the West Bank worsens.

Nada's comment that rather than complying with nationalist demands for sumūd a lot of her peers 'want to build what they call a better life,' reflects the complexity of the current socio-political moment. This is captured by Diana Allan's (2007, p.277) argument that rather than solely exploring 'the coercive harmony of a national identity rooted in past history,' it is necessary to consider 'emergent forms of subjectivity that increasingly privilege individual aspiration over collective, nationalist imperatives.' For Nada who is privileged in socioeconomic terms, has

lived abroad and has dual nationality, which affords her certain protections, the imperative to move abroad to build 'a better life' is not as great as for her peers who are less-favourably positioned.

Like Nada, Kareem, who was a fourth year studying English Literature at Birzeit, suggested that young Palestinians are keen to leave Palestine and highlighted the lack of opportunities as a key motivating factor: 'the policies that are present are that now, we as young people don't have opportunities, we don't have opportunities here, I mean the biggest dream of all the young people now is to go abroad.' Kareem suggested that policies, which he did not specify, were responsible for the lack of opportunities for young Palestinians and what he described as their strong desire to leave.

Lateefa also commented on the lack of opportunities and oppression in Palestine that she suggested pushed young Palestinians to search for work abroad.

> I have a brother who travelled abroad of course due to the lack of positions here and due to the lack of… of course this is Palestine, because of the oppression of course. There are now few vacant positions, (I mean) it is very hard to obtain a position here in Palestine and every person is educated, we are not able to find work for the highly qualified who are graduating from university.

The situation Lateefa described was one in which the most able were left with no paid work. Her account was of Palestinians wanting to help their

country to develop and progress, but of being impeded by living in a state of occupation.

> We want to take Palestine to a higher level of growth, a developed and advanced phase, but there are no officials, nor many foundations, that try to support this, to support Palestine and develop the infrastructure, to develop the economic situation, to develop the social situation – also the occupation opposes these things.

In highlighting the lack of opportunities available to young Palestinians as a result of the occupation, Kareem and Lateefa described the effects of 'Israel's policy to de-develop the Palestinian economy,' (Abdel Jawad, 2001) and suggested that the repercussions were that many young Palestinians felt they had no choice but to build their lives elsewhere.

Ramz, the Sociology and Translating student who described being tear gassed and shot at during a nonviolent student demonstration (chapter 5), was outspoken in his criticism of Palestinians who wanted to go abroad. He suggested that people who wanted to study then work abroad were 'selling' their nation, a term that is redolent of betrayal and unsympathetic to the reasons that are impelling young people to leave. Yet, as can be seen from the extract below, he did not rule out the possibility of himself spending time outside Palestine.

> When you study and go to work in Jordan, or you go to work in Australia for example, or Spain, okay you are not working for

your nation. If I travel, it would be on condition that I'm only completing studies, only.

His repetition of the word 'only' distanced him from those he described as akin to traitors. Ramz's narrative suggested that he felt that Palestinians have an obligation to stay and work for Palestine and the Palestinian cause, (i.e. achieving liberation), rather than working for another country. In nationalisms there are often 'mechanisms of exclusion' and '[f]requently, elites define the "action" in hierarchical ways, placing themselves at the centre as those who are '"better" nationals, that is, those who have the privilege of defining the nation' (Schulz, 1999, p.9). The participants in the first part of this chapter, while mostly not elites, also positioned themselves at the top of hierarchies of who constituted the 'better' nationals, defining what it means to be a good Palestinian in ways that included them but excluded some of their peers. In doing so, those who considered the possibility of leaving provided exculpatory discourses for themselves.

This type of narrative meant that some of the students who said that they wanted to leave Palestine and justified their reasons also castigated others who wished to do so. In a similar way to Ramz, for example, Montaser, who said he wanted to leave Palestine (to get away from an overbearing father and 'find himself'), said 'I think people who just left Palestine for ever after err **[sighs]** they don't know Palestine, they don't love their lands. They don't love Palestine, but I do love **[very long pause]**.' His comments show the centrality of affect for attempts to stake claims to Palestine despite the apparent contradiction of wanting to leave.

Montaser, the son of a lawyer, was very critical of Palestinians who go to live abroad permanently and distanced himself from them by stating that 'I want to go out, develop myself and go back here with power, with knowledge, with everything I've got and to start working.' Just as Montaser criticised those who leave Palestine forever, Muhammad, the Engineering student at An-Najah who said that the constant threat of death keeps Palestinians fearful (chapter 4), suggested that those who leave threaten the future of their nation in contrast to those who, like him, stay and try to bring the occupation to an end.

> [W]e as Muslims consider someone living in Palestine to be a mujāhid because they try to erase the occupation, that it's part of erasing the occupation, because it supports, because we if Palestinians all of us no longer wanted the situation here and we went abroad, what would remain in Palestine, correct?

Muhammad's comments suggest that he considered staying in Palestine to be a collective responsibility on which the future of the nation depended. Ramz and Muhammad's comments echo those of Khalil (2010), who argues that the emigration of academic highfliers is considered 'dangerous' for both the Palestinian cause and resistance to the Israeli occupation.

The participants used the narratives discussed in this part to do political, moral and identity work. Politics pervaded their narratives. In terms of their political work, a number of them condemned the occupation for deliberately damaging Palestinian belonging and/or stifling growth (and therefore opportunities) so that young people wanted to leave. Their

arguments about strategic Israeli policies that seek to oust the

Palestinians from their land fit with literature that in different ways argues

that Israel's policies are designed to oust the Palestinians (for example

Hanafi, 2009). Their accounts invited criticism from me and an

international audience who would rightly be outraged at the idea that

Israel is strategically working to oust the Palestinians from their land. The

participants also critiqued Palestinians who have left Palestine or plan to

leave and used their critiques to emphasise how essential resistance (in

the form of sumūd) is to the Palestinian cause. For them, the liberation

that they desperately wanted was contingent on collectively remaining in

Palestine and thereby resisting the occupation. However, their narratives

constructed some of their peers as having abandoned that sense of

collective duty and common cause. Their narratives pointed to 'affective

economies' (Ahmed, 2004) in which accounts about being steadfast

accorded higher status to Palestinians who remained in Palestine and

whose claims to belonging were legitimated, while marginalising and

questioning the claims of those who leave, or discuss the possibility of

leaving.

The moral work of these narratives served to condemn those who

pursued personal aspirations or interests over the needs of the nation. In

order for the personal sacrifices of the participants who remained in

Palestine to be meaningful, they had to be part of collective action.

However, the emigration of their peers raised the question of why they are

continuing to make sacrifices for a collective cause that others are

abandoning. It meant that they had to justify themselves as well as

constructing those who leave as wrong. Many of these participants vehemently opposed the idea of putting personal aspirations ahead of the nation and framed it as an issue of morality in order to promote the importance of collective action and to avoid calling into question what their collective sacrifices have been for and who they are as a people.

In questioning the morality of peers who had left Palestine, or were planning to leave, these participants also did identity work, strengthening their own claims to belonging by querying the Palestinian credentials of those who decided to leave. By sharing these critical narratives with a foreigner and an imagined foreign audience they resisted being pulled into a discourse that constructs sumūd as optional. At the same time, their argument that the occupation is pushing young Palestinians to leave Palestine, with potentially detrimental consequences for the Palestinian cause, underlined why it is so important to end the occupation, thereby serving as a rallying call for the international community.

PART 2: The desire to leave

This part explores the narratives of the seven participants who spoke at length about wanting to leave Palestine. It considers three main groups of narratives: those that connected the desire to leave to different aspects of the occupation and its effect on belonging, those about wanting to get away from restrictive patriarchy and/or conservatism and those about the desire to pursue opportunities abroad. These participants were situated outside the value system of an 'affective economy' (Ahmed, 2004) in which sumūd was privileged, as explored in part one and, as can be seen most clearly in the first section of this part, some of them used their

narratives to claim shared feelings of alienation as a result of the occupation.

I argue that the first group of narratives not only highlighted the cost of the occupation on Palestinian lives, but also provided personal examples of what is at stake if a solution to the conflict is not found soon. The other two groups of narratives highlight the complexity of the students' negotiations about whether to stay or leave. The accounts of most of the participants discussed in this part included narratives that fit into each of these three groups, even if they were not highlighted as the main motivating factor in decisions to move abroad.

The majority of the participants who were contemplating leaving Palestine were middle class, with the exception of Nour Ahmad, who described herself as coming from a single-parent family that faced considerable financial difficulties following her father's decision to leave. Drawing on emigration data collected through a household survey and other relevant studies, Hilal (2006, p.226) argues that the 'highest rates of emigration were found to exist among the "well off" and the very poor. Both had strong motives to secure or improve their life chances', with those in the upper social classes seeking to reproduce their class positions and pursue ambitions and those in lower social-class positions seeking social mobility. He also points out that better-off households are in a better position both to be able to emigrate and to send family members to study abroad, which may explain why the students in this research who said they were thinking about leaving Palestine were predominantly middle class.

According to a 2010 survey by the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS), more than 32,000 Palestinians emigrated in the years 2005 to 2009 and in 6.7 percent of households at least one person had emigrated. A third of the emigrants were between the ages of 15 and 29 and education and studying was the most-cited reason for people emigrating, followed by the desire to improve living conditions and then the lack of job opportunities in Palestine (PCBS, 2010). Only two of the seven students in this research who said they were thinking about moving abroad were young women. This is consistent with PCBS survey results that found that Palestinians who left Palestine between 2005 and 2009 were more likely to be young, male and well educated (Migration Policy Centre, 2013).

Wanting to move abroad if the hardship of occupation persists

Hilal (2006, p.226) argues that emigration has been a strategy for Palestinians 'seeking to move out of the zone of vulnerability, poverty, and deprivation'. According to the 2010 PCBS survey, 13.3 percent of Palestinians aged 15 to 59 wanted to leave Palestine with the most common reason being to 'improve living conditions', a desire expressed by 39.3 percent of those who wished to leave. This section focuses on the narratives of three participants, Sultan, Mohamed Hosen and Husam, who linked the desire to leave to the occupation. Through their narratives they underlined how unliveable the occupation makes life in Palestine (c.f. Butler, 2004), which strengthened their argument that the occupation needs to be brought to an end. It also considers the narratives of Nour

Ahmad, whose explanation of her desire to leave was strongly connected to the occupation, although she did not frame it in that way.

Sultan, one of the two participants who lived in Jerusalem, responded to the question 'Do you plan to continue living in Jerusalem?' by saying 'Umm ... mmm ... I would ... If it stays like *this*, like sometimes enough is enough. If it stays like this and it's getting worse day by day, I'd prefer to live outside'. As will be seen in the following extract, he was referring to the effect of Israel's policies of de-Arabising the land. Sultan said he would prefer to live in a 'Western country,' but not the United States.

> They, they change ... recently they have been changing in Jerusalem little things. For example, ahh ... to name a few ... road signs ... They used to be in err *Hebrew*, *Arabic* and *English* ...

Mmm.

> ...the name of the place. Nowadays, they have changed the signs into, people would say ... Hebrew, Arabic and English, but the Arabic part is actually the Hebrew name in Arabic letters. So for example, the French Hill used to say <<'French Hill'>> in Hebrew, <'al-tulla faransia'> in Arabic, 'French Hill' in English. Now the Arabic part says << 'French Hill'>>, but with Arabic letters ... Like this is a small *thing,* but it affects you.

Well, what does it symbolise?

It symbolises that there's nothing called Arabic culture, there's no Arabic *names* of places.

What does that, how does that feel?

They, as they say, you're not, do not exist, you've come from *nothing*, you are a guy with no heritage, no history, no culture.

Sultan suggested that the Hebraization of Jerusalem symbolised the erasure of Palestinian history and culture and argued that in being a declaration that the Palestinians do not exist, undermined their collective claims to belonging. He described this as so demoralising that he would prefer to leave Palestine altogether than continue to endure it. Remembering is central to sustaining a feeling of continuity over time and space, which is an integral part of any group identity (Gillis, 1994). It operates mostly through the threads of narrative, with people and nations using memories to produce a narrative of continuous existence to legitimate their being (Antze and Lambek, 1996). In that context, practices such as changing place names served to undermine the sense of continuity for the Palestinians and to weaken their belonging and consequently their hold on their land.

Pappe (2006) argues that the Jewish National Fund's Naming Committee has been Hebraizing Palestine's geography in an ideological move to de-Arabise the land since the first half of the twentieth century. Just as Sultan said it symbolised that there is no Arab culture and makes Palestinians feel that they 'do not exist,' Sultan suggested that the violence of this Israeli policy was making life in Palestine increasingly

unliveable, prompting him to contemplate emigrating. His privileged class positioning means that Sultan is better positioned to be able to move abroad than many of his peers. Sultan's narratives echo Nada's comments in part one about the occupation creating conditions that are so difficult that the young want to leave.

Mohamed Hosen, who argued that 'everything in your life is connected with the occupation,' said that he must leave Palestine because he is connected to his friends and they have all left due to the hardship and precarity of life under occupation. He described how his peers arrived at the decision to go abroad.

> I remember that most of my classmates **[coughs]**, after finishing the tawjihi in 2003, they travelled out of Palestine. It was the first wish of all students, after the tawjihi to leave to study at a university outside Palestine and most of them ... or many of them didn't return. They finished their BA, they tried to search for work, complete a Masters and came back for a visit only and their families encouraged that because during that period the situation was really difficult in Palestine. The Jews arrested the young people and killed the young people and many of my friends from my school martyred themselves and died or were imprisoned. Therefore all Palestinians thought, and this is an important point, and all Palestinians felt it, 'there is no future in Palestine. There is no future in study, and no future in work and there is no future in maintaining an ordinary life'. Therefore to decide to live in Palestine is to decide to lead

an *abnormal* life. Every year there are problems. Today there is

the first intifada, the second intifada, events in al-Aqsa mosque,

problems with ... with settlers, events in Hebron, the massacre

etc. There are problems each day each day each day.

Therefore it was necessary ... err ... for one who searched for

life with some measure of stability to travel.

Mohamed Hosen described the hardship Palestinians face under

occupation as relentless and argued that those who want to live 'with

some measure of stability' have to leave, like his friends have done. He

said the fact that all, or most, of his friends were living abroad and asking

him to emigrate too meant that he felt that he too must leave. His

narratives resonate with Hanafi's (2004) argument that 'spacio-cide',

Israel targeting the space in which Palestinians live in order to make the

'voluntary' 'transfer' of the Palestinian population inevitable, incorporates

'"socio-cide",' which is 'targeting social ties.' Mohamed Hosen said

Err ... Of course, I am among, I am among people whose friends

all left, or most of them left to go outside Palestine to learn and

they return for visits only. Each year or two years, during the

summer holiday for example, they come for a visit and then they

leave. Therefore I also, personally, am linked with my friends. I

must leave Palestine [**half laughs**] to live with my friends.

Mohamed Hosen suggested that the pull of his friends was so strong that

he would consider leaving Palestine even if the situation improved.

Furthermore, he constructed himself as pressured by his friends who

'always demand that I go abroad.' As a result of the negative effects of the

occupation on his life as a young Palestinian, Mohamed Hosen said that he must look for 'a stable place' to live.

> Not for ever, but for a limited period until I have finished my studies, and worked and obtained money … sufficient to live … in Palestine in a good way. The other matter, you must think how to get rid of the occupation. That is a question that every Palestinian asks himself. It is not possible to live in Palestine or in any part of the world under occupation, ever.

There were contradictions in Mohamed Hosen's account as he said that he wanted to work abroad to obtain enough money to live in Palestine 'in a good way', while arguing that it was impossible to live in Palestine under occupation. He suggested that even choices about whether or not to have a family were complicated by the occupation, with the Palestinians facing restrictions on who they can marry due to the severe travel restrictions. Abdel Jawad (2001) argues that in Palestine matters that should form part of an individual's rights, such as marrying someone from abroad, getting a work permit, travelling abroad, 'must pass through Israel's apparatus of military rule.' Mohamed Hosen suggested that restrictions on marriage are problematic and that the 'severe suffering' that the Palestinians are forced to endure even affects choices about whether or not to have children, which is a 'big problem'.

> The life that the Palestinians live is severe suffering and therefore the children will live that severe suffering. So either you don't don't **[laughs] …** don't have children at all so that they don't live that suffering, or you go abroad for a long period so

that the children live in calm circumstances or they learn something about real life.

Mohamad Hosen's comment that if he were to have children they would have to be brought up abroad to live in 'calm circumstances' and learn about 'real life', suggests that he does not consider life in Palestine to constitute 'real life,' or to be liveable in Butler's (2004) terms. It is poignant that he considers his choices to be: to avoid having children altogether or to bring them up elsewhere. His repetition and nervous laughter when he discussed the possibility of not having children suggested that the idea was hard to bear. Implicitly, Mohamad Hosen would prefer not to have children if he remained in Palestine than to subject them to the suffering that he and his peers have had to endure. His comments underlined the cruelty of the occupation and its profound effect on the lives of Palestinians in a striking way for the international audience he hoped to influence with his words.

However, like some of the other participants who said they were thinking about leaving, Mohamed Hosen said his plan would be to return at some point. He said 'I may think hard about travelling each day to complete my studies and my education and maybe work for a long period ... But it is not possible, except that I return to Palestine.' He gave the example of relatives who left Palestine and settled abroad, sending money to build houses in Palestine, who would say 'if nothing else I will return to be buried in Palestine. Even if I died in Europe, I must be buried in Palestine'. The narrative Mohamed Hosen shared about his relatives saying that even if they died abroad they would have to be buried in

Palestine, i.e. that one way or another they had to return to their homeland, shows signs of prescriptive plotting, drawing on the key political trope of the necessity of return (Allan, 2007). In sharing this narrative he leaves open the possibility that he too shall only return to be buried. His narrative is, therefore, simultaneously hopeful, he plans to leave and then return, and stark; if he leaves he may not see Palestine again.

In his narrative Husam, the twenty-year-old Accounting student who said Palestinians have to curtail their movements to avoid the threat of arrest, struggled with conflicting desires about whether or not to leave Palestine. He suggested that the insecurity and powerlessness he felt as a result of the occupation led him to think about moving abroad. Yuval-Davis (2006) defines belonging as about emotional attachment, feeling 'at home' and feeling 'safe'. From his narratives it was clear that Husam did not feel safe and that the conditions for him to feel belonging to Palestine were being damaged by the occupation. However, he said his religious beliefs as a Muslim young man made him feel that he should stay in Palestine.

Husam described the powerlessness, anger, frustration and sadness he felt because he wanted to go to visit the Al-Aqsa mosque, but was prevented from doing so by Israeli soldiers at checkpoints (as discussed in chapter four). This powerlessness and the insecurity he faced in Palestine pushed him to contemplate life abroad.

I don't have power. (I mean) I can't, that's it I remain here and afterwards I began to think that I will go to other cities, countries other than Palestine.

Like what…?

Like Malaysia, abroad, Australia, so I can live in security, and go to any place, but ((that's too)) much. Palestine's here. We…but the reason that doesn't allow us to go and live abroad ((is that)) we consider Palestine <holy land>. I mean <holy land> isn't going. I mean I must stay in it because in the Qur'an, in the Qur'an and in Islam, that at the end of the world <at the end of the world>, all people <from all the countries>, they want to come here.

Husam seemed conflicted about the idea of leaving Palestine. He began by explaining that his powerlessness has led him to consider going abroad to countries where he can live in safety and travel freely, in ways that he cannot in Palestine. However, after saying that he was thinking of going abroad, he stated that he cannot leave Palestine because it is the holy land. In Islam Jerusalem is the third holiest city after Mecca and Medina and Palestine is considered to be a holy land for Muslims (Eickelman and Piscatori, 1996). It is significant that Husam used the collective when he said 'doesn't allow us' and 'we consider Palestine' because these statements suggest he feels that he belongs to a community of Muslims, or the umma, which contributed to his thinking that he should remain in Palestine. Later, in response to a question about

the effect of checkpoints on his life, Husam returned to the idea of living abroad, before restating that he needed to stay in the holy land.

> It leaves me thinking that I will go to other countries, I mean other countries you go to them and have a trip, you go, you and your family do that, go to the sea, (I mean) it leaves me thinking that I will go and live in another country, not Palestine, but sometimes I think it will give me a better living, if I go abroad and don't remain in Palestine. Often I say I must stay in Palestine, because she is land <holy land>, sometimes I say <this is a hard life and I must go to another country>, I mean <sometimes but sometimes I think> I think of going to another country, another country, in order to get a good living and not see many <checkpoints, this is> hard for anyone.

There is tension between Husam's sense that it is his religious duty to remain in the holy land to which he has an emotional attachment and a sense of belonging, and his desire to leave to get away from the checkpoints and 'hard life' in Palestine.

> Of course all of us Palestinians love living in Palestine, (I mean) <anyone likes their home country, not I, you, anyone, but here in Palestine life is very difficult and in the last years many people think about going to another country, yeah to live in safety, safe when you want, if you want to go in anytime> but we think that, <to anywhere you can, but I can't, this is difficult for me>. This land is holy. We must remain in it despite <although we face many problems>, but if we were able to try life outside Palestine, maybe we'd change our

minds because we don't live outside Palestine we don't know how people live outside Palestine. <Maybe people like living in other countries, maybe happy, maybe sad, we don't know> I don't know. <What about you?>.

In the extract above Husam switched between Arabic and English in a way that made his narrative disjointed and seemed to be indicative of his conflict about what to do. He began speaking in Arabic, stating that 'of course' all Palestinians love living in Palestine. His comment suggested that this was the requisite normative position that he felt Palestinians must take and he used the language in which he was most at home to express this idea. He then switched to English to talk about the painful topic of the hardship of living in Palestine, making Palestinians consider life abroad where they can live in safety. He switched back to Arabic to state that Palestine is holy and he must remain, so that he asserted claims to belonging in his home language, but discussed the problems that Palestinians face in English. By repeatedly switching to English to discuss those problems, Husam emphasised them (cf. Lowi, 2005). His uncertainty about what would be best for Palestinians was clear when he switched language to assert that Palestinians might change their minds if they were able to experience life outside Palestine, '<we don't know>, I don't know'. Husam's comments suggest that he has had enough of the hardship of life under occupation, but nonetheless felt compelled to endure it because of Palestine's religious significance for him and his belonging to an imagined community of Muslims.

Nour Ahmad, who lived in a village near Tulkarm, expressed her narrative slightly differently from Mohamed Hosen, Husam and Sultan in that she did not directly link her desire to leave Palestine to the occupation. However, Nour Ahmad, who explained how her family struggled when her father left, justified her wish to go abroad on the basis of the PA failing adequately to support her family despite all the sacrifices they had made and the suffering they had endured as a result of the occupation. She argued that she, her family and Palestinians in general have suffered so much that she no longer cares whether or not she goes to live abroad. She listed the sacrifices her family has made for Palestine and argued that despite this the PA did not support them. Seemingly conflating the PA and Palestine she asked why she should love Palestine.

> But in the end the Palestinian Authority didn't give me even a scholarship. They didn't help me with anything when mama was injured and dad was a prisoner. The Palestinian Authority didn't help me. So why should I love Palestine? She hasn't done anything for me. At the time when I needed her, she wasn't beside me, but when Palestine needed me and my family, we were all of us by her side a lot. We sacrificed, we gave her and we gave her from our blood, from our soul and our effort. The army took our house and occupied it. They turned it to ruins. Our furniture was ruined. Whisky they left for us in the house and they prevented my family from going out to buy milk for my sisters. They were <baby>, my sisters.

Nour Ahmad's narratives suggested that she has been traumatised by what her family has had to endure under occupation: the occupying of her home, the imprisonment of her father and other relatives, the wounding of her mother and the killing of her younger brother. In light of the extent of her family's suffering and sacrifices for the Palestinian cause she expected the PA to offer her family support that was not forthcoming. As a result of the suffering her family has endured, Nour Ahmad's identifications with Palestine and her emotional attachments have been damaged, as can be seen in the following extract.

> Palestine didn't help us. She didn't offer us anything. How can she want us to love her? … Because of that I, no it's normal (I mean) that if I travel to another country I don't have any problem. I don't have a problem at all with travel. It's normal (I mean) I have begun to feel that Palestine is the same as any other country.

By using 'Palestine' to stand for the PA in the extract above, Nour Ahmad was able to direct at her homeland the anger and pain she felt at both how she and her family have suffered under occupation and the reaction of the PA. In this way she justified her decision to leave.

> As much as I love her, my belonging has reduced. (I mean) this is what killed my belonging to her, not us who killed it. The conduct of the Palestinian Authority (I mean) is what killed our belonging to it, not us who killed it.

> **If you travelled do you think that you would return?**

No. I mean return return, don't return, it makes no difference to me.

Later in the interview, Nour Ahmad said that the PA did not support her family when her father left her mother after 18 years together. She said for 12 years her mother has struggled to bring up herself and her siblings without their father and yet the PA did not do anything, in contrast to the support for which she had hoped. In response to the question, 'Are you angry?' she said 'Yes. I am very angry. Very angry, not a little. I hope that if I were born in another country, in another world, not here, at least this would not happen to us.' Her account suggested that she had expected her family's sacrifices for the nation to be rewarded with solidarity and support in their personal hardship, rather like the reciprocity in Marcel Mauss's (2002) theorisation of gift exchange. The traumatic losses Nour Ahmad's family suffered at the hands of the Israeli occupation and her disillusionment and anger with the PA has led to a weakening of her identification and emotional attachment to Palestine more generally. In other words, it has undermined her sense of belonging and led to her desire to leave Palestine and claimed indifference about whether or not she returns.

The current impasse in efforts to end the conflict (Abunimah, 2006), the worsening of the conditions of daily life and the 'excessive force' Israel uses in the West Bank (Amnesty International, 2014) are the backdrop against which these participants discussed the possibility of leaving Palestine. The narratives in this section highlighted different ways in which the occupation damaged the conditions of Palestinian belonging to the

nation to the extent that these young people wanted to leave Palestine or were thinking about going abroad. The views they shared about wanting to leave did not conform to nationalist discourses about the importance of sumūd for both what it means to be Palestinian and the Palestinian cause. However, the participants defended their positions by sharing narratives about the unbearable oppression of life under occupation and in sharing these narratives helped to strengthen the case for the need to end the occupation.

The occupation exacerbating social issues

Sultan, whose narratives about contemplating leaving Palestine were discussed in the previous section, suggested that the occupation exacerbated social issues, which made life in Palestine even more difficult to bear. The idea that the occupation compounds Palestinian social issues fits with Brian Whitaker's (2006, p.11) argument that in the Middle East 'a supposedly traditional Arab morality' is invoked to oppose Western policies that are perceived to be domineering and imperialist. He argues that 'attitudes towards homosexuality (along with women's rights and human rights in general) have become entangled in international politics, forming yet another barrier to social progress,' (2006, p.11). Restrictive conservatism and overbearing patriarchy were two examples of domestic issues that students said made them want to move abroad.

Sultan argued that the occupation hinders efforts to tackle issues in Palestinian society, making points similar to those made by Whitaker (2006) above.

There's one point as well people should remember that we have our own problems **[^]** as so- society. Like it's not only occupation, we have internal problems, err domestic *violence*, drug *addicts* ... Like like you know ... we are normal people with normal problems as well. It's not, it's just like occupation and occupation problems are just another burden on our, on our normal lives. Like so, people, like should remember that it's *not* as if we only have occupation as our only main concern in *life* and deal with our problems. You should remember that you have a kid dealing with his homosexual orientation, living in *fear* of *rejection*, you have a girl that she's forced into *marriage*, or she's being beaten up with domestic violence and she can't *speak* because *society* will not allow her and such and such and I want people to know as well we are working on these things as *well*. Like, we are a society and I think Palestinians, even though we are under occupation we are one of the most advanced Arab nations as a *society*. Like people think we are backward, but like we are *not*. We have many institutions that help domestic violence, we have Aswat, the Palestinian lesbian women association. We have alQaws, the Palestinian LGBT association. We are going there, we are arriving there little by little, but occupation with all the burdens that come with it is, are also hindering us.

In the narrative above Sultan made direct appeals to me, and the imagined international audience, saying 'people, like should remember,' 'you should remember,' 'I want people to know.' This underlined the fact

that he conceived of the interview as an opportunity for advocacy, a chance to get the point across that the burdensome occupation impedes efforts to make progress in areas of Palestinian society that he imagined a liberal international audience would be concerned about.

Ahmad said he was thinking about leaving Palestine to get away from what he described as the 'backwardness' and conservatism of his home town Qalqilya and other cities in which young people are restricted in terms of who they can marry and compelled to worship in particular ways.

> Now in Ramallah here the matter is slightly more open. <Ok>, you can marry one who's not wearing a hijab, you can live here ordinarily, no one tells you to pray, no one tells you to fast, you choose the people who you want and that's it, but in other cities it's hard. Because of that I don't like Qalqilya. I don't like living there and I don't like staying there except for a day or two days and that's it, I want to return here.

Implicit in Ahmad's comments was the idea that outside of Ramallah young Palestinian Muslims are not free to choose how or whether to practise their religion, nor whom to associate with or marry. The context in which some young Palestinians who are not religious, or at least not religiously observant, face restrictions and pressure is one in which religious Muslims and those against the idea of secularism are 'the loudest voices in the contemporary Islamic world' (Eller, 2010, p.113). Destabilising events in Palestine in recent decades, including the failed peace process, 'have created profound uncertainties that have weakened

once dominant forms of secular nationalism and opened up paths for new collective identities, especially resurgent Islamic, or "Islamist," ones' (Lybarger, 2007, p.1). Lybarger uses 'Islamist' to refer to activists and movements that are aligned to the ideology of 'politically resurgent Islam' and 'draw on key symbols, discourses, and … narratives of the Islamic religion – such as the notions of *jihād* (the "effort" to lead a pious life, establish a society based on the precepts of *sharī'a*, the "religious law,"' (Lybarger, 2007, p.1-3). In response to Ahmad's use of the term 'backwards', I became aware of intervening in the narrative as I asked him whether it would be more accurate to describe Qalqilya, the town where his family home is, as 'more traditional,' but he said

> No it's backwards. Qalqilya is a backwards town and traditionalists are over the top. I mean I don't like the traditional thing and I don't like backwardness. (I mean) like perhaps I studied at university and I saw people and I spoke to people and the environment influenced me and I saw other and new thoughts, but I would die if I lived in Qalqilya.
>
> I couldn't <no way>. Now I think about travelling from here.

Ahmad's statement that he 'would die' if he lived in Qalqilya suggested that he found it suffocating. He also found Islam very restrictive. He said 'I view Islam as an expression of the shackling of a human, just something that leaves me shackled and I don't want to be shackled, I want to be free. I want to be free to think, I want to be free to act.' These emotive comments both express Ahmad's deep frustration and seek to elicit

empathy for his position from a liberal audience that prioritises religious and intellectual freedom.

Although Ahmad wanted to leave Palestine, he said he would only leave if he could return. He said he would like to spend three months over the summer in Palestine every year and the remaining nine months in Italy. Two of his close Palestinian friends lived abroad in summer 2010 when I conducted the interview, but returned while I was in Palestine to spend the summer working in Ramallah. Since I left Palestine one of Ahmad's closest friends has also left to study abroad.

> But it remains that I have a connection to here, that I couldn't go and not return, <no>, there's also something here for me. It's not everything, but I mean it's life. *I lived* here, my friends, my family and my people.

Thus while Ahmad said that he was thinking about leaving, he was unwilling to entertain the possibility of a complete break with Palestine.

Montaser said he wanted to go abroad to get away from an overbearing patriarchal father in order to 'find himself'. He said he would like to go to England, or any country, to study or just to experience something different.

> I I I was like err living with my family for all my life and now I want to find myself and while I'm here, I will not.

Why?

> I have that ... I have my father, he's that man with err, not ... not dictator, but he's controlling us, like... if you just err stay in his house you will be under his rules and his ... house rules, you

know. So I don't want to to stay in this region, I want to find myself in my way in my wor-... in my err ... things.

Montaser's narrative faltered as he described his father as overbearing and said that he could not remain in Palestine because it would not allow him the freedom he needs to 'find' himself. He later explained that his father was a devout Muslim who put pressure on Montaser to conform and become a practising Muslim himself.

My father is such a religious man. And he always asks me to pray and to go with him to the mosque and you know, but I ... I just told him that I ... I want to be Muslim by myself. I need to, to believe and everything by myself. Not anybody telling me to do anything. I, I need to reach that ... err ... err ... err … <faith>…

There is tension in this narrative between the demands of Montaser's father and Montaser's need to have the space to think independently and find his own faith.

Sultan's narratives about how the occupation impedes social progress in Palestine contextualised the accounts of Ahmad and Montaser about the oppressiveness of restrictive conservatism and overbearing patriarchy. These young men explained the desire to leave Palestine in ways that suggested that being prevented from making independent adult decisions about matters such as who to love or whether to worship was too much for them to bear. While they both craved freedoms they were not afforded in Palestine, they said their attachment to the place meant that they would return. I would argue that these accounts parallel Nour Ahmad's comments about failures in reciprocity.

The occupation is oppressive and makes life in Palestine hard to endure, but if in sacrificing personal wellbeing for the benefit of the nation young people feel repressed by their families and/or communities instead of rewarded or at least appreciated, they have much less incentive to continue to make sacrifices. In sharing narratives about the need to get away from conservatism, patriarchy and restrictions on what to think or believe, the participants in this section invited a liberal foreign audience to empathise with their desire to go abroad.

Wanting to go abroad for educational opportunities

Some of the participants said they wanted to leave Palestine because of the exciting opportunities abroad, while for others it was a lack of opportunities in Palestine that made life abroad seem attractive. According to the 2010 PCBS survey, more than a third of the 32,000 people who emigrated between 2005 and 2009 said that they left to study and pursue educational opportunities. More than a third of those who emigrated in that period had university or higher degrees.

Aisha[14], a bright and ambitious student, said she wanted to 'go abroad to get a better education.' When asked where she would like to go, she said 'I didn't decide until now, but I am thinking of maybe England or USA because they speak English and I want to improve my language more and more'. In her narrative Aisha expressed the desire to work for the benefit of other countries, something which Ramz critiqued in part one. She said that she was thinking of studying human rights

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[14] The participant selected this pseudonym herself.

> Err ... to ... to help people around the world, not just in Palestine.
> I would come back to Palestine for sure to help people here, but
> I really wish to go to Africa, I really wish to go there because I
> want to help people there because those people don't have
> really err ... a good life according to the global standards. They
> don't have ... err ... even the chances that I got while I live in an
> occupied country, still there are some people who are not
> occupied, but they don't have the chances that we got, so I want
> the people to know about the Palestinian case and the
> Palestinian question, but also I want to work with other people
> around the world.

While Aisha expressed her commitment to the Palestinian cause, she focused on her desire to help those she described as less fortunate than herself in Africa in this narrative. In her comments she made generalisations about Africa that revealed ignorance about the continent and the considerable disparity in wealth, opportunities and power both within and between countries. In focusing on the needs of 'Africa' and stating that she wanted to study human rights, Aisha may have deflected some of the criticism she anticipated she would receive from her peers who depicted leaving Palestine as immoral. Her narrative thus functioned as prolepsis, defending herself in advance of being attacked (Billig, 1991). Her comments about wanting to go abroad to help those she considered to be less fortunate than herself, echo the accounts of some of the people who come to Palestine with similar intentions.

In a pilot interview I conducted in London before carrying out this research I spoke to Sami, a former Birzeit student who had recently completed doctoral studies in London. He said before he moved to the UK he had a 'yearning to go to the West, to study'.

> Britain the country, you see it in the TV. It's beautiful, it looks beautiful. People say it's beautiful so...and you hear London and Paris, these are international cities that are well known, people know them...er and people like to visit them. In the imagination of the people, the collective imagination, these are popular, like good places, prestigious places to go to.

For Sami, a gifted scholar who had wanted to pursue doctoral studies, it was important to travel abroad to realise his academic aspirations. Similarly, Mohamed Hosen, the bright intellectual Masters' student whose narratives were discussed at the beginning of this part, said that he needed to move abroad to pursue further studies.

> The reality is there is no solution currently, therefore, I must, me as an educated young man, I must … I must look for another country in which to complete my studies and live for a period in a stable situation so that I can study in the correct way and I must work because work in Palestine is also a problem in the shadow of the occupation. There is no freedom, it is not possible to say what you want. When I write an article, in … for example in a newspaper or on the internet, or in any place, I think carefully about what I am going to write because it is possible to write an article that lands you in prison **[laughs]** for example. It's possible

to write an article, also there are … err … problems between the Palestinians themselves: Hamas and Fatah and so on. It is possible that Fatah will say to you 'you're Hamas, that's a problem' and Hamas will say to you 'you are Fatah, that's a problem'. Therefore I feel, as an educated man, even when I write research or an article or anything, I need to think carefully about what I write … and that is a problem. An educated person needs to have complete freedom in order to write the correct thing and to write the thing in a creative/unique way and that is never the case in Palestine. So therefore I need to be in a place for a fixed period where I can write in freedom, think in freedom and write research in freedom. In reality, we don't see in Palestine any future in in this phase.

Mohamed Hosen explained that due to the occupation and tensions between the Hamas and Fatah political parties, he felt the need to self-censor and did not have the freedom to express his views in his writing or to write creatively. The Palestinians have been brought to the verge of civil war by the rivalry between Hamas and Fatah at various times between 1994 and 2000 (Hroub, 2006). Hroub (2006, p.87) argues that the tension between the parties was exacerbated by Hamas continuing to carry out 'military attacks against Israeli targets at times when the Fatah-led Palestinian Authority was trying to conclude incremental peace deals with Israel.' Following the 2006 elections, which Hamas won, 'becoming the Palestinian Authority, Fatah attempted to bring down Hamas's government and started to play the role that Hamas used to play when it

was in the opposition' (Hroub, 2006, p.87). In addition to feeling restricted by the tensions between Fatah and Hamas, Mohamed Hosen's intellectual ambitions did not fit within a Palestine in which Palestinians see no future, hence his desire to leave.

Rather than focusing on the attraction of opportunities in other countries, in his narratives Ahmad, who discussed being imprisoned in chapter 4, emphasised the lack of opportunities in Palestine, which was also highlighted as a motivating factor by15.2 percent of those who wanted to leave in the 2010 PCBS survey. A lack of opportunities, coupled with the lack of legal protection for Palestinians, the occupation and repression from the PA also made Ahmad consider going to live abroad. He said the PA not only failed to challenge the occupation, but also repressed Palestinians. Ahmad conveyed the tension between the demands for steadfastness imposed on young Palestinians by previous generations and the lack of opportunities presented to them.

> The elderly have lost hope. That's it they're just sitting. The subject no longer concerns them because they are waiting to die, because there's also nothing for them to do. He's got used to the fact that he just gets older. There's nothing for him to do and that's it. He sits and he no longer has an important role in society, but our families don't want us to travel and they don't want us to leave and they don't want us to…only on the other hand they are not able to offer anything to us, it's like that.

Ahmad's comments are moving as they suggest that older generations have been broken by the occupation and are now redundant, an idea that

he repeats a number of times in this short extract. Unlike the narratives in part one that romanticised and idealised the older generation, Ahmad pathologised them. His frustration was evident when he contrasted the position of older Palestinians with that of himself and his peers who were affected by the lack of opportunities, but yet discouraged from leaving. The tension in his comments between the hopelessness of older generations and their insistence on young people remaining in Palestine is echoed by literature that constructs the generation that was ousted during the Nakba as expressing a romanticised and idealised view of their lost land while simultaneously conveying their hopelessness and disappointment and 'mourning the loss of an identity, related rights and status,' (Richter-Devroe, 2012, p.108).

The narratives in this section focused on how opportunities in other countries, or a lack of opportunities in Palestine, contributed to decisions to move abroad. These participants were unapologetic about wanting to leave to pursue opportunities. In contrast to the participants in part one who characterised those who left Palestine as selling their nation or harming the Palestinian cause, these young people presented the desire to leave as logical.

The participants in this part said they wanted to leave Palestine or were considering emigrating due to: the damage done to the conditions of belonging by the Israeli colonial project; the restrictions associated with conservatism and patriarchy and the desire to pursue opportunities not available in Palestine. Most of them mentioned more than one of these factors, though not always linking them to the desire to leave. Many

argued that the conditions under occupation made life increasingly unliveable in ways that suggested their sense of belonging was being undermined. In sharing such painful and difficult narratives the students allowed me, and an imagined international audience, insights into the damaging effects of the Israeli colonial project.

Other participants said that repressive aspects of Palestinian society made them want to live abroad, specifically restrictive patriarchy and conservatism, which Sultan suggested were exacerbated by the occupation impeding social progress. I suggest that for these young people, the idea of staying in Palestine and thereby making further sacrifices for the collective good, for what they saw as negative returns; repression in Palestinian society, was too much to bear. Through their narratives about desiring religious, intellectual and social freedoms that they are currently denied, they sought to elicit empathy from a liberal audience. Some students sought to travel abroad to pursue opportunities not available to them in Palestine, thereby prioritising their individual aspirations over the collective demands for them to remain in Palestine and demonstrate sumūd (c.f. Allan, 2007).

Conclusion

The narratives in the two parts of this chapter are in tension. The participants in part one used their stories to emphasise how important sumūd is to the Palestinian cause and to castigate their peers who had left Palestine or were thinking about leaving. The ways in which they did this suggested that there is an 'affective economy' (Ahmed, 2004) in

which those who are steadfast are deemed to be good Palestinians, while those who leave or want to go abroad are marginalised. In contrast, the participants in part two expressed the desire to leave Palestine and sought to explain their wish to go abroad in three different ways: they described Palestine as unliveable because of the damage the occupation does to the conditions necessary for a sense of belonging; they used interviews with a foreigner to highlight social issues such as conservatism and patriarchy as pushing them to seek greater freedoms elsewhere and they said the desire for opportunities not available in Palestine made them want to leave. While I separated the narratives in part two into three sections, in most of the interviews with students who wanted to leave all of the factors were mentioned, even if they were not held up as the motivating factor in decisions to move abroad.

The students in part one considered the emigration of Palestinians to be detrimental to the Palestinian cause. Their narratives did moral work as they sought to police the behaviour of their peers by condemning those who leave. They also did identity work as they constructed themselves as better Palestinians for being steadfast and they did political work as they condemned the occupation for making life in Palestine increasingly untenable and warned internationals about the heavy price of allowing it to continue. Some of the students argued that Israel was deliberately making life in Palestine increasingly difficult for the Palestinians in an effort to make them leave. This echoed the literature on Israel's deliberate policies to oust the Palestinians (for example, Hanafi, 2009) and served as a rallying cry for internationals to join efforts to bring the unjust occupation

to an end. It was particularly important for these participants vehemently to reject the idea that leaving Palestine was acceptable so that their own sacrifices in staying and enduring the occupation remained meaningful. That these kinds of nationalist narratives are not entirely successful in keeping young Palestinians in Palestine was demonstrated by the fact that the participants whose accounts were reported in part two were contemplating going abroad, even though many felt that they had to justify themselves.

The reasons the participants gave for wanting to go abroad were largely because the occupation directly or indirectly made their lives unliveable or contributed to a situation in which they could not fulfil their aspirations or be the people they wanted to be in Palestine. Despite the nationalist demands for steadfastness and sacrifices for the nation, these participants felt that it was also important to consider their psychological, social and intellectual needs and therefore said they were thinking about leaving. The fact that the sacrifices the participants made while enduring life under occupation were sometimes met with indifference, or repressive societal restrictions, increased the appeal of life abroad. In sharing narratives about wanting to go abroad the participants drew attention to the widespread damaging effects of the occupation and underlined the importance of bringing it to an end.

Focusing on the second intifada, Allen (2008, p.456) describes how 'a variety of forms of violence are being mobilized to encourage, if not force, people to leave'. She argues that '[t]he excessive force (Falk 2000) with which Israel reacted to the second intifada was enacted through

strategies aimed at making "the life of Palestinians into hell" until they leave (as *Arabic News* reported Israeli Minister of Labor Shlomo Bin Azri as saying in May 2001 [Graham 2002]).' (2008, p.474). Efforts to force Palestinians to leave Palestine did not end with the second intifada, however, as Israeli practices to reduce the Palestinian hold on their land have continued. These include '[a]dministrative measures to strangle economic life and humiliate Palestinians' (Peteet, 2005, viii) in a bid to bring about the 'voluntary' displacement of Palestinians who 'will appear as migrants rather than refugees and thus will attract little international attention' (Peteet, 2005, ix) and 'spacio-cide', the targeting of the space in which Palestinians live in order to bring about the 'voluntary' 'transfer' of the Palestinian population (Hanafi, 2009). This is the historical and contemporary context in which the participants shared their narratives about the desire to go abroad.

The participants' narratives also revealed the tensions and stories that can be hidden by powerful nationalist narratives, but are nonetheless important for an understanding of the complex negotiations that young Palestinians living under occupation have to make. Although these participants were not able to commit to sumūd, in stating that they will return to Palestine if they leave, they underlined their strong attachment to their homeland in ways that suggested that they were influenced by nationalist discourses of sumūd.

This part explored the tension between the ways in which some of the participants staked claims to their homeland discursively and others gave accounts about the possibility of leaving Palestine if the occupation

continues. The first chapter examined the narratives of students who said that hearing their grandparents' stories about their love of the land and dispossession made them more determined to resist the occupation. In giving accounts of belonging to the land they spoke against dominant Israeli narratives that seek to undermine their claims to the land. The chapter also considered how the participants used narratives about resistance to present themselves as continuing their family legacy of resistance and thereby underlined their determination as a people to end the occupation.

The second chapter in this part built on the first, exploring the tension between nationalist discourses that call for Palestinians to stay and resist the occupation by demonstrating sumūd and the fact that some young Palestinians leave or want to leave. It examined narratives about students wanting to go abroad due to the damage done to their sense of belonging by the conditions of life under occupation and argued that in sharing them the participants underlined why it is imperative that the occupation is brought to an end.

The last part of the thesis begins with the final empirical chapter, which is the culmination of the preceding empirical chapters in that in articulating their hopes and/or expectations for the future the students underline what led them to agree to participate in the research and share their narratives. The part also considers the implications of the research and examines the reflections of a couple of participants on the research and the situation in Palestine currently.

PART 4

Looking to the Future

Chapter 7

Hope for the Future

Introduction

This chapter explores the participants' narratives about the future, looking at how they draw on hope and/or faith to formulate future visions that they construct as helping them to live their lives. While the narratives in this chapter are about the future, they are also revealing about the condition of the present. The chapter is the culmination of the preceding empirical chapters in that in articulating their hopes and/or expectations for the future the participants underlined what led them to agree to participate in the research and share their stories.

Some of the participants said they had put their hopes in international resistance movements and they decided to participate in the research in an effort to inspire more foreigners to support them, seeing me as a conduit for their messages. Their participation itself was an embodiment of the hope that talking to an international audience could make a difference. I describe the kind of hope expressed by these participants as 'secular exogenous hope', as it is derived from those outside Palestine and not contingent on faith. Others said their faith in God gave them confidence that the Palestinians would be victorious, or that the occupation would end (even though the cycles of conflict would continue). They hoped to see Palestinian victory in their lifetimes. These participants used the interviews as a platform to emphasise their faith and strength as Muslims, making the point that the solution to the conflict

would come from within. The hope they expressed was 'religious endogenous hope' as it was derived from Palestinians in Palestine. One of the participants straddled these two positions drawing hope from Palestinians, rather than the international community, but seeing promise in secular, rather than devout Muslim resistance. I term his kind of hope 'secular endogenous hope' as it is hope that is derived from secular resistance inside Palestine. This chapter examines what the participants' use of: 'secular exogenous hope'; faith and 'religious endogenous hope'; and 'secular endogenous hope' in their narratives about the future may reveal about how they view the current political moment.

The futures the participants imagined fit with their motivations for participating in the research and yet they were incommensurable with each other, with some supporting a one-state solution, some advocating a two-state solution and others wanting a single state for the Palestinians and the dismantling of the State of Israel. This chapter will argue that the incommensurable future visions the participants shared are a reflection of 'the utter disarray of the Palestinian political field' in which the Islamic Hamas government is pitted against the secular Fatah government (Hilal, 2010, p.24). Hilal (2010, p.27) argues that Hamas and Fatah's 'opposing concepts of resistance', with the former 'sanctioning military action against Israel' and the latter advocating nonviolent resistance and negotiations, 'provide an ideological basis for the geopolitical polarization.' The tension between conflicting ideas of resistance will be seen in the accounts in this chapter as the participants discuss their contrasting hopes and/or expectations for the future.

Despite different sources of hope and/or faith, there was one issue that ran through all the young people's narratives; the longing for freedom and the satisfaction of life's basic needs. This is encapsulated in Lateefa's narrative, which she presented with stark clarity as she discussed her visual image of Palestine. When I asked her to draw 'what comes to mind when you think of Palestine?' Lateefa produced an image with a map and some stick figures playing football and one holding a Palestinian flag to depict the 'free and proud' country she hopes to see.
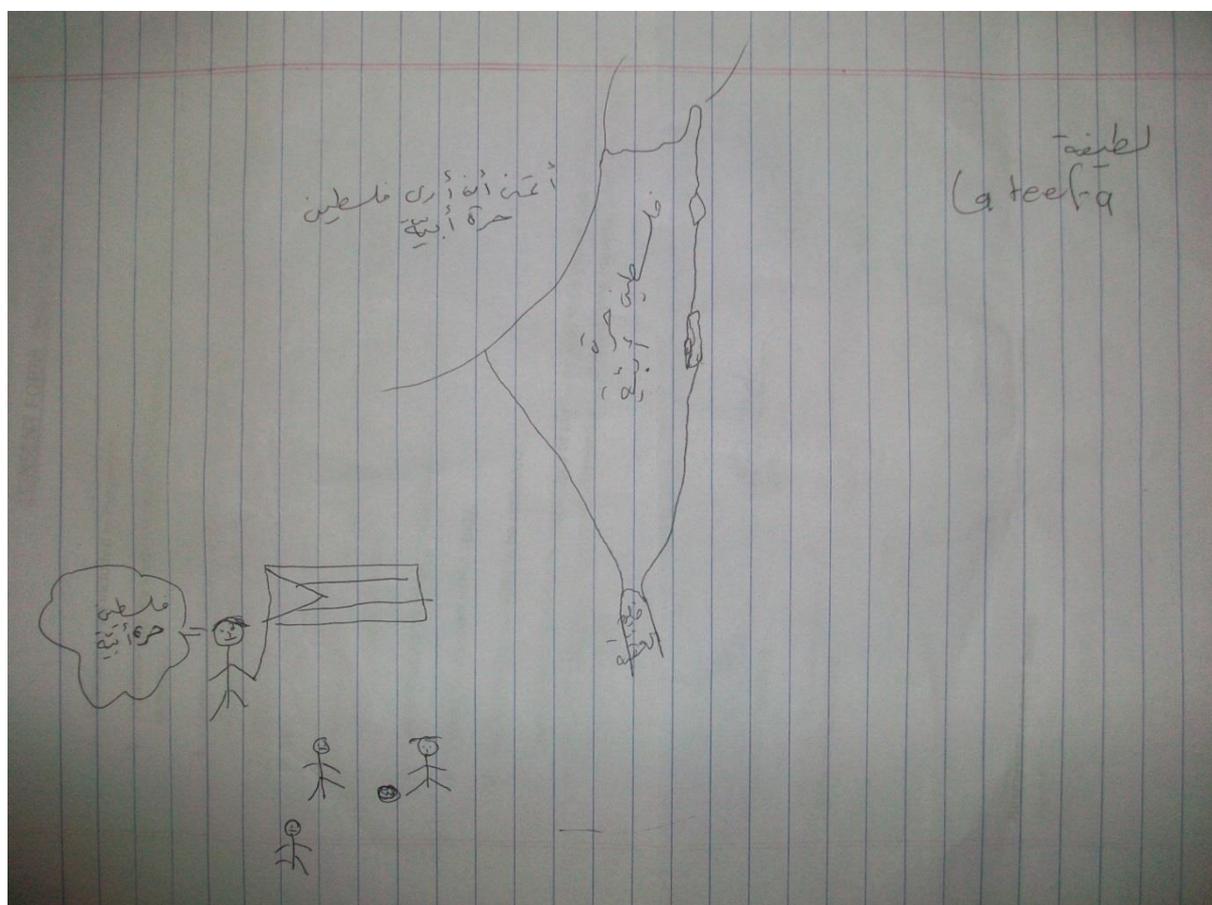

Figure 7.1: Lateefa's picture, 2010

As she was drawing the picture, Lateefa said, 'They are the small children who hope to see Palestine as a country,' and the translation of the Arabic text on the top left of the picture is 'I hope to see Palestine free and

proud.' Lateefa stressed this hope by writing 'Palestine free, proud' both in the speech bubble next to the figure holding the Palestinian flag and on her drawing of the map of Palestine. When she had finished the picture, she described the images she had drawn by saying 'These are small children playing games, (I mean) because Palestine is free and proud … There are no stones at this time, no tanks ... This means that it has become safe for them to play now.' Implicit in Lateefa's comments is the idea that it is currently unsafe for Palestinian children to play games like football outside. This reflects the reality in which Palestinian children have been killed by the Israeli military when doing nothing more than playing football on the beach (Sengupta, 2014). In describing her hope for a peaceful future she evokes the precarity of the present and past (discussed in chapter four).

Lateefa's picture allows her both to acknowledge how vulnerable children are currently and to project her own future hopes into the drawing in such a way that present and hoped-for future coexist. The picture allows her to make her hopes concrete and temporarily to achieve them in black and white and in the telling of a future story. In a similar way, narratives allowed the participants to make concrete their contrasting hopes, all of which were underpinned by desires for freedom.

This chapter is separated into two parts that in different ways are both connected to hopes and/or expectations for the future. The first begins by exploring narratives that express exogenous hope that requires the engagement of internationals. It then examines an account that expresses secular endogenous hope that depends on Palestinian

resistance, before exploring devout Muslims' faith-based expectations and 'religious endogenous hope'. The second part explores the different solutions to the conflict for which the participants hoped, focusing on the one state solution, two state solution and a solution that would see the return of historic Palestine to the Palestinians.

I begin the first part with an examination of narratives that draw hope for the future from international support for the Palestinian cause and I argue that in expressing hope in this way the narratives serve as an appeal for international support. I then explore an account that draws hope from secular Palestinian resistance, before exploring narratives about faith and religious hope that makes the devout Muslim participants certain either of Muslim victory over the Jews, or that the occupation will end, even though the conflict will continue.

The second part examines narratives that explore the solutions to the conflict that the participants hoped for or had faith in. It considers narratives about the one binational state and two-state solutions and a solution that envisages the return of historic Palestine to the Palestinians. It argues that while the solutions the participants imagined fit with their sources of hope and how they conceived of their participation in the interviews, they are incommensurable with each other. It then explores the implications of this and what it might reveal about the current political moment.

PART 1: Different kinds of hope

This part explores the different kinds of hope and/or faith that the participants expressed in their narratives. It begins by exploring narratives from participants who pinned their hopes for liberation on internationals. Next it examines narratives from students who drew hope from secular Palestinian resistance. It then turns to narratives from participants whose hopes for the future rested on Muslim Palestinians uniting so that the victory of which their faith made them certain could be realised. It ends by analysing the narratives of participants whose faith gave them hope that the occupation would soon end, even though they believed the cycles of conflict would continue.

Hope in internationals

> Everybody's life is pervaded by daydreams: one part of this is just stale, even enervating escapism … but another part is provocative, is not content just to accept the bad which exists, does not accept renunciation. This other part has hoping at its core, and is teachable (Bloch, 1986, p.3).

As in the quotation from Ernst Bloch above, the participants were not content to accept the occupation, instead those in this section drew hope that Palestine would be liberated from international resistance movements. As explored in chapter three, this motivated them to participate in the research in the hope that they would encourage other internationals to resist. Nadia Abu-Zahra and Adah Kay (2013) highlight the importance of Palestinians 'internationalising' their struggle to end the

occupation and they cite a community leader in the village of Budrus, Abu Ahmad, who puts his hopes in getting foreigners involved in efforts to end the occupation:

> Because we could not win against the occupation by ourselves alone, we have to persuade all the people around the world that we are right, that we are not terrorists, and that we are just looking for our freedom, as the French did [under occupation], as India [under colonialism], as the United States [under the British empire], as any people who are suffering from occupation in their history. All of them are struggling against occupation, and we have to struggle against occupation (Abu-Zahra and Kay, 2013, p.182).

The journalist and activist Abunimah also highlights the importance of international support. He argues that the Palestinian cause has worldwide support that Palestinians need to mobilise and that internationals who are unable to come to Palestine 'can certainly use their knowledge to act for peace and justice. This is happening all over the world,' (2006, pp.247-248).

The participants in this section constructed international support as a source of hope for liberation. In doing so, they strengthened their appeals for support for their cause. I examine the narratives in this section in some detail given that it was the desire to resist the occupation by inspiring internationals to take action that motivated these participants to take part in the research, as outlined in chapter three. Muhammad, who suggested that those who leave Palestine threaten the future of their

nation (chapter 6), exemplifies this focus on international engagement, saying that the emphasis in Palestinian efforts to liberate Palestine should be on showing the world who they are.

> In my opinion, the most important thing in order for us try and end the occupation is not the conflict which is happening now, it's that we show the world who we are. Most countries don't know who the Palestinians are, they don't know who the Arabs are. They get the idea that they are <terrorists>. But, but if we are able to explain, if we are given the opportunity to present a clearer picture of ourselves as Muslims, as Arabs to the people – to the people not to the governments, leave the governments to one side – there will be fraternity and there will be stronger relations between us and the people of other nations.

Muhammad suggests that stronger relationships between Muslims, Arabs and people in other nations will help Palestinians to bring an end to the occupation. Implicit in his narrative is the hope that when people in other parts of the world are disabused of their misconceptions about Muslims and Arabs, they will support Palestinian resistance efforts.

While Nada also views the international community as key to change in Palestine, she constructs it as knowledgeable about Palestine and suggests that momentum is already building against the Israeli occupation internationally. This gives her hope for the future, but hope that is tempered by apprehension that despite this, the situation may not improve. Her position fits with the idea of '"[p]essimism of the intellect, optimism of the will,"' which is among Gramsci's most famous sayings

(Johnson, 2013, p.51). Back (2008) argues that 'this is something close to a kind of hope that is an orientation to the world…It is knowing and worldly' and attentive to the danger that what is hoped for might not materialise (Back, 2008).

In the extract below, Nada's 'pessimism of the intellect' is apparent in the way in which she draws on the Palestinian collective memory of Israeli oppression to temper her hopes that the international community will help bring an end to the occupation. However, the importance of Palestinian liberation to her, and Palestinians in general, means that in her narrative at least, she wills herself to keep hoping and working to sustain her hope that the occupation can be brought to an end. Nada likens the international reaction to the occupation to the response from the international community to apartheid in South Africa, raising the prospect of the occupation being rendered untenable like apartheid before it.

> It shows such a strong mirror reflection with, err ... South Africa and how things finally started turning over for them, how the movement really started going, because it didn't start moving until ... the public opinion everywhere else was like 'enough is enough. This is wrong and it should not be happening and our government cannot stay quiet about this.' Which kinda seems the path that the public opinion is going when it comes to Palestine, which gives you hope and gives you a bit of worry, you're like 'oof,[15] the Zionist movement is strong enough to actually even

---

[15] An exasperated exclamation.

shut this down and make this not work for us either'. So you have

hope mixed with worry as well.

Nada's comments are a continuation of the appeal for international

involvement in campaigning to end the occupation discussed in chapter

three, as she constructs Palestinian liberation as contingent on

international support. In making her case, she draws parallels between

Palestine and South Africa in a rhetorical move that serves to heighten

hope by suggesting that change for the better is inexorable. Nonetheless,

her hopes for liberation are tempered by the fear that the Zionist

movement will undermine efforts to liberate Palestine.

In chapter three, Nada's narrative implicitly suggested that

participating in research destined for a foreign audience was part of her

efforts to help secure a 'different future'. However, as will be seen below,

after these comments she expressed concern that it may not work and the

Palestinians may continue to be dispossessed. This suggests that her

hope is emergent but 'not-yet', (Back, 2014). Back (2008) argues that 'it is

precisely in the attention to the not-yet, to the becoming, to the day

dreaming of the possible that hope is most important.' Nada said she

works for a better future

> To keep out the idea that right now I'm sitting in my
>
> grandmother's back yard, land that has been in my family for
>
> 100 years or more and I ... I'm not sure that 50 years from now
>
> I will have the option of coming down here again **[pause]**.
>
> These trees that my grandmother took so much pride in planting

> *herself* could be gone and *this* won't be my grandmother's back
>
> yard any more.

Nada's comment that she works to encourage internationals to support the Palestinian cause to prevent herself becoming despondent, suggests that she is working to sustain her hope that the occupation will be brought to an end. As Rachel Seginer argues, '[f]or hope to have an impact, it cannot be a fleeting experience but rather an ongoing process', (2008, p.278). It requires work, as Ernst Bloch (1986) argues. Having constructed international engagement with the Palestine question as crucial for liberation in preceding comments, in this extract Nada lays out what is at stake if collective efforts to end the occupation and realise a just settlement for the Palestinians fail. She establishes her family's century-long connection with the land and suggests symbolically that her family has strong roots in the land and has nurtured it through the reference to her grandmother planting trees. This makes it all the more powerful when she expresses her fears that within the next half century they could have been ousted from their land. However, the way in which she suggests that her grandmother's trees 'could' be gone, leaves open the possibility of the reverse if her appeal for international support is heard and there is a mass movement for change like the anti-apartheid movement she highlights. She suggests that the anti-apartheid movement foreshadows what may happen with Palestine ('which kinda seems the path that the public opinion is going when it comes to Palestine, which gives you hope').

In constructing international support as a source of hope, some participants simultaneously constructed Palestinian resistance as

ineffective or weak, thereby stressing the need for the support for which they were appealing. In this way they appeared to construct a binary between outsiders and Palestinians. In the following extract, Nada contrasts the hope she gets from international solidarity movements, with the anxiety caused by collective memories of the failed resistance efforts of previous generations and the resignation of her peers. I quote the following narrative at length because it is a good example of how she juxtaposes the contribution foreigners make to efforts to liberate Palestine with the implicit failure of the Palestinians. She suggests that maintaining hope is essential for managing daily life under occupation and she works to sustain her hope.

> I mean, so it's hard and as hard as it is ... it makes you just want to try harder and harder and harder and you worry about the day when you might run out of energy or hope because when that day comes you know that you are going to be devastated.

> **Do you feel like that is a danger?**

> I worry about it. I worry about it ... Sometimes more than others **[^]**. When ... like I was saying how, err, the public movement, the international world, you know their movements give me hope.

> **Mmm, mmm.**

> So that kind of, erm, quiets my worries a little bit down, 'cause it's like something may change. But sometimes you worry, my mother's been working for thirty years, my father's been

working as well, they have been living in this society, they have been living in this culture ... what has changed that much for them? And they're pretty hard workers. So you worry about suffering disappointment ... that many have suffered before you.

Mmm.

When you look at Professors who you *know* were a *big* part of the first intifada and all the work that they put into it and all the times that they were abused and thrown in jail ... and then you see them sitting there, you don't think that they didn't achieve anything *for* the next generation, but you know that they are looking around and they're like 'there's less of my country than when I started' ... We are left with less than 11 percent of historical Palestine ... It makes *no* sense whatsoever and people are begging to leave ... Your youth are begging to leave. Well what's the hope? What's the hope of this country if they constantly keep leaving? It should be a *shame* that everybody here my age wants to leave and then everybody my age abroad that hears about Palestine, hears the suffering that we're going through ... wants to come and help. It really confuses you.

Nada uses the collective memory of the failed efforts of her parents' generation to bring the occupation to an end to historicise her fears that current internationally-supported efforts may also come to nothing. In contrasting young people abroad with her peers in Palestine she hyperbolically suggests that young Palestinians have all given up, ignoring

the efforts of the many young people, like herself, who are committed to remaining in Palestine and working to end the occupation. She depicts foreigners, who have much less at stake, more favourably than Palestinians who suffer the trauma of occupation. Discursively she seems to idealise foreigners, pinning all her hopes on their interventions, which strengthens her appeal for their involvement. In doing this, however, she underlines the characterisation of herself as alienated from her peers and straddling two national identities, American and Palestinian, and not fully belonging to either, as discussed in chapter five. For the purposes of this interview at least, she identifies more with young politically-engaged foreigners than with politically active young Palestinians. She notably uses extreme case formulations (Potter and Wetherell, 1987) that serve to essentialise both Palestinians and the international community, presenting young Palestinians as negative and their peers abroad as uniformly positive.

In her narrative Aisha does something similar, which will be explored below, but let us begin by examining the picture she drew of Palestine when I asked her to draw what comes to mind when she thinks of Palestine.

Figure 7.2: Aisha's Picture, 2010

When I asked 'what have you drawn?' Aisha described many of the

freedoms and opportunities that Palestinians are deprived of, in stark

contrast to the conflict, restrictions, sense of imprisonment and

restrictions, which she and other participants had highlighted as some of

the worst aspects of life under occupation in chapter four. Aisha said

> I drew the ... the sea, because I want, I want to see Palestine
>
> one time like this. Err ...It's free, roads can go anywhere without
>
> having any checkpoint and so on. You can reach the sea that
>
> you can't reach now. And all people from all religions are living
>
> beside each other in peace. They are living a peaceful life. You

can go to anywhere without having any checkpoints, without

seeing any wall.

In a short response, Aisha repeated the key themes of: a desire to see the

sea, peaceful co-existence and freedom to move about without

checkpoints and barriers. When I asked whether she envisaged seeing

the Palestine she longs for in her lifetime, Aisha's comments echoed

Nada's, juxtaposing caring foreigners with Palestinians who 'don't care'.

That's a hard question. **[Pause]** I don't know. I hope so. I hope,

but I don't know. Because ... because of many reasons. The

Palestinians are not going on the right road towards their

liberation. This is the most obvious thing that I see. We are

becoming more shallow and most of us don't care about the

Palestine question. People in other parts of the world are really

caring about it. **[Text omitted]** So um ... I would see this if I see

the Palestinian society going on the right road, but now it's not

going on the right road.

Aisha's comments simplify and distort the political moment in a way that

ignores the ambivalence of many people internationally and the political

commitment and sacrifice of many Palestinians. However, both Aisha's

and Nada's comments convey to outsiders frustration with what the young

women characterise as the impotence of Palestinians. Their comments,

however, are complimentary about foreign engagement with the

Palestinian cause, which perhaps reflects the interview dynamic in which

they were talking to me, an engaged foreign listener, and through me

seeking to inspire other foreigners to support the Palestinian cause. Their exogenous political hope depends on the Palestinians reaching out and connecting with the international community to produce a shared political hope.

Hope in Palestinian resistance

This short section examines Yousef's narratives, which suggest that he draws hope from secular Palestinian resistance. In contrast to the narratives in the previous section that focused on appealing to foreigners, hopes were pinned on what Palestinians can achieve for themselves in the account of Birzeit Sociology student Yousef, who longed to pray in Al-Aqsa. Yousef described resistance as something that energises him and gives him hope that Palestine will one day be free, which he described as the Palestinians' right. He said that while at university he got to know institutes and was involved in organising conferences and he participated in voluntary work, much of which was to protect land threatened with Israeli occupation.

> I feel that I, my goal will be realised. When I think about it, I see Palestine before me, liberated. I only see Palestine, and this is what motivates me, gives me hope and a challenge and the will to continue in the work that I am undertaking. I will continue doing voluntary work to help the Palestinian cause, which helps the lands threatened with confiscation, to protect the lands threatened by Israeli confiscation and this (I mean), our attempt, succeeded in that. And Israel wasn't able to confiscate those lands that we went to defend through our voluntary work. For a

number of days we volunteered on the land. This gave us
feelings of hope, a challenge and power that we have power in
Palestine, that we are the rightful ones and we have the right to
remain in Palestine and live an independent life in Palestine, a
free life in Palestine. That, (I mean), motivates us to do more
and more. We have to work harder in order to take the land, to
be able to liberate more land, as it is our right as Palestinians.

Yousef, who said that after graduating he intends to work for an institute full time, suggests that resisting the occupation and successfully defending Palestinian land energised him and gave him hope that the Palestinians will liberate Palestine. He describes a process of working to sustain hope in the way in which he asserts that he has made a conscious decision to only imagine Palestine liberated. Doing this gives him hope. Through stating that '[w]e have to', he constructs working harder for the Palestinian cause in order to claim their rights as obligatory for Palestinians. The secular endogenous hope that Yousef draws from Palestinian resistance contrasts with the focus on international support in the exogenous hope of the participants in the previous section. His narrative is also in contrast to those of the devout women in the next section who emphasised their faith and religious hope, as will be seen below.

Hope in Palestinian Muslims

This section examines the narratives of devout Muslim students whose hopes for the future rested on Muslim Palestinians uniting so that they

could vanquish an enemy they characterised as 'the Jews'[16] and secure

the victory of which they were certain due to their faith. Unlike in the

narratives in the previous sections, the hope explored here is explicitly

religious. The participants used the interviews as a platform to show the

strength that resulted from their faith and, in publicly proclaiming this, to

make their hopes for liberation concrete. Alessandro Portelli (1991, p.62)

argues that 'interview time is felt to be status-loaded time. The fact that

the interview takes place means that the narrator is recognized.' While

these participants did not seek to appeal to internationals through their

participation in this research, telling their stories was a way for them to

preserve themselves from oblivion, building their identities and the

legacies they would leave for the future (Portelli, 1991). Furthermore, their

narratives about the importance of Palestinian Muslim resistance also

functioned as counter narratives to accounts that centred on the

importance of foreign support.

Muslima, who said she would die rather than leave Palestine in

chapter five, drew on the Qur'an and prophecies to argue that Muslims will

be victorious over the Jews in this, or future, generations. Her narrative,

explored below, is similar to those examined in the second part of chapter

three in that she confidently asserts that victory is inevitable. She draws

her authority from the Qur'an, rather than appealing for, or seeing

liberation as contingent on, international support as in the first section of

this chapter, or on secular resistance as in the second. Muslima said that

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[16] See earlier discussions on the ways in which the devout Muslim students used this term.

they would continue fighting their 'enemies' until they were 'victorious with the permission of God the mighty and sublime.'

Portelli (1991, p.63) argues that 'narrators are interested in projecting an image.' From her assertions and rhetoric it seems that Muslima is attempting to convey strength, confidence and unshakeable faith. Assertions of future victory are a source of hope for Muslima and the other participants in this section, whose narratives suggest they are not sure that victory will be realised in their lifetimes, although they would like it to be. Asserting and re-asserting the inevitability of their victory could be one way in which they did the 'work of hoping' (Seginer, 2008).

In a joint interview with Muslima, Salwa suggested that if Palestinians are good Muslims and work together they will 'be victorious,' which she characterised as defeating 'the Jews'.

> [I]f we are brought up correctly, we will go out to the world in the right way and be able to defend our homeland. If we have high confidence in ourselves and in the people around us, of course we will realise our victory and we will be victorious and we will overcome the Jews.

Salwa's narrative does not describe victory as inevitable, but rather contingent on the way in which Palestinian Muslims comport themselves, believe in themselves and each other and unite to fight the enemy, which she characterises as 'the Jews'. While Salwa's comments stem from her interpretation of the Qur'an, and her understanding of her faith more generally, they can be read as essentialist because they both homogenise Jews and construct them as the enemy. Salwa was more confident of

victory when I asked her to draw what comes to mind when she thinks of Palestine. She said she would leave the page blank because white is the colour of the flag raised when Palestinians succeed or are joyous and thus 'the white page represents Palestine because Palestine will be liberated.' Her picture then, functions as a political slogan as well as giving substance to her narrative of future military success.
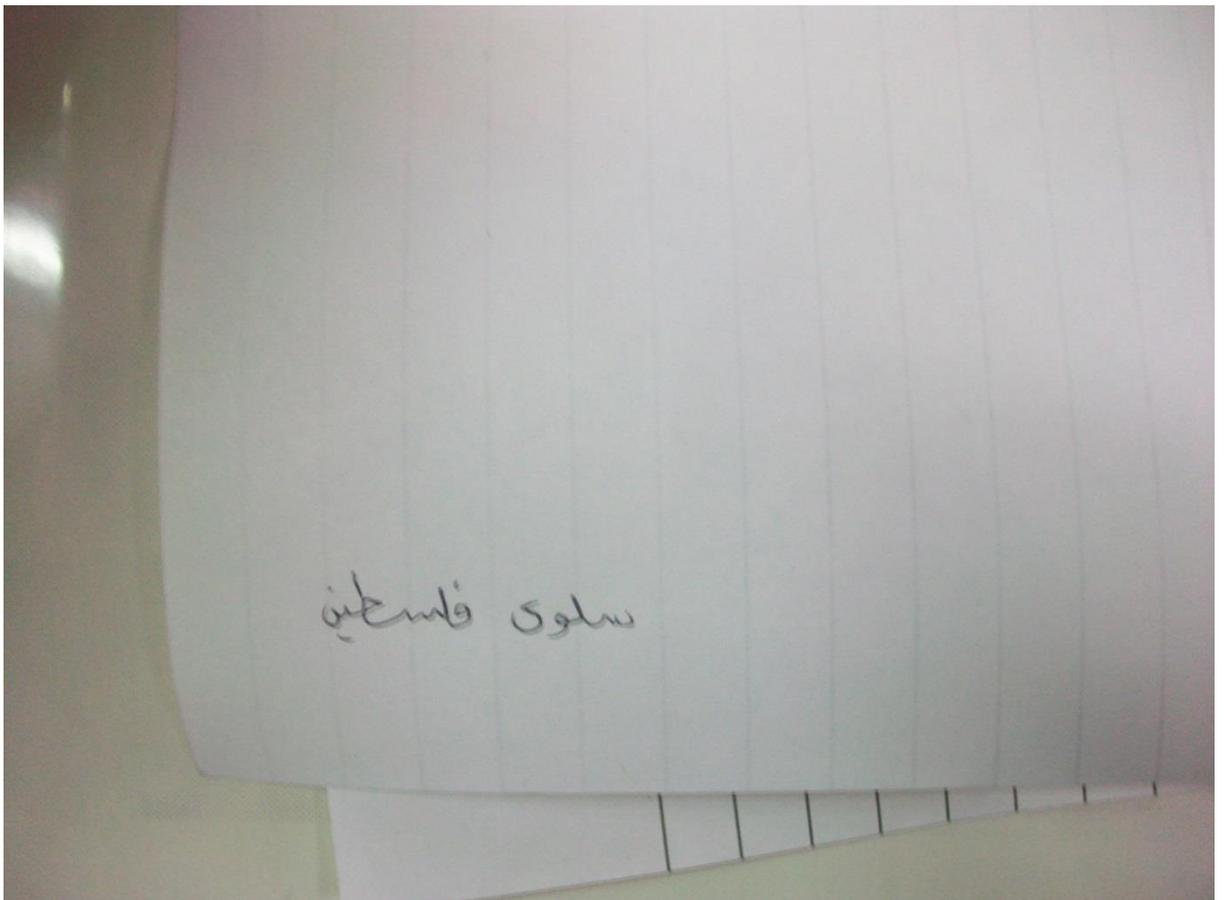

Figure 7.3: Photograph of Salwa's picture, 2010

Similarly, Zahra said that 'we', implicitly referring to all Palestinians, do not recognise the State of Israel because it is an occupying state and 'we will remain resisting until liberation, God willing,' and in a joint interview with Fatima and Salwa, she said 'we are patient because we know that in the end we'll be victorious.' She constructs Palestinians as

indefatigable and determined in their efforts to liberate Palestine, thereby making them seem strong despite being subjected to occupation. Her comments serve to counter those in the first section that construct Palestinians as weak and dependent on outside support and they function as a source of hope grounded in faith that although the situation is hard now, it will improve.

It has been argued that '[o]nly with the aid of the sacred can we understand the incomprehensible, manage the unmanageable, and endure the unbearable' (Pargament and Brant, 1998, p.112). Zahra, and the other devout Muslim young women, characterised themselves as buoyed by the strength of their faith despite the hardship of life under occupation. For Zahra, and the other participants in this section, faith in God, and the authority of the Qur'an, hadith and sunna, provided them with 'something to hold onto in the face of overwhelming challenge,' (Lear, 2006, p.91). The Qur'an, hadith and sunna 'provided a legitimate source of guidance. And they needed to be able to hold onto that sense of legitimacy' (Lear, 2006, p.98) as they endured the oppression of life under Israeli occupation in order to 'provide them with the resources to commit to the bare idea that after' the occupation 'there would be something good *for them*,' (Lear, 2006, p.98).

In the same joint interview, Muslima said that Muslims need to unite as 'one hand' in order to liberate Palestine. Her comments are an example of the religious endogenous hope expressed by her and her peers.

I see that Islam is what makes us human, thus (I mean) if I want to work for a party, I would like to search for parties that agree with Islam, (I mean), let's say the Islamic parties that try to spread the idea of Islam. I will tell you, (I mean), never, never, will someone on his own be able to stop ((Israel))… I ((can't)) say me on my own 'come on, I want to stop and I want to liberate Palestine without cooperating with my sister, and my sister, and my sister, and we will all be one hand in order to liberate ((Palestine)) or in order to return to work on the things that we want. We must be many, must be a group.

The idea of Muslims uniting as one hand, which was mentioned by a number of the participants, comes from the hadith, the reports of the teachings, sayings and deeds of the Prophet, as in the Sunan Abī Dāwūd, Book 39, Number 4515:

Narrated Ali ibn AbuTalib [sic]:

Qays ibn Abbad and Ashtar went to Ali and said to him: Did the Apostle of Allah (peace_be_upon_him) give you any instruction about anything for which he did not give any instruction to the people in general?

He said: No, except what is contained in this document of mine. Musaddad said: He then took out a document. Ahmad said: A document from the sheath of his sword. It contained: The lives of all Muslims are equal; they are one hand against others; the

lowliest of them can guarantee their protection (Center for Muslim-Jewish Engagement).

When I asked Zahra how she looks at the future, she, like Muslima, also said if Muslims unite as 'one hand' they will be liberated.

> God willing, God willing a day will come when we are liberated, if we just remain patient and steadfast, and like we said yesterday, if there is unity between us. If everyone has an opinion and everyone has his point and everyone has his way, if everyone is like that, if we don't build this, we won't liberate ourselves, except if we are one hand holding on to each other, the same opinion and the same unity and the same point, the same decision, at that time we will be liberated.

Zahra suggests that her hopes for Palestinian liberation rest on Palestinians uniting, but that those hopes will remain unfulfilled until Palestinians stop prioritising their individual concerns over those of the collective.

The idea of hope that stems from faith in Islam and Palestinian Muslims, what I have termed 'religious endogenous hope', was complicated by the participants who argued that while the current conflict may end, the cycles of conflict would continue. However, I will argue that the participants' narratives suggest that they drew hope from the fact that what is happening is what has been written and from the belief that the current conflict will end, even though the broader conflict will continue.

Ramz, who described himself as a Muslim who believes in the Qur'an, said that it is possible that the occupation may end soon, but that peace will not last because of competing claims on the land.

> Perhaps soon there will be a Palestinian state, but the Jews will remain here, possibly there will be a Palestinian state and an Israeli state, but that will last for years, but the struggles will return again. I mean the Jews will say that that's enough. The Palestinians have lived ten years on their own, now we want to occupy also half of the remaining land. And the Palestinians remain thinking we want to return the land which Israel occupied and we want to return and they want to occupy. So I mean it is hard to end the conflict. The occupation maybe, but the conflict is hard. The conflict is hard to end.

Ramz suggests that the occupation is part of a broader landscape of struggle that will continue. In constructing the conflict in this way, he is able to do two things. First, he introduces hope by suggesting that there may 'soon' be a Palestinian state, or a two-state solution. Second, he reduces the significance of the occupation by constructing it as just one struggle within a much broader conflict.

In his narrative, Ramz distinguishes between the occupation, which has been the focus of much debate and national and international resistance efforts, and what he frames as a conflict with the Jews. There is hope in the idea that it may be possible to end the occupation, but Ramz constructs the conflict as enduring. Ramz said 'Palestine, according to the Qur'an, (I mean), it is the land of conflict. It will always remain in

conflict until Judgement Day.' He draws on the past as evidence of the accuracy of the Qur'an, in part to explain his confidence in the Qur'anic suras about perpetual struggle to a non-Muslim foreigner.

Similarly, Montaser, the English Literature and Translation student who said he wanted to leave Palestine in the previous chapter, argued that the conflict will last forever, and he cited the Qur'an as informing Muslims of this, much like the Hamas Charter, or Covenant, which cites a hadith in which the Prophet describes Palestine as a land whose people will be in constant struggle until the Day of Resurrection (Hamas, 1988). Article 34 of the covenant states that the Prophet called on his companion Ma'adh ben-Jabal, saying:

> O Ma'ath [sic], Allah throw open before you, when I am gone, Syria, from Al-Arish to the Euphrates. Its men, women and slaves will stay firmly there till the Day of Judgement. Whoever of you should choose one of the Syrian shores, or the Holy Land, he will be in constant struggle till the Day of Judgement (Hamas, 1988)

Like Ramz, Montaser said he envisages perpetual conflict with 'the Jews' because that is his understanding of what it says in the Qur'an. Drawing on the religious text he does not make exceptions for Israelis who oppose the occupation, because according to his understanding of the Qur'an, they are still the 'enemy'.

> As a Muslim I think the fight will just stay between us forever after and this is what our religion and our holy book are telling

us. We will not be a friend to our enemy: to the Israeli people or to the Israeli government. The people are the same as the government. Even there are some people in Israel who don't like the policy or the thing, they are still our enemy.

Why?

This is what the holy book is just saying. Not, I'm not just taking things as it is, but they are our ... enemy. Jewish, I'm talking about Jewish, yeah. Jews, Jews yeah, not the Israeli, Israeli, 'cause there's some people who's not Jews in Israel. The Arab are Israeli, but they are Arab.

Montaser takes a defiant and absolutist stance in which an intractable conflict with those he characterises as the Jewish enemy is inevitable due to his interpretation of Islam. In stating that 'we will not be a friend to our enemy,' Montaser may be alluding to Sūra 5, Al Mā'idah, which includes verse 51, which begins:

O ye who believe!

Take not the Jews

And the Christians

For your friends and protectors;

They are but friends and

　　Protectors

To each other ('Alī, 1997, pp.264-265).

Montaser also gives another explanation for his assertion that there will be a perpetual conflict with Israeli Jews, one that is based on the premise that in particular circumstances reconciliation is impossible.

[T]here will not be any peace between us.

You don't think so?

No I don't think so!

Ever?

Ever, never ... I can tell you why. You know why?

No.

Yeah, I will tell you why ... because if I'm going to ... to be your neighbour in the future as you've, as you, as if you were Israeli and I'm Palestinian, you will be my neighbour, okay, my neighbour, then *your* father just killed *my* father or your grandfather just killed my grandfather in the war and we just mentioned this small story while we are just sitting together, how can we just still talk together and still live together, how? You just killed my father. Your father just killed my father. How can I just ... coexist with you? It's, it's insane.

In this passage Montaser stages a conversation with me as an imagined Israeli to point to the history of Israeli violence against the Palestinians through the generations as a barrier to peace. Unlike Nada, who highlighted the historic peaceful coexistence between Jews and Palestinians as a source of hope, Montaser focuses on the history of

violence instead. Not only does he not envisage peace, he called for a return to war.

> I hope that we go back to war and to fight, but that we don't have a normal life again, or for now. Don't just give me good food, good shelter, good money, good gear and 'just keep silent, don't talk about policy now, don't talk about your political situation, don't talk about your land.'

Montaser envisages perpetual struggle with 'the Jews' in his narrative and argues above that he would prefer war to a situation where the occupation is normalised and the struggle forgotten. The appetite for war in Montaser's narrative is in contrast to the position taken by the participants at the beginning of this chapter who hoped for a peaceful, international pathway to liberation. However, his position has parallels with those like Muslima, who constructed holy war and fighting the enemy as essential parts of what it means to be a good Muslim. Montaser's 'hope' that Palestinians return to war could be indicative of an impatience to see an end to the occupation, even if the broader conflict continues.

From the narratives discussed in this part, it can be seen that the participants drew hope for the future from a variety of different sources and that working to sustain contrasting kinds of hope helped to make their lives under occupation liveable. The participants who said they drew hope from international resistance movements described an exogenous political hope that required Palestinians to reach out and connect with the international community to produce a shared political hope. In contrast to this, the participant who argued that secular Palestinian resistance was a

source of hope described a secular endogenous political hope that required Palestinian unity and sacrifice, while those who drew hope from both their faith and fellow Palestinian Muslims described a religious endogenous hope. The ways in which these different forms of hope translated into hoped-for solutions to the Palestinian conflict will be explored in part two.

PART 2: Hoped-for solutions to the conflict

This part explores the different ways in which the participants imagined the future according to their different sources of hope. It begins by considering the narratives of participants who said that their faith made them confident that the Palestinians would regain all of historic Palestine and that 'the Jews' would leave or submit to Muslim rule. This idea, which conflicts with the options for resolving the conflict popular internationally, is consistent with the desire of these participants to use the interviews as a platform for publicising their defiant positions rather than seeking to foster international links, which some of the other participants sought to do. It also examines similar views expressed in secular terms. It then explores the narratives of those who hoped for one binational state as a solution to the conflict. It argues that this solution is consistent with the aims of these participants to appeal for international support for the resistance movement. It then considers narratives from a couple of participants who said they were open to the possibility of a one- or two-state solution. It concludes that the futures the participants imagine are incommensurable with each other and considers the implications of this.

Regaining historic Palestine

This brief section explores narratives about hoped-for futures in which the Palestinians will regain historic Palestine in its entirety. It begins by exploring the narratives of devout Muslim young women who drew on their faith to explain their confidence that the Palestinians would regain historic Palestine, before examining the narratives of two young men who were determined that the Palestinians would regain historic Palestine and the Israelis would be forced to leave.

A group of devout Muslim participants said they had faith that in the future Israel would cease to exist and historic Palestine would be returned to the Palestinians, in some cases as a Muslim state, which was a view expressed by Sarah, Zahra and Fatima in a joint interview.

When I asked for the solution envisaged by the three young women, Fatima said 'the expulsion of the occupiers so that we can enjoy the freedom that is our right. I mean it's not something that's not our right because it's our land.' Similarly, Zahra said 'we'll never recognise that there are two states – the state of Palestine and the state of Israel. This thing is forbidden for us. There's no recognition because it's our right, it's our land and our right to visit it. No one will prevent us from it.'

However, when I asked what liberation meant to Zahra, she said 'liberation is getting rid of Zionism, and not the Jews, from the Palestinian lands .. We consider that it is the State of Palestine and not the State of Israel.'

[A]nyone who encourages the occupation and Zionism, that's it leave the land. When you say "liberation, how will liberation

> be?" Removing anyone who says there is a State of Israel or State of Palestine and national homeland for the Jews, the Jewish state will be in Palestine, anyone who supports this idea can leave Palestine. We work to remove them from Palestine by force, peacefully, anything. The important matter is they leave the land of Palestine.

Zahra's narrative is unnerving as potentially it advocates the violent mass expulsion of Jewish people from Israel if they refuse to agree to live in a Palestinian state, despite the fact that Jews lived in Palestine before the creation of the State of Israel and generations of Israeli Jews know no other home, having been born there. The young women imagined a future in which the State of Israel would cease to exist. Unlike the participants who hope to build a future that recognises the millions of Israeli Jews who already live in Israel, the hope expressed by these young women was destructive, seeking the destruction of a state and, in its most extreme formulation, the expulsion of a people, which has disturbing echoes of the Nakba.

> **Sarah:** In the future I expect us Palestinians and the Arabs will unite and, I mean, wipe out the State of Israel, all of it.

> **Zahra:** wipe it out of existence.

> **Fatima:** we are convinced of this because our Lord will help us.

Sarah's opening 'expectation' that a united front of Palestinians and Arabs would 'wipe out' Israel, a point that is made more emphatically by Zahra, becomes a 'conviction' supported by God by the time Fatima joins in.

Given the widespread international support for Israel's right to exist and the expectation that this research will reach an international audience, these young women may have expected their comments to be perceived as both unpalatable and defiant.

In a similar way to Sarah, Fatima and Zahra, a couple of participants described future visions in which the Palestinians would regain all of historic Palestine and the Israelis would be forced to leave. For example, Muhaned was determined that the Palestinians would reclaim historic Palestine in its entirety and create a state on the land that he emphatically states is solely for the Palestinians, instead of one binational state for the Palestinians and the Israelis to share.

> [W]e have one aim that *unites* us as Palestinians here and those abroad which is only liberation, the return of refugees who are abroad, the return of refugees who are inside, the breaking of our *chains* and to have control over all of our lands and to *secure* our freedom. We are announcing a state for the people on the land, and our aim is to announce a state on all parts of Palestine from the north to the south, from the east to the west, basically we will be Palestinians on one land for one people, not for two people.

In the same way, Yousef said that the Palestinians are united in their goal of achieving independence and liberation from Israel and despite some Western and Arab states supporting Israel he feels that their goal of complete sovereignty in historic Palestine will be realised.

> We look and strive to see Palestine free free free with complete
> *sovereignty* in Palestine, without pressure from Israel, Israel, let
> it go, let it go, I mean let the Western countries find it land, buy
> land in any Western country and live in it.

His comments are heteroglossic in that it sounds as though he is directly repeating slogans and political campaigning discourses inflect his narrative. With both religious and secular narratives the participants in this section argued that the only future they can envisage is one in which historic Palestine is returned to the Palestinians. However, what is unclear is whether in practice they would be willing to accept some form of compromise even if they are unwilling to vocalise this in the interview. The example of the Hamas Movement is relevant here as the movement has compromised since the position it set out in its charter, however, on its anniversaries its leaders sometimes claim they will get back historic Palestine 'from the river to the sea'. See Ayyoub and Sherwood (2012) for an example of this. Hroub (2006, vii-viii) argues that 'Hamas in the eyes of many Westerners, official [sic] and lay alike, has always been reduced to a mere 'terrorist group' whose only function is and has been to aimlessly kill Israelis.' However, in 2005 the religious-nationalist liberation movement 'decided to run for the Palestinian Legislative Council elections in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip', (Hroub, 2006, xiv) which it won in January 2006 and it also decided to put all military activities on hold 'for an unspecified amount of time', (Hroub, 2006, xiv).

A one-state solution

In stark contrast to the narratives outlining the belief or conviction that historic Palestine would be returned to the Palestinians and Jewish Israelis would be expelled, a few of the participants hoped for a one-state solution in which Palestinians and Israelis would live side-by-side. Nada, for example, said

> I don't know what to expect because Palestinian history is always up and down, up and down ... I expect for things to require another few decades for things to reach an even plateau and I don't think there'll be any lasting solution other than a one-state solution. We'd interact and if you had a neighbour they invited you to their happy occasions, but now we're treated as animals. Palestinians feel like they are just being stepped on, they are not getting treated as human beings, they are ... you know <oppressed>.

> **Mmhmm, 'oppressed'**

> Oppressed, yes. We are developing it and they're just ruining it and all they want to do is kill us. You can't have two states living side by side. It would never work. It would never last because the Palestinians and the government have given up so much of Palestine. In only 60 years we have seen nothing of it. If we were able to live in peace and understanding at one time, why can't it happen again? To target each other and give such a negative image of each other. 'Cause I don't think every single

Israeli knows what's going on here, so it's unfair to call every

single one of them ... okay we won't call them anything. Most of

them don't know what's going on here. It does anger me to

know and that at one point they were your age and they were

treating you like scum. I will be treated like scum by someone

30 years younger than me. That's why I don't think a two-state

solution will work. I don't know what to expect in the future, but

I think a one-state solution is the only solution we have. There's

no Palestinian state, our borders aren't being controlled by us,

by our government.

Nada uses the collective memory of harmony between Palestinians and

Jews to make the case that coexistence can happen again in the form of

a one-state solution to the conflict. Abunimah (2006, p.16), a journalist

and activist who advocates a one-state solution, argued that Palestinian

memories 'of peaceful coexistence between Jews and Arabs in Palestine

before the creation of Israel' are 'key to a new future.' He shared his

parents' narratives of living amicably in Palestine with their Jewish

neighbours in his call for one democratic state for all and said that 'there

were ordinary friendships with Palestinian Jews, many of whom lived

simple rural lives' (2006, p.6). In sharing their family stories, both Nada

and the journalist and activist Abunimah draw on the key political trope of

close relations with local Jewish people, which helps to foreground a

'rhetoric of authenticity and moral edification' (Allan, 2007, p.258).

Nada rejects the idea of a two-state solution as unviable because

illegal Jewish settlements carve up Palestinian territory to the extent that

there is insufficient contiguous territory to sustain a functioning state (Tilley, 2005) and the inequities and injustice make it unworkable. Recognising this reality, her decision to advocate a one-state solution is courageous because it acknowledges the need 'to face up to reality in new ways,' (Lear, 2006, p.119). Increasingly Palestinians, Palestine Studies scholars, and Jewish liberals are calling for a single state for Palestinians and Israelis – the so-called 'one-state' solution (for example, Farsakh, 2007; Abunimah, 2006, Tilley, 2005; Sussman, 2004). Those who call for 'one state', or one country, argue that the two-state solution that would result in an independent Palestinian state is no longer viable because of the continued expansion of illegal Israeli settlements that carve up the West Bank (For example, see Abunimah, 2006; Tilley, 2005; Sussman, 2004).

Like Nada, Husam also hopes for a one-state solution to the conflict. He imagines people from each of the monotheistic religions sharing a state.

> (I mean) <I can purchase a home in Jaffa, like that, I can purchase anything, I can build a factory in Tel Aviv, in Jaffa> I mean <One country for all. Holy land for all, you are to select your religion>, you are free to choose your religion, but this land is for all. For Christians, Muslims, Jews, here is Bethlehem, <Holy Land> but in it there are Christians, there are Muslims.

However, when I asked whether Husam thought this would happen in his lifetime, he said 'I think it is hard now, hard, I mean <near>, near, no, but if you *want* some years, because there are Israeli people who died and

there are Palestinian people who died, killed. Israelis killed and Palestinians killed, and there are many <families>, families <don't forget his members>.' His comments echo the argument Montaser made about the cycle of violence contributing to a never-ending conflict. However, unlike Montaser, Husam says he wants coexistence and suggests that it is possible in the future.

Nour Ahmad said that she would not encourage resistance at all because as long as Palestinians resist they lose, instead, like Nada and Husam, she hopes for 'peace' with Israel as a pragmatic solution to the conflict that would see Palestinians and Israelis living together.

We don't have tanks, we don't have planes, we don't have arms, we don't have anything. With what should we resist? Israel has and it has rockets and it has planes and it has AF-16s and all kinds of arms to the extent that it has nuclear arms. Okay we don't possess anything, how can we resist? If we are satisfied with peace and we live with them it would be better.

This narrative seems designed to justify resignation and pragmatic co-existence because of the disparity in military capabilities between the Israelis and the Palestinians. Nour Ahmad drew on the example of the shooting and killing of her younger brother and the potential killing of Israeli children to make the case for coexistence. She said 'so why not make peace and live, us and them, study together, and eat together, and that's it, be content and live?' The solution that Nour Ahmad advocates is an example of 'radical hope', 'a form of hope that seems to survive the destruction of a way of life,' (Lear, 2006, p.96) and endures despite the

immense difficulty of holding onto it 'in the midst of subjective catastrophe,' (Lear, 2006, p.96). She is committed 'to the bare possibility that, from this disaster, something good will emerge,' (Lear, 2006, p.97). In contrast to those who drew on Islam to argue that there would be continual war, she gave the example of the Prophet Muhammad whom she said loved the Christians and the Jews and made peace with them more than once as an example that they should follow.

Tilley (2005, p.11) argues that the debate about a single democratic state has been stalled by the fears of Zionists and Palestinians. Nonetheless, she cautions that 'the one-state solution cannot be dismissed, however, overwhelming these obstacles appear, for no other choice remains.' The hope Nada, Husam and Nour Ahmad have for the future is both courageous and radical.

A few of the participants were not strictly wedded to a particular solution to the conflict, adopting pragmatic responses to the extremely difficult situation. In the extracts below Sultan, who said he was contemplating leaving Palestine and that the occupation exacerbated social issues (chapter 6), wavers between hoping for a two-state solution and expecting there to be a one-state solution.

> For me, if there would be a two state *solution* **[^]** ... it should be on the borders of the '67 war and East Jerusalem as a part of Palestine. Nothing less, nothing more. We ... it's ... like at least people, most foreigners ... most foreigners that do not come here and just stay outside and see media, Israel is not doing a benevolent thing by giving us land, it's our land. It's already

enough that we have to give a part to, for Israel to be built on. They are forgetting this main idea. We are not *begging* for something that we do not own. It's our *own* right.

Many people they say, 'oh but Yasser Arafat didn't accept the Camp David thing and they were offering 98 percent for Palestine'. So what? We should have *100* percent. It's our land, you cannot be *good* to us by ... we are not *beggars* asking you for something we do not *own*. We are not asking you to give us something from your own pocket, or your own money, or your own land, it's *our* land. Most people forget this point when they talk about Palestine Question and any final status negotiation. This is *our* land and people have to always keep that in mind. As I say, I know, at least the reality I know, Israel is already started and has its own generation. They are not Europeans any more, they are not Ethiopians any more, they are not Hin- Indian any more, they are Israelis. Either two state solution **[^],** or one democratic state with two nationalities in it. But when we say two state solution we need the West Bank and the Gaza Strip ... at least.

However, when I asked whether there would be land left for a Palestinian state after the expansion of Israeli settlements, he said 'I don't think so.' This is a position held by those who advocate a one-state solution because 'Jewish settlements have carved Palestinian territory into a vestige too small to sustain a viable national society,' (Tilley, 2005, p.1) and '[a]ny Palestinian state created in the twisted scrap of land remaining is certain to fail Palestinian-national hopes and needs,' (2005, p.3). Like

Nada, Sultan concluded that in the end he thinks there will be a one-state solution.

> That's why one democratic state solution, I think that will be the end. Because, ahh ... for me I would not be that affected if there was a two state solution 'cause I live in Jerusalem, but if there was a two state solution for people living in refugee camps you have to understand that they literally have *lost* their lands. They cannot even visit any more, they cannot go to Haifa and Acre. That's why Palestinian society has so many layers. You have the people who are living in the West Bank 'cause they are from the West Bank and people living in refugee camps and people from Jerusalem. So ... I only represent a small fraction of the Palestinian people. I like, I cannot speak for the people living in refugee camps, I don't have that experience, I never lived in a camp, my parents never lived in a tent. I cannot *speak* for them.

In his narrative, Kareem, who discussed negotiating life in Palestine with the constant threat of imprisonment in chapter 4, did not express a preference for either the one- or two-state solution, stating instead that he hoped that everyone would 'live together'. He hoped for a solution that above everything was accepted by both peoples.

> I, I mean, I hope that it's possible for everyone to live together. Now our political *frame* will represent all of us. It must be in the frame of equality and democracy. I am a person that doesn't have a problem if there is a state with two peoples living in it on

the *basis* that we understand each other, that there is scope for us to understand each other, and not on the basis that there is power imposed on us and hatred between us two, they hate us and we hate them. Do you understand? And in the frame of two states again I don't have a problem if there are two states if this is *acceptable* to the two people, but as a vision which we see, it's hard because the policies are, are, on two sides I mean if there was a unified state to two states, the current policies will not achieve their aims even if one of those two, the Israeli policies are not meaningful in a state for two people, nor meaningful in two states.

The future vision that Kareem advocates is flexible and harmonious and not vengeful, in stark contrast to the narratives of those who wanted to wipe out the State of Israel or to expel Israeli Jews. Back (2008) argues that

As John Berger would have it hope has to take the world in. This kind of hope is established in the accumulation of small acts that defy division, hatred and mutual misunderstanding, where the counterintuitive (i.e. that people refuse to be defined by the differences that are socially ascribed to them) is intuitive.

This description of hope fits with Kareem's radical hope for the future.

Conclusion

The participants in this research imagined and hoped for starkly different futures, which reflected their different political and religious beliefs and their motivations for taking part in the research. Their divergent hopes

reflect the contrasting positions of Palestinian political parties and movements. While secular nationalists often 'seek a nonreligious democratic state' in which diverse citizens have the same rights under one constitution (Lybarger, 2007, p.1), those activists and movements aligned with politically resurgent Islam's ideology seek 'some form of sharī'a-based state and society within the boundaries of what is now Israel, the West Bank, and the Gaza Strip in their entirety' (Lybarger, 2007, p.3).

The participants who said they would accept nothing less than the return to the Palestinians of historic Palestine in its entirety, presented themselves as staunchly opposed to the one- or two-state future visions of some of their peers, and the radical hope of those who advocated a one-state solution was absent from the narratives of those whose hope came from their faith. Furthermore, the participants' hoped-for futures were qualitatively different, with those at one extreme advocating the mass-expulsion of Israeli Jews in contrast to those at the other calling for all of historic Palestine to be shared. What is unclear from the narratives, and particularly those of the participants who wanted the return of historic Palestine in its entirety, is the extent to which the hopes they shared reflected their personal beliefs and the extent to which they would be prepared to compromise.

This chapter has examined the different ways in which the participants oriented themselves to the future and worked to sustain their hope (Bloch, 1986), approaching hope as an ongoing process (Seginer, 2008). The different kinds of hope that the participants worked to sustain,

and the belief that the future could, or would, be better, helped to make life under occupation liveable.

What the narratives in this chapter reveal is the considerable gulf between the ways in which different young Palestinians narrate the future. Given the considerable weight given to Palestinian unity in order to liberate Palestine in the narratives, it is concerning that there was no consensus on what the future of Palestine should look like. On the contrary, the imagined futures constructed in the interviews were incommensurable.

Some participants drew on their readings of Islam to argue that the Palestinians would be victorious and defeat 'the Jews', their hope was destructive, however others demonstrated radical hope and sought a one-state solution, or a solution based on equality, that would be tough to accept and realise, but more conducive for peace than advocating the mass expulsion of Jewish Israelis. Given that Birzeit student elections are seen as a barometer of popular opinion, the views of these participants, most of whom studied at Birzeit, underlines the complexity of the political moment and point towards the intractability of the conflict.

As will be explored further in the conclusion to this thesis, I would argue that rather than being a reflection of what participants expect to see in the short term or perhaps even in their lifetimes, the hopes they expressed and the ways in which they worked to sustain that hope was an example of 'getting by' (Allen, 2008). Arguably, their lives were more liveable because of the ways in which they conceived of themselves, or constructed themselves discursively, as working to make a difference, rather than as impotent. The participants' use of narratives as resistance

was arguably more important as a means of them 'getting by' and continuing to remain steadfast and demonstrate sumūd than it was effective as a means of working towards bringing an end to the occupation.

Conclusion

> Much of my work as a writer and lecturer was concerned with refuting the misrepresentations and dehumanizations of our history, trying at the same time to give the Palestinian narrative – so effectively blotted out by the media and legions of antagonistic polemicists – a presence and a human shape (Said, 2003b, iii).

In popular representations the Palestinians are often depicted as victims or terrorists (Philo and Berry, 2004), and even in some academic literature their agency is overlooked (see Hammami, 2010). In contrast, this thesis has sought to explore the agency of young Palestinians through a focus on their narratives. Like Said (2003b) in the epigraph above, I have sought to give Palestinian narratives a human shape, exploring both how and why Palestinian university students narrated their lives under occupation to me as an interested visiting researcher.

Eliciting the narratives of students at Birzeit and An-Najah, top Palestinian universities, allowed me to gain insights into some of the different messages about negotiating life under occupation that bright young minds sought to share with a foreign audience. In Palestine about 28 percent of women and 26 percent of men enrol in higher education (Fannoun, 2008), which means the participants were a privileged minority. Since Palestinian students are central to boosting the struggle against the occupation (Jad, 2010b) it was helpful to explore their ideas about resistance. Given that student elections at Birzeit, where most of the participants studied, are seen as a barometer of Palestinian popular

opinion, the narratives the participants shared may also provide insights into societal positions on engaging with foreigners more broadly.

At the heart of the thesis is the idea that the participants' narratives reflected their motivations for participating in the research. I argued that some of the participants sought to encourage support for international resistance efforts through their participation, while others attempted to justify uncompromising positions vis-à-vis the State of Israel and Israeli Jews. Through the ways in which they framed their narratives and the stories they chose to tell, or not tell, they conveyed different aspects of the hardship of life under occupation in Palestine. However, I assert that there were also moments of breach when participants deviated from nationalist and popular resistance struggle scripts of sumūd (Rijke and van Teeffelen, 2014) to share narratives about the impossibility of life in Palestine under occupation and to critique aspects of Palestinian society they found oppressive.

This chapter briefly draws out the main conclusions from the preceding chapters before exploring the wider implications of this research within the context of increasing tension in the Occupied Palestinian Territories. The critical review at the start of this thesis (Chapter 1) critiqued literature that treated Palestinian narratives as evidence, arguing that while it did the important work of drawing attention to the injustice of the occupation, the lack of critical engagement with the narratives was epistemologically problematic. I also reviewed literature that purported to let Palestinian narratives speak for themselves, arguing that while it privileged participant agency by not using the accounts to make specific political points, it did not offer readers insights that

would help them appreciate the richness and complexity of the texts. I argued that in contrast to those approaches, this thesis considers the complexity of the participants' narratives and how their motivations for participating in the research affected the accounts they shared. This analytic perspective was inspired by literature that explored how narratives are constructed.

The methodological chapter (Chapter 2) argued against taking a realist view and seeking to present an analysis of how Palestinian university students negotiated their lives under occupation as though this were discernible from the interviews. Instead, the chapter argued for a focus on the ways in which the participants *narrated* their lives. It explained that my focus was on analysing what the interviews signified to different participants, how their motivations for taking part in the research affected the stories they shared and the ways in which they shaped their narratives. A central analytic focus was also on what led the participants to tell the stories they told in the ways that they did.

The third chapter, 'Stories as Resistance', explored two very different stories of struggle. The participants whose accounts are analysed in the first part used the interviews as a platform to appeal both to me as a foreign researcher and to an imagined international audience to get involved in the international movement to resist the illegal Israeli occupation. In contrast to this, the young women in the second part saw the interviews as an opportunity to construct themselves as devout Muslims, thus establishing the credibility needed to promote their ideology of the importance of resisting the Israeli occupation through Islam. Furthermore, the young women and men whose narratives are analysed in this part used the interviews to justify both

their stance vis-à-vis Israel and Israeli Jews and their hopes for the future of Palestine. The chapter argued that the differences between the approaches of the participants reveal diametrically-opposed outlooks and responses to the conflict that underline the complexity of the situation in Palestine and how difficult it will be to arrive at a solution that is palatable to all.

The fourth chapter (Making Palestine) argued that the participants presented themselves as political agents in the ways in which they invited moral condemnation of the occupation by 'making' Palestine discursively in the interviews to convey the oppressive conditions of life under occupation to a foreign audience. I argued that they brought into being a dangerous Palestine that was full of obstacles and restrictions that impeded movement, a place in which Palestinians could be arrested or killed at any moment. One of the contributions of this thesis is my theorisation of 'temporary life', the idea that Palestinian lives could be interrupted at any moment by imprisonment or killing, or the imprisonment or killing of their loved ones. The participants described what it was like to live in those conditions and framed their experiences in terms of the absence of internationally-recognised rights to strengthen the case for moral condemnation of the occupation. This chapter, like the thesis in general, argued that there was much more to the participants' narratives than strategic discourse. As they talked about how frightening it is to endure the precarity of their lives under occupation, the tension and pain in their narratives was palpable. I argued that the strength of their feelings made the messages they sought to convey all the more powerful and their narratives even more poignant.

Chapter five (Staking Claims to Palestine and Refusing to Give In) explored how the participants discursively staked claims to their homeland by conveying the idea that the land, the way in which many Palestinians were forced from it, *sumūd* and resistance are an integral part of what it means to be Palestinian. It argued that through their narratives the participants sought to show people from abroad how significant Palestine is to the Palestinians and to persuade them of the legitimacy of the Palestinians' claims on the land. For some of the participants, this was an important way in which they sought to increase support for international resistance efforts through participating in the research. For others, it was a way to contextualise their desire to get rid of the State of Israel and, in some cases, their wish to expel the Israeli Jews.

Chapter six (Beyond *Sumūd*: The question of leaving) focused on the ways in which the participants outlined what was at stake if the occupation is not brought to an end and a solution is not found to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The participants whose narratives were analysed in the first part of the chapter suggested that the occupation is deliberately attempting to push young Palestinians to leave their homeland by damaging their sense of belonging to Palestine. These participants argued that the consequences of young Palestinians moving abroad would be extremely grave for the Palestinian cause. In shaping their narratives in the ways in which they did, these participants stressed the importance of Palestinians continuing to resist and showed why it is so important that the occupation is brought to an end. This strengthened their appeal for international support for resistance efforts and highlighted the tension between the attraction of a life outside Palestine and the importance of remaining in the homeland.

Despite the pressure on Palestinians to demonstrate *sumūd,* the participants in the second part of chapter six said they wanted to leave Palestine or were considering leaving as a result of the negative effects of the occupation on their lives and the damage it has done to their sense of place. In sharing these narratives they revealed the tensions and stories that can be hidden by dominant narratives.

The final empirical chapter (Chapter 7: Hope for the Future) examined the different ways in which the participants did hope work and oriented themselves to the future. It explored different kinds of hope, particularly 'secular exogenous hope', 'religious endogenous hope' and 'secular endogenous hope'. It explored how these kinds of hope and the belief that the future could, or would, be better helped to make life under occupation liveable and helped these young people to endure life under occupation, or 'get by'. It also explored the implications of these different forms of hope on the futures the participants were able to imagine. The narratives in the chapter revealed the considerable gulf between the ways in which different young Palestinians narrated the future. The imagined futures constructed in the interviews were incommensurable, which has implications for efforts to bring the occupation to an end; a desire that united the participants.

The views expressed in this thesis have been like a story of two halves united by the hardship of occupation that was at the centre of all of the participants' narratives, as seen in chapter four. The staunchly different positions of young Palestinian participants sometimes at the same universities gives an indication of just how complex it will be to find a solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict that is acceptable to the Palestinian people, let alone the Palestinians and Israelis. As Jeremy

Bowen argues in a package on Radio 4, 'Some Jewish settlers … believe that God gave the land to them and Islamists on the other side are a big part of Palestinian nationalism. If you think you're doing God's will, there isn't much room for negotiation,' (2014) which is the position of some of the participants in this research. However, the students expressed other contrasting views, including advocating compromises that they hoped would lead to a resolution of the conflict.

This research has contributed to the existing literature by focusing on the agency of young Palestinians and exploring how they chose to use the interview process to present their lives under occupation and get their messages across, messages that in different ways were about the need to bring an end to the occupation and about working to bring about a better future for the Palestinians. By exploring the students' narratives in this way it was much easier to see the participants as complex agents resisting the occupation in imaginative ways, rather than constructing them solely as victims of it.

Another way in which the research added to the existing body of literature was in bringing together diverse accounts of life under occupation and exploring conflicting narratives about the desired solution to the conflict and the best way to arrive at it. By exploring such contrasting narratives in the same piece of work it was possible to analyse both commonalities and differences in the students' approaches to telling their stories about life under occupation and how this related to their motivations for participating in the research.

When I conducted this research in June and July 2010 the Israeli navy had just stormed the Mavi Marmara ship that led the flotilla seeking to break the Israeli blockade and deliver aid to Gaza (Booth, 2010) and I started to interview participants fewer than eighteen months after the end of the 2008 to 2009 Gaza War in which some 1,400 Palestinians were killed (Thomson, 2011). This formed part of the backdrop against which the participants shaped their narratives. However, it has been five years since I conducted my research and this is, therefore, an important time to take stock of some of the national and international developments that have taken place since the summer of 2010 and to think about what they mean for the hopes expressed by the participants. In terms of developments in Israel and Palestine since I conducted my research, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict intensified once again with the 2014 Gaza war, when 2,104 Palestinians were killed and 108,000 people's homes were 'destroyed or severely damaged' (OCHA, 2014). This violence provoked anger and unrest in the West Bank and the situation got so tense that there was talk of the possibility of a new intifada (Sawafta, 2014). The war also led to international condemnation of Israel's actions (White, 2014) and numerous marches and demonstrations around the world (Khomami and Johnston, 2014).

After this latest war the United Nations Secretary General Ban Ki-moon said 'We must not lose sight of the root causes of the recent hostilities: a restrictive occupation that has lasted almost half a century, the continued denial of Palestinian rights and the lack of tangible progress in peace negotiations,' (Derfner, 2014). Following this latest war Sweden, the

UK, France and Spain voted to recognise the State of Palestine or to state that they will recognise it and Federica Mogherini, the Italian European Union foreign policy chief, said she wanted a Palestinian state to come into existence during her five-year term (Black, 2014). The votes to recognise Palestine followed the 2012 admission of Palestine to the United Nations General Assembly as a non-member observer state (United Nations, 2012).

Dramatic events since I conducted this research have shown how quickly the geopolitical landscape in the Middle East can change. The Middle East has been rocked by the revolutionary wave of 'anti-government protests, uprisings and armed rebellions' (Manfreda, 2015) commonly referred to as the 'Arab Spring', a term that has been much criticised 'for being inaccurate and simplistic,' (Manfreda, 2015). However, '[e]xuberant revolution has passed into economic malaise, political stagnation and, worst of all, horrendous violence' (Ramdani, 2012). In the subsequent civil war in Syria, more than 220,000 Syrians have died (Jones and Ahmed, 2015), more than nine million have had to leave their homes (BBCa, 2014) and the Sunni jihadist group ISIL, the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant, has risen to prominence. Some commentators argue that the recent uprisings in the Middle East and subsequent violence have drawn attention away from the Palestinian cause (Ramdani, 2012).

Taken as a whole the narratives shared by the participants in this research and the way in which they are presented here are designed to convey the idea that no one should be made to live through what the

Palestinians are subjected to under occupation. Through their participation in this research, many of the participants sought to encourage the international community to get involved in international movements to oppose the occupation, though some were opposed to foreign involvement for ideological and/or political reasons.

Given the failure of international movements significantly to improve the situation for Palestinians in Palestine or to bring an end to the occupation, it is not surprising that some of the participants were sceptical about the benefits of foreign involvement. Allan (2007, p.275) asks '[b]y documenting histories of violence and suffering in marginalized communities are we facilitating real change in people's lives? Or are we just easing our own consciences'?

Collins (2011, p.128) argues that 'identification with Palestine can be a shallow and highly romanticized attachment that does not stretch beyond the exercise of political fashion statements (e.g., wearing a *kufiya*)' or, I would argue, empty rhetoric in support of the Palestinian cause. Drawing on research with Palestinians in the Shatila camp in Lebanon, Allan (2007) argues that '[t]he expectation that increased interest on the part of the international community will lead to intervention or beneficent action on their behalf is being replaced by a perception that these encounters amount to little more than empty talk' (Allan, 2007: 274). In this context, it is arguably surprising that so many participants drew hope from the idea that they were encouraging foreigners to resist by sharing their stories.

In *Palestine* Joe Sacco, a graphic novelist, depicts an encounter between himself and a mother in a refugee camp in Gaza, with Sameh (a volunteer social worker who hosted him there) translating:

> She asks, what good is it to talk to you?
>
> Huh?
>
> She says she's been interviewed before, even Israeli TV interviewed her. She's used to it.
>
> She wants to know how talking to you is going to help her. We don't want money, she says, we want our land, our humanity (Sacco, 2003, p.242).

A little later, 'how are words going to change things? She says she wants to see action,' (Sacco, 2003, p.243). In thinking about what good it was for the Palestinian university students to talk to me and whether words are going to change things, I would argue that on its own, this research can only hope to make 'a very small difference,' (Malek, 2015). However, as Malek (2015) said, 'there's a lot of work coming out now…Maybe all of it will come together to form one big voice,' and people will 'start to have a more nuanced view.' For the participants like Rami, whose comments are at the very start of this thesis, this is an important source of hope.

Nonetheless, given the extent of the injustice to which the Palestinians are subjected under Israeli occupation, the power imbalance between the Palestinians and the Israelis, the central role the UK, France and US have played in creating and/or perpetuating the conflict and the complicity of many European governments, the European Union (Short,

2011) and the US government, the faith that a number of the participants had in foreigners seems unwarranted.

Clare Short (2011) has highlighted the European Union's failure to hold Israel to account for its actions. She argues that the European Union took no action despite the International Court of Justice's advisory opinion that 'the route of the Separation Wall and the existence of the settlements were in complete breach of international law,' just as it did nothing following other reports of 'grave breaches of international law.' Furthermore, Short argues that 'EU assistance relieves Israel of its duties under international law to provide humanitarian relief within territories it occupies and has been instead used to subsidize the ever-worsening effects of the occupation,' (Short, 2011). She argues that we must conclude that

> [I]t is time for people across the European Union to hold the EU to account for what is being done in our name, with our money. Current policy is guilty of gross double standards and clearly breaches EU claims to stand for human rights, democracy and the rule of law (Short, 2011).

Angela Davis, the renowned African American activist and scholar whose release and subsequent acquittal for first degree murder was in part the result of a mass liberation movement, said 'It's important to retain that sense that it is possible to win what often appear to be insurmountable victories if we create the kinds of communities of resistance and communities of struggle that we were able to create there,' (2014). Some of the participants in this research highlighted the global

anti-apartheid movement as an example of what is possible when people around the world work together against injustice and argue that this is what is needed in Palestine.

Towards the end of writing up this thesis I emailed the 16 participants who shared their email addresses with me. Three of my emails were not delivered, some of the students did not reply and Ahlam, with whom I am connected on a variety of social media, read my message, but did not respond. However, two participants did reply: Rami, whose epigraph is at the start of the introduction, and Wadee'. Both men said that the situation in Palestine had worsened, but that was the only point on which they agreed.

Rami said he now lives and works for a multinational management consultancy firm in Dubai following a scholarship to study for a Masters in the United Arab Emirates, but he cannot imagine living the rest of his life anywhere but Palestine. I asked about his hopes and expectations for the Palestinian cause and he said he hopes for 'freedom of the land and people,' but he has no expectations 'as the situation is getting worse and worse.' It has been a year since he last visited Palestine, but he said 'from what I hear from my parents, it's not getting better at all.' Rami's sobering remarks echo Sultan's comments five years earlier that 'it's getting worse day by day'.

Rami said that taking part in this research 'opened my eyes to the fact that there are people out there thinking about the Palestinian cause and interested in studying and helping us.' He said 'I see some light at the end of the tunnel from the people (internationals) I met in Palestine, they

are really doing lots of protests and demonstrations to support the Palestinian cause.' It is poignant that he considers the efforts of internationals in Palestine to be 'light at the end of the tunnel' given how little they have managed to achieve, particularly as Rami has left Palestine since I first met him and the situation in Palestine is deteriorating.

However, Wadee' who still lives in Palestine and works as an administrative manager and researcher at a consultancy firm, said he does not engage with internationals regarding Palestine. He was disparaging about the international community, saying that it is as neo-liberal as its economy. 'Nice big words empty of content; states without sovereignty, economic growth without jobs, and "rights" without justice.' After the interview Wadee' was arrested again and incarcerated for about a year. He subsequently did an MA in Sociology and Social anthropology in a European country. When I mentioned that some of the other participants had seen their participation in the research as resistance, he was adamant that it was 'in no way resistance' and said 'I don't know what some of the people you interviewed were smoking ;)[17]'.

Unlike Rami, Wadee' said the research did not have any effect on him. However, like Rami, he said the situation in Palestine is worse than it was in the summer of 2010 when I conducted the interviews. He said 'the regional environment has changed a lot as well. A very big fear now is ISIS.' While Wadee' said he hopes for a one-state solution 'based on the right of return of Palestinian refugees, redistribution of land and wealth,

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[17] These symbols ";)" are meat to signify a winking smiley face.

and equal citizenship,' he said that he sees it 'as not being very possible' and foresees 'more bloodshed and wars coming.'

The participants in both 2010 and 2015 highlighted the hardship and oppressiveness of life under Israeli occupation and described the situation as deteriorating. Taken together, what was particularly powerful about their narratives was the contrasting ways in which they conceived of the conflict and their different approaches to resolving it. What was important for many of the participants was maintaining a sense of hope, the strongest sources of which were Islam or their ability to inspire internationals to support the Palestinian cause. I do not think the participants who drew hope from these sources were naïve about the short-term prospects for a solution to the conflict, rather in drawing on and sustaining these sources of hope they were better able to 'get by' (Allen, 2008) and endure the daily humiliations and injustices of life under occupation.

Table 1: List of participants

Participant Pseudonym	Age/ Year of Study	University	Subject	Main Interview Language
Ahlam	21	An-Najah	Business Management	English
Ahmad	23	Birzeit	Civil Engineering	Arabic
Aisha	21	Birzeit	English Literature	English
Fatima	I.N.A.	Birzeit	I.N.A.	Arabic
Husam	20	Birzeit	Accounting	Arabic
Kareem	4th Year	Birzeit	English Literature	Arabic
Khaled	21	An-Najah	Computer Engineering	Arabic
Lateefa	24	Al-Quds Open University	Business Administration	Arabic
Manar	3rd Year	An-Najah	Law	Arabic
Mohamed Hosen	25	Birzeit	Islamic History of the Arabs	Arabic
Montaser	22	Birzeit	English Literature and Translation	English
Muhammad	3rd Year	An-Najah	Engineering	Arabic
Muhaned	20	Birzeit	Trade	Arabic
Muslima	2nd Year	Birzeit	Physics	Arabic
Nada	20 (nearly 21)	Birzeit	English and marketing	English
Najma	2nd Year	Birzeit	English Literature	Arabic
Nimr	1st Year	An-Najah	Economics	Arabic
Noor	Withdrew from participation during a joint interview with Muhaned.			
Nour Ahmad	Final Year	Birzeit	Sociology	Arabic
Rami	21	An-Najah	Computer Engineering	English
Ramz	4th Year	Birzeit	Sociology and Translating	Arabic
Salwa	4th Year	Birzeit	English	Arabic
Sami*	27	Birzeit graduate	English Language and Literature	English
Sarah	I.N.A.	Birzeit	I.N.A.	Arabic
Sultan	20	Birzeit	Nursing	English
Wadee'	**	Birzeit	Sociology	English
Yousef	4th Year	Birzeit	Sociology	Arabic
Zahra	I.N.A.	Birzeit	I.N.A.	Arabic

I.N.A.: Information not available

* Sami participated in a pilot study in London.

** I have not included Wadee''s year or his age for his security.

I have not included the areas in which the participants live in this table so

as not to make them identifiable and therefore potentially vulnerable. In

the chapters I have included the names of the students' towns or cities,

however I have not included the names of the small villages that some of the participants lived in to avoid potentially making them identifiable. I do not have the ages or subject studied of the three young women who participated in a joint interview together: Fatima, Sarah and Zahra.

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Table 2: Transcription conventions

<words>	Indicates that participants have switched from the main interview language (either Arabic or English) to English or Arabic.
<<words>>	Indicates that the participant has switched to Hebrew from the main interview language.
word [^]	Indicates up-speak.
Word	Indicates a stressed word.
wo-	Indicates that a word is cut off.
[words]	Provides additional information about what participants are doing, such as: coughs, long pauses, half laughs.
((words))	Shows words I have added to facilitate understanding of a phrase.
[text omitted]	Indicates that some of the narrative has been omitted.
...	Indicates a short pause or that speech trails off.
Words	Indicates that the speech/recording was unclear.

Interviewing in Arabic

I conducted most of the interviews in Arabic, having studied Arabic and Modern Middle Eastern Studies for my first degree from 2000 to 2004. As I was not very familiar with the colloquial Palestinian dialect, I mainly spoke in fusha, a highfalutin register that differs from the language the participants spoke in their daily lives. Immediately this distanced me from the participants. Some of them changed their register to meet mine and others continued to speak in colloquial Palestinian Arabic. Another aspect of conducting the interviews in Arabic was the fact that my Arabic was rusty and I sometimes spoke with grammatical errors, which were apparent when I listened to the recordings of the interviews. Sometimes the participants corrected my Arabic and occasionally I had to ask what they meant, which interrupted the flow of the interviews at times. In a few of the interviews I spoke Arabic throughout, but the participants switched repeatedly between Arabic and English.

Glossary

Administrative detention is 'detention without charge or trial that is authorized by administrative order rather than by judicial decree,' (B'Tselem, 2014a).

An-Najah National University is a university in the West Bank city of Nablus.

Al-Aqsa intifada, which is also known as the second intifada, was the second Palestinian uprising against the illegal Israeli occupation. The uprising, which began in September 2000, is named after the al-Aqsa mosque, which is located in the Haram al-Sharif in East Jerusalem where the uprising started after what was seen by many Palestinians as a provocative visit from the then Israeli opposition leader Ariel Sharon.

Al-'awda literally means 'the return'. It is often used in the phrase 'ḥaqq al-'awda', or 'the right of return,' which refers to the Palestinian right to return to the lands they were expelled from or fled in the *Nakba,* or catastrophe, of 1948 and subsequently.

Birzeit University is a university in the West Bank town of Birzeit.

Checkpoints in Palestine are barriers erected by the Israeli military so that it can control and restrict both the movement of Palestinians in the West Bank and their access to Israel.

Fataḥ (Ḥarakat al-Taḥrīr al-Waṭanī al-Filasṭīnī) is the 'Palestine National Liberation Movement', the Palestinian political party that is the largest in the multi-party Palestinian Liberation Organization.

The First intifada was a popular Palestinian uprising against the Israeli occupation that began in the West Bank and Gaza in 1987.

Hamas (*Ḥarakat al-Muqāwama al-Islāmiyya*) is the Islamic resistance movement, a Palestinian organisation and political party.

Ḥaram al-Sharīf (the noble sanctuary), also known as the Temple Mount, is the religious site in Jerusalem's Old City that houses the al-Aqsa Mosque, the Dome of the Rock and the Dome of the Chain.

Hebron is the second largest city in the West Bank and 'the only West Bank city with Jewish settlements inside its urban area,' (Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, 2005).

The Nakba literally means 'the catastrophe'. It refers to the 'dispossession of the Palestinians caused by the creation of the State of Israel' in 1948 (Cohn-Sherbok and El-Alami, 2009). Some scholars argue that the Nakba did not end in 1948, but rather continues into the present (for example, Ali, 2013; Massad, 2008).

The Naksa literally means the 'setback' or 'relapse'. It refers to 'the expulsion of Palestinians from [sic] West Bank, eastern Jerusalem and Gaza during the 1967 war. It also marks the beginning of Israel's illegal military occupation of these territories,' (BADIL, 2004).

The occupation, or the Israeli occupation, refers to the State of Israel's occupying of the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, the Gaza Strip and much of the Golan Heights since the Six-Day War of 1967.

The Oslo Accords were an agreement between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) brokered by Norway in 1993. Under the terms of the agreement the PLO and Israel recognised each other.

The Palestinian Authority (PA), or Palestinian National Authority (PNA) (as-Sulṭa al-Waṭanīya al-Filasṭīnīya) was established in 1994 as a consequence of the Oslo Accords. It was set up to govern the Palestinian Administered Territories as an administrative entity in charge of public safety, education, public health and utilities.

The Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) was founded in 1964 to liberate Palestine.

Politicide of the Palestinian people is the term Baruch Kimmerling (2002) uses to describe 'the gradual but systematic attempt to cause their annihilation as an independent political and social entity'.

Precarity is defined by Butler (2009b, ii) as the 'politically induced condition of maximized vulnerability and exposure for populations exposed to arbitrary state violence and to other forms of aggression that are not enacted by states and against which states do not offer adequate protection'.

Qalqilya is a Palestinian town in the West Bank that has been almost entirely surrounded by the Wall that Israel has built in the West Bank.

Rāmallāh is a West Bank city that serves as Palestine's de facto administrative capital.

The Second intifada (see al-Aqsa Intifada).

Settlements in the context of Israel and Palestine are Israeli communities illegally constructed on land Israel occupied in the Six-Day War of 1967. The settlements violate the Fourth Geneva Convention, which prohibits occupying powers from moving their nationals into occupied territories.

Settlers in Palestine are Israelis who live in illegal Israeli settlements.

The Six-Day War refers to the war between Israel and the Egyptian, Syrian and Jordanian armies that took place from June 5 to 10 in 1967. 'Israel captured the West Bank from Jordan, the Gaza Strip and Sinai Peninsula from Egypt, and the Golan Heights from Syria,' (Beinin and Hajjar, 2014, p.6).

Spacio-cide is Sari Hanafi's (2004) argument that Israel is targeting the space in which Palestinians live in order to make the 'voluntary' 'transfer' of the Palestinian population inevitable.

Stun grenades are non-lethal explosive devices that produce a blinding flash of light and an extremely loud noise in order to temporarily disorient those subjected to them.

Sumūd means steadfastness. It describes a strategy of Palestinians opposing the occupation by stubbornly and steadfastly remaining on their land.

A Sūra is a chapter of the Qur'an.

Umma means community. It refers to the worldwide community of Muslims.

Urbicide is a term Stephen Graham (2002) uses to explain 'the deliberate denial or killing of the city – the systematic destruction of the modern urban home'.

The Wall is a contested term used to describe the barrier that Israel has built through the West Bank 'to separate Jewish settlements and Israeli cities from Palestinian towns and villages' (Weizman, 2007, p.161). The Wall has annexed Palestinian land and created sealed enclaves of some West Bank towns. It comprises '8-metre-high concrete slabs, electronic fences, barbed wire, radar, cameras, deep trenches, observation posts and patrol roads' (Weizman, 2007, p.161).

Short timeline of the occupation

Rather than attempting to reproduce the numerous texts that have been written on the Israeli occupation of Palestine, this brief preface seeks only to provide a timeline of some of the key facts of Palestinian history that are essential for an understanding of the narratives that follow. Palestinian history is dealt with extensively in a rich body of works by scholars including: Kimmerling and Joel Migdal (2003); Rashid Khalidi (2007); Pappe (2006); Said (2003) and Avi Shlaim (2009).

1917 Lord Arthur Balfour, then British Foreign Minister, issued the Balfour Declaration that promised that Britain would 'support the establishment of a national home for the Jewish people in Palestine' (Shlaim, 2009, p.4).

1920 Britain obtained a mandate over territory that included Palestine from the League of Nations.

1936 Between 1936 and 1939 Palestinian Arabs revolted against British rule in mandatory Palestine in what Arabs call the Great Revolt.

1947 In February the British government decided to hand the Palestine mandate to the United Nations, which succeeded the League of Nations.

On November 29 the United Nations General Assembly voted to partition Palestine into one Arab state and one Jewish state. The plan was rejected by the Arabs of Palestine, the Arab states and the Arab League.

It led to civil war between the Arabs and Jews in Palestine.

1948 Britain set May as the date for the end of its mandate.

On May 15 the 'Zionist leaders proclaimed the State of Israel' (Beinin and Hajjar, 2014, p.5).

Forces from Egypt, Syria, Jordan and Iraq invaded Israel claiming they sought to protect Palestine, but Israel's armed forces were superior and they seized territory beyond the land included in the Jewish state in the partition plan (Beinin and Hajjar, 2014). Due to the fighting between 1947 and 1949 more than 700,000 Palestinians became refugees.

1967 June 5-10 the Six-Day War between Israel and the Egyptian, Syrian and Jordanian armies took place. Israel captured the Golan Heights from Syria, the Sinai Peninsula and Gaza Strip from Egypt and the West Bank from Jordan (Beinin and Hajjar, 2014).

June 27 Israel annexes East Jerusalem.

November 22, The United Nations Security Council issued Resolution 242, which stated that the following principles should be applied:

'(i) Withdrawal of Israel armed forces from territories occupied in the recent conflict;

(ii) Termination of all claims or states of belligerency and respect for and acknowledgment of the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of every State in the area and their right to live in peace within secure and recognized boundaries free from

threats or acts of force' (United Nations Security Council, 1967). The resolution also affirmed the necessity '[f]or achieving a just settlement of the refugee problem,' (United Nations Security Council, 1967).

1973 From October 6-26 there was the October War. Egyptian and Syrian forces attacked Israeli forces in the Sinai Peninsula and the Golan Heights.

1987 In December the first intifada began. Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza started a popular uprising against the Israeli occupation (Beinin and Hajjar, 2014).

1993 On September 13 the Oslo Accords were signed by the Israelis and Palestinians, signifying the Palestine Liberation Organisation's 'recognition of the State of Israel and its right to exist; Israel's recognition of the PLO as representative of the Palestinian people; and the two sides' agreement to resolve all their outstanding differences by peaceful means,' (Shlaim, 2009, xii).

2000 In September Ariel Sharon visited Haram al-Sharif where al-Aqsa mosque is located, sparking al-Aqsa intifada.

2002 Israel began to construct the Wall in the West Bank.

2005 In August Israel withdrew from the Gaza Strip.

2007 Israel began its land, air and sea blockade of the Gaza Strip.

2008 From December 27, 2008 to January 18, 2009, Israel carried out its

Operation Cast Lead attack on the Gaza Strip. This resulted in

1391 Palestinian deaths, including 759 Palestinians who were not

involved in the hostilities (B'Tselem, 2014b). In the conflict

Palestinian groups fired rockets into Israel, killing three civilians

and a member of the security forces. Excluding deaths caused by

Israeli soldiers accidentally shooting each other, five soldiers were

killed in the Gaza Strip (B'Tselem, 2014b). 2014 July 8-August 26

Israel carried out its 'Operation Protective Edge', bombarding Gaza

and carrying out ground attacks. Hamas and Islamic Jihad fired

rockets into Israel. In the conflict more than 2,200 people were

killed, most of them Gazans.

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