AUTHENTICITY AND HYBRIDITY IN ALIENATION: NATIONAL IDENTITY IN THE PALESTINIAN DIASPORA

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Abstract

This study investigates the space in which Palestinian identity in the diaspora is formed and where moments of plurality emerge. By focusing on the Palestinian community in Canada, this study interrogates the processes of national identity formation and the achievement of belonging. The study utilizes empirical research in the form of interviews as well as the existing literature on the study of nationalism and identity to conduct a qualitative analysis of Palestinian national identity in the diaspora today. It thus demonstrates that the Palestinian identity is one that is intrinsically dual, with both essential and plural identities that are constructed and negotiated within a social matrix, and that incorporate national ideologies, collective memories, and cultural identities in the creation of a Palestinian nationality. In doing so, the study addresses a lack of scholarship on the identity formation in third generation Palestinian exiles, and illustrates the parameters of the ongoing Palestinian condition of statelessness.

Key Words: Palestinian, Stateless, Diaspora, Nationalism, National Identity, Cultural Identity, Nakba

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This paper is dedicated to my late grandfather, Dr. Burhan Dajani, whose endless contributions and lifelong dedication to the Palestinian cause left behind an inspiring legacy of perseverance and an undying hope for the return of Palestine.

"He says: I am from there, I am from here,
but I am neither there nor here.

CONTENTS

Chapter 1. Introduction

National identity is often understood to be composed of a combination of essential and imagined qualities. It is both an inherited and a deliberately chosen process of identification that undergoes significant changes in one lifetime. In the millennium of hyper-globalization and the steady dissolve of state power and borders, nationhood and national identities are acquiring a new kind of fluidity that has shifted the understanding of national identity from the traditional essential model. This process has resulted in the constitution of hybrid national identities that encompass aspects of a global imagined community with highly permeable internal borders between different cultures and nations. However, these changes are not as seamless nor as inclusive as they at first appear to be, and greatly impact the ways nationalism is conceived of in many societies today.

This thesis paper will focus on the space and discourses in which Palestinian national identity in the diaspora today is formed, what influences its development, and how it becomes a definitive and significant identity. The purpose of this research is to provide a clearer understanding of what being Palestinian today means, as Palestinian nationalism remains a controversial question under the scrutiny of global society. Furthermore, it is the goal of this study to provide a framework and launch pad for further research into the identities of various fragments of Palestinian communities in the world in order to provide evidence for the importance of the Right of Return and the need for repatriation of Palestinians worldwide.

Due to the severe fragmentation and dispersal of the Palestinian community since the Arab-Israeli war of 1948 and the continued conflict that has prevented Palestinians from achieving statehood, Palestinian identity in the diaspora subsists in a unique space where it is

contained and shaped by the forces of displacement, statelessness, and invisibility. By looking

at the Palestinian community in Canada, this study will begin to interrogate the parameters of

this space in which Palestinian identity is formed, in order to

- locate instances of plurality and/or hybridity in the Palestinian identity in the diaspora,
- understand how these instances arise, and what factors influence self-identification within the Palestinian collective identity, and thus to
- better understand how and why a distinct and prominent "Palestinian" national identity still exists within communities that are "stateless" – without a nation or "home".

Furthermore, this study will engage with the existing scholarship on the subjects of identity,

nationalism, memory, diaspora, and citizenship and performance in order to provide a more

meaningful understanding of the Palestinian condition.

Method

The methodology of this study was based on qualitative analysis of phenomenological

interviewing of five Palestinian young adults, where participants were asked the question "How

do you respond when someone asks where you're from?" and largely allowed to direct the

conversation following. The interviews included questions on inherited nationalities,

citizenship, memories, and utilized symbols and images of Palestinian culture to generate

discussion. In addition, bilingual interviewing allowed participants the choice and opportunity

to respond in Arabic, thus providing insight into what parts of their identity they feel are rooted

in their native language – what parts they feel they need to express in Arabic – and how they

perform their identity through their language. Purposive sampling was used, where the ideal

participants were considered to be of Palestinian descent who would have either personally

carried "stateless" status or have had close family members who did. The participants chosen

for the study were between the ages of 18-30, as it was considered important that the participants selected provide their own understandings of themselves and the ways they self-identify. Therefore, Palestinian young adults who were not too young to clearly articulate their perceptions were considered ideal for the research. In addition, young adults were considered more suited to this study as they represent the future of Palestine to and within their communities. Expectations of this age group are therefore high, and performance of distinctive identities among this Palestinian generation is thus more tangibly prominent.

Furthermore, young adults who constitute their family's third generation in exile were selected – ideally descendant from 1948 historic Palestine, whose grandparents were displaced, and whose parents were born in exile. The selection of this demographic is key, as it provides insight into a community where statelessness has been inherited over the course of generations for the past 65 years, and so provides a rich representation of the issues of authenticity and hybridity in national identities. Moreover, it is imperative that this sample be considered and understood in studies of Palestine, as 1948 Palestinians are most often ignored, avoided, and forgotten in the general representations of Palestinians and in all peace negotiation processes. In the mainstream discourses, 1967 has become the marker of Palestinian refugees, and it is only the 1967 refugees and borders that are often legally contested, leaving 1948 Palestinians unrepresented, "stateless," and invisible. Not only does this color their experiences differently from the rest of the Palestinian community, it also makes it doubly important to give voice to their situations in order to elucidate their demands for the Right of Return.

Finally, once the interviews were conducted and transcribed, they were analyzed through a process of interpretation where themes were extracted from the language cues, repeated words, common experiences, etc. that emerged from the interviews. These themes thus answered the questions of how frequently plurality is expressed, what the most prominent influences on feelings of belonging are, how collective and post-memories are expressed and referenced, and how national identity is expressed and performed. These themes were then further analyzed through the lens of the existing literature on the topics of nationalism, memory, diaspora, and citizenship and performance in order to unpack Palestinian identity and better understand how it is produced. The goal of this analysis has been to understand where and how a balance between authenticity and hybridity is achieved in the Palestinian identity, and through this understanding, this thesis will outline the ways Palestinian identity is shaped in the diaspora and how a people without a "homeland" constitute a nation that is both fixed in its historic specificity and is fluid in its plurality of experience.

Participant Profiles

For the purposes of this study, a diverse sample of Palestinians in exile was chosen for interviews. The sample consists of five participants, three of whom are women and two are men. Of these five, four participants are classified as Palestinian refugees as per the definition stipulated by the United Nations Relief Works Agency (UNRWA). All five participants carry Canadian citizenship as well as other documentation, and have received undergraduate or higher level education in Canada. None of the participants interviewed ever lived in refugee camps, yet all have had ties to Arab nations surrounding the Palestinian territories. In addition, the participants interviewed fall into the upper-middle-class echelons of society, and have thus

been privileged enough to avoid the poverty and dissolution of life in the camps, and whose

families have had the opportunities to integrate into other societies and achieve successful re-

settlement. As a result, the identification processes for this sample differ from the typical

identifications of Palestinian refugees suffering from the varied deprivations of camp life.

The participants also come from a variety of backgrounds, having lived in Jordan, Syria,

the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Palestinian territories, and Canada; and with most of them

having experienced at least one instance of migration and relocation. Furthermore, as the

study's aim is to investigate the space in which Palestinians in exile form their national

identities, four of the participants selected constitute their families' third generation in exile,

representing the generation of the majority of the estimated 5 million refugees worldwide. This

generational distance from the Nakba[1] and the refugee camps is vital to the sample, as it

delineates the possibilities for choice and plurality that are available to such Palestinians and

how those possibilities become interwoven with their Palestinian identities. In addition, two of

the participants interviewed are Christian, whereas the other three are Muslims. These

denominations of faith represent the variety of the Palestinian nation's religious groups, and

also influence the degree of identification and belonging to the Palestinian versus other

communities achieved by the participants. All participants selected understand and speak

Arabic to varying degrees of fluency and have engaged with the Palestinian communities in

Canada and elsewhere in attempts to reconnect with their roots.

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[1] *Nakba* (Arabic: نكبة) meaning "catastrophe," is the Arabic term used in reference to the Arab-Israeli war of 1948.

Kismet[2] (Female, 26 – 8 years in Canada): is a Syrian-Palestinian whose father's family originated from historic Palestine, but moved to Syria two generations prior to 1948 and gained Syrian citizenship. Her mother's family descends from Jaffa, Palestine, but moved to the West Bank after the Nakba, and from there to permanently reside as refugees in Syria. Her parents later moved to the UAE for career opportunities, eventually immigrating to Canada in time for her entrance to university at the age of 18. She is now a Ph.D. Candidate in Cell and Systems Biology, and carries both Syrian and Canadian passports.

Carla (Female, 23 – 23 years in Canada): is a Jordanian-Palestinian whose mother's family escaped to the West Bank and from there to Jordan during the Nakba. Her father's family originates from the 1948 Palestinian territories, yet remained in their homes after the Nakba and were therefore granted Israeli citizenship. However, they eventually moved to Jordan due to the severity of the ostracism in their communities in the occupied territories, and from there, her parents immigrated to Canada. Born in Jordan yet raised in Montreal, she carries both Jordanian and Canadian passports and is currently a M.Sc. Candidate in Dietetics and Human Nutrition.

Haya (Female, 24 – 15 years in Canada): is a Jordanian-Palestinian whose family originated from Jaffa, Palestine. Her mother's family left Palestine during the Nakba to Beirut, Lebanon, and from there to Kuwait and eventually to Amman, Jordan. Her father's family escaped to Syria, and from there relocated to Jordan as well, where she was later born. With a B. Com. in International Relations, she has lived in Canada since the age of 9 and carries both Jordanian and Canadian passports.

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[2] For the protection of the participants' confidentiality in this study, their real names have been withheld and substituted with pseudonyms that reflect their cultures and backgrounds.

Ayman (Male, 21 – 11 years in Canada): is an undergraduate student of Law and Society, and a Palestinian refugee whose family on both sides originated from 1948 Palestinian territories and escaped to refugee camps in Lebanon after the Nakba. Born and raised in the UAE, he immigrated with his family to Canada at the age of 10, and had carried Lebanese issued Travel Documents until receiving Canadian citizenship.

Haitham (Male, 29 – 16 years in Canada): is a Palestinian from Gaza whose family lived in the UAE before relocating to Canada for 5 years when at the age of 8, returning to the UAE for high school, and moving back again to Canada at the age of 18 for university. With a B.A. in Psychology and Political Science, he carries both Canadian and Palestinian passports, yet is prevented from returning to the Gaza Strip due to the blockade in effect by the Israeli authorities.

The Existing Literature: Nationalism and Identity Studies

Nationalism & Authenticity

Nationalism, according to Benedict Anderson, is developed through the shared ideologies and hegemonies of people who need not know each other, but who have a shared consciousness or image of their nation. Anderson argues that a nation "is an imagined political community – and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign. It is imagined because the members of even the smallest nations will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives an image of their community". (6) Hence, due to the conceptual nature of imagined communities, the rupture between the image and the essentializing notions of fate and the body adds fluid dimensions to the concept of nationalism. Rather than limiting nationality and membership to a set of bodily characteristics – ethnicity, ancestry, historic presence, etc. – it allows the concept of nationalism to become a pliable construction of an image that is determined by the members of that imagined community, and thus can be inclusive or exclusive, hierarchical or horizontal, fatalistic or self-determined.

Therefore, nationalism can be understood as a composite of the political ideologies that shape its imagined communities and the essentializing ideologies of ancestry and genealogy that are inherent in the notion of nationhood and that play a major role in defining those imagined communities. It is simultaneously an inclusive imagined community that provides the space for ideological affiliation and an essentializing and fatalistic reality in which membership is reliant on ancestry and genealogy. Hence, in the development of a cohesive national image, it is the surrounding circumstances and forces that determine which set of characteristics acquire

greater value in the shaping of a national image – and, consequently, the selection of its members – at a specific place and time. The concept of democracy for instance implies a greater emphasis on the self-deterministic values to nationhood, providing an opportunity for belonging that is a matter of choice rather than fate. However, in instances of hardship and crisis, national values tend to revert to fatalistic values of fraternity based on ancestral ties and ethnic purity. Nationalism thus becomes a matter of interpretation that is dependent on the contexts of where different particular commonalities become most prominent.

Spaces in Diaspora: Home, Borders, and Belonging

Paul Gilroy writes that diaspora "identifies a relational network, characteristically produced by forced dispersal and reluctant scattering. It is not just a movement through purposive, desperate movement is integral to it. Push factors like war, famine, enslavement, ethnic cleansing, conquest and political repression, are a dominant influence". (318) Distinguishing between diaspora as a form of forced displacement as opposed to other forms of nomadism – such as travelers and tourists, émigrés, migrant workers, settlers, etc. – is therefore key in understanding the Palestinian condition. With the forced displacement of Palestinians came a colonial force of deliberate and systematic erasure. As such, the diaspora of the stateless Palestinian refugees is fundamentally tied to its history of ethnic cleansing. As a result, Palestinian identity in the diaspora is in a de facto struggle for self-actualization and reaffirmation of its essence and its distinctive boundaries.

In his examination of borders and belonging, David Morley writes that "[i]t is at the boundary, where territorial control is, in fact, least secure that it is likely to be asserted all the more hysterically". (221) The implications of "boundaries" on the Palestinian identity are

therefore considerable. The lack of autonomy that defines their cultural boundaries with their host countries' challenges the Palestinian identity in multiple ways – the "statelessness" of Palestinians in the diaspora marks them as without origin, without past, and without culture, thus rendering their Palestinian-ness invisible and replaceable in the cultural landscape of their new homes. However, Morley also argues that understanding "home" as static undermines the possibilities for plurality and hybridity, as "the more strongly someone holds an image of Heimat [home] as something necessarily stable and unchanging, the more likely they are to be hostile to newcomers". (220) This creates a need for reaffirmation of the Palestinian "authentic" and universal identity that has been legally erased, thus leading to an even stronger desire to distinctively define and cement that "authentic". However, due to the severe fragmentation of the Palestinian community, the grounding of "authentic" ideals of the Palestinian "home" remains elusive. Consequently, the assertion and solidification of the Palestinian identity and "home" in its past conditions and image becomes a highly valued ideal and signifier of authenticity, and deviance from that historically rooted ideal less and less welcome. It is here, then, that collective and post-memory become salient contributors to the identification process with a Palestinian nation and "home".

Memory – The Image from the Past

A cursory look at Palestinians in the diaspora reveals that memories rather than a country have become their inheritance, and continue to act as substitutes for their unattainable national homeland. The importance of memory to the Palestinian identity is therefore fundamental – the rupture between homeland and people permanently relocated "Palestine" from its tangible physical land to the cognitive imaginary of its people, and severed all

communication between the two. As a result, "Palestine" necessarily exists in the collective memory of Palestinians in the diaspora, as there is no other means of access to it. This rupture thus features as a key moment in the Palestinian memory. In his article "The Past in the Present: Culture and the Transmission of Memory" Ron Eyerman writes that "cultural trauma refers to a dramatic loss of identity and meaning, a tear in the social fabric, affecting a group of people who have achieved some degree of cohesion ... [so that] collective identity formation, which is intimately linked with collective memory, may be grounded in loss and crisis, as well as in triumph". (160) The Palestinian Nakba thus represents the cultural trauma from which Palestinian identity emerged.

Memory, however, is a construction – whether cognitive or tangible – that mutates and degrades as time progresses, thus changing the relations of trust between histories, memories, and cultures. This becomes highly significant in the case of collective memory, where memories are shaped into narratives and identities in and of themselves to which communities can relate. Here, the narrative aspect of memory then offers the cornerstone against which belonging and membership in a collective is measured. Yet memory can never be a fixed absolute due to its very changing nature – particularly as it disperses throughout, and is adopted by, entire communities. As a result, "post-memory," which can be understood as "a hybrid form of memory that distinguishes itself from personal memory by generational distance and from history by a deep personal connection," (Goertz 33) emerges as the means for relation and belonging within the newer generations of the Palestinian community.

Post-memory differs from collective memory in that it changes the dynamic of power between collective and individual memory. Whereas in collective memory "individual memory

is conceived as [a] derivative of collective memory," (Eyerman 161) in post-memory, the

generational distance allows for the incorporation of personal experience, education, cultural

exchange, etc. into the narratives of collective and individual memory. This allows for individual

memory to match and compete with collective memory in the formation of identity, thus

challenging the universality of the collective "authentic" memory by providing individual

memory the room for growth independently of the decaying memories of its prior generations.

As a result, post-memory offers a divergence from collective memory and collective identity

into individual and particular identity, thus heightening the fragmentation of Palestinian

identity and adding to its plurality in the diaspora.

Citizenship and Performance

If nationalism is composed of an imagined community in which the image or concept of

a nation is constructed from its territorial connections, its cultural identity, and its ideologies

and hegemonies, then the space in which these components' values to the national identity is

negotiated is vital in understanding the ways in which nationalisms are created and

disseminated. Habermas's notion of a public sphere depicts a space in which equal and

informed engagement is practiced through the medium of deliberative discourse, by providing

a space that allows "citizens [to] deliberate about their common affairs, and hence [is] an

institutionalized arena of discursive interaction". (Fraser 110) This public sphere therefore

provides a forum within which the parameters of a nation's identity are negotiated, challenged,

and defined. As a result, understanding how the dynamics of this space affect the building of

nationalism within an imagined community's consciousness is necessary for understanding how

effective nationality can be achieved.

Furthermore, the translation of a nationalism from the imagination of its community to a lived condition necessitates the creation of measurable modes of belonging. Membership in a nation's collective identity thus becomes translated into various modes of citizenship. Similar to conceptual membership in a national imagined community, citizenship requires the reflection of the nation's image, yet it differs in that it necessitates the internalization of a national image, as well as the performance of its markers. Citizenship thus entails "a set of rights both claimed by and bestowed upon all members of a political community ... in which the content and scope of *claimed* rights for protection, recognition, provision, etc., on the one hand, and the content of rights that are *recognised* as legitimate by the state and effectively *sanctioned* on the other, may differ". (Pakulski 73, emphasis in original) As a result, citizenship simultaneously requires knowledge of and affiliation to a nation's imagined community, as well as the performance of its values in order to achieve recognized belonging. Thus, Pierre Bourdieu's concept of "cultural capital" as the embodied, objectified, and institutionalized markers of cultural identity, in addition to the tacit knowledges that dictate the citizenship role, become necessary requirements for the achievement of effective citizenship.

In the case of Palestinian communities outside the West Bank and Gaza, these dynamics significantly affect national and cultural identities. The statelessness of Palestinians and their resulting affiliations to other countries thus lead to dual and plural nationalities. Palestinians resort to carrying various citizenships – US, Canadian, European, Australian, etc. – in order to survive in a highly globalized economy where the lack of a passport means negligible opportunities for survival and success. The dispersal of Palestinians into foreign nations and cultures thus creates a multitude of national and cultural citizenships within the collective

Palestinian community. This adds various layers of competing national identities to the

Palestinian identity that overlap and possibly overwhelm it. As a result, the integration of

Palestinians into host communities in terms of their official and cultural citizenships plays a

large role in framing and contesting their "authentic" Palestinian identities.

Modern Palestinian History: A Timeline

The contemporary history of the Palestinians turns on a key date: 1948. That year, a country and its people disappeared from maps and dictionaries ... 'The Palestinian people does not exist', said the new masters, and henceforth the Palestinians would be referred to by general, conveniently vague terms, as either 'refugees', or in the case of a small minority that had managed to escape the generalized expulsion, 'Israeli Arabs'. A long absence was beginning.
(Sanbar 87)

Year	Event
1917 -	- The Balfour Declaration
1948 -	- The Arab-Israeli War and the Nakba
1967 -	- The Six-Day War and the Naksa
1970 -	- "Black September"
1975 -	- The Lebanese Civil War and the "Wars of the Camps"
1982 -	- Israel's war on Lebanon and the Expulsion of the PLO
1987 -	- The First Intifada
1991 -	- The Gulf War and the Exodus from Kuwait
1993 -	- The Oslo Accords and the "Peace Process"
1995 -	- Exodus from Libya
2000 -	- The Second Intifada
2003 -	- The Iraq War and the Exodus from Iraq
2004 -	- Death of Yasser Arafat
2006 -	- Blockade on Gaza
2008 -	- "Operation Cast Lead"
2012 -	- "Operation Pillar of Defense"

Chapter 2. Historical Background – the Palestinian Narrative

The history of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict is a significantly long and widely varied

narrative that spans 65 years of exile and occupation. The extent of the fragmentation of the

Palestinian community since 1948 expanded and layered the narrative such that countless

collective events have accrued and amalgamated into a meta-narrative of a "Palestinian

experience" of exile, statelessness, and loss. This has resulted in a blending of the different

types of loss each experience wrought and has thus blurred the different ways those losses

have individually shaped the collective Palestinian identity. Although most of the major events

littering Palestinian history since 1948 include similar experiences of loss of life and

dispossession, it is the ways those losses shaped the following divisions in the Palestinian

collective that are key to understanding Palestinian identity today. For the purposes of this

study, the events and experiences of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict will be classified according

to the types of losses that they resulted in, in order to provide a clearer understanding of the

contextual circumstances leading up to the events, as well as their consequent ramifications for

the Palestinian community.

Palestinian Nationalism – a Brief Overview

The existence of a Palestinian nationalism and a Palestinian identity is often considered

by Palestinians as an inherent component of their community, with the belief that "the nation

was always there, indeed it is part of the natural order, even when it was submerged in the

hearts of its members". (Smith 18) Therefore, although the history of the Palestinian region is a

history of perpetual conflict and colonization where "Palestine was conquered in times past by

ancient Egyptians, Hittites, Philistines, Israel, Assyrians, Babylonians, Persians, Romans, Muslim

Arabs, Mamlukes, Ottomans, the British, the Zionists ... the population remained constant-and

is now still Palestinian". ("Jerusalem, the Old City: An Introduction")

Nevertheless, despite the romanticizing of Palestinian identity, in his book, *Palestinian*

Identity: The Construction of Modern National Consciousness, Rashid Khalidi stresses that

Palestinian identity has never been an exclusive and discrete identity, with "Arabism, religion,

and local loyalties" playing an important role in building "overlapping identities" (19-21) within

the collective of the Palestinian peoples. Writing that "local patriotism could not yet be

described as nation-state nationalism," (32) Khalidi describes the Arab population of British

Mandatory Palestine as multitudinous, with some or many communities expressing loyalties to

villages, regions, a projected nation of Palestine, an Arab national project, as well as to Islam.

(32) Therefore, Khalidi demonstrates that the modern national identity of Palestinians, as with

most modern post-colonial nationalisms, is rooted in nationalist discourses that emerged

among the peoples of the Ottoman empire in the late 19th century, and was sharpened and

cemented following the demarcation of post-colonial nation-state borders in the Middle East

after WWI and during the dissolution of the British empire. Yet it is also important to note that

unlike most post-colonial nations, Palestine did not achieve sovereignty or independence after

the dismantling of the British Mandate, and therefore the establishment of the state of Israel

has since greatly affected the trajectory of Palestinian nationalism, so that "[a]fter this decisive

date [1948], one can affix 'pre-' or 'post-' as markers of an apocalyptic moment" (Peteet 627) in

Palestinian history and the Palestinian identity.

However, although the Zionist project of a Jewish State on the land of Palestine played a

role in shaping Palestinian nationalism today, "it is a serious mistake to suggest that Palestinian

identity emerged mainly as a response to Zionism". (Khalidi 19-21) The presence of loyalties and bonds within the collectives of the Palestinian Arab community prior to the end of the British rule provided Palestinians with the foundational basis of a distinct nationalism that has since developed as an amalgamation of its previous collective identities – religious, local, regional, Pan-Arab, and Palestinian. Thus, the rhetoric of Palestinian nationalism has historically been mired in the discourses of Pan-Arabism and Pan-Islamism due to its population's original diverse collectives. These discourses continue to influence Palestinian nationalism today, yet have also been counterbalanced by the historical events following the dissolving of the British Mandate, that have since forcefully shaped and dictated modern Palestinian identity.

1948: The Nakba and 'The way of Transfer'

In 1917, Great Britain's issuance of the Balfour Declaration[3] provided the legal foundation for the creation of a Jewish state on the land of Palestine. However, the promise to the Zionist community inherent in this declaration could only find opportunity for its fruition after WWII and toward the end of the reign of the British Mandate in historic Palestine, as the British had notified the UN of their intent to terminate the mandate no later than August 1st, 1948. (United Nations General Assembly) However, when in early 1948 Great Britain announced its intention to withdraw its mandate by May 14th, the Jewish Leadership declared the establishment of a Jewish State in Eretz-Israel, to be known as the State of Israel, without mentioning its borders, and with the declaration to become effective from the end of the

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[3] The Balfour Declaration (dated 2 November 1917) was a letter from the United Kingdom's Foreign Secretary Arthur James Balfour to Baron Rothschild (Walter Rothschild, 2nd Baron Rothschild), a leader of the British Jewish community, for transmission to the Zionist Federation of Great Britain and Ireland. Its contents stated that "[h]is Majesty's government view with favour the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people, and will use their best endeavours to facilitate the achievement of this object, it being clearly understood that nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine, or the rights and political status enjoyed by Jews in any other country". (Yepp 290)

Mandate at midnight of that day. (Bier 49) With full knowledge of the existence of an indigenous Palestinian population, and with the understanding that "Palestine's indigenous Arab population would not acquiesce in its dispossession," the chosen method for the establishment of this Jewish state necessarily had to be through 'the way of transfer.' In fact, "'[t]he idea of transfer had accompanied the Zionist movement from its very beginnings', Tom Segev reports. 'Disappearing' the Arabs lay at the heart of the Zionist dream, and was also a necessary condition of its existence". (Finkelstein xi-xii)

It is critical to note that throughout the West, the concept of population transfer had been, at the time, widely accepted "as an expedient (albeit extreme) method for resolving ethnic conflicts". (Finkelstein xiv) In fact, population transfer was cited by the British in the late 1930s as a model for resolving the conflict in Palestine, based on the precedent set by the displacement of 1.5 million people between Turkey and Greece in 1923. (Finkelstein xiv) Therefore, during the chaos that ensued in 1948 following the declaration of the establishment of the Jewish state, "the Zionist movement exploited the 'revolutionary times' of the first Arab-Israeli war ... to expel more than 80 percent of the indigenous population (750,000 Palestinians)". (Finkelstein xv) This exodus, referred to as the "*Nakba,*" Arabic for "Catastrophe," marked the first major milestone of the Palestinian experience of displacement and dispossession. Due to this original rupture between people and homeland, the collective growth of the Palestinian nation was divided – those that remained within historic Palestine became Arab-Israelis, others were displaced within Palestine to refugee camps in the West Bank and Gaza, and yet more were expelled to camps in neighboring countries – further

stunting the development of a cohesive collective Palestinian identity and resulting in the

Palestinian Refugee Status.

Unlike all previous and following instances of displacement in world history, Palestinian

refugees gained a unique standing in the global legal system due to the political conflicts of

interest between Israel and its neighboring Arab countries. Palestinian refugees were, and

continue to be, legally restricted from officially and permanently resettling in their host-

countries throughout the Middle East. Further complicating their legal status, the UN Relief and

Works Agency (UNRWA), an organization set up uniquely for Palestinian refugees in 1949,

defines Palestinian refugees as persons who lived in Palestine "between June 1946 and May

1948, who lost both their homes and means of livelihood as a result of the 1948 Arab-Israeli

conflict". (Pipes) Especially important is the UNRWA's extension of the refugee status to "the

descendants of persons who became refugees in 1948". (Pipes) With the majority of

Palestinians living in refugee camps across the Middle East – growing in number from 750,000

to an estimated 5 million ("Palestine refugees") – the rippling effects of these limitations

restricted the collective growth of the Palestinian "nation," resulting in collective experiences

that were inevitably traumatic – the degradation and humiliation of life in the camps, the

repeated expulsions, and the countless wars and casualties to which Palestinian refugees were

subjected in the years following the Nakba and throughout the 65 years of exile from Palestine.

Those events and conditions thus became the dominant and defining narratives of the

Palestinian identity in the diaspora, unlike the more common developments of a nation-state

that tend to include more positive experiences such as industrialization, economic

development, participation in the global community, etc. Therefore, the Nakba can be seen as a

significant defining moment in Palestinian history and the Palestinian identity.

1967: The Naksa and the Six-Day War

Although the Nakba displaced 80 percent of the indigenous Palestinian population from

the territories of historic Palestine, it left the communities of Palestinians living in the Trans-

Jordan Area (West Bank and surrounding municipalities) and Gaza Strip largely unaffected.

However, when escalations between Israel, Jordan, Syria, and Egypt resulted in the 1967 Six-

Day War, a second wave of Palestinian exodus ensued – displacing an estimated 300,000

Palestinians out of the West Bank and Gaza, most of whom then settled in Jordan. (Sharp)

Known as the *"Naksa"* (Arabic for "Setback"), 1967 has since circumscribed borders along "the

lines of where Israeli, Jordanian, Egyptian, and Syrian military forces were deployed on the eve

of what was then going to be the Six Day War," (Miller) and along which a two-state solution to

the Palestinian-Israeli conflict could be reached. It is significant in that, as a result of the war

and the illusory "borders" it created, 1967 has become the de-facto internationally recognized

"Palestinian" territory in the UN and throughout the peace process. In fact, it is the borders of

1967 that have recently gained recognition as those of a sovereign Palestinian state, upgrading

the status of the Palestinian National Authority (PA) in the UN from "entity" to "non-member

state," on November 29th, 2012. (Charbonneau)

Significantly, in Palestinian culture the Naksa also holds strong symbolical value, further

dividing the Palestinian collective experience. 1967 cemented the displacement of all 1948

refugees when the Arabs were soundly defeated by Israeli forces in their attempts to liberate

historic Palestine. The Naksa also laid the groundwork for the internationally endorsed "two-

state solution," (Finkelstein xvii) in which both an Israeli and Palestinian state could co-exist within the borders of historic Palestine. Although seemingly the more rational and peaceful resolution to the conflict, the "two-state settlement" nullifies the map of historic Palestine to which millions of refugees wish to return and erases all chance of reversing the effects of 1948 for the dispossessed Palestinians. This has further incapacitated 1948 refugees in the legal process, as they could not belong to or participate in the creation of the Palestinian state of 1967, nor could they return to their homes or settle in the countries to which they fled; thus setting off a chain of events that would split the development of Palestinian communities in and outside the territory in two divergent directions.

Furthermore, with Israel's capture of more Palestinian territories in 1967 came a reprisal of the original obstacle to the Zionist vision – they "wanted the land but not the people". (Finkelstein xvi) However, due to a change in the international community's perspective following the 1949 Fourth Geneva Convention which ratified the "'unequivocally prohibited deportation' of civilians under occupation," (Finkelstein xvi) expulsion was no longer a viable option for Israel's takeover of the Palestinian territories. This meant that with 'the way of transfer' no longer available, the fulfillment of the Zionist dream of a purely Jewish state in Palestine would necessarily be through means of segregation and apartheid.

Apartheid, Oslo, and the 'Peace Process'

In the aftermath of 1967, Palestinian political forces began to emerge as significant obstacles to Israel's annexation of Palestinian territories. In particular, with Israel having officially accepted and endorsed the two-state settlement, the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) "could no longer be dismissed as simply a terrorist organization bent on

Israel's destruction," which increased pressures on Israel to reach an agreement with the PLO's "compromising approach". (Finkelstein xviii-xix) In an attempt "to head off what Israeli strategic analyst Avner Yaniv dubbed the PLO's 'peace offensive'," (Finkelstein xix) Israel invaded Lebanon, where PLO officials were then headquartered, in June, 1982. This invasion and the resulting chaos and weakening of the PLO led to a sidelining of the question of Palestine and the '67 borders, thus allowing Israel to maintain its authority over the occupied Palestinian territories. Consequently, with the ongoing stalemate that prevented Palestinians from gaining autonomous control over the West Bank and Gaza Strip, an uprising of the Palestinian population began in December of 1987 "against the occupation in a basically non-violent civil revolt, the *intifada*". (Finkelstein xix, emphasis in original)

This First Intifada (Arabic for "shaking off"), which lasted from December 1987 to 1993 and led to the Oslo Accord, marked the largest non-violent attempt at resistance by Palestinians since 1948, and more significantly "was the first time that the [Palestinians] of the territories had acted with cohesion and as a nation". (McDowall 2) Defined by the Palestinians' stone-throwing offensive against the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF), the Intifada primarily consisted of peaceful acts of civil disobedience by Palestinians including "general strikes, boycotts on Israeli products, refusal to pay taxes, graffiti, and barricades," ("History of Conflict") and was quickly recognized as an uprising unlike all previous disturbances. Thus it began that the

> world was assailed by disturbing scenes of Israeli efforts to restore order. Television networks and newspapers around the globe relayed pictures of Israeli troops firing on stone-throwing demonstrators, or beating those they caught with cudgels. It rapidly became clear that many of the latter were not demonstrators at all ... [with] one such picture captioned 'Armed Israelis drag a Palestinian youth from his house yesterday, during a sweep through the town of Khan Yunis on the Gaza Strip. The youth was taken into an alleyway and beaten unconscious.' (McDowall 2)

As a result, Israel's brutal response, in concert with the inept and corrupt leadership of the PLO,

eventually led to the uprising's defeat. (Finkelstein xix)

This defeat was further compounded by the resulting agreement reached at Oslo by

Israel and the PLO, known as the "Oslo Accord" when

> [a]fter the implosion of the Soviet Union, the destruction of Iraq, and the suspension of
> funding from the Gulf states, Palestinian fortunes reached a new nadir. The US and
> Israel seized on this opportune moment to recruit the already venal and now desperate
> Palestinian leadership – 'on the verge of bankruptcy' and 'in [a] weakened condition'
> (Uri Savir, Israel's chief negotiator at Oslo) – as surrogates of Israeli power. This was the
> real meaning of the Oslo Accord signed in September 1993. (Finkelstein xix)

The significance of Oslo, and its effects on the Palestinian community both within and outside

the occupied territories therefore was, and continues to be, considerable. It allowed Israel to

maintain control by proxy in the West Bank and Gaza Strip through the establishment of the

Palestinian National Authority (PA) as the Palestinian governing body, thus allowing the

occupation and annexation of Palestinian territories to continue undeterred, and further

cemented the apartheid rule over Palestinian territories – all of which eventually culminated in

the Second Intifada.

September 2000 saw the beginning of the second uprising of Palestinians against Israeli

rule, often referred to as the Second Intifada, or the Al-Aqsa Intifada (in reference to the Al-

Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem). Several political events are cited as contributors to the uprising,

with the breakdown of the Camp David negotiations on July 25, 2000 being the most likely

catalyst. ("Sharm El-Sheikh Fact-Finding Committee Report") As with the First Intifada, the Al-

Aqsa Intifada also saw excessive use of force in Israel's response to the largely unarmed revolt,

further fueling the anger and desperation of the uprising. "Israel responded to the disturbances

with excessive and illegal use of deadly force against demonstrators; behavior which, in the

PLO's view, reflected Israel's contempt for the lives and safety of Palestinians. For Palestinians,

the widely seen images of Muhammad al-Durrah in Gaza on September 30, shot as he huddled

behind his father, reinforced that perception".[4] ("Sharm El-Sheikh Fact-Finding Committee

Report")

In addition to the policing tactics of the Israeli forces against Palestinian civilians during

the Second Intifada, Israel proceeded with "Operation Defensive Shield," an invasion of the

West Bank in March/April of 2002. The large-scale offensive, which was mainly carried out in

the refugee camps of Jenin, Bethlehem, Nablus, and Ramallah, saw

> the targeting of Palestinian ambulances and medical personnel, the targeting of
> journalists, the killing of Palestinian children 'for sport' (Chris Hedges, *New York Times*
> former Cairo bureau chief), the rounding up, handcuffing and blindfolding of Palestinian
> males between the ages of fifteen and fifty, and affixing of numbers on their wrists, the
> indiscriminate torture of Palestinian detainees, the denial of food, water, electricity,
> medical treatment and burial to the Palestinian civilian population, the indiscriminate
> air assaults on some Palestinian neighborhoods, the systematic use of Palestinian
> civilians as human shields, [and] the bulldozing of Palestinian homes with the occupants
> huddled inside. (Finkelstein xxiii)

Reports of the battles and struggles of the Second Intifada, like the First Intifada, were widely

broadcast and became inescapable throughout the Middle East – Arabs, and more particularly

Palestinians, everywhere were consumed by the unfolding events of the Intifada. However,

unlike the First Intifada, when "all international and regional events were reported by Arab

government-controlled services on a limited basis," the real-time coverage of the Second

Intifada set a precedent as the "first televised conflict where Arab transnational TV [set] the

agenda for Arab (and often Israeli) audiences – [constituting] the first comprehensive

indigenous coverage of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict". (Rinnawi 64) This coverage resulted in a

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[4] Refer to image 5, Appendix D

heightened sense of reality for the viewers, and brought the horror and violence of the uprising into their homes. Solidarity with the Palestinians strengthened, and more importantly, solidarity within Palestinian communities re-emerged after having been side-lined in the years following Oslo. The crisis of the Second Intifada thus created the first collective experience that was uniquely Palestinian and that eliminated the distances and borders between them as it was unfolding, so that even Palestinians outside the territory experienced the Intifada as though it were first-hand.

The West Bank/Gaza Strip Divide and the Gaza/Israel Wars

Despite the extent of violence in retaliation to the uprising, the Second Intifada lasted until the death of Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat in November 2004, and disintegrated with Israel's unilateral disengagement from the Gaza Strip, announced in June 2004 and completed in August 2005. (Tenne) Following these events came what is arguably the most powerfully definitive divide for the Palestinian nation. General elections for the Palestinian Legislative council commenced in January 2006 during which the Islamist group Hamas won with an unexpected majority of "76 of the 132 seats in the chamber, with the ruling Fatah party trailing on 43". ("Hamas Sweeps to Election Victory") With this win, the conflict between Israel and Gaza intensified, with Israel sealing Gaza's borders, and largely preventing free flow of people and many imports and exports. ("Gaza Siege: Timeline") In addition, due to a breakout of internal fighting between Hamas and Fatah in 2007, a political split between Gaza and the West Bank eventuated, with Hamas establishing a government in Gaza, and Fatah maintaining the PA in the West Bank. ("Gaza Siege: Timeline") Consequently, the US, Israel and the EU cut off aid to Gaza in an attempt to undermine Hamas and force it from power while strengthening President

Mahmoud Abbas and Fatah's position as the recognized Palestinian National Authority.

(Erlanger)

Since the establishment of the blockade on Gaza, which has lasted since March 18th of

2006, ("Gaza Siege: Timeline") numerous military conflicts between Gaza and Israel ensued. On

June 25th 2006, Israeli soldier Gilad Shalit was captured "by militants from Hamas and two allied

groups who tunneled into Israel from the Gaza Strip," ("Hamas releases audio of captured

Israeli") leading to massive retaliation by the Israeli army which was exacted over the course of

several deadly operations. "Operation Summer Rains" and "Operation Autumn Clouds" marked

the first major Israeli mobilization into the Gaza Strip since its unilateral disengagement plan

was implemented in 2005. (Itim; Schippert) After the signing of a ceasefire agreement on

November 26th, 2006, and its eventual breakdown, Gaza saw the Israeli offensive "Operation

Hot Winter" in February 2008. ("Israeli army kills 4 Palestinians in West Bank") In response to

the escalating desperation of relations between Gaza and Israel, an Egyptian-brokered six-

month ceasefire agreement was reached, and came into effect on June 19th, 2008. (Kershner)

However, when four months into the agreement, "Israeli troops killed six Hamas gunmen in a

raid into the territory, Hamas responded by firing a wave of rockets into southern Israel".

("Gaza Truce Broken as Israeli Raid Kills Six Hamas Gunmen") These mutual attacks

consequently led to Israel's largest and deadliest offensive on Gaza, "Operation Cast Lead,"

which lasted from December 27, 2008, to January 19, 2009. ("Timeline: Gaza crisis")

Titled as "22 days of death and destruction" by Amnesty International's report on the

2008/9 offensive, Operation Cast Lead was a massive scale attack that utilized "insane" force,

weapons, and war tactics in the densely civilian populated Gaza Strip. ("Operation Cast Lead"

16) Testimonies from Israeli soldiers emphasize the degree of force used, with the frequent

recurrence of its description as "insane" – "[w]e are hitting innocents and our artillery fire there

was insane … What's an insane amount of artillery? Ten of our bombs for every one of theirs".

("Operation Cast Lead" 16) In a more detailed explanation of the extent of force used by the

IDF, Amnesty International reports that

> the scale and intensity of the attacks against Gaza from Israel during the 22 day-conflict
> have caused more death and destruction than any other Israeli offensive in the past.
> According to AI's figures, some 1400 Palestinians were killed by Israeli forces, while at
> least 900 of these were unarmed civilians not involved in the conflict, including 300
> children and 115 women. The organization also reports that the Israeli attacks that were
> the deadliest were carried out with high precision weapons. Israeli F-16 combat aircrafts
> targeted and destroyed hundreds of Palestinian homes without warning, with full
> knowledge of the circumstances, killing and injuring people, often while they were
> sleeping at night. Other victims were sitting in their yard or hanging laundry on their
> roof. Some children were struck while playing in their rooms, on the roofs of their
> homes, or outside near their homes. Rescuers and paramedics [were] attacked several
> times while trying to rescue the wounded or recover the bodies of victims. Dozens of
> civilians [were] killed by less precise weapons, including mortar shells and white
> phosphorous. Still others, including women and children, were shot at short range while
> posing no threat to the lives of Israeli soldiers. ("Factsheet: Amnesty International
> report"; "Israel/Gaza: Operation "Cast Lead"" 6-8)

As with the two intifadas, Operation Cast Lead thus became a widely marked experience for

Palestinians everywhere. The degree of violence of the 22 days, widely and thoroughly covered

in the media, became a daily experience for Palestinians across the globe. It was a reprisal of all

the injustices Palestinians ever experienced in their collective histories and was therefore a

monumental tragedy that united all those who sympathized with the Palestinian cause.

Similarly, Israel's latest war on Gaza, "Operation Pillar of Defense," which commenced

from the 14th to the 21st of November 2012 also produced an awakening for the Palestinian

communities in and outside the occupied territories. This most recent assault however was

unlike the previous instances of Operation Cast Lead and the two intifadas, as the scale of force

utilized by Israel was tempered and did not exact the usual number of casualties as the prior

attacks did. In addition, the brief period of the conflict and the significance of the military

power demonstrated by Palestinian militia in Gaza reduced the possibility of its becoming

another purely tragic moment in Palestinian history. This resulted in the emergence of different

kinds of unities – and divisions – amongst Palestinians viewing the conflict from outside, based

more on political alignments and perspectives than on emotional responses, as the trauma and

victimization of Gaza was not as much in focus during these events as it had previously been.

Palestinian Refugees: The Cycles of Exile

As with life for Palestinians within the territories, life for Palestinian refugees in exile

was exceptionally difficult from the outset. In addition to the loss of a national homeland, the

dispossessed refugees were relegated to shanty camps on the margins of society and with

varying availability of survival's most basic resources. In Syria, Jordan, and Lebanon, camps

provided shelter for the hundreds of thousands of refugees and sporadic availability of the

minimal resources required for sustaining their communities such as food, water, electricity,

and fuel. However, these camps also simultaneously restricted Palestinian refugees from

achieving any long-term security or settlement. Smaller numbers of Palestinians fleeing to the

Gulf, Iraq, Egypt, and other neighboring Arab countries were integrated into the communities

of their host countries, yet were also limited in terms of their legal rights and freedoms. In all

cases, Palestinians were and continue to be legally prohibited from attaining citizenship

anywhere in the Middle East, so that, "although the Palestinian diaspora is situated in a variety

of countries, legally the Palestinians are nowhere". (King-Irani 923)

As a result, the provisions for basic human rights and economic sustainability for those

communities also varies to a large degree across the various refugee camps to which

Palestinians fled. These circumstances culturally marginalize Palestinians and relegate them to a

liminal legal zone where, at best, they are treated as second-class citizens and, at worst, are

perceived as leeches to the countries in which they find themselves. In addition, the lack of a

nation-state or a "homeland" to provide support for the refugees left Palestinians in the care of

"UN-established institutions such as the UNRWA to deal with the Palestinians' needs and

demands through exceptional channels outside the jurisdiction of the UN's human rights

regime. As a consequence, Palestinians' rights are always open to question and [have been]

frequently violated". (King-Irani 923)

Due to a variety of political conflicts that arose amongst the Arabs "[o]ver the [65] years

since the Nakba, Palestinian refugees experienced repeated expulsions from their second, third,

and sometimes fourth homes". (*Chronicles of a Refugee*) These repeated expulsions began "as

early as the mid-1950s [when] Iraq, Saudi Arabia, and Libya expelled striking Palestinian

workers". (Rosen 75) However, the first instance where large numbers of Palestinians were

subjected to targeted onslaught and were forcefully expelled was during the "Black September"

events of 1970-71, when Jordanian armies expelled "some 20,000 Palestinians and demolished

their camps". (Rosen 75) With the goal of eradicating the power of the PLO, which had accrued

in Palestinian enclaves and refugee camps across Jordan since 1968, the Jordanians conducted

a systemic and meticulous campaign against the PLO, forcing them into the mountains where

they were besieged by the Jordanian army and effectively expelled from the country. (Pollack

343) As a result of the 1970 expulsion, the PLO lost its base of operations, and fighters were

driven into Southern Lebanon where their heightened presence and the intensification of

fighting on the Israeli-Lebanese border stirred up internal unrest in Lebanon, eventually

contributing and leading to the Lebanese Civil War from 1975 to the mid-1980s. (Fisk 74)

Among the countless Palestinian casualties during the civil war was the destruction of the Tel

Al-Za'atar ("The Hill of Thyme") UNRWA administered camp. Housing approximately 50,000-

60,000 refugees in northeast Beirut (*Intersections* 156), Tel Al-Za'ater was annihilated during

the war on August 12, 1976 in an attempt to eradicate the presence of the PLO and Fatah at the

camp. (Fisk 85-6)

Furthermore, the conflict over Tel Al-Za'ater between the Lebanese and Palestinian

militia resulted in sparking what is now known as the "war of the camps," where Palestinian

refugees were systemically targeted and evicted during the civil war. This included the Sabra

and Shatila Massacre of approximately 3,500 Palestinians by a Lebanese Christian Phalangist[5]

militia assisted by the IDF in the Sabra and Shatila Palestinian refugee camps in Beirut, Lebanon,

between September 16 and September 18, 1982. "The carnage began immediately. It was to

continue without interruption till Saturday noon. Night brought no respite; the Phalangist

liaison officer asked for illumination and the Israelis duly obliged with flares, first from mortars

and then from planes". (Hirst 157) Similarly, another victim to the war of the camps was the

Bourj el-Barajneh ("the Tower of Towers") camp, which was laid siege to by the Israeli army and

Lebanese Christian Phalangists in 1982 after Israel invaded Lebanon earlier that year. It and

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[5] The Lebanese Phalanges Party is a traditional right-wing political-paramilitary organization. Although it is officially secular, it is mainly supported by Maronite Christians. The party played a major role in the Lebanese Civil War (1975–90). (Fisk 290)

other Palestinian camps were further targeted by Amal militia[6] from February 1984 to February 1987 for the control of West Beirut, leaving Palestinian casualties in Lebanon in the tens of thousands. (*Chronicles of a Refugee*)

The events of Black September in Jordan and the War of the Camps in Lebanon have thus become distinct collective memories within the Palestinian diaspora. The conflicts and resulting losses for the Palestinian communities in Jordan and Lebanon served as reminders of the status of Palestinian refugees as unprotected and marginalized minorities. Furthermore, the involvement of the PLO, who later became the official leadership of the Palestinian people in the West Bank and Gaza, drew a connection between Palestinians within and outside the territories – particularly at a time when Israeli/Palestinian borders had not yet been definitively drawn. Therefore the collectivity of the memories of Black September and the War of the Camps transcends the imagination of the communities who were directly affected by the attacks, and ties in with the meta-narratives of the Nakba. Although the number of Palestinians directly affected by these conflicts is smaller than, and farther removed from, the number of Palestinians directly affected by the conflict with Israel, the general themes of dispossession and the fight for recognition and stability unify the experiences in ways that allow Palestinians in and outside the territories to relate to one another. In fact, for many Palestinians who shuffled from camps in the West Bank and Gaza to camps in Jordan and Lebanon, the conflicts with Israel often become interchangeable with those with the Jordanian and Lebanese armies.

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[6] The Lebanese Resistance were the armed militia of the Movement of the Dispossessed (or Movement of the Deprived), a political movement of Lebanon's Shia community. The militia's name, when abbreviated, created the acronym Amal, which means "Hope" in Arabic. The movement was founded in 1974 and its armed organization was founded in 1975. The Amal militia was a major participant in the Lebanese Civil War. (Augustus 37)

In addition to the difficulties facing refugees living in camps, Palestinians who fled to the Gulf and other Arab countries, although not relegated to camps, were also repeatedly prosecuted. In March of 1991, some 400,000 Palestinians (Rosen 75) living in Kuwait were targeted and forcibly expelled in the aftermath of the Gulf War, marking "the largest forced displacement of Palestinians from an Arab state". (Rosen 75) Unlike the previous expulsions from Jordan or Lebanon, where the presence and activities of Palestinian militia gave the governments cause to retaliate, the deportations from Kuwait stemmed from a desire for vengeance against the Palestinian community due to the positive political relations of Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat and the PLO with Saddam Hussein, who had earlier invaded Kuwait during the Gulf War. (Rosen 81) While Palestinian militia engaged in conflicts with the governments' official armies in Jordan and Lebanon, none existed in the population of Palestinian refugees living in Kuwait, rendering the exodus from Kuwait as nothing more than a viciously violent and vindictive vendetta against the Palestinian refugee population, who did not in fact pose any real security threat to Kuwaiti society. Palestinian refugees living in Kuwait had not in any way contributed to Saddam Hussein's invasion of Kuwait, yet were punished for their leader's diplomatic relations with Iraq. As a result, "Kuwait's ethnic cleansing of the Palestinians is notable not only because of its exponentially large scale but because it afforded the ultimate proof of the cynical Arab manipulation of the Palestinian cause. The Palestinian Kuwaiti community was arguably one of the most settled and economically integrated of Palestinian Arab diasporas, yet this did not prevent its uprooting in one fell swoop through no fault of its own". (Rosen 83)

Significantly, these prosecutions of Palestinians occurred between the 1967 war and the signing of the Oslo Accords, during a time when Palestinians were legally and officially defenceless. However, despite the implied promise and hope of Oslo in the creation of an official Palestinian government that could ostensibly then support the exiled Palestinian communities, the expulsions and violations against refugees continued after the agreement. In fact, the signing of the Oslo Accords effectively instigated the expulsion of Palestinians from Libya in the mid-'90s. "In his speech during the Sept. 1 1994 celebrations, Colonel Mouamer Qadhafi announced his plan to expel Palestinians residing in his country in order to prove to the whole world that PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat had failed to establish a state and, therefore, was unable to fulfill the demands of the Palestinian struggle". (Sirhan) Following this announcement, from mid-December 1994 to mid-February 1995, the Libyan government began to methodically erase its Palestinian residents from all legal records, thereby refusing to renew expired residency permits or issue new permits, nullifying any existing renewable labor contracts, and preventing any Palestinians who had left Libya for personal or business trips to return – regardless of whether or not their residency permits were valid, and despite the fact that they were entitled to receive certain labor rights and compensation from the Libyan government. During its first stage, hundreds of Palestinians were expelled to the Egyptian border where they were refused crossing. As a result, "they were practically left in no-man's land near the Saloum border post while Libya refused to take them back". (Sirhan)

The situation in Libya continued in such vein, with more Palestinian refugees unable to reach Syria or Jordan after being "stranded on board a ship opposite the coast of Cyprus, which denied them the right to enter its territory and did not allow their ship to dock in its ports".

(Sirhan) Furthermore, Lebanon also "turned back several hundred Palestinians who arrived from Libya on two ships in late August 1995. Their entry was made subject to obtaining an entry visa, even for those holding Lebanese travel documents". (Sirhan) As a result of this aimless exodus, hundreds of Palestinians were left stranded in the camps along Libya's borders and in no-man's land, living in severe conditions "compounded by the fact that the UNRWA was unable to provide refugees with food or health services on a regular basis since it operate[d] neither in Libya nor in Egypt and because Palestinians [were, and continue to be,] excluded from the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees, meaning that they were prevented from receiving UNHCR[7]'s full support". (Sirhan) Eventually however, Libyan forces in 1997 forcefully evacuated the Al-Awda (Arabic for "the Return") camp which had been put together in the no-man's land between Egypt and Libya's borders, "and ordered Palestinians residing in it (250 of them) to take buses to [another refugee camp within Libya] while carrying all their personal belongings". (Sirhan)

The year 2003 also saw a reprisal of the ethnic cleansing of Palestinians from their re-settled homes – this time, in Iraq, and this time, again, due to the political support Saddam Hussein had offered Palestine and Palestinian refugees in the past. Like Jordan, Syria, Lebanon, and other Arab states, Iraq had played host to a significant Palestinian refugee population after the 1948 Nakba. Unlike those states however, "Iraq did not sign an agreement with the UNRWA ... preferring instead to address the assistance needs of the Palestinian refugees itself". ("Nowhere to Flee" 8) This left any and all support received by the Palestinian community entirely dependent on the Iraqi government, which was controlled by Saddam Hussein until the

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[7] U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)

US invasion of 2003. In the interim, support for the refugee community was provided through measures such as the standard issuance of travel documents instead of passports, government-provided housing where rental of private property to Palestinians was paid for by the Iraqi government, and exemption of Palestinians from military service, including Saddam's "paramilitary force, the *Jaysh al-Quds* (Jerusalem Army), [established] with the aim of 'liberating' Jerusalem," and into which "Iraqi males of military age, particularly Shi'a and Kurds, were often forced to 'volunteer'". ("Nowhere to Flee" 9-10)

These conditions, along with Saddam Hussein's continued provision of "martyr" payments to families of Palestinian suicide bombers and to the families of other Palestinians killed in the Intifada – a reported total of €1 billion – created resentment within the Iraqi community who were left to suffer under the strict sanctions regime. ("Nowhere to Flee" 10) The build-up of resentment culminated in a backlash against the Palestinian refugee community during the US invasion of 2003, when almost immediately following the fall of the government in April they "became subject to intense harassment, violent attack, and forced evictions from their homes". ("Nowhere to Flee" 12) The intensity of the Iraqi community's backlash against the Palestinians resulted in the displacement of most of the refugee community, with most Palestinians choosing to flee to Jordan mainly "because most of the other countries bordering Iraq kept their borders firmly closed, especially to Palestinians". ("Nowhere to Flee" 17) However, this did not mean that they were able to resettle in Jordan. New desert camps awaited the displaced refugees in conditions where "[f]requent windstorms [would] whip fine sand into every tent ... [r]espiratory problems among camp residents [were] omnipresent, and the heat in summer [was] unbearable. " ("Nowhere to Flee" 18) Refugees were thus forced to

choose between uncertain and dangerous futures in Baghdad and jobless and hopeless prospects in the shanty camps of Jordan's desert. Those who chose to return to Iraq were expelled again in 2006, yet were denied re-entry into Jordan. ("Nowhere to Flee" 22) As a result, stranded on the borders of Jordan and Iraq, makeshift camps emerged much as they did between Libya and Egypt.

These repeated expulsions from Kuwait, Libya, and Iraq therefore also constitute collective memories that are strongly reminiscent of the Nakba and the original exodus of the Palestinian community. For those communities in particular, these expulsions came about through no fault of their own and were in response to the politics of the time. These expulsions however were also results of the lack of support the Palestinian refugee community had received from the PA and the inadequacy of the UNRWA in protecting their interests. Therefore the repeated ethnic cleansing of the Palestinian communities from their re-settled homes severed their ties with the nations in which they sought refuge and reaffirmed their statelessness. The victimization of the Palestinian refugees in Kuwait, Libya, and Iraq thus tied them to the communities in Lebanon and Jordan who had suffered similar ostracism, degradation, and prosecution. However, the lack of involvement of Israel or official Palestinian leadership in these attacks rendered them unique to Palestinian refugees rather than to the Palestinian collective writ large. The collectivity of these memories is therefore less tangible, as it exists mostly within communities in the diaspora and to a far lesser degree in the conventional Palestinian narratives. The contribution of these events to the Palestinian identity thus lies in providing irrevocable proof of its consistent prosecution on the basis of ethnicity, regardless of when, where, or how.

Palestinians in Exile: the Hierarchy of Experience

Left with nowhere to go, Palestinian refugees have thus been tossed from one host-country to another, where political agendas and conflicts dictated their increasingly hopeless futures. The experiences of the marginalization, targeting, violence, and repeated expulsions literally perpetuated the Nakba and the resulting homelessness and lack of security of the Palestinian nation, and have thus rendered it timeless and inescapable – for the Palestinian in exile, the Nakba did not end in 1948 but has continued, and remains a fact of their daily existence. In addition, by being separated from Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, and socially and culturally marginalized in their re-settled homes, Palestinian refugees are consigned to a liminal space where belonging remains elusive, not only in a legal sense, but also in the desire to build lasting and enduring ties to a "home".

In essence, all the historical events outlined in this chapter boil down to a prosecution of Palestinians that is facilitated and made possible by their eternal "statelessness". With no national government or official army to shield and protect the interests of Palestinians, they have been rendered legally helpless and fair game in any and all conflicts that arise in their presence. 1948 succeeded in exiling a nation from its homeland and abandoning its people to the mercies of a desperate fate, and 1967 and the creation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip borders cemented their refugee status for the foreseeable future. As a result, Palestinian refugees will always continue to be refugees as they are denied citizenship in the occupied territories, the West Bank and Gaza, denied the Right of Return, and denied protection from the Palestinian Authority who is only responsible for Palestinians within the 1967 territory and borders.

The Palestinian population is thus divided from its home, and splintered into the fragments of communities that dispersed across the diaspora. The various experiences that ensued of this rupture resulted in an exaggerated plurality of devastation in the Palestinian narrative and have created a dichotomy in belonging to the Palestinian identity. The repeated cycles of rejection and prosecution, with no haven to which to return, separated Palestinians in exile from those who suffered different kinds of injustice within the occupied territories. This further led to the entrapment of Palestinian refugees in an endless cycle of transience, where deferral of achieving their one desire – finding a homeland – is the only constant.

Further distinctions of the Palestinian refugees' identities lie in the uniqueness of their experiences. The Palestinian-ness of the refugees in exile is defined by their history of having been subjected to cultural and political marginalization, rendered as scapegoats for the various grievances of the communities in which they resided, and enduring repeated attacks and expulsions; whereas Palestinians within the West Bank and the Gaza Strip are defined by the occupation, the PA and Hamas leaderships, and the intifadas and conflicts with Israel. As a result, the identity of the Palestinian refugee is necessarily shaped by its physical and legal transience, as opposed to that the Palestinian in the West Bank or Gaza Strip whose identity is informed more by experiences of oppression and apartheid. Although the distinction may be subtle, the difference between negative recognition and invisibility marks the division between Palestinians in and outside the territories – whilst those in the West Bank and Gaza Strip are actively oppressed, those living in the camps are entirely helpless and excluded from controlling their fates. The perception of differing experiences on either side of the border thus creates divisions in belonging to the overarching Palestinian identity.

As a result of the original expulsion and dispossession of May 1948, the Palestinian narrative is one that is littered with struggle, strife, and injustice. The Palestinian people were rendered "stateless" and for the large part homeless and unprotected by the Nakba and the following wars and upheavals, so that the Palestinian condition has become a unique and distinctive identity in world history. In his novel *Gate of the Sun* Lebanese author Ilyas Khuri writes that "[a]s with all disasters, the only thing that can make one forget a massacre is an even bigger massacre, and we're a people whose fate is to be forgotten as a result of its accumulated calamities. Massacre erases massacre, and all that remains in the memory is the smell of blood". (107) Such is the case with the identity of the Palestinian people, where war, conflict, repeated expulsions, and massacres upon massacres compete within the same identity for significance. As a result of this fragmentation, the combined experiences of the Palestinian nation fall within varying hierarchies of experience according to (a) the degree of devastation wrought, (b) the magnitude and collectivity of the experiences, and (c) according to the overlaps and similarities among them; leading to a stratified and indefinable collective identity.

"He says: I am from there, I am from here,
but I am neither there nor here.
I have two names which meet and part...
I have two languages, but I have long forgotten
which is the language of my dreams.
I have an English language, for writing,
with yielding phrases,
and a language in which Heaven and
Jerusalem converse, with a silver cadence,
but it does not yield to my imagination.

Chapter 3. Conceptualizing Nationalism and National Identities

Identity is a way of claiming personhood, instating existence, and achieving belonging. It is therefore an all-encompassing understanding of a person's being, and their place and belonging in the world. Identity is a slippery concept that is an attempt to classify the characteristics that define individuals to themselves and to the societies around them. Pinning identity down to one definition is impossible – it is fluid, and thus shifts and changes as time and circumstances change. It is both an essential quality that is fatalistic and a social construction that is shaped by society and life's experiences. (Lawler 1) It includes gender identification, sexual identification, class, religion, as well as ethnic and racial identifications, to name a few. These facets of identity tend to heavily overlap, yet when pressed, often one or another emerges as the "primary" identity, so that individuals identify as being gendered (eg. "a woman"), racialized (eg. "black"), classed (eg. "working-class"), sexualized (eg. "gay"), and nationalized (eg. "Canadian"), etc. In other instances, the distillation of a single primary identity is impossible, so that the overlaps of the layers of identity become the primary identifiers – eg. "black woman," "gay Jew," "African-American," etc. Thus, identity can be understood as a layering of various points of identification, and the dynamics between and amongst those layers. As a result, the identities of individuals vary according to the combinations of the layers of identification that are felt most prominently at a given time.

Constructing Identity

The formation of identity is therefore a highly fluid process that varies according to the experiences of individuals, and thus affects the value these various identifications accrue in their overall identity. The premise of this study is that the formation of identity can be

understood to include two distinct and simultaneous processes of identification: the

essentializing of oneself, where identity is seen to be fixed and inherently formed at birth, and

the pluralizing of oneself, where identity is seen to be socially constructed and open to

negotiation. It is therefore the negotiations that take place within both processes, as well as

between one another, that internalize individual identity and provide it with its fixed definitions

as well as its fluidity. This understanding of identity reflects Erik Erikson's theory of identity

where

> neither does the individual [fully] adapt to society nor does society [fully] mold him (sic)
> into its pattern; rather, society and individual form a unity within which a mutual
> regulation takes place. The social institutions are pre-conditions of individual
> development, and the developing individual's behavior, in turn, elicits that help which
> society gives through its adult members directed by its institutions and traditions.
> Society is not merely a prohibitor or provider; it is the necessary matrix of the
> development of all behavior. (Rapaport 104)

Therefore, where the essentializing of identity is concerned with the inherent characteristics

individuals are born with – their sex, ethnicity, and sexual orientation etc. – the pluralities of

identity occur due to their existential circumstances – their social class, race, gender roles,

citizenships etc. Both sets of traits are born-into yet their changeability across space and time

suggests that they are not fixed and latent understandings of personhood, but are processes of

encoding and decoding that are continuously influenced by the prevailing social orders of the

environments in which they are produced. That is to say that the essential traits of individuals

as well as their existential circumstances accrue meaning from the ideologies, hegemonies and

understandings of the societies in which they are perceived.

In their self-reflections, participants acknowledged both aspects of identity. They

articulated the essential attributes of identity into which they were born – namely, their

Palestinian identities – but also stressed the importance of nurturing that identity through their

lived experiences as well.

> [Ayman:] Identity is – we contribute to it as much as it is made for us. Your parents, or society, may try to feed you your identity as much as they want, but unless you feel a certain connection with it, unless you pursue it, there's nothing that will tie you to it. And that's why you'll feel that there are those who are detached, even though they may be born Palestinian and have the same knowledge of the issue.

> [Carla:] Basically, my identity, I was born with. But it was not nurtured, it wasn't given the importance that it should have been given. Then I grew up and I realized – you know, you give the importance to your identity, you give it the weight it needs.

> [Haya:] For me, it started off when I was young. You know, just given all these stories – and, especially in Jordan – you hear a lot of stories about Palestinians, and I just took that part of me for granted, I didn't really look too much into it. I think it was because of the community there, because there are so many Palestinians there that – and everyone I knew was Palestinian by origin – there weren't that many people who identified solely as Jordanians. And the other thing is that within the education system, you're always learning about *"El'Adeyye"*[8] (the "Palestinian Cause") and the story and it was always there. And I think more – there was the emotional attachment, but the intellectual interest grew more in university, when I myself wanted to learn more about the Middle East and the politics of the Middle East, and I became more interested in learning the history and the facts and the details of Palestine and identifying, you know, aspects of the Palestinian identity in myself.

> [Kismet:] I always felt that, for instance although I was born in Syria and I grew up there, I always felt more Palestinian. Part of it was because I spent a lot of time with my mom's family, so I always identified myself as Palestinian. I don't think necessarily having "Palestinian blood" is important in the sense that I'm half Syrian, half Palestinian – or more like 75% Palestinian; I have to be genetically correct. [Laughs]

Here, the dynamics of identity formation are clearly expressed, where the participants reflect

on and emphasize the dual nature of their identities as essentially inborn and socially produced.

For both Ayman and Haya, the connection with the Palestinian identity is based more on a

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[8] *El'adeyye* (Arabic: القضيه) meaning "the issue" or "the cause," used in reference to the Palestinian cause.

personal relation to its narratives rather than an essential belonging attained at birth. Pursuing

the Palestinian identity is a common theme referred to by the participants, indicating that

belonging to the Palestinian identity is a matter of personal choice, rather than a latent destiny.

Here, however, the construction of that identity becomes dependant on three variables: the

essential qualities that are born-into, the social production of the Palestinian identity learned

from their parents and social environments, and also their own research and synthesis of the

Palestinian identity. The internalization of the Palestinian identity is therefore strongly

influenced by the essential qualities and social matrices present in the lives of Palestinians, yet

it is ultimately dependant on a personal attachment and interest in order to become a

cemented *primary* identity where the lack of this personal connection renders individuals as

"detached, even though they may be born Palestinian and have the same knowledge of the

issue".

Becoming/Being Palestinian

Of particular significance is Carla's sense of identification, as her Palestinian identity was

disclosed to her at a later age. The fact that Carla was unaware of her Palestinian heritage until

she was 12 colors her sense of identification, and indicates that the lack of awareness of her

essential inheritance and the absence of rigid social environments that dictate identity plays an

equal role in shaping self-identification as their presence.

> [Carla:] I resent my parents for not telling me what I was, or who I was, or where
> I came from since I was a kid. I feel like, because, maybe the fact that I didn't
> discover or I didn't relate to my identity when I was a child, maybe gave me more
> – I became more attached to it when I realized who I was. Yeah, I guess I could
> say that that was lacking; asking myself "where am I from?" or "who are my
> people?" since I was a child. I've always been an outsider over here. I've always
> been different than *any* other Arab. [Emphasis hers] Because over here it's all
> Lebanese, Syrian, Egyptian. I could have never – I was never able to relate to

them. I speak with a different accent for instance, and they'd make fun of it sometimes. But I had no clue who I was, I used to say – there was a time I used to say I'm Lebanese simply because I had no clue!

In contrast to other participants whose sense of being Palestinian was taken for granted as they grew up, Carla grew up in Montreal, removed from Palestinian communities, and was raised without the influence of her parents' nationalisms. However, this lack of a clear and unambiguous belonging led her to identify with the Palestinian identity more strongly as she discovered it as her "true" inherited identity. This illustrates that the Palestinian identity is perceived as a rightful and authentic inheritance by Palestinians born in the diaspora as their responses illustrate its significance in directing and anchoring their identities. Just as its essentialism limits the scope of identification to one "authentic" ideal, the lack of an authentic on which to fall back in Carla's upbringing created a void that prevented her from connecting with other nationalisms and collectives. As a result, authenticity and its markers remain a vital component of identity in general, and in Palestinian identity in particular.

Similarly, in her responses, Kismet demonstrated her struggles in assimilating various nationalisms within her own "authentic" identity.

> [Kismet:] After I moved to Abu Dhabi, most of my classmates were Palestinians.
> So it made more sense for me to be Palestinian because I could fit in better.
> Now, one of the things I suffered from as a child is that I have a Syrian father and
> a Palestinian mother, so I felt odd. All of my classmates' parents came from the
> same place – both would be Egyptian or Palestinian – and I felt that I was weird.
> Somehow it made me feel that there was something wrong with me, so I always
> wished it were different. That feeling went away with time. In high school I felt
> more Palestinian. I grew up in a house where it didn't matter where you're from,
> we were really a family who strongly believed in *"Qawmeyye 'Arabeyye"*[9] ("Pan-
> Arabism"). So that's how my identity was shaped, I didn't care where anyone

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[9] *Qawmeyye 'Arabeyye* (Arabic: قوميه عربيه) meaning Pan-Arabism; an ideology espousing the unification – or, sometimes, close cooperation and solidarity against perceived enemies of the Arabs – of the countries of the Arab world, from the Atlantic Ocean to the Arabian Sea. It is closely connected to Arab nationalism, which asserts that the Arabs constitute a single nation. Its popularity was at its height during the 1950s and 1960s.

came from. To me, the Palestinian cause was something very important that we all had to work for, and it didn't matter where you came from. When I had to deal with people in class who weren't like that, I found it odd, and thought there was something wrong with them.

As with the other participants, Kismet's identification as Palestinian in an environment of Palestinians reflects the ways personal national identity is influenced by the social matrix. In particular, the nuances of being "75% Palestinian" as opposed to 100% Palestinian, and her emphasis on being "genetically correct" illustrate the importance of essential authenticity within that social matrix as opposed to her home environment where Pan-Arabism shaped her identity as an Arab-Palestinian who strongly believed in the Palestinian cause. As a result, Kismet felt out of place in a society of "100 percents," which shifted the focus of her identity from a "pure" or "authentic" Palestinian identity, to a "more Palestinian" identity that remained inclusive of other Arab identifications.

This demonstrates a stronger connection with the imagined community of Pan-Arabism as opposed to the Palestinian or Syrian nationalisms to which she also belongs; which, in turn, further emphasizes the ways the internalization of a nationalism through the essential and social matrices varies within the same "authentic" identity. Steph Lawler writes that individuals often "counterpose *being* an (authentic) identity against *doing* an identity (performing)". (101, emphasis in original) This process of differentiation thus results in the development of various levels of authenticity in the Palestinian identity and becomes palpably noticeable in the way Palestinians self-identify within themselves and within their communities, versus the ways they identify themselves to and in opposition to the non-Palestinian Other.

In other words, it can be argued that identities are socially *produced* constructions, (Lawler1) rather than essentially or socially *dictated* molds. Identities are composed of the

essential and existential characteristics carried by individuals and the meanings attributed to them by the social orders in which they are negotiated. As a result, identity formation becomes a dialogical process in which individuals utilize their own essential traits in dialogue with the meanings they hold in the ideological and hegemonic discourses that surround them in shaping and internalizing their own identities. Identity thus becomes a combination of fatalism and choice – it is what individuals are born to, yet it is also what they choose to make of it, all within the scripted values and systems of meaning-making of the societies in which they live.

Nationalism and Imagined Communities

By looking at national identity in particular, these processes become vividly apparent as the ideas of nation, home, personhood, and collectives dialogically form and shape identity. Nationalism is an ideological form of identification that groups communities under one national identity. (Anderson 6) It is a concept that is often used to develop and sustain cohesive ideologies and hegemonies within the boundaries of a nation-state through a common consciousness of its identity. Benedict Anderson's concept of "imagined communities," posits that nationalism is composed of a shared consciousness of universality and connectivity that define its identity within the borders of a state. (6) These imagined communities draw on a variety of ideologies and practices in order to establish a cohesive and universal understanding of the nation. The image created is one that is thus based on ubiquitous and normative understandings of its communities, and is therefore translatable across the divisions of class, gender, race, religion, sexual orientation, etc. Hence, nationalism can be seen as first and foremost an "imagined" construct that is constituted of, and further translated into, the ideologies, hegemonies, laws, and citizenship practices that direct its members. Thus the image

or concept of the nation becomes a malleable and fluid construction that can be (re)negotiated in order to reach the objective of a unified and holistic nation.

The shared consciousness of a nation's imagined community therefore encompasses a variety of defining characteristics inherent to its identity including its geography and landscape, its history, its customs and traditions, as well as its politics. These imagined communities are thus essentializing in ways unlike race, gender, and sexual orientation in that they are essential to the *land* and its connected *concepts* rather than the *body*; and as such, are subject to more universally applicable definitions, limits, and laws that encompass the collective nation. Membership within an imagined community is therefore achieved through a reflection of this collective image in the individual self. This is not to say that the essentializing notions of the body do not feature in nationalism, yet the translatability of that nation's image across the divisions of gender, class, race, religion, and sexuality is heavily reliant on the conceptualization of the state's values in their shared consciousness. Understanding nationalism as an imagined community is thus useful in its distancing between the nation as *concept* and the *citizen* – the body – so that "members can only perceive the nation as a whole by referring to the image of it that they have construed in their own minds". (Tamir 421)

The significance of imagined communities is therefore in their reliance on conceptual relations rather than tangible connections as they are perceptions that, although encompass essential qualities, mainly function to preserve the image of the nation across the varieties of its members, across geographical distances, and through its generations. Hence the unifying ideological frameworks and the historic, geographic, and ethnic essential characteristics inherent to the nation shape and solidify its image within the shared consciousness of its

community, whereas the conceptual nature of the nation's "image" or "identity" allows it a margin of fluidity in which to accrue symbolic rather than essential meaning.

Conversely, where Anderson does away with the limitations of the physical ties between bodies and land, Yael Tamir argues in his article "The Enigma of Nationalism" that imagined communities in themselves do not fully account for nationhood. Imagined communities can be the result of any shared consciousness amongst individuals who otherwise may or may not be connected, whether that shared consciousness centers on nationality or other binding commonalities such as gender, race, class, religion, sexual orientation, etc. In essence, Tamir argues that not all imagined communities are nationalistic, claiming that "a definition of nation should not specify the causes leading to the emergence of nations but should stress those features common to communities that fall under the definition of nation and distinguish them from other imagined communities". (425) Such features thus constitute a nation's cultural identity, where commonalities are found through the hegemonic, ideological, and traditional outlooks and behaviors. As a result, cultural identity and national identity are inextricably intertwined, where cultural identity is a large influence on imagined communities.

Constructing Palestinian Nationalism

This process becomes particularly important and useful in the case of the Palestinian identity, where Palestinians are not united in one homeland and thus have little to connect them across the various geographical distances besides their conceptual understandings of Palestine. This condition of unanchored attachment is repeatedly referenced in the interviews, yet is succinctly expressed by the sentiment of "carrying Palestine" wherever they go.

> [Carla:] Wherever you are, you feel like "Palestine is in me". I carry my identity
> and who I am wherever I go. There's this saying and I've heard it a lot:

"everybody has a country that they live in, we Palestinians have a country that lives in us". And it's very true.

The lack of a sovereign Palestinian state within the borders of historic Palestine obliges Palestinians in the diaspora to rely on the imagination in order to construct a homeland. Where Carla states that Palestine "lives in us," she expresses that condition of necessarily relying on an imagined community in order to find and construct a "homeland" and thus references a canon of Palestinian narratives, cultural traditions, literature, music, etc. that have been carried over by the generations of Palestinians living in exile in order to keep Palestine alive.

It is important to note that the Palestinian imagined community, whether in the occupied territories or in the diaspora, like most other imagined identities, has not been static in the years since the occupation. It has fluctuated and been re-imagined at several moments of its history, yet a few staples of the Palestinian canon have remained consistent throughout the history of its occupation, and will be discussed further in this study. It is these staples that are referenced by the participants as their essential Palestinian markers, among them the ancestry and genealogy that ties their families to the land of Palestine, but also the vast array of nostalgic, romantic, and political and cultural practices that have been passed down from one generation to the next. This canon – this cultural identity – thus becomes the imagined community in which the Palestinian image and identity is constructed. It becomes the resource from which Palestinians in the diaspora draw their identities and the point of entry that connects Palestinians to one another and to their imagined homeland.

Yet cultural identity is not enough to account for nationalism's ethno-, geo-centric essentialism. In the idea of the nation as "home" lies an essence of territorial connections, where "feelings of fraternity, substantial distinctiveness, and exclusivity, as well as beliefs in a

common ancestry and a continuous genealogy," (Tamir 425) are those distinguishing features that bind "nation" and "home" together, and differentiate between national identity, and other forms of imagined communities or cultural identities. Hence, "home" becomes symbolically located and tied to physical geographies and territories, as well as their histories and symbolic significances.

Land and Territory in National Identity

The territoriality of nationalism is therefore a complicated aspect of the Palestinian identity in the diaspora. The history of expulsion and erasure of historic Palestine presents Palestinians, particularly those descendant from the 1948 territories, with a dilemma where the question of "where am I from?" becomes mired in minefields of explanations and a necessity for self-reflection and introspection. The challenge to define "Palestine" when there is no tangible country to point to and to explain their feelings of attachment to this nation that cannot be found on a map thus forces Palestinians into a hyper-awareness of themselves and their national identities early on.

> [Interviewer:] Do you ever wonder if you believe that you're Palestinian because you were born there, or because it's what you've been told all your life, etc.? [Haitham:] I've been asked these questions. I think Palestinians are asked these questions more than anybody else. I've had to look at where Palestinians come from, what being Palestinian means. When was there a Palestine? Was there a Palestine? What was Palestine? Personally, I feel I'm Palestinian because my parents came from there, and ethnically, geographically, I'm from there. My family has been there for over a thousand years. I take pride that I was born there, but at the same time, most Palestinians here weren't born there, that doesn't make them any less Palestinian. So, I recognize that also.

> [Haya:] There were times when I've questioned you know, why it is that I self-identify so strongly as a Palestinian if I've never seen that country, and I've never known what it's like to live there. But I think that being Palestinian is different than living in that country and with the occupation every day, because I feel like there's no hard and fast definition of a Palestinian, you know. The people who

are living there – sure they might be living in Palestine, but some of them, their views or their ties to their country have changed throughout the time that they've been living under occupation. And so I don't think that they can be any more Palestinian than we are per se. But – I mean, I feel like I have as much of a right to call myself a Palestinian because I try to learn more about and represent the culture and the politics and all of that, just as much as the people who live there, but it's just I'm representing it in a different way and I'm abroad.

In their self-identifications, participants frequently referred to their ancestries and genealogy to articulate claims to Palestine. In their self-identifications, these essential qualities ranked highest in their claims to membership to the Palestinian nationalism, yet their responses were also tempered by acknowledgement that essential qualities are not all what the Palestinian identity is constituted of. The lack of a homeland and their absence from what is left of the Palestinian territories leaves Palestinians in the diaspora vulnerable to challenges against their identities. As a result, their inherited ethnic essentialism, although valuable to their personal identifications, becomes necessarily supplemented with knowledge of Palestine, of its cultural identity, its history, and its politics in order to strengthen claims to its national existence. Therefore, despite its inclusion of cultural markers of belonging, territoriality and the connection to the land of Palestine remains a vital component of the Palestinian identity. Claims of ownership based on the premise of inheriting Palestine are thus highly significant in the Palestinian identity.

However, these claims are further complicated by the idea of the Right of Return – one of the most enduring staples of Palestinian identity. Where participants strongly identified as being Palestinian, and comfortably expressed the openness of their cultural identities and their connections to Palestine, the concept of the Right of Return brought out hesitations and mixed reactions in the participants' feelings of belonging to the Palestinian nation.

[Haya:] I would like to have the Right of Return. Because it is an acknowledgement that this is my country and I have a right to return to it. I definitely want to go back, but I can't say I'd want to go back permanently until I know what it's like to be back there to begin with. I'm not sure I want to live there, I definitely want to visit.

[Ayman:] Of course I would go back. I actually haven't thought about it. Although it seems like something obvious, I never actually sat down and thought about it. If I were to go back, it would be to *Safad* – well, '*Alma*[10] is totally destroyed anyway. I'd be living under the state of Israel – or in the West Bank. Maybe.

[Carla:] I don't know, I wouldn't – I don't know. I find it so hard to believe, honestly. As much as I want it, I find it hard to believe that Palestine will ever return. On a scale of one to ten, I think it would be a 3. If I were to go back, it would be with a specific project in mind. To go back and live? It would have to be different. If I can go back to *Haifa*, or *Akka*, or *Ramle*[10], I would. If I could establish a life there, I would. But even though there's little chance of Palestine coming back, I still hold on to my identity in hopes; right? I guess there's always that seed of hope in you. And I hold on to it, because even if Palestine doesn't come back, if only one Palestinian house remains, I would still say I'm Palestinian. Will Palestine come back? *Inshallah*[11]. What's left of it is absolutely nothing, Montreal is bigger than what's left of Palestine. But what's left of it is worth everything.

The hesitations over going back to live in Palestine expressed by the participants, coupled with their strong belief in the Right of Return, thus illustrate the ongoing nature of their unanchored Palestinian identities. The feelings expressed suggest that the Palestinian identity, drawn from the imagined Palestinian community, is untranslatable into a typical nationalism within the borders of a nation-state. The participants' responses signify that being Palestinian in the diaspora today cannot be transposed onto being a Palestinian at home tomorrow, but that a significant shift is needed in order to reground the Palestinian identity in its native territory. This further suggests that a traditional sense of territoriality is incompatible with the uprooted Palestinian identity in the diaspora, as the Palestinian image referenced by the participants is

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[10] Cities and villages in historic Palestine where the participants' families originated, lost to Israeli settlers in 1948
[11] *Inshallah* (Arabic: انشاالله) meaning "God willing".

one that they are unable to ground in their native land. On the other hand however, the connection to the land of Palestine demonstrated by the participants despite not having lived there also indicates that the essential qualities of the Palestinian identity are vital to its nationalism. These essential connections – as opposed to the cultural identity of Palestine – provide Palestinian national identity with a tangibility that binds its collective together. It creates a common goal – the Right of Return – that directs their identities towards nationhood and achieving autonomy in their homeland. The unanchored territoriality and the desire for the Right of Return present in Palestinian nationalisms are therefore the necessary distinguishing features between Palestinian cultural identity and Palestinian national identity.

Therefore, nationalism can be understood as a composite of the cultural identity that shapes its imagined communities, and the essentializing ideologies of ancestry and genealogy that locate an imagined community within a "home" or "homeland" – for instance, history is one influence that is essential to the location of a nation and directly affects its imagined community by its essentialism. The change of location changes the history connected to the community, thus changing the image of their national identity. In combining both fluid and essential elements, the concept of the nation as home thus allows for aspects of agency and choice in terms of affiliation and identification with its "image". Yet this agency is re-inscribed in nationalism's highly essentializing territorial and historical requirements for membership and cohesion – in order to form a collective identity from which to draw the image of home, the feelings of fraternity that are reliant on ancestry, genealogy, and historical belonging remain indispensible.

Authenticating and "Othering" in Palestinian National Identity

The ideological narratives of an imagined community therefore determine the sustainability of a nation's image within and beyond its culture, state, and borders. It is also the ideological aspects of a nation's image that allow for its pervasiveness across the varieties of genders, classes, races, sexualities, and religions of its members. Therefore, although the creation of a nationalism and the building of a national identity are interchangeable concepts, it is also necessary to note their distinctions between the collective and the individual. In opening the concept of nationalism to an imaginary, the possibilities for individual agency in the construction of, and affiliation to, a communal national image allow for a dialogue between the community and the individual. Hence, the creation of a cohesive nationalism and the building of national identity inform one another through the splintered experiences and ideologies of individuals, as well as the uniting and fusing of overarching commonalities. The process of formation of both nationalism and national identity thus necessarily becomes a process of inclusions and exclusions, and a filtering between the romanticized authentic and the marginalized and opposing "other".

In defining themselves, participants clearly delineated the differences between being "Palestinian" versus being "other" through the very language and logic used in their self-identifications. Living in Canada where communities of various backgrounds continue to immigrate and settle renders it typical for Canadians to identify as both Canadian *and* other, with the result that hyphenated national identities (eg. Greek-Canadian, Italian-Canadian, etc.) are common. However, this is not the case with the participants, whose responses to being asked "where are you from?" strongly stressed their Palestinian backgrounds, and emphasized the deliberate process of answering this seemingly innocuous question.

[Haitham:] I say I'm Palestinian. Because I like to be accurate, I think that's an accurate description. Sometimes I've said I'm from Palestine and people don't know where that is. I could say I'm from Palestine, but saying I'm Palestinian is more familiar to people. And it's a political statement too, meaning that I'm Palestinian and there's a struggle going on. We're fighting for a Palestine that isn't there right now, or that was there and isn't there anymore. I have Canadian citizenship, I'll say that, but I'm Palestinian.

[Kismet:] It depends. Usually if I'm talking to some random people and it's small talk, I would just say I'm from Syria. When I first moved to Canada I used to say I'm from Abu Dhabi. But now I say I'm from Palestine. After I became involved with the Palestinian cause I started saying that I'm Palestinian more often. There's nothing wrong with being Syrian but it's just that I'm so involved in the cause that I feel more Palestinian than Syrian.

[Ayman:] "Do you want the long story of the short story?" That's what I answer when people ask. [Laughs] I'd say that I'm a Palestinian. I identify right away as being Palestinian because I don't like it when people who are, don't. I don't blame them because I feel that they're justified in saying that they're Lebanese. Some Palestinian refugees I know who come to Canada say they're Lebanese, and they're justified in doing that because essentially their parents were born there and they were born there and they lived there. They don't know anything about Palestine, they don't know what life is like there, they know what life is like in Lebanon. So they rightfully should identify as Lebanese. But I feel that because I never lived in Lebanon I can't identify either way. So if I'm going to identify myself, I might say Emirati. But that's ridiculous; people would think I'm scamming them if I said that. I maybe have once or twice in my life said I'm Lebanese when I was trying to cut the conversation short and not have to explain anything. But even if I have a little bit of time I'll say I'm Palestinian. I'd leave it at that. So I identify as Palestinian, or Palestinian refugee if someone pushes it.

[Haya:] I always say I'm Palestinian. When I was younger, when I recently had come to Canada from Jordan, I used to say I was Jordanian or from Jordan. But I think I've been identifying less and less with the Jordanian part, even though I carry the passport, and I've just said I'm Palestinian. I mean, I always knew I was a Palestinian, but when I was in Jordan I also identified as a Jordanian; when I was living there. And aside from the fact that I was born there, and I lived there for a certain amount of time, I didn't feel like I had ownership or claim over it as my own country. It's – I feel I have more of a claim in Palestine because that's where generations of my family were, and it was their country – they weren't immigrants or visitors, it was their own country.

[Carla:] Sometimes I say I'm Jordanian, sometimes I say I'm Palestinian. It really depends. Before – now I'm much better, I really do try to say that I'm Palestinian.

> Generally, when Arabs ask, I immediately say I'm Palestinian. With 'ajanib[12], let's say – I'll tell you: once, I did my internship at the Jewish General Hospital. It was like I was afraid of saying that I'm Palestinian, you know? I didn't want to, like, fail, I didn't want to – and any time I had to work with someone whose nationality I did not know, I used to say Jordanian. I mean, legit, this is probably a fear that my parents planted in me– say *anything* but Palestinian. [Emphasis hers] You know? It's not shame – I'm not ashamed or embarrassed to say I'm Palestinian, it's just a fear of being judged or misunderstood. Now I'm feeling much better saying, "you know what, I'm just going to say I'm Palestinian because that's what I really am".

What is immediately apparent from the participants' responses is that there is no straightforward answer when it comes to their backgrounds and origins. The context of the question greatly affects their responses, indicating that not only is it difficult for Palestinians to define their identities to themselves, but that it is even more so when identifying themselves to non-Palestinian others.

A common sentiment expressed by the participants is the need to justify and validate their Palestinian-ness, both to themselves and to others. The participants identified "accuracy" and "justification" as means of defining the parameters of their identities, suggesting that it is not enough to be a Palestinian, period, but that evidence in support of their claims is needed. This indicates that the Palestinian identity is intrinsically perceived as a distinct identity that is different from Other non-Palestinian identities, and that can only be expressed in relation to other identities. Rationalizations and defenses of their identities in order to validate and justify their claims to the Palestinian identity immediately arise – Kismet's involvement in the Palestinian cause is *why* she feels more Palestinian than Syrian, Haya does not feel a claim to ownership of the Jordanian identity *because* it is not the country in which her family's

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[12] 'Ajanib (Arabic: اجانب) plural for 'Ajnabi (Arabic: أجنبي) meaning "foreign," is used to denote outsiders or foreigners, mainly signifying non-Arabs.

generations had lived, Ayman does not feel "justified" in saying that he's Lebanese *because* he had never lived there, nor is he comfortable identifying as Emirati *because* he does not fit the mold of Emirati identity.

The language of self-identification of Palestinians is therefore inherently a language of differentiation, indicating that it is not enough to merely identify as Palestinian, but that an explanation of each individual trajectory is required in order to support their claims to Palestinian authenticity. This is also expressed in the participants' choices of other identifications when they are unable to provide these explanations, or even when a danger of misunderstanding and possible backlash against their Palestinian nationalities is perceived. Therefore, in small talk conversations or in instances where Palestinians may feel targeted, they sometimes choose to identify differently in order to avoid misconceptions and misunderstandings of their Palestinian identities. These deliberate choices and the language of self-identification used by the participants reflect the position of the Palestinian identity as one that is under threat of erasure, and that is continuously undermined by the opposing myths and narratives of the Israeli identity, as well as the general lack of awareness of its existence often encountered in most non-Palestinian communities.

Essential Authenticity and Particularism in National Identity

The construction of a Palestinian "authentic" identity is therefore fundamentally inherent to the Palestinian subjectivity, as it allows Palestinians to unequivocally mark themselves as members of the Palestinian community. As a result, markers of authenticity begin to include the essentializing aspects of identity such as lineage, ancestry, genealogy, and historicity, as well as the ideological ideals and cultural norms of what it means to be a

Palestinian such as the customs and traditions, rules, and hegemonies. National identity at both the collective and individual levels thus becomes a balancing act between the fluidity of its cultural identity and the fixity of its territoriality and genealogy – between idealized authenticity and inescapable assimilation.

In his investigation of the ways universalism and particularism shape identity, Ernesto Laclau begins by suggesting that "there is no possible mediation between universality and particularity: the particular can only corrupt the universal". (84) Similarly, Meaghan Morris writes that "[n]ational identity occurs in an encounter with cultural difference when and only when that difference cannot be represented to the satisfaction of all concerned". (1) Thus it can be argued that national identity is cultivated in the instances when cultural particularlism cannot be universalized. These concepts highlight the fact that the process of formation of a "universal" nationalism based on an "authentic" ideal necessitates a separation between that "universal authentic" and the "particular other". Consequently, the "universal" becomes tied to essential "authentic" qualities and the "particular" becomes a signifier for difference, implying a lack of compatibility between the "universal" and "particular" such that they become mutually exclusive. Hence, in the developing of an "authentic" Palestinian identity, a process of identification of the "universal" versus the "particular," and a strain between the two identities, arises. This results in a tension in the Palestinian identity between the romanticized "authentic" – framed by the universal and essential narratives of Palestinian identity – and the emerging fluid, plural, and "hybrid" identities of its members; further suggesting the notion of a disjointed and unbridgeable divide between the "universal" and the "particular".

Membership and belonging to imagined communities is therefore dependant on bridging the divides between the "universal" and "particular," the "authentic" and the "acquired," as well as the moments of overlap between them, in ways that reflect the image of the nation "to the satisfaction of all concerned". Thus, membership of individuals to collective identities is contingent on two different dynamics: the ability to share the same image of a nation amongst the imaginations of all members of the community, and the ability to share a consciousness and awareness of each other amongst all the individuals who share that image. In other words, it is not enough to have the same understanding and image of a nation as that of its imagined community in order to belong to that community, recognition from within the community itself is vital in order to attain belonging and responsibility within it. Therefore, although Anderson's definition of "imagined communities" does not require that its members know one another, and suggests that their nationalism exists as a conceptual construction in which belonging is a matter of affiliation with the "image", it still necessitates an awareness and affinity amongst its members in order to foster solidarity and cohesion.

Membership and the Politics of Recognition

The combination of conceptual and essential, collective and individual sets of characteristics that form a nation's image and determine its members is the premise of Charles Taylor's *Politics of Recognition*, in which he suggests recognition as a main component for achieving belonging. Writing that "[n]onrecognition or misrecognition can inflict harm, can be a form of oppression, imprisoning someone in a false, distorted, and reduced mode of being," (225) Taylor argues that recognition is subject to two types of politics: the politics of dignity and the politics of difference. Where the first refers to the rational understanding that a universal

human potential for respect is the driving value for recognition, the latter identifies the universal human potential for forming and defining one's own identity as the driving value for recognition. (Taylor 235) In essence, Taylor's politics of equal dignity "is based on the idea that all human beings are worthy of respect, whereby the basis for respect is a universal human potential such as human beings' status as rational agents who are capable of directing their own lives". (Cooke 259) Taylor's politics of dignity is "difference blind" (234) in the sense that it does not value essential qualities in order to recognize members of its nationalism, and therefore, essential difference neither adds to nor detracts from the belonging of individuals to an imagined community. Conversely, Taylor's politics of difference focuses on the notion of essential difference – identifying the universal human potential for difference, or particularism, as a key value in achieving recognition.

However, Taylor's use of the politics of difference is significant in that he does not limit the value in difference merely to its potential, but expounds on the importance of also recognizing value in its results for a functional politics of difference. Therefore, equal recognition of the manifestations of difference is a vital component towards achieving a politics of recognition. The politics of difference therefore becomes a much more complex forum to navigate, as it is widened by the need to account for not only the possibility of difference, but also for the products of difference, and to afford equal recognition to the variety of those products. For instance, as in the case of Palestinians in and outside the territories, a common inherited history of conflict that is shared within a national imagined community can be interpreted exclusively, with hierarchies of experience, or inclusively, as victims together. The recognition of a potential for difference in an exclusive understanding in which the differences

between the various historical experiences of Palestinians are identified is not enough for an effective politics of difference. Equal recognition must be given to all the products of the conflict that led to the Palestinian experience whether within or outside the occupied territories. In other words, even in the dichotomy and stratification that arises from difference, equal value must be recognized in either side's position, rather than the creation of a bias in which one set of essential characteristics is given preference over another. Taylor's argument here is that authenticity and essential difference must be recognized without allowing for one set of traits to overpower the other.

In order for recognition to be effectively procured, Taylor argues that a balance between what he calls the "politics of dignity" and the "politics of difference" must be achieved. Where "the politics of equal dignity focuses on what all human beings share in common, the politics of (equal) difference focuses on each person's (or group's) distinctness from every other". (Cooke 259) Here, the ideological narratives determine whether greater emphasis in a community is placed on the autonomy and dignity of its members, or whether the inherent authenticity and difference of its members is more valued. Therefore, this framework is equally as important in understanding the structures that shape an imagined community in that it points to the different inclusive and/or exclusive ideologies that determine recognition within that community. Taylor concludes that a balance between the politics of dignity and the politics of difference is vital to the development of a functional politics of recognition. He suggests a "fusion of horizons," (252) which he describes as a space in which deliberation and discursive engagement can flourish in order to determine this balance. Similarly, for the creation of a cohesive nationalism, a balance between the ideological and essential qualities of that

community must be achieved. Therefore, Taylor's fusion of horizons provides the forum for the

negotiation of where value is placed, and when; and hence, the space that provides this forum

becomes key to the determination of a national image.

Achieving Recognition in Diaspora

However, the politics of recognition in the Palestinian identity are further complicated

due to the diaspora of its population that has splintered the Palestinian experience and resulted

in various Palestinian communities that reside within nationalisms other than their own. As a

result, the politics of difference that separate Palestinians from the Other become the focal

definitions of their identities within their host communities, and a process of self-differentiation

complemented by the systemic and institutionalized marginalization of Palestinians in their

host countries emerges as an inescapable component of the Palestinian identity.

> [Kismet:] I remember once, a Palestinian girl was thanking me for participating in an activity or other for Palestine that we were doing. I was in 9th grade I think, it was during the Second Intifada. It annoyed me that she was thanking me, I felt that it was something everyone had to do. And when she said something like "God bless you Syrians," my thought was that "no, we're all Arabs and we all know what this cause is and it's our cause". When I was in Grade 12, I drew Handala[13] on the blackboard and someone said that it was very well done and asked who drew it. When I said it was me, she said "You? But you're Syrian!" And I was so bothered because they keep thinking along these citizenship or nationalist lines and I felt really sad that people thought that way. I don't know why. That's when I realized that I was raised differently, because it was at that point that I felt different.

> [Ayman:] And you know. Even though you're young, you know there's a difference between you being a Palestinian and being Lebanese. You just grow up knowing it. Like, there's something not the same about you and everyone else. For instance, every time we travelled to Lebanon they've treated us differently at border security. They have to rub it in your face that you're a guest. You've been a guest in their country for two generations, but you're still a guest. Even after we got our Canadian passports – once they realize that we're

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[13] Refer to Image 3, Appendix D

originally Palestinians they would treat us that way again. You're put into that category and there's no getting out of it, no matter what you do. You're a Palestinian refugee, even if there's no connection, even though you're not the one who left the country. I don't even understand what the bad thing is about being a Palestinian refugee, it's supposedly an honor, right? You're supposedly the representative of Palestine and it's a huge identity for the Arabs in general and they parade with it left, right, and centre. But as Palestinians, they treat us terribly. Why? Aren't we the representatives of the struggle?

Although the participants' self-identifications illustrated a heightened sense of fluidity, agency, and inclusion, the positioning of Palestinians in their host communities reflects the opposite. In their experiences with other nationalisms, the participants illustrate the lack of a politics of recognition of their identities, as being Palestinian automatically excludes them from the nationalisms of other countries in which they resided. Ayman's anecdotes on the treatment of Palestinians in Lebanon for instance highlight the dual space occupied by Palestinians in the Arab imagination: they are simultaneously "heroes," whose cause is touted as an "Arab" cause, yet they are systemically marginalized and ostracized in most Arab societies. Similarly, Kismet's understanding of the Palestinian cause as opposed to the perceptions of her Palestinian classmates underscores the untraversable divide that is socially constructed between Palestinian and Other, so that Handala for instance, the heroic representative of Palestinians, is seen as a purely Palestinian symbol that only Palestinians are expected to use, recognize, and relate to.

Therefore, it becomes apparent that in the traditional nationalisms of these communities, a politics of difference is valued more strongly, and the differentiation between the Palestinian authentic and the non-Palestinian Other is conducted by both Palestinians and their counterparts. This thus results in further differentiation in the self-identification of Palestinians, as they instinctively cling to their Palestinian difference from the Other in

retaliation to the lack of effective recognition they receive in their non-Palestinian environments. As a result, this internalization of difference imbalances the Palestinian image in its own community toward a stronger emphasis on a politics of dignity, where the essential qualities of ancestry and genealogy and "blood" become more highly valued. As a result, this further heightens the significance of authenticity in procuring membership within the community – as seen by the ways Kismet's Palestinian classmates differentiated between her and themselves – and thus creates a hierarchy of belonging where degrees of "authenticity," measured by the presence of essential qualities, determine belonging.

Identity is therefore inherently a process of creation, in which various facets of identification are layered and overlapped to form an individual's defining identity. It includes essential qualities that are inborn – including sex, ethnicity, etc. – as well as the symbols and meanings ascribed to these qualities by the social matrix in which individuals reside – including gender, nationality, etc. Identity is thus a socially produced process, in which an individual's identifiers are continuously negotiated in dialogue with the overarching hegemonies and ideologies of society. As a result, one can conclude that identity is innately dual, as it is both essential and fluid, and it is the internalization and synthesis of those qualities that determines an individual's sense of self-identification, and the emergence of his/her primary identity.

In the study of national identity and Palestinian nationalism, the processes of identity construction become particularly vivid. The responses of participants in this study reveal that identity is simultaneously essentially inherited and socially constructed, as it is continuously renegotiated and in flux. Therefore, Palestinian national identity presents an inherent duality,

where essential authenticity and the potential for plurality both dictate its parameters. As a result, Palestinian nationalism can be seen as a confluence of both its authenticity and its hybridity, wherein essential characteristics are affixed absolute and universal meanings that are genealogically inherited only to be reinterpreted through the social matrices of the communities in which individuals reside.

Furthermore, nationalism can be understood as a process in which a national image is conceptualized within its imagined communities, through the negotiations that occur between its ideological perceptions and essential characteristics. It is a creation of an image of the nation that is translatable across its various divisions of gender, class, religion, etc., and thus constitutes an identity that includes a community's essential characteristics, ideologies, and cultural cannon. National imagined communities are therefore unique from other types of imagined communities in that they are tied to the essential qualities of land, ancestry, and genealogy in order to foster cohesion and feelings of fraternity and solidarity. Therefore, the construction of imagined communities is also a process where the balance of a nation's values between authenticity and autonomy is achieved and perpetuated. Anderson's imagined communities thus function to provide the overarching narratives of a national image, however, they are not enough to define and shape national identity in itself. As a result, membership within an imagined community is achieved through a reflection of this collective image in the individual self, thus necessitating the individual internalization of its collective values and ideals.

In the case of Palestinian nationalism, this process becomes particularly significant as the Palestinian nation necessarily exists only in the imagination of its community, and cannot be located on a world map. This results in a heightening of the value of authenticity and

essentialism in the Palestinian nationalism, as demonstrated by the participants' responses and experiences. Palestinian nationalism is thus constituted of a continuously shifting balance between its members' essential and acquired identities, where authenticity and plurality carry varying value in defining members' national identities and their belonging to the overarching Palestinian collective. And it is therefore through these dialogical negotiations that the Palestinian national identity becomes a cemented *primary* identity within individuals' self-identifications that simultaneously encompasses and transcends the numerous other facets of their identities.

It can thus be concluded that national identity at the individual level is necessarily a self-invention that simultaneously reflects and shapes the collective nationalism and identity of the imagined community. The process of constructing identity is therefore a circular loop of meaning making where the collective ideologies and hegemonies inform individual identities, which in turn influence and direct the community's image. As a result, the universal and essential authenticity of a national identity is always already in dialogue with the difference and diversity of its individual members, and is therefore always already open to plurality.

"What about identity? I asked.
He said: It is self-defence...
Identity is the child of birth, but
at the end, it is self-invention, and not
an inheritance of the past. I am multitudinous...
within me an ever new exterior. And
I belong to the question of the victim. Were I not ⁃
from there, I would have trained my heart
to nurture there deers of metaphor...
So carry your homeland where you go, and be
a narcissist if need be/

Chapter 4. Statelessness, Exile, and Alienation

Post-colonial nationalism has developed markedly in the last century and the inexorable tide of globalization has resulted in various forms and modalities of collectives and membership. Carriers of multiple citizenships, transnationals, nomads, ex-patriots, immigrants, refugees, and exiles have complicated the simple structure of the homogenous nation by crossing borders and challenging the notions of discrete and essential difference amongst nations and cultures. Furthermore, post-modernity has challenged and renegotiated statehood and the power of national borders to the extent that the nation-state is arguably in decline and transnationalism and uprooted existence are on the rise. Yet despite these developments, statelessness and its disempowerment remain an uncommon condition that is unique to Palestinians – historic Palestine has been wiped off the map and those who originated from it are largely homeless. The uprooting of the Palestinian identity and its resulting statelessness through multiple generations thus relegate it to a non-tangible and transient space. Therefore, the Palestinian nation is by necessity, and as a result of conflict, relegated to the imagination – as more than just an imagined community, but as a nation that only exists in the imaginations of its members. As a result, the Palestinian identity cannot be located specifically within a spectrum of traditional nationalism, transnationalism, diaspora, and nomadism, but draws on elements of each modality of being in order to exist.

Transnationalism, the Third Space, and Rhizomatic Becoming

If traditional nationalism is understood in terms of discrete imagined communities in which collective identities are shaped, and where "nationalism's specificity is that it is necessarily territorial, in so far as to be a national is to possess a territory—without which there

can be no national existence," (Morley 208) transnationalism can be understood to mean

"belonging both to the community of the receiving country and the community in the country

of origin". (Madsen 68) More specifically, transnationalism is a concept used to describe

"'contracts, coalitions and interactions across state boundaries that [are] not directly controlled

by the central policy organs of government". (Clavin 425) This definition places

"transnationalism" as a condition unique to such multi-national organizations and their

workers, and the border-crossings that are integral to their functionality. It is significant in its

independence of the state – and thus, possession of territory – for the emergence of

collectives, and instead relies more on the border crossings of imagined communities rather

than merely state lines. Rather than drawing on an image of a nation in determining a collective

identity, brands and cultural identities become the common denominators that reflect

membership within a collective. From this perspective, the progress of technology and the

"global flows of information, investment, trade and people across national borders" have come

to mean that "we are heading in the direction of a 'borderless world,'" (Morley 204) where a

dominant culture of consumption rather than civil responsibility defines the boundaries of

belonging. This also implies a dissolving of difference as the ubiquitous acts of trade and

consumption overpower the markers of cultural difference in determining inclusions into the

transnational collective.

However, this explanation simplifies the relations between individuals and collectives,

and amongst communities in and of themselves. Morley writes that "[d]espite the fact that

many people have links (of various sorts) which transcend the space of the nation, these do not

often, as Hannerz puts it, 'coalesce into any single conspicuous alternative to the nation.'" (205)

This harkens back to the idea of imagined communities that are not nationalistic in nature presented earlier by Yael Tamir – that culture, gender, race, religion, etc. can offer commonalities that bind collectives regardless of national and territorial borders. As a result, the existence of both national and non-national collectives suggests a negotiation between various forms of collectives in defining and shaping identities yet cannot definitively challenge the importance of national communities. As Hannerz continues to suggest, "if the 'nation is not really withering away … it is changing'—but he rightly argues it is not … 'being replaced by any single transnational culture.'" (Morley 205) Here the implication is that non-national collectives cannot replace nations and nationalism, nor can they provide a universal transnational culture despite the decline of the relevance of national borders in the shaping of identities. This indicates that national identity is necessarily always already rooted in territoriality, yet develops to transcend its essential boundaries (of ancestry, genealogy, etc.) to connect with, and incorporate, various other nationalisms, cultures, and collectives.

This model of understanding national identity echoes Iain Chambers' concept of "rhizomatic becoming" and Homi Bhabha's "third space" as the post-modern alternatives to traditional nationalism. Based on Deleuze and Guattari's conceptualization of the "rhizome," an "acentered, nonhierarchical, nonsignifying system without a General and without an organizing memory or central automation, defined solely by a circulation of states," (Deleuze and Guattari 23) Chambers describes the condition of "rhizomatic becoming" as an organic, non-structured development of identity that is interconnected and continuously in flux. Similarly, Homi Bhabha's "third space" suggests that belonging is achieved not in a space of discrete and fixed boundaries, but a space "where the familiar and the foreign are conjoined, where it is less clear

where home concludes and the foreign begins—where we must dwell in home as itself a hybrid space of coeval times and lives". (Morley 211) This blurring of boundaries is integral to the concepts of a mobile and hybrid identity, and thus the "third space" and "rhizomatic becoming" represent the conditions in which plurality of identities is developed and negotiated.

Finding Home in Alienation

In the case of the Palestinian identity, whose borders and boundaries are untenable at best due to the disappearance of its home territory, the potential for achieving a "third space" and "rhizomatic becoming" is significantly heightened. "Home" for Palestinians in the diaspora is therefore an indefinable space that includes elements of their combined experiences, yet that cannot be clearly and definitively articulated.

> [Carla:] Do I feel at *home* when I'm in Canada? [Emphasis hers] Yes; yes and no. It's a weird feeling, I don't know where I belong. If you told me to go live in Jordan, I won't have a problem. If you told me to go live in Palestine, even better, because I would love to go live there. I would miss over here, yes, of course, but, do I – I don't know. It's – I – it's weird. I don't know. I wouldn't be able to tell you.

> [Ayman:] Canada is my home. Canada is what I know as my home. The only reason why Emirates isn't home is that there's nothing for me there anymore – no family or friends. Emirates is therefore not a country I would call home, even though it had a lot of influence on my life. I still sometimes look up their soccer leagues that I used to follow, when I feel nostalgic. But that doesn't mean that I feel any loyalty or allegiance to Emirates. It's part of my past.

> [Haitham:] I've been everywhere in the UAE so I definitely have a sense of belonging there. It's not as strong as it used to be, because I've spent a lot of time here now and actually because my political understanding of the Emirates affected my sense of belonging there. I do think of the UAE as one of my homes. Palestine, UAE, Toronto, York University. Believe it or not York is like a home on its own for me now. I've been here for 11 years. The tug of war happens when I think of the first 5 years I lived in the UAE because those were the best years of my life, my childhood years. I'm very nostalgic about those years. That period of my life has the top spot in terms of where I belong. And I guess I should say

Toronto is home. It took a while for me to call this place home actually. It took a long time.

[Kismet:] The thing is, I would say that according to this poem[14], he has more of a conflict inside of him than I have inside of me. He's saying that there are two different banks and there is something in the middle between them. I wouldn't describe myself as that, because I wouldn't say that there are two mutually exclusive sides to my personality, I feel I like it here and I would like it there. It's not either or. I understand where he's coming from and what he means, and maybe with time I will feel this division more, but now, I feel like I don't have that much of a division. Yes I do feel that I'm from here and there, and neither here nor there, but I don't feel that it's creating a division.

As illustrated in their responses, Palestinians in the diaspora relate to the concept of "home" as a necessarily fluid and indefinite space. The mobility of the Palestinian identity and its lack of ties to a national homeland allow it to acquire multiple physical homes, and a conceptual Home that is a combination of all of them. As described by the participants, Home is indefinable; it is both Canada and not. It is a merging of history, memory, experience, and yet it is also an ever-expanding sense of belonging where divisions and commonalities are constantly in flux.

The mobility and the adaptability of the Palestinian identity is therefore evident in the ways the participants elucidate on their migratory experiences – home is here in Canada, home is in their childhoods, home is in Palestine. However, the various "homes" described are not discretely divided and categorized, nor do they seamlessly blend together. As Carla describes it, "I would miss over here, yes, of course, but, do I – I don't know. It's – I – it's weird. I don't know. I wouldn't be able to tell you". This response, coupled with the fact that it took Haitham a long time of residing in Toronto before being able to identify it as home, and the ways Ayman works through his understanding of "home," indicate that the various "homes" to which Palestinians belong are in constant dialogue and negotiation with each other. Rather than melding into one

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[14] Refer to Appendix C

Home, in which the boundaries between the various experiences dissolve into one hybrid space, the distinctive boundaries of each home within the Palestinian identity remain intact. Conversely, the internal boundaries of the Palestinian identity's homes are also constantly reformed and shaped by coming up against one another. In other words, Home for Palestinians is neither a fixed nor a borderless fluid space, but rather it is a space in which the borders of various home(s) are porous and semi-permeable, where each experience of belonging is distinctly identifiable, yet where Home remains unanchored. Belonging for Palestinians in the diaspora therefore remains elusive, contested and indefinable.

Palestinian Identity in an "Alien Space"

As with Deleuze and Guattari, both Chambers and Bhabha reveal the fluidity of belonging by emphasizing the importance of dispensing with essential difference and discrete boundaries to identities by framing "home" as itself a fluid and indefinable space of belonging.

> In Deleuzeguattarian terms, the rhizome is populated by lines of flight (deterritorialization) as well as lines of 'territorialization' by which flows become halted, ordered, and attributed. As Deleuze and Guattari write, 'there exists tree or root structures in rhizomes; conversely, a tree branch or root division may begin to burgeon into a rhizome' (p. 15). Neither the rhizome (the potential for things to deterritorialize and enter into new assemblages) or the root-tree (the stratification of things into orders, taxonomies, or structures) is primary. (Wallin 84)

However, Deleauze and Guattari emphasize that despite the capacity of the "rhizome" to deterritorialize identity, "the kind of smooth or non-hierarchical spaces created by the rhizome are 'not in themselves libratory ... [n]ever believe that a smooth space will suffice to save us.'" (Wallin 84) Similarly, both Chambers and Bhabha are unable to entirely dispense with traditional nationalism, so that the "familiar" is a necessary component of the "third space" just as "rhizomatic becoming" has an origin of departure that is rooted in the original "home" from

which the rhizomatic connections develop. Indeed, Chambers continues to write that "despite the optimistic theorising of nomadism and rhizomatic becoming, the mystery of that sense of belonging—deposited in the desire, the need to be a part of a historical social and cultural unit that is called "home" [or] "homeland"—refuses to fade away". (Morley 211)

Therefore, while the Palestinian identity displays the traits of a "third space" and "rhizomatic becoming," it is even more bound due to its uprooted nature by the desire for a "homeland" than the mobile identity that is grounded in traditional nationalism. That is to say that if the "third space" and "rhizomatic becoming" allow rooted national identities to achieve fluidity and hybridity, the lack of a homeland in the Palestinian identity prevents it from achieving those conditions to the same degree. Instead, Palestinian identity can be perceived to occupy an "alien space," where its statelessness allows it a measure of fluidity that is bound by the desire for a grounded homeland. This is further reflected in the dual presence of discrete Palestinian-ness as well as a multiple consciousness in the identities of the participants, who are comfortable in their belonging to multiple identities, yet are unable to dispense with their primary Palestinian identities.

> [Kismet:] I don't feel a tug-of-war as Palestinian-Syrian. I still feel more
> Palestinian than Syrian. I don't see a conflict, but I still see myself as being more
> Palestinian than Syrian. As for Canada – I do like it here, I really like living here.
> But I want to go back to Palestine. I never doubted my right to go back. Before
> my grandma died, the only thing she wanted to do was go back. When I visited
> Syria in 2008, no matter what we talked about, she would bring up Palestine. She
> would say that the weather is better in Palestine than in Syria, which didn't make
> much sense really. And whenever anyone tried to reason with her she would
> insist that the weather in Palestine was the best. If we were eating beans, she'd
> say beans in Palestine were the best. It was very clear to me then how much she
> wanted to go back and because she couldn't go back, I promised her that I
> would, and that if she had lost hope, then I hadn't. It's my right, no one will take
> it away from me. And it doesn't matter whether I actually move back there or
> not, it's still my right. My grandparents worked really hard when they were in

Palestine, they deserved everything that they owned there and it was taken away from them and someone needs to be accountable.

[Haya:] I do want to explore and learn about other cultures, but I still feel firmly grounded in my own. I don't feel it's such a hybrid thing where I can take it off whenever I want to. I don't feel – I do feel that I belong to multiple places but I don't feel that self-identifying as a Palestinian would diminish from the others, simply because I almost feel that they're mutually exclusive. I mean, the way that I feel that I belong to Palestine is much more like we said before, in an abstract way – it's the Palestinian identity, and the culture and the literature and all of that and the history. It's different from the way I identify as belonging to Jordan – which, I know Jordan's streets, I know Jordan's, you know, the way of life there and I don't identify with the Jordanian identity per se. In Canada it's a bit of both, it's identifying with the culture and the politics and the cultural references and things like that, and knowing the city itself, but knowing that I'm not from here. I can live here, and I can see my future here, but my past is not from this country.

Both Kismet and Haya here display a fluidity of identity that encompasses multiple "homes," yet both return to the point of departure – Palestine – as the "original" source of their identities. It is where Kismet longs to "go back," and where Haya's past is from, and it therefore represents a void that prevents Palestinians from fully connecting with their other "homes" and dispensing with the unattainable homeland of Palestine. The rootedness of the Palestinian identity in its connection to historic Palestine thus reflects its deep territorialization, despite the fact that being Palestinian and belonging to the Palestinian community necessitates an unequivocal state of wandering as it is simultaneously deterritorialized by the migrations of its diaspora. As such, the Palestinian identity is always already rooted in historic Palestine; it is only capable of branching into other nationalisms, yet can never take root elsewhere. Therefore, where the "rhizome" and the "tree-root" structure of "rhizomatic becoming" are capacious to possibilities for new assemblages, the Palestinian identity remains one that is incapable of being entirely re-grounded within other collectives.

Exile and Statelessness

Barry Curtis and Clare Pajaczkowska argue that "if the tourist travels, for the most part, backwards in time, then the immigrant, the exile and the diasporic travel forward with no promise of a restored home," rendering the condition of the refugee an "inversion of the tourist's experience, on a journey in which the return to the 'present' of home, the lost equilibrium which brings closure, coherence, and the security of identification, is hopelessly deferred". (Morley 227) Curtis and Pajackowska's argument further emphasizes the fact that underlying the fluidity and openness of the "rhizomatic becoming" and "third space" is the "equilibrium," "coherence," and "security" of a distinct and definable Home. This indicates that the achievement of Chambers' and Bhabha's fluidity of being is necessarily facilitated by a definable and distinct point of departure – the traditionally understood essential and native Home. Therefore, despite displaying numerous similarities to the conditions of "rhizomatic becoming" and the "third space," stateless identities cannot be classified as such, as they are by definition without origin and without a home. This relegates the stateless identity to a different form of plurality and fluidity than is understood by the post-modern alternatives to traditional nationalism, as it lacks a definable point of departure – namely, its original homeland.

Although Curtis and Pajaczkowska classify immigrants, refugees, and exiles under one category in their analysis, it is important to note that the exile referred to in the case of Palestinians is uniquely different from the status of conventional exiles. Traditionally, the condition of exile is one that has historically existed since the dawn of time, and was an ancient tool of punishment in banishing individuals from the support and safety of their communities. (Said 137) In his essay "Reflections on Exile," Edward Said distinguishes between exiles and other forms of mobile identities, writing that exile "is the unhealable rift forced between a

human being and a native place, between the self and its true home: its essential sadness can never be surmounted. … The achievements of exile are permanently undermined by the loss of something left behind forever". (137) However, while those in exile can never return to their native homes, the condition itself has never resulted in the erasure of those homes from the understandings of the surrounding world. In fact, it is arguable that the case of statelessness is further removed from the common experiences of mobility and exile, as the home to which Palestinian refugees long to return has been quite literally erased from the consciousness of the global community. Where émigrés, tourists, or migrant workers may not feel that they belong entirely to any "Home," there is always a home to return to, or at the very least to reference as a point of origin even if it no longer resembles the home they once knew. Palestinians on the other hand, particularly those descendant from the occupied territories of 1948, cannot even locate their original home on the global map, nor can their newer generations credibly claim origin of a location they had never even physically visited, rendering the pathos of stateless exile "in the loss of contact with the solidity and satisfaction of earth: homecoming is out of the question". (Said 142)

Statelessness and Alienation

As a result, the condition of exile in the case of Palestinians is further removed and distinct from all other forms of transnational mobility. The statelessness and alienation of Palestinians is therefore better understood as a condition that encompasses the experiences of exile, but carries with it more perplexing and even direr implications than exile does, for it challenges the validity of the Palestinian identity by posing the question of how one, or indeed an entire nation, can exist in a condition of exile of a state that in fact no longer exists.

[Haya:] In terms of my own family, I'm sure they must have been stateless when they first left Palestine, but it wasn't for very long. They got the Jordanian passport in the '60s or '70s. And well – it's different what things it says on paper, because to me – Palestinians from 1948 – nothing will say that they are actually Palestinians. They either carry other passports or they're stateless, but regardless of whether they carry a passport for a different country, be it Canadian or whatever, I don't correlate the two to each other. They're still Palestinians.

[Haitham:] Legally stateless? Without a passport? That's my whole family. It means they don't have a legally recognized state. They're stateless. It means there's some kind of conflict. For me, when I hear that I'm stateless, it means that I've been affected and oppressed by something more powerful, usually a colonial capitalist phenomenon. There are many stateless people in the world. I don't find the term itself problematic, it's the reasons behind it. So if someone says I'm stateless, I'd be like "Yeah, I'm stateless, and here's why". I wouldn't say "don't call me stateless". For me, that's just getting emotionally nationalistic. I don't care about statehood in general, I care that there is a particular injustice that was committed.

Participants here acknowledged the differences between their self-identifications and the ways they are officially classified in the ways they describe their own condition of statelessness. The ways Palestinians in the diaspora view their own statelessness illustrates that, in their self-identifications, it is no more than a legal status that does not adequately describe their sense of belonging or their national identities. Yet in their responses, the participants were also careful not to dismiss the realities of being stateless in favor of asserting a national existence, but instead identified statelessness as an inherent *aspect* of the Palestinian identity rather than its primary identifier. The inclusion of Palestinians born outside of Palestinian territories within the conceptual understanding of the Palestinian nationalism is therefore key, as it functions as a response to the uprootedness of the stateless identity by maintaining the ties that Palestinians feel to their national community. It also reflects the necessity of resorting to essential and "authentic" commonalities in the construction of a national identity, as the official status of

Palestinians as "stateless" further heightens the literal and figurative distances between them and their homeland.

Nevertheless, the difficulties faced as a result of the legal restrictions imposed by the label of "statelessness" remain inescapable and feature prominently in the narratives of most Palestinians' lives in the diaspora.

[Kismet:] I was never stateless, but my mom's family was and still is. And it's a big problem for them now because they can't leave to Jordan or Lebanon, so they're stuck in Syria. It makes me angry – most of my anger is directed basically against Zionism, because they caused the problem, but also at Arab regimes. Most of my anger right now is just – why can't they run away like other people? Palestinians from Syria are stuck there because they're Palestinians. Syrians can leave, they can escape. Palestinians can't.

[Carla:] My mom's aunt is stateless. Honestly, like, I don't know how to say this in a proper way, but it's meaningless. I've always felt – I mean, these people don't even – like – how do they define themselves? "I'm Palestinian". But they don't even have a paper to justify it, you know. When they come – for them to travel, they're treated terribly. For us, we say – we *know* they're Palestinians. [Emphasis hers] We know, "ok, these are Palestinians – whether they have a passport or not". But when it comes to the whole legal system, and you have to justify – to validate where you come from, what are you supposed to say? [Says in disbelief] "*I have a 'green card*[15]'?!" What does that even mean?

[Ayman:] Oh yeah. A story that's imprinted in my head was when we lived in Al-Ain in Emirates. It's almost at Oman. They actually share a border with Oman, so you're literally on the border of Oman and Emirates. The story that I remember was about my brother, when we were in school. He was in Year Six, and there was a field trip going to Muscat, the capital of Oman, and you definitely need a passport to get through to Muscat. So the school asked the students for their citizenships and they refused to let my brother go on the trip because they said that Oman doesn't allow people with travel documents to enter. And you have to realize that for people with travel documents, getting a visa is close to impossible. You would have to go through a rigorous process in order for you to

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[15] The green card referenced here is one that is held by Palestinians in Jordan. It is "not an ID but is called a Bridge Card. The green card is temporary (for two years) and is issued to residents of the West Bank who are not Jordanian citizens. Each time the resident crosses the bridge, the Jordanian authorities enter a note on the card by hand. The yellow card is issued to Jordanian citizens (many of whom are residents of the West Bank) for five years. In effect it serves as an alternative passport so that the Israeli crossing stamps do not appear in the original Jordanian passport, which would cause problems in other Arab states for these residents". (Immigration Refugee Board of Canada)

>get it and we literally found out a week before the trip. Eventually my brother
>got it, because he was only 10 or 11 years old at the time and my dad had
>connections who helped us. But by then it was too late to register for the trip. It's
>tough to be stateless and have a travel document.

As illustrated by their various experiences, travel is particularly difficult for Palestinians lacking other citizenships and passports. This indicates that, in a world of hyper-globalization and transnationalism, the Palestinian identity is officially non-recognizable due to the lack of a Palestinian state, and thus the various forms of stateless Palestinians' documentations are insufficient in meeting global standards of travel. This process of regulating Palestinian bodies and migratory movements thus replaces the Palestinian identity with a stateless status in the official regulations of migration, so that the Palestinian-ness of individuals becomes a negatively perceived and regulated aspect of their identities, replaced by their less-than-adequate official documentations and "stateless" status.

Palestinians in the diaspora are therefore non-recognizable as members of a discrete national community, but are only visible as "stateless" bodies without origin. As a result, this process fundamentally questions the existence of a Palestinian collective as it erases any and all official claim to a Palestinian citizenship. Furthermore, the connotations of a "stateless" identity as opposed to that of a "traveler" or even a "refugee" erase the possibilities for return by denying the existence of a state to return to, further disrupting and challenging Palestinians' claims to a national home. Hence, the exile and statelessness of Palestinians becomes more than a condition of anchored mobility – it in fact becomes a question of existence so that Palestinians are either "stateless" or carry non-Palestinian citizenship, neither of which recognizes their own Palestinian nationalities.

Stateless Boundaries

In his examination of borders and belonging, David Morley writes that "[i]t is at the boundary, where territorial control is, in fact, least secure that it is likely to be asserted all the more hysterically". (221) The implications of "boundaries" on the stateless Palestinian identity are therefore considerable. Where other mobile or plural identities reference a Home, the Palestinian is locked in "a circular quest for an increasingly elusive identity". (Morley 227) This elusiveness of the Palestinian identity and the questioning of its existence therefore not only leave its members vulnerable to violations of human rights, as demonstrated in Chapter 2, but they also render the identity itself, at the conceptual level, particularly vulnerable to dilution by external cultures. The lack of autonomy in defining their cultural boundaries with their host countries erases the Palestinian identity in multiple ways, just as the "stateless" status of Palestinians renders their national identity as invisible and forgotten.

The threat of disappearance or evolution into a national image that does not even resemble the "authentic" that has been otherwise removed from the global community's imagination therefore becomes a real deterrent to plurality in the Palestinian identity and a stressor of essentialism and authenticity in the Palestinian collective.

> [Carla:] As a Canadian-Palestinian, I tend to always shut off that Canadian side and always want to embrace that Palestinian culture because I feel that, basically, give us a couple of years and we're going to be an extinct species. Yes I'm happy we're in Canada, and yes I appreciate the Canadian culture, but I also don't feel it flows, because they are not like me and I am not like them. I wish I could be one of these people who could say that "yes, I am Canadian and it merges perfectly with my Palestinian one because I feel such an open connection between both". I don't feel that, no. Not at all. I never felt an *appartenance* [French for "membership of"] to Canada. I mean we really do celebrate – like, the holidays, the religious holidays we relate to, you know. But, like, "thanksgiving"? We don't have this, "thanksgiving". It means – it doesn't mean anything to me – [says nonchalantly] "thanksgiving". But I only feel pride, let's say, during the national holiday, you know, [enthusiastically says] "Yay, it's Canada day!" But other than that I won't. I've never said that "yeah, I'm a

Palestinian-Canadian". And if anybody asks me, I tell them that I'm a Palestinian from Jordan. Which isn't even true! [Laughs] I'm actually a Palestinian from Canada.

[Kismet:] I don't really have any conflicting feelings about being Palestinian-Canadian, because I'm wondering how Canadian I am to begin with. A lot of times I feel like I don't want to be Canadian, I want to move back – I actually want to go back to Palestine.

In their responses, participants displayed elements of strong resistance to the assimilation of other nationalisms in their own identities. Although they are comfortable in acknowledging their own fluidities and the ways they've adjusted to incorporate their own exile and statelessness within their identities, they strongly denied and rejected the incorporation of a Canadian nationality in their own identifications, despite often recognizing it as a home. Therefore, not only does the Palestinian identity remain their primary "authentic" identifier, the participants' responses demonstrate that it is also jealously guarded and preserved to the extent that it becomes inviolable, and any and all cultural markers of belonging to other nationalisms actively rejected and resisted.

Narcissism in the Stateless Identity

In his examination of multiculturalism, Michael Ignatieff describes this mode of collective self-identification in which authenticity becomes idealized at the expense of the integration of other cultures as a form of autism "in which members of a group become so enclosed in their own sense of self-righteous victimhood, so trapped in their own mythology, that they become unable to listen to outsiders". (Morley 221) Although aspects of "self-righteous victimhood" and mythology do exist in the Palestinian identity, what is expressed here by the participants is a greater desire to protect their identities from the erasure caused by their statelessness – albeit through the same processes of entrapment and self-isolation

referenced by Ignatieff. A more essential form of nationalism, where not only ancestry but also

heritage, culture, and custom are fundamental to belonging thus becomes dominant in

Palestinian communities, and encapsulates the Palestinian identity within the discourses of

authenticity and fixity. It becomes "an assertion of belonging in and to a place, a people, a

heritage. It affirms the home created by a community of language, culture and customs, and, by

so doing, it fends off exile, fights to prevent its ravages". (Said 139)

> [Haitham:] For instance, we had a *dabke*[16] here in the Student Centre last week. It symbolizes culture – Palestinian culture. And maintaining it as a Palestinian *dabke* is resistance to the eradication of our culture. And – for instance, here, where he says "carry your homeland wherever you go and be a narcissist if need be". That line invokes activism for me – be a narcissist. I appear as a narcissist to a lot of people. I feel a sense of responsibility too, but the narcissist part is very invocative of activism because I think that because of the activism of Palestine, there's an image of narcissism that I've projected that probably wouldn't be there if I were an activist for any other cause.

> [Kismet:] The part what struck me the most was this one: "so carry your homeland wherever you go, and be a narcissist if need be". Because I think that's what I do. I carry Palestine with me everywhere, Palestine more than Syria. And I like telling people about Palestine all the time. It's not that I love Palestine more than Syria, which might be true, but I feel that Palestinians are always misrepresented and misunderstood. And I know it annoys a lot of people when I talk about Palestine, which is why it says "be a narcissist if need be," so they have to listen to me whether they like it or not. And I'm not afraid of telling the people what Palestinians are fighting for. I'm not ashamed of saying what they want or who they are. The reason I like this, especially the part about being a narcissist, is because I don't want to play the game that a lot of liberals play – saying that "I hope that Palestinians find their Ghandi," you know, because then they don't explain things the way they are. They don't talk about who the victim and who the oppressor are, and they treat both sides as equal, and that really annoys me. If it offends people when I tell them the truth as it is, then it's their problem, not my problem.

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[16] *Dabke* (Arabic: دبكة) also transliterated "dabka,""dabki," "dabkeh," "debke," "debkah," "debki," "debka" is an Arab folk dance native to the Levant. It is popular in Lebanon, Palestine, Jordan, Bosnia, Turkey, Syria and Iraq. Either as a line dance or a round dance, it is widely performed at weddings and joyous occasions. The line forms from right to left, and the leader of the *dabke* heads the line, alternating between facing the audience and the other dancers.

The threat of extinction – which is a real threat in the case of a stateless identity that cannot perpetuate itself through a "natural" development in its "home" environment – thus leads to the emergence of Ignatieff's narcissistic nationalism in the Palestinian identity, where hyper-differentiation between the "authentic" and the "other" that threatens the national identity becomes a means of protecting its boundaries, and fending off the ravages of exile. However, it is also important to note that this narcissism, as illustrated by the participants' fixation on the question of Palestine, refers to an actively and deliberately adopted mode of being. This indicates that narcissism in the Palestinian community is not a "natural" condition, but rather a chosen way of identification that is utilized as a form of resistance to "the eradication of Palestinian culture," and becomes necessary in circumstances where a threat to their claims to a Palestinian identity arises.

The "inbetweens"

As a result of these modes of identification, the ideal of "authenticity" in the Palestinian identity gathers significant value, yet the various markers of the Palestinian identity's "authentic" begin to accrue different symbolic meanings to the various communities of Palestinians dispersed across the globe, as they interact with their host countries and cultures, and as newer generations are born in exile. The universality of the Palestinian "authentic" as defined by their cultural heritage is thus gradually eroded by the inevitable cultural plurality and intermingling that arise in response to the pressures for survival and resettlement. As a result, Palestinians in the diaspora are not necessarily *entrapped* in the space of self-victimization and narcissistic autism necessary for maintaining their identities, but are rather in constant dialogue with it. The participants in this study reflect this dialogical process of

identification by consistently displaying pluralities that challenge Ignatieff's argument, while preserving the precarious boundaries of their Palestinian-ness and culture.

> [Haya:] I have two parts of my identity, and two languages that I'm comfortable with, and I don't know at times which one I belong to more. I'm comfortable with the language that is not of my own origin, but at the same, I can appreciate the other one. I full identify as being an Arab and Palestinian, but I'm more comfortable speaking in English and reading in English, and I don't know my own country so much. Belonging to two places at once. So in terms of "carrying the homeland wherever I go," or "I am two in one," you know – I think I can relate to all of that. On the other hand, "the outside world is exile, exile is the world inside," – I see it as opposite. There are many places in which I belong in different ways. I think that's a little bit of how I feel at home here and in Jordan. In Jordan I feel at home in terms of being the same one as everyone around me, you know, with the language and the culture. But at the same time because I've lived so long in a Canadian system, I feel I can be at home here. It's just belonging to different places in different ways, I feel that I don't feel like an outsider here or an outsider there.

> [Ayman:] In everything I've said I don't mean to say that I don't feel loyalty to Canada or feel that I'm not Canadian. I've lived more than half my life here, I've lived longer in Canada than anywhere else in the world. So yes, in that sense, I'm a hundred percent Canadian – just as Canadian as anyone else. What has helped me with that is that in coming to Canada, we haven't come here as guests, we've come here to be part of the country. In fact, you could say that everyone who's here doesn't actually belong here, except for the indigenous peoples. So everybody is a settler, and I'm as much a settler as anybody else.

The participants' own multiple consciousness is therefore apparent, and is an acknowledged facet of their identities. They are comfortable with their sense of belonging to collectives other than the Palestinian, as they acknowledge the variety of cultural capital they've acquired and relate to. Their cultural identification with the Palestinian identity thus allows them to interpret the cultures of other nationalisms through the various knowledges that they've accrued, without separating them into distinct and mutually exclusive identities – Haya is comfortable articulating her Palestinian identity in English and Ayman considers himself a "settler" in

Canada as much as everybody else. As a result, Palestinians in the disapora are, as Stuart Hall

puts it

> people who belong to more than one world, speak more than one language (literally and
> metaphorically), inhabit more than one identity, have more than one home, who have
> learned to negotiate and translate between cultures and who, because they are
> irrevocably the product of several interlocking histories and cultures, have learned to
> live with, and indeed to speak from, *difference*. They speak from the "inbetween" of
> different cultures, always unsettling the assumptions of one culture from the
> perspective of another, and thus finding ways of being the same as and at the same time
> different from, the others amongst whom they live. (Morley 207, emphasis in original)

> However, the degree of fragmentation and dispersal present in the Palestinian diaspora

limits the possibilities for interaction and communication within the collective itself, resulting in

different trajectories of development within each different segment, with no way of achieving a

cohesive image across its various communities. This creates a sense of alienation within the

Palestinian communities where one fragment cannot relate to the other, unless it is through

the indisputable essential and universal meta-narratives of their identity. This internal

alienation is represented through the divisions in the Palestinian narrative that shape and

define Palestinian identity, specifically for those in the diaspora who are often caught between

the "question of the victim" and the liberating reality of their own fluid identities.

> [Haya:] You know, I think I relate to it in different ways. "I belong to the question
> of the victim".[17] I see Palestinians as victims, I don't so much see myself as a
> victim. So in some things I guess I distance myself a little bit from the rest of the
> Palestinians. But then again, I am still a Palestinian.

Here, Haya identifies the victimhood of Palestinians as a meta-narrative to which she does not

relate, demonstrating at once the fragmentation of the Palestinian identity and its internal

alienations, as well as the varying significance of its collective narratives. This distancing that

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[17] Refer to "Elegy for Edward Said," Appendix C

occurs as a result of the diaspora thus causes aspects of authenticity to coalesce into fewer –

yet more universal and all-encompassing – narratives of the Palestinian identity and the

Palestinian "Home," such as the Nakba and other universally acknowledged Palestinian symbols

identified by the participants as their signifiers of belonging (eg. olives, oranges, the *kofeyye*[18],

etc.). As a result, authenticity in the Palestinian identity becomes bound by an unchanging and

static image of "Palestine," and plurality becomes a process that is separate from, but in

dialogue with, the Palestinian identity of the participants.

Diaspora and Alienation

Paul Gilroy writes that diaspora "identifies a relational network, characteristically

produced by forced dispersal and reluctant scattering. It is not just a movement through

purposive, desperate movement is integral to it. Push factors like war, famine, enslavement,

ethnic cleansing, conquest and political repression, are a dominant influence". (Gilroy 318) As

such, the diaspora of the stateless Palestinian refugees is fundamentally tied to its history of

ethnic cleansing. Due to the forced evictions and the instability of the refugees, as well as their

inability to develop a new fully cohesive image of Palestinian nationalism because of the extent

of their fragmentation, the imagined understanding of the Palestinian identity and the

Palestinian "Home" becomes even more strongly rooted in the unchangeable past. The

essential element of "land" thus becomes particularly vital as "territory and indeed Nature itself

are engaged … as a means to define citizenship and the forms of rootedness that compose

national solidarity and cohesion". (Gilroy 316)

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[18]Refer to Image 8, Appendix D

However, due to the lack of connection to the Palestinian territory from which the refugees originated, only the figurative identifications remain in their image of Palestine. The divide between the symbolic meanings of Palestine and the land itself thus stunts the growth of the image and encapsulates it in the unchangeable image of what Palestine means – dispossession, struggle, and cultural heritage – and therefore creates an unchangeable "authentic" image of the Palestinian identity and "homeland". As a result, despite their multiplicity of belonging, the "authentic" Palestinian-ness of Palestinians in the diaspora remains "objectified as fixed and closed, a latent destiny, rather than the result of a process of self-making and of social interaction". (Gilroy 313)

Gilroy's concept of diaspora can be further understood as "a historical narrative that escapes the conflation of nation with race with place with kin". (Helmreich 244) This allows diasporic communities to emancipate their histories from the borders and histories of nation-states, so "that a 'diasporic perspective' might be gained," that would place diasporic communities "not as falling 'between' traditions but as constitutive of a tradition that transcends national boundaries". (Helmreich 244) Whilst this analysis of diaspora is highly useful in understanding the fluidity and plurality of diasporic identities, it is problematic in its (unsuccessful) attempts to divorce the ideas of home and territory from one another, and becomes most evident in the Palestinian diaspora, where the territoriality of the Palestinian identity is inescapable due to the ongoing nature of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Although participants in this study largely display the traits of Gilroy's "diasporic perspective," it is also dangerous to ascribe this experience to the entirety of the Palestinian diasporic community. With vast numbers of Palestinians in the diaspora living in refugee camps,

the conditions that allow some communities to attain a degree of Gilroy's "diasporic perspective" and Chambers' "rhizomatic becoming" remain inaccessible to the majority of the Palestinian collective. As a result, the statelessness of the Palestinian refugees is a continuous reminder of their histories and thus prevents them from truly escaping the territoriality that is inherent in their nationalism. This is further demonstrated by the fact that the participants repeatedly reference the Right of Return and the hope of achieving it in their interviews, indicating that their understanding of the Palestinian diasporic condition is that it is temporary. This understanding is key to the Palestinian identity, as it is not only a part of the identities of the participants of this study, but it is essential to displaced Palestinians everywhere. Hence, the development of plurality and hybridity within the Palestinian identity is simultaneously inevitable and futile, as its solidification in a "Home" is continuously deferred.

The statelessness of Palestinians in the diaspora thus carries dual implications: it is simultaneously a conceptual space of disempowerment, where the achievement of belonging to a homeland and the creation of a united nationalism remain elusive, and it is also a legal reality that renders stateless Palestinians immobile, as the documentations most often carried by stateless Palestinians (eg. travel documents, green card, etc.) constrain their abilities to travel. As a result, Palestinians are entrapped within a paradoxical "alien space" where their uprooted statelessness and the lack of a definable and discrete Palestinian home or identity do allow them a measure of fluidity and mobility in crossing the borders of imagined communities, yet where their official "stateless" status highly restricts and anchors their migratory movements.

Thus, where the post-modern alternatives to nationalism – "transnationalism," the "third space," "rhizomatic becoming," and "diasporic perspective," etc. – attempt to undo the journey confirmed in "the point of departure, secured in the presumption of eventual homecoming," (Morley 211) the Palestinian identity's "statelessness" coupled with its "refugee status" is a constant process of reinstating that eventual homecoming into its narrative. Therefore, the conceptual and physical spaces in which the Palestinian identity is framed and that are limited by the constraints of "statelessness" subvert its potential pluralities and re-inscribe them into its self-essentializing universal narratives in order to preserve, mobilize, and survive. Furthermore, the lack of complete resettlement for Palestinians due to the ongoing nature of the conflict with the occupier prevents their achievement of permanent homes in their host countries, and creates an ongoing sense of temporality in the displaced identity which in turn further reifies the permanent-temporariness of their lives "in-between". This liminal space therefore becomes one where the absolute "authenticity" of the Palestinian identity cannot be entirely dismantled in favor of a more fluid identity, yet where it is still an identity that is in constant flux due to its engagement with the identities of the nations in which Palestinians reside.

As a result, the Palestinian identity resides not in a "third space" of "rhizomatic becoming" and "diasporic perspective," but rather exists "in a state of 'tenuous stalemate' in which 'they cannot go backwards and they cannot go forwards'… stuck in an eternal situation of transience". (Morley 227) This is not to say however that the Palestinian identity remains static and unchanging, but rather that the process of confluence of authenticity and plurality in its identity that is constantly in flux repeatedly leaves its parameters unresolved. The stateless

Palestinian identity in the diaspora can therefore be perceived to occupy an "alien space," wherein plurality and hybridity can emerge, but only to be re-embedded in its historically specific and culturally essential universal ideals. Thus, the mobility and lack of a homeland for Palestinians become the ideological frameworks that determine their identities, placing them within spaces of legal constraint where they are recognized as "stateless" and are prevented from achieving any resolution over where it is exactly that they belong. Hence, the pressures for survival and continuity repeatedly come into conflict with the persevering desire to achieve the hopelessly deferred and elusive "homeland" from which to develop and grow as a nation, leaving Palestinians "stuck in an eternal situation of transience".

"The outside world is exile,
exile is the world inside.
And what are you between the two?
I do not define myself
so that I would not lose it. I am what I am.
I am my other, a duality
gaining resonance in between speech and gesture.
Were I to write poetry I would have said:
I am two in one,
like the wings of a swallow,
content with bringing good omen
when spring is late.

Chapter 5. Memory and Myth

The diaspora of the Palestinian nation is an inherent component of its identity, as the events that led to the dispersal and displacement of the Palestinian people are inescapable and prominent moments in the Palestinian history and narrative. As Palestinian historian, essayist, and novelist Elias Sanbar writes, "[t]he contemporary history of the Palestinians turns on a key date: 1948. That year, a country and its people disappeared from maps and dictionaries". (87) As such, the Nakba of 1948 functions as a key moment in the collective memory of the Palestinian identity, along with other historically significant events such as the Naksa and the intifadas, which also feature prominently in the Palestinian collective memory and largely affect Palestinian identity.

However, as previously demonstrated, the scope of the different historical events classifies them within a hierarchy of experience that affects the influence and power of each memory in shaping the Palestinian identity. This hierarchy of experience varies from one Palestinian community to the next so that, for instance, those affected by the war of the camps in Lebanon may relate more powerfully to the Sabra and Shatila massacre than the expulsion of Palestinian refugees from Libya. However, the most significant and the most universal memory in the Palestinian collectivity remains that of the Nakba, the original displacement, and the source of the following history of struggle in the diaspora – "[t]he year 1948 mark[ed] the beginning of *al-ghurba* (exile or diaspora) and *al-nakba* (disaster or calamity), words intensely resonant in the Palestinian lexicon. After this decisive date, one can affix 'pre-' or 'post-' as markers of an apocalyptic moment". (Peteet 627)

The impact of the Nakba is therefore manifold: it is simultaneously the one all-encompassing memory that ties the Palestinian collective together both in the diaspora and in the occupied territories, and yet the memory of the Nakba also acts as a space that separates the Palestinian identity from its other cultural narratives in ways that stunt its growth and progress. The inescapability of this memory entraps its subjects within the narrative of the Nakba – the catastrophe – of displacement and homelessness. On the one hand, the Nakba of 1948 is the memory of the original rupture, and as such, creates a romanticized nostalgia for the Palestine remembered by the first wave of exiles and idealizes the "authentic" Palestinian identity. On the other hand, the Nakba writ-large, which includes not only the events of 1948 but also all the Palestinian nation's consequent losses and struggles, has become "a Palestinian event and a site of Palestinian collective memory; it connects all Palestinians to a specific point in time that has become for them an 'eternal present'". (Sa'di 177) As a result, the Nakba and its associated alienation thus form a distinct sub-identity within the overarching Palestinian identity, creating an intrinsic duality within the national Palestinian identity where Palestinians are continuously renegotiating the internal borders of the fixed and essential original catastrophe against the adaptability of their cultural identities.

Collective Memory and Collective Identity: The Nakba of the Palestinians

That memory functions as a significant component of individual identity is indisputable, but it is also true of the importance of memory for the formation of collective identities. In his introduction to the book *Palestinian Collective Memory and National Identity*, Mier Litvak writes that "[n]o group identity exists without memory as its core meaning; the sense of continuity over time and space is sustained by remembering, and what is remembered is defined by the

assumed identity. ... These reconstructed images of the past provide the group with an account of its origin and development and thus allow it to develop a historical identity". (1) Similarly, Ron Eyerman argues that collective memory "is defined as recollections of a shared past which are passed on through ongoing processes of commemoration, officially sanctioned rituals which remember a group through calling upon a common heritage, with a shared past as a central component". (161) Collective memory can therefore be understood as an image or concept of a history that reflects the narrative of a community, that binds the collective together, and that is an integral component of national identity.

As a reconstructed image of the past, collective memory both draws on individual histories and memories in its formation, and yet it also forms and shapes those individual reflections in the memories of its members. Eyerman continues to argue that, due to the nature of collective memory as a foundation of collective identity, "individual memory is conceived as [a] derivative of collective memory. It is the collective memory which orients a group, providing [its] temporal and cognitive map". (161) This implies that collective memory is not only the product of the memories of a collective community, but that collective memories in themselves have the power to influence and direct individual memories. Collective memory thus shapes and impacts the formation of collective and national identity by providing roots that can be remembered and that can provide a stable point of reference for the perpetuation and sustainability of identity. This creates a circular loop of meaning-making where collective memories are constructed out of the individual recollections of a community, but where those collective reconstructions gain symbolic meaning and resonance enough to direct and reaffirm individual memories and identities.

The collective memory of the Nakba is one that is tacitly acknowledged in the Palestinian community, and its dissemination is therefore an instinctive or "natural" process. It is most often passed down through generations through the stories of the elders as parents and grandparents alike share the stories of their experiences, imparting a sense of ownership over their histories to their later generations. As a result, the Nakba becomes the inherited alternative for the Palestinian nation whose homes and land are otherwise inaccessible.

> [Ayman:] It's the same narrative that you hear from most Palestinians: the one of being kicked out of your homeland, the one of longing to return; the beauty that is Palestine, the beauty that is returning to our homeland. Songs by Fairouz[19], national songs, we had tapes of them that my dad would play in the car; of even the national anthems, *Mawtini*[20]. We used to listen to them a lot. There was a radio station that would play them continuously and my mom would record them, and till this day we've kept the CDs – we converted the cassette tapes into CDs and kept them. In my car right now we have those CDs. Oh and the food! Palestinian food is all we eat. We have a Palestinian flag in my house, we have a poster that talks about the cultural clothing, the different embroideries of the different cities and villages. My parents have also told us a lot of stories of what Palestine was like, what their parents told them, how their parents were kicked out. They talked about the camps. My mom talks about it more than my dad. I think my dad may have been traumatized by it, but he sometimes mentions stories of what he went through.

> [Haya:] I think there were the two different types of memories – there were the painful memories, like the Nakba when they were expelled from their homes, and I'm sure many other Palestinians have those as well. And there was, you know, the memory of, for example my grandmother's story of how her brother was killed in a terrorist Israeli bombing, and that was one interaction with the occupier that I'm sure many other Palestinians have experienced in some way or another. And in terms of just the everyday life, it was living by the sea, a lot of people lived on the coast and I'm sure they have that as part of their memory. And the groves, the orange groves, the olive groves – the traditions, the weddings, the ceremonies, the events; things like that, you know. My

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[19] Nouhad Wadi Haddad (Arabic: نهاد حداد) (born November 21, 1935), known as Fairuz (Arabic: فيروز, also spelled Fairouz or Fayrouz, meaning "Turquoise" in Arabic) is a Lebanese singer who is among the most widely admired and deeply respected living singers in the Arab world. Her songs are constantly heard throughout the region, and still spark Arab and Lebanese national pride.

[20] *Mawtini* (Arabic: موطني "My Homeland") is a popular poem written by the Palestinian poet Ibrahim Touqan circa 1934, that then became the de facto national anthem of Palestine.

grandmother would tell me about all the different dances and the songs and the ways of dress and all those cultural traditions they had. We try to keep those memories alive, even things as simple as our food, the Palestinian cuisine, you know, Palestinian artwork, Palestinian poetry – I try to learn more about it and try to keep that in our everyday life in one way or another. I guess I pick and choose the things that I do like and want to continue so that part of it is the aesthetic or beauty of the culture that I want to keep. But yeah I feel compelled to because it is a part of myself that would only be there if I actively tried to keep it a part of my life and, you know, for our family. If we tried to ignore that, then it'll be gone forever. There's no country that we can go back to that can keep reminding us of these things.

The dual narratives of memory within Palestinian identity are thus depicted by the participants, as they describe both the narratives of Nakba, loss, and displacement, as well as the cultural narratives and traditions that are remembered in the diaspora. Unlike other national identities whose cultures are propagated in their own homelands, Palestine's "authentic" culture is treated as a stunted relic that is remembered alongside the rupture of connection with their homeland. As a result, the anthems and songs, artwork and poetry, traditional garb and cuisine etc. are actively preserved in the diaspora much the same way that the ethereal memories of the Nakba are preserved across its generations. It is important however to note in this case the differences between these two types of memories: where the memories of the Nakba reside literally in the memories of Palestinians and their recorded histories, memories of Palestine reside in its cultural relics – the pictures of its villages, towns, and cities, as well as its customs, traditions, and heritage pre-1948. As a result, these subtle divisions mark memory for Palestinians in different ways, linking the memories of the Nakba with the historical authenticity and legitimacy of Palestine, and the performed tangible memories of culture with the authenticity of Palestinian-ness and being Palestinian.

Therefore, as demonstrated by the participants' responses, the collective memory of the Palestinian nation hinges on the narratives that allow it access to its history and to its heritage, providing a substitute for their lost homeland. In their recollections, participants distinguish between the collective memories of the Nakba and the memories of Palestine, marked by stories of its traditions, culture, and way of life, signifying the intrinsic duality of their identities. These two narratives thus become the defining histories of origin, belonging, and ownership that are prevalent in Palestinian discourse, and provide the foundation of a nation that has otherwise ceased to exist.

Memory: Individual, Localized, and Collective

However, where memories of Palestine and Palestinian culture are easily discernible and function to restore its image in the minds and memories of its later generations, memories of the Nakba are more complex. Due to the vastness of the narratives of the Nakba, and the degree of fragmentation of Palestinian communities and generations, its memories are necessarily perpetuated through various means and are experienced in various ways. In an overarching web of experiences, it is not surprising that all the events in recent Palestinian history are rooted in the Nakba of 1948, and pour into the Nakba of Palestinians' daily lives. However, as previously demonstrated, this web is not a flat network of experiences but rather is a stratified grading of value and importance of each incident. As a result, three forms of memory become especially pertinent in the case of Palestinian identity in the diaspora: individual memory, *localized* collective memories of the various fragments of Palestinian communities, and the overarching collective memory of the Palestinian nation. Each node in this web of remembrance – such as Black September in Jordan, or the exodus from Kuwait –

represents a "localized" collective memory that is more immediately relevant to those Palestinians who were directly affected by its events than to Palestinians who did not experience those events firsthand or were not directly affected by them at all. This also means that from the perspective of each community at each node, the hierarchy of experience differs as their own memories influence their identities more powerfully than other localized collective memories. The interconnectivity of these localized collective memories then generates a universal image of the Palestinian collective memory as one that is rooted in the Nakba and in Palestine pre-1948, and that samples the Nakba's various following struggles and experiences.

Localized collective memories therefore serve as common histories to the fragmented communities within the overarching Palestinian collective, and function as components of the meta-Nakba of Palestinians. Yet due to the internal hierarchies of experience within the Palestinian collective memory, localized collective memories do not carry as much weight in forming individual identities in the Palestinian collective as the overarching and all-encompassing memory of the Nakba. As a result, this renders the Nakba as an inescapable memory that entraps Palestinian identity in its narratives of catastrophe and dispossession. Memories of the Nakba of 1948, and the following "nakbas" or catastrophes of each localized memory – such as the repeated expulsions and the intifadas – therefore become signifiers for the entirety of the Palestinian experience. By focusing on the narratives of the original catastrophe, the Palestinian identity thus keeps circling back to the questions of its national legitimacy, its existence, and its Right of Return.

Hence, the positioning of the Nakba of 1948 as the source of all the following calamities that have befallen the Palestinian nation simultaneously renders it as the biggest catastrophe in

terms of value – as it is the source – and the biggest catastrophe in terms of scope, as all following calamities continuously pour into its narrative. Thus, when Palestinians in the diaspora remember their history, the Nakba is always the point of entry into that history. It is the most remembered narrative, and is always remembered first. Therefore, the Nakba also becomes an overarching collective memory that is preserved at the expense of Palestinians' individual and localized collective memories, as it includes and symbolizes the rest of the Palestinians' calamities in its own narrative, and therefore precludes the need to address those sub-narratives separately.

Mythologizing Memories: Memory-Identities and Lived Conditions

Consequently, the memory of the Nakba works to simultaneously preserve and erase its own individual and localized memories, as its stories and symbols of the original catastrophe acquire ever-expanding value and meaning, thus overshadowing all sub-narratives of its identity. In their own responses, participants demonstrate this process by continuously circling back to stories of the original Nakba of 1948 inherited from their families and learned from the mainstream discourses of Palestinian history.

> [Carla:] I've been told by my grandparents from my mother's side much more, because they were the ones that left Palestine. You hear my grandmother talk about how they were scared away by rumors, you know, "soldiers are coming, and they're killing people". There were lots of rumors going around. So people got scared, packed their stuff and, *yalla, yalla, yalla*[21], quick, quick, quick, they grabbed whatever they could – not even their papers, their documents – and they fled. I got goosebumps hearing that. I remember that my grandfather used to say that in the camps they were scared of being attacked. But they don't go into detail about it, it's almost like a memory that they want to erase, you know. Whenever I ask, they'd just talk about the inconveniences of life in the camps. When they were in the refugee camps, my grandmother's dad went back, only to find that the Zionists had taken over their home! Already! They scared off the

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[21] "*Yalla*" (Arabic: يالله) is a common expression denoting "come on," "let's get going," and mostly meaning hurry.

people, they deserted the area, and the Jews came and took over my grandmother's house! It was like – like, I tell you to flee, you flee your house, fast, fast, fast, you go back there after four days, five days, to see another family in your house, using your own things! And my grandmother talks about how they had special tablecloths that they used only during Christmas and special occasions. So when my great-grandfather went back, he saw that they [the settlers] had taken them out and spread them on the table. Imagine. So it makes you wonder sometimes when you hear Israelis saying that this is their promised land and they've been there forever and then you hear your family talking – it breaks your heart, you know.

[Kismet:] This reminds me of my grandparents' journey. How they went from Jaffa to the West Bank, and from there to Jordan and Syria. It reminds me of pictures of the Nakba. Till this day, whenever I see these pictures I feel really, really sad. It's something I cannot get over. Have you ever watched the TV show, *"El-Taghreebe El-Falasteeniyye"* [22]? Those episodes where they were forced to leave – I still remember them – were extremely painful.

Both Carla's and Kismet's inherited memories are typical of the Nakba narratives that are shared by Palestinians in and outside of Palestine. They clearly depict detailed events of the 1948 ethnic cleansing, and the individual stories of their grandparents' fleeing of Palestine in ways that eternalize the rhetoric of the Nakba. However, these accounts also minimize the value of other memories, rendering the Nakba itself a symbolic history of the Palestinian nation: the experiences of Carla's grandparents in the camps directly after the expulsion are vague and inaccessible, similarly, Kismet automatically reverts to referencing the prolific photos of the Nakba in order to better depict her family's own unarticulated experiences. Thus, one can see how individual experiences stand as representative moments that signify the entire experience of the Nakba, and vice versa, and thus function as points of connection to the overarching collective memory. Memories of the Nakba consequently provide Palestinians with

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[22]*El-Taghreebe El-Falasteeniyye* (Arabic: التغريبة الفلسطينية) "The Palestinian Exodus" or "The Palestinian Emigration," a Syrian TV series aired during Ramadan of 2004, is considered the most important work of dramatic treatment of the Palestinian cause, depicting the British occupation of Palestine and the guerilla massacres of Zionist settlements between the thirties and sixties of the last century.

points of entry into the general narrative that then distill the collective memory into individuals'

own stories. In this way, the collective memory that is constructed out of the stories of entire

communities becomes conflated with the individual memories of its people. It does not merely

exist in the past as a passive history, but rather the relations drawn from these points of entry

into the collective memory allow it to become part of the individuals' ongoing identifications,

such that either individual memories or the collective memory of the Nakba can stand in for

one another.

The significance of collective memory is therefore in its power to affect both collective

and individual identities within a national imagined community. So much so, that the degree of

value and meaning acquired by certain collective memories, the Armenian genocide for

instance, arguably constitute identities in and of themselves. That is to say that the scope of

collective meaning such memories gain provides them with distinct identities, where the

memory of the Armenian genocide becomes not only a reference point for the Armenian

community's history, but also provides the language for the discourse around similar events

such as the Holocaust, the Rwandan genocide, the Nakba, etc. Such collective memories form

intrinsic identities in and of their own, that are definable and recognizable, and can stand alone

as universally acknowledged and understood signifiers from which identities are drawn and to

which collectives are tied. Such memory-identities thus link "collective memory to the

formation of collective identity and bring it close to myth and to ideology". (Eyerman 162)

The Nakba, the Catastrophe, is one such recognizable and universally acknowledged

memory of rupture and displacement whose trauma is undeniable. Due to the passage of time

and the emergence of several generations who experienced various nakbas as a result of the

original catastrophe, the memory that is "Al-Nakba" has grown to encompass several narratives

of several communities and an entire history of dispossession and repeated upheaval. As a

result, the Nakba is, by its very nature, a memory that is constructed out of the multitudinous

memories of its communities; it is a signifier for more than just the collective memories of its

communities and amounts to "more than the sum of the memories of the individuals that

compose the collective". (Anastasio 42) The multitude of narratives that is the Nakba thus

becomes the accumulation of the calamities that have befallen the Palestinians, formulating an

ideological discourse that represents the Palestinian identity and to which Palestinians are tied.

Therefore, as a result of its significance in the Palestinian collective, the memory of the Nakba

becomes "a lived condition, not a historical possession [that perpetuates] Sanbar's formulation

about the refugees having 'gambled everything on taking [Palestine] with them, gradually

becoming the temporary replacement of their homeland'". (Allan 51)

Symbolizing the Nakba

If "belonging to an imagined community is constantly reproduced and bolstered through

invented traditions, commemorations, the construction of national museums, and the creation

of national cultural canons and national heroes," (Sa'di 176) memory-identities then produce

and become linked to symbols that propagate their narratives by distilling them into key

elements and emphasizing their most significant moments. These tactics of preserving and

disseminating the memory of the Nakba can all be found in the Palestinian identity where dates

and cultural symbols become used as signifiers for the Nakba and the Palestinian condition

writ-large: May 15th for instance is the annual commemoration date of the Nakba for the

majority of the Palestinian community in the diaspora. Similarly, Land Day on the 30th of March

is the annual day of commemoration of Israeli appropriation of Palestinian land since 1967, and

has come to represent resistance against all Israel's acts of land-grabbing and settlement

building on Palestinian land. ("Land Day") Such dates are regularly utilized by Palestinian

communities to remember the original displacements of their families, often through

organizing demonstrations and rallies and political demands for the Right of Return.

In addition to the dates of commemoration, the Palestinian community also turns to

cultural symbols of its dispossession such as poetry and art that depict the Nakba and the

Palestinian struggle. Palestinian artists, such as highly acclaimed poet Mahmoud Darwish

"whose considerable work amounts to an epic effort to transform the lyrics of loss into the

indefinitely postponed drama of return," (Said 142) have thus become regarded as national

heroes. Darwish's poetry is therefore frequently referred to as the voice of Palestinians in the

diaspora, with his poems often recited at events commemorating Palestinian history and

culture. Similarly, another symbol of the Palestinian Nakba is Palestinian cartoonist Naji Al-Ali's

character of "Handala" [23] who has become the mascot of the Palestinian cause and a symbol of

its struggle and resistance.

> [Haitham:] I commemorate the dates as part of the activism that we do. Keeping them alive, remembering, raising awareness about them, and continuing – it's a way of resistance too, continuing the struggle. [Pulls out Handala pendant necklace] I wear this every day. This is Handala – I think *handala* means miserable. And it's a symbol of the Palestinian struggle to return home. He has his back turned to the world because no one cares about his plight. And it's also a cartoon character that makes a very effective mascot for the struggle. Also, Mahmoud Darwish for instance was a symbol of Palestinian resistance – poetry is important, in every struggle there's poetry, and a lot of meaning and power to it.

> [Haya:] I like Handala, I think it's a good way that's not over dramatic of showing exactly how we feel as Palestinians.

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[23] Refer to Image 3, Appendix D

[Kismet:] Handala makes me think about Naji Al-Ali and how he was assassinated, but most importantly I think about how great his artwork is. Not just his artwork about Palestine, but about the Arab world in general and how the Arab regimes failed Handala – failed the Palestinians. In Arabic, *handala* means something that's really bitter, and the reason why Naji Al-Ali called him Handala is because of the bitterness of Palestinian life.

[Ayman:] Handala, Naji Al-Ali. I mean, it is what it is. It's a symbol of the Palestinians. When I see it I just think of my grandfather. I feel it's a symbol of the Palestinians that left, who suffered the Nakba. It's a symbol of being kicked out, marginalized, he's patched up, he's poor, he's a refugee. That image is strong and he's turned his back to the world, he's despondent, dejected by the way that he's treated.

Caricaturing the Palestinian condition, Handala is poor and dispossessed, his back is turned to the world in dejection and in desolation at the way he is treated. His name, Handala (Arabic: حنظلة), which is also the name of a bitter fruit, further signifies the bitterness of the Palestinian struggle. Through the ubiquitous use of Handala in Al-Ali's cartoons, and in countless political discourses even after Al-Ali's assassination, he has become the de facto representative of the Palestinian cause and a symbol of solidarity and resistance. The symbolism of Handala, Darwish's poetry, and other forms of commemoration, thus works to consolidate and link the Palestinian collective memory to the individual identities of its members across its various communities. As a result, their meaning to the Palestinian collective expands to include its entire history by representing a few key narratives that then stand in for the whole – dispossession, bitterness, and the hopelessly deferred homeland.

Inheriting Palestine – Inheriting Memory

In his introduction, Litvak writes that "[i]n the words of Ernest Renan, 'suffering in common unifies more than joy does. Where national memories are concerned, griefs are of more value than triumphs, for they impose duties, and require a common effort,'" (1) and the

greater the suffering and grief, the greater the value of the memories in shaping collective

identities. Looking at the Nakba reveals that its narratives of shared suffering through the

experiences of dispossession and displacement thus actively shape Palestinian identity by

providing impetus for its propagation. The duties imposed by the narratives of the Nakba thus

become inextricably connected with discourses of activism, resistance, and above all the Right

of Return.

> [Ayman:] Looking at what you've known to have lost – what was taken from you –
> it invokes the same emotion that the Palestinian flag invokes: the idea that we
> have something to return to and that it's bigger than the lines that are drawn. It's
> bigger than establishing a Palestinian state, it's much bigger issues than that.
> That's what I think it represents – it represents the complexity of the Palestinian
> identity. It's a history of what's happened, it's a history of lives impacted. And
> learning about it from your parents – your identity stems from your parents. Your
> parents instill in you a sense of being Palestinian and what it means to be
> Palestinian, because the identity isn't there for you, it's not molded by society for
> you – although it might be in terms of the "othering" that we as Palestinians
> experience. But the story, the narrative is given to you by your parents. So, it's our
> parents' mission to instill it in us – we're what's left of Palestine. And that makes
> sense too because, I'd say that on the one hand, I don't want everything that my
> family was put through to be in vain. And that's something they tell us, that their
> suffering and struggle has all been so that we could fight for Palestine and return
> to Palestine. On the other hand I would say that I truly believe that I have a right
> to return to Palestine and to live there, regardless of what my parents believe or
> have taught me.

> [Carla:] When I see these images I think of all the generations of Palestinians that
> are coming or that are here – the generations that have come, and that are to
> come. I wonder if they would ever see these pictures and long to go back to
> Palestine like I do. Because I feel like, more and more, we're forgetting who we
> are. I just wonder about the generations to come, if they'll look at something like
> this, or even know what Handala is. At least in your case, your parents told you
> about the Right of Return, I had to read about it online. This is why resistance is
> important, this is why activism is important. So that we don't lose what's left of
> Palestine and the Right of Return, which we hope for.

In discussing their inherited identities and memories, the participants' responses repeatedly

reverted to the ideas of return, activism, and resistance. Thus one can see how the concept of

the Nakba not only refers to the events of 1948, but that as a collective memory, the Nakba inherently also includes the longing for return. The narrative of the Nakba therefore encompasses more than its memories, and becomes a lived and performed identity that requires actively remembering and memorializing the Palestinian identity on a daily basis. It thus symbolizes struggle, injustice, and the ideals of resistance, and has grown to include the history of Palestinian dispossession since 1948. It is used to reference both the key date of 1948, as well as the entire Palestinian narrative since, and hence carries significant meaning for the Palestinian community and the Palestinian identity.

These key symbols form the collective memory that is indisputable and that is collectively acknowledged as part of the essential heritage of the Palestinian nation, regardless of whether or not, or to what extent, it has been individually experienced by its members. Michael Milshtein captures the symbolism of the Nakba for the Palestinians, writing that

> [t]he memory of the Nakba evolved as a central national myth that elucidated three issues: the way in which their past evolved, the course in which their present is conducted, and the goals they must strive for in the future. It has become a powerful tool, shaping and disseminating Palestinian national consciousness and mobilizing the community. Hence, the memory of the Nakba was never merely the object of grief and longing, nor an idea encouraging passivity, but a means of stimulating Palestinian activism, inter alia, by enhancing the yearning for return (*al-'awda*).The Palestinians never portrayed the Nakba as a story of the distant past, but as a living, continuous event, integrated into the present and spanning several generations, different sectors of the population, and geographic origins. (48)

Thus in an attempt to maintain the preservation and nurturing of the uprooted Palestinian identity, and the protection of its collective memories through future generations, the Nakba therefore becomes "a rhetorical performance in which an imagined community is invoked," as a self-essentializing and authenticating of the Palestinian identity "in order to mobilize for action". (Morley 237) Hence, the Nakba in fact becomes an "authentic" and essential identity

inherited in combination with the Palestinian cultural identity that continuously strains and influences individual identities as well as the image of Palestinian identity within the imaginations of its collective.

Hybridity in Memories of the Nakba

It is important to note however that the authenticity derived from the collective memory of the Nakba does not exclude the plurality of individual memories. In his article, "Catastrophe, Memory and Identity: Al-Nakbah as a Component of Palestinian Identity," Ahmad Sa'di writes that "[s]imilar to various Third World peoples who have experienced centuries of colonization, the question of identity among Palestinians has become intimately connected to the 'restoration of the individual's subjectivity'; that is, a national narrative has been constructed through life stories, documents, and viewpoints of individuals". (176) Not only does this underscore the value of individual memory in the creation of collective memory, but it also reveals the diversity of narratives and viewpoints that come into play in its construction.

Due to the transient nature of memory, and its inherent openness to interpretation and difference, individual memories serve as supplements to the universalized and undisputed collective image, rendering collective memory far more capacious and inclusive of difference than understandings of collective identities. This is not to say that "essential truths" are not drawn from collective memory, however, despite the propensity to authenticate and essentialize collective memory, its ephemeral and transient nature as well as its reliance on the consolidation of localized and individual memories maintain its capacities for diversity. Where collective identities can be defined within boundaries of difference and markers of belonging, the borders of collective memory remain highly fluid and unfixable. Therefore, by its very

nature, collective memory comes in the form of a dialogue between authenticity and plurality, and between universals and particulars, rather than as divisions between them. In other words, collective memory allows for an overlapping of authenticity and plurality rather than posing each set as mutually exclusive possibilities. In a sense, collective memory thus poses the ultimate in hybridity, as its ephemeral nature does not allow for fixity or discreteness, and its assemblage of memories into a universal narrative renders it categorically fluid. This locates collective memory in a space where it is in continuous reconstruction as new memories are added, old memories are reinterpreted, and where the flux of identity and memory are inextricably intertwined.

This framework of memory and identity discussed thus far highlights collective memory as a vital component of national identity that is both constructed by and that also shapes and informs individual memories. This structure however is further complicated in the case of the Nakba and Palestinian identity due not only to the wide geographic fragmentation of the community, but also due to the passage of time and the emergence of second, third, and even fourth generations of Palestinians in the diaspora. As the memory of the Nakba itself "still resides in a liminal zone between history and memory – that is, between the past as object of dispassionate study and the past as an affective part of personal and collective consciousness," (Goertz 33) it is vulnerable to decay and the influences of time. In addition, the timelessness of the memory of the Nakba and its ongoing nature as a "lived condition" of diaspora and dispossession prevent its relegation into a distinct history of the past, but reconfigure it into an evolving and current commemoration and performance of identity. The inheritance of both the memory of the Nakba of 1948 along with the Nakba as a living, continuous existence is

therefore complicated by the dissemination of these collective memories, which themselves are ethereal and imperfect constructions. As a result, the collective memories of generations born after 1948 differ significantly from the mythical Nakba of the generations who experienced it firsthand.

Palestinian Post-Memory, "Survivor's Guilt," and "Imposter Syndrome"

Marianne Hirsch proposes the term "post-memory" to describe a hybrid form of memory that "distinguishes itself from personal memory by generational distance and from history by a deep personal connection. Post-memory should reflect back on memory, revealing it as equally constructed, equally mediated by the processes of narration and imagination. ... Post-memory is anything but absent or evacuated: It is as full and as empty as memory itself". (Hirsch 8-9) Post-memory is therefore a more useful descriptor of the image of the Nakba that resides in the memories of its newer generations, as it diminishes the all-encompassing identification that the Nakba serves to provide by revealing its ethereality and its changeability over time. Post-memory in the Palestinian identity therefore dismantles the myth of the Nakba through generational distance, and thus reorients the identity of the Nakba from a dogmatic and fixed narrative to one that is open to interpretation and interrogation.

Post-memory is most visible in the Palestinian identity in the sense of detachment to the narratives of the Nakba amongst its newer generations. Due to the passage of time, the memories of the events of 1948 and the journeys of the first wave of displaced Palestinians become difficult to relate to as the newer generations of Palestinians born in exile live comparatively normal lives with minimal upheaval or suffering. As a result, memories of the

Nakba and Palestine assume fairy-tale-like qualities as they appear to be in a far off land from

the far off past, and are thus non-immediate and untenable.

>[Haya:] I've had – we do have conversations about Palestine. And it's a lot more of a myth now or a fairy – not a fairy-tale, but it's far removed enough that it's not an immediate – I don't know how to put it – it's not immediately there, it's far off, it's like a story, not very tangible. Yeah, so it's much more abstract and theoretical an idea rather than the concrete Palestine that we would move to tomorrow. I think my parents have distanced themselves from it a little bit, so that it – they don't even romanticize – there's no nostalgia there. It's just facing the hard facts of what it is today, and the fact that that's completely different and inaccessible than what it used to be. I used to have a lot of conversations with my grandma about Palestine, and because to her it was much more of an immediate reality, you know, she was much closer to it and to romanticizing that ideal of Palestine, because she lived there and she remembered it. So that was a different type of conversation. It was much more immediate and real to her.

>[Haitham:] My dad told me the story of '48, of his grandfather in 1948. He owned a business in *Beer el-Sabe'*, which later became Beir Sheva. And that house was bombed and they had to flee back to Gaza. My dad would also sometimes tell us the story of '67; actually I've only heard it from him twice – two or three times. My dad was kicked out at 16, he managed to return eventually through a family reunification program. And my mom – she was five years old at the time. The house was bombed, they were lucky they hid in a room that didn't explode. They actually argued over which room to go to, and the one they didn't go to was bombed – the bomb fell there. I feel like part of me wants those experiences to be more real, but it's hard, because I feel a disconnect. My parents had a different experience of life than I did, so different. And especially my dad, and I don't really talk much to him. So it's hard. It depends on the person really, some people – I feel like they'll never understand. Other people who aren't from Palestine, I feel like they understand more. I think a lot of Palestinians will be desensitized or will be disconnected. You can't really go to them for understanding because they already understand – like "you're not the only one". That's the kind of thing other Palestinians might give off, they have the capacity to understand it, but someone who hasn't experienced it will lend you an ear whereas someone who's been through it though might not. It might be due to collective trauma. It really depends on the person. It's like that with my dad. So, I might not be comfortable talking with some Palestinians about it. I know someone who is a survivor of the Sabra and Shatila massacre and I feel that in talking to that person about my family experience... it just doesn't compare.

In their responses, the participants demonstrate a sense of distance from the immediacy of the Nakba's memories, describing it as "abstract," "like a story, not really tangible," and not as "real" as they would like it to be. This "disconnect" is further consolidated in the relations between the various fragments and generations of Palestinians, as the range of experiences create divisions in which one fragment of the Palestinian community is unable to relate to the other. This in turn results in instances where connectivity to the symbols of the collective memory eclipse connectivity to its actual narratives, leading to feelings of even further disconnect from the grand-narrative of the Nakba so that it is not only difficult to relate to due to its historical distance, but it is also difficult to internalize within individual identities due to its vast difference of experience from their own experiences and day to day lives.

As a result, the inherited collective memories of the Nakba fit awkwardly in the identities of newer generations of Palestinians – the Nakba is undeniably their inheritance, yet it does not resemble their lives in any way and is thus difficult to internalize, leading to an emergence of "impostor syndrome," particularly for Palestinians in the diaspora. In his own self-reflections, Alain Finkielkraut coined the term "imaginary Jew" to describe the process of living a fictional, inauthentic life based on the borrowed identities and experiences of persecuted predecessors. Writing that

> [o]thers had suffered and, because I was their descendant, I harvested all the moral advantage. The allotment was inescapable: for them, utter abandonment and anonymous death, and for their spokesperson, sympathy and honor ... The effect produced wasn't intentional. I did not set out like a cynical and sordid swindler to embezzle what they possessed. But it isn't only intention that matters. I owed to the bond of blood this intoxicating power to confuse myself with the martyrs, (18-19)

Finkielkraut developed the concept of an "imaginary Jew" to explain the feelings of in-authenticity his lack of experience of the Holocaust lent his privileged identity. While

Palestinians are not as frequently treated with "sympathy and honor" due to their Palestinian heritage as Jews connected with the Holocaust are, parallel feelings of survivor's guilt, fraud, and a diminished claim to the "authentic" Palestinian identity persist in newer generations' identifications due to the generational and experiential distances from the catastrophe of the Nakba.

> [Ayman:] I feel that about myself. I might not be entitled to, even though I'm Palestinian, I'm not entitled to judge what goes on there. Like, let's say recently: I have a friend of mine who goes to UTM and she's from Gaza and I was talking to her during the latest war on Gaza[24] and she was talking about the different political factions, and she said "how can you support them? Look at all the people dying!" So that makes me feel like I'm not entitled to judge – who am I to judge? I'm not from there, I've never been there or lived there.

> [Kismet:] Sometimes I used to feel that I was pretending to be Palestinian. Not that it's not who I am, just that I'm too far away to be Palestinian. I always feel grateful for everything that Palestinians inside Gaza and the West Bank are doing. That was one of the reasons I wanted to go to Gaza, to let them know that we're really grateful. Not that it makes a difference, but just to make me feel better. Seeing how hopeful the people in Gaza were when I met them, I realized that if the people suffering the most didn't feel hopeless, then we on the outside didn't have the luxury of feeling hopeless.

The fact that none of the participants had personally suffered injustice beyond the fact that they could not visit or live in their native lands, whilst narratives of tremendous suffering suffuse the Palestinian identity in every way, thus presented an obstacle to their full identification with the Palestinian collective memory. Participants actively exclude themselves from the grand-narrative of the Palestinian identity because of the privileges of their lives in Canada that Palestinians elsewhere cannot access, and thus face internal conflicts of belonging to the Palestinian identity.

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[24] Operation Pillar of Defense, which took place during November 2012.

What is most significant in this process of disconnecting from the authenticity of the Palestinian identity is that it is not a division that is present in the image of the Palestinian identity itself, but is rather a process that individuals undergo as a result of internalizing the hierarchies of experience in the Palestinian narrative as they see them. Although it may be true that the greater the tragedy, the greater its value is in the Palestinian national identity, the reverse is not necessarily a foregone conclusion. The idea that the more privileged individuals are, the less of a claim they have to the Palestinian identity is not one that is universally accepted nor utilized in excluding Palestinians from their claims of belonging. Therefore, this process of self-differentiating and self-exclusion from the collective is an often unspoken yet prevalent form of internal self-alienation and struggle with the dogma of the Nakba of the Palestinian narrative. As a result, resolving this conflict then becomes reliant on individuals' own experiences and memories that may mimic or echo the collective memory of the Nakba in order to maintain their connections to the collective and to internalize the memory of the Nakba as a living aspect of their identities rather than as a relic of the past.

Reinterpreting "the Nakba"

In his introduction, Litvak writes that "[e]very group develops the memory of its own past and so highlights its unique identity vis-à-vis other groups. ... The past the group prizes is domestic: the histories of foreign lands are alien and incompatible with its own past. National identity requires both having a heritage and believing it to be unique". (1) This suggests that even in memory, moments of distinction, essentialism, and authenticity arise. Authenticity in collective memory thus refers to those memories that are indisputable and that have gathered such scope of symbolism and universal meaning that their references and meanings become

absolute and all-encompassing to the extent that they could be deemed ideological. As demonstrated, the memory of the Nakba is one such memory-identity and its preservation is maintained partially through the differentiation of its narrative from all other histories, just as the vulnerability of the exiled Palestinian identity is compensated for by the narcissistic fixation on its essential authenticity.

However, in instances of post-memory, the restricted and enshrined dogma of such memories becomes reinterpreted and opened to dialogue with narratives of the Other in order to create a point of reference to which members of a community can relate. Due to the vastness of its collective memory and the length of time and number of generations that it covers, the integration of the Nakba into the individual memories of emerging generations has necessitated opening its ideological meanings to different experiences and different collective memories. If the collective memories of the Nakba of the first generation who experienced it developed within the Palestinian identity to become essential truths, the post-memory of later generations interrogates those truths in ways that dismantle their inherent dogma.

> [Haya:] I think Palestinians share a history but since the Nakba, in those 65 years, those three generations have gone through so many different life experiences that there can't be a universal anymore. They can understand that part of me, and that part of my identity, but you know, my current world view, or my current way of thinking might be completely different because of the past three generations. So for a deeper level of connection, yes it would make a difference if someone shares that history with me or not. But it doesn't have to be a Palestinian living in exile, it can be anyone who's had a similar experience of having had to leave their country. So I do relate to Armenians, or any other immigrants who have a similar diaspora. The same goes for the Holocaust. In the case of the Holocaust and Zionism – I disassociate the two. Simply because I don't think that whatever, you know, bad things that happened to me as a result – or from the Israelis – I don't want to associate that with people who are descendant from the Holocaust because I know that there are many Holocaust survivors who have nothing to do with the Zionist and Israeli project. And I

don't want to take away any of their experience and trauma because of wanting to focus on my own.

[Carla:] I compare myself to Armenians, Armenians who've never been to Armenia. They read, they write, they speak fluent Armenian, you ask them what they are, they're going to say Armenian. They have a country, Armenia, but because of the Armenian genocide they hold on to their identity through generations. Even those born outside Armenia, who've lived their lives away from Armenia, speak and dress as though they just arrived from there. So I compare myself to them, but at the same time it's different.

Relating the memories of the Nakba to other narratives that Palestinians in the diaspora more commonly come into contact with is thus one of the ways they interrogate and reinterpret their own inherited collective memories. The narratives of the Armenian Genocide or the Jewish Holocaust, which are ever-present in the mainstream discourses of the Western world thus provide unlikely points of connection to the narratives of the Nakba. Post-memory therefore encapsulates the experience of later generations of Palestinians who inherit the Nakba from their parents and grandparents through their own individual stories, whilst simultaneously bringing them into dialogue with the narratives of the non-Palestinian Other. This dialogical process works to reinforce and link the Palestinian collective memory to individual identities of its people across its various communities, through the use of shared symbols – in this case, displacement, dispossession, and genocide.

Memory, Crises, and Identity

In addition, the internalization of collective memory into the individual identities of its members is further facilitated by the emergence of moments of crisis. In his theory of identity, Erik Erikson identifies adolescence as a critical moment in individuals' identity formations, where "[t]he psychosocial crisis of late adolescence [is] postulated to be identity versus identity diffusion (or confusion, in Erikson's later writings)". (Kroger and Marcia 32) This indicates that

during adolescence, individuals are faced with choices that would determine their identities, and that the necessity of making those choices represents crises in the creation of individuals' identities. Erikson focuses on two instances of choice that arise at the cusp of adulthood: the choice of occupation, and the formation of an ideology; and argues that it is these choices that direct the identities of adolescents. Erikson's perspective is therefore useful in understanding the ways in which the ideology of the Nakba — which is predominantly a narrative of the severe suffering and struggle — has become a key element in the lives of its later generations. Similar to the "crisis" identified by Erikson's theory, moments of crisis arise in the Palestinian collective that connect collective memory and post-memory to individual memory, thus integrating it into and cementing it within the personal identities of its emerging generations.

One instance of collective crisis identified by all the participants as a turning point in their identifications as Palestinians is the Second Intifada. This is particularly significant, as the Second Intifada in fact took place at the time when the participants were in their adolescence, and was a moment that provoked a questioning of their Palestinian identities. It was also a key moment in their histories, as it was the first violent encounter with the occupier that this generation of Palestinians was able to experience in real-time through the extensive broadcasting of its events. The Second Intifada therefore became an instigator for many Palestinians in the diaspora — the participants of this study included — for deeper examination of and connection with their Palestinian identities. Similarly, the following wars in Gaza — Operation Cast Lead, and most recently, Operation Pillar of Defence — repeated the cycles of crisis and introspection as the third generation of Palestinians in exile matured.

> [Kismet:] I was 14 when the Second Intifada happened I think — and I was really shocked to see it. That was the first time when I organized something for

Palestine in high school. This is when Palestine was no longer a story that my grandmother had told me about. This was the first time I remember feeling sad, angry, and helpless. Then when I came here, in the first few years I didn't really have an identity – I was really focused on studying and I didn't question anything. But when the massacre in Gaza happened, that was the time that I had a crisis. It was so painful, I dropped three courses, I couldn't sleep at night, I was crying, I lost weight – because I felt that people were dying for no reason and we kept asking them to be strong so that we could have the Right of Return. It was a sort of survivor's guilt, and it was the hardest thing I ever had to deal with because I had to live a regular life while they were suffering. I felt that I had to go to Gaza, I needed to go, and I did end up going there in May 2009. It was all these experiences and that crisis that happened that solidified my Palestinian identity for me.

[Carla:] I first – well – because my parents were never clear on what it was, you know, when I asked where we're from. It was later actually; it was around when I was 11-12, during the Second Intifada that I found out. I remember going on the TV and what not, and we had Arabic satellite at that time. I remember seeing children throwing stones, and like – there were, do you remember that Arabic song, the one called "El-Helm El-Araby[25]"? I remember watching it and *crying*, crying, why are these people dying what – what is this? And my dad and my mom explaining to me that this is the conflict between the Palestinians and the Israelis, and my dad – I would hear him yelling, *yelling*, and I never used to get it. I didn't understand why or what was going on. I didn't get it because when I used to ask them "where are we from?" they would tell me "say we're from Jordan". You know? So when my dad once said "say you're from Israel," to me, that was when enough was enough. So I dug deeper, I did my own research and then at the end, my parents gave up and they told me "Yeah, I'm from Ramleh and your dad is from Rameh, etc. etc". [Emphasis hers]

[Ayman:] The Second Intifada – it made it feel real. Going back to that idea of evidence of what has happened, and that there is something that has happened: although I didn't see the Nakba, I related the experience of seeing the suffering of the Intifada and the resistance of the Intifada to what it would have felt like to be part of the Nakba. Because the way you experience stuff is through making relations to experiences you've had before. There was also a TV series, "El-Taghreebe El-Falasteeniyye," that was broadcast during Ramadan of – I forget which year – where they showed the story of the Nakba and what happened and that was really strong for me. A couple of scenes hit home for me.

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[25] *El-Helm El-Araby,* meaning "The Arab Dream," (referencing the dream Pan-Arabism) is an Arabic song released in 1998, that gained widespread popularity in September of 2000 during the Second Palestinian Intifada. The operetta featured singers from each country of the Middle East, representing the ideal of Pan-Arabism that it endorsed.

These events that strongly echoed and reiterated the memory of the Nakba thus illustrate Erikson's crisis in which the need for ideological formation and affiliation became a pressing need, and thus compelled Palestinians in the diaspora to internalize the memory of the Nakba, who until then had felt a "disconnect" with the narratives of the Nakba and "wanted those experiences to be more real". The intifadas and wars that happened within the lifetimes of the third generation thus formed individual memories that then created strong ties to the overarching collective memory of the Nakba, further perpetuating the same processes of conflation and mythologizing that previous generations of Palestinians had performed.

As a result, the memories of Palestinians, individual, localized, or collective, have amalgamated into a narrative of Nakba, loss, and catastrophe. In the same way that belonging in the Palestinian identity opens out to other identities, the dogmatic memory of Palestine and the Nakba opens out to the individual and localized memories of the various fragments of the Palestinian community, yet re-inscribes those memories within the original and all-encompassing narrative. This positions the collective memory of the Palestinian community as a key influence on Palestinian identity and a demarcating signifier of Palestinian authenticity, as it includes both the essential narrative of dispossession as well as the ever-expanding tales of struggle that simultaneously challenge and reinforce the underlying reality of the Palestinian Nakba.

Hence, one can see that The Nakba, whether it is the Nakba of 1948 or the following lived condition of the Nakba and the Palestinian struggle, remains the prevailing narrative of the Palestinian identity and creates a distinct memory-identity that carries its own ideologies and

symbolic language within the overarching Palestinian identity. Its development from a localized collective memory distinctive to the first generation of Palestinian exiles to an overarching and all-encompassing narrative in which post-memory and individual memory are continuously in dialogue thus creates an intrinsic duality within the national Palestinian identity where Palestinians are continuously renegotiating the internal borders of their fixed and essential original catastrophe against the changeability and ethereality of their inherited memories. Thus, post-memory in the emerging generations of Palestinians is a process of continuous opening-out of the original narratives of the Nakba so that its significance works to simultaneously homogenize and divide the Palestinian identity, as its fixed historical narratives compete with the emerging interpretations and experiences of its newer generations in defining the essential and authentic qualities of what it means to be Palestinian.

As a result, the collective memory of the Palestinian community today encompasses far more than the narratives of catastrophe and trauma originally referenced in the formation of Palestinian identity. In fact, the memory of the Nakba in Palestinian identity today can be said to allow Palestinians to "find their agency in a form of the 'future' where the past is not originary, where the present is not simply transitory. It is ... an interstitial future, that emerges *in-between* the claims of the past and the needs of the present," (Bhabha 219, emphasis in original) and thus creates an identity that is at once fixed and rooted in the infallible narratives of the Nakba, and fluid and open to new and differing experiences of plurality and hybrdity.

"He loves a country and he leaves.
[Is the impossible far off?]
He loves leaving to things unknown.
By traveling freely across cultures
those in search of the human essence
may find space enough for all to convene...
Here a margin advances. Or a centre
retreats. Where East is not strictly east,
and West is not strictly west,
where identity is open unto plurality,
not a fort or a trench

Chapter 6. Cultural Pluralism, "Hybrids," and Citizenship Enactments

If Palestinians could be said to have reached a consensus and understanding of their

national identity amongst each other, the question then arises of how this nationality is

translated into visible and recognizable markers that engage with the state and citizens of its

host countries. When it comes to Palestinians living in the diaspora, particularly for those born

in exile, competing national identities are a matter of daily occurrence. Furthermore, as

demonstrated in Chapter 4, home and belonging are not definite or easily elucidated concepts

in the case of stateless Palestinian refugees. The lack of statehood, particularly for Palestinians

descendant from the occupied territories of 1948, therefore creates greater challenges and

tension in terms of belonging and achieving official and recognized citizenship.

In addition, if the image of the Palestinian national identity can be understood as

intrinsically dual, where the Nakba and the cultural heritage of Palestine both equally dictate

the image of the Palestinian identity, Palestinian identity is then almost entirely determined by

individuals, as opposed to government institutions or state imposed laws and regulations due

to its lack of official statehood. In other words, the Palestinian identity in the diaspora is

composed entirely in the consciousness of its people, where "the question of identity ... has

become intimately connected to the 'restoration of the individual's subjectivity'" (Sa'di 176)

without the influence of traditional markers of official Palestinian citizenship or regulated civil

rights and responsibilities. This is not to say however that Palestinians don't engage with those

forms of authorized personhood as the achievement of belonging and recognition within host

countries is imperative to their survival. As a result, Palestinians engage with the concepts of

citizenship and official nationality in ways that result in plural cultural identities, whilst

maintaining distinct differences in their national identities and allegiances.

Performativity and National Cultural Identities

As demonstrated in Chapter 3, identity is composed of various intersecting modes of

identification that include an individual's gender, class, sexuality, beliefs, etc., and that render

self-identification as a process of layering and interlocking of various identities to create a

singular and cohesive individual identity. Similarly, nationalism and nationhood require the

creation of an imagined community where an image of the nation, and thus its national

identity, is constructed out of the various ideologies, hegemonies, traditions, and heritage of a

collective. These include its essential heritage – of ethnicity, language, territory, and genealogy

– as well as its history, collective memories, and its cultural customs and traditions.

In her writings on queer theory, Judith Butler posits that gender identity is performative,

where "to say that gender is performative is to say that it is a certain kind of enactment; the

'appearance' of gender is often mistaken as a sign of its internal or inherent truth; gender is

prompted by obligatory norms to be one gender or the other (usually within a strictly binary

frame), and the reproduction of gender is thus always a negotiation with power". (i) This

suggests that identity – particularly gender identity – is never a latent and "essential"

component of a person's being, but is always a matter of choice, action, and performance.

Butler's argument frames gender identity within the discourses of power, where markers of

gender – both in the physical characteristics of the body and in the behaviors and presentations

of that body – constitute a language of being. This language is then further encoded and

decoded within society's matrices of meaning-making and within society's hegemonic and ideological understandings of sex, gender, and gender roles.

Similarly, national identity also carries performative potential, where the ethnic and essential physical markers of the body are considered as signs of an inherent truth that is validated (or not) through further reflections of the nation's collective image in the individual self – namely through performing the behaviors and norms that are indicative of that collective's ideologies and hegemonies. This implies that, for example, color is the "appearance" of a person's race and ethnicity, yet their performance – the way they dress, speak, behave etc. – supplements that information in ways that consolidate their racial and national identities. It is these performed signs that thus constitute a language of *being* a national. However, it is important to note that these signs are by their nature socially and conceptually produced, where a person's dialect for instance is a characteristic that is learned and acquired from the society in which they reside rather than an inborn trait. As a result, *being* a national identity requires access to a society's cultural identity in order to acquire such markers of belonging. National cultural identity, and the acquisition of these signs, thus grounds national identity within the individual body and within personal identity, and thus allows members of a national community to actively embody, represent, and perform their identities.

As with the possibilities for the emergence of imagined communities that do not constitute nations, cultural identity exists both within and without the discourses of nationalism. Therefore, it is important to note that where cultural identity can encompass any selection of cultural markers, be they "native" or "foreign," *national* cultural identity is

constructed out of the culture that is understood to belong to a collective due to its pervading historical presence, folklore, and traditions etc. In the idea of national cultural identity then is a strong implication of essential authenticity, where cultural markers such as accents and dialect, modes of dress, traditional rituals, etc. are considered to inherently belong to a community by virtue of its existence, and are considered "naturally" inherited much the same way that ethnic physical distinctions are naturally inherited. Therefore, where common genealogy and ancestry foster feelings of fraternity and solidarity within a national collective, shared cultural signs and traditions reflect that solidarity and locate it within a national narrative through various modes of ownership such as the institutionalization of traditions, the passing down of heritage, etc. Hence, if national identity can be deconstructed into the individual and the collective, the essential and the fluid, the universal and the particular, cultural identity can be understood to include similar dynamics and spectrums of identification.

Cultural Capital

Cultural identity can be understood as the amalgamation of common markers of belonging to a collective, with national cultural identity further specifying the types of markers used to distinguish a national collective as opposed to other types of collectives and communities. The "image" of a cultural identity then is composed of the cultural capital that is common to that collective culture, and can be both tangible, as in the cultural products that are unique to a particular group, or intangible, so that it is "the cultural knowledge and competencies that an individual holds, but which are not necessarily articulated by society in formal manners". (Karim 147)

In his examination of cultural identities, Pierre Bourdieu defines cultural capital as "the collection of symbolic elements such as skills, tastes, posture, clothing, mannerisms, material belongings, credentials, etc. that one acquires through being part of a particular social class". ("Cultural Capital") He argues that cultural capital can be *embodied*, as in the accents and dialects of a community, *objectified*, in products that carry symbolic cultural meaning, and *institutionalized*, as in the validating degrees and certificates that indicate the level of cultural capital acquired by an individual. ("Cultural Capital") Thus cultural capital provides individuals with the language of performing identity through its embodied, objectified, and institutionalized signs of belonging and is therefore vital to achieving belonging in an imagined community. It provides the language for decoding, absorbing, and performing the imagined consciousness of a nation in its heritage and traditions, and thus allows individuals to gain membership and recognition within that imagined community.

Cultural capital in a national collective is therefore a fundamental component of its identity and its imagined communities, as it is one of the ways by which the image of the nation is reflected and in fact *performed* in the daily lived experiences of its people. Cultural capital thus becomes embodied, objectified, and institutionalized into performative signs that individuals can constantly "read" and identify in their interactions with one another. As a result, it can be argued that cultural capital offers individuals various ways of performing belonging as well as identifying it in one another, so that just as ethno-specific features such as dark/fair skin are "read" as markers of race, the cultural capital of an accent, a *kofeyye*, or a passport become markers of national affiliation.

The Role of Cultural Capital

Hence, the performativity of cultural capital in a national identity allows it a far greater

degree of agency than essential markers of ethnicity, as it can be selectively performed

depending on the situations individuals find themselves in and the collectives to which they

wish to belong at any given moment. For a nation such as Palestine, in which the physical

features of its members vary widely and are not explicitly distinctive, cultural capital therefore

becomes vital in the processes of connecting the national image to the individual members of

that community, and recognizing members of the Palestinian nationalism. This results in a

heightening of the significance of Palestinian cultural capital in the Palestinian identity, as it

becomes the most effective means of recognizing, performing, and claiming belonging within

the Palestinian nationalism.

> [Haya:] Even with Arabs, I think I feel very different as a Palestinian from the others. It could be as simple as, you know, our accents are different, our food is different, our traditions and weddings and things like that are different. So we may be all from that country – or from the original pan-Arab area – but it is a very distinct cultural identity.

> [Ayman:] I don't speak Lebanese, my parents don't speak Lebanese. We're Palestinians, why should we speak Lebanese? And it does make a difference. Look – anything that you share with another person, culture, identity, makes a difference. I am different with my Arab friends than I am with my non-Arab friends. The more you can relate with another person, the more you can connect. I feel more connected with a Palestinian refugee than with an Algerian Arab. And I feel more connected with an Algerian Arab than, let's say, a South-Asian etc. These commonalities make a difference in how connected you feel.

> [Haitham:] Those moments are very much part of what gives me belonging. I take pride that the "Knafeh el-Nabulsiyyeh[26]" is the best one, and it's Palestinian. I always say it's better than the Lebanese Knafeh. Because, you know, they cook the best, but our Knafeh is better. I know some Gazan dishes, Summa'eyya[27] etc.

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[26] Kenafeh (Arabic: كنافة, pronounced: kanāfah), also spelled knafeh, kunafeh, or kunafah, is a traditional Arab cheese pastry soaked in sweet syrup thought to have originated from the city of Nablus, Palestine, and popular in the eastern Mediterranean cuisines.

[27] Summa'eyya (Arabic: سماقيه) and Ma'loobeh (Arabic: مقلوبه) are both traditional recipes part of the Palestinian cuisine.

So that's part of it. But also studying the history and being politically active also contributes to me feeling that I belong there. The more I know about Palestine, the more I feel a sense of belonging.

[Carla:] Yes! This is Palestinian culture, this all about what we are other than the fact that – listen there are two sides of our culture, we take out the war, the injustice, the bloodshed, but we also have other ways of remembering our land. This picture of *dabke*[28] is, like, epic. It shows you first the Palestinian *thoub*[29], the Palestinian *kofeyye*, Palestinian embroidery. This is our culture. And add to that the *dabke* which is – we're the leading nation in *dabke* if you will. I'm actually in a *dabke* troupe, but it's not Palestinian. They're Lebanese, Syrians, and I'm the Palestinian. There's also our food! *El-Ma'loobeh*[25] – typical Palestinian. This is our culture. There's always the bloodshed and injustice as I said and all that but we also have to not forget our roots and the cultural beauty of Palestine. So for instance, the *thoub*. When we were kids, whenever we had guests coming over my mom would always wear *el-thoub* – the embroideries, the colors, you feel grand when you wear that. And of course nothing compares to the Palestinian *kofeyye*. This is our struggle, our revolution, but also our culture.

In their responses, participants reflect on the various markers of Palestinian identity that are considered "authentic" or essential to Palestine, and thus define their Palestinian identities through their accents and dialect, the cuisine, the embroidery, the *kofeyye* etc. The sentiments of pride and ownership expressed by the participants therefore indicate that these signs of Palestinian cultural capital are the distinguishing features that demarcate its unique identity and its national difference from other Arab and non-Arab identities. Furthermore, the participants' responses demonstrate that, similar to the binary of gender identity outlined in Butler's theory of perfomativity, cultural capital in the Palestinian community can be classified into *Palestinian* cultural capital versus *Other* cultural capital (which can be further classified into Arab cultural capital and non-Arab cultural capital) that is acquired from their experiences in various countries and homes. These distinctions reflect the idea of an "authentic" Palestinian

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[28] Refer to Image 7, Appendix D

[29] *Thoub* (Arabic: ثُوب, pronounced: thawb) is a gown traditionally worn by women in Arab countries. The Palestinian *thoub* is marked by the styles of collars, sleeves, colors, and embroideries that differ from one region to the next and are symbolic of the different cultures.

identity that is "naturally inherited" versus other "foreign" identities that are "acquired" as a result of experience, thus reiterating the binary of essential versus inauthentic qualities within the national identity. The "authentic" Palestinian identity, distinguished by discrete Palestinian cultural capital, thus becomes the original centre against which Other identities are defined and separated.

This process of othering is reflected in the ways participants read and perform cultural capital, as their responses not only indicate the prevalence of Palestinian cultural capital in their lives, but also elucidate the hierarchies of value into which the various sets of cultural capital fall – Palestinian culture being the one they most relate to, followed by Arab culture, and then by the different cultures they interact with. For instance, Ayman's explanation of the different ways he is able to relate to and connect with members of other nationalisms demonstrates the importance and value of the presence of Palestinian cultural identity and Arab cultural identity versus Other cultural identities in his achievement of belonging and building meaningful relationships within his community.

In addition, it was important for Ayman to emphasize that his parents don't speak with a Lebanese accent, despite having grown up in Lebanon, as a signifier of how strong their Palestinian identity is. Similarly, the other participants also compared their Palestinian identities to other Arab identities in order to signify their authentic and essential difference. Not only does this demonstrate the jealously guarded preservation of Palestinian culture in relation to Other cultures, but such perceptions which are highly common in Palestinian communities indicate that to the Palestinian community in the diaspora, the closer an individual's identity resembles the "authentic" Palestinian cultural identity, the more Palestinian they are, and

therefore the more valued their identities within the collective. Cultural capital in the Palestinian identity therefore functions both to consolidate national identity through the performance of its signifiers and to build connections amongst members of a community and establish their "place" within the collective by reflecting their degrees of authenticity.

Performing Palestinian Identity

That Palestinian cultural capital dictates the sense of identification that participants feel thus reflects its significance in their lives, as they identify as Palestinians first and Other second, rendering the Palestinian identity as the primary cornerstone against which their other cultural identities are constructed. Nevertheless, embodied and objectified forms of Palestinian cultural capital do not fully account for the entirety of the Palestinian cultural identity, nor are they enough for the establishment of a cohesive nationalism. In addition to those forms of cultural capital is the side of the Palestinian identity that is preoccupied with its activism and the sense of responsibility for achieving social justice. As demonstrated in participants' responses throughout the study, discourses of politics, justice, and activism are rampant in Palestinian communities, as they are intimately connected to the narratives of the Nakba and the Right of Return, and act as substitutes to the inheritance of the land of Palestine.

Therefore, as the responses of the participants indicate, knowledge and affirmation of the Palestinian cause and the Palestinian narrative also become vital knowledge forms of cultural capital for the achievement of connections and belonging, whether it is with other Palestinians or individuals of other nationalities. As a result, the value of the Palestinian narrative as a form of cultural capital becomes a defining signifier in the image of the Palestinian identity, and the performed cultural capital of the Palestinian identity become its

measurable signifiers. For instance, the wearing of the *kofeyye* or the use of countless Handala

products such as key chains and necklaces like the one worn by Haitham become indicators of

not only the Palestinian nationality of their wearers, but also the individuals' political stance

and solidarity with the Palestinian cause.

Conversely, the lack of such knowledge excludes Palestinians from the collective, thus

creating internal divisions and alienations within the Palestinian identity.

> [Haitham:] I think that if someone who I know is Palestinian doesn't know
> anything about the history or care about anything, I might criticize them for that.
> But I wouldn't say they're not Palestinian. I think people can self-identify
> however they wish, it's no one's business. But if I know someone is originally
> Palestinian and they say they're Canadian or something else, it bothers me.
> They're privileged, that's what bothers me. They're really, really privileged.
> You're here because somebody was expelled, most likely, and you're acting like
> you don't care and you're acting like you're White.

> [Carla:] I can't deal with them. Especially Americans, you know those that go to
> America, who live there, and adopt the accent etc. – I feel that I wouldn't be able
> to connect with them. Especially American-Palestinians or American-Arabs in
> general – when they adopt American culture, they forget their roots. I can't
> connect with people like that. Don't get me wrong, I do have friends who have
> adopted other identities. We bond on so many different levels, but at the same
> time when they say they're American or Jordanian, or anything else, it still
> bothers me.

The sentiments expressed here thus further illustrate the hierarchies of belonging in which the

value allocated to an individual's cultural capital and performance relies on the collective's

values, which in turn are dictated by the collective's degree of acceptance of plurality versus

authenticity. In this case, the discarding of the "authentic" and essential Palestinian identity of

an individual in favor of another acquired identity – for instance, identifying as American or

Jordanian rather than Palestinian – places that individual at one end of a spectrum of

identification, in opposition to the holistically and exclusionary "authentic" Palestinian identity,

thus alienating them from the overarching Palestinian collective. Therefore, while Palestinian

cultural identity may be multiple and hybrid in its inclusions of foreign cultural capital such as

multiple languages, passports, etc., it is not without internal boundaries that demarcate

difference between the "authentic" and the "acquired," ranking them within a hierarchy of

value rather than merging with other cultural identities in a non-stratified and fluid manner.

However, this is not to say that it is only through these markers that knowledge of the

Palestinian narrative, closeness to it, and therefore belonging are measured. Participants in this

study consistently acknowledged the significance of plurality in their identities, indicating a shift

in value from a purely "authentic" identity to one that is multitudinous, without entirely casting

off its Palestinian origin and heritage. This shift therefore allows the Palestinian identity to

continue to develop and adapt to its surrounding cultures and nations, yet also aids in

preventing its complete loss and dissolution. Classifications and stratifications of belonging are

thus established where different expectations of different groups set different standards of

how much Palestinian cultural capital is required for connection, acceptance, and belonging. In

individuals of Palestinian origin for instance, all forms of essential markers and Palestinian

cultural capital become necessary for complete acceptance and belonging to the Palestinian

community, whereas for non-Palestinian Arabs fewer markers of solidarity are expected for

building meaningful connections, and even less are required of non-Arabs.

"Othering" Palestinian Culture

It is important to note however that just as the presence of Palestinian cultural capital in

an individual's identity influences the measure of his/her acceptance and belonging within the

Palestinian collective, it also works in reverse to hinder their achievement of belonging within

other national collectives and communities.

> [Kismet:] In terms of the Palestinian culture, in terms of poetry, and books, that's
> almost entirely what I read. It's what I like to read. I love reading history. And I
> know it sounds odd, because I tried to get a friend to read a book and he couldn't
> understand why I liked it so much – it's so sad and full of suffering. And what I
> think is that for him, it's a book. For other people, it's what actually happened to
> them, it's the story of their lives. It's hard to explain sometimes to people here in
> Canada to whom the Palestinian story is a totally new concept. To them, it's just
> a story, it's not a reality and you have to explain it to them. I find that part a little
> bit tough, because you're telling someone about how great this book or poem is
> and they can't relate to it. That frustrates me. I do feel more understood by
> other Palestinians because this struggle shaped my life. So the way my life runs is
> based on what I believe in, in terms of justice for Palestine and for others. The
> average Canadian citizen here doesn't know about any of these struggles and
> when I try to explain it to them it seems that it takes a lot of effort for them to
> understand. And it's basically because *"'elly 'eedo belmay moo metl elly 'eedo
> belnar"*[30]. And they never experienced it or met anybody who experienced it.
> They were never friends with anyone who experienced injustice, even though
> here there are many injustices against the natives. But again, it takes a special
> type of person to question these things, the majority of the people don't
> question these things; and you find that most of the people who do have
> experienced injustice. So usually it's easier to explain things to people who are at
> least familiar with these concepts. So I've learned that just because someone is
> an Arab doesn't mean they understand the degrees and types of injustices
> happening, whereas left-leaning Canadian activists who are more politically
> literate could sometimes grasp the situation better, because of their political
> awareness.

> [Carla:] Of course, of course it makes a difference. It's unbelievable. Even though
> we've barely known each other, I can talk to you as if I've known you for years.
> It's weird. We have something in common and it's golden for both of us. We
> have something to relate to. We have the same stories, even the same things to
> share about; the same passion. If someone *'ajnabi*[31] asks me, "Where are you
> from?" "I'm from Palestine." [Says carelessly] "Oh Ok." You know? "Next." It
> doesn't mean anything for them, Palestine. That's probably it, I feel that they
> don't understand when I say Palestine. When you speak about Palestine, I'm like
> "wow – yes, this person knows". We share the same knowledge of the suffering,

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[30] Arabic proverb: "he whose hand is in the water is unlike he whose hand is in the fire," meaning that suffering is less meaningful to those who hear about it, whilst living safely away from its reality, than to those who experience it firsthand.

[31] *'Ajnabi* (Arabic: أجنبي), meaning "foreigner", is mainly used to denote outsiders or non-Arabs.

the politics, but also the beautiful culture of it. So I feel that it lacks in other friendships. They lack something.

[Haitham:] There's definitely something missing, they're not Palestinian at the end of the day.

As the participants' responses indicate, Palestinian cultural capital does not only work to provide Palestinians with a sense of belonging to the Palestinian identity and a medium of connection amongst themselves. The distinctiveness of the Palestinian cultural identity also works as a mechanism of marginalizing and othering Palestinians in their host countries, where the Palestinian narrative and Palestinian cultural capital are not adequately or even accurately represented in the mainstream culture, and do not exist in the imagined communities of the nations in which they reside. The fact that "it takes a special type of person" to understand, recognize, and reflect back the values and markers of cultural capital that constitute Palestinian identity demonstrates the difficulties Palestinians face in forming connections in which they feel fully recognized, accepted, and "at home". As a result, Palestinians feel the strongest sense of connection and belonging to communities and individuals where their Palestinian cultural capital – a vital and necessary component of their national image – is reflected back to them.

Hence, cultural capital functions as the language through which the national cultural identity of the Palestinian identity is lived and performed. It thus provides individuals with a sense of their own identities and belonging, and allows members of a collective to recognize one another through the performances of their cultural identities. However, this also results in the emergence of dichotomies of authentic/inauthentic identities that create internal divisions within the Palestinian collective, and that work to marginalize and alienate Palestinians in their host homes. This reiterates the argument discussed in Chapter 4 where the internal boundaries

of identity for Palestinians in the diaspora that separate their Palestinian-ness from their other

identities can never be erased to allow a free-flow of cultural capital, but remain as semi-

permeable borders that can only be reshaped by coming into contact with the identities of their

host countries. The Palestinian identity can therefore never be fully reflected in another

country's imagined community but requires its own nation in order to be holistically

represented. As a result, Palestinians can only see the parts of their identities that coincide with

other national narratives reflected within the nationalisms of their host countries, and it is

therefore only in parts that they can achieve belonging.

Cultural Capital and Effective Citizenship

If belonging to an imagined community is a matter of consciousness, where membership

is achieved by reflecting a nation's essential qualities, collective memory, and its national

cultural identity, citizenship becomes the official and authorized form of recognizing that

membership. It provides individuals with an acknowledged sense of belonging and participation

in the community as it "refers to a status entailing a set of rights [and responsibilities] both

claimed by and bestowed upon all members of a political community". (Pakulski 73) Citizenship

thus becomes the validated representation of an imagined community's presence – it

recognizes the parameters of a community's identity and translates its values and traditions

into institutionalized, regulated, and authorized rights and responsibilities. Consequently, the

citizenship role participates in the cultural capital of a nation's imagined community in order to

certify and validate membership and create a sense of belonging within its community. As a

result, national cultural capital becomes a necessary implement for individuals to achieve not

only belonging and recognition in the consciousness of their communities, but also in achieving

and performing belonging as a lived condition, as it becomes the currency through which both implicit belonging and official citizenship are attained.

It is important to note however that belonging to a cultural identity and attaining citizenship are not equal. The distinctions between cultural identity and citizenship that differentiate between membership at a cognitive level versus membership at an officially recognized level lie in the types of cultural capital required for achieving those two forms of belonging. As demonstrated thus far, the cultural capital required for achieving belonging to the cultural identity of a community lies in its national symbols and heritage. Citizenship, on the other hand,

> involves a range of forms of tacit knowledge, competence and taken-for-granted assumptions. Citizens must know how to engage in citizenship activities. They require basic working knowledge of the political system and skills in accessing and processing information, interpreting political talk, and debating public issues. All of this must be contained in the taken-for-granted knowledge which comprises their (shared) lifeworld. (Karim147)

This indicates that cultural capital in the form of the tacit knowledge that is particularly linked to the citizenship role and civil behavior as opposed to cultural identity is "vital to having effective citizenship". (Karim 147) Therefore, the acquisition of such cultural capital in addition to the acquisition of a nation's cultural identity thus becomes imperative to achieving effective citizenship.

However, if the cultural capital necessary for attaining membership in an imagined community and achieving effective citizenship resides in the consciousness of that community, the question then arises of how it is then to be acquired, decoded, internalized, performed, and engaged with by members of that community at the level of lived experience rather than merely as a conceptual and imagined representation. One of the ways of engaging with and

acquiring a community's cultural capital is through participation in its Habermasian "public sphere," as "citizenship rights are currently expanding towards a new domain of cultural rights that involve the right to symbolic presence, dignifying representation, propagation of identity and maintenance of lifestyles. This reflects the crisis of welfarism, the 'shrinking of the state', and the expansion of the public spheres". (Pakulski 73)

Habermas's "public sphere" provides a space that allows "citizens [to] deliberate about their common affairs, and hence [is] an institutionalized arena of discursive interaction," (Fraser 110) where a space in which equal and informed engagement is practiced through the medium of deliberative discourse. As a space in which the "right to symbolic presence, dignifying representation, propagation of identity and maintenance of lifestyles" (Pakulski 73) is achieved, the public sphere thus provides the space in which cultural capital is acquired and negotiated. It allows for individuals to interact with the dominant ideologies and hegemonies of a community in ways that challenge and subvert the prevailing discourse, and in fact arguably provides the space in which an imagined community is created and disseminated.

Such interaction is facilitated by the distinction of the public sphere from the frameworks of a marketplace, by placing value on "debating and deliberating," rather than "buying and selling," (Fraser 111) and, perhaps more importantly, by distinguishing between the "public" and the "private" spaces. As a result, the negotiations over which types of cultural capital are valued and diminished, included and excluded, and which ideologies and hegemonies are challenged or not, ultimately occur in a nation's public sphere(s). The public sphere can therefore provide the space where the values of essentialism and authenticity to an

imagined community are determined, and where markers of belonging are dictated by a discursive public.

Power in the Public Sphere

The governance of a public sphere, whether state or self- governance, thus becomes crucial in the negotiations over ideology, hegemony, cultural capital, and belonging. Despite its capacity for plurality and the challenging and subverting of ideologies due to its openness and its deliberative qualities, Fraser demonstrates that the Habermasian public sphere remains constrained within the dominant and instinctively adhered-to narratives and frameworks of society. Writing that the Habermasian public sphere is bound by "an ideal of unrestricted rational discussion of public matters ... [where the] discussion was to be open and accessible to all, [and] merely private interests were to be inadmissible," (113) Fraser reveals that the illusory boundaries between "public" and "private" rationalize the differences between "admissible" and "inadmissible" discourse to the public sphere, and thus are complicit in reaffirming normalized hegemonies and ideologies. As such, participation in the public sphere allows individuals to acquire knowledge and cultural capital, yet it is also premised on a taken-for-granted threshold of cultural capital that is based on the "reason" and normative understandings of the existing hegemony. It thus requires instinctive and unspoken understandings of what is and isn't admissible in the discourse of a public space as opposed to a private space, and therefore limits the scope of interaction and deliberation by constraining its subjects of discourse only to those admissible in a "public" space.

Thus, as Fraser illustrates, the inability of the public sphere to effectively transcend the divisions of gender, class, race, sexuality – also affected by the rationality of the engaged

"public" – creates a "discourse of publicity touting accessibility, rationality, and the suspension of status hierarchies [that is] deployed as a strategy of distinction". (115) That is to say that the conceptual framework of a public sphere in fact could not apply in its reality, where "declaring a deliberative arena to be a space where extant status distinctions are bracketed and neutralized is not sufficient to make it so". (Fraser 115) As a result, the "reason" that governs Habermas's public sphere dictates the discourses, participants, and subjects of that sphere in normative ways that could not provide the space needed for the renegotiation of normative ideals.

As a result, Fraser proves that a singular universalizing public sphere is an ineffective and insufficient tool for the creation of such powerful and all-encompassing concepts as nationalism. She suggests that "alternative publics" are more effective in providing spaces for the renegotiations of normative discourse. Fraser's "alternative publics" constitute "*subaltern counterpublics* in order to signal that they are parallel discursive arenas where members of subordinated social groups invent and circulate counterdiscourses to formulate oppositional interpretations of their identities, interests, and needs". (Fraser 123, emphasis in original) In a sense, these alternative publics then feed into subaltern imagined communities – the commonalities being in the marginalized discourses that these counterpublics engage in. Similarly, in his article, "The Elusiveness of Full Citizenship: Accounting for Cultural Capital, Cultural Competencies, and Cultural Pluralism," Karim H. Karim posits the notion of "public sphericules" to denote the sub-cultures and sub- public spheres that arise within the dominant public sphere of a collective. In looking at the public sphere, Karim notes that

> [t]hose whose membership is drawn from elite groups generally have easier access to
> the larger public sphere since the discourses with which they articulate issues have

often become entrenched in society through the ability of these groups to dominate public culture. ... Non-elite groups tend to lack such cultural capital. They have to work much harder to be able to access public discourses and to participate in broader societal arenas. (153)

Thus these distinctions, where the discourse of a public sphere is regulated by the divisions of "public" and "private," and where access to the discourse itself is predicated by prior knowledge and understandings of the hegemonic cultural capital of a society, fail to fully emancipate the Habermasian public sphere from the normative ideologies and hegemonies of society – namely the bourgeois, masculinist frameworks that shaped it.

Thus the governing frameworks of the public sphere render its construction of a nationalism "as a fabrication of elite groups ... [where] these elites seek to manipulate the masses by inventing traditions. They link the masses to the past, in order to legitimize their hold on power and to divert the social grievances of the masses against foreign states, thus foiling both revolutionary processes and democratization". (Litvak 6) Therefore, if the public sphere is only accessible to the elite class – or what Stuart Hall terms as the "power-bloc," then "public sphericules" can be seen as "the sites where the struggle for and against a culture of the powerful is engaged," (Hall, "Notes on Deconstructing the Popular" 71) they are not spheres where a fully formed, unambiguous culture can be expressed, but rather provide a space where that culture can be constituted.

National Public Spheres and Palestinian Sphericules

Hence the public sphere can be understood as a space in which dominant ideologies and hegemonies are discursively constructed by the elite power-bloc and thus dictate the national identity of a community as it is determined by a select few, and that public sphericules or subaltern publics provide the spaces in which alternative identities are constituted and

performed. However, the Palestinian identity in the diaspora refutes the popular conception

that nationalism is "instilled and passed on only by ruling elites. In this regard, the

Palestinians—both 'inside,' in Israel, the West Bank, and Gaza, and 'outside,' in the diaspora—

are an exception, since they have never lived under sovereign Palestinian rule". (Milshtein 71)

As a result, the culture of Palestinians in the diaspora can thus be seen as one that is

constituted in both the public spheres of their host countries, and the public sphericules of

Palestinian communities.

This varies the discourses in which the Palestinian identity participates, allowing it to

accrue the cultural capital of both the nationalisms of its new homes, as well as the ideologies

of its own collective. However, the lack of institutionalized forms of disseminating knowledge

about Palestine (such as museums and school curriculums in which its history would be taught,

etc.), along with the lack of a national home in which the community would be united, have

circumvented the emergence of a unified Palestinian public sphere. Therefore, if the national

public sphere demarcates what knowledge is "public" and what knowledge is "private" in a

nation's discourse and its identity, then in all countries other than Palestine, Palestinian cultural

capital is marginalized in relation to the nation's own discourses and is thus relegated to

"private" spheres and/or subaltern counterpublics.

As a result, Palestinian homes and communities in the diaspora represent sphericules in

which the Palestinian identity is deliberated, enacted, and performed; and it is therefore in

these spaces that the discursive spheres of communication in which the Palestinian identity is

constructed arise. It is important to note however that within those private spheres, the same

power dynamics and frameworks of inclusion and exclusion of certain discourses also arise, so

that the inherent hierarchies of value that are present in the Palestinian national and cultural

identity receive corresponding value in the deliberative spaces of those spheres. The tacit

knowledges of the Palestinian identity thus become the implicit conditions of being Palestinian,

and are represented in the language spoken, the food that is prepared, and the customs that

are followed etc., whereas the discourses of memory, the Nakba, and politics, etc. are included

in the deliberative spaces of the communities.

> [Ayman:] Take the *dabke* for instance. It's culture. I don't dance it unfortunately,
> I haven't actively tried to learn it, but it's definitely something I like and see as a
> symbol of culture. The dresses on the men and women are very traditional.
> *Dabke* invokes happiness for me, I guess that's because it's what we usually do
> during weddings and celebrations. Now, it's important for us to maintain our
> culture and to not totally lose it, because it's the untold story if you will. It's
> untold – it's invisible in that, for instance, my parents haven't taught me *dabke*,
> but they've told me about our political history. I wasn't around for the Nakba, I
> don't think that any parents sit down and show their kids evidence of what
> happened during the Nakba, but the *dabke* is evidence that there is in fact a
> Palestinian identity. It's not that it's neglected, but in terms of *dabke*...there's
> nothing to tell. I physically see *dabke*, or eat the food, there's no need for
> anyone to tell me that this is Palestinian. But I need to be told about the Nakba.
> Our cultural identity is ongoing, it's what I eat every day, I can experience it all
> the time. What you can't experience has to be told to you or else you wouldn't
> find out about it.

Ayman's examples of how he has experienced Palestinian culture through food and *dabke*

versus the ways he's learned of the Nakba demonstrate the difference between the

deliberative qualities and the essential and fatalistic qualities of the spaces in which Palestinian

identity is constructed – the cultural capital of performed heritage such as dialect, food,

clothing, and cultural customs is taken-for-granted and is thus rendered "invisible," whereas

the intangible heritage of the Nakba and its associated collective memories is necessarily

relegated to a discursive space that is open to discussion of the past, history, and politics. As a

result, the heritage of cultural capital such as the Nakba through a discursive space results in

the emergence of post-memory where the collective memories of the Nakba are reinterpreted by the newer generations, as opposed to the tacit knowledges that remain unchallenged due to their invisibility in the deliberative sphericules of Palestinian communities.

Negotiating a Palestinian Public Sphere

Due to the geographical distances and the dispersal of the Palestinian nation, and the limitations to access imposed by their diaspora, the creation and dissemination of the Palestinian knowledge that is necessary for participation in its discursive spheres become dependent on active personal interest. This causes Palestinians to turn not only to their older generations for information about Palestine, but also to forms of communication that can expand their deliberative discourses beyond the private spheres of their homes and communities. As a result, written works – such as histories and literature – that could be more widely accessed become the educational tools that Palestinians in the diaspora rely on for gaining access into Palestinian discourse. Furthermore, in recent years, social media has also become a large influence in creating a Palestinian discursive public sphere, in which Palestinians all over the world could participate in debating and constructing their identities.

> [Haya:] I started asking a bit more about our family history and our stories about our time there. But I also felt that our experience in Palestine may not have been as representative of most other Palestinians' experiences – there were so many different experiences. So I actually turned a little bit to Palestinian literature, in translation or in Arabic, poetry and stories by Palestinian writers. And I also turned a little bit to, just, you know, histories written either by Arab historians or British historians or whatever, to, you know, get different facts and information about Palestine in the twentieth century.

> [Kismet:] I love reading about Palestine, in terms of politics and in terms of other forms of cultural resistance. And I try to stay involved as much as I can, not only involved in going to events here – because I'm well connected with Palestinians here and in Gaza and in Syria and lots of other places, I feel it plays a very

important role, because everything I know about what's going on inside Gaza or inside Palestine, I know it through Facebook. And everything that's going on here, I know it through Facebook. I guess when I was younger, a teenager, it wasn't real as it is right now. I still sympathized but not in the same way. Even before 2008, just the level of awareness, maturity, and having time to actually sit and think – it started in 2006 and Lebanon, but at that point in my life I didn't have time to be actually involved. That's when I started getting angry, and then a big part of it was actually SAIA[32] at UofT. After I saw that there were so many activities going on, I wanted to be part of it. And then little bit by little bit, I felt like this is what I want to do. Not because I feel obligated, but because it makes me happy. But I would say that 2008/9 Gaza[33] was a major turning point. Before that, I would go to events if I had time. After that, I would make time.

The forms of participation referenced by the participants thus become of particular importance for Palestinians living in the diaspora, as the public sphere of each host nation dictates the degree of inclusion of the Palestinian identities of its members. Where the Palestinian identity is one that is excluded from the national narrative of their host countries, Palestinians in the diaspora turn to the subaltern publics of organizations such as SAIA in order to deliberate, construct, and represent their identities. In addition, the public sphere offered by the internet and social media provides a space that is not bound by any particular national cultural capital, and thus affords Palestinians access to the discourses in which their identities and cultures can be reflected and performed.

However, this is not to say that the public sphere of host nations is always exclusionary to the Palestinian identity and its relevant discourses. The public spheres of "immigrant countries" such as Canada and Australia provide Palestinians, and most other migrant

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[32] The student organization, "Students Against Israeli Apartheid" (SAIA), is a sub-organization of the Coalition Against Israeli Apartheid (CAIA), and "is a network of university students, faculty and staff working to raise awareness about Palestine and Israeli Apartheid as well as the need to sever economic ties between campuses and the support for Israeli state policies. We are connected with the growing Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions Movement against Israeli Apartheid. SAIA also organizes the annual Israeli Apartheid Week". ("Students Against Israeli Apartheid")

[33] Referring to "Operation Cast Lead" which took place from December 2008 to January 2009

identities, access to the public sphere in ways that recognize their own native identities whilst allowing for a dialogue with the national identity of their host communities.

> [Haya:] I don't think that they contradict each other, or that one is at the expense of the other, simply because I feel that the Canadian identity has room in it for you to be another and Canadian, which I don't feel is the same for other countries that are more homogenous. I don't feel any less Palestinian because I'm Canadian. I think, with the Canadian narrative, you are an outsider, you are a person who's come from a different country, and so a lot of the Canadian ways of being and traditions and the things that they identify with are also things that are for immigrants and not necessarily for people who are born Canadian. I feel like they're all hybrid in the end, you know. Thanksgiving is not necessarily the way that – there's no one way to do thanksgiving. In my family for example, when we do thanksgiving, we do it with our own Palestinian food, we still use the occasion to give thanks for whatever blessings we have, but we don't tie it to the history of the settlers and the pilgrims and all that which is – it's American and not even Canadian. So I think we co-opt what we want to from our culture and Canadian culture and we still feel that it's no less Canadian and no less Palestinian.

As demonstrated by Haya's response, Palestinians living in Canada thus feel a greater degree of autonomy and empowerment in its public sphere, as its normative ideologies and hegemonies automatically afford room for migrant identities such as the Palestinian identity within the discourses of Canadian nationalism and Canadian national identity. The fact that "there is no one way to do thanksgiving" implies that the exchange of cultural capital that occurs as Palestinians and other migrant identities "co-opt" aspects of the different cultural identities present within the Canadian public sphere allow them to perform their identities in new and unexpected ways (such as celebrating thanksgiving with Palestinian food) that enhance their sense of belonging. As a result, the Palestinian cultural identity begins to accrue new cultural capital from its host nationalism in ways that expand its plurality, whilst maintaining its authenticity.

Yet despite their ability to perform their Palestinian identities in the Canadian public sphere, participants acknowledged that there are also limits to the engagement of the Palestinian identity in Canadian discourse and politics.

> [Kismet:] When I have to listen to Harper, Kenney, or Baird speak about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict it makes me really angry, because they don't represent all Canadians. So I don't think that there's a conflict between my Palestinian and Canadian identity, it's just that these people exist in this place, and they don't represent me. So I wouldn't say that it conflicts, I would say that Canadian politicians and people who carry those ideas make me angry and I try to avoid them.

> [Ayman:] I'm angry when Harper makes statements that don't represent me, because I'm a Canadian too. As much as I'm a Palestinian, I'm a Canadian too.

These limitations further emphasize the normative divisions between the discourses that are allowed to participate in shaping national identity, and where the Palestinian identity continues to be marginalized. However, despite its tendency to perpetuate normative ideologies and hegemonies, the importance of an overarching public sphere in which the unification of alternative publics under the umbrella of nationalism is facilitated remains undiminished. The creation of solidarity and cohesion amongst the different subaltern counterpublics and their incorporation into the dominant discourse becomes essential in order to shape effective nationality.

It is not enough however for a public to reach a consensus over its ideologies and hegemonies in order to establish a distinct nationalism – formalization of those conclusions is necessary for the creation of a nation. The translation of a public sphere's consensus into nationhood therefore requires the formation of state apparatuses that sanctify its ideologies and hegemonies into measurable parameters of belonging. Citizenship therefore also becomes a construction where the "bestowing and granting of rights should be viewed as a complex

process, in which the content and scope of *claimed* rights for protection, recognition, provision,

etc., on the one hand, and the content of rights that are *recognised* as legitimate by the state

and effectively *sanctioned* on the other, may differ". (Pakulski 73, emphasis in original)

However, since the Habermasian public sphere cannot provide the adequate space for the

discursive interaction between these Palestinian subaltern counterpublics and the decision

makers of the nations in which they reside, different forms of engagement emerge. Different

modes of communicating in the public sphere that are not bound by the same logic of reason

that limits discursive engagement are enacted by individuals in order to claim belonging. As a

result, effective participation in the public sphere necessitates not only the use of discursive

engagement, but also performing the citizenship role through actively pursuing and acquiring

the cultural capital of the nation in its various forms.

Performing Citizenship

In her article "The Repositioning of Citizenship and Alienage," Saskia Sassen argues that

citizenship enactments and participation in a nation's public sphere create denationalized

modes of citizenship that can reaffirm or subvert, at any given time, either a) the

conceptualized image of a nation, b) the state's institutionalized values, or c) all of the above.

Sassen illustrates how performance in compliance with a nation's institutionalized values

secures membership in that nation's imagined community, and affords access to its

nationalism. These negotiations of granting citizenship and belonging suggest that the relations

between individuals, imagined communities, and the state lead to a "relationship between

citizenship and nationality [where] the evolution of the latter [is] towards something akin to

'effective' nationality rather than as 'alleigance' to one state or exclusively formal nationality".

(Sassen 80) Sassen further argues that these modes of engagement with a state's imagined community and its conceptual nationalism constitute "denationalized forms of citizenship," (80) and thus can be more useful in developing effective nationality than Habermas's discursive public sphere alone, rendering the utilization of performance and citizenship enactments a necessary mode of participation in a nation's public spheres and decision-making process.

In the case of Palestinians living in the diapora, the plurality of belonging and nationalisms in which they engage necessitates a balancing act between the Palestinian cultural identity and their Other cultural identities. Yet in terms of citizenship, the lack of a Palestinian state and Palestinian citizenship compels Palestinians in the diaspora to turn to their host countries for the rights and freedoms of a citizenship role, and thus the cultural capital necessary for performing that role.

> [Haya:] I mean, the way that I feel that I belong to Palestine is much more like we said before, in an abstract way – it's the Palestinian identity, and the culture and the literature and all of that and the history. It's different from the way I identify as belonging to Jordan – which, I know Jordan's streets, I know Jordan's, you know, the way of life there and I don't identify with the Jordanian identity per se. In Canada it's a bit of both, it's identifying with the culture and the politics and the cultural references and things like that, and knowing the city itself. But I also feel I belong as a citizen to the country, and I fully identify as a Canadian. I follow Canadian politics, and I vote in elections... I can see my future here.

> [Haitham:] Would I move back to Palestine under the current circumstances if I was allowed to go back? No. I see myself as being more effective here. I've been involved with the BDS[34] movement and it's a huge thing, and I'm very much – like I said Toronto is now another home. I'm connected to people here, I know people and people know me and the community here – I would have to start from scratch if I were to go back there, my activism. My Arabic is weak, I can't read properly. And the culture is also – culturally different now. I'm making much more of a difference here, and for me, I'm not just a Palestine activist. The

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[34] *"The global movement for a campaign of Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) against Israel until it complies with international law and Palestinian rights was initiated by Palestinian civil society in 2005, and is coordinated by the Palestinian BDS National Committee (BNC), established in 2007. BDS is a strategy that allows people of conscience to play an effective role in the Palestinian struggle for justice". ("Introducing the BDS Movement")*

majority of what I do is Palestine, but what I've read, what I've studied, what I've discussed with other activists – I'm an internationalist. It's not just in Palestine that injustices are happening. This is an issue of capitalism, globalization, neo-liberalism, colonialism, imperialism. So for me, I don't see it as – the way to be Palestinian is to go and live there. I see that as more of a nationalist act that's legitimate, but at the same time I see a broader analysis than "Palestine" and going to live there. There's a responsibility to fight for justice and our rights. We have human rights, and that's our responsibility.

[Ayman:] I work with SAIA, unlike my brothers who have never done any political work – or at least they haven't done as much as I have. They're knowledgeable about stuff. My dad has always talked about the political parties, Fateh, Hamas, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, etc. So even though we've never lived in Palestine, we're familiar with the politics and the political system. But none of that makes me a Palestinian citizen. We can talk about Palestinian politics all we want, it still won't change anything in the system. On the other hand, I also follow Canadian politics, I'm very active, and I vote in elections. I know what's going on in Canada, I've studied the political organization of Canada. So of all the countries I'm tied to, the country I have the most stake in is Canada – it's the only country I have citizenship in. It's only Canada that I am empowered in or that I can participate in.

As demonstrated by the participants' responses, maintaining a Palestinian identity whilst performing a Canadian citizenship thus necessitates a blending of different types of cultural capital – where Haya's cultural identity for instance is reliant on the distinctly Palestinian knowledge of the traditions and heritage, her knowledge of the Jordanian or Canadian context relies on the daily experiences of living in those countries and learning their systems and ideologies. Similarly, both Haitham and Ayman illustrate their sense belonging in the Canadian identity through their participation in the activities of discursive political engagement that would otherwise not be accessible to them.

Therefore, the involvement of the Palestinian identity and Palestinian cultural capital in the Canadian public sphere is reflected in the degree of Palestinian activism that is present in the Canadian context, and in this case would imply that the Palestinian sphericules present in

Canadian society arguably carry greater power in shaping the ideologies of Canadian culture than they would elsewhere. What the responses of the participants illustrate then is that where the cultural capital of a nation's cultural identity provides individuals with a sense of themselves, their history, and their imagined communities, effective citizenship or citizenship as an enabling condition allows them to exercise their membership in ways that validate and perpetuate their feelings of belonging. As a result, the performance of citizenship as an enabling condition thus becomes key to the development of effective nationality and a stronger sense of belonging and home.

Thus, one can see that it is the relations between the individuals and their surrounding community that allow for their integration into the society and their ability to connect to the greater overarching nationalism of a country. In other words, it is the engagement of individuals with – and performance of – the cultural discourse and capital of a nation that determines their belonging and thus provides individuals with "effective citizenship," or "effective nationality". The capacities for political engagement that are inherent in citizenship as an enabling condition therefore provide individuals with an agency that allows the crossing of boundaries of ideological and essential belonging within the nationalism of a given state.

Thus, the Palestinian identity can be seen as one where Palestinian cultural capital demarcates Palestinian cultural identity without preventing its interactions with and assimilations of Other cultural capital and identities. Ironically, the value of cultural capital to the Palestinian identity thus works to both unify it, through providing discernible and distinct Palestinian cultural capital, and to dismantle its cohesiveness as the Palestinian cultural capital of individuals mixes

with the cultural capital of their non-Palestinian environments and thus loses value and credibility in the Palestinian collective. As a result, the process of Othering in which the cultural capital of the Palestinian identity is valued above other types of cultural capital works to alienate and further fragment the Palestinian collective, as its uniformity is dissolved in the dispersal of Palestinians across the diaspora.

Furthermore, Palestinians in the diaspora can also be seen to recognize the need for belonging in their resettled homes, and are therefore capable of achieving it through the combining of the various forms of cultural capital of their environments with their inherited Palestinian cultural identities. This process of interweaving of differing cultural capital further extends into the ways Palestinians achieve effective citizenship in the nations in which they reside as they acquire the languages and cultural capital with which to navigate their various public spheres, and thus use those knowledges to negotiate belonging. The acquisition of these diverse forms of cultural capital thus provides the Palestinian identity with the tools to adapt to its foreign environments whilst still maintaining its distinctive voice and perpetuating its own marked identity.

It can therefore be argued that membership to a nation is achieved through the affiliation with its ideological perspectives as demarcated by its cultural capital and the connection with its essential characteristics, and that the imagined community's public sphere is the space where value of both aspects is negotiated and institutionalized by the nation's mechanisms of governance. However, due to the shifting nature of a nation's values and the lack of equal and full access to its decision-making process, participation in the public sphere becomes a matter of more than talk. It takes on the mode of embodying and enacting the

community's values in order to gain membership and recognition in the nation's overarching imagined community.

Therefore, cultural identity – and through it, national identity – inherently represents a performative identity that utilizes the signs of cultural capital to demarcate belonging and difference. Cultural identity therefore allows individuals a greater measure of agency, as it provides them with the opportunities to perform various distinct identities. This is particularly useful and significant in the case of the Palestinian identity as its nationalism is composed entirely out of the cultural capital of its people in the form of their genealogies, their memories, their heritage, and their culture. Therefore, the Palestinian national identity can be understood as an intrinsically performative identity that cannot be measured or distinguished in ways other than through its enacted cultural capital. As a result of its statelessness and the inescapable emergence of plurality in its cultural capital, the Palestinian identity thus becomes even more essentially tied to notions of purism and "authenticity" in validating claims of belonging. Therefore, where the ability of the Palestinian identity to adapt and integrate Other cultural identities within its performance allows it a measure of fluidity where it can find belonging in any nationalism, it also simultaneously entraps it in a circular quest where the holistic and absolute representation of its own identity remains as perpetually elusive as the return to its native Palestinian homeland.

Metonymy was sleeping on the river's bank;
had it not been for the pollution
it would have embraced the other side".

-   *Elegy for Edward Said*
    Mahmoud Darwish

Chapter 7. Conclusions and Further Research

Findings and Results

In conducting this study, it was my expectation to find that Palestinian national identity subsists in a liminal space where it is prevented from moving forwards or backwards due to the constraints of its displacement and disenfranchisement, yet where it acquires a high measure of fluidity and plurality as it continues to circle in its quest for achieving a stable and grounded nationalism. Palestinian identity is rooted in the traditional concepts of nationalism and the essential image of Palestine, yet it also encompasses the various experiences of diaspora in ways that allow it to transcend the universality of an overarching national identity. This results in a cyclical process of identification that starts by valuing essential and traditional qualities, expands to include the plurality of experiences of the Palestinian communities, and reverts back to the idealized and romanticized desire for "home" in the unrelinquished desire for achieving a right of return.

The findings of this study confirmed my expectations, and indicated that Palestinian national identity is firmly rooted in its territoriality, yet has also developed to transcend its essential boundaries (of ancestry, genealogy etc.) to connect with, and incorporate, various other nationalisms, cultures, and collectives. Palestinians in the diaspora can therefore be seen to simultaneously display traits of essential belonging, where authenticity is highly valued in their sense of belonging and is identified through their essential ties to their ancestries; and to perform a large degree of plurality and hybridity, where citizenship, post-memory, and cultural identities of Palestinians are continuously in flux and are influenced by their surrounding societies. The understandings of traditional post-colonial nationalism therefore are not

sufficient in unpacking Palestinian national identity, and require the inclusion of theories of belonging, collective memory, and effective citizenship, in order to delineate the Palestinian condition.

Strengths, Weaknesses, and Recommendations for Further Research

Among the strengths of this study are that it provides a qualitative analysis of the ways Palestinian identity is developed and performed today, thus offering insight into an area of study where the research has been lacking. It provides a framework of understanding stateless identities as opposed to the typical migrant identities and illustrates the ways traditional post-colonial nationalism has been influenced by the hyper-globalization of today's world. However, in looking at identity, my study has been limited in scope to looking only at national identity as a primary point of identification for Palestinians, which relegated all other layers of identity to a secondary level of importance. Therefore, various other identifications such as gender, class, and religion were only touched upon during the interviews, but not examined in depth. I was also limited to looking at only one small fragment of the Palestinian community – those living in Toronto – which precluded the ability to look at Palestinian identity as a whole.

It would therefore be useful to continue the work of this research by looking at the various other layers of identification present in Palestinian communities, and to include the various fragments of Palestinians. Due to the limitations of access, I was only able to interview Palestinians of mid-upper class, living in North America, whereas a more in-depth study of Palestinian identity would necessitate the inclusion of Palestinians living in refugee camps, Palestinians who have been integrated into the societies of countries in the Middle East,

Palestinians who have been able to re-settle in the West, and Palestinians who, through the work of the UNRWA, have been able to re-settle in South America.

Conclusion: Confluence in Alienation

Palestinian national identity in the diaspora is a complex and indefinable identity in which questions of belonging, authenticity, and plurality constantly reconstruct the image of the collective Palestinian community. As demonstrated by this study, Palestinian national identity is both innate and strongly influenced by the significance of its essential qualities, as well as socially produced in that it also relies on the contexts within which value is accorded to its various markers. Although Palestinian "blood" is universally considered a determining sign of belonging, the internalization of the Palestinian national identity into individuals' own identifications necessitates a learning process in which the various markers of Palestinian-ness are encoded, decoded, and engaged with in order to construct a Palestinian identity that is simultaneously particular and universal. This process results in the heightening of the importance of essential and authentic signifiers of the Palestinian identity, where territoriality, genealogy, and ancestry confirm an essential belonging to the national Palestinian identity, and performance of cultural traditions and participation in collective memories validate authentic belonging to the Palestinian cultural identity.

Therefore, Palestinian identity in the diaspora can be seen to inherently belong to the question of authenticity, where belonging to the collective identity is measured through the presence and performance of its "authentic" Identifiers as delineated in its national image and imagined community. As a result, a hyper-awareness of difference ensues in Palestinian communities as well as their host communities, where the essentializing and othering of the

Palestinian identity become the primary modes of engagement with it, further emphasizing the importance of authenticity in shaping the recognizable and indisputable Palestinian identity.

However, due to the dispersal and fragmentation of the Palestinian collective, the construction of a universal identity is further complicated. The Palestinian national identity is one that is irrevocably rooted in its territoriality, as the rupture between the Palestinian community and their native homeland has since determined the fate of their nation. As a result, questions of "home" and belonging greatly influence the image of the Palestinian identity in its collective imagination. On a spectrum of traditional nationalism, transnationalism, diaspora, and nomadism, the stateless Palestinian identity can be seen to combine aspects of each mode of existence in order to sustain its nationalism across its diaspora and its emerging generations. Therefore, "Home" to the Palestinian community is an indefinable space that includes elements of their combined experiences, and in which the various "homes" to which Palestinians belong are in constant dialogue and negotiation with each other. The statelessness of the Palestinian identity thus renders home as a space of porous and semi-permeable fluidity where the various homes and experiences of the Palestinian community interact to create an illusory and fleeting sense of belonging that remains uprooted from a fixed and definable Home. As a result, the boundaries of the Palestinian identity remain unfixed and unfixable, leading to a greater reliance on its conceptualized authentic and essential values in order to connect and achieve belonging within its communities.

The condition of exile in the case of Palestinians is therefore further removed and distinct from all other forms of transnational mobility as it exists in a tenuous stalemate, unable to achieve its own statehood or to assimilate into the cultures and nationalisms of its host

communities. Thus, the inevitable plurality of identity in the Palestinian diaspora imposed by its

exile and statelessness results in a heightened threat of its disappearance, as it cannot be

perpetuated in the typical nationalism of a state. Authenticity therefore becomes a highly

valued signifier of Palestinian-ness and the preservation of the "authentic" Palestinian identity

at the cost of achieving complete belonging in other nationalisms becomes a mechanism of

self-defence that results in a process of narcissistic self-entrapment where the Palestinian

identity is encapsulated in the discourses of "pure" authenticity as a means of claiming

belonging to the Palestinian collective. This further emphasizes the importance of authenticity

in the Palestinian identity in its struggles to maintain its tenuous boundaries as it is

continuously relocated within various other nationalisms.

However, rather than fix Palestinian authenticity in absolute and unchangeable

signifiers, the multiple consciousness that arises within the Palestinian identity as a result of its

statelessness leads to a dialogical negotiation of its "authentic" signs. As a result, different

signifiers of authenticity arise in the various Palestinian communities of the diaspora, leading to

an increase in the fragmentation and internal alienation of the Palestinian identity. Therefore,

the creation of a cohesive overarching Palestinian nationalism that ties the fragmented

Palestinian collective together becomes reliant on the assemblage of these various symbols of

authenticity into an indisputable and universal Palestinian identity. Authenticity in the

Palestinian identity thus becomes bound by the universal and indisputable signs of Palestinian-

ness, and the emergence of plurality and hybridity in the identities of Palestinians becomes a

process that is separate from, but in dialogue with, their "authentic" Palestinian identities. As a

result, the Palestinian identity resides not in a "third space" of "rhizomatic becoming" and

"diasporic perspective," but rather exists in an "alien space" where the process of confluence

plurality and authenticity in its identity is constantly in flux, and continually leaves its

parameters unresolved.

Furthermore, due to the statelessness of the Palestinian identity and the impact of the

events of 1948 on the trajectory of its nationalism, memories of the Nakba play a significant

role in shaping Palestinian identity. By providing a common history of displacement and

struggle, the Nakba simultaneously acts as a universal and all-encompassing memory that

perpetuates the Palestinian identity, yet that also entraps it within the narratives of the past.

The Nakba therefore constitutes a sub-identity within the overarching Palestinian identity,

where the memories of rupture, displacement, and strife are continuously remembered and re-

embedded within the daily experiences of the Palestinian narrative. As a result, the collective

memory of the Nakba becomes the inherited alternative for the Palestinian nation whose

homes and land are otherwise inaccessible, rendering the Nakba as an inescapable memory

that entraps Palestinian identity in its narratives of catastrophe and dispossession.

However, despite the heightened significance of the universal collective memory of the

Nakba in shaping Palestinian identity, the emergence of post-memory in its later generations as

a means of interrogating and reinterpreting the mythology and dogma of the Nakba narrative

has resulted in an opening-out of the absolute collective memory to new and plural

possibilities. Where in previous generations the Nakba referred specifically to the historical

events of the diaspora and the loss of the romanticized and idealized historic Palestine and the

symbolism associated with those losses, within the generational distance of Palestinian youth

today the Nakba has come to signify not only the victimization Palestinians, but also their empowerment and activism.

In addition, reconciling the traumatic memories of the Nakba with the relatively ordinary day-to-day lives of third generation Palestinians in the diaspora today has necessitated a crossing over between the discourses of the Nakba as well as the discourses of other parallel histories and collective memories, such that "The Nakba" has lost much of its mythological aura and has instead become a history among histories of struggle and loss. Thus, the internalization of the innately traumatic memories of the Nakba within the identities of Palestinians living in the diaspora today has become a process of negotiation and dialogue between various narratives of individual and collective memories in order to assemble an accessible understanding of the Nakba. As a result, collective memory and post-memory in the Palestinian diaspora perpetuate the processes of authenticating and validating identity – in this case, through memory – only to then disrupt and uproot its essential truths through the emergence of plurality within its fixed narratives.

Hence, identity and all its facets can be understood to be fundamentally performative, where claiming an identity and belonging to a collective necessitates the internalization of its values and understandings, and their reflection in the performance of the individual self. As a result, cultural capital, which constitutes the discourse and signs through which identities are performed, becomes a vital tool for claiming and enacting identity. In instances where universality and authenticity are highly valued as they are in the diasporic Palestinian identity, cultural capital then also becomes classified and stratified into distinctions of authentic and inauthentic, Palestinian and Other, etc., resulting in greater emphasis on the authenticity of

individuals' degree of Palestinian-ness. Thus, the enactment and performance of Palestinian

identity becomes reliant on not only the presence of visible essential ethnic traits and traceable

Palestinian genealogy, but it also necessitates the performance of embodied, objectified, and

institutionalized forms of Palestinian culture such as the dialect and accents, cuisine and

traditions, knowledge of the history and memories, etc. These distinctions thus reflect the idea

of an "authentic" Palestinian identity that is *inherited* versus other non-Palestinian identities

that are "acquired" as a result of experience, further reiterating the binary of essential versus

inauthentic identities. The "authentic" Palestinian identity, distinguished by Palestinian cultural

capital, thus becomes the original centre against which Other identities are defined and

separated.

Conversely, the agency afforded to identities by the performative nature of cultural

capital expands their potential for pluralities, as various forms of cultural capital are acquired,

enacted, and combined. The distinctions between absolute identities – and their absolute

cultural capital – thus become blurred, as individuals assimilate their inherited and acquired

cultural capital to shape their own individual identities. This in turn influences the choices

individuals make in deciding when and where to perform which sets of cultural capital in order

to claim particular identities to suit their advantage. However, as the cultural capital necessary

for claiming belonging to a nationalism and enacting its citizenship role is most often in the

form of tacit knowledge and take-for-granted assumptions, its acquisition and performance

necessitates a negotiation of the public sphere and sphericules of society in which it is encoded,

decoded, and disseminated. In the case of Palestinian identity, these negotiations result in

inclusions and exclusions where the performance of the Palestinian identity in the private

sphere utilizes different Palestinian cultural capital than it does in the public sphere – for instance, the use of the Palestinian accent and dialect at home becomes an authenticating performance of the Palestinian identity, whereas involvement in Palestinian activism and the use of objectified markers of the Palestinian identity such as the flag, the *kofeyye*, Handala, etc. become the accepted modes of performing Palestinian identity in the public sphere. These differentiations further result in the emergence of subaltern publics or Palestinian sphericules that are more inclusive of markers of the Palestinian identity, and where Palestinian individuals utilize a greater measure of Palestinian cultural capital in order to claim, recognize, and validate their belonging to the overarching Palestinian collective.

The processes by which cultural capital accrues symbolic meaning to signify identity through the discursive interactions of the public sphere and/or sphericules further reiterate the idea that identity is as much a socially constructed mode of claiming personhood as it is an essential and inherited trait, for it is through the social matrices that the essential characteristics of individuals gain referential meaning to their ethnicities, heritage, race, and nationalities. Therefore, the essentialism of the Palestinian national identity is constantly in dialogue with the changeability of its signifiers, as its individuals and communities internalize and synthesize their identities, creating a circular loop of meaning-making wherein the collective informs the individual and vice versa. As a result, one can see that Palestinian national identity is in a constant attempt at fixity that is invariably disrupted by the flux of its surrounding social ideologies and hegemonies that continuously subvert and re-inscribe its essential and authentic meanings.

The result of these experiences and the fluidity of the cultural capital and memories of Palestine that in fact signify all its meaning due to its detachment from an actual homeland, is that Palestinian identity in the diaspora and specifically within the newer generations has achieved a great measure of plurality, where its essential roots and its autonomous plurality are equally important and valued in its national and racial frameworks. Palestinian identity is therefore strongly rooted in the land, in its history, and in its memories, yet it is also malleable and encompasses the pluralism enforced on it by the process of diaspora and displacement. It is therefore a highly complex identity that is capable of retaining its authenticity whilst incorporating difference for maintaining its survival without diminishing from its original ties to the land and its Right of Return. Therefore, Palestinians in the diaspora manage to blend the essentialism of the Palestinian identity with the pluralism of its diaspora in unexpected ways that free Palestine, in a conceptual sense, from the occupation of its history, whilst also remembering and retaining the heritage and culture of their unattainable homeland.

Additional Notes

Notes on Palestinian food

Food was the one unprovoked reference that all the participants strongly connected with. That food is a significant marker of their Palestinian-ness indicates the value placed on not only the heritage of the cuisine, but also the values associated with food. In Palestinian heritage, food has always played a large role in shaping society – most Palestinians were either farmers or fishermen, and many of the bourgeois class acted as estate managers to the upper class who were almost entirely composed of landowners who rented olive and orange groves to tenants. Furthermore, the trades of oranges and olive oil of which Palestinians were global leaders prior to 1948 have thus left traces that preserve the symbolism of food in their national pride and culture. For instance, these trades not only shaped Palestine's economy prior to the Nakba, but they also brought about cultural traditions and folklore, such as the *dabke*, which originated in the stomping of olives for the production of olive oil. The *kofeyye* was also the result of the traditions of farming, as it served to protect farmers from the sun. In addition, food and the eating of food has traditionally been a communal undertaking that brought together families, and so was a vital component of the social glue that bound the Palestinian nation.

Moreover, in Palestinian culture, food, language, land, and history are intimately connected. For instance, *Fattūsh* (Arabic: فتوش), a garden salad common to the Levant and that is distinctive for its use of chipped pita bread and roughly chopped vegetables and greens, is a word made of Arabic "fatt," meaning "crush" or "break," and the suffix of Turkic origin "ūsh". Coining words this way was common in Syrian Arabic as well as in other dialects of Arabic due

to their intermingling with Turkish culture during the reign of the Ottoman Empire. Similarly,

hummus (Arabic: حُمُّص), the Arabic word for "chickpeas" and hence the name of its pureed dish,

requires Tahini – a loanword from Arabic "*tahinah*" (Arabic: طحينة), or more accurately "*tahinia*"

(Arabic: طحينية), derived from the root "*t-h-n*" (Arabic: ط ح ن) which, as a verb "*tahan*" (Arabic:

طحن) means "to grind," – not coincidentally, the way Tahini is made. Jaffa oranges, which once

dominated the global market, are named after the Palestinian coastal city of Jaffa in which they

are grown. Maintaining the recipes, names, and traditions of these foods is therefore not only a

part of maintaining the traditions of Palestinian culture associated with them, but it is also a

form of resistance against their co-optation into Israeli culture.

Notes on Language

Although all the participants in this study were given the option of conducting the

interview in Arabic and were repeatedly prodded during the interviews to switch to speaking in

Arabic, few actually did so. Only two of the participants spoke substantively in Arabic during the

interview, despite all of them having a relatively strong working fluency in the language. They

all acknowledged their familiarity and comfort with English, remarking that it is indeed for them

a more "yielding" language and that Arabic is the "language of their dreams," and were more

comfortable speaking in Arabic after the interviews were concluded.

All the participants further remarked on their accents and dialect – often emphasizing

that it is their deliberate choice to speak in a Palestinian accent when they have the capabilities

to mimic other Arabic accents. However, the accents of the participants could not be deemed

homogeneous as they've all been influenced by the Syrian, Lebanese, Jordanian, and Egyptian

accents of Arabs around them. It is therefore worth noting that the fluidity of language for

Palestinians in the diaspora is beyond their control, and betrays their constant mingling with other cultures, despite their attempts at retaining their "original" accents.

Notes on Education

The concept of crisis developed by Erikson focused on the choices of deciding on an occupation and the formation of an ideology specific to individuals' identity. Significantly, for Palestinians in the diaspora, these choices are intimately intertwined. At on point in her interview, Carla states that one of her driving motivations for success is the desire to prove her abilities as a Palestinian, to "show them that a *Palestinian* is going to do this" [emphasis hers]. Furthermore, one important ideal in the Palestinian collective in the diaspora that was briefly mentioned in interviews and implicitly taken-for-granted is the pursuit of knowledge and the value of education. Palestinians are repeatedly reminded that education is their strongest weapon and the value of education within the Palestinian collective is considered immeasurable. This is reflected in the level of education presented by the participants who have all attended post-secondary institutions and are determined on pursuing higher education. Furthermore, the fields of study most valued in the Palestinian identity are also reflected in the choices of the participants, as they have all chosen to pursue careers in highly competitive fields and areas of study.

Notes on Naji Al-Ali, Edward Said, and Mahmoud Darwish

Naji Al-Ali, Edward Said, and Mahmoud Darwish are three of the most prominent Palestinian figures whose lives were dedicated to the Palestinian cause. Naji Al-Ali was the political cartoonist who developed the character of "Handala" that became the most used symbol of the Palestinian struggle and Palestinian resistance. Al-Ali's cartoons frequently

critiqued Arab regimes and Israel and strongly expressed his stance as a fierce opponent of any

settlement that would not vindicate the Palestinian people's right to all of historic Palestine,

and thus "were sharply critical commentaries on Palestinian and Arab politics and political

leaders". (Farsoun 111) He was eventually assassinated due to his political ideas and his rising

popularity amongst Arabs and Palestinians in particular, yet his contributions to the Palestinian

identity and political outlook remain highly significant in the Palestinian narrative and to

Palestinians everywhere. ("Naji Al-Ali")

Edward Said "was a Palestinian–American literary theoretician, University Professor of

English and Comparative Literature at Columbia University, and a public intellectual who was a

founding figure of the critical-theory field of post-colonialism". ("Edward Said") Throughout his

career, Edward Said was a strong spokesperson for the Palestinian cause and wrote several

works on the Palestinian condition, including *The Question of Palestine*; *The End of the Peace*

Process: Oslo and After; and *Reflections on Exile and Other Essays*. His intellectual contributions

thus earned him the admiration and respect of the Palestinian community, where he became a

figure of resistance and a voice for dispossessed Palestinians. Similarly, Mahmoud Darwish was

a Palestinian poet and author whose life and work was dedicated to representing Palestine and

the struggles of diaspora and exile. Regarded as a poet of the resistance, Darwish "committed

himself to the … objective of nurturing the vision of defeat and disaster (after the June War of

1967), so much so that it would 'gnaw at the hearts' of the forthcoming generations". (Butt 9)

Countless of Darwish's poems poignantly describe Palestine as "a metaphor for the loss of

Eden, birth and resurrection, and the anguish of dispossession and exile". ("Mahmoud

Darwish")

The poem selected for the representation of Palestinian identity in this study, "Elegy for Edward Said," therefore combines the voices of two of the most prominent Palestinian spokespersons. In a conversation between Said and Darwish, the poem illustrates the condition of exile and the complexities of achieving belonging to a Home. Darwish's imagery combined with Said's theorizing of identity is highly provocative of the Palestinian statelessness and its inability to escape its narratives of dispossession and displacement. As a result, it further demonstrates the ways Palestinian identity is constructed in the diaspora, and how the essence of the Palestinian identity remains a metonymy[35], where "had it not been for the pollution, it would have embraced the other side".

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[35] "metonymy /mɪˈtɒnɪmi/ noun (*pl.* metonymies): [*mass noun*] the substitution of the name of an attribute or adjunct for that of the thing meant, for example *suit* for *business executive*, or *the turf* for *horse racing*. origin mid 16th cent.: via Latin from Greek *metōnumia*, literally '' change of name' '". ("metonymy")

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Appendix A

Informed Consent Form

Study name

Authenticity and Hybridity in Alienation: National Identity in the Palestinian Diaspora

Researchers

Researcher name: Ghina Al – Dajani

Masters Candidate

Graduate Program in: Communication and Culture

Email Address: account@domain.com   Phone: 123-456-7890

Purpose of the research: The purpose of my research is to understand what being Palestinian today means, as there is a need for research in this area, and to provide a launch pad for further research into the various fragments of Palestinian communities in the world.

What you will be asked to do in the research: Your participation in this research will include an interview (approx. an hour and a half) in which you will be asked general questions, such as "How do you respond when someone asks where you're from?" and "Why?" and be allowed to direct the conversation. You will be given the choice of conducting the interview in English or in Arabic, or a combination of both. You may be asked for a follow-up interview (that would not exceed 15-20mins) to reflect on the initial interview's conversation. There are no incentives offered for participation.

Risks and discomforts: It is possible that you may experience a backlash from your peers who may not approve of the study, should they learn of your participation. You may also realize personal identity conflicts that may strain your loyalties - whether to the Palestinian community or to your adopted communities (eg. Canada). This in turn could lead to being ostracized or judged by your peers according to where you ultimately align yourself.

Benefits of the research and benefits to you: This study will provide an unprecedented voice for Palestinians in the diaspora, and a greater insight into the ways Palestinian identity is influenced by its dispersal fragmentation. Participants are likely to gain a deeper understanding of themselves and their identities as a result of their participation, and that is likely to lead to a greater sense of belonging to their communities.

Voluntary participation: Your participation in the study is completely voluntary and you may choose to stop participating at any time. Your decision not to volunteer will not influence the relationship you may have with the researchers or study staff or the nature of your relationship with York University either now, or in the future.

Withdrawal from the study: You can stop participating in the study at any time, for any reason, if you so decide. Your decision to stop participating, or to refuse to answer particular questions, will not affect your relationship with the researchers, York University, or any other group associated with this project. In the event you withdraw from the study, all associated data collected will be immediately destroyed wherever possible.

You will also be provided the opportunity to review the analysis and conclusions drawn from your interview, with the freedom to strike any or all of your contribution from the study, should you choose to do so. All associated data will then immediately be destroyed.

Confidentiality: The interviews will be recorded and transcribed. All identifying information will then be coded by a key that only I (the researcher) will have access to. The key will be securely stored for the duration of the study and then destroyed upon its completion, leaving all identifying information completely anonymized. The coded information of the participants identities will be retained until the end of the study – that is, once the thesis has been completed. All electronic files containing this information will then be deleted, and hardcopies will be destroyed. Confidentiality will be provided to the fullest extent possible by law.

Questions about the research?

For any questions about the research you may contact: the researcher, Ghina Al – Dajani, telephone 123-456-7890, e-mail account@domain.com; or the supervisor, Prof. Daniel Drache, e-mail drache@yorku.ca; or the Joint Graduate Program in Communication & Culture, 3013 TEL Centre, 88 The Pond Road, telephone 123-456-7890, e-mail comcult@yorku.ca.

This research has been reviewed and approved by the Human Participants Review Sub-Committee, York University's Ethics Review Board and conforms to the standards of the Canadian Tri-Council Research Ethics guidelines. If you have any questions about this process, or about your rights as a participant in the study, you may contact the Senior Manager and Policy Advisor for the Office of Research Ethics, 5th Floor, York Research Tower, York University, telephone 416-736-5914 or e-mail ore@yorku.ca

Legal rights and signatures:

I,   , consent to participate in Authenticity and Hybridity in Alienation: National Identity in the Palestinian Diaspora conducted by Ghina Al - Dajani. I have understood the nature of this project and wish to participate. I am not waiving any of my legal rights by signing this form. My signature below indicates my consent.

Signature_____   **Date**_____
Participant

Signature_____   **Date**_____
Principal Investigator

Additional consent:

I, _____ , consent to allowing the researcher to record my participation in the interview process. I am not waiving any of my legal rights by signing this form. My signature below indicates my consent.

Signature_____   **Date**_____
Participant

Signature_____   **Date**_____
Principal Investigator

Personal Information Form

Study name
Authenticity and Hybridity in Alienation: National Identity in the Palestinian Diaspora
Researchers
Researcher name: Ghina Al – Dajani
Masters Candidate
Graduate Program in: Communication and Culture
Email Address: account@domain.com   Phone: 123-456-7890

Participant Name: _____

Participant Age: _____   **Gender**: _____   **Phone**: _____

Email address: _____

What is your highest level of education? In what field?

_____

Where in Palestine is your family originally from?

_____

How old were you when you moved to Canada?

_____

Where did you live before moving to Canada?

_____

Do you carry Canadian citizenship?

_____

What citizenship do you carry along with/did you carry before gaining Canadian citizenship?

_____

Have you ever had a Palestinian passport or ID? If yes, do you still have it and use it?

_____

How fluently do you speak Arabic (eg. fluent/read and understand but not speak/speak and understand but not read and write/not at all/etc.)?

_____

Appendix B: Interview Guide

1. Tell me where you're from. Tell me a little bit about your history.
   a. Would you be more comfortable doing the interview in Arabic?
2. How do you respond when someone asks where you're from? Why?
3. What is your nationality? Is it the same as your citizenship on your passport?
4. Were you ever "stateless"? What does that term mean to you?
5. Is your nationality the same as that of your parents?
6. Do you ever reflect on the nature of your racial and national identity? In what instances do you feel compelled to do so? What conclusions do you come to?
7. What do you feel influenced your feelings of belonging most? Parents? Community? School? Your own interest and research? etc.
8. [ASK IN ARABIC+ENGLISH] Do you ever experience conflicting feeling of belonging to more than one location? (What country do you feel most patriotic towards or devoted to? What country do you feel a greater sense of belonging to and why?)
9. Has there been any sense of disillusionment/imposter syndrome about your identity? Shame, fear, disappointment?
10. Do you participate in the collective memories of your community? What history is it? If not, why?
11. Do you know the Palestinian national anthem?
12. I will show you a series of images and I would like you to tell me what you associate each of them with, and which you relate to the most.
13. [ASK IN ARABIC] Are there any significant dates that you associate with the Palestinian identity or Palestinian culture? For example, do you commemorate the Nakba or do you commemorate Land Day etc.? How do you participate in those memorials?
14. Are you familiar with Mahmoud Darwish's poetry? What parts of this poem resonate with you?
15. Do you feel more understood by people from a similar background as yours or do you feel freer to be yourself with people who know nothing about it?
16. Do you feel a connection (whether based on history or just blood) amongst members of the diaspora community?
17. Do you consider "blood" to be the main ingredient for inclusion into the community? Or do you consider people's actions and choices to be more important? Or can actions and choices exclude people from the community, but never include them if they do not have the necessary "blood" ties?
18. [ASK IN ARABIC] How do you feel about the "Right of Return"? Would you like to have a Right of Return?
19. Are you an activist in the Palestinian community? Do you campaign for the Palestinian cause?

20. Do you feel that you "perform" your identity? Do you feel the need to behave in certain ways deliberately to show your loyalty and belonging or do you do things almost unconsciously because you feel that you belong? Eg. do you vote? Do you participate in online forums for the Palestinian community? Do you take a particular interest in things like Palestinian films or Bayt Zatoun's cultural events or the Toronto Palestine Film Festival etc.?

21. Has this conversation affected your perception of your own national identity? How?

Appendix C: "Elegy for Edward Said" – Mahmoud Darwish

Elegy for Edward Said	طباق (عن إدوارد سعيد)
He says: I am from there, I am from here,	يقول: أنا من هناك. أنا من هنا
but I am neither there nor here.	ولستُ هناك, ولستُ هنا.
I have two names which meet and part...	ليَ اسمان يلتقيان ويفترقان...
I have two languages, but I have long forgotten	ولي لُغَتان, نسيتُ بأيِّهما
which is the language of my dreams.	كنتَ أحلُمُ,
I have an English language, for writing,	لي لُغَةٌ انكليزيّةٌ للكتابةِ
with yielding phrases,	طيّعةُ المفرداتِ,
and a language in which Heaven and	ولي لُغَةٌ من حوار السماء
Jerusalem converse, with a silver cadence,	مع القدس, فضيّةُ النَبْرِ
but it does not yield to my imagination.	لكنها لا تُطيع مُخَيّلتي
What about identity? I asked.	والهويّةُ؟ قُلْتُ
He said: It is self-defence...	فقال: دفاعٌ عن الذات...
Identity is the child of birth, but	إنَّ الهوية بنتُ الولادة لكنها
at the end, it is self-invention, and not	في النهاية إبداعُ صاحبها, لا
an inheritance of the past. I am multitudinous...	وراثة ماضٍ. أنا المتعدِّدَ... في
Within me an ever new exterior. And	داخلي خارجي المتجدِّدُ. لكنني
I belong to the question of the victim. Were I not	أنتمي لسؤال الضحية. لو لم أكن
from there, I would have trained my heart	من هناك لدرَّبْتُ قلبي على أن
to nurture there deers of metaphor...	يُرَبي هناك غزال الكِنَايةِ...
So carry your homeland wherever you go, and be	فاحملْ بلادك أنّى ذهبتَ وكُنْ
a narcissist if need be/	نرجسيّاً إذا لزم الأمرُ/
The outside world is exile,	منفيٌّ هوَ العالَمُ الخارجيُّ -
exile is the world inside.	ومنفيٌّ هوَ العالَمُ الباطنيّ
And what are you between the two?	فمن أنت بينهما؟
I do not define myself	لا أعرّفُ نفسي
so that I would not lose it. I am what I am.	لئلاً أضيّعها. وأنا ما أنا.
I am my other, a duality	وأنا آخَري في ثنائيّةٍ
gaining resonance in between speech and gesture.	تتناغم بين الكلام وبين الإشارة
Were I to write poetry I would have said:	ولو كنتُ أكتب شعراً لقُلْتُ:
I am two in one,	أنا اثنان في واحدٍ
like the wings of a swallow ,	كجناحَيْ سُنُونُوّةٍ
content with bringing good omen	إن تأخَّر فصلُ الربيع
when spring is late.	اكتفيتُ بنقل البشارةِ!
He loves a country and he leaves.	يحبُّ بلاداً, ويرحل عنها.
[Is the impossible far off?]	[هل المستحيل بعيدٌ؟]
He loves leaving to things unknown.	يحبُّ الرحيل الى أيِّ شيء
By traveling freely across cultures	ففي السَفَر الحُرِّ بين الثقافات
those in search of the human essence	قد يجد الباحثون عن الجوهر البشريّ
may find space enough for all to convene...	مقاعد كافيةً للجميع...
Here a margin advances. Or a centre	هنا هامِشٌ يتقدَّمُ. أو مركزٌ
retreats. Where East is not strictly east,	يتراجَعُ. لا الشرقُ شرقٌ تماماً

and West is not strictly west,
where identity is open unto plurality,
not a fort or a trench/

Metonymy was sleeping on the river's bank;
had it not been for the pollution
it would have embraced the other side.

ولا الغربُ غربٌ تماماً,
فإن الهوية مفتوحَةٌ للتعدّدِ
لا قلعة أو خنادق/

كان المجازُ ينام على ضفّة النهرِ,
لولا التلوُّثُ,
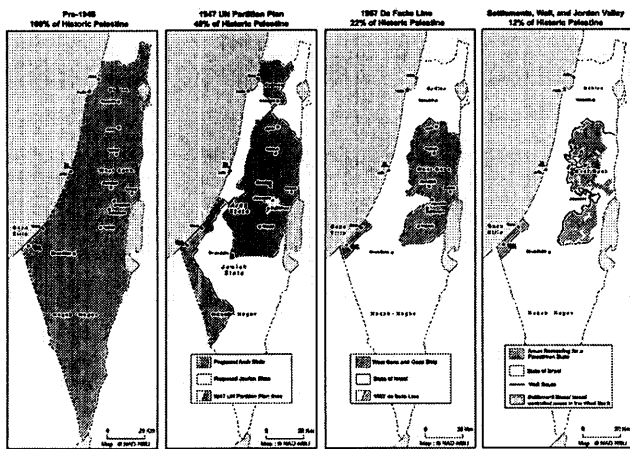لاخْتَضَنَ الضفة الثانية

Appendix D: Images

Image 1
The map of Palestine, depicting the original territories of Historic Palestine (100% Palestine remaining), the Partition Plan proposed by the UN in 1947 (48% Historic Palestine remaining), the annexation of Palestine by 1967 (22% Historic Palestine remaining), and the annexation of Palestine by 2001 (12% Historic Palestine remaining).
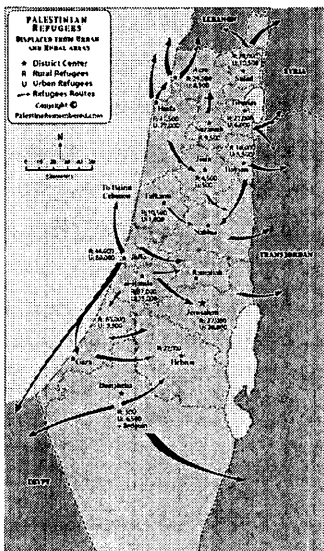
Image 2
The map depicting the escape routes of Palestinians during the Nakba, and the numbers of displaced Palestinians from each location.
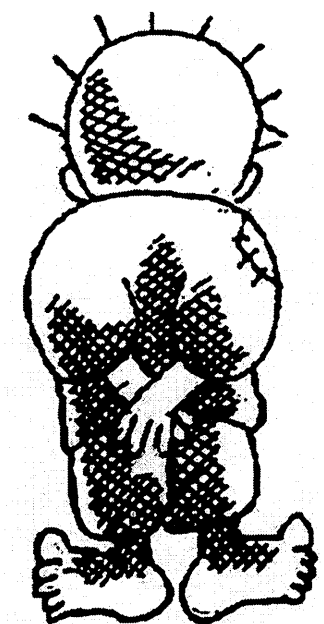
Image 3
Naji Al-Ali's Handala, a cartoon character developed to symbolize the Palestinian condition: he is poor, dispossessed. His back is turned to the world in dejection and in desolation at the way he is treated. His name, Handala (Arabic: حنظلة), which is also the name of a bitter fruit, further signifies the bitterness of Palestinian life. He has thus become a mascot of the Palestinian cause, and a symbol of solidarity and resistance.
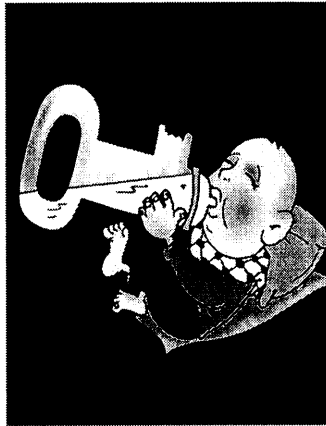
Image 4
A cartoon depicting the instilling of the Right of Return in the growing generations of Palestinians. The Right of Return is represented by the key, which symbolizes it due to the fact that the first displaced generation retained the keys to their homes despite being evicted. The baby is dressed in the colors of the Palestinian flag and wears a Palestinian *kofeyye*, signifying that it is a Palestinian baby.
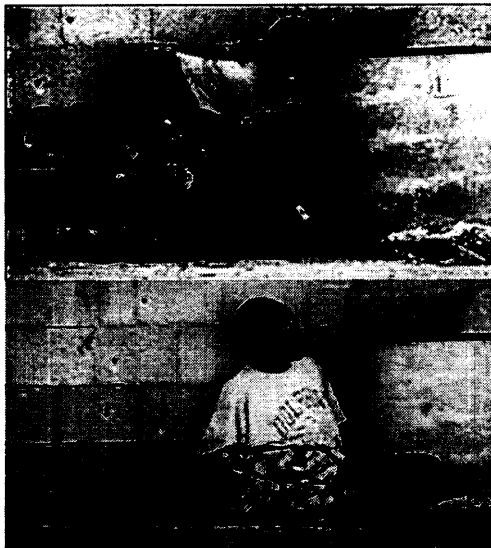

Image 5
The images of Mohammad El-Durra who was shot and murdered by Israeli forces as he hid behind his father during the Second Intifada. This image was widely disseminated in the media during the Second Intifada as a symbol of Palestinian resistance, victimhood, and struggle.

Image 6
Graffiti on the Israeli Apartheid Wall that is continuously dividing and annexing areas of the West Bank. Here, the narrative of resistance is emphasized, illustrating the inherent struggle of the Palestinian identity.
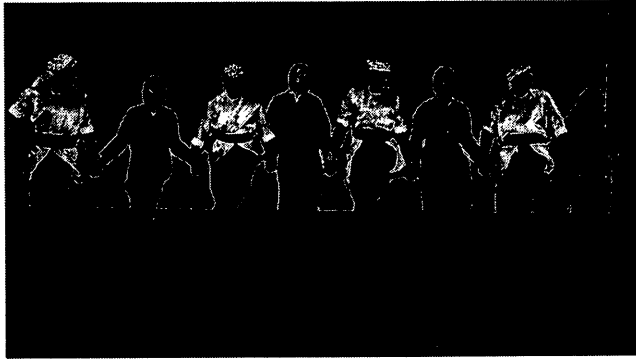
Image 7
The *dabke*, (Arabic: دبكه) from the root word *dabk* (Arabic: دبك) meaning "to stomp," is a line or round dance common to the Levant and Iraq. The Palestinian *dabke* is said to have developed from the traditional stomping of olives for the production of olive oil. Different national *dabke*s are distinguished by the music used and the footwork patterns of the dance. In this image, the women are dressed in traditional Palestinian *thoub*, and the men in the traditional Palestinian garb and wearing the *kofeyye*.
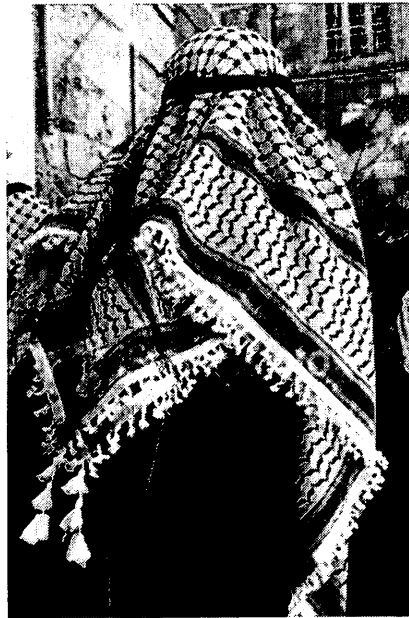

Image 8
The *kofeyye*, a traditional square-cut headdress common to the Middle East, and worn to protect from the heat of the sun. The different *kofeyyes* of the Arab region are distinguished by the varying patterns and colors used in the design. The Palestinian *kofeyye*, as illustrated, is traditionally black and white, with widely spread connected squares in the centre and a border of continuous curving lines, ending in twined dangling threads and tassels.