Articulations:

Settler Colonialism, Dispossession, and Arts in post-Oslo Palestine



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to my grandmother, *kamla*, whose story is this.

Table of Contents

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS 7

ABSTRACT 8

LIST OF FIGURES 9

MAP OF PALESTINE 10

INTRODUCTION 11

Handala and post-Oslo 15

Culture and post-Oslo 20

A Map of Chapters 31

LITERATURE REVIEW DISPOSSESSION AND ARTS 36

Encounters between Arts and Politics 39

Settler Colonialism, Neoliberalism and Indigeneity 47

Processes of Dispossession across the Line 56

The Conundrum of Resistance 70

Conclusion 76

METHODOLOGY 79

The Map 79

The Field and the Archive 84

Naming Palestine 90

'The Colonized Within' 95

Locating the Cultural 101

Subjects and Subjectivation 108

Conclusion **112**

CHAPTER ONE THE INTERTWINED HISTORIES OF HAIFA AND RAMALLAH 114

Articulations of the Urban **118**

Urban Technologies of Dispossession **124**

Civil Society and '67 Territories **136**

Genealogies of a Fragmented Middle Class **144**

Conclusion **147**

CHAPTER TWO 'SCENES OF DISPOSSESSION' AND HAUNTING IN 'AYN HAWD 150

Conquest of Labour **155**

Dispossession in 'Ayn Hawd **163**

The Destroyed World of 'Ayan Hawd **166**

Dada Meets Zionism for a Scene of Dispossession **170**

The Artist Settler Colony **175**

Scenes of Haunting **181**

Conclusion **186**

CHAPTER THREE ARTS IN THE PARALLEL CITY 189

Introduction **189**

Gentrification as Encompassing Comparison **192**

'Pessoptimism' and Arts in the Parallel City **200**

Arts, Dispossession, and Gentrification **203**

'To the Contrary': Ramallah **213**

The Conundrum of Resistance **217**

Conclusion **228**

CHAPTER FOUR CULTURAL BOYCOTTS AS ANTI-RECOGNITION 230

Recognition and Boycott **236**

The Call for a Cultural Boycott **245**

Palestinian Artists and the Arab World **255**

Arts without a State **261**

Conclusion **270**

CONCLUSION 272

Summary **274**

Contributions and Limitations **278**

Future directions **281**

BIBLIOGRAPHY 283

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Abstract

This research project explores the relationship between Palestinian cultural production, urban expansion/renewal, settler colonialism, and late capitalism in the post-Oslo historical conjuncture in Israel/Palestine. Using in-depth interviews with Palestinian artists, archival materials and audio-visual materials, the project traces the journeys of Palestinian artists as they navigate the socio-spatial processes reproducing the urban fabrics of two cities: Haifa in the north of historic Palestine (today's Israel) and Ramallah in central West Bank. I look at the Palestinian village of 'Ayn Hawd in Haifa and its transformation into the arts settler colony of Ein Hod in 1953; the layered history of dispossession, first of the Palestinian in 1948, then of the Arab Jew in 1959 in Wadi Salib; and the contemporary urban expansion and renewal, respectively, of the Ramallah and Haifa and their associated forms of cultural production.

The project makes two overarching arguments. First, I argue that the dispossession of the Palestinian and the racialization of the Arab Jew serve as the inherited background within which modes of urban production across Israel/Palestine unfold. In the second vein, I read the urban transformations in the two cities since the early 1990s as reflective of the increasingly central role the market has come to play following the neoliberalisation of the Israeli economy in 1985 and the Oslo Agreement in 1993 and their concomitant fashioning of consumerist subjects across the 'Green Line.' In this context of dispossession, I posit that Palestinian arts and cultural boycotts connote 'practices of articulation' that mean (via Antonio Gramsci and Stuart Hall) neither total incorporation into, nor a total reclaiming of the settler colonial spatialization of the city. Rather, I argue that they are part of a necessarily unequal struggle towards opening up cultural possibilities.

The project contributes to two overarching debates: the first pertains to human geography and focuses on the relationship between dispossession, urbanization and arts within city-forms. It argues that urbanization—understood as capitalist agglomeration—has to be understood as one among many historically specific and socially embedded socio-spatial processes. The second contribution pertains to both urban studies and cultural studies. By examining modes of cultural production as nonlinearly mediated through economic, political, urban and juridical spheres, I show how arts are socially constituted and so are the subjectivities of the artists that produce them.

List of Figures

Figure 1 Map titled dispossession in historic Palestine (inclusive of today's Israel). Ramallah is in central West Bank and Haifa is in the north of today's Israel. Source: Palestine Land Society. _____ *10*
*Figure 2. The General Secretary of the Union of Palestinian Writers and Journalists. Source: Naji Al 'Ali Collection, Middle East Center Library, Oxford University.*_____ *18*
Figure 3. The Palestinian nationalist leadership in a car, crossing the border from 'outside' into Palestine. Source: Naji Al 'Ali Collection, Middle East Center Library, Oxford University. _____ *19*
*Figure 4. Road from Al-Bireh, passing through the Beit Eil West Road Exit, towards the north. The line marked with bright green is the wrong path we took to Tulkarim in northern West Bank. The dotted dark green line separating the West Bank from historic Palestine.*_____ *79*
*Figure 5. Naji Al Ali Collections at the University of Oxford's Middle East Centre.*_____ *88*
Figure 6. Burj 15. Home of Palestinian refugee Abed El Latif Kanafani. It has been turned into Israeli law offices. Photograph by Sama Haddad. _____ *114*
Figure 7. Shop fronts in Wadi Salib, and the Ilan Pivko architects sign showing the planned buildings. Photography by the author. _____ *115*
Figure 8. Map showing 1948 and 1967 territories. The red line is the 1949 Armistice Green Line. Source: Palestine Land Society. _____ *136*
*Figure 9. Gallery in Ein Hod artists' colony, formerly the Palestinian village of 'Ayn Hawd. Photograph: Sama Haddad, 2022.*_____ *150*
Figure 10Gallery in Ein Hod artists' colony, formerly the Palestinian village of 'Ayn Hawd. Photograph _____ *150*
Figure 26. Mohammed Assaf's concert in Rawabi ampitheatre. Source: Rawabi website, 2016. _____ *216*
*Figure 27. A snapshot from 'Inn Ann' music video featuring 'Daboor', a rapper who is part of the BLTNM group. Source: Inn Ann music video, youtube.*_____ *222*
Figure 28. Map showing Kashabi Theater and copies of documents relating to its building. By Haya Zaatry, 2021. _____ *225*

Map of Palestine

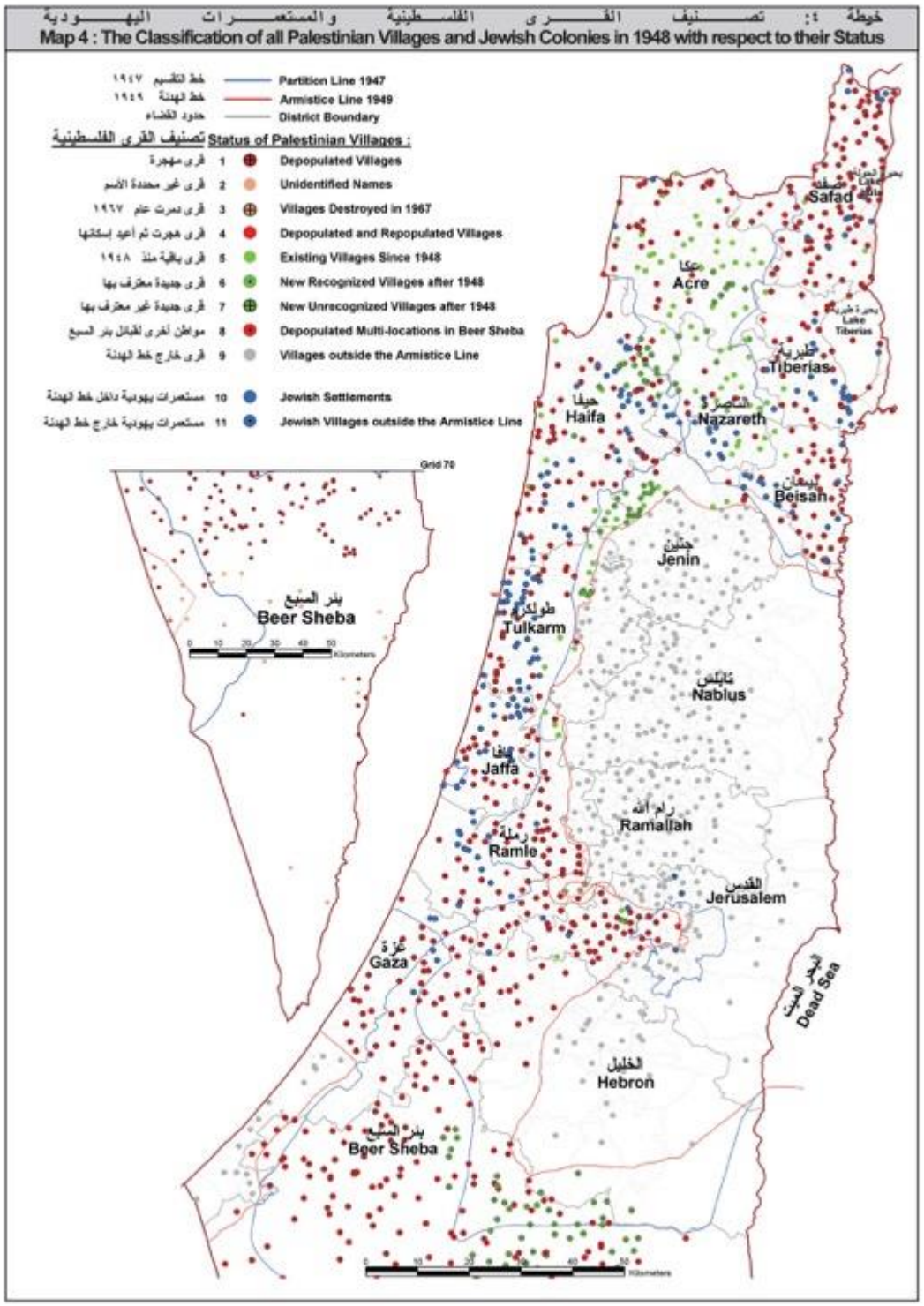


Figure 1 Map titled dispossession in historic Palestine (inclusive of today's Israel). Ramallah is in central West Bank and Haifa is in the north of today's Israel. Source: Palestine Land Society.

Introduction

On July 8, 1972, agents from the Israeli National Agency for Intelligence (*Mossad*) planted a bomb in a car in Beirut. A few hours later, a massive explosion was heard. Soon thereafter, the news broke out that the explosion targeted Ghassan Kanafani, the Palestinian revolutionary, writer, essayist, novelist, playwright, and spokesperson for the Palestinian Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) (Maasri, 2020, pp.163-210). The explosion killed both Kanafani and his niece, Lamis, who—minutes before he had left their home—had asked her uncle to drop her off at a relative's house. Lamis and Ghassan were very close. When Lamis once asked Ghassan to bring her books to read, he famously wrote her the short children story al-qandīl al-ṣghīr (The Little Lantern). I like to think they wrote the story together, for Kanafani needed to imagine Lamis as his reader in order to write the story; the story is complete only with her as an audience. The ruthlessness of the Israeli settler colonial order targeted both the writer and the audience.

On July 22, 1987, gunshots were heard outside the London office of the Kuwaiti newspaper *Al Qabas* on Ives Street in Chelsea, London (BBC, 1987). The shooting targeted the Palestinian cartoonist, Naji Al 'Ali, whose cartoons not only refuted the Israeli settler colonial order, but also criticized the Arab reactionary regimes as well as the Palestinian nationalist leadership's succumbing to Israeli demands for recognition. This was a few years before the signing of the so-called Oslo Peace Agreement by the Palestinian Liberation Organization in 1993. Al 'Ali's criticism was principled, sharp, grounded, far-sighted, and unapologetic. It pointed fingers at anyone whose compass was not the Palestinian struggle for liberation,

including former Chairman of the Palestinian Liberation Organization, Yassir Arafat and the Palestinian poet Mahmoud Darwish.[1]

Naji Al ‘Ali was born in al Shajarah village near Tabaryā (Tiberius) in 1937 (‘Ashour, 2019, p.262). Following the Palestinian *Nakba* (Arabic for Catastrophe) in 1948, he became one of more than 750,000 Palestinian refugees who were dispossessed from their land by the newly established Israeli settler state. He and his family moved to ‘Ayn al-Hilūa refugee camp in southern Lebanon. Initially, he was influenced by the Arab Nationalist Movement, which was established in 1951 and took the liberation of Palestine as the cornerstone of its political vision (see Hanssen & Weiss, 2018 and Bardawil, 2020). He had first trained to become a mechanic and turner, before becoming a painter. Al Soumi notes that Al ‘Ali abandoned the idea of becoming a visual artist “because he realized that his message is of the direct and simple type—as simple as the white and black that tolerate no interpretation or misunderstanding that would undermine their light and clarity” (Al-Adab, 2002, p.54).[2]

Thus, Al ‘Ali became a prolific cartoonist, whose drawings were published in *Al Tali’ah* (Kuwait, 1963-1969), *Al-Sy*āsa (Kuwait, 1969-1974), *Assafir* (Beirut, 1974-1083), and *Al-Qabas*. Following Arab defeat in Al-Naksa (Arabic for the setback) in 1967 its ushering of a moment of disenchantment[3], Al ‘Ali introduced *Handala* (1969) (Al-Adab, 2002, p.63). *Handala* (see Figure 2) is a ten-year old boy, barefoot, wearing short and torn clothes, with thorns on his head, who would become a recurring drawing across the walls of Palestinian refugee camps. Al ‘Ali insisted that him and *Handala* remain ten, for time was stopped

[1] Many of Naji Al Ali’s cartoons criticize the Palestinian traditional leadership. One of his cartoons against Yassir Arafat is a play on ‘Yes Sir’, as connoting a succumbing to Israel, which gradually becomes Yasir. See *“The Peace Process”* in ʿAlī, N. & Sacco, J. (2009). *A child in Palestine: The cartoons of Naji al-Ali*.
[2] All translations are the author’s unless otherwise noted.
[3] Al Makhoul notes that 1967 ushered in a moment of disenchantment that pushed many Palestinian intellectuals and artists to reassess the role of their intellectual production, including Edward Said, Mahmoud Darwish, and Ghassan Kanafani. See Makhoul, 2022.

following their dispossession in 1948. In an interview with the Egyptian novelist and literary critic Radwa 'Ashour (2019), Al 'Ali noted that he created *Handala* in Kuwait in 1969 "out of fear of being tainted by the consumerist society" (p.272). "The character of *Handala* stood for an icon that saved my soul from slipping, every time I felt a bit of laziness or that I could neglect my duty. I feel this kid is a water drop on my forehead, awakening me, pushing me towards devotion, and guarding me from misdoing and lostness" (p.264). *Handala* was not Palestinian, though he had been born there. He is biased to refugees, to the oppressed, and to his class—that of the impoverished. He has turned his face away from the world as it is and continues to do so.

The sharper Al 'Ali's critique became, the more opposition and repression he received. He was arrested multiple times in Lebanese jails. The Palestinian cartoonist Khalil Abu Arafeh notes that Al 'Ali's drawings did not escape the Israeli censor. He narrates how the drawings were smuggled into the 1967 territories[4] through Palestinian and Arab newspapers and magazines that were smuggled 'illegally.' His drawings would then be reprinted without permission from him or the original publishers. "Later on," Abu Arafeh notes, "I came to know that Al A'li was pleased by this entire process: the smuggling first, and the 'theft' second" (Al-Adab, 2002, p.56). His drawings were smuggled to the 1948 territories in the same manner. With the introduction of the fax in the 1980s, "the primary player here, or perhaps the primary smuggler, became Naji Al 'Ali himself. He started sending his drawings to Al-Itihad magazine in Haifa" (p.56).[5] The Israeli censor, based in the western part of Jerusalem, would then cross any drawings that criticized Israeli repression and policies (p.56). In this, Al 'Ali's drawings

[4] I use the '67 territories' to refer to the territories that came under Israel's control in 1967 after the Arab defeat in the so-called "Six-Day War." I use '48 territories' to refer to Palestinian territories that had been occupied by Israel in 1948. For more, see Methodology.

[5] For more on al-Itihad, see Morgenstern, H. (2019, September 23). *An Archive of Literary Reconstruction after the Palestinian Nakba*.

were circulated across three Palestinian geographies: the refugee camp in Lebanon, the '67 territories, and the '48 territories. Their 'political' function stems not only from their content, but also from their circulation across fragmented geographies of dispossession.

In the interview with 'Ashour (2019), Al 'Ali insisted on the primacy of art as a mediator of a political message: "I want to use my symbolic tools but I am also concerned by the issue of clear delivery to the ordinary and poor person, who concerns me in the first place" (p.272). Al 'Ali's stance on the role of arts occurred at a time when the emancipatory role of the cultural and the artistic was being coopted by the Palestinian Liberation Organization's emerging state-building project in the 1980s, enlisting traditional intellectuals and art forms into what Palestinian literary critic Faisal Darraj (2007; see also Al-Adab, 2002) refers to as *"al-moū'assassa"* (the institution). The clarity of the message, the accessibility of the art form, and the shared corpus of iconographies between the author and the audience insisted on refuting such institutionalization and on retaining a role for the cultural that brings into question the fundamental antagonism with the settler colonial order and its accomplices. Unlike Jacques Rancière's 'politicized art,' which abolishes itself as art by being closely sutured to politics, *Handala* is a practitioner of a particular articulation (link, connection) between the socially constituted spheres of 'arts' and 'politics' that refutes the limits of both, thereby redefining them.

Al 'Ali was to face the same fate as Kanafani. He remained in coma until his death on August 29 of the same year. It is well-known and documented as per the testimonies of Al 'Ali's friends and contemporaries that prior to his assassination, he had received multiple death threats from the leadership of the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) for his constant criticism of their complicity with the Israeli settler state (Najjar, 2007; Helsa, 1994; and Al-Adab, 2002).

It is not known who exactly killed Al ‘Ali. Some have pointed fingers at the Israeli Mossad. Others, citing the death threats prior to his assassination, suggested it was the leadership of the PLO. And some suggested it was a double agent that worked for both the settler state and the Palestinian leadership. While it is not our purpose here to identify the murderer, these narratives around the physical targeting of Al ‘Ali already point us towards the intricate relationship between the Israeli settler colonial order, the Palestinian nationalist leadership, the organic Palestinian intellectual and artist, and the role of the cultural in enacting, maintaining, perpetuating, subverting, or abolishing modalities of dispossession.

Handala and post-Oslo

I return to Al ‘Ali and Kanafani because their targeting by the Israeli settler colonial order and by the Palestinian nationalist elites[6] and the endurance and afterlives of their cultural projects in contemporary Palestinian political and social life can serve as an entry point into the conundrums and dilemmas engulfing the fragmented, contemporary Palestinian cultural scenes. In analyzing Palestinian cultural productions in the post-Oslo historical conjuncture, I repeatedly encountered Kanafani and Al ‘Ali in academic and journalistic commentaries, posters, films, and interviews. At first, their articulation of the relation between the political and the artistic seemed palpable—presenting what Taraki (2008a) refers to as a ‘hegemonic’ ethos of resistance from the 1960s and 1970s.

But the more I delved into their corpus of artworks and political works, it became clear that, first, characterizing the ethos of the 60s and 70s as connoting some sort of a ‘hegemonic’

[6] Darraj argues convincingly that while al *al-moū’assassa* tries to incorporate Kanafani’s afterlives into a general notion of the ‘nation,’ it completely negates Naji Al ‘Ali. I conceive of both forms—incorporation and negation (i.e., both epistemic and physical assassination)—as belonging to the same nationalist bourgeois cultural apparatus that aims to neutralize an emancipatory role for the cultural.

framework in the contemporary conjuncture in Palestine is an overstatement, for as both Ghaleb Helsa (1994) and Faisal Darraj (2007) argue, the Palestinian Liberation Organization (and, later, the Palestinian Authority) have institutionalized a dominant notion of the cultural that refutes its emancipatory potentialities, and by extension, the legacies of Kanafani and Al 'Ali. By entering an asymmetrical circuit of recognition with the settler state that relies on coercion, we may say—following Guha's (1991) discussion of the Indian bourgeoisie under the Raj—the PLO and its particular institutionalized notions of 'culture' and 'resistance' remain dominant rather than hegemonic (p.97).[7]

In 1993, Al 'Ali's fear of the limits and implications of the looming threat of notions of 'self-rule' and 'negotiations' became a reality. That year, the Palestinian Liberation Organization signed the 'Oslo Accord' with the Israeli government at the White House. The agreement enshrined limited Palestinian self-rule through what came to be called the Palestinian Authority (PA) within fragments of the territories occupied in 1967. The Oslo Agreement promised a state without sovereignty, a territory without borders, a dependent market without direct control, and a fragmented map of land-islands without most Palestinians. Thus, it had implications not only for Palestinians living in the '67 territories; it effectively excluded Palestinians living in the '48 territories as citizens of Israel and relegated them to the sphere of 'minoritarian' politics within the Israeli state as well as putting on pause the right of return for Palestinian refugees in neighboring Arab countries and around the world. It enshrined, as many

[7] Given the particular colonial relations within which Indian bourgeoisie nationalism emerged, it was trapped in conditions that "did little to encourage any organic growth and expansion", leading it to harden "quickly into a parasitic and precocious outcrop on the surface of the colonial society and defined itself sharply by its antagonism with its Other—the working class, an antagonism, which, from the very beginning, it sought to resolve by discipline rather than by persuasion" (Guha, 1991, p.134). This is also true of the Palestinian elites, whose project remains restricted to the particular interests of the Palestinian rural bourgeoisie and the capitalists.

scholars have argued (Abourahme, 2009 and Rabie, 2021), a neoliberal state-building project that is organically attached to the engulfing settler colonial order.

The assassination of Kanafani and the later assassination of Al ‘Ali marked beginnings of the expulsion of the ‘organic intellectual’ from the ranks of the Palestinian Liberation Organization (henceforth, the PLO) and the gradual institutionalization of a notion of the cultural that replaced revolution with capitalist state building. Ghaleb Helsa (1994) notes that in these years, “[i]t was not enough for the PLO to expel the Palestinian and Arab intelligentsia and close the road in its face, but it also spread an atmosphere that is hostile to culture, based on the premise of emphasizing the role of the gun, by considering it the real and sole source of thought” (p.119). When the Palestinian Authority was established after the agreement, its state-building project constituted another level of mediation between the settler state and wider global processes of capitalist accumulation. The contemporary articulations between the cultural and the political in Palestine occur against the backdrop of an expulsion of the intellectual as well as within an ‘inherited colonial background’ (Coulthard, 2014). The institutionalization of culture and the neoliberal rearticulation of a nationalist program of liberation materialize through a particular, urban mode of production that permeates contemporary processes of cultural production in the spatial form that is the Palestinian city.

In the 1980s, Al ‘Ali drew, wrote, and spoke at a time when silence on critical political issues was the prerequisite for institutional ‘cultural work.’ In one cartoon (see Figure. 2), we see a lineup of identical figures, wearing formal suits and holding a sign that reads: “The General Secretary for the Palestinian Union of Palestinian Journalists and Writers.” In his drawings, Al ‘Ali developed this recurring image of the Palestinian nationalist leadership: suits, large faces and cheeks, and bald heads. In the cartoon, they say in colloquial Arabic: “You are coming to

give lessons in *wataniyya* (Arabic for patriotism) and you are coming to ask us to improve our line… Man, you are neither a writer, a journalist, a poet, nor a critic… what are you? And who?" To this question, a man with a thick mustache (another recurring figure in Al 'Ali's drawings), wearing torn clothes that represent his social class responds: "I am the reader." *Handala* stands next to him, with his hands clasped behind his back and his face turned away from the audience.

Al 'Ali's cartoon highlights that the leadership had a particular notion of the cultural that remained restricted to pre-assigned roles of poet, journalist, and writer that belong to particular institutions (the Union). The man's response to the question ("I am the reader") highlights the primacy of the reader to Al 'Ali: he is just as much an intellectual. In Gramsci's often-quoted formulation, we may say: "All men are intellectuals, one could therefore say: but not all men have in society the function of intellectuals" (Gramsci, 1971, p.9). The cartoon shows both the 'functionaries' and the reader; the emphasis on the latter disrupts the normative designation of the former as 'proper intellectual.'



Figure 2. The General Secretary of the Union of Palestinian Writers and Journalists. Source: Naji Al 'Ali Collection, Middle East Center Library, Oxford University.

In another cartoon (Figure. 3), Al 'Ali shows a car with the same leadership figures driving it. Its license plate reads: 242 NA 'A M. 242 refers to the United Nations Resolution 242, which was adopted in the wake of the Six-Day War in 1967 and called on Arab states to recognize Israel's right "to live in peace within secure and

recognized boundaries from threats or acts of force."[8] The Arab states eventually accepted the resolution, and the Palestinian Liberation Organization rejected it until 1988. It is generally seen as the basis of the Arab-Israeli 'peace process.' Na 'a m looks like normal plate letters, but together they constitute a 'na'am' (Arabic for yes). The car has marks of two large feet, representing humiliation. There are two Israeli soldiers stationed at what looks like a border, checking the identity cards of the drivers. One of them says: "They are expelled from the Palestinian [refugee] camps outside… let them enter to negotiate on behalf of those in the inside."



Figure 3. The Palestinian nationalist leadership in a car, crossing the border from 'outside' into Palestine. Source: Naji Al 'Ali Collection, Middle East Center Library, Oxford University.

The cartoon is a direct critique of the gradual PLO's succumbing to what Glen Coulthard (2014) calls 'colonial politics of recognition'—i.e., the recognition-based models that fail to interrogate the fundamental antagonism between the settlers and the indigenous communities and that work to assuage—rather than absolve—this antagonism through 'reconciling' "Indigenous assertions of nationhood with settler state sovereignty" (p.3). Al 'Ali drew the cartoon at a time when the PLO was in exile. His distinction of 'inside' and 'outside'

[8] See full resolution in Peacemaker. (n.d.). *242 Resolution*. Retrieved May 24, 2022, from https://peacemaker.un.org/sites/peacemaker.un.org/files/SCRes242%281967%29.pdf

works to puncture through the exiled PLO's claim to being the sole representative of the Palestinian people.

Soon thereafter, Al 'Ali was assassinated.

In my interview with Naji Al 'Ali's son, Khalid, I asked him why the family chose to archive the cartoons at the Middle East Center at Oxford University. Given the proliferation of cultural institutions in post-Oslo Palestine and the recent (first in 1997, then in 2016) establishment of the Palestinian Museum in Birzeit near Ramallah (which hosts an impressive digital and physical archive of Palestinian social and cultural history), I wanted to know if there was ever an option to bring the cartoons to this fragment of Palestine. Khalid noted that "You are under occupation in any case. Who would guarantee the drawings and their safety? Even the Palestinian museum.. what I know is that their important collections are outside Palestine. On what basis would I bring something from the outside to inside Palestine, if the ones inside are bringing things outside?" (Personal Interview, Online, June, 2021). These questions around the 'archive' in a context of a looming threat of dispossession and erasure highlight the difficulties and contradictions that face the fragmented Palestinian cultural fields. Palestinian cultural archives are often plundered, stolen, and destroyed (see Sela, 2017). The questions also stress the continuous condition of dispossession that Palestinians face, even after the enshrining of a Palestinian capitalist state-building project. Naji Al 'Ali's artworks continue to raise questions even after his assassination.

Culture and post-Oslo

Whilst the Oslo Agreement does not connote a rupture and consolidates logics that had predated it, it did introduce a Palestinian state-building project and a wider logic of colonial recognition that continue to profoundly impact the sphere of everyday life across historic

Palestine. In addition to the intrinsic contradictions of the pre-Oslo Palestinian cultural fields that I discussed above, the Agreement was preceded by the neoliberalization of the Israeli economy in 1985 through the Economic Stabilization Plan. While up until 1973 the Israeli economy was characterized by a "strategy of state-led industrialization funded through external capital flows" (Hanieh, 2003, p.7) and that "favoured business groups involved in the 'national project'" (p.7), after the 1973 war with Arab states, the Israeli economy "entered a long period of low growth combined with high inflation (stagflation)" (p.8). Nonetheless, the government had tight control over the Israeli capital market until the shift to a neoliberal economy in 1985, which meant intensified privatization and the direct plugging of the Israeli economy into the global circuits of capitalist accumulation.

This plan introduced a 'rearticulation' (i.e., a re-linking; Hall, 1985, p.113) between the settler state and the market in which the latter has increasingly come to play a more primary role in the sustenance of the settler colonial paradigm. This has had implications not only for the '67 territories, but also for the '48 territories. Neoliberalism has had implications for both territories by its introduction of consumerist and indebted lifestyles, the fragmentation of the Palestinian political field, the expansion of an 'aspiring' middle class and the reification of their fragmentation as institutional polities (one as a state-building project, and the other as a rights-based minoritarian project. But while the market works directly through the settler state in the '48 territories, in the '67 territories it is mediated by a nationalist bourgeoisie state-building project. Though not yet recognized by the settler state as a sovereign entity, the nationalist bourgeois state continues to be spatialized and reproduced—as ministries, municipalities, security apparatuses, planning departments and, importantly, as security officers, thereby attaching a particular mode of political subjectivation to the wider sphere of social reproduction.

Given the primacy placed on the market following 1985, it is no coincidence that the Oslo Agreement—a political agreement in the first place—would have a particular focus on the economic. Hever (2010) notes how when "the Oslo negotiations began, they were managed mostly by Shimon Peres, who filled the negotiating team with representatives of Israeli business interests" (p.12). Though his successor Yitzhak Rabin would reject this model, the structural implications of the 1994 Protocol on Economic Relations (otherwise known as the Paris Protocol), which handled the economic issues raised by the Oslo Accords, continue into the present.

Since the signing of the Agreement, Ramallah—a city in central West Bank—has become a primary location for the plugging of the dependent Palestinian economy into global modes of capitalist accumulation. In a similar vein, Haifa—a city in the north of today's Israel—has witnessed a re-spatialization of a Palestinian urbanity that is directly mediated by the structures of the Israeli state and the neoliberal market. In both cities, what some artists, academics and journalists have dubbed the 'alternative cultural scenes' (Karkabi, 2013) emerged. The 'alternative cultural scene' refers to cultural venues and initiatives that have gradually emerged since the early 1990s and that fuse local and international genres. To define this alternative cultural scene is a difficult task as the designation 'alternative' may disguise more than it reveals.

Karkabi (2013) defines these scenes as productive of a "politicized counterculture that innovatively fuses local and international musical expressions as a form of protest that aims to challenge external and internal impositions of structural oppression and othering" (p.308). To him, the alternative capacity of these scenes—despite being structurally conditioned and restricted to a Palestinian middle class across the two Territories—lies in their fusion of music

genres as well as their political oppositional capacities. These are urban scenes, composed of mostly middle-class Palestinian artists with access to cultural capital. I take their journeys as one of my vantage points in order to argue that these cultural scenes are implicated in wider socio-spatial processes, including settler colonialism, capitalism and urbanization. Settler colonialism dispossess and so does capitalism; it is the coalescence and divergence of these two processes that I pay particular attention to—in both the village-form and the city-form. Dispossession, I argue, is a historically specific and socially embedded process; only by situating it within its particular context can we understand its logics, contradictions, slippages and openings.

I say city-*form* and village-*form* because I understand both (following Massey, 2000) as condensed vantage points into particular articulations of practices and processes. Understood this way, 'city' becomes one sociospatial form amongst many other possible and imagined ones (Brenner, 2015). The reproduction of the urban as *city* is itself indicative of a power relation as is the relegation of the non-urban (e.g., village form) to a realm of anticipated and eventual subsumption by an encroaching process of capitalist agglomeration (urbanization). I understand the urban and non-urban relationally, hence my emphasis on the Palestinian village.

Thus, I understand these cultural scenes as a particular and contingent articulation of a mode of cultural production mediated by the wider political, social and economic relations that underpin the post-Oslo historical conjuncture *across* historic Palestine. Bringing together primary data (in-depth interviews with Palestinian artists), archival materials and audio-visual materials, the project interrogates the relationship between capitalism and settler colonialism, on the one hand, and arts and dispossession on the other. These two cities are positioned differentially in relation to the Israeli settler colonial order: while Haifa has been occupied since

1948 and is juridically categorized as within the Israeli citizenship sphere, Ramallah has been under a Military-Civil occupation since 1967. I call this the *unequal ordering of Palestinian life in its different geographies*: the Palestinian citizen of Israel is directly embedded within the politico-judicial and economic spheres of the settler state; the Palestinian in the West Bank is relegated to the military-civil complex and a state-building project dependent on the settler colonial order; the Palestinians in the Gaza Strip are subjected to a brutal siege, maintained by the settler colonial order, the Palestinian Authority and the Arab states; and the denial of the right of return continues to prevent the Palestinian *shatat* from returning to Palestine. The unequal relationships between these geographies are constitutive of the settler colonial order. While I regrettfully do not incorporate the dynamics in the Gaza Strip and the *shatat,* I nonetheless approach the West Bank and the '48 territories as embedded in an unequal relation to them.

The project reads at the limits of Palestinian cultural productions by constantly elaborating their frictions with the urban. The materiality of the urban is understood here as constantly in flux; its manifestation is simultaneously contingent upon and reproductive of determinate economic, juridical and political relations. In this sense, I use Stuart Hall's notion of articulation (1985) to read the relationship between the urban and the cultural as an articulation—a connection or a link—that is contingent upon particular historical circumstances.

I use 'articulation' as a method of analysis that identifies the particular modes of linking, de-linking and relinking between socially constituted practices and spheres. Whilst Stuart Hall's (1985) concept of articulation primarily takes up the question of linking between different axes of power (race, class, gender, nation, etc.) in a given historical conjuncture, I show how it is

also applicable to the historically determined and socially constituted spheres within which these axes of power intersect and materialize. In other words, if 'culture' is to be understood as a material force that involves the 'codification' of certain practices into institutions, discourses, ideologies and movements, then there is room to critically assess the 'articulations' that make up this culture as well as its linking with other socially constituted spheres (e.g., 'the urban') in each historical moment. In this sense, I trace the particular and contradictory 'linkings' that make up what is referred to as the 'cultural' and the 'urban' in the post-Oslo historical conjuncture in Israel/Palestine.

Such an approach to articulation is still consistent with Stuart Hall's theory and only expands it. In an interview with Grossberg, Hall (1986) argues that "a theory of articulation is both a way of understanding how ideological elements come, under certain conditions, to cohere together within a discourse, and a way of asking how they or do not become articulated, at specific conjunctures, to certain political subjects" (p.53). In addition to stressing the contingent nature of relations of power in each historical moment (and, therefore, their nature as prone to rupture and transformation), such an approach refuses to see ideology as 'false consciousness' in the orthodox Marxian sense (see Williams, 1977, pp.95-101). In other words, it "asks how an ideology discovers its subject rather than how the subject thinks the necessary and inevitable thoughts which belong to it" (Hall interviewed by Grossberg, 1986, p.53).

The merits of Hall's theory are inconceivable without his open-ended and non-teleological approach to *dialectics*—what he calls a 'Marxism without guarantees' (1986). Following Gillian Hart (2018), I understand dialectics here in the Marxian sense as a philosophy of internal relations that focuses on a) processes and does not see structures as pre-dating relations that sustain them; b) on 'events', 'things,' and 'systems' as constituted by multiple

processes and, therefore, internally contradictory; and c) on a 'whole' constituted by historically determined parts, and parts constituted by a historically determined whole (pp.375-376). In this sense, I read the particular articulation between market, state and settler colonialism in post-Oslo Palestine not as a *part* that is reflective of an a priori general process (universal capitalism), but rather as the product of particular determinations and relations, and the mediations therein. 'Mediation' names this complex relationality between the part and the whole, and how social meanings are constituted and circulated by power relations. Lukács (1971) argues that "the category of mediation is a lever with which to overcome the mere immediacy of the empirical world" (p.162), pointing instead to the complex determinations that make up experiences. Such determinations are not restricted to either the objective or subjective level but involve both. Though Raymond Williams (1977) critiques the concept of 'mediation' for its reliance on "separate and pre-existent areas or orders of reality" (p.99; for example, 'art' and 'the economic structure'), I use it here only in the sense of naming the dynamic and internally contradictory processes through which power relations coalesce to produce certain discourses, practices, institutions and subject-positions. In terms of its role in assessing how subject positions are linked to discursive formations, I follow Gordon (2008) in understanding mediation as "the process that links an institution and an individual, a social structure and a subject, and history and a biography" (p.19).The concept of articulation is crucial to this endeavor as it stresses a Marxian method of "advancing to the concrete through multiple relations and determinations" (Hart, 2018, p.381).

In this project, I use the notion of 'articulation' to make two overarching arguments. In the first vein, I argue that the dispossession of the Palestinian and the racialization of the Arab Jew serve as the inherited background within which contemporary urbanization across

Israel/Palestine unfolds. The project traces the relationship between dispossession and arts in the development of Israeli and Palestinian capitalist state formation in different historical conjunctures. I look at the Palestinian village of ‘Ayn Hawd in Haifa and its transformation into the arts settler colony of Ein Hod in 1953; the layered history of dispossession, first of the Palestinian in 1948, then of the Arab Jew in 1959 in Wadi Salib in Haifa; and the contemporary urban expansion and renewal/gentrification, respectively, of the Ramallah enclave and Haifa and their concomitant attachment of the cultural to global modes of capitalist accumulation. Building upon the writings of David Harvey, Silvia Federici and Glen Coulthard, the project argues that dispossession has to be understood as historically specific and socially embedded within wider socio-spatial processes. If dispossession is indeed determined by wider processes of ideological legitimation, then so are the practices and processes of dispossession within the city-form. Understood this way, displacements in the city for purposes of urban renewal cannot be reduced through a logic of economic functionalism to a mere effect of capital’s desire for absorbing surplus values (see Harvey, 2003). Despite the increasingly central role of the market, the state still plays a primary role in condensing together practices of dispossession into sustainable and traveling ‘technologies of power.’ The project re-focuses the attention of urban studies researchers on how these mediations between the state and market oscillate in order to argue that we need to venture beyond a mere focus on urbanization as an engulfing process of capitalist agglomeration towards a more intricate analysis of how urbanization fits within wider socio-spatial processes, including settler colonialism and racialization. Towards this end, I make a contribution to urban Marxist geography that highlights the ways in which capitalism unfolds according to entrenched racial and colonial logics.

I argue that dispossession in 1948 occurred in particular historical conditions in which the settler state played a major role that hampered with market logics in order to ensure its ethnonationalist character (see Bhandar, 2018). In the wake of 1948, the settler state became a site of condensation of racial hierarchies and practices of dispossession into systems of rules, turning settlers into propertied individuals (i.e., proper modern legal subjects, the 'human') and Palestinians into propertyless communities (i.e., the Other). Although this condensation is what has enabled the expropriation of land from 1967 to the present, following that year, it is the settler that leads the expropriation, followed by further juridical consolidation by the state. I then posit, following Brenna Bhandar (2018), that contemporary expropriation remains embroiled in a 'racial regime of ownership' that formulated racial property laws that differentially attributed value to the lives of the European settler by relying on racial notions of the human. Contemporary modes of urban production in Ramallah and Haifa are contingent upon these endurable settler colonial and racial articulations. And, so are modes of cultural production in the two cities.

In the second vein, my project examines how Palestinian arts in the post-Oslo conjuncture are produced, circulated and consumed in a context framed by such practices of dispossession. Now that we can approach Israeli settler colonialism and late capitalism through a dynamic historical framework, I move to discuss the genealogies of Palestinian middle class in the two cities and the concomitant, contradictory spatialization of urban and middle-class cultural scenes. I read the transformations in Haifa and Ramallah as reflective of the increasingly central role the market has come to play following the neoliberalisation of the Israeli economy in 1985 and the Agreement in 1993, and their associated modes of consumerist

subjectivation across the Green Line,[9] as a 'rearticulation'—a new linkage whereby the market comes to play a more central role in both logics of dispossession and racialization. I use Antonio Gramsci's notions of 'political society' and 'civil society' to argue that as '48 Palestinians face this state/market rearticulation as mediated by the citizenship sphere, '67 Palestinians face it as mediated by a settler state/indigenous state/market/settler configuration of power. I call the particular modes through which dispossession, urbanization and arts coalesce in these various conjunctures 'differentiated practices of dispossession,' which avoids the pitfalls of Foucauldian readings of settler colonialism as self-reproducing and all-encompassing.

I posit that we need to understand contemporary Palestinian arts by analyzing their frictions with this overarching mode of dispossession. Contrary to dominant journalistic and academic accounts that endow Palestinian arts, a priori, with an oppositional capacity, I make the claim that Palestinian arts are mediated by these wider power relations. To this end, the project takes contemporary notions of 'cultural boycott' in the two cities as a productive entry point for accounting for these differentiated practices of dispossession as well as identifying modes of Palestinian cultural resistance. I posit that Palestinian arts connote 'practices of articulation' that mean (via Gramsci, 1972) neither total incorporation into, nor a total reclaiming of the settler colonial spatialization of the city. Rather, following Stuart Hall (2016), I argue that they are part of a necessarily unequal struggle towards opening up emancipatory cultural possibilities. I offer a new approach to the questions of 'resistance' and 'agency' that

[9] The Green Line refers to the 1949 armistice lines established between the newly established State of Israel and its Arab neighbors in the aftermath of the 1948 Nakba, often referred to as the War of Independence. The 1948 events led to the sovereignty of the Israeli Jewish state over 78% of historical Palestine, now commonly referred to within literature as 'Israel proper'. The Gaza Strip, the West Bank, and East Jerusalem constitute the Territories beyond the Green Line—what is commonly referred to as the Occupied Territories or 'beyond the Green Line'. Until 1967, the Gaza Strip was controlled by the Egyptian government and the West Bank by the Jordanian government until their occupation by the Israeli state. For more on the Green Line, see Khamaisi, Rassem, 2008. "From Imposed Ceasefire Line to International Border."

critically takes into account the material realities within which arts are reproduced and circulated.

Overall, the project contributes to three overarching debates. The first pertains to urban studies and focuses on the relationship between dispossession, urbanization and arts. I follow other urban studies scholars (see Zeiderman, 2018 and Jazeel, 2018) in arguing for an understanding of the 'urban' as an 'articulating principle' within a wider socio-spatial formation. Situating the 'urban' within wider processes helps me interrogate the political economic presumptions—often based on processes of urbanization in the Global North—of urban theory, including gentrification theory. It also moves beyond economic functionalist explanations of displacements and dispossession towards an analytics focused on the multiple socio-spatial processes and the different levels of mediation engulfed therein that contribute to the reproduction of a thing that we call the city. The city is a vantage point, rather than a self-bounded entity.

The second contribution relates to cultural studies and examines the different levels of mediation between, on the one hand, the cultural sphere and the economic, urban and juridical spheres, on the other. Modes of cultural production in the city-form are mediated through unfolding processes of settler colonialism, capitalism and urbanization. Rather than viewing arts as all-encompassed within an unstoppable consumerist capitalism or as a sphere of resistance to said consumerism, I view arts as socially constituted and just as implicated in processes of dispossession. Artists, then, embody contradictory positions with different levels of cultural and spatial mediation. It is by examining these that we can weave together a politics of cultural resistance, grounded in the practices and contradictions of the everyday.

The third contribution relates to settler colonial studies and Palestinian cultural history. By looking at the different geographies of Ramallah and Haifa, the project aims to disrupt the sometimes formulaic explanation of the settler colony as a 'structure, not an event of elimination' (Wolfe, 2006). I show how the structure is contingent, how it depends on the creation and sustenance of links and how it ultimately points for ruptures and transformations. The writings of Palestinian thinkers, including Ghassan Kanafani and Naji Al 'Ali, have animated my dynamic understanding of settler colonialism in direct and indirect ways. They have expended immense energies towards understanding and activating the relationship between the cultural and the political towards emancipatory ends. Tracing the shifts that have occurred since their writings contributes to a Palestinian cultural history that understands culture as implicated within wider processes of social reproduction.

A Map of Chapters

This dissertation is composed of four primary chapters, along with an extensive review of the literature and a discussion of methodology. The first chapter introduces the two case studies of Haifa and Ramallah through a critical reading of their intertwined urban histories. I trace how the formation of the Israeli juridical sphere and its concomitant and co-constitutive formation of racial subjectivities were—and continue to be—reliant on differentiated practices that are constantly translated into a racial taxonomy of the urban. By critically reading archival materials from secondary sources, I posit that 1948 represents a moment whereby logics of dispossession were condensed into systems of rules. I then move to discuss how the military-civil occupation of the remaining Palestinian territories in 1967 relies on the coercive possession of the land through a coalition of the settler state, the settler, the market, and a Palestinian nationalist bourgeoisie formation. By tracing the constitutive role of the settler in these

territories, I argue that Israeli civil jurisdiction comes to play a coercive role. I show how the suppression of the distinction between political and civil society that Gramsci saw as exceptional to fascist Italy in the 1920s becomes constitutive in the Israeli settler colony. In this sense, Gramscian thought 'stretches' (as Fanon, 1967, might call it) as soon as it reaches the settler colony. The overall aim is to a) foreground how dispossession serves as the inherited background within which contemporary modes of urban and cultural production unfold and to b) demonstrate how modes of dispossession and rationales for urban renewal and expansion "adapt themselves to the contemporary imperatives of colonial domination" (Bhandar, 2018, p.14).

The second chapter zooms in on the transformation of the depopulated Palestinian village of 'Ayn Hawd in Haifa into the Israeli arts colony of Ein Hod in 1953. The colony was founded by Marcel Janco, a Romanian settler and one of the founders of the avant-garde Dada arts movement in Zurich in 1915. Rather than reading the meeting of political Zionism and Dadaism (an anti-art, anti-war, anti-institution movement) in 'Ayn Hawd as oxymoronic, I show how Dada's critique of modern bourgeois society was itself made possible only through the colonial theft of African, Oceanic and Indigenous artefacts. Modernist notions of 'primitivism', 'savagery' and 'insanity'—integral to Dadaism—were articulated to material Zionist notions of 'conquest of land' and 'labour' through Janco in 1953, resulting in what Latty et al (2016) call 'scenes of dispossession.' These are socio-spatial practices reproductive of both urban and non-urban fabrics in that they anticipate contemporary linkages between arts and dispossession in the city-form.

By tracing 'scenes of haunting' in fragmented Palestinian archives (poems, oral history, photographs) on 'Ayn Hawd, I show how these scenes of dispossession are not a thing of the

past but continue into the present. Haunting, I argue, is about recalling the destroyed world of ‘Ayn Hawd and refusing for it to be repressed. It is about naming destruction-through-preservation. I make the claim that the articulation of this link between the artistic and landscapes of dispossession anticipates contemporary modes of neoliberal cultural gentrification in Wadi Salib in Haifa.

The third chapter takes up contemporary cultural scenes in the cities of Haifa and Ramallah. I signpost the beginning of neoliberalisation of the Israeli economy in 1985 and the signing of the Oslo agreements in 1994 as marking the increasing reliance on the logic of the market. Nevertheless, the urban renewal of Haifa, the urban expansion of Ramallah, and their concomitant fashioning of consumerist subjectivities continue to occur against the backdrop of the dispossession of the Palestinian and the racialization of Arab Jews. Thus, I propose to understand the cultural scenes in the two cities relationally in order to delineate the limits and potentialities for a politics of cultural resistance.

Building on discussions in cultural studies as well as within human geography on the ‘critical infrastructure’ for arts in the city, I find that Palestinian artists in the two cities embody contradictory positions. Their production of art is facilitated by their middle-class mobility and an urban expansion/renewal contingent on modes of dispossession in the two cities of Haifa and Ramallah. Paraphrasing Stuart Hall, we may say this in this unequal terrain, there are contestations and struggles—'points of resistance’ and ‘points of suppression’—as the dominant culture aims to rework cultural forms and inscribe them within its more inclusive range (Hall, 2021, p.354). Thus, however limited and provisional, Palestinian artists engage in ‘practices of articulation’ (Hall, 2016, p.26) within the cultural domain and open up cultural possibilities

Chapter four focuses on the politics of the Palestinian cultural boycott (widely defined). It takes conversations around the Palestinian Call for the Academic and Cultural Boycott of Israel (henceforth PACBI, instituted in 2003) in both the ’48 and ’67 territories as its entry point. To do so, I rely on Arabic media reports, existing literature in Arabic, PACBI statements, and in-depth interviews with artists. I pay particular attention to the conversations around the differential criteria for the West Bank and the ’48 territories. While PACBI does not directly prohibit international and Arab artists from performing in the West Bank, it does prohibit the same artists from performing in the ‘48 Territories. The campaign argues that the former involves an indirect relation whereby the artist is granted a ‘permit’, while the latter involves a direct relationship with the Israeli embassies, ‘normalizing’ the settler colonial order.

Both in my personal interviews with artists and reports in Arabic journalistic articles on the campaign, some have critiqued this inconsistency, arguing that both the permit and the visa are ultimately issued by the Israeli state. The emergence of independent cultural scenes within the ’48 territories has highlighted the necessity of *re*-instituting sustainable cultural relations between ’48 Palestinians and the wider Arab world. I approach these frictions as a generative ground for envisioning emancipatory and liberatory Palestinian cultural fields that are simultaneously attuned to the spatio-temporal differences between the fragmented Palestinian geographies while remaining collective. By discussing Fanon’s reading of the Hegelian master-slave dialectic, I posit that, in addition to ‘nonrecognition’ and ‘domestication’, there is another resolution to the dialectic which Fanon neglects and the boycott highlights: *anti-recognition*. Boycott constitutes a reversed gaze—a refusal to recognize the legitimacy of the settler state and to engage in political, economic, and cultural circuits with it. Boycott, I argue, is not merely about ‘withdrawal’ from chains of complicity, but about building worlds where this complicity

no longer makes sense. It is about refusing a ‘colonial politics of recognition,’ whose debilitating effects on the Palestinian struggle both Kanafani and Al ‘Ali had predicted in both their journeys and artworks.

Literature Review

Dispossession and Arts

In both scholarly and journalistic accounts, Arab cultural productions, particularly in the aftermath of the Arab Spring, are overdetermined by notions of resistance and agency (see Toukan, 2021; El Zain, 2016; and Salih and Richter-Devroe, 2014). There is a tendency to frame discussions on politics and arts in the region through the binary of hegemony/counterhegemony, which elides the particular conditions under which contemporary arts are produced. Following Hanan Toukan (2021), I read this binary as itself symptomatic of an unfolding neoliberal order. To pose the relation between politics and arts in light of neocolonial funding and continuous dispossession under late capitalism necessitates a move beyond the hegemonic/counterhegemonic, submissive/resistant binaries. In other words, we should be careful not to counter the 'resistance thesis' with its counter thesis—i.e., all arts are subsumed within power relations and structures. Both stances presume an innate, essentialized relation between politics and arts without specifying the historically determined (but not exhaustively determining!) relations within which this relation is articulated.

Scholars have argued that, in the context of the Arab world, particularly after 9/11 and even more in wake of the Arab revolutions in 2010, there has been an increasing emphasis on the cultural frontier by the metropolitan centres of imperialism and neo-colonialism (Toukan, 2021; El Zein, 2016; and Sabry, 2012). In much of the literature, there has been a tiring and tired debate that is reduced to the binary of hegemonic/counterhegemonic, submissive/resistant (see Toukan, 2021 for an overview). The emphasis has been on examining this relation between politics and arts by attempting to deduce and essentialize it once and for all. In a context of intensified violence, where possibilities of the political are repeatedly repressed, the cultural is

lauded as a counterhegemonic force that has the ability to magically enact resistance. This is particularly true in the case of Palestinian cultural productions. They are produced in a context of settler colonial erasure and dispossession. In light of this, the '*joie de vivre',* to celebrate life—regardless of its relation to class, gender, neoliberal consumerism—is a priori determined as a response of resistance (see Taraki, 2008b). In settler colonial studies, it is argued that in the face of settler colonial dispossession, 'all the native has to do is stay' (Deborah Bird Rose as cited in Wolfe, 1999, p.1). Staying is resistance; joyful staying is even more resistance; and so on.

Yet, this '*joie de vivre'*—reflective of the post-Oslo proliferation of urban cultural sensibilities in Palestine, particularly in the West Bank but also in the '48 territories—does not happen in isolation from the overall workings of power in Palestine. Through funding schemes, travel exchanges, arts residencies, biennials, exhibitions, museums, and urban plans, a whole new sphere of institutionalized 'culture' has emerged in the region that aims to win the 'hearts and minds' of Arabs and Muslims, as Toukan (2021) so painstakingly shows. This unfolding of cultural infrastructures, its impact on cultural productions, and its conditioning of their political possibilities cannot be understood in isolation from intensified neoliberal capitalist accumulation in the region, the emergence of counter-revolutionary regimes since the 1990s and after 2010, and the continuous colonial dispossession of Palestinians by the Israeli state.

The aim of this project is to delineate the neoliberal, settler colonial, and neo-colonial context within which the Palestinian urban cultural scenes emerge. I use neo-colonial to refer to the bodies of international funding that have systematically restructured the possibilities of political action in the West Bank in wake of the Oslo Agreement by suturing the spheres of political activism to schemes of funding (see Hamami, 1995). Notably, this international

funding does not only come from the US and Europe, but also increasingly from countries within the Arab Gulf, which problematizes the critical focus on Western funding as it highlights the increasing power of a regional capitalist centre. In this regard, Adam Hanieh's (2013; 2020) emphasis on Gulf-based capital and its role in intensifying neoliberalization and class stratification in Palestine and elsewhere in the region is pertinent. Furthermore, Toukan (2021) constantly alludes to the role of the Gulf oil economies in determining the shape and content of the circuits of cultural capital in the region. Such neo-colonial relation, enacted both within North-South as well as South-South circulations, fits within a program of 'cultural diplomacy' that uses 'soft power' to reshape the possibilities for both the political and the cultural in Palestine (pp.42-61). Museums, arts exhibitions, the Ministry of Culture, and nongovernmental organizations participate directly in conditioning the horizon of possibilities for artworks and artists. Rather than being fully incorporated into structures of power or fully subversive, arts are mediated by such wider power relations.

In this review of the literature, I take an interdisciplinary approach that brings different fields in conversation with one another in order to map these colonial and neocolonial configurations of power. I start by discussing Gabriel Rockhill's and Jacques Rancière's theoretical formulations on the relationship between the political and arts, arguing for an approach that reckons with the historical, political-economic, and colonial conditions that determine the production, circulation, and consumption of arts in post-Oslo Palestine.

Bringing these strands of thought in conversation with one another, I argue, builds an analytical framework that accounts for the multifarious power relations without reducing Palestinian arts and artists to mere effects of power. Throughout, I aim to uphold the tension between, on the one hand, understanding the structuring forces that make and remake

Palestinian urban fabrics and enable particular modes of subjectivation within them; and on the other, the ways in which Palestinian artists negotiate such forces. Consequently, the framework I build in this chapter is a work between 'history and theory,' as Stuart Hall (2016) once dubbed it, "rather than the unfolding of a logically and conceptually clarified theoretical line of thinking or simply the deconstruction of theory into its historical conditions" (p.2). In this sense, we need not only consider the conditions within which theories are produced, but also the context to which they are transposed.

Encounters between Arts and Politics

Arts do not have a transcendental capacity that can be determined a priori to play a political function. The relation between politics and arts, in other words, cannot be determined once and for all, for that depends on the particular historical circumstances within which arts are produced, circulated, and consumed or received. To pose the question, 'what is the relationship between politics and arts?' is already to presuppose that there is a monotonous, essential relation that can be grasped discursively. It is also to presume that we know, a priori, what politics and arts mean.

Endowing arts with the *capacity to be political* and *to be innately resistant* is a common tendency of much of European thought in the twentieth century, which rests on a didactic approach that determines, a priori, what is and what is not political (see Rockhill, 2014). In the words of Rockhill, artworks are approached through a 'talisman complex' or a 'social epoche'. The 'talisman complex' refers to the tendency to approach artworks in isolation from the social nexus and to locate the 'political' in the artwork itself (Rockhill, 2014, p.6). The artwork is presumed to have an innate political capacity despite its social context. For example, to read the artworks of the DADA or Surrealist movements of the early twentieth century as anti-art and anti-bourgeoisie without examining the particular sociohistorical conditions under which they

were produced, their relation to the capitalist, colonial, racial, and heteropatriarchal forces and circuits that enable their works, and the omissions they require to make their critique—which I further explore in Chapter Two—reflects a 'talisman complex.' As for the 'social epoche', it refers to the tendency to "bracket the intricate social relations at work in aesthetic and political practices." This means that the social sphere is taken into account but is nonetheless reduced to a "determinist matrix that works of art react to (by either confirming or rejecting it" (p.6). The emphasis on the political function of arts that David McDonald, for example, articulated in his book on Palestinian music *My Voice is My Weapon* already presupposes that the voice is the weapon. By constantly reducing the cultural to the political McDonald forecloses questions of production, consumption, and circulation—what Rockhill calls an "analytic of immanent practices", namely, the intricate examination of particular historical formations and socially constituted practices (p.4).

In moving beyond the hegemonic/counterhegemonic binary, I take my cues from the writings of both the U.S. philosopher Gabriel Rockhill and French philosopher Jacques Rancière. My discussion of these two thinkers is informed by Hanan Toukan's (2021) work on the politics of art in Beirut, Amman, and Ramallah and her engagement with Rockhill; Najat Rahman's (2015) adaptation of Rancière in her work on the influence of the Palestinian poet Mahmoud Darwish on Palestinian contemporary artists; and Ruba Salih's and Sophie Richter-Devroe's (2014) work on cultures of resistance in Palestine. While Rochkill helps me foreground the historical conditions under which arts are produced, Rancière guards my analysis from lapsing into determinism, namely the counter-resistance thesis, whereby Palestinian arts figure only as manifestations of a highly disciplined and determined field.

I hold neither of these theorists as prescriptive, as both produce their knowledge within particular conditions (the French academy and the U.S. academy). In discussing Rancière, cultural geographer Divya P. Tolia-Kelly (2019) notes that his observations are "based on exclusively European sensibilities and texts, themselves articulating a narrow aesthetic palate" (p.124). Ranciere's formulations are born within the contradictions of the national polity of France, particularly the May 1968 uprising. In her formidable study of *May '68 and its afterlives*, Kristin Ross (2002) notes that "the trace of May and its aftermath can still be found in Ranciere's theoretical conceptualizations of the 'police' as the order of distribution of bodies as a community, as the way places, powers, and functions are managed in the state's production of a chosen social order, and in his analysis of politics as the disruption, broadly speaking, of that naturalized distribution" (p.24). The workers and students' uprising disrupted the distribution of the sensible: the student no longer at the university, the worker no longer at the factory.

However, the brute police force with which the uprising was faced, Ross argues, relates to the incorporation of the army into the police and vice versa during and after the Algerian War (Ross, 2002, p.51). The forgotten history of the massacre committed against the Algerians in Paris on October 17, 1961, where two hundred Algerians were killed, predicts both the police order and, partially, the forms and practices of insurrection against it in 1968. In this sense, 1968 was more an articulation of a "disjuncture or fissure created within that [students'] identity" (p.25). In his writings, Rancière suggested that this disjuncture "took the form of a political opening to otherness (represented by the two classical "others" of political modernity, the worker and the colonial subject) that was itself the result of that generation's particular historical and political memory, a memory bound up with and inscribed in decolonization" (Ross, 2002,

p.25; see also Rancière, 1997). Thus, contrary to what Tolia-Kelly argues, it seems that Rancière 's formulations were not 'exclusively based on European sensibilities' but were in conversation (however limited and provisional) with the moment of formal decolonization in Algeria.

Rancière's theoretical formulations, particularly in his book *The Emancipated Sepctator,* are clearly concerned with moving beyond Marxist and Foucauldian approaches to aesthetics. Against Marxian notions of pre-determined working-class revolutionary fervor and poststructuralist notions of power as all-encompassing, he posits a theory of the political that takes account of the structuring power of what he calls the 'police order' and the subjective (and then potentially collective) ability of the 'spectator' to re-organize it. It is no surprise that he arrives at these conceptualizations, given that the May '68 events precisely constituted a re-ordering of the distribution of the sensible. In that moment of '68, even arts and culture and their relation to politics were redistributed: "politics was exerting a magnetic pull-on culture, yanking it out of its specific and specialized realm" (Ross, 2002, p.15). His ideas, then, are conceptually, geographically and temporally specific. They cannot be simply *transferred* to another spatio-temporal context, though the questions they respond to, the order they identify, and the *subjects* they try to articulate retain some relevance to colonial and postcolonial contexts.

Rancière defines politics and aesthetics as forms of distribution of the sensible. In Western capitalist societies, politics is an aesthetic affair, "since it is, above all, a matter of establishing and modifying a sensory matrix that delimits the visible form from the invisible, the sayable from the unsayable, the audible from the inaudible, the possible from the impossible" (Rockill, 2014, p.163). This sensory matrix is upheld by the 'police distribution of the sensible', which refers to the "harmonious relationship between an occupation and an

equipment; between the fact of being in a specific time and place, practicing particular occupations there, and being equipped with the capacities for feeling, saying, and doing appropriate to those activities" (Rancière, 2011, p.43). The 'police distribution of the sensible' names a dominant sensory matrix that determines and legitimates certain modes of feeling, saying, and doing. It activates and upholds particular modes of affective performance that re-orient the body so that a harmonious relationship may exist between the occupation and the equipment. For a worker in a factory, for example, this police order seeks to discipline their modes of seeing, doing, and feeling in a manner that activates a productive relationship between their body and the machine. The police order, therefore, posits other affective modes as ineligible. To Rancière, Toila-Kelly (2019) reminds us, the social world is "maintained by an established set of possible modes of perception that foreground any action" (p.127).

He then juxtaposes emancipation to this police order. Emancipation occurs, he says, "when we understand that the self-evident facts that structure the relations between saying, seeing, and doing themselves belong to the structure of domination and subjection" (Rancière, 2011, p.13). Thus, he suggests that the emancipated workers are those "who employ capacities for feeling and speaking, thinking and acting, that do not belong to any particular class, but which belong to anyone and everyone" (p.43). The emancipated workers enact 'dissensus'—namely, they "reconfigure the landscape of what can be seen and what can be thought" and then "alter the field of the possible and the distribution of capacities and incapacities" (p.49). While the police order is defined by Rancière as anti-political, this dissensus is defined as the *political*—the former enacts a dominant mode of perception; the latter reorganizes this mode of perception. Artistic works that manage to enact this reorganization of the sensible are political. This is consistent with Kristin Ross' reading of Rancière's work in the context of May '68. In

this sense, explicitly politicized art does not necessarily re-order the realm of the sensible. Rather, by relying on the dominant distribution of the sensible, it re-enacts this distribution.

I read Rancière's analysis as an attempt to move beyond disenchantment and towards a reckoning with the 'political' as it appears in the most unexpected places. Rancière suggests an emancipatory understanding of the political that focuses on the subjective capabilities of peoples to learn and unlearn, redistribute, and re-arrange what he terms the 'organization of the sensible.' Thus, his notion of dissensus leads to a new notion of political subjectivation, which consists in "the action of uncounted capacities that crack open the unity of the given and the obviousness of the visible, in order to sketch a new topography of the possible" (Rancière, 2009, p.49). This, in turn, enables him to conceptualize collective emancipation not as the wholistic understanding of systematic processes of subjection, but as the "collectivization of capacities invested in scenes of dissensus" (p.49). Scattered and sporadic acts of dissensus crack open the system from the inside, constituting fissures and disjunctures; their collectivization leads to collective emancipation.

In his book *Radical History and Politics of Art,* Rockhill (2014) criticizes Rancière's formulations precisely because they "foreclose the possibility of thinking the social politicity of aesthetic practices" (p.164). Politicity here means the "political dimensions that play themselves out in historical struggles between various forms of social agency" (Rockhill, 2014, p.6). Rockhill argues that Rancière presumes that politized art, which "purport to venture out into the real world or provoke public mobilization is condemned to either disappear as art (by becoming indiscernible from politics) or remain with the museum space, forever cut off from the real world" (p.170). In this sense, the explicitly politicized art conveys the political message by abolishing itself as art. The seeming unison of arts and politics in May '68 noted by Ross (2002)

exemplifies such a relationality, whereby the artistic refuses its 'place' and achieves a "complete contemporaneity with the present" (p.15). In contrast, political art is that which remains pure of *explicit* political intervention and which aims to re-order the realm of the sensible. Rockhill says that in Rancière, "An art that is political on the stipulation that it maintains itself pure of all political intervention is opposed to the art that does politics by abolishing itself as art" (p.170).

To Rockhill (2014), this argument is limited because it rests on the assumption that arts and politics are essentially separate and mutually exclusive domains (p.171). He takes issue with this a priori, ahistorical determination of a monotonous relationship between two essentialized spheres that are called 'politics' and 'arts.' In contrast, he advocates for a "pragmatic or praxeological approach" (p.29), which begins with the "diverse practices labelled as 'artistic' or 'political' as well as the processes of conceptualization that codify them" (p.29). From this lens, the seeming unison of arts and politics in May '68 may be read as a particular practice of articulating the political, the artistic, and the relation between the two, rather than as an archetypical example of a *politicized* art juxtaposed with a *political* one. Thus, he is interested in formulating an 'analytic of immanent practices'—of 'the social politicity of aesthetic practices', rather than a theory that relies on transcendental, conceptual abstraction that leads to a monotonous relationship between politics and arts that can be generalized across time and space.

This has far-reaching consequences for how we understand the political and the artistic, not least of which is the interrogation of politics and arts as socially constituted, opening up the possibility of examining the differential power relations that constitute them and are, in turn, constituted by them. This is why Rockhill is fond of saying that "Arts and politics have no *eidos*," by which he means that they are "concepts in struggle that vary according to the social

setting and historical conjuncture" (p.179). Thus, his study aspires to analyse, with a thoroughly historicist approach, the multifarious negotiations and encounters that codify certain activities as artistic and/or political.

Rockhill's deeply historicist analytic foregrounds my attempt throughout this dissertation to take the historically determined structural relations into account—settler colonialism and late capitalism. Therefore, I take seriously the historical conditions under which arts are produced, consumed, and received. In the particular example of the Ein Hod artist colony, which I discuss at length in Chapter Two, I narrate the artists settler colony against the backdrop of a history and present of differentiated dispossession.

Yet, I am as troubled as Rancière by the question of political subjectivity in moments of disenchantment. The capitalist relations of power co-opted the revolutionary fervour of May '68 as a demand for increased consumption, changes of lifestyles, and a deepening of individuality (see Ross, 2002). This has been taken by some to mean that power is all-encompassing (i.e., it swallows up its critique) and that our political subjectivities are constantly determined by its logics (Foucault, 1990; see Hall, 1985). Though different, the post-Oslo moment in Palestine ushers in a similar moment of disenchantment, whereby a history of both armed and popular resistance is co-opted by nationalist ('67 territories) and minoritarian ('48 territories) elites and the power of the settler colony is not only upheld but expanded. The question at stake is not whether or not arts are resistant, but what understandings of politics and arts exist in this particular moment, the particular embodied linkages between the two, and what visions for an emancipatory cultural field may we glean from such embodied linkages.

Despite its limitations, I still find Rancière's notion of 'dissensus' as generative in that it troubles accounts of power that presume its omnipresence and omnipotence and starts to

account for the embodied departures and negotiations that people enact in their day-to-day lives. To put it in more concrete terms, my attempt in Chapter Three to examine the neoliberal conditions under which Palestinian arts in Haifa and Ramallah are produced reaches its limits when I start discussing, at the end, how some of these artworks have been enlisted for the purpose of political protest in Al Quds or Unity uprising (Jerusalem Uprising) of May, 2021. The production, consumption, and reception occur within neoliberal, settler colonial networks of power. What this example shows, however, is that the reception of these artworks by protesting 'spectators' and their metamorphosis into protest songs or spaces is what—even if momentarily—gives the artwork a political articulation. This did not happen according to a pre-established formula of how an artwork should re-order the sensible, activate a reorientation of the body, then a political subjectivity, leading eventually to a collectivization of 'capacities invested in dissensus.' Rather, a collectivization of capacities invested in dissensus was unfolding as protest, for which certain artworks were brought in as political articulations.

Like Rancière, in thinking about power in Palestine, I hope to move away from the formulaic tendency to treat structures (in this case, settler colonialism) as omnipresent, omnipotent, and permanent and Palestinian unfolding critiques of this power as mere variations of effects of this power. I turn to this question in the next section, introducing some of the conversations around settler colonialism, neoliberalism, and subjectivity.

Settler Colonialism, Neoliberalism and Indigeneity

Given my focus on contemporary Palestine, I engage with theories of settler colonialism (Wolfe 2006; Veracini 2006 and 2021; Mamdani 2020; Simpson, 2014; Salamanca et al, 2012, and Khalidi, 2020), albeit at some distance. I ground my understanding of the interlocking Zionist logics of power in Ghassan Kanafani's (1980; 2015) provocative yet underdeveloped

understanding of the eliminatory logic of Zionism (*niẓam iqtilā'i*) and its hierarchy of the human (*al-tabaqat al-basharyya*). Kanafani's analysis is particularly instructive in that it takes a historical approach to the particular logics of Israeli settler colonialism without losing sight of the possibility of its abolition through Palestinian resurgence. Seen this way, Israeli settler colonialism is a complex *set of relations* constantly disciplined into real institutions (Occupation, Siege, Military, Apartheid, Prison), regulative categories (Labor, Capital, Property, Law), and eliminatory spaces (Cities, City-Settlements). As relations, they can be bent, surpassed, adapted and performed (King, 2019, p.40); their organization depends on particular historical conditions and, importantly, so does the possibility of their abolition.

The Israeli settler colonial order constantly strives for permanence and to present that permanence as commonsensical. Wolfe (2006) argues that settler colonies "were not primarily established to extract surplus value from indigenous labor. Rather, they are premised on displacing indigenes from (or replacing them on) the land" (p.387). Thus, settler colonies are predicated on the "elimination of native societies… The colonizers come to stay—invasion is a structure not an event" (p.388). Wolfe's formulation sheds light on the constitutive role that dispossession plays not only in ushering and institutionalizing the settler state in its early stages (the event), but also the role it continues to play in spatializing the settler colonial order (the structure). These formulations give further conceptual weight to what Palestinian intellectuals (Sayegh, 1965) and communities have for long articulated as the defining logic of Israeli settler colonialism: *al-Nakba al-Mustamirra* (the continuous Nakba, Arabic for catastrophe).

My engagement with the settler colonialism framework has been informed by multiple critiques of its materialist and structuralist focus. Palestinian historian Rana Barakat (2018) critiques settler colonial studies for its taxonomies of 'triumph' and 'defeat', which are eerily

close to Zionist narratives of conquest (p.350). She also notes the framework's focus on narrating the settler, rather than the native, and following Robert Warrior (1992), argues for an 'indigenous intellectual sovereignty' (p.359). In this sense, we have to use the settler colonial studies framework within an analytic that emphasizes indigenous sovereignty. Similarly, Black American feminist scholar Tiffany L. King (2019) argues that in privileging a "linear and coherent narrativity" (p.71), settler colonial studies disappears the role of the settler—namely, the modes of being, seeing, and doing that are codified by the settler colonial order. She further adds that this focus on settler colonialism and the settler's relation to the land erases the unintelligible (to the Eurocentric humanist traditions) modes of livelihood of Black and Indigenous peoples in the Americas.

In a similar vein, Black American historian Robin Kelley criticizes Patrick Wolfe's formulations and his erasure of African indigeneity. In his book *Traces of History,* Wolfe (2016) argues that "[t]he role that colonialism has assigned to Indigenous people is to disappear. By contrast, though slavery meant the giving up of Africa, Black Americans were primarily colonized for their labour rather than for their land" (p.2). Kelley argues that here, "through linguistic sleight of hand, Africans are turned into Black Americans." In this sense, Wolfe "unwittingly misrecognized and unwittingly contributed to, what was clearly a process of elimination: eliminate the culture, identity, and consciousness while preserving the body for labor" (p.268). Kelley further argues that Wolfe's formulations on race as a "trace of history" locate racialism in the Enlightenment. In contrast, Cedric Robinson's (2000) formidable study on Black Marxism locates the "genesis of racialism much earlier, even before the first signs of merchant capital in the thirteenth century" (p.273). Thus, while Robinson's analysis locates European racialism within the spatio-temporal developments within Europe preceding the

Enlightenment and Renaissance periods, Wolfe's formulation sees "the enactment of race making occurring outside Europe, by way of encountering the other, and idea of race a product of Enlightenment rationality and scientific classification, rather than see both processes as deeply embedded in Western civilization" (p.273). This is of direct relevance to my discussion of political Zionism as an extension of European racialism, bred on European soil, and born within its contradictions. While it is beyond the scope of the project to examine what Cedric Robinson's thesis in his book *Black Marxism* does to our understanding of Zionism, his formulations still inform my understanding of the racial European grounds within which Zionism was born, propagated, and then materialised in an Ashkenazi, Jewish supremacist project on the land of Palestine that takes the dispossession of the Palestinian and the racialization of the Arab Jew as its conditions of possibility.

I also engage with formulations from the field of Indigenous Studies in the particular context of Turtle Island (today's North America). In particular, throughout the thesis, I engage with Glen Coulthard's (2014) understanding of the colonial logics of recognition and have benefited greatly from his discussion of the centrality of the logic of dispossession to both settler colonialism and capitalism. Coulthard advocates for a contextual shift from the capitalist relation to the colonial relation that "takes as its analytical frame the subject position of the colonized vis-à-vis the effects of colonial dispossession, rather than from the primary position of the 'wage male proletariat [in] in the process of commodity production' to borrow Silvia Fedirici's useful formulation" (p.67). He re-examines Karl Marx's thesis of *primitive accumulation*, which relates to the "violent transformation of noncapitalist forms of life into capitalist ones" (p.55), noting its 'normative developmentalism' and Eurocentric presumption that such accumulation constituted a "prior or transitional stage" and a "historical *inevitable*

process that would ultimately have a *beneficial* effect on those violently drawn into the capitalist circuit" (Emphasis original).[10] This formulation, as Coulthard and others (Glassman, 2006; De Angelis, 2004) argue and as I show in my discussion of neoliberalism below, does not explain the contemporary global realities, whereby dispossession and violence continue to inform the unfolding of neoliberal capitalism. In his comparative study of neoliberalism in South Africa and Palestine, Andy Clarno (2017) shows how "forcible dispossession is not merely a settler colonial strategy but also a racialized process of capital accumulation" (p.7). In this sense, the Israeli neoliberal, capitalist, and settler colonial order, and its reshaping of Palestinian urban fabrics, offers a nodal point within this larger global order of neoliberal capitalism, where the settler colonial intent on dispossession meets the 'creative destruction' (Harvey, 2005) of neoliberalism. Neoliberalism thrives on modes of violent differentiation and dispossession.

My engagement with Indigenous Studies is informed by my understanding of indigeneity as a relation and of indigenous decolonial thought as 'grounded normativity,' which Coulthard (2014) defines as the "modalities of Indigenous land-connected practices and longstanding experiential knowledge that inform and structure our ethical engagements with the world and our relationships with human and nonhuman others over time" (p.77). I approach the Indigenous struggles in Turtle Island as a continuous manifestation of an unfolding and in-motion imaginaries for living otherwise within and outside the settler colony. In this sense, Indigeneity names historically contingent modalities, relations and embodied archives of knowing, living and resisting. The Palestinian peoples in their different geographies are

[10] There is an expanding debate on the thesis of primitive accumulation. In contrast to Coulthard, for example, De Angelis (2004) offers an alternative reading of Marx's thesis of primitive accumulation, "one that shows the continuing relevance of 'enclosures' as constituent element of capitalist relations and accumulation' (p.61). For more, see De Angelis, M. (2004). See also Glassman, J. (2006) and Foster-Carter, A. (1978).

indigenous to the land of Palestine and their struggles are to be understood relationally to other Indigenous struggles.

This is why I sit uneasily with the tacit acceptance of settler colonialism as a conceptual framework to think Palestine and the simultaneous hesitation to think of indigeneity and Palestine. To my mind, this comes for a global racial hierarchy that still posits the struggles of the Indigenous as non-existent and fixes the Indigenous to the past. Relatedly, it also comes from a pragmatist approach to the Palestinian question—symbolized by the Oslo Agreement, which still clings, however precariously, to an understanding of this question as one of two competing nationalist imaginaries. It is no coincidence that Yassir Arafat, former president of the Palestinian Authority and former Chair of the Palestinian Liberation Organization, used to repetitively proclaim 'We are not Red Indians' (see Abu Lughod, 2020). His liberation strategy of state-building occludes and sidesteps the questions that Indigenous thought has repeatedly sought to raise about state formation, capitalism, colonialism, and sovereignty. To make this clearer, I will engage briefly with Lila Abu Lughod's essay 'Imagining Palestine's Alter-Natives: Settler Colonialism and Musuem Politics.'

Lila Abu Lughod (2020) argues that the "concept of settler colonialism opens up possibilities for thinking differently about Palestine's political present and future" (p.4). She recounts the story of a visit she made to today's Australia in 2015, and the plethora of cultural protocols—such as Acknowledgment of Country and the Welcome to Country (WTC)—she witnessed that aimed at recognizing indigenous peoples. After stating that such practices would be unimaginable in Israel today, Abu Lughod moves to explore the limitations of the registers of settler colonialism and indigeneity when they reach Palestine. She uses these cultural protocols to explore three reasons why Palestinians resist comparing themselves with

indigenous peoples, which can be summarized as colonial recognition, temporal, and symbolic elimination. The first objection Palestinians have (the colonial recognition) relates to how rituals of reconciliation in settler, multicultural liberal democracies such as Canada and Australia, "evoke a static and often romanticized "traditional" culture that makes even less sense in this context than it might in Australia" (p.8). The 'even less sense' in this formulation suggests that there is some sense to the settler colonial logic of erasure through multiculturalism in Australia, which is contrasted to the Palestinians, who, due to their much later conquest, "were already politically mobilizing around independence struggles" (p.10).

This leads to the second Palestinian objection—the temporal one. This is an objection that runs throughout Abu Lughod's lecture and informs the rigid distinctions she makes between the Indigenous peoples in Canada and Australia, and the Palestinian people. It can be summarized as such: these multicultural strategies of recognition and rights claims are outside the orbit of a "people whose political language for so long has been that of anticolonial or anti-imperial national liberation" (p.10). This leads Abu Lughod to argue that the preservation of culture has never been a priority for Palestinians. "Palestinians never considered Zionist settlement a threat to their cultural identity. It threatened their lives, their autonomy, their political aspirations, and their sovereignty" (p.10). Is this in juxtaposition to the Indigenous struggles, which consider settler colonialism a mere threat to their cultural identity rather than their self-determination and sovereignty? The third objection, the symbolic elimination one, relates to how these cultural protocols are symbolic and evade larger questions of righting colonial wrongs, redress, and reparation (p.12).

Throughout the essay, Abu Lughod is intent on distinguishing between the Palestinian struggle and these indigenous struggles. While in the second part of the lecture she uses these

reasons to establish the difference between these struggles, in the last part she moves to critically reassess her approach to the cultural protocols, recognizing that they are themselves—even if currently appropriated by the settler state—the result of First Nations' activism. The lecture concludes by exploring how thinking settler colonialism and these manifestations of indigenous struggles can "open[s] up possibilities for thinking differently about Palestine's political present and future," (p.3).

While I agree with Abu Lughod's observation that the specific spatio-temporal conditions of Israeli settler colonialism and the Palestinian struggle have to be rigorously taken into account, her Palestinian objections to the analytic of indigeneity seem to reduce indigeneity to how it has been characterized by the multicultural settler state. To accept tacitly, as she does with her first and second objections, that the struggles of the First Nations in today's Australia are about the preservation of a 'romanticized' culture, while those in Palestine are about political aspirations and sovereignty erases the histories and presents of Indigenous struggles in Australia and Canada that contest the settler state and continue to spatialize modes of and claims to sovereignty. It also erases the historical connections and discontinuities that linked activists in various settler colonies (see Estes, 2019). As Coulthard (2014) argues, these cultural protocols have been appropriated as tools of erasure by the settler state. In this sense, the 'cultural' is not to be approached as a separate sphere that can be prioritized and de-prioritized. The cultural protocols are a material manifestation of a historically determined structure of dispossession in today's Australian settler colonial order, against which a persistent tradition of Indigenous resistance continues to take shape. It is also a significant frontier for struggle that happens simultaneously with the continuous struggle for sovereignty and self-determination not only for the First Nations in today's Australia but also for the Palestinian people.

These struggles are different, but their difference should not be located in essentialized framings offered by the settler state ('romanticized' culture; Palestinians were colonized much later; symbolic gestures). Rather, they should be located in the particular histories of resistance that these struggles engulf as well as the different determinations that make up the settler colonial orders against which they resist. To argue that Palestinians had political parties, libraries, and archives at the moment of conquest in 1948, and that their struggle is consequently different from that of the First Nations, presumes that the latter did not have modes of archiving and political organizing. Thus, it takes the Western bourgeois modes of reading culture (the library, the party, the archive) as normative. This settler colonial iteration of culture cannot be our starting point for understanding how our struggle as Palestinians is positioned relationally to the struggles of indigenous communities around the world.

We also cannot approach indigenous knowledge production on settler colonialisms as a mere archive of liberation imaginaries that we selectively draw upon. Instead, our modes of struggle and life within and against a capitalist, racial, heteropatriarchal settler colonial order should be approached relationally. Not despite of, but because of our different positions vis-à-vis different settler colonial orders we articulate multiple modes of critique of the engulfing order within which a settler state makes sense. "Indigenization" then, to quote McKittrick's (2016) reading of Sylvia Wynter, "is rebellion." "Indigenizations are ongoing rebellions that demand we think outside our normalized order of consciousness" (p.86). In reading Sylvia Wynter's *Black Metamorphosis*, McKittrick notes that Wynter's concept of indigenization is not "a discussion of teleological-temporal New World arrivals and here-first-spatial-birth-claims; indigenization is a verb" (p.84, footnote). Indigenization as a verb asks us to interrogate the ways in which chattel slavery and genocide "produced a range of differentiated modes of

knowing and uneven perceptions of humanness (from which the enslaved black was excluded altogether as a labour unit)" as well as the constant spatialization of "acts of rebellion" (p.85, footnote) against the dominant modes of knowing the human. Seen this way, Israeli settler colonialism and Palestinian rebellion against it may be read as particular articulations of what Azoulay (2019) calls 'the unstoppable imperial movement', "enamoured of the new, started in the late fifteenth century and inaugurated the production of carelessness for people (and extra care for their expropriated objects) now seen as wordless and available for enslavement, exploitation, rape, and dispossession" (p.22). When 1948 is thought, in concrete terms, in relation to 1492, Abu Lughod's Palestinian rejections fall apart. The historically determined and socially embedded processes and practices of dispossession in Palestine are a manifestation of wider socio-spatial processes of racial capitalism and colonialism—what Azoulay (2019) calls 'the unstoppable imperial movement' inaugurated in the second half of the fifteenth century. In the contemporary moment, it is the ascent of neoliberalism to global hegemony that determines—albeit not exclusively—the parameters of this dispossession.

Processes of Dispossession across the Line

David Harvey (2005) defines neoliberalism as a political economy theory that posits property rights, free markets, and free trade as fundamental values for any institutional framework that wants to advance human well-being and liberate individuals. According to this theory, the state's intervention in the regulation of the market should be minimized while its intervention in creating the proper institutional framework for the unfolding of this 'individual entrepreneurship' should be maximized. Harvey adds that "if markets do not exist… then they must be created" (p.2). In practice, however, neoliberal states have proactively intervened into

the regulation of the market to restore power to the capitalist classes (Harvey, 2005, pp.64-87). They coercively manipulate state institutions to ensure strict control by elites and experts.

To Harvey, the constitutive violence that Marx's thesis of 'primitive accumulation' relegated to a pre-capital moment continues to unfold in the contemporary moment—a conundrum he captures with his notion of 'accumulation by dispossession' (2003 & 2004). Such violence remains constitutive for neoliberalism in that it plays a central role in absorbing the overgrowth of capital globally. Levien (2012) notes that while Harvey's notion liberates Marx's from its temporal limitations, it nonetheless clings to an economic functionalism that explains this force of dispossession as economic, rather than extra-economic. I am sympathetic to Levien's critique, who is concerned with genealogies of dispossession, as it posits an understanding of dispossession that centres the role of the state in condensing both economic and extra-economic practices and processes of dispossession. This understanding is central to my attempt to analyse the unfolding modes of urban production in Palestine and their differentiated enmeshment within wider socio-spatial processes.

The unfolding of neoliberalism in historic Palestine, across the Green Line, has reshaped the arenas of cultural engagement and limited its emancipatory potential. By privatizing the market and prioritizing the financial and state-building as modes of political engagement, neoliberal capitalism, facilitated by an engulfing settler colonial project, has reshaped the possibilities for the political in Palestine. Modes of urban production across the Green Line are mediated through overarching socio-spatial processes of settler colonialism and neoliberalism capitalism, and so are modes of cultural production.

Arts, including music, are not produced, circulated and consumed apart from this neoliberal restructuring. The production, consumption and reception of urban arts in Palestine

in the post-Oslo moment is constitutive of and constituted by an emerging middle class. In discussing the expansion and diversification of the upper and middle classes both in the Global North and Global South under racial capitalism, Clarno (2016) reminds us that "[w]hile upward mobility can provide these emergent [middle] classes with relief from some forms of oppression, they nevertheless confront ongoing discrimination due to the continued prevalence of racism" (p.11). This mobility, he further adds, "is coupled with expanding inequality between rich and poor and the growing instability of the middle classes" (p.11). The relationship between settler colonial dispossession and capitalist accumulation by dispossession is historically differentiated.

Rabie (2021) argues that while scholars often argue that the Oslo Agreement constituted a rupture, it is in the early 2000s that new markets were violently opened, and physical spaces structurally remade to advance major neoliberal economic readjustments (p.16). Following the Second Uprising (Intifada), particularly in 2007, intensified pro-privatization initiatives unfolded in the West Bank (led by former Prime Minister Salam Fayyad). But that year also marked, as Rabie notes, the last time the Palestinian legislative council convened. Neoliberal state-building in the West Bank, like elsewhere, prefers and enhances executive and expert-based rule, and thrives within anti-democratic and authoritarian political institutional arrangements.

In Haifa, a city occupied in 1948 and located squarely within the citizenship apparatus of the Israeli state and coercively naturalized as a settler colonial city, neoliberalism and settler colonialism manifest differently. In recent years, a number of scholars have attempted to understand the cultural scene in Haifa (Karkabi, 2013 & 2018; Withers, 2021). While Karkabi's account helps me foreground the unfolding of the scene within the neoliberalization of the

Israeli economy and the expanding of the Palestinian middle class, Withers' points me towards understanding the connectedness between Haifa and Ramallah as well as to the subjective experiences lived within the terrains defined by this neoliberal order. Withers (2021) situates these cultural scenes within the networks of consumption that are activated by neoliberalism across the so-called Green Line, arguing that the transformation of collective resistance into individuated politics "reshaped cultural sensibilities on both sides of the Green Line" (p.100). She concludes that "whereas class fragmentation shapes access to leisure in the Ramallah context, in Haifa ethno-national discourse animates ideas around consumption" (p.102). I take their observations as points of departure to explore in detail the unfolding relationship between settler colonialism, racialization, urbanization and neoliberalism and its differentiation across the Green Line. While Karkabi is concerned with articulating the significance of such a cultural scene in mapping or 'reclaiming' a Palestinian space, I am more interested in the contradictions that such mapping presents. I am particularly concerned with the continuities and discontinuities across the Green Line and what they tell us about the relationship between settler colonialism, racialization, and neoliberalism.

As noted in the section above, settler colonialism is defined by its logic of elimination—namely, the targeting of Palestinian bodies through murder and imprisonment, the erasure of Palestinian geographies to build settlements in their place, and the attempt to juridically and politically contain Palestinians living in the territories occupied in 1948 (those who became citizens of the Israeli state). To settle a territory, its residents are to be dispossessed, its geographies transfigured, remade and enclosed. Similarly, in discussing capital as a logic of enclosure, De Angelis (2004) argues that "there is no enclosure of commons without at the same time the destruction and fragmentation of communities" (p.57). Both settler colonialism and

neoliberal capitalism require enclosure and dispossession. Thus, these phenomena do not exist as separate spheres of influence. Not only do they intersect, but the colonial relation serves as the background against which the 'creative destruction' and enclosure of neoliberal, racial capitalism unfolds. Dispossession in this late capitalist moment in Palestine is sustained and perpetuated according to the racializing and eliminatory logic of Israeli settler colonialism. As Lloyd and Wolfe (2015) note, "settler colonialism's inventory of local strategies is becoming increasingly congenial to neoliberalism's emergent world order" (p.112). In this sense, settler colonialism is foundational to global modes of capitalist accumulation.

Across the spatio-temporal divide that the Green Line enacts, neoliberalism works in tandem with the settler colonial order to further enable and perpetuate the latter's expansion. In this sense, I build upon the already existent literature on settler colonialism, neoliberalism and urbanization within the Green Line and in the West Bank to trace both the continuities and discontinuities in how this neoliberal settler colonialism manifests across different spatio-temporal terrains. In the West Bank, where Ramallah is located, the unfolding neoliberal order is constituted by and constitutive of widening socioeconomic inequalities as well as an increasingly entrenched colonial order (Abourahme, 2009). Indeed, scholars argue that the signing of the Oslo Agreement in 1993 has meant the gradual spatialization of a neoliberal state-building project that aims to plug the local economy of the West Bank into global regimes of capitalist accumulation (see Rabie, 2020; Haddad, 2016; Clarno, 2016; and Abourahme 2009).

Seen from this political-economic perspective, the Oslo Agreement has not only served to consolidate Israeli colonial power but also to resolve settler colonial political-economic contradictions through colonial recognition politics—namely, through modes of 'liberal pluralism' that seek to incorporate Indigenous assertions of nationhood into relations with the

settler state that normalize, rather than dismantle, its order (Coulthard, 2014, p.37). Through neoliberal and settler colonial restructuring, the agreement has ensured the continuous expansion of Israeli settlements in the West Bank, the continued dependency of the Palestinian market on the Israeli economy, the intensified military subjugation of the Palestinian population, and the introduction of modes of governmentality that aim at reshaping Palestinian subjectivity (Abourahme, 2009; Rabie, 2020).

As Palestinian American geographer Kareem Rabie (2020) argues, in light of the agreement, the military occupation became a strategy of managing and sustaining the inequality between the Israeli and Palestinian markets, rather than equalizing them (p.28). Rabie's formulation helps me ground the connectedness between Haifa and Ramallah, namely by recognizing the relation of inequality between the two economies within which they are engulfed as constitutive of power. Neoliberal settler colonialism in Haifa enforces neoliberal settler colonialism in the West Bank through unequal power relations that are structured by the settler colonial order, and vice versa. The differentiation in the manifestations of this phenomenon should not lead us to treat them as separate. Rather, we should read this differentiation as integral to the workings of settler colonialism in Palestine.

Thus, the West Bank is not an 'exceptional'[11] space where all modes of power are suspended and the military occupation reigns as supreme and omnipresent. The implicit and explicit support to the Palestinian Authority (PA) by the U.S. and European powers—and by the Israeli state—is predicated on the PA's continued transformation of the Palestinian quest for

[11] I am thinking here of contemporary debates that orbit the Agambenian register of a 'space of exception.' While these debates are helpful in demarcating some of the juridical logics of the Israeli state, they tend to exceptionalize the occupation in the territories occupied in 1967. For a discussion of Agamben and Palestine, see Lentin, R. (2008). *Thinking Palestine*. See also Tuastad, D. (2017). 'State of exception' or 'state in exile'? The fallacy of appropriating Agamben on Palestinian refugee camps.

liberation into a neoliberal state-building project. As an authority without sovereignty over a territory, the Palestinian Authority represents a state-building project that primarily works to manage market relations and regulations, ensure a mode of capitalist accumulation even in the midst of intensified settler colonial violence, and benefit particular stratums of what Tariq Dana (2020) calls 'crony capitalists.' Rabie (2021) aptly argues that "[s]uch a context, where a territorial state is unlikely to emerge, demonstrates crucial features of the neoliberal state and the ways state can organize markets even without production or well-defined territorial relationships." He adds that "ideas, institutions, and practices of state can be productive even without territorial sovereignty" (p.18). The state—even without a nation and a territory—claims a monopoly over the politico-juridical sphere, the economic sphere, and the social and cultural sphere, which works to ensure the upholding of a neoliberal mode of capitalist accumulation and, in turn, the upholding of the settler colonial order.

As both Abourahme (2009) and Rabie (2021) argue, the neoliberal expansion of Ramallah rests on the enclavation of the rest of the West Bank; Palestinian urban expansion is selectively enabled by settler colonial expansion. These modes of urban production persist within relations of inequality. Thus, in the West Bank, the neoliberal order is enacted by a coalition of Palestinian capitalists and political elites, who are dependent on the political (recognition politics) and economic (neoliberalism) conditions that the Oslo Agreement enables. The manifestations of this coupling of neoliberalism and settler colonialism go beyond the institutional and the structural to organise the day-to-day lives within the West Bank around neoliberal renditions of private property, intensified consumption, and debt (Harker, 2020). That the alternative cultural scenes mostly rely—to varying degrees—on privately-owned venues and/or neoliberal cultural funding (see Toukan, 2021) offers us a prism through which to

understand this phenomenon. My aim is to trace how these power relations condition the day-to-day lives across the Green Line and how Palestinian artists negotiate such power relations. I take the making of the city—as a process—as an important local scale that conditions the making of the cultural.

Taking the city-form as my vantage point into these processes and articulations, I benefit from the expanding literature on urban renewal and expansion, neoliberalism, and settler colonialism in the context of the territories occupied in 1948 (Sa'di-Ibraheem, 2021; Kallus & Kolodney, 2010; Weiss, 2011; Milner, 2020) and those occupied in 1967 (Rabie, 2021; Abourahme, 2009; Taraki, 2008a, 2008b). Through tracing the 'archaeology of three addresses' in the Palestinian neighbourhood of Wadi Salib in Haifa, Palestinian geographer Yara Sa'di-Ibraheem (2021) shows how neoliberal privatization of vacant Palestinian refugee homes works to enact an "urbicide of the Palestinian city" (p.699). In Wadi Salib, she traces a poetics of time-space of the settler colonial order that rests on elimination "through the construction of an edifice composed of a mixture of real and imaginary: of old stones and new buildings, of dispossession and rewriting the past" (p.700). Such an edifice includes an artists' quarter, modern megastructures, and a municipal park. The dispossession of Palestinians from Wadi Salib in 1948 was enacted by brute force; today, their homes are being targeted through market-based neoliberal physical and aesthetic mechanisms of gentrification. To her, this constitutes an act of 're-frontiering' (p.700), where the neoliberal order enables the private sector to encroach on already dispossessed spaces. Crucially, Sa'di-Ibraheem makes references to the Ein Hod artists' colony, which I discuss at length in Chapter Two. She argues that the remaking of the Palestinian village of 'Ayn Hawd into the Israeli artist colony of Ein Hod was facilitated directly through governmental committees, while the remaking of Wadi Salib is currently facilitated by

privatization and the market. Both, however, deploy the aesthetic and the artistic to enact a scene of dispossession. Both pronounce different articulations of material and creative conquest. The dispossession remains constitutive; how it is enacted differs.

Sa'di-Ibraheem's formulation brings to mind Neil Smith's (1996) discussion of the frontier and the 'revanchist city.' Smith traces how the reformulation of the 'urban' as worthy of gentrifying conquest by the middle class evokes a longer genealogy of conquest of the indigenous communities in today's North America. Just like settlers treated native communities as a wilderness to be tamed, so do 'urban pioneers' who reformulate the city as "not yet socially inhabited." Smith adds that "the urban working class is seen as less than social, a part of the physical environment" (p.11). Smith treats conquest as a metaphor without interrogating how it serves as the inherited background for a classed, racializing and gendered mode of urban production that is contingent upon historical and contemporary processes and practices of dispossession. This is a pitfall that Sa'di-Ibraheem's concept of 're-frontiering' transcends by stressing the historically contingent nature of settler colonialism and capitalism as two socio-spatial processes. Though Smith's reference to 'conquest' is relevant, he does not take it a step further to treat settler colonialism as a socio-spatial process in and of itself, worthy of interrogation.

Like Sa'di-Ibraheem, Milner (2020) reads the layered geographies of dispossession and racialization in the chronology of Jamassin, a Palestinian village near Jaffa that was forcibly depopulated of its 2000 Palestinian residents in 1948 then filled with Mizrahi Jews (of North African and Arab heritage) and named Giv'at-Amal. Due to Israel's racial hierarchies, the neighbourhood was not formally recognized by the municipality, which left it an 'open frontier' (p.270) yet to be formally institutionalized. The rights of Mizrahi/Arab Jews as a racialized

settler community to the neighbourhood remained contested, and the frontier remained open. In Giv'at Amal, neoliberal 'entrepreneurs' are currently executing the erection of a luxurious compound of high-rises named Park Bavly, based on a plan authorised in the early 2000s. Thus, Milner writes on Jamassin as connoting two stories of dispossession: the one of Jamassin by Giv'at-Amal, and of Giv'at Amal by Park Bavly. She concludes that neoliberalism has gradually enabled the closing of the open frontier of Giv'at-Amal: "the area remained an open frontier, in which neoliberal forces operate to materialise a geography that can, and may eventually will, be institutionalized" (p.270). To her, neoliberalism has enabled the 'institutionalization of the geography', i.e., its proper "affirmation and integration into a broader collective narrative" (p.271).

Sa'di-Ibraheem's concept of 're-frontiering' and Milner's concept of 'open frontier' demonstrate that the settler colonial logic still persists into the present in the territories occupied in 1948. They both demonstrate how the neoliberal order both enables and is enabled by the settler colonial and racial hierarchies underpinning the Israeli state. This order presents new urban strategies that can 'settle' urban areas that had been left in 'suspense' since 1948, such as Wadi Salib and Jamassin. Sa'di-Ibraheem's concept of refrontiering suggests that these spaces are re-constituted as an urban frontier to be further integrated into the settler colonial order. Similarly, Milner's concept of 'open/close frontier' suggests that the neoliberal order works to institutionalize, and therefore close, a physically settled yet institutionally unsettled urban area. In both accounts, the neoliberal order works to perpetuate settlement and further institutionalize it. As these neighbourhoods lie within the 1948 territories, the Israeli state works directly on reorganizing the frameworks that enable this refrontiering. "The forces acting in the re-frontiered spaces," Sa'di-Ibraheem (2021) reminds us, "unlike in the West Bank are not military

personnel, security companies and zealots but investors, architects, and real-estate companies" (p.700). Recognizing the difference in how these forces is important , but should not be at the cost of neglecting the relationality between the different settler colonial logics across the Green Line divide.

The common proposition in Settler Colonial Studies that the settler colony constantly seeks its permanence (see Veracini, 2013) suggests an opposite proposition: the permanence of the settler colony is always contestable. The settler colony seeks permanence because it is always reminded of the originary structure of dispossession that haunts its foundation. These open frontiers, or spaces of refrontiering, suggest exactly that. They contain clear chronologies of dispossession and racialization, and though the neoliberal order provides a new set of technologies to exact this dispossession and racialization, it does not necessarily fully close these frontiers as Milner seems to suggest. Indeed, her opposition of an 'open' frontier with a 'closed' one seems to rest on the premise that frontiers cease to exist once they are properly institutionalized. I argue that the antagonistic relations within the closing/closed frontier continue to exist and their production as 'closed' (i.e., fully integrated into a collective narrative) leaves the settler colonial narrative of gradual settlement and permanence unchecked. According to Milner's logic, the village of 'Ayn Hawd became a closed frontier as soon as it was institutionalized into an Israeli artists' village because it was incorporated into the collective narrative of Zionist settlement. Revisiting the archives of the village, re-reading its persistent architecture, and even understanding the condition of its settlers as 'precarious' constantly brings these antagonistic relations to the forefront.

The limitations of this equation between frontiers and institutionalization to describe these neoliberal urban strategies within the territories occupied in 1948 are even more palpable

in the West Bank, which has been described as the Bantustans (Abourahme, 2009), colonial enclave, and frontier (Weizman, 2012). Just like Haifa, the West Bank too has investors, architects, and real-estate companies that are reshaping the urban fabric of the city and defining the limits of its horizons. They, too, work to propagate a neoliberal order that upholds a settler colonial order and they do so in the context of a military occupation with military personnel and security companies. The Palestinian neoliberal state-building project exists within a frontier—"a space containing antagonistic relations between two or more populations, while one of them perceives the others' place as empty or unregulated, therefore identifying it as a destination for spreading, regulation, and codification" (Handel, 2011, p.161 as cited in Milner, 2020, p.269). As discussed earlier, it is working to institutionalize a neoliberal order that plugs the West Bank into global modes of capitalist accumulation. As Ramallah expands, the West Bank shrinks. In the West Bank, where frontiers proliferate, the institutionalization of these modes of production occurs through (not despite of) the military occupation and Israeli settler colonialism. Palestinian investors can posit 'home ownership' through privatization, debt, and banks as a strategy that "empowers people on their own land" (p.102). In an interview he had with the manager of the Affordable Mortgage and Loan Program (a USD 500 million project bringing together international development agencies, several banks and the Palestine Investment Fund), Rabie (2021) is told, echoing language that has been part of the discourse of the Palestinian national movement, that home ownership "will advance the struggle through steadfastness" (p.102). The intensified privatization of private homes in the West Bank is couched here in terms of a nationalist struggle for liberation against the condition of the frontier. The neoliberal order, then, does not close the frontier by plugging it into structures and institutions; rather, it works to exploit the antagonistic relations within it to enhance capitalist accumulation and leave

settler colonial expansion unabated. The manifestation of neoliberalism in its Palestinian garment in the West Bank shows that neoliberalism exploits these antagonistic relations within the frontier, even while keeping it open. *Institutionalization does not equate to the closure of the frontier.*

My argument here, and throughout the dissertation, is that these modes of dispossession and capitalist accumulation in Haifa and Ramallah are *relational* and though they may manifest differently, they do express the workings of the same settler colonial, neoliberal, capitalist power relations. Therefore, I extend Sa'di-Ibraheem's concept of 're-frontiering' to account for the dynamics in the West Bank—the settler colonial edifice rests on recreating the conditions of the frontier to further institutionalize and exploit. Given its insistence on elimination and expansion, it always needs a frontier. Re-frontiering is its logic. What differs is how these power relations are organized in the political, economic, juridical, and cultural fields across the different spatio-temporal locations within historic Palestine (state-building project in the West Bank, the realm of rights and citizenship in 1948 territories, and so on). Thus, while it is understandable that Tariq Dana (2020) argues that there exist "different political economies" (248) in the West Bank, Gaza, East Jerusalem, and the Palestinian community in Israel, these different economies work in tandem with one another through relations of inequality within an overarching context of dispossession and capitalist accumulation. Modes of urban production in Haifa and Ramallah are mediated through an engulfing context of dispossession; the inequality between them is reproductive of the wider edifice of the settler colony. I read them relationally as having *differentiated* rather than *different* economies.

In both Ramallah and Haifa, neoliberalism under settler colonialism works to further dispossession and enclosure. In Haifa, it does so by privatizing Palestinian urban fabrics and

targeting them through urban renewal schemes. The Palestinian neighbourhood remains a frontier. In Ramallah, a state-building project works to plug these territories into global capitalist modes of accumulation. It is a project that persists within a frontier; it may even use 'privatization' and 'home ownership' to contest its frontier condition. But ultimately, it works to uphold the settler colonial order. In Wadi Salib, it presents itself as a market and a citizenship-state; in the West Bank, it presents itself both as a market and as the brute force of military occupation. The present neoliberal targeting of Wadi Salib rests not only on the dispossession of its Palestinian residents in 1948 and the racialization of its early Mizrahi settlers, but also, and crucially, on the continuous dispossession of Palestinians in the West Bank through unequal political-economic relations and brute military force.

Neoliberalism, as a global phenomenon, does not unfold equally across space and time even if it does have identifiable features such as its emphasis on privatization, free trade, and individual entrepreneurship. It is socially embedded and is therefore contingent upon the particular historical and geographical circumstances. Even across the land of Palestine, then, there is a significant difference in how neoliberalism unfolds. While the political-economic structures within the two territories are not entirely separate and exist in a relation of productive inequality, even in their 'containment' and 'expression' of the colonial relation they articulate different approaches. In urban locations, particularly Ramallah, it has physically manifested as high-rise buildings, expensive cafes and bars, increased numbers of owned cars, planned ghost cities and towns, all geared towards an aspirational (both real, but also imagined) middle class. It has also meant increased debt (Rabie, 2021; Dana, 2020; Harker, 2020), which participates directly into fragmenting the collective into individual units of labour working tirelessly to simply pay off the next loan payment for a car or a mortgage. In the midst of mundane day-to-

day life under neoliberalism and settler colonialism in the West Bank, and despite the daily encounters with settler colonial structures of oppression, debt—as a central pillar of neoliberal state-building—becomes an organizing principle of subjectivation.

The Conundrum of Resistance

Importantly, neoliberalism in the West Bank has also meant the proliferation of urban cultural sensibilities. While much has been written on neoliberalism in Palestine, this relationship between arts, culture, and neoliberalism has only recently been taken up by scholars. In her study of arts in Amman, Beirut, and Ramallah, Toukan (2021) locates the proliferation of urban cultural sensibilities in these cities within the politics of what she terms "neoliberal cultural funding" (p.6). She uses this conceptualization to trace the "global vision and the global aesthetics propagated by a specifically neoliberal form of capitalism as the supporting ideology of globalization, which so many cultural funders and practitioners adhere to in practice, even if never categorically expressed" (p.6). Crucially, Toukan argues that the formulaic designation of Arab cultural productions as 'counterhegemonic', particularly in the aftermath of 9/11 and then the Arab revolutions of 2011, is reflective of this neoliberal form of capitalism. She reads it as being reflective of neoliberal modes of individualism and entrepreneurship, which prioritize the artist and the artwork as atomized units of aesthetic counterhegemony at the cost of an art that is organically embedded in the social and political processes of social change and transformation. In other words, the artwork is endowed with an innate power to effect social change. What is elided in this endowment is both the particular social processes through which arts are produced as well as the role of a socially and politically embedded art practice that interrogates the power relations within which it is produced, circulated, and consumed. Toukan proposes a move away from the

hegemonic/counterhegemonic binary towards a rigorous understanding of the material power relations that intervene in the production, circulation, and consumption of art. This research project directly builds upon her observations, but also departs from them in fruitful ways.

While Toukan's work focuses on the interrelationships between arts and politics in Amman, Beirut, and Ramallah, this dissertation zooms in on Ramallah and Haifa. Therefore, I pay particular attention to the differential manifestation of neoliberal settler colonialism across the Green Line in Palestine. I am more concerned with how Israeli settler colonialism and neoliberalism interact to create differentiated terrains of erasure, control, and management across the Green Line. Furthermore, Toukan's work focuses on the politics of neoliberal cultural funding and its conditioning of the cultural fields, while this research project ventures into a different territory by focusing on Palestinian artists and their negotiation of a consumerist terrain of cultural production enabled by gentrifying cultural strategies, private property (privately-run cultural venues such as bars and restaurants), and neoliberal urban expansion and remaking. I use Toukan's framing to analyse the repetitive references to 'resistance' in contemporary Palestinian cultural productions as reflective of a 'conundrum of resistance'—an attempt to make sense of and even justify the consumerist nature of Palestinian arts in light of a persistent meta-framework of resistance to the Israeli occupation.

Salih and Richter-Devroe (2014) argue that, in Palestine, "resistance and classic nationalist art function as cultural hegemonic metaframes" (p.20). The persistent attempts by contemporary Palestinian artists to position themselves in relation to the 'resistance thesis' is reflective of the enduring coupling of arts and resistance in Palestine. The 'conundrum of resistance' can then be read as the artists' attempt to position their arts in relation to this thesis either by rejecting it, incorporating it, or working within its limits. Salih and Richter-Devroe's

framing has helped me in approaching these debates and recurrent references to resistance as reflective of wider shifts in power relations. However, the authors approach this seeking of the "normal, the mundane and seemingly 'apolitical' or 'a-nationalist'" as disruptive of "common sense' and capable of reordering the 'realm of the sensible" (p.20), thereby endowing it with a political efficacy. They use Rancière's notion of the political as the reordering of the notion of the sensible to salvage a politics of the apolitical. I depart from their framing in that I approach these recurrent references to resistance as a reflection of negotiations of power relations: to respond to a meta-framework of resistance with seemingly 'apolitical' art in an exceedingly consumerist urban environment does not necessarily mean that the artwork becomes political. In other words, to posit an artwork as 'apolitical' in a clearly political context does not a priori mean that the artwork disrupts power relations and reorders the arena of the sensible. At the heart of their conceptualization is a particular Rancierian understanding of the relationship between arts and politics, explained above, where any discursive re-ordering of the realm of the sensible constitutes a political intervention. Instead, I approach these apolitical and a-nationalist framings of the artworks as discursive attempts to respond to shifting material conditions. They simultaneously refute the resistance meta-framework while rationalizing the consumerist tendencies which Palestinian arts—across the Green Line—have been enmeshed within, albeit to varying degrees. Furthermore, in moments of protest, such arts are explicitly enlisted in the service of a political vision in Palestine, as I discuss in Chapter Three.

In making this shift from prioritizing the artwork and the subjective position of the artist towards a materialist understanding of how settler colonial, racial, and political-economic power relations condition, and thereby limit, the production, circulation, and consumption of Palestinian arts, I rely on these authors' observations as well as the expanding literature on

neoliberalism in Palestine. I build upon the works of scholars who have begun to interrogate the ways in which neoliberalism and settler colonialism are refashioning subjectivities across historic Palestine. I take pointers from Rabie's (2021) work in his insistence on reading Palestinians as subjects, rather than objects, of history, and on moving away from searching for Palestinian innocence to articulate a case of anti-occupation. I also take cue from his definition of neoliberalism in Palestine not only as a "state-scale market organization", but as a project of social engineering and subjectivation that aims to "reorient national political agency as market participation" (p.17). His approach conceives of everyday qualities of life as produced and determined through wider political economic and social relations. In this sense, the political economic structures of Palestinian neoliberalism and Israeli settler colonialism are not relegated to the sphere of the institution, the law, and the policy, but are instead approached as an interlocking matrix of power relations that conglomerate to determine the horizons of possibilities in the everyday life.

Finally, Rabie's account foregrounds my attempt to move beyond the 'occupation' to incorporate a wider analysis of the workings of settler colonialism in Palestine. While his work is on large-scale private housing in the West Bank, it nonetheless helps me map out the political economic caveats underpinning the production, circulation, and consumption of culture in the West Bank in particular, and the political-economic contradictions at the heart of Israeli settler colonialism more generally.

In the same vein, Tariq Dana's (2020) work on the relationship between Palestinian political and business elites, which he conceptualizes as "crony capitalism," sheds light on the institutional and structural arrangements between Palestinian elites, Palestinian capitalists, and the settler colonial order in the West Bank. Jamil Hilal's (2006) sociological study of the

emerging middle class in post-Oslo Palestine helps me in placing the proliferation of cultural sensibilities in the two cities within wider political-economic changes. Nasser Abourahme's (2009) article on urbanization in Ramallah points to the multifarious levels of articulation of this neoliberal colonialism in Ramallah. He is interested in tracing how this coupling of settler colonial interests and Palestinian capitalists' interests translate into tangible local nodes that perpetuate class stratification. He relates neoliberal urban expansion to settler colonial enclosure, and identifies, as early as 2009, the gradual emergence of Ramallah as a hub for artists and cultural producers. He approaches Ramallah as an attraction to musicians, artists, and filmmakers, who see it as a "fundraising 'gravy train' that a distilled, serially imaged and feverishly peddled 'Palestine has become" (p.502). While his article points to a possible relation between the two, it does not explore the concrete ways in which neoliberal urban expansion affects Palestinian cultural productions and producers. It also seems to a priori denounce these artists' urban and middle class aspirations as opportunistic.

Instead, I argue that the aim is to understand how these power relations unfold, how people make sense of them in their day-to-day lives, and how they negotiate their limits. This, I argue, better enables us to articulate an emancipatory potential of the cultural and the artistic that counters not only the settler colonial relation, but the continuous demand by neoliberal capitalism to reduce Palestinian arts and culture to consumable commodities.

Finally, I draw on the emerging literature on the entangled relationship between neoliberalism and arts more widely to make this shift from an a priori determination of the relationship between politics and arts towards examining this relationship as it unfolds in particular historical conjunctures. In particular, I draw on the works of León (2014), Weidman (2014), and Tausig (2014) on the relationship between music and neoliberalism. While this

dissertation does not focus solely on music but on alternative arts more generally, these scholars' observations are still relevant to how we understand the mediated nature of the relation between the production of arts in the particular moment of neoliberal capitalism. Writing on music and music making under neoliberalism, León (2014) writes that "music making mediates the interaction of a wide variety of social actors and institutions, making it a useful site in which to analyse the role that neoliberal logics have in this process of negotiation" (p.129). Citing Ilana Gershon's (2011) definition of the neoliberal subject as "a flexible bundle of skills that reflexively manages oneself as though the self was a business" (p.546), León argues that these "strategies of self-management are embedded in a variety of music-making contexts" (p.131) and may serve as a powerful entry point into understanding the working of neoliberalism.

Furthermore, Adam Krims (2003) explores how neoliberalism has created significant disparities within the recording industry, whereby the smaller recording companies proliferate, the more wealth and power is consolidated by major labels. Against the backdrop of this analysis, we can approach the establishment in Ramallah, for example, of the BLTNM independent record label to deliver to a niche local and regional market as connected to wider networks of global neoliberal capitalist accumulation. BLTNM was established by a group of Palestinian artists, including the rapper Shabjdeed, the music producer Al-Nather, and the art director Shabmouri.

On their website, BLTNM mentions that their goal is to "become the go-to place for Arab artists to create and release their music, without succumbing to the creative compromises often demanded by big labels. The plan is to make our culture the mainstream culture" (BLTNM website). The market, then, becomes clearly a way of contesting the major labels and transforming what has been repetitively and reductively described as 'underground,'

'alternative,' or 'political' into 'mainstream'. BLTNM is not a major label and does not have the capacity to carve up a major slice of the regional market; its location within the 1967 territories further limits its sphere of operations. Yet, what is telling about their profit-based initiative is its clear openness about turning Palestinian and Arab music into commodifiable products that may compete with global labels. However precariously, being able to compete within the market and to be locally integrated into global circuits of consumption and production becomes the way forward to Palestinian and Arab artists. The wider neoliberal conditions across the Green Line, discussed earlier, enable and make possible such an initiative, which in turn, consolidates the power of major recording labels as well as global corporates (including the Swedish audio streaming giant, Spotify, where many of these artists release their productions; see Vonderau, 2019) at the global scale. Looking into the dynamics of this local nodal point of neoliberal capitalist accumulation offers us insights both into the intricate relationship between settler colonialism and neoliberalism, as well as the ways in which neoliberalism conditions the production, circulation, and consumption of music and arts more generally.

Conclusion

The tendency to treat Palestinian arts through the reductive binary of hegemony/counterhegemony bypasses the necessity of examining the "social politicity of aesthetic practices" (Rockhill, 2014, p.164)—namely, the particular conditions within which the artistic and political are codified and the concrete relations that ensue from their encounter with one another. In the particular context of historic Palestine, this means taking into account the workings of neoliberal capitalism, Israeli settler colonialism, and its dependent Palestinian neoliberal economy and elites. The urban centres within which the Palestinian arts I discuss are produced are constituted by and constitutive of the workings of these paradigms. Indeed, the

'social politicity of aesthetic practices' analytic allows me to read the power relations that inform the urban planning of these two cities through the lens of aesthetics. This moves away from "the widespread proclivity to think the politics of aesthetics within the framework of the visual and literary arts, leaving aside the role of architecture, urban planning, public, art, design, music, and so forth" (Rockhill, 2014, p.180). The urban planning of the city, and the arts produced within its pathways, offer an insight into both the workings of settler colonialism and neoliberalism in Palestine as well as the ways in which Palestinian artists negotiate their contradictions.

Resistance is an analytic of power, not an a priori definition of its disfiguration (see Abu Lughod, 2002; Mitchell, 1990). Exploring arts in their material manifestations has implications not only for how we read the city, but also how we read political subjectivity. By taking contradictions and differentiations as generative, I refrain throughout the dissertation from prescribing what constitutes a political art. Rather, I explore the practices of how politics and arts figure and how they are brought together in particular discursive and material articulations. This not only disrupts structuralist and poststructuralist tendencies that see structures such as settler colonialism or capitalism as all-encompassing, but it also points towards a complex reading of modes of sociality and of political subjectivity in conditions of extreme subjection. I have found this reading of structures and subjectivity generative because it has enabled me to account for the already-unfolding imaginaries for emancipatory cultural fields in Palestine, and to approach the contestations within these imaginaries as generative. As Ross (2002) argues, "[t]he relation between ideas and modes of political action is always a conjunctural or situational one" (p.78). The contestations within and against settler colonialism and capitalism in the West Bank and Haifa already point to unfolding critiques, critiques that cannot be accounted for if

approached through analytical models of hegemony/counterhegemony and resistance/submission/complicity. Like Ross (2002), I do not believe that "consciousness precedes action or that a movement is born from a model, a blueprint, an idea, or a set of ideas, and not from a struggle" (p.78). Reading through the contradictions and frictions and analysing the differentiated modalities of power shows that power is not, after all, all-encompassing and that a critique of power does not await a critic or a theorist to formalize it: it is already unfolding.

Methodology



Figure 4. Road from Al-Bireh, passing through the Beit Eil West Road Exit, towards the north. The line marked with bright green is the wrong path we took to Tulkarim in northern West Bank. The dotted dark green line separating the West Bank from historic Palestine.

The Map

We started our day at Sukkarriyya, a new café in *Ramallah Al Tahta* (downtown Ramallah). I went there with my friend to wait for Zaid, a friend and an activist. Given his work, Zaid has an extensive knowledge of practitioners and organizers within the fragmented Palestinian urban cultural fields. He offered to rent a car and drive us to Dar Qandil cultural center in Tulkarim, a Palestinian city in the north of the West Bank. Dar Qandil was established in 2003 and became most known for its music band (also named Dar Qandil), which has produced songs that address, among other things, contemporary socioeconomic and political issues in Palestine. One of their most well-known songs is titled '*Bukra al-Nas Bta'rifkum'* (tomorrow, people will know you). The song is a direct critique of the Palestinian Authority's

co-optation of the history of resistance and revolution in Palestine in order to generate legitimacy for their state-building project. We had a coffee and, shortly after, started our journey towards Dar Qandil in the north. Neither of us had driven to Tulkarim before, which is usually not a significant concern, unless you live in a land with complex, highly militarized geographies with Israeli watch towers, settlements, prisons and military zones. Nonetheless, we were not concerned when we started the trip as we both had presumed a basic knowledge of roads to the north of the West Bank.

We left Ramallah from the Beit Eil West Road exit, an open road gate affecting al-Bireh area; when blocked, the checkpoint prevents Palestinians from getting to the old 60 road linking the south, center, and north of the West Bank (see Figure 4). We then joined 60 road and started heading towards the north. We knew we had to take a left at a roundabout. So, when we got close to the first roundabout, named after the Israeli settlement Kfar Tapuach, we took a left. We were unsure, so we stopped and asked someone parked to the right of the street in a car with a Palestinian license plate (green and white, in contrast to the Israeli yellow and black plates). He said that we could have taken the second exit, continuing straight after the roundabout, but that we could continue on this road towards Tulkarim, though it may take us longer. We chose to continue on that road (road 505).

We passed by Palestinian villages, including Jamma'in, Barkan, and ElKana. At some point while driving, we joined Road 5, where I noticed we were the only car with a green and white license plate on the road. I started getting nervous and told Zaid that we might need to make a U-turn as this might be an Israeli-only road. Zaid agreed but there was no way for us to turn around as there was a cement barrier between the two carriageways. We naively consulted Google Maps, which do not take into account the differential access to territory that the Israeli

settler colonial order imposes on Palestine (see Sánchez, 2018). We had to continue driving forward. We eventually found ourselves at a major Israeli checkpoint in the north-west of the West Bank– Jbara checkpoint – right at the so-called Green Line (see the dotted line in Figure 4). We were a few minutes away from Kufur Qasim (Kfar Qasim)—a Palestinian city that lies within the Green Line and under direct Israeli control. According to Israeli military laws, Zaid and I—being holders of West Bank identity cards and riding a Palestinian car—are not allowed to cross into these territories.

Zaid and I were nervous, as many Palestinians have been recently killed at Israeli checkpoints, some for making mistakes such as this one and others for allegedly attempting to stab Israeli soldiers. In October, 2019, close to when we took the trip, a twenty-five year old Palestinian, Ra'd El Bahri, was killed at Jbara checkpoint (Arab48, 2019). Zaid pulled down the window, turned on the emergency signal and waved at the checkpoint operators in order to indicate to them that we made a mistake. Three armed Israeli operators, carrying automatic weapons, rushed towards us with clear caution. The checkpoint is operated by a private Israeli security company. They asked us to get out of the car, stand behind a barrier, and present our identity cards. We complied. One of them seemed particularly threatened, though the three of them had their fingers on the triggers. They took the cards, asked Zaid to drive the car into the checkpoint, and asked me to walk on foot towards the inspection rooms. The soldier was talking to me from a distance, had a gun pointed at me, and asked me to walk in front of him. I walked cautiously, knowing that every act and move is closely inspected by him.

I got to the inspection room, went through the sensory machines, and straight into the waiting room. Zaid parked the car outside and went through the same process. From the window, I could see the operators thoroughly inspecting the car. They opened both the back and

front of the car. They had a police dog sniffing inside the car. It took them around thirty minutes to check it. Eventually, they decided we were not a threat. They had to completely close the checkpoint and take down the metal and plastic barriers between the two carriageways to let us make a U-turn back towards the territories we are allowed in. At the risk of seeming reckless, Zaid and I felt a bit of victory that they had to completely shut down the checkpoint to let us out, and that we made it a few meters into the 'Green Line' without an Israeli permission. We drove back towards the roundabout and took the second exit at the roundabout towards Nablus and Tulkarim.

Having grown up in the West Bank, these maneuvers around the imposed Israeli settler colonial geographies constituted a part of my everyday life. Now that I was on fieldwork, I felt—or indeed, fabricated—an observational distance from these maneuvers. Not only are they part of my everyday life, I told myself, but they are also now part and parcel of my so-called 'fieldwork.' Yet, in these moments, the separation between the 'subject' and 'object' of research felt unjustified. As soon as we got to the checkpoint, it did not matter if I was doing research or not—what mattered was my legal status as a subject of the military occupation. As Palestinians, our pathways of mobility around the West Bank and historic Palestine are determined by the Israeli military occupation apparatus and its fragmentation of Palestinian geographies. A Palestinian generation after another accumulates an unintelligible knowledge of how to navigate this differentiated system of segregation and erasure. We produce space. As geographer Doreen Massey (2000) has once put it, "you are not just travelling across space; you are altering it a little, moving it on, producing it. The relations that constitute it are being reproduced in an always slightly altered form" (p.226). Her observation is central to my understanding of my

own subjectivity as a researcher as well as to the wider arguments I am making in this project about the contingency of modes of socio-spatial production, including the urban.

In a poem titled *the Cartographer tries to map a way to Zion,* Jamaican poet Kei Miller (2014) questions the authority of the cartographer and his map:

> *The rastaman thinks, draw me a map of what you see*
> *then I will draw a map of what you never see*
> *and guess me whose map will be bigger than whose?*
> *Guess me whose map will tell the larger truth?*

Citing this poem, Hazel V. Carby (2019) writes that, while looking through the city archives for fragments of her family's history, she knew that "the lives I looked for could not be visualized on a map and fell through the net of questions asked or not asked on a census form" (p.156). In the poem, the *rastaman* addresses the cartographer, whose map-making is considered 'science without bias.' The *rastaman* knows that his map of what the cartographer never sees is bigger. The 'map' authoritatively fragments, ghettoizes, and imposes oppressive geographies. It tells the story from the perspective of dominance. In the context of Palestine, mapping has always been instrumentalized to fragment, Bantustanize, and erase Palestinian geographies.

Sánchez (2018) shows how the production of maps in Palestine is not neutral, objective, or 'complete. "Maps," she reminds us, "emerge from the subjectivities and intentions of those who produce them" (p.79). They are sutured to relations of power—a scale of cartographic power—that endows certain maps not only with more representative authority, but also with the authority to translate a map into reality. The Google Maps Zaid and I naively consulted do not take into account the differential access that defines the dominant Israeli spatial order. If maps are about dominance, then what we rarely see on them is how people walk them, upend them, ruin their neatly-drawn pathways and create new ones. The map gives the illusion of a surface

that collapses all of these trajectories (Massey, 2000, p.227). The Palestinian accumulation of knowledge of how to navigate these maps and to walk despite them is unrepresentable through and unintelligible to the map. In my own navigation of these maps and the fragmentation between Palestinian geographies, I relied on creative methods. I worked closely with the Haifa-based Palestinian photographer, Sama Haddad, to take photographs of areas I could not easily access, including the village of 'Ayn Hawd. Such a collaboration reflects the overall point I am making in this project about the differentiated nature of settler colonial modes of erasure, control and management across historic Palestine. It also testifies to modes of knowledge production and circulation that transcend the settler colonial fragmentation of Palestinian polities and geographies.

The *rastaman* questions not only the authority of the map, but the whole epistemological apparatus that separates subject from object and endows the map with its representative authority. His is, therefore, a question of who can produce legible knowledge. Whilst dominant socio-spatial processes present maps, cities and villages as flattened and all-encompassing surfaces, our work as researcher is to puncture through that with historically situated and empirically grounded analysis that names and demonstrates the other processes of socio-spatial production that the dominant ones attempt to subsume. '*Guess me whose map will tell the larger truth?'*

The Field and the Archive

Who can write and produce legible research is highly determined by colonial, heteropatriarchal, and class-based power relations within Western academic enterprises. Palestinian feminist sociologist, Anaheed Al-Hardan (2014), reminds us that the reception of the Israeli "new" historians and their account of the Palestinian *Nakba* in the English language

academy demonstrates that "the final plausibility of the Nakba in English, is better understood as being indicative of what and when history comes to be defined as history, and the power inherent in who is allowed to deem historical accounts as finally historical, and the routes that the history of the vanquished must traverse in order to be finally considered nonetheless only partly plausible" (p.63). For decades, Palestinians spent immense intellectual and cultural energies to document al-Nakba (the Palestinian catastrophe of 1948 and the establishment of the State of Israel) and its profound impact on Palestinian society and geography. The unravelling of 'untapped archival sources' that are essentially colonial, mediated by the Israeli academy and Israeli scholars, finally made it partially acceptable to speak of the atrocities of 1948 as 'ethnic cleansing' (see Pappe, 2006). Thus, the production of both historical and contemporary scholarly narratives is enmeshed within power relations and occurs against the backdrop of concrete historical conditions.

The same can be said of the sudden uptake of 'settler colonialism' as an analytical framework. As early as 1965, Palestinian intellectual Fayez Sayegh (1965) described in theoretical and analytical terms the distinct settler colonial nature of the Zionist project. Using the Haitian historian's Michel-Rolph Trouillot's (2015) register, we may say that this 'new' historical narrative, its perception as new, and its ability to introduce itself as a 'ruptural' intervention demonstrates that "[h]istorical representations—be they books, commercial exhibits or public commemorations—cannot be conceived only as vehicles for the transmission of knowledge." Trouillot adds that "not any relation will do. Authenticity is required, lest the representation becomes a fake, a morally repugnant spectacle" (p.149). The colonial archive—in its dominant instantiation—is a normalized tool of authentication; relying solely on its

classifications, narratives, silences, and selective un-silencing risks overlooking the concrete historical conditions under which certain narratives are deemed more legitimate than others.

It is necessary, therefore, to question the ways in which certain accounts are deemed more representative and authoritative than others—*whose map is deemed more representative of the larger truth*. Methodologically, both Al-Hardan's and Trouillot's observations guide my politics of citation in this dissertation. Research is a form of knowledge production and is therefore imbricated within power relations both within the academy and the communities we research. My understanding of how to read structures and subjects as they pertain to Palestinian arts and cities informed my interrogation of my own positionality as a Palestinian researcher. In this chapter, I hope to explore some of these methodological problems, which formed the engine of my research. In the first two sections, I stress the importance of reading the relationalities between Palestinian geographies against the backdrop of their fragmentation. I share reflections on the fragmented settler colonial 'map' I had to navigate as a Palestinian researcher as well as on the map of power relations that informed my research whilst 'in the field.' The understanding of my own negotiation of power relations points to a larger understanding of modes of urban and cultural production, on the one hand and how people produce, navigate, negotiate, disrupt and resist them, on the other. In the last two sections, I extend these interrogations of positionality to the wider questions of how to read structures and subjects.

This project relies on a combination of interviews and archival research, supplemented by a close reading of other audio-visual materials. The Palestine Underground documentaries and videos on the online broadcasting platform, the Boiler Room, are of particular significance to the project. They include interviews with multiple artists, scenes of parties and concerts, and

contextual commentary on the complex cultural link between Haifa and Ramallah. Due to limitations on my mobility within Palestine, I collaborated with the Haifa-based Palestinian photographer Sama Haddad, who visited the village of ‘Ayn Hawd and took photographs of the artists’ colony.

The thesis has two multi-phase, qualitative case studies: Ramallah in central West Bank and Haifa in the north of Palestinian territories occupied in 1948. My primary methods of research are fifteen in-depth interviews with Palestinian artists and cultural practitioners; discursive analysis of audio-visual materials produced by Palestinian artists; and discursive analysis of archival materials, particularly the Naji al Ali Cartoons Collection, held at the University of Oxford’s Middle East Centre (MEC) Library. His collection at Oxford includes cartoons that offer a thorough critique of the then-nascent logic of colonial recognition amongst the leadership of the Palestinian Liberation Organization. Al Ali’s cartoons help me ground my critique of the role of the Palestinian elites in a longer genealogy of radical Palestinian artistic and political thought.

For archival research, I made two visits to the Middle East Centre Library. I received generous help from archivists at the Centre as well as the Al ‘Ali family. The collection includes some 1,500 cartoons (see Figure 5). With the help of Al ‘Ali’s son, I was able to curate a collection of cartoons that critiques politics of recognition and negotiation and the role of the Palestinian political elites. In their critique, therefore, the cartoons predict the underlying contradictions of the post-Oslo historical conjuncture. When a cartoon is ambiguous, I sought advice from the Al ‘Ali family, who are familiar with the collection.

SR 1/1536	As Safir Newspaper (not including 1446, 1106, 1310)	Lebanon, Beirut	c1974-1982/3

W 1-188	Waton Newspaper (no 188 is oversize and is stored in the large box)	Kuwait	C1979-1982
K 1-28	Khaleej Newspaper	UAE	Early 1980s
Q 90-824	Qabas Newspaper (not including 392, 534, 787)	Kuwait	1983-1985
QI 1-931	Qabas International Newspaper	London	1985-1987
MA 1-13	Al Mawkif al Arabi Magazine	Cyprus	Early 1980s C1981-1983
M1, M2	Self-portrait and a poster for a play in Kuwait		
QI A-K	Qabas International Newspaper cartoon series (H1 missing in the H series)		
	Large format material in separate box Q907, Q934, L1 – L6, L8		

Figure 5. Naji Al Ali Collections at the University of Oxford's Middle East Centre.

For my fieldwork in Haifa and Ramallah, I used in-depth interviews as they allowed me and my interlocutors to explore multiple themes at length. Given the restrictions on my mobility as a Palestinian researcher within Palestine, it also made sense to opt for in-depth interviews to ensure that as many themes are addressed in the interviews as possible. The interviews were conducted and recorded in Arabic. I closely transcribed and translated to English sections of direct relevance to the themes of the dissertation. As for audio-visual materials, I incorporated them at a later stage as my fieldwork was cut short. I use discursive analysis to trace visual themes that relate to settler colonial fragmentation of Palestine and the 'conundrum of resistance' that permeates Palestinians arts. In cases where the visual material is an interview, I pay close attention to the context of the interview, the dynamics between the interviewer and the interviewee, and the intended audience for the interview.

For the interviews, I conducted two field trips. The first took place between April and October 2019. During this phase, I accompanied Palestinian artists in their concerts and studios in Ramallah and Bethlehem in order to better grasp their music production process. I also interviewed cultural practitioners working at different cultural institutions in Ramallah, including the Palestinian Museum and al Qattan Foundation. I regularly attended cultural events at these institutions, including the A.M. Qattan Foundation's exhibition 'From the Archive Room' (2019) and the Palestinian Museum's exhibition 'Intimate Terrains: Representations of a Disappearing Landscape' (2019). While I do not directly analyze these exhibitions, I conducted participant observation in order to better understand the programs of these institutions, their regular audiences, and how they situate themselves in relation to the city.

The second phase of my research took place between November 2020 and February 2021; it was cut short due to the global COVID-19 pandemic. During this phase, I conducted most of the interviews. I also spent extensive time with the artists in the different cultural venues in Haifa and Ramallah, attending parties, concerts, and events. These spontaneous conversations, though unrecorded, were of major significance, as they were interactive, included multiple artists, and offered direct commentary on the cultural and its spatialization. The artists I interviewed were mostly part of the 'alternative music scene' or Palestine Underground Scene, which broadly refer to Palestinian music that draws on international music genres and situates itself in an alternative relation to the meta-framework of folklore (Richter-Devroe and Salih, 2014). This scene, in both cities, corresponds closely to an emerging urban middle class (Karkabi, 2018 and Taraki, 2008a, 2008b). Therefore, my research project is not about all the cultural topographies within these two cities or Palestine. Rather, it is about this particular scene and what it tells us about the complex relations of power in the city.

Naming Palestine

The fragmentation of Palestinian polity and geography affects how we name Palestine. How do we refer to the different territories that have been forcibly occupied or annexed in different moments without upholding settler colonial geographies and histories? While the convention in much academic literature has been to refer to territories within the Green Line as 'Israel proper,' I find that such categorizations serve to naturalize and normalize the Israeli settler colonial order within the territories it had dispossessed of their Palestinian residents in 1948. Methodologically, it conceals the dis/continuities between these territories and the 'Occupied Territories,' which refer to the territories Israel militarily occupied in 1967. It also evades a serious reckoning with modes of Palestinian sociality that transcend these borders. The artists I interviewed stressed an organic connection between Ramallah and Haifa that, despite the differences, transcends this settler colonial logic of fragmentation. Bringing Haifa and Ramallah in conversation with one another was not an arbitrary choice. Rather, it was based on already unfolding connection that the artists themselves have been articulating, one embedded in a political and social history that also defies such these fragmentations (see Nassar, 2017).

Instead of using 'Israel proper' and 'Occupied Territories,' which are misleading insofar as they make a rigid distinction between the two and normalize the settler colonial order, I use the 1948 or '48 territories to refer to the territories within the Green Line and the 1967 or '67 territories to refer to those outside of it. These categorizations are commonly used in Palestine. While they do mark a distinction between the two dates of conquest, they do not presume or suggest a fundamental difference. To the contrary, they suggest a continuity of expansion and conquest; they approach the settler colonial order as a process condensed into a structure, not an event (Wolfe, 2006). This is especially true in light of recent plans by the Israeli government,

supported by the United States government, to annex the West Bank.[12] The border of the settler colony is never strictly defined, for it is an ever-expansionist project. 'Proper' in 'Israel proper' disguises more than it reveal. The Palestinian naming of these territories according to the dates of conquest denaturalizes the presumed permanence of the settler colonial formation and names what Audra Simpson (2014) calls "settler precariousness" (p.19), which emanates from the precarious assumption of the permanence of borders and nation-states. The fabricated, yet real distinction that Israel makes between the 1948 and 1967 territories is reflective of this settler precariousness. It aims to naturalize and normalize by creating the settlement in the West Bank as the exception, not the rule.

This formulation also reminds readers that Israeli settler colonialism is not restricted to the 1967 borders, i.e. the Occupied Territories of the West Bank, the Gaza Strip, and East Jerusalem. As Salamnca, Qato, Rabie and Samour (2012) remind us, the Green Line "has become a powerful symbolic and material signifier that enforces, and takes for granted, the fragmentation of the Palestinian polity." With a few exceptions," the authors warn us, "it is a line that is rarely crossed in scholarly accounts of Palestine—in either direction" (p.3). The necessity to methodologically cross the 'Green Line' has the generative potential not only to better understand the historically differentiated nature of Israeli settler colonialism but also to explore Palestinian modes of sociality that transcend its spatio-temporal differentiations. It reorients us to analyze the settler colonial structure without mistaking it for one of its modalities: the military occupation since 1967.

[12] For interactive maps that show the enclosures, settlements, and settler expansion, see *United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs—Occupied Palestinian territory | Maps*.

Occupation, apartheid, and settler colonialism are often used together to refer to the realities in Palestine, despite the intrinsic frictions between these different frameworks. By focusing only on the settler colonial military occupation of the territories annexed after 1967, we risk, as Rifkin (2017, p.43) argues, "internaliz[ing] it as an ontological category distinct from the larger structures of Israeli colonialism." Furthermore, "When the Occupied Territories are used as the de facto referent, settler colonialism seems to designate an extension of national authority beyond its proper geopolitical limits rather than the foundation of a state on top of existing indigenous polities and territories that became "domestic" by virtue of this nonconsensual imposition" (Rifkin, 2017, p.43). In other words, it risks posing the struggles in Palestine as two competing nationalist projects, rather than a struggle between the settler colonial entity and the colonized. Palestinian nationalism is understood here as but one of many responses to Israeli settler colonialism—it is *a framework* that has attempted to assuage the fundamental antagonisms in Palestine by organizing them within the framework of nation-state building. Palestinian nationalism, despite having various articulations since its emergence, has precipitated or has been coopted into an elite state-building project that relies on colonial recognition and perpetuates the settler colonial order.

By defining settler colonialism as the occupation, we also risk neglecting the temporal (from *before* 1948 until today) and spatial dis/continuities (the now-Israel, the West Bank, the Gaza Strip, East Jerusalem, the Golan Heights, and the plight of seven million Palestinian refugees) of the settler colonial project, as well as the dis/continuities of Palestinian experiences. The Israeli military occupation in the West Bank is but one of the logics of Israeli settler colonialism. While occupation as a framework may be helpful in explicating the specificities of

the realities in the West Bank, it is insufficient in addressing settler colonialism as a whole paradigm. Therefore, occupation is understood here as the modality, not the paradigm.

My map of research was a cordoned map, a ghettoized map, a fragmented map. Given that my research focuses on two different locations that are positioned differentially vis-à-vis the settler colonial state (i.e., across the so-called Green Line), the challenge of maneuvering around imposed settler colonial geographies was central. In order to access Haifa, for example, I had to seek a magnetic card from the Israeli military occupation. This is a card given only to those Palestinians whose 'security record' with the settler state is clear. Without it, Palestinians cannot apply for short-term permits to visit family, go to hospitals, travel abroad, or simply visit Palestinian towns and cities occupied in 1948. After obtaining the card, I had to find creative ways to get a permit to visit Haifa, for obtaining a permit to 'research' was certainly not an option. The map is fragmented, yet we still walk it, cross its checkpoints, jump over its walls, and maneuver around its segregationist permit regime. These are socio-spatial practices worthy of recognition and analysis.

During my fieldwork in Haifa, I was often asked by Palestinians I met about how I got there. This was my first extended stay in the city. Palestinians I met often spoke of a sense of 'alienation'—of being in and from Haifa, but constantly rejected by its settler colonial map. They spoke of their city, *their* embodiment of Haifa, as a ''parallel city'' (Murkus, 2017). It is this 'city' that I walked through, which exists despite and because of Israeli settler colonialism. It is a precarious, contradictory and contingent socio-spatial form that is always in flux, but it is there and it wants to say something. While there, I was often haunted by the presence of Palestinian refugees—the 60,000 refugees who were forcibly expelled from the city in 1948. Some of their homes still stand. Their ghostly presences are still part and parcel of the 'parallel

city' and constitute an urban collective memory. From 1948 till today, the Israeli settler state has introduced multiple historically determined spatial strategies that aim at remaking this urban fabric and erasing what remains of its Palestinianness (see Kolodney and Kallus, 2008). Yet, refugees continue to haunt the foundation of this settler colonial order by bringing its foundation into question. I saw Haifa as haunted. I saw its urban fabric as embroiled in what Latty et al (2016, p.136) call 'structured scenes of dispossession'—the early dispossession of 1948, and the continuing dispossession through market forces, exemplified, by the intent to transform and erase Palestinian refugee homes through urban renewal schemes.

Settler colonialism is a conglomerate of relations of oppression that condenses itself in structures. It is not fixed. It is impermanent despite its claim to permanence. These relations defined my terrains of movement and mobility as a Palestinian researcher, but they did not fully determine the content of my interactions with Palestinian geographies as well as with Palestinian artists, activists, and cultural practitioners. I experience the settler colony as a proliferation of differentiated relations of power that condense themselves into physical, material and discursive shapes and forms, such as the checkpoint, the wall, the permit, the novel, the city and the TV channel in the occupation's permit-management rooms. In this sense, the settler colony can be read in the Rancierian register as the police distribution of the sensible: a sensory matrix that aims to effect a harmonious relationship between the Palestinian and their particular, fragmented geography and the modes of feeling, saying, and doing appropriate to these geographies and their modalities of power (Ranciere, 2011, p.43).

My sense of reflexivity on the ways in which this sensory matrix impacted my research—both as a limitation and as an epistemic friction that, if explored, becomes productive of deeper understandings of settler colonialism—was continuous. But the settler state and the

settlers do not constitute the only relation of power undergirding my research. Throughout my fieldwork, I negotiated what anthropologist Kirin Narayan (1993) calls "shifting identifications amid a field of interpenetrating communities and power relations" (p.671). In her observations on the so-called insider-outsider anthropologists, she adds that the "loci along which we are aligned with or set apart from those whom we study are multiple and in flux" (p.672). Her observations are particularly pertinent as they puncture through the essentialized distinctions upon which an 'insider-outsider' dichotomy rest.

'The Colonized Within'

The insider-outsider positionality, or the 'outsider within', does not innately add to one's research. Being from Palestine does not a priori mean an ability to comprehend and make intelligible its multiple realities. Commenting on the field of anthropology, Narayan (1993) argues that the "paradigm that polarizes "native" anthropologists and "real" anthropologists stems from the colonial setting in which the discipline of anthropology was forged: the days in which natives were genuine native (whether they liked it or not) and the observer's objectivity in the scientific study of Other societies posed no problem" (p.672). The discursive formations of these bygone days still continue into the present, where an emphasis on the potential contributions of the 'insider-outsider' position still persists. The demand on the 'others' of Western academies to "'source' their own lived experiences and histories," Al-Hardan (2014, p.64) reminds us, is one reflection of the enduring "coloniality of power" (Mignolo, 2017) within the university.

In moving beyond this reductive insider-outsider dichotomy, I accept Narayan's (1993) invitation for a reckoning with "hybridity"—the fact that, as a social scientist, I am doubly embedded in the world and hierarchies of Western academic scholarship as well as in the

everyday socioeconomic and political hierarches of Palestine (p.672). One's positionality is productive of critical knowledge only when it is rigorously examined as a shifting articulation vis-à-vis the wider power relations. In other words, it is only through the constant, self-reflective assessment of the different modes of identification vis-à-vis wider power relations (settler colonialism, class, gender, race) that positionality should be evoked. Black feminist scholar Patricia Hill Collins (1986) names this positionality the 'outsider within', which offers a vantage point from which "experienced reality is used as a valid source of knowledge for critiquing sociological facts and theories, while sociological thought offers new ways of seeing that experienced reality" (P.S25). Following Collins, Al-Hardan (2014) calls the positionality of Palestinian scholars researching our own communities 'the colonized within' (p.66).

These formulations ground my understanding of the double positionality of the 'colonized within' as embedded in both the knowledge/power nexus within the academy and the social hierarchies within the communities we research. In this sense, these scholars view identity as a continuous process of 'dis/identification.' They recognize that identities, in the words of Stuart Hall, "are subject to a continuous 'play' of history, culture, and power." Identities are "the names we give to the different ways we are positioned by, and position ourselves within, the narratives of the past" (Hall, 1989, p.70). While I argue for the necessity of situating Palestinian city-forms and cultural productions within the wider power relations, it is equally imperative to situate my own knowledge production within the multiple power relations through which it has been, and continues to be, mediated.

Therefore, I approach research as a ''site of struggle'' (Smith, 2012, p.41) that involves contested and contesting claims, histories and presents of complicity, disciplinary and institutional regimes of knowledge production as well as margins of resistance. To see research

as a site of struggle is to start from the basic premise that research is not apolitical or neutral; it is enmeshed within larger power relations that constantly determine who can be a subject of research and who cannot and that often constitute "nonwhite women, men, and children" as mere "objects of study (oddities in the seamless white landscape), rather than relevant geographic subjects" (McKittrick, 2006, p.33) capable of producing and critiquing knowledge. To see research as a site of struggle is also to accept that it "is one of the ways in which the underlying code of imperialism and colonialism is both regulated and realized. It is regulated through the formal rules of individual scholarly disciplines and scientific paradigms, and the institutions that support them (including the state)," (Smith, 2012, p.8). Kahnawake Mohawk scholar, Audra Simpson (2014), reminds us that military might was not all that was required to know, represent, and discipline the colonized; "it required the methods and modalities of knowing—in particular, categorization, ethnological comparison, linguistic translation, and ethnography" (p.96). "Concepts," she says, "have teeth, and teeth that bite through time" (p.100) and so do maps.

It is for these reasons that I felt profound discomfort with the extractive nature of Western research methods, which often formulate the colonized and the indigenous as mere objects of study (Al-Hardan, 2014; Smith, 2012). Having grown up in a lower middle-class family in Al-Arroub refugee camp in the north of Hebron, I regularly visit my family in Palestine. Yet, being there for 'research' positioned me as someone with a 'gaze.' For example, once I was having breakfast with friends in Bethlehem. One of them sarcastically introduced me as "Hashem, here to study us for a few weeks." In Haifa, similar interactions occurred. I was once socializing with a group of artists at al-Rai café. They entered into a passionate discussion about the charged topic of cultural boycotts. Then, one of the artists, a comedian, turned around

to me and said sarcastically: “you are taking notes, aren’t you?” Both interactions were in a context where I was not explicitly there for ‘research’. We can grasp the validity and importance of this suspicion and hesitation towards ‘research’ and ‘researchers’ as a methodological practice only if we consider the historical and material nature of the coloniality of knowledge production vis-à-vis Palestine. I am a Palestinian student. But, in my research, I am tied to an elite Western institution that was and still is imbricated in colonial, racial, gendered and capitalist hierarchies that contain and perpetuate settler colonial and neocolonial orders (see Chantiluke et al, 2018). In this context, to question the politics of research—its motifs, methodologies, theories, funding—is one step towards decolonizing knowledge; to align this research with the unfolding struggles against settler colonialism globally and to fight for a return of and to the land is another.

But it is not only our positionality vis-à-vis the academy that influences our research on the field. Throughout my fieldwork, I experienced shifting modes of dis/identification that defined my access, or lack thereof, to spaces, persons, and ideas, along the lines of gender, class, and geographical location. In some cases, my Western education credentials facilitated my access to elitist cultural spaces in Ramallah and Haifa. This was not only my own perception, but that of people I spoke to. While conducting an interview with an administrator at a cultural institution in Ramallah, for example, I asked him about the class positionality of the audience that the institution caters to. He responded by arguing that this is a matter of ‘perception’. To counter my point, he constantly reminded me of my ‘elitist Western education.’ The reference to these credentials and my own positionality in this context worked to destabilize my attempt to stress the role of class in spatializing the cultural in Ramallah. The spatialization of a sense of the cultural rooted in NGOization and institutionalization is the byproduct of Palestinian

capitalist state-building and conditional international funding, which, as Rema Hammami (1995), argues emerged to "professionalize" Palestinian leftist politics at the cost of the suppression of alternative anti-capitalist and anti-colonial imaginaries.

Furthermore, he clearly addressed me as a member of the younger generation (*jil* in Arabic), which, according to his analysis, shares a disdain and a critical approach towards the 'non-governmental organizations' generation'—the one that saw in the NGOization and professionalization of Palestinian leftist politics following the first Palestinian uprising in 1987 and, more intensely after the Oslo Agreement in 1993, an arena of elaboration for their political and cultural projects. Thus, he identified me simultaneously according to the social and economic hierarchies in Palestine as well as my academic credentials; these modes of identification undergirded our conversation.

My access to rappers' studios and concerts was also mediated by power—being a heterosexual male with the skills to navigate these spaces enabled me access to all-male spaces. This explains why my initial entry into this cultural scene was often mediated by men. In Ramallah, most of my interviews were with male rappers, a clear limitation of the research project, which is a byproduct of my positionality as well as social relations of power that incipiently regulated my research practice. While it was my intention to interview female rappers and artists in the second stage of the fieldwork in Ramallah, my fieldwork was interrupted due to the global pandemic.

Being an 'insider' does not have an innate definition—it only helps us name our positionality vis-à-vis power relations on the field. In some interactions, I was perceived as an insider, in others as an outsider, and often as neither. These a priori categorizations that we are pushed to contend with in the Western academy work to curtail our enmeshment within power

relations in the 'field' and beyond. As Al-Hardan (2014) notes, to reductively think of one's positionality through this dichotomy "overlooks the coloniality of power in the world and the impact that this has on the structural relationships of power in the field" (p.65). Modes of differentiation multiply, and so do our modes of dis/identification. Rather than relying on a prefabricated dichotomy, the aim should be to constantly interrogate how power relations inform and undergird our research in its different stages.

Cultural geographer Don Mitchell (1995) notes that the 'outsider-insider' distinction reifies an essentialized, ontological notion of 'culture'. He critiques Clifford's concept of 'conjunctural spaces' and the idea of being 'caught between cultures'. He says that "'to be caught between cultures' insider/outsider and observer/observed dichotomies must be reinforced, in spite of the best intentions to do away with them." The outsider/insider distinction is therefore already implicated in a particular definition of culture that ascribes it an ontological status. To avoid the pitfalls of such a definition, Mitchell suggests that we attend to the "social processes of the social making of the idea the cultural" (p.108). In other ways, to use 'culture' as a "useful tool for arraying power, for organizing distinctions in the world" (p.106). The important question to ask becomes 'who reifies' culture? Who names it as such? And what are the different infrastructures—material, social, and political—that produce the idea of culture?

Moving away from the outsider/insider distinctions already point to the necessity for an alternative understanding of culture. To me, it became increasingly clear that choosing to research the cultural scenes in Ramallah and Haifa, for example, was already indicative of a certain understanding of the 'cultural' that privileged the middle-class. Locating the cultural was already imbricated in a hierarchy—or, in the words of Hall & Jefferson (1993), a 'scale of cultural power' (p.11). It, therefore, becomes pertinent to place this definition of the 'cultural'

in conversation with other definitions, and to trace its pronouncement of itself as 'cultural' as an effect of power, an endeavor I take up in the next section.

Locating the Cultural

The question of locating the cultural is a methodological one. My choice in the early stages of the research project to focus on the cities of Ramallah and Haifa, for example, was already indicative of a particular understanding of the cultural. My initial research proposal had been to understand the politics of cultural resistance in Palestinian refugee camps in the West Bank. In particular, I wanted to zoom in on the *Freedom Theater* in Jenin refugee camp and, by tracing its metamorphosis, map the power relations which are spatialized within and beyond the camp that work to limit the terrain of possibilities for the cultural. The theater's original and current moto was 'generating cultural resistance', though when I interviewed the director at the time, he stressed a shift away from 'cultural resistance' towards 'cultures of resistance.' This shift is reflective of wider political and socioeconomic changes through which a new relation between politics and culture has been mediated. Considering the ensuing analysis of cultural production in urban centers of Palestine, it can be understood as an attempt to rearticulate the role of the cultural in the West Bank due to the restructuring that has accompanied the intensified neoliberalization of the Palestinian economy in the years since the Oslo Agreement. What informed my research, then, was an attempt to move beyond the formulaic description of Palestinian modes of sociality and cultural life within the refugee camp as a priori resistant and agentive (see Ramadan, 2013; Tuasted, 2017). Due to political limitations, it became difficult to carry out this project. Nonetheless, since this early stage, it seemed to me that the cultural had to be intricately examined in its relation to structuring forces.

Since then, the project has developed to focus on the politics of cultural production in Palestinian cities. I trace what Don Mitchell (1995) calls "processes of social making of the idea of the cultural" (p.108) and what geographer Sharon Zukin (1991, p.260) calls the "critical infrastructures" (p.260) of the cultural. While I aim to emphasize class as a significant power relation in post-Oslo Palestine, I simultaneously approach it as enmeshed within other power relations, the background of which is an inherited settler colonial structure. The idea of culture becomes understood as implicated in both the spatialization of a settler colonial order (by, for example, turning a Palestinian village into an arts colony) and the negotiation of hegemonically demarcated cultural fields in the city by Palestinian artists. The aim of the analysis shifts from defining 'culture' and delineating its general parameters to understanding "how the idea of culture functions in a differentiated society to naturalize and smooth out differences in the name of a certain social order; how contradictions inherent within the various social systems that govern our lives are subsumed under the realm of culture; how they are figured to be naturalized, slowly changing, rooted in people themselves" (Mitchell, 1995, p.111).

Given the overdetermination of the settler colonial antagonism in discussions of cultural production in Palestine and the consequent characterization of the latter as 'resistance' (see El Zein, 2016; Taraki, 2008a; Toukan, 2021)[13], it seems particularly crucial to offer an analysis that takes into account the processes through which the 'cultural' is codified as such according to, and in relation to, the various power relations in Palestine. My interviews, theoretical framework, and the literature I rely upon, zoom in on a particular mode of cultural politics in post-Oslo Palestine. Its practitioners are mostly urban, from the middle-class stratums (middle,

[13] El Zein offers a compelling account of why metaphors of 'resistance' became dominant in discussions of Arab cultural productions in general, including Palestinian cultural productions, in the aftermath of the Arab Spring. See El Zein, R. (2016). *Performing El Rap El 'Arabi 2005-2015.*

upper), and are generally cognizant of their role as either cultural actants, artists, practitioners, or at least interested in the cultural. Their perspectives, which inform my research, are mediated by these positions vis-à-vis the wider power relations in Palestine. In this sense, the perspectives of this research cannot be generalized even on Ramallah and Haifa. The cities contain multiple, complex, and intermingled communities, cultures, class positionalities, neighborhoods, refugee camps, etc., that offer shifting and competing understandings and spatializations of the cultural. Nonetheless, by tracing how the cultural figures in these scenes, what power relations Palestinian artists contend with, and what political demands they are responding to, I offer a methodological approach—grounded in Cultural Studies, Urban Geography, and Cultural Geography—that is equally attuned to structures and subjectivities.

Furthermore, by tracing where the 'cultural' figures in the city, we should be attentive to what it excludes from its definition. In contrast to the alternative music artists I interviewed, for example, there are popular singers in Palestine, whose music is most present in weddings. While on fieldwork, I always reflected on the lack of pronouncement of their work as 'cultural.' In other words, they sing at weddings; they manipulate musical genres to cater to a wide audience; and their work is informed by a network of informal economy (for example, compensation payments for the singer and the band) and a critical infrastructure (recording, publicity, lighting). When attending one of the weddings in Al-Arroub refugee camp in northern Hebron, the popular *Diḥiyya* singer, Ayman al-Sab'awi, drew a large number of attendees. *Diḥiyya* is a Bedouin genre of music and dance that is practiced amongst Bedouins in al-Naqab region (the Negev desert), Jordan, and some areas in the Arab Gulf. In recent years, the genre has gained such popularity in Palestine that its music can be heard at most weddings.

From its earlier iterations, the genre has undergone major transformations, including the addition of the electronic keyboard. In this particular instance, the wedding was gender-segregated and the male singer sang exclusively to a large number of men and young boys. The *Diḥiyya* music is highly repetitive and catchy; the dance consists of two lines of men, dancing and clapping according to the beat. The family that threw this wedding was affluent, which was reflected in the staging of the party: the lighting, the stage, the drinks, the large audience, and the elaborate fireworks. Inviting this famous singer was already indicative of this affluence, as the cost of such an invitation can reach up to six-thousand dollars. The emphasis, it seems, is on the 'enjoyment' of the night—on the *'joie de vivre'* in Lisa Taraki's (2008a, p.17) words—rather than on upholding certain musical and lyrical forms of the popular song, or on articulating a political message of preserving popular elements of Palestinian culture. In its current iteration, *Diḥiyya* aims to cater to an audience of consumers. Here, too, the consumerism that is so characteristic of post-Oslo Palestine serves as the background against which this 'cultural solution' emerges, triggering one commentator to ask: 'has the popular song collapsed at the hands of the new artists?' (El Remawi, Ultra Palestine).

The notable friction here is that these singers and the spaces within which they perform do not introduce themselves as belonging to a particular *mash-had thaqafi* 'cultural scene', while the urban scenes I am concerned with do. I note this friction not to 'fix' the meaning of the cultural but to stress the middle-class character of the urban cultural scenes. The pronouncement of the 'cultural' is a particular urban middle class phenomenon. In his study of the Palestinian middle class, Palestinian sociologist Jamil Hilal (2006) argues that the middle class "resembled by its stratums of writers, educators, media people, TV presenters, political commentators, and journalists, is the most present in the public sphere in all its activities. This

is perhaps the reason why," he reminds us, "the middle class has been called '*al-tabaqa al-tharthara'* [Arabic for the blabbermouth class], for it uses verbal communication the most" (p.24). The Palestinian middle class, like the middle classes elsewhere, insists on honouring its cultural producers and practitioners. Hilal cites Khalil Sakakini Cultural Centre in Ramallah as an example of this middle-class phenomenon. The centre is named after the Palestinian Jerusalemite poet, scholar and Arab nationalist Khalil Sakakini. The middle-class is equipped with harnessing mediums of expression in the public sphere, which explains its ability to demarcate its 'cultural' realms and arenas. Rather than reducing the 'cultural' in Palestine to its various middle-class iterations, the ability of the middle class to undertake this demarcation should be in and of itself read as a reflection of its position within power hierarchies in Palestine and the exclusion and delegitimization of other forms of cultural production as marginal and insignificant.

Yet, the designation 'middle class' can be misleading in its homogenization. The denominator 'middle class' has been consistently used to describe the shifting realities in the West Bank, particularly Ramallah, and in Haifa (see Rabie, 2021; Abourahme, 2009; Karkabi, 2018). Rabie notes how the notion of 'middle class', as evoked in discussions of development in Palestine, often refers to either "the kinds of educated people who live mostly in Ramallah and who work in the PA or development sectors" or to an "aspirational middle class" (p.25)—namely, the imagined community that is targeted by projects of urban development, expansion, and renewal. Understood this way, class is not to be understood as a fixed demarcation, "but shifts in relation to wider social and political economic changes in Palestine, and through interventions like housing developments that presuppose, need, or cultivate certain forms of cultural values" (Rabie, 2021, p.25). These developments, and their re-making of the urban

fabrics in both Haifa and Ramallah, constitute and are constituted by a shifting (both real and aspirational) Palestinian middle class. The cultural values participate in demarcating both their classed positionality and, quite importantly, in making the urban fabric itself.

Thus, following Rabie (2021) and Hilal (2006), I methodologically move away from the temptation to unilaterally translate class position into a unified expression. Within the middle class in Palestine, there are varying strategies of negotiation for the political, socioeconomic, and cultural contradictions that permeate their livelihoods. In the same study, which was conducted between 2003 and 2004, Hilal locates the middle class in the expanded sector of those employed by governmental and non-governmental organizations ('al-muwaẓafin', Arabic for employees) in Palestine, as well as specialists and artisans who own their means of production (such as doctors). He is careful to note, however, that this position of the middle class is only as seen from a structural perspective—from the position of these stratums vis-à-vis the relations of production within Palestinian society. This structural position does not translate unilaterally in a unified cultural response. He says:

> Within the middle class, there coexists multiple cultural modes that cannot be reduced to one statement—such as the statement that the social position of the 'employees' (al-muwaẓafin) prevents their identification with the workers, or that the absence of ownership (of relations of production) leads, by necessity, to the cultivation of a proletarian, class-based consciousness (Hilal, 2006, p.24).

To presume that the middle-class has a unified statement on the unfolding realities in Palestine is a tacit acceptance of a classical Marxist thesis of linear correspondence between the 'economic base' and consciousness. The shortcomings of such an approach have already been critically elaborated by—among others—the Birmingham School of Cultural Studies (see Hall, 2016). Hall & Jefferson (1993) argue that "developed and organized revolutionary working-class consciousness is only one, among many such possible responses, and a very special ruptural one at that. It has been misleading to try to measure the whole spectrum of strategies in

the class in terms of this one ascribed form of consciousness, and to define everything else as a token of incorporation" (p.45). In a similar vein, we cannot presume that the 'middle class' names a unified position that produces a homogenous social and cultural response to wider structural contradictions.

Hall and Jefferson (1993) advocate that we read cultures "along the scale of cultural power" (p.13), thus placing the production of culture along the socioeconomic and political relations. It is this 'scale of cultural power' that I find compelling and relevant to the analysis of cultural productions in post-Oslo Palestine. While my research focuses in particular on 'cultural productions', which represent a facet of the cultures produced differentially, it nonetheless approaches Palestinian culture through this scale. The question of 'who reifies' culture, as suggested by Mitchell above, can be concretely answered by an emphasis on the 'scale of cultural power' along which cultural productions are produced and ranked.

The analysis of this scale, however, cannot be reduced to the level of class, given the dominant role that the Israeli settler colonial order plays in Palestine. Tawil-Souri (2012) explains that "the spatial-political conditions of Palestinians function similarly to the 'base' and do in many ways determine the 'superstructure' of the cultural realm" (p.154). Her formulation is an invitation to replace the classical Marxist notion of the base and the superstructure—the former referring to the relations of production within society, and the latter referring to the juridico-political institutions, the state, the law as well as the ideological aspects that condition forms of social consciousness—with a base that names the colonial-spatial-political relations of production. While I agree with Tawil-Souri's insight, her replacing of the base-as-relations-of-production with the base-as-colonial-relations reproduces the reductive problematic of 'which power comes first' that classical Marxism introduced. Instead, following Coulthard (2014), I

argue that "the colonial relation should not be understood as a primary locus or "base" from which these other forms of oppression flow, but rather as the inherited background field within which market, racist, patriarchal, and state relations converge to facilitate a certain effect of power" (p.14). Coulthard's formulation highlights the constitutive nature of the colonial relation while maintaining an intersectional approach to power that does not simply replace the classic Marxian base with another one.

The question of locating the cultural already points us to various levels of mediation that move beyond the restricting binary of settler colonial oppression and Palestinian resistance and towards a more complex understanding of Palestinian modes of sociality and cultural formations. By constantly interrogating what I mean by the cultural and where I locate it, I have been able to approach a theory of the cultural as mediated (not necessarily fully determined) by the wider relations of power. These power relations determine and limit the possibilities of articulation for the cultural, but they do not fully determine the content of cultural struggles in Palestine. Although I have shown in this section the importance of thinking about cultural production along a scale of cultural power and as enmeshed within wider power relations, I have not discussed my methodological approach to understanding how Palestinian artists negotiate these power relations. In the next section, I offer brief methodological notes on the relationship between arts, subjectivity and subjectivation.

Subjects and Subjectivation

The thesis of arts-as-resistance should not be simply inverted into its opposite: arts-as-structured. We should be careful not to lapse into reducing Palestinian arts into mere reflections of structural relations. To presume so gives the impression that Palestinian artists and their work merely reflect the workings of the structuring forces. In his article the "Pitfalls of

Palestiniology," the eminent Palestinian intellectual Ibrahim Abu-Lughod warned against the tendency to narrate Palestinian modes of social and cultural life merely through the encounter with British imperialism and Zionism. Such an approach risks an epistemic erasure of the complex modes of Palestinian sociality. In Abu-Lughod's (1981) words, "we must surely be aware that Palestinians led some kind of life, educated themselves for purposes other than fighting Zionists, composed works of art and literature, transformed their views of themselves and the world, created an economy, loosened some social bonds, created others, built houses, farmed their lands, and exported their produce and so forth" (p.404). This does not mean that the entanglement with British imperialism and Zionist settler colonialism should not be intricately examined. Rather, it means that such an examination should not reduce Palestinians to a mere effect of these structures—as the subject to be erased and expelled, or as the subject that is constantly and steadfastly resisting without contradictions.

Abu-Lughod's observations point to two questions: the first relates to how we write Palestinian modes of political, social and cultural life in the midst of colonial management and settler colonial erasure; the second to how we write Palestinian subjectivity. While it would be reductive to study class relations in Palestine without examining their entanglement with the British colonial and Israeli settler colonial structures, it would be equally reductive to presume that these relations are fully determined by these structures, or that class relations fully determine the content of the political, social, and cultural struggles that Palestinians partake in. My aim in this research is to show these entanglements and their articulations figure in modes of urban and cultural production. Doing so guards against the tendency to neglect power relations and their determining role vis-à-vis Palestinian arts, as well as the inverted tendency to endow Palestinian artists with an a priori resistant capacity that conceals, rather than reveals,

these power relations (see Toukan, 2021). It also disrupts tendences within urban studies to approach arts in the city as always and merely subsumed within logics of economic production and consumption.

I read Abu-Lughod's observations as an invitation to thoroughly read these entanglements without reducing Palestinian modes of cultural and social life in the city to a mere, constant and consistent reaction to the colonial and settler colonial encounters. In other words, it is not true that in contexts of settler colonialism, as Deborah Bird Rose or Patrick Wolfe have variably put it, "all the native has to do is stay at home" (cited in Wolfe, 2006, p.387). How we stay at home also matters, for it is not only where the alternative visions for liberation and the various articulations of resistance take place but also where the modes of colonial cooptation, recognition, and disciplining unfold. Both are equally important to assess, for from their assessment we can identify the 'cracks' in the structures and the caveats of the unfolding anti-colonial potentialities across the political, socioeconomic, and cultural fields.

The second question that remains to be answered revolves around how—given all these structural constraints—can we write Palestinian subjectivity. How can we grasp the modes of articulation by Palestinian artists after having considered their position in relation to structures?

If we accept that one's position is determined by structures only in the sense that their possibilities are limited according to said structures, then it becomes clear that there is room for a whole range of social, political, and cultural resolutions within, against, and beyond these structures (see Hall et al, 1993; Hall, 2016). These resolutions may include cooptation, negotiation, subversion, or collective resistance. We should not arrive at these resolutions structurally and in a formalist manner, as is suggested by Settler Colonial Studies, where the 'native' is to be erased by the 'settler,' and all the native has to do is stay. Rather, we have to

understand the concrete historical conditions in which these resolutions are articulated, the mapping of the different power relations that limit their articulation and the modes of consciousness of the subjects and their capacities for resistance. The 'agency' of the Palestinian native is not a priori resistant, by virtue of their structural position vis-à-vis the settler.

Throughout my research, I have aimed to move away from the temptation to predetermine what 'agency' and 'resistance' may mean in the context of intensified settler colonial violence, which explains the emphasis on processes and practices throughout the dissertation. The lexicons of 'resistance and agency' can be helpful, but they have the tendency, as Alexander Wehelieye (2014) argues, "to blind us, whether through strenuous denials or exalted celebrations of their existence, to the manifold occurrences of freedom in zones of indistinction." Following Avery Gordon, then, I approach agency as complex, vouched in a complex personhood, which means that "all people (albeit in specific forms whose specifity is sometimes everything) remember and forget, are beset by contradiction, and recognize and misrecognize themselves and others" (Gordon, 2008, p.5).

In the interviews I conducted with the artists, and in my transcription of them, I paid particular attention to how the various relations of power in Palestine inform their understanding of their position as artists and cultural practitioners. The themes I explore in this thesis directly emerge from these conversations: settler colonial dispossession and fragmentation, class relations in an intensified neoliberal order, urban renewal and expansion and their impact on the possibilities for the articulation of the cultural, and finally, social and political movements and the demands they differentially make on the Palestinian cultural fields. These were themes that recurred throughout the interviews, and I therefore found it necessary to explore them in depth and in separate chapters.

In an interview with a Palestinian rapper in Ramallah, he noted that many researchers approach Palestinian music by focusing "merely on its lyrical content, not its shifting form" (Interview with Author, 2019). He noted that the 'sound design,' which is an essential ingredient of music, is often neglected, though, he argued, it can be approached as a political choice in and of itself. He even argued that Ramallah's rap has its own sound qualities—different even from other cities in Palestine. By focusing on power relations and subjectivity, this research admittedly neglects these important aspects. Building upon the expanding field of Sonic Studies, there is room to explore them in future research (see, for example, Goodman, 2016 and James 2020). Tracing how the forms of various Palestinian cultural productions have shifted, not only in terms of written and spoken content, but also sonically, theatrically, and choreographically may reveal profound insights about the intricate relationship between cultural forms and their contexts. In its focus on the various levels of mediation between the structural and the cultural, this research project does not uptake these questions. However, it does offer a methodological approach of linking the structural and the cultural that may be expanded and stretched to trace the historically determined transformations and shifts in cultural forms. These shifts and transformations in design also do not occur in a vacuum, and are contingent upon, among many other factors, the circulation of ideas and skills, market relations, and differential access to equipment and instruments.

Conclusion

How we conceptualize our positionality in the field as researchers often aligns with how we approach our objects and subjects of research. Research is a 'site of struggle'—not only in how our knowledge production is placed in relation to systems of domination, but also in how, what, and why we research. In this chapter, I have endeavored to show the multiple ways in

which my positionality figured or not during the research project. I have shown how the outsider/insider dichotomy works to obscure the power relations within which we are enmeshed within the academy as well as the communities we research. I have also shown how this dichotomy rests on a particular, essentializing notion of culture. To depart from this notion, I methodologically follow and adapt some of the advances made in Cultural Geography and Cultural Studies to trace the 'idea of culture' in the Palestinian city as an 'arraying of power', i.e., to take the 'cultural' as a condensed site for interlocking relations of power. Approached this way, the multiple forms of cultural resolutions that artists offer to structural contradictions can be accounted for without a priori determining how these resolutions should look like. A rigorous assessment of power relations and structures is achieved, without reducing Palestinian artists and their multiple, lived resolutions to mere reflections of such structures.

Chapter One

The Intertwined Histories of Haifa and Ramallah

If a house burns down, it's gone, but the place—the picture of it—stays, and not just in my rememory, but out there in the world. What I remember is a picture floating around out there outside my head. I mean, even, if I don't think it, even if I die, the picture of what I did, or knew, or saw is still out there. Right in the place where it happened. – Toni Morrison, 2004, p.35.



Figure 6. Burj 15. Home of Palestinian refugee Abed El Latif Kanafani. It has been turned into Israeli law offices. Photograph by Sama Haddad.

On a cold day in January 2020, we drove around the city of Haifa.[14] We first went to Wadi Salib, which stands in the eastern part of the city with old homes—some neglected, others renovated—that belonged to Palestinian refugees before 1948. In Al Burj neighborhood stood the houses of Abdellatif Kanafani and Abed Elrahman El Haj (mayor of Haifa, 1870-1946) and other old houses surrounding them. The house of the Kanafanis (Figure. 6)—appropriated by the Israeli state in 1948, sold to the state-owned housing company Amidar in 1953 and

[14] That day, I was taken on a tour around Haifa by Palestinian geographer Yara Sa'di-Ibraheem and her partner, Hisham, whom I would like to thank for their knowledge and time.

then to four real estate companies in recent years (Sa'di-Ibraheem, 2021, p.698)—has been renovated and turned into law offices. The old and partially destroyed shops below the houses, opposite to the newly-built Haifa Court House, had a large poster in Hebrew by Ilan Pivko architects, showing the vision for the renovation of the shops (see Figure. 7). The old fronts would be polished and renovated, and on top of them, large 'modern' residential places would be built. We then drove to Yafa (Jaffa) street, where a similar trend of renovation and gentrification was happening. Newly-opened Israeli stores with Hebrew fronts. Closed shops. New residential and commercial buildings. These are all part of market-led, municipality-facilitated efforts to reshape what remains of Haifa.



Figure 9. Shop fronts in Wadi Salib, and the Ilan Pivko architects sign showing the planned buildings. Photography by the author.

While walking around Haifa, I was reminded of Toni Morrison's novel *Beloved.* In it, she speaks of places that are still there, floating, even if they are burnt down. The picture of Wadi Salib is still floating not only in the rememory of Palestinian refugees and their descendants, but also *out there*. A house that remains vacant, neglected and decaying names a plunder not yet completed. A house that is renovated names an urban technology of layered dispossession, another rehearsal of a dispossession that started in 1948 and that targets the picture floating out there. The dispossession of the Palestinian refugee in 1948 and the current targeting of their houses by settler colonial urban technologies are what I call 'differentiated practices of dispossession.' They occur as articulations within particular

historical circumstances, whereby in the latter, contemporary moment (unlike in 1948), the market plays a more direct role in dispossession. In the contemporary historical conjuncture of post-Oslo, Palestinian modes of cultural production in the two cities of Haifa and Ramallah occur in parallel with a rearticulation between, on the one hand, settler colonialism and dispossession, and capital on the other. It is my aim in this chapter to trace how the differentiated practices of dispossession and racialization are condensed into settler colonial racialized and classed taxonomies of the urban that structurally limit the horizon of possibilities for Palestinian arts in the city.

The systemic theft of Palestinian land, homes and wealth in 1948—meticulously documented by Michael Fischbach (2003)—was the prerequisite for the emergence of the settler as property-owning, i.e., as a proper subject. Thus, settler colonialism names a socio-spatial structure of dispossession and racialization that is foundational to global capitalist modes of accumulation (Lloyd and Wolfe, 2016). This structure consists of a "set of technologies" (la paperson[15], 2017, p.67) sustained by legal practices (property law), economic practices (conquest of labour), urban practices (racialized segregation and dispossession), discursive practices and artistic practices (the artists' colony) that are condensed into systems of rules that *differntially* enable the dispossession of the indigenous. As technologies, they "evolve and spread," so that "[t]echnologies of land dispossession are in wider circulation today even in places where we do not see white settler emplacement" (la paperson, 2017, p.65).[16] There is a

[15] *A Third University is Possible* is published by la paperson, the avatar name for K. Wayne Yang (2017).

[16] Seen this way, in the particular context of today's North America, the triad of settler-native-slave does not name identities, but a "figurative shorthand" that describes particular relations of power to the land. They represent 'sites of exception' that bring to the forefront the foundational logics of the settler colony. Thus, the settler is not an identity but an "idealized juridical space of exceptional rights" (la paperson, 2017, p.86); the native is not an identity but "a world to be obliterated" (p.88); the slave is not an identity, but "an ontology of total fungibility and unending property constitutive of the very world order of settler colonialism" (p.91). These technologies evolve, spread, and circulate, so that to be subjected to anti-Indian technologies you do not need to be indigenous. One of the major pitfalls of the settler-native-slave triad, la paperson notes, is its untranslatability to contexts outside of

pertinent conceptual move here away from an identity-political analysis that posits a well-defined colonizer versus a colonized towards an analysis of technologies that interrogates how particular constellations of power come into being and are sustained by particular practices.

In this chapter, I weave together an analysis of how technologies of power permeate the production of the urban in the two cases Palestinian city-forms of Haifa and Ramallah. Given my focus on the production of the urban and its enmeshment within historically contingent political, economic, cultural and juridical relations of power, I trace the shifting Israeli strategies towards Palestinian urbanity since 1948 to the present. The overarching question that concerns me is: how is the settler colony productive of particular kinds of urbanism and what are the economic, juridical and cultural socio-spatial processes that sustain and enhance this mode of production in the particular post-Oslo historical conjuncture? Furthermore, what does an emphasis on the coalescence of the urban with other socio-spatial processes tell us about urbanization more generally?

Thinking through Stuart Hall's notion of 'articulation' as a 'more-than-urban' method, I look at the differentiated geographies of Ramallah and Haifa in order to argue that the Israeli state's reliance on market logics across the two Palestinian geographies of Aradi '48 ('48 territories) and Aradi '67 ('67 territories)[17] in the post-Oslo conjuncture remains hindered by a particular colonial and racial edifice. This edifice rests on the 'set of technologies' underpinning the triad of Ashkenazi (European) settler-Arab Jew-Palestinian indigenous. I make the claim that Ramallah and Haifa highlight the necessity of bringing urban theory in conversation with

North America. In my ensuing analysis, I choose to expose the limits of this untranslatability by reading the specific constellation of technologies that the triad of Ashkenazi settler-Arab Jew-Palestinian native names. I conceive of this triad as a 'figurative shorthand' that describes particular and determined relations to the land in the context of Palestine.

[17] Recall that Aradi '48 refers to Palestinian territories occupied in 1948 and Aradi '67 refers to the territories occupied in 1967, including the West Bank, the Gaza Strip, and East Jerusalem.

cultural studies and settler colonial studies to delineate how urbanization is *one* of various socio-spatial processes. I read the story of urbicide in Haifa and the gradual transformation of Ramallah into a Palestinian urban centre through this framework, before moving to discuss the genealogies of the Palestinian middle class in the two cities. The overall aim of the chapter is not merely to narrate the histories of the two cities, but to trace how a (classed) Palestinian urbanity continues to articulate itself against the backdrop of overarching socio-spatial, settler colonial dialectics of dispossession and racialization. This sets the scene for the upcoming chapters and my discussion of the shifting articulations of both Israeli and Palestinian artistic practices.

Articulations of the Urban

Stuart Hall's (1985) notion of articulation (via Althusser, 1970 and 2014) challenges both the orthodox Marxist tendency to read the different levels of determination within a particular social formation as having a one-to-one correspondence and the opposite Foucauldian tendency (the noncorrespondence thesis) that slips into a theory incapable of theorizing the "unevenness of a complex unity, or even the 'unity in difference' of a complex structure" (p.92). While Marxists overemphasize the correspondence between different levels of determination, Foucault presumes a noncorrespondence to the extent of losing from sight the *determinate* nature of the social formation. This is why Stuart Hall (1985) stresses that a social formation is a 'structure in dominance' (i.e., determinate) that has "certain distinct tendencies; it has a certain configuration; it has a definite structuration" (p.2). Thus, Hall (1985) defines articulation as a:

> connection or link that is not necessarily given in all cases, as a law or fact of life, but which requires particular conditions of existence to appear at all, which has to be positively sustained by specific processes, which is not eternal but has constantly to be renewed, which can under some circumstances disappear or be overthrown, leading to the dissolving of old linkages and the forging of new connections—rearticulations. It is also important that an articulation between

> different practices does not mean that they become identical or that the one is dissolved into the other. Each retains its distinct determinations and conditions of existence. However, once an articulation is made, the two practices can function together, not as an "immediate identity"… but as distinctions within a unity (p.113).

Hall's notion of articulation stresses the determinate nature of the link between the different practices that may be 'condensed' into systems of rules. In other words, there is neither a guarantee that the ideology of a class corresponds to its position in the relations of production, nor a guarantee that such a correspondence will necessarily not happen. An articulation is therefore not inevitable and is contingent, which crucially, as Bhandar (2018) argues, "reveals the potential for political transformation and rupture" (p.14). This is what Hall (1985) terms the "open endedness of practice and struggle" or an "articulation in terms of effects which does not necessarily correspond to its origins" (p.95). In short, rather than interrogating power relations through tracing their origins, we may interrogate *how* certain 'sets of technologies' operate to produce particular discursive and material effects. In this sense, the articulation between the Israeli state, the market, the cultural, the urban and the settler subject is not guaranteed a priori, but is dependent on particular conditions of existence, has to be constantly renewed, and seeks new connections and rearticulations.

From this angle, the Israeli state can be understood as an apparatus that—in an open-ended struggle—brings together discourses and practices (set of technologies) into a complex structure of dispossession and racialization that aims to sustain the Ashkenazi settler-Arab Jew-Palestinian native triad. The articulation between *different* practices (e.g., urban, cultural, juridical or economic) produces structures that do not form an 'immediate identity' but should be seen as 'distinctions within a unity' (p.113) with different levels of mediation. The formation of the Israeli juridical sphere and its concomitant and co-constitutive formation of racial

subjectivities were—and continue to be—reliant on differentiated practices that are constantly translated into a *racial and classed taxonomy of the urban*.

The recasting of land as property plays a central role in these practices of dispossession and racialization. Property laws are predicated on the formation of a racial subject, a relation that Bhandar's (2018) 'racial regimes of ownership' names (p.2). Her formulation stresses the co-constitutive nature of property and subjectivity: not only "was property law the primary means of appropriating land and resources, but property ownership was central to the formation of the proper legal subject in the political sphere" (p.4). The colonial encounter produced a juridical sphere that remains intimately tied to a racial concept of the human that differentially attributes value to the lives of particular groups while excluding others.

Israeli settler colonialism, she reminds us, offers an apt example of the flexible and contingent nature of articulations. As an ethnonationalist project intent on maximizing Jewish control over the land, the Israeli state relies on a "combination of older and newer rationales for appropriation and ownership, coupled with a range of other legal orders including military, land use planning and criminal laws" (p.24). Even when Palestinians are able to provide documented proof (conforming to European standards) that they own the land, even in the contemporary context of neoliberal capitalism and the primacy it places on 'the market' "the imperatives of Israeli ethnonationalism compete with and hamper the imposition of mechanisms that a rational market in land requires" (p.83). Rather than demonstrating a teleological story where the newer replaces the older, Israeli settler colonialism represents a telling case that demonstrates how modes of appropriation and dispossession *nonlinearly* adapt themselves to the "imperatives of

colonial domination" (p.14).[18] These shifting juridical forms are mediated through the material and discursive urban fabric of the city-form, producing racialized and classed taxonomies.

The Israeli 'racial regimes of ownership' sustains a dispossessing and racializing mode of urban production that continues to precipitate urban taxonomies in Haifa and Ramallah. The urban mode of production reproduces itself through the inequalities propagated by said taxonomies. By intricately examining the 'concrete' (i.e., lived and embodied within particular historical conditions) of technologies of power in these two cities, I follow other urban studies scholars in moving away from a limited focus on 'urbanization' as 'capitalist agglomeration'[19] towards a transdisciplinary approach that conceives of the 'urban' as an 'articulating principle' that is contingent "on the specific historical conjuncture and social formation in which it takes shape" (Zeiderman, 2018, p.1122; see also Jazeel, 2018 and Goonewardena, 2015).

The focus on contingency and the 'concrete' in history moves away from what Angel and Wachsmuth (2015) call '*methodological cityism*,' which entails "an analytical privileging, isolation and perhaps naturalization of the city in studies of urban processes where the non-city may also be significant" (p.377). But, as Jazeel (2018, p.406) argues, this critique of 'methodological cityism' leaves intact a 'methodological urbanization' that reduces the *planet* to an urban analytical gaze, thereby eliding other (historical, juridical, textual, cultural, etc.) socio-spatial dialectics. Instead, viewing the city as a particular form or 'thing' and the 'urban' as *one* process enmeshed within a plethora of socio-spatial processes helps us see the 'urban'

[18] Bhandar's (2018) aim is to challenge the developmental notion of linear progress from 'possession' to 'land by title' in the settler colony. In Palestine, physical dispossession remains constitutive, even when title to the land "in the older form of deeds should provide the basis for the settling and registration of title" (p.111).
[19] A prime example of this understanding of urbanization as 'capitalist agglomeration' is Neil Brenner's (2015) explanation of Lefebvre's 'urban revolution', in which he argues that "the development, intensification, and worldwide expansion of capitalism produces a vast, variegated terrain of urban(ized) conditions that include yet progressively extend beyond the zones of agglomeration that have long monopolized the attention of urban researchers" (p.16). Such a definition incorporates the non-urban only insofar as the latter will soon be 'world-encompassed' by urbanization.

and the 'global' as "theoretical questions, practical questions, political questions, economic questions, legal questions, aesthetic questions and moral questions, none of which is reducible to any other and all of which fundamentally shape social life" (Zeiderman, 2018, p.1123). The *relational* understanding of the two cities and other non-urban geographies that I am suggesting here is inflected by cultural and historical theories and methods that stress the contingency of the 'urban,' that take the non-urban as a relevant site of analysis (see Chapter Two) and that take the relation between the two (urban and non-urban) as co-constitutive.

Like the juridical, Zeiderman reminds us, "concepts like the 'urban' are never only theoretical considerations, but 'articulating principles' of social formations, producing both discursive and material effects and possessing social, cultural and political lives of their own (p.1123). This highlights the question of the urban as one of *method* rather than of codifying a systematic theoretical framework that can encompass the ever-multiplying forms of urbanization in our so-called 'urban age.'[20] The reproduction of the urban fabrics of Ramallah and Haifa under Israeli settler colonialism relies on urban but also cultural, juridical, political and economic 'articulating principles.'

In thinking about the articulations between settler colonialism and urbanization, geographers have begun in recent years to draw on formulations from the burgeoning field of Settler Colonial Studies in order to identify the logics of power specific to what they term the 'settler colonial city.' Human geographer Hugil (2017) defines the settler colonial city in juxtaposition with the 'colonial city,' which has long been theorized in geographic literature as an urban landscape developed in the 'periphery' in order to serve the interests of the metropolitan 'center' (Blomley, 2004; Hugil, 2017; Home, 2013; and Simon, 1984). He argues

[20] This refers to the widespread perception that there are more people living in the city than in rural areas.

that the settler colonial city differs from the colonial city along three axes, which I summarize as spatial, temporal and political (p.11). Spatially, the settler colonial city serves settler populations rather than a metropolitan center. Temporally, it is constantly and directly determined by the colonial relation and the latter cannot be relegated to the past, for it continues into the present. Politically, it primarily excludes, erases, and dispossesses, rather than exploits, the Indigenous.

Hugil's theorization of the 'settler colonial city' fits within a wider tendency in urban studies since the late twentieth century that focuses its analytical gaze on "city-like" settlements (Brenner, 2015, p.14) and that 'prefixes' city with a modifying term (e.g., settler colonial)"use[s] a modifying term [i.e., 'settler colonial']… to demarcate its research terrain as a subset of putatively more general sociospatial form, "the" city" (p.15). Here, Brenner has in mind a reductive 'methodological cityism' that, in its attempt to pluralize by prefixing, ends up reifying one of urban studies' primary objects of inquiry—namely the 'city.' But there is also another limitation to Hugil's reification of a 'settler colonial city', which is that it does not account for the contingent nature of dispossession. If the settler colonial city is distinguished by its intent to dispossess and dispossession is a historically specific and socially embedded socio-spatial process, then the 'settler colonial city' is a particular sociospatial form that presents itself as worthy of reification. Thus, it names an urban technology of power that negates the continuous presence of the Indigenous, constantly reshaping, upending, contesting or negotiating the dominant settler colonial relation (see Simpson and Bagelman, 2018, p.559).

In the context of some Palestinian cities occupied in 1948, including Haifa, there remains a Palestinian urban presence contesting—albeit in fragmentary and contradictory ways—the coercive spatialization of the settler colony in city-form. While in Haifa the

neoliberal modes of accumulation are directly facilitated by Israeli state and capital, in Ramallah they are enacted under military occupation and a dependent capitalist, Palestinian nationalist bourgeoisie order (sustained by international aid and the Israeli settler state). These articulations complicate the limited categorization 'settler colonial city' and point to multifarious socio-spatial processes at work—all at once—that it fails to name. Rather than being an engulfing and all-encompassing order, the 'urban' is an 'articulating principle' within these wider socio-spatial processes. This already points to the necessity of engaging with the 'urban' beyond the limited lens of 'capitalist agglomeration' in order to account for these other socio-spatial processes within and beyond the city.

The alienation of Palestinians from their land in the juridical sphere occurred simultaneously with a series of other processes—both material and discursive—that institutionalized certain ways of life and modes of subjectivity that privilege the settler. The urban transformation of the two cities of Haifa and Ramallah, as I show in the next two sections, are contingent upon and reproductive of these processes.

Urban Technologies of Dispossession

> The struggle for the redemption of the land means simply this—the liberation of the land from the hand of the stranger, from the chains of wilderness; the struggle for its conquest by settlement; and last but not least, the redemption of the settler, both as a human being and as a Jew, through his deep attachment to the soil he tills (cited in Fischbach, 2003, p.70; original, Weitz, 1950, p.6).

Yosef Weitz was a Russian settler, who came to Palestine in 1908 and began working with the Jewish National Fund (JNF)—the fund established in 1901 and endowed with the mandate to acquire land in Palestine—in 1918 (Fischbach, 2003, p.5). In 1932, he became the

director of the JNF's Land Development Division. In the wake of the dispossession of Palestinians from their homeland in 1948, Weitz insisted on settling expropriated refugee lands to ensure the future of the political Zionist venture.

In the quote above, Weitz posits the 'redemption of the land' as a 'liberation' from 'the chains of wilderness.' Now that Palestinians have been dispossessed from their land and the lands lay in the possession of the Israeli provisional government, Weitz was pushing for the settlement of arriving settlers on the land to expedite the process of its physical and legal expropriation, i.e., its transformation into property held legally by the emerging Zionist state. Thus, the 'redemption of the land' meant nothing less than the 'condensing' of practices of dispossession of the Palestinian 'stranger' into a sustainable social formation with juridical, economic, political, cultural and—I would add—urban 'articulating principles' in order to ensure the continuity of Zionist settlement. In other words, it meant the alienation (the *estrangement*) of the Palestinian from their property (in its multiple juridical and non-juridical forms) through dispossession and the concomitant condensing of these practices of dispossession into systems of rules that privilege certain groups in their legal entitlement to said property. Thus, to Weitz, the redemption of the land was intimately tied to the 'redemption of the settler, both as a human being and as a Jew.' The subjectivity of the settler (the human) is contingent upon their ownership of the land, what Weitz refers to—euphemistically and in parlance reminiscent of early Zionist emphasis on cultivation of the land as the proper mode of settlement (Shafir, 1996)—as the settler's 'deep attachment to the soil he tills.'

In this sense, the dispossession of 750,000 Palestinian refugees from their lands and homes in 1948 was the prerequisite for the emergence of what Bhandar (2018) calls a 'racial regime of ownership' in the settler colony that attaches the attainment of legal property to a

racial hierarchy, which in turn posits the 'wilderness' of the Palestinian 'stranger' as its fundamental other. Bhandar (2018) argues that the "evolution of modern property laws and justification for private property ownership were articulated through the attribution of value to the lives of those defined as having the capacity, will, and technology to appropriate, which in turn was contingent on prevailing concepts of race and racial difference" (p.4). In other words, Israeli settler colonialism was and remains predicated on the differentiated attribution of value that renders settlers as proper subjects of history—the human being, the cultivator, the Jew—and indigenous Palestinians and their ways of life as outside history. This settler-indigenous antagonism is central to the workings of modes of urban production across historic Palestine.

During the British Mandate in Palestine, the Jewish neighborhoods of Hadar Hacarmel, Bat Galim, and upper Carmel sprang up in Haifa (Seiklay 1995, p.17).[21] They did not only constitute separate physical neighborhoods, but also separate architectural styles, neighborhood and electoral systems, street names, and, gradually, a relentless attempt to create an exclusive economic sector for Jewish settlers. They were meant to serve as a nucleus for the future majority-Jewish city. It was not until 1948 for these exclusionary urban technologies to become condensed into systems of rules that ensured, first, the dispossession of the refugee, and second, the alienation of the refugee from their land through a settler social formation. It is this particular shift to dispossession as *constitutive* that distinguishes modes of urban production in the 'settler colonial city' from those in the 'colonial city'—settlers aim to settle and to achieve that they *need* to dispossess. And that mode of dispossession is crosscut by class, race and gender.

[21] While Seikaly notes that the first neighbourhood of Herzelia emerged in 1907, Kidron (2016) states the neighborhood sprang up in 1907 and he substantiated the claim by a photograph of the neighborhood from the Maston Collection in the Library of Congress. See Kidron, Anat. 2016.

The ‘racial regimes of ownership’ of the Israeli state created an urban taxonomy that pushed Palestinians, both Christians and Muslims, into Wadi Nisnas under military control; placed Arab Jewish settlers in their ‘natural place’ within Palestinian properties; and naturalized the privileged presence of European Jews in newly established neighborhoods, such as Hadar HaCarmel. In this sense, the Ashkenazi settler—Arab Jew settler—Palestinian native is a triad that names a set of technologies that becomes articulated under particular historical circumstances into a determinate socio-spatial formation of dispossession.

In 1948, following the establishment of the Israeli state, 60,000[22] Palestinians were dispossessed from their homes in Haifa. To ensure the alienation of refugees from their land and lay its possession over it, the newly-established Israeli state relied on strategies of erasure and exclusion in the juridical, economic, political and cultural spheres that simultaneously became materially translated into the urban fabric of the city. Between May and June of 1948, David Ben Gurion, the first Israeli Prime Minister and Minister of Defence, issued an order to demolish the Old City of Haifa. The demolition was based on British urban plans and surveys, particularly the 1947 plan, which called for a complete demolition in order “to clear the slums, along rebuilding that would ‘enable property owners to develop their properties on up-to-date lines’” (Kolodney and Kallus, 2008, p.337).

While the demolition never came to fruition under British rule due to the high costs of reimbursing property owners, it inaugurated Israeli control over the city. In the words of Uriel Sharon, Head of the Municipal Development Unit, at a 1951 open competition to design downtown Haifa: “Only with the evacuation of Haifa’s Arabs after the city was conquered was

[22] While some Zionist sources claim that many of the Palestinians who fled Haifa were told to do so by the Arab Higher Committee, Khalidi’s account contests that, showing that there is no historical evidence to substantiate this claim. Khalidi, Walid. 1988. “Plan Dalet: Master Plan for the Conquest of Palestine.” See also Khalidi, Walid. 2008. “The Fall of Haifa Revisited.”

a radical solution possible" (Sharon as cited in Kolodney and Kallus, p.339). I read this British colonial failure at erasure and the subsequent success of these plans under the Israeli settler colonial order as emblematic of their interconnected yet differentiated modes of rule: the British mode of rule was one of extractive control and management, while the Israeli is one of dispossession; dispossession is foundational to both, though in the settler colony it becomes constitutive of the socio-spatial order, *demanding the erasure of the Indigenous to put the settler in their place.*

The urban technology of erasure occurred simultaneously with juridical practices that aimed at alienating Palestinian refugees from their land. Following 1948, the Israeli state devised multiple legal strategies to expropriate Palestinian land and dwellings. In the early stages, such strategies had an ad hoc character and relied on military and governmental committees and civilian bodies. As the state apparatus was consolidated, these strategies were condensed into juridical systems of rules that were simultaneously translated—materially—into taxonomized urban fabrics (see Fischbach, 2003). A series of laws were thus instituted to ensure the permanent alienation of the refugee from their property, the most sweeping of which is the Emergency Regulations (Absentees' Property) issued in December 2, 1948, which declared Palestinian refugees 'absentees' whose property could be seized by the state (Fischbach, 2003; Robinson, 2013). These regulations further stipulated that "the state could seize the property of any absentee and turn it over to a new office that replaced the Custodian of Abandoned Property: the Custodian of Absentee Property" (Fischbach, 2003, p.22). Following this, the custodian "found himself the largest legal urban landlord in Israel after 1948" (p.29). In Haifa alone, the number of urban 'abandoned dwellings', including in Wadi Salib, amounted to 14,000 (p.30) in

which 40,000 Jewish settlers were settled (p.11). In the rest of the country, 250,000 settlers were moved into 49,065 urban dwellings controlled by the custodian (p.33).

In 1953, having ensured the alienation of the refugee and the settlement of the settler in their place, the custodian handed control over urban property to Amidar Company (the state-owned Israeli National Housing Company for Immigrants) and most other abandoned property to the Development Authority (established in 1951). Prior to that, the state had closed two deals with the Jewish National Fund—designed to exclusively settle Jewish settlers—that transferred under its control refugee properties (p.58-p.68).

These represent series of practices of dispossession that first appeared in ad hoc manner only to be later condensed (as Stuart Hall might put it) into juridical form. In its insistence on selling the land only to Zionist state agencies (the Development Authority, the Jewish National Fund, Amidar), the ethnonationalist state hampered the logic of the market, thus defying the developmentalist notion of progress from possession to legal ownership. In other words, coercive possession remained central to the state. This juridical consolidation did not only mean the alienation of the refugee from the land, but the transfer of land to the settler. And that 'transfer' is mediated through a 'racial regime of ownership' (Bhandar, 2018) that formulated racial property laws that differentially attributed value to the lives of the European settler by relying on racial notions of the human.

But the juridical consolidation of these practices occurred in tandem with urban technologies that erased the Old City and targeted the remaining Palestinians as well as the arriving Arab Jewish settlers. Following May 1948, the Israeli state moved the remaining 5,000 Palestinian residents to the Wadi Nisnas neighbourhood to the West of Haifa and placed them under a brutal military occupation until 1966 (Weiss, 2011). The majority were granted Israeli

citizenship, though as Lustick and Berkman (2017) note, "[f]or almost two decades, from 1948 through 1966, suffrage rights for Arab citizens coexisted with severe and systematic restrictions on the Arab population's civil liberties, economic and cultural rights, and freedom of movement" (p.42). In the same vein, arriving North African Arab Jews (mostly Moroccan) were then moved into the historic and depopulated neighbourhood of Wadi Salib, located at the heart of downtown Haifa and on the lower northeastern slope of Mount Carmel (Weiss, 2011; Shohat, 2017). The Arab Jewish residents were racialized as natural proprietors of these places as they were presumed to come from similar '*mellah'*[23] living conditions in Morocco. The unbearable living conditions resulted in an Arab Jewish rebellion in 1959, leading to the evacuation of the neighbourhood (Shohat, 2017, p.72). This rebellion in Wadi Salib was characterized by the Israeli state as an expression of "violence-prone" Moroccans and were suppressed with military and police terror (Shohat, 2014, p.72).

The urban here is "conceptually defined, legally codified, governmentally managed, politically contested and socially lived" (Zeiderman, 2018, p.1120) as an 'articulating principle' within a wider socio-spatial formation of dispossession and racialization. The particular racial regime of ownership in the Israeli state produces legal subjects and edifices that are materially and discursively mediated through the 'urban,' which is in turn reproductive of said regime of ownership. Following 1948, the *state* played a primary role that hampered with market logics to ensure a particular rendition of the human that takes the Ashkenazi, male Jew as its archetype, thereby racializing the Arab Jew as a 'qualifiable settler' whose claim to the land can never be fully substantiated and dispossessing the Palestinian Arab whose claim to the land—even through the European registers of proof—is entirely excluded from this juridical realm.

[23] *Mellah* is an Arabic term that refers to Jewish neighborhoods in Morocco.

Between 1948 and 1966, the ruling party 'MAPAI' sought to utilize the military government as a "machine capable of translating intimate ties with the desperate and utterly dependent mukhtars and other traditional elites into mass voting for Mapai and its 'affiliated Arab lists'" (Lustick and Berkman, 2017, p.44). Through these ties, the government sought to exchange the relaxing of movement restrictions, granting permits and even the granting of citizenships (Robinson, 2013) with expressions of 'loyalty' and behavior in 'politically correct manner' (Korn, 2000, p.169). Gradually, the 'idiom of conquest' is replaced by the 'idiom of order'—as Guha (1997, p.25) might call it—designed to entice the traditional elites to attach themselves to the colonial order. Within this order, '48 Palestinians became gradually subjected to the direct exclusionary logics of Israeli citizenship and the Israeli economic, political, juridical and civil spheres (Robinson, 2013). Understood this way, Order implies coercion insofar as it is enforced by the apparatus of the settler state.

The Israeli state put in place multiple legal decrees, including the 1950 Law of Return and the 1952 Citizenship Law to ensure the systematic exclusion of the remaining Palestinian population. The 1950 Law granted "automatic citizenship to all Jews in the country, by virtue of their "immigrant" status, but only to 63,000 Palestinian Arabs, by virtue of their residence." In order to qualify for the residency, Palestinians had to meet a range of conditions, including "proof of their 'legal residence' in Israel for at least three of the previous five years, demonstration of their command of Hebrew, and a declaration of loyalty" (Robinson 2013, p.100). As for the 1952 Citizenship Law (misleadingly dubbed the Nationality Law in English to suggest a separation between the 'Israeli nation' and the 'Israeli citizenship'), it reified the exclusionary stipulations of the 1950 Law, outlining "two paths to acquire automatic status in seemingly, neutral bureaucratic terms" (p.107).

Yet, the neutrality of the legal language of the Law is deceptive, as it enshrines the racial distinction previously introduced in the 1950 Law, outlining a settler colonial hierarchy of citizenship: an automatic citizenship for 'immigrant' Jewish settlers, and citizenship-by-residence for non-Jewish residents (i.e., Palestinians) (Robinson 2013, p.108). The edifice of the Israeli citizenship apparatus, therefore, was built and continues to be informed by a systematic exclusion and conditioning of Palestinian presence. It would seem that the Israeli legal apparatus does not escape Alexander Wehelieye's (2014) observation that, "In the end, the law, whether bound by national borders or spanning the globe, establishes an international division of humanity, which grants previously excluded subjects limited access to personhood as property at the same time as it fortifies the supremacy of Man" (p.79). The plunder of Palestinian land, its institutionalization as property and the dispossession of the Palestinian before and after the Palestinian catastrophe (Al-Nakba) serve as the fundamental precondition of the Israeli citizenship.

In the years of the military government, the settler state explored the possibility of assuaging the political antagonism that the remaining Palestinians embody through what I term a 'distracting cultural field'—namely, the carving out of a structural space within the settler colonial apparatus for an 'Arab Israeli' (rather than Palestinian) cultural presence that may be tolerated only insofar as it does not bring the settler state into question. In 1958, Mordechai Namir, the Chair of the Arab Affairs Committee designed to deal with '48 Palestinians in the 1950s and 1960s, noted the emergence of an educated urban Palestinian intelligentsia in which he saw a potential, threatening leadership to the deprived Palestinian masses. He thus argued for the employment of the educated Palestinians in functions that would "divert the Palestinians' attention from their daily realities to more benign subjects." Namir argued for the need "to

establish musical bands, and entertainment groups, this gives expression to the feelings in the cultural field…. This [recreation] is also an employment sector for students and secondary school graduates … The Roman slogan of 'bread and entertainment is not wrong'" (cited in Sa'di, 2014, p.42).

Namir's proposition that the cultural may serve to distract the Palestinians from their daily realities points to a deeper liberal fantasy—namely, the separation of the cultural field from the wider colonial and material relations within which the everyday unfolds (Rockhill, 2014). This excision is what enables him to posit the cultural field through the idiom of order as a distraction capable of creating more 'benign Palestinian subjects.' The 'distracting cultural field' presents to us in disguise a particular articulation between the state, the cultural and the urban, whereby the military government directly intervenes to fashion 'benign Palestinian subjects,' which ultimately failed as Maha Nassar's (2017) work on Palestinian cultural producers during these years demonstrates. These cultural strategies are constitutive of the racial and classed taxonomies of the urban in Haifa and name a wider socio-spatial process of erasure that targets Palestinian geographies in their multiple spatial forms, including the city. Thus, the manifestations of exclusion in the city-form are to be viewed *relationally*, rather than as self-contained within a demarcated, easily-identifiable collectivity that we name the 'city.'

The military government was lifted in Haifa in 1966. However, the implications of its restructuring, fragmentation, and erasure of Palestinian geography and polity inform the present. I posit that we need to understand the post-Oslo historical conjuncture in light of this history. The neoliberalisation of the Israeli economy in the 1985 Economic Stabilization Plan (ESP) has meant a rearticulation between, on the one hand, Israeli settler colonialism and dispossession and capital on the other. Effectively, as Hanieh (2003) argues, the ESP marked a new beginning

in which the Israeli state's control over the economy is gradually conceded to its capitalist class.[24] This has had implications both for the '48 territories and the '67 territories, which I take up in the next section. Suffice it to say here that in the contemporary historical conjuncture, Israeli settler colonialism has become increasingly reliant on market logics and, equally, "settler colonialism's inventory of local strategies is becoming increasingly congenial to neoliberalism's emergent world order" (Lloyd and Wolfe, 2015, p.112).

Just like the emergence of a racial subjectivity is contingent upon racial property laws that produce a propertied European settler, a ghettoized Arab Jewish settler and a dispossessed or excluded Palestinian, the emergence of a taxonomized urban landscape in Haifa is contingent on racial regimes of ownership. In the particular circumstances of the years following 1948, an articulation (i.e., a contingent link or connection) occurred between the juridical and the urban whereby the state played a major role that hampered with market logics to ensure its ethnonationalist character. But as an articulation, there is no guarantee that this same link will appear undifferentiated across time and space; it is contingent, has to be sustained and may disappear or be overthrown leading to rearticulations. Seen this way, the selling by Amidar of Al Burj 15 to four real estate companies demonstrates a 'rearticulation' in this post-Oslo moment, a new linkage whereby the market increasingly comes to play a primary role in both logics of dispossession and racialization. Crucially, as I argue in Chapter Three, such a rearticulation remains embroiled in these logics.

In Haifa, Palestinians today constitute around 11% of the city's overall population (Israeli Central Bureau of Statistics, 2008). From more than 90% land under Palestinian

[24] Israel had a centralized and national economy before 1985 that focused on nurturing a native capitalist Jewish class. The nationalized character of the Israeli economy prior to 1985 is often, misleadingly, characterized as 'socialist.' Hanieh argues that this nationalized character was a settler capitalist necessity, rather than a socialist commitment. See Hanieh, Adam. 2020. "From State-Led Growth to Globalization".

ownership in 1947, only 3% remains Palestinian today (Khalidi and Shihadeh, 2017, p.247). The ’48 Palestinian economic sector “has remained apart from the Jewish economy in terms of geographic separation, income deprivation, consumption divergence, and poverty entrenchment” (p.275). While up until 1973 the Israeli economy was characterized by a “strategy of state-led industrialization funded through external capital flows” (Hanieh, 2003, p.7) and that “favoured business groups involved in the ‘national project’” (p.7), after the 1973 war with Arab states, the Israeli economy “entered a long period of low growth combined with high inflation (stagflation)” (p.8). Nonetheless, the government had tight control over the Israeli capital market until the shift to a neoliberal economy in 1985, which meant intensified privatization and the direct plugging of the Israeli economy into the global circuits of capitalist accumulation.

This, in turn, created further socioeconomic and political stratification that continues to precipitate a specific Palestinian urban middle class presence within the 1948 Territories, including Haifa (Karkabi 2018, p.1175). Assessing the difference between 1948 and the current neoliberal moment promises to shed light on how modes of dispossession “have adapted themselves to the imperatives of colonial domination” (Bhandar, 2018, p.28). In the next section, I pay particular attention to Aradi ’67 (67 territories), which further demonstrate the plasticity inherent in the juridical and the urban and how modes of dispossession and rationales for urban renewal and expansion adapt themselves to the contemporary imperatives of colonial domination.

Civil Society and '67 Territories

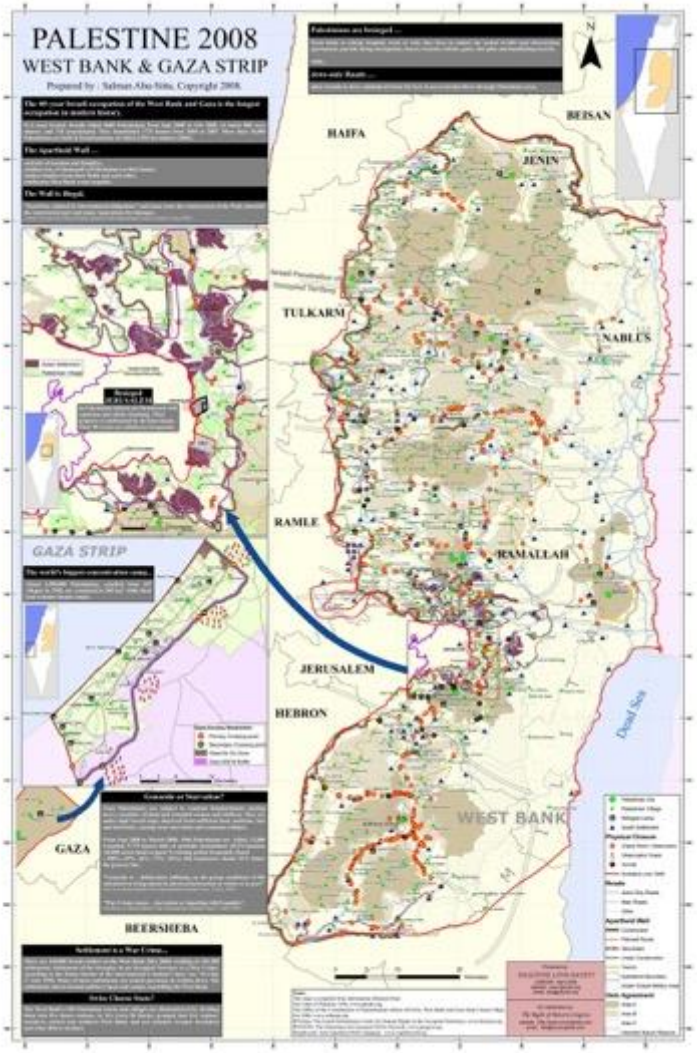


Figure 10. Map showing 1948 and 1967 territories. The red line is the 1949 Armistice Green Line. Source: Palestine Land Society.

The emergence of the 'racial regime of ownership' in 1948 continues to inform unfolding processes of urbanization across historic Palestine. The ways in which this regime is mediated through the 'urban' and vice versa are, however, determined by the particular articulations between the juridical, economic, political and cultural processes in each of the Palestinian geographies. Thus, whilst the production of the urban in Haifa is mediated directly through the Israeli market and citizenship logics, it is mediated through a Palestinian nationalist elite (the Palestinian Authority), the Military-Civil occupation and the settler in the West Bank (see Figure 8). There is a need here to venture beyond a mere focus on 'urbanization' and towards an analysis of these wider socio-spatial formations and the mediations between them in order to understand how the production of the urban is differentially produced across these two geographies.

Ramallah was occupied and came under Israeli control after the 1967 de facto annexation of the West Bank, the Gaza Strip, and East Jerusalem, in addition to the Syrian Golan Heights and the Egyptian Sinai desert. Israel's 1985 Economic Stabilization Plan (ESP) had profound ramifications for the territories occupied in 1967. The necessities of expansion for Israeli capital, along with the political necessity of facilitating the presence of a co-opted Palestinian elite in order to neutralize organized resistance, resulted in another significant episode of colonial recognition—the 1993 Oslo Accords. Since the signing of the Oslo Agreement in 1993, Ramallah has come to occupy a central role in Palestinian national politics. Lisa Taraki (2008a, 2008b) notes that even prior to the agreement, Ramallah had a symbolic capital that attracted a sizeable middle class, consisting of students, intellectuals, and professionals. By being the de facto political capital of the Palestinian National Authority (PNA), this symbolic capital was further consolidated and augmented, transforming the small town of Ramallah into a major Palestinian urban center. Thus, Ramallah became the site of the "unpacking of a radical neoliberal project directed at Palestinian economic space and the relations contained therein" (Abourahme, 2009, p.504).

As Hanieh (2003) argues, writing in the context of the Second Palestinian Uprising (Intifada, 2000-2004):

> beginning in the mid-1980s and accelerating with the Oslo process, Israel's new capitalist class has sought a solution to the costs connected to the occupation… The solution envisaged is based on ending direct military rule and cantonizing the Palestinian territories under Palestinian 'self-rule'. The Oslo process was intended to achieve this outcome via negotiations, and Israel's current war against the Palestinian people aims at imposing this solution by force (p.66).

The neoliberalization of the Israeli economy and its implications for contemporary modes of appropriation and dispossession demonstrates how the latter adapt themselves to the 'imperatives of colonial domination.' Following the ESP, capital has increasingly come to play

a central role in the settler colonial configuration of power. In this sense, I read the 1985 ESP and the Oslo Peace Process as ushering in a 'rearticulation' between, on the one hand, settler colonialism, dispossession and racialization, and on the other, capital and the urban. This does not mean that 'capital' takes precedence over the Israeli settler colonial intent to dispossess and settle. Rather, after 1985, the Israeli political economy was reorganized, partial power was conceded to the capitalist class and that meant that Israeli settler colonial modes of dispossession and racialization had to adapt to these new historical circumstances. The production of the urban in Ramallah is mediated through these chains of inequality and dependency, especially as seen in relation to Haifa.

Through her concept of 'open frontier', Milner (2020) shows how the Tel Aviv municipality did not recognize the rights of Arab Jews as a racialized settler community to the neighbourhood of Giv'at Amal (built on top of the dispossessed Palestinian village of Jamassin). In the contemporary moment, the neighbourhood is targeted by 'neoliberal entrepreneurs' and the eviction of Arab Jews is all the more convenient due to their contested legal title to property (p.270). Thus, this reliance remains hindered by the state's racial edifice that rests on the 'set of technologies' underpinning the triad of Ashkenazi (European) settler-Arab Jew-Palestinian indigenous. In Ramallah, by contrast, this neoliberalization has meant the institutionalization of a Palestinian nationalist politics that attaches itself to the settler colonial order through the 'idiom of collaboration.'

Through the 'idiom of collaboration' (Guha, 1997, p.86) in which the colonial order entices particular segments of the colonized to attach themselves to it, the Palestinian nationalist elites in Ramallah are sutured to the Israeli settler colonial order. Palestinian nationalism has precipitated a bourgeois state-building project without sovereignty that seeks to plug the

Palestinian economy into global capitalist modes of accumulation (Dana, 2020). Given the particular colonial relations within which this iteration of the nationalist project unfolds and its reliance on capitalist modes of accumulation, it has failed to constitute a hegemony and has sought to assuage its antagonism with the Palestinian working classes and *fellahin* (peasants) "by discipline rather than by persuasion" (Guha, 1997, p.134). Although Ramallah is the most central city for the PNA, it has also hosted the staunchest protests against it in 2021, following the assassination by the PNA forces of the Palestinian activist Nizar Banat (Al-Haq, 2021). The nationalist project, as argued by many scholars, reifies and sustains the settler colonial order. Thus, we may say, following Ranjit Guha's (1997) discussion of the Indian elites under British colonial rule, the Palestinian nationalist state-building works to "assuage the contradictions by making them mutually nonatagonistic and enable the engine of dominance to run on smoothly" (p.25). These structural contradictions, which began in Haifa in 1948 and even prior to that, still inform the production and reproduction of Ramallah as an urban fabric that continues to dialectically encompass surrounding suburbs, villages and refugee camps.

From 1967 to 1994, Ramallah, like the rest of the Occupied Territories, was governed by an Israeli 'Military-Civil' administration. In Israeli economic historiography of the early years of the occupation, the focus is on the 'potential benefits' of the occupation to the Palestinian economy. In real economic terms, in the early years of the occupation, the Palestinian economy did experience a boom (Hever, 2010, p.8). As per a report from the Bank of Israel published in 1974, it was argued that the occupation is beneficial to the Palestinian economy (Bregman, 1974; see also Hever, 2010). Early on, the Israeli state was cognizant that its coercion of Palestinians had to be embedded within strategies of building consent amongst particular stratums of the Palestinian population. The relaxation of economic restrictions was

intended to generate this effect. Here, we can locate a tendency similar to the military government's in the '48 territories: to embed coercion within a consent targeted at particular stratums of the indigenous population.

Due to multiple economic factors not least of which is the continuous expropriation of Palestinian land, economic growth in the territories ended in the 1980s. Since the signing of the Oslo Agreement in 1993, there has been a consistent divergence between the Israeli economy and the Palestinian economy in the '67 territories. Hever (2010) states that "[t"here is no area in Israel/Palestine that is free from Israeli control, no area where a different set of economic laws apply" (p.2). The differentiated forms of Israeli control in the '48 territories and '67 territories, however, exist within unequal political (citizen vs. military subject) and economic relations (Israeli economy vs. the dependent Palestinian economy). In political economic terms, as Kareem Rabie (2021) argues, the military occupation of the West Bank became a strategy of managing and sustaining the inequality between the Israeli and Palestinian markets rather than equalizing them (p.28). This inequality is not restricted to the economic sphere, but extends to the overarching social formation, producing what I call an *unequal ordering of Palestinian life*.

The Israeli settler colonial state devises a hierarchy of Palestinian life in its different geographies: the Palestinian citizen of Israel is directly embedded within the exclusionary politico-judicial and economic spheres of the settler state; the Palestinian in the West Bank is relegated to the military-civil complex and a state-building project dependent on the settler colonial order; the Palestinians in the Gaza Strip are subjected to a brutal siege, maintained by the settler colonial order, the Palestinian Authority and the Arab states; and the denial of the right of return continues to prevent the Palestinian *shatat* (Arabic for diaspora) from returning to Palestine. By zooming in on two Palestinian cities that are positioned differentially vis-à-vis

the settler colonial order, I show how the unequal relationships between these geographies are constitutive of the settler colonial order.

Following 1967, the Israeli state relied upon a mix of juridical formations to enable its alienation of Palestinians from their land. Powers to control land and property enshrined in the Emergency Regulations of December 1948 (discussed above) were extended to the 1967 territories through the Military Order No.58 of 1967 (Home, 2003, p.301; see the Nakba Files copy of the Order). The 1948 regulations discussed above ensured that 'absentee' included even Palestinian refugees who remained within Israeli territories, not only those who crossed the borders into neighboring countries. This was carefully formulated to preclude any opportunity in the present and future for a Palestinian refugee from reclaiming their property. In 1948, Israeli officials insisted on this more expansive definition not only to prevent remaining refugees from reclaiming their property, but also because they had in mind a "hypothetical case of Israel capturing the northern West Bank sometime soon and incorporating it into Israel. Under such a scenario, refugees in the newly captured areas then no longer would be 'absentees' living across the borders but Israeli citizens who would be entitled to get back the land they had abandoned in Israel" (Fischbach, 2003, p.22). After 1967, this more expansive definition proved fruitful, as it prevented refugees from claiming their land back.

The Israeli state continues to expropriate land in the '67 territories by relying on overlapping bodies of law, including "Ottoman, British Mandatory, Jordanian, Palestinian law post-Oslo, the Oslo regime, Israeli civil law, Israeli military law, and Israeli de facto control" (Rabie, 2021, p.164). One of the most significant features of post-1967 modes of dispossession is the direct role settlers play in expropriating Palestinian land. The occupation of the remaining Palestinian territories in 1967 presented a conundrum to Israeli ethnonationalist settler

colonialism. As Patrick Wolfe (2016) argues, it meant more land, but also more Palestinians (p.247), thus presenting Israel with a demographic threat to its racial Jewish state. Kareem Rabie (2021) calls this "a push and pull between the need for territory and the undesirability of fully incorporating its inhabitants" (p.82-83). In this constellation of Military-Civil power, Rabie points out that the Israeli civil jurisdiction extends into the '67 territories, mapping onto settlers rather than territories. This jurisdiction keeps Israeli settlers bound within the ethnonationalist imperatives of the state, while fabricating a distance from their illegality. The settlers illegally occupy Palestinian lands, and then move "to shape law in the wake of their activities and to make Jewish Israeli presence in and political control over the West Bank permanent through practice and, ideally, retroactively under Israeli jurisdiction and law" (Rabie, 2021, p.164). Recall Hall's understanding of the state (via Gramsci) as "pluricentered and multidimensional" (p.93)—the settler state operates across the political and civil spheres, while remaining the crucial site where differentiated practices of dispossession (both legal and illegal) are condensed into systems of rules.

It is crucial to acknowledge that the settlers' use of coercive force across the different Palestinian geographies occurs outside the Israeli state, though it is backed up by it. In this sense, the seeming illegality of the settlers' coercive force reproduces the legality of the settler state. Under the Military-Civil configuration of power, the distinction between the settler 'political society' (the State) and 'civil society' is suspended, which in turn reproduces both the legal character of the State in both the '48 and '67 territories while simultaneously expanding its borders. Writing on the fascist squadristi in 1920s Italy, Gramsci identified a similar suspension of the distinction between the political and the civil. He says, "in the present struggle it often happens that a weakened State machine is like a flagging army: commandos, or private

armed organizations, enter the field to accomplish two tasks—to use illegality, while the State appears to remain within legality, and thereby to reorganize the State itself" (Gramsci, 1971, p.232). This exceptional suspension in fascist Italy becomes constitutive as soon as it reaches the settler colony.

In Gramscian terms, the settlers use 'illegality', while the settler state appears to remain within legality. In this distribution of political violence, the distinction between political society and civil society is most clearly suppressed. By extension, within the '67 territories, practices of dispossession are distributed across Israeli political and civil society, rather than being merely centralized in the state. The settler state, however, remains the main site of condensation of differentiated practices of dispossession. The contemporary historical conjuncture of post-Oslo is largely defined by a Palestinian state-building project that depends on, rather than dismantles or challenges, these practices of dispossession. Its main function—as stated earlier—has been to manage the political and economic inequalities between the '48 and '67 territories. Ramallah is the site that most palpably brings these dynamics to the forefront.

Concomitant with Ramallah's emergence as a political center were processes of urban hierarchization according to social class. Lisa Taraki (2008b) shows how the governmental practices of the PNA and their emphasis on 'rank' in the early years were consolidated into social inequalities that became most palpable in Ramallah. Furthermore, with the coming of the PNA, "[m]any large-scale projects in construction, telecommunications, services, and the media were undertaken by an emerging group of globally oriented investors" (67). In the early years, Ramallah witnessed the "emergence, for the first time, of upscale suburban areas removed and distinct from the older, more mixed, residential neighborhoods" (p.67). In Ramallah, the political, economic and juridical rules that accompanied the Oslo Agreement are constantly

articulated into urban classed taxonomies, effecting a "spatial segregation by social class" (p.67). This is what Palestinian urbanist Nasser Abourahme (2009) has described as "urban development as political subjectification writ large" (p.504).

To a Palestinian political field already stratified by factionalist politics, the Agreement added the "emergence of a deradicalized, globalized form of "normal" politics advanced by some elements of the new middle class; and the normalization of a new individualistic ethos embracing leisure, self-enhancement and social mobility" (Taraki, 2008b, p.65). The market has become increasingly central not only in managing macroeconomic inequalities between the different Palestinian geographies of '48 and '67, but also in proliferating determinate modes of subjectification that enshrine ethos of individualism and consumerism. The spatial segregation of the urban produces and is reproduced by everyday practices, particularly in the cultural sphere, that reifies it. Thus, in Ramallah, there exists "implicit hierarchy of schools and other sites where education can be acquired" (Taraki, 2008b, p.72). Furthermore, new articulations between the 'cultural' and resistance have emerged, whereby the 'folkloric' (previously the bedrock of nationalist ethos) is gradually replaced by individualist notions of consumerism and leisure that serve seemingly apolitical ends (the 'normal' politics in Taraki's parlance). These articulations are ushered in by a middle class, which has a fragmented history in the two cities.

Genealogies of a Fragmented Middle Class

While 1948 formed a rupture in Palestinian history, it would be a mistake to view it "solely as a dividing line in the periodization of Palestinian history [as that] can obscure important continuities that spanned that auspicious year" (Nassar 2017, p.16). Both Haifa and Ramallah had multiple historical factors, spanning to the years prior to 1948, that encouraged the emergence of a Palestinian middle class. Prior to 1948, Haifa served as a cosmopolitan urban

center, whose "rising urban middle classes of petit bourgeoisie included entrepreneurs, intellectuals, and artists standing at the forefront of forming a Palestinian nationalism based on modern liberal values" (Karkabi 2018, p.1171). They articulated a nationalist project as the urban fabric of the city was being transformed by Zionist settlement and British colonialism. "During this period, various Palestinian clubs, theaters, and cafes competed in offering stages for local artists and famous singers from throughout the Arab world, including 'Um Kulthum and Farid al-'Atrash" (Karkabi 2018, 1171). Haifa developed a distinct, cosmopolitan lifestyle.

However, this urban presence was not without contradictions; it was enmeshed within class-based and gendered notions of the home, the family, and the nation, as Sherene Seikaly's (2016) work demonstrates.[25] Seikaly (2016) notes that Palestinian elites were not (and are not) homogenous (p.13). By men of capital, she refers to a growing "group of men working in commercial, and to a much lesser extent, industrial ventures, [who] were accumulating capital and expertise in the early twentieth century. These businessmen were a primarily urban, relatively wealthy group of men who attempted to author a new sort of hegemonic power" (p. 14). Prior to 1948, Haifa had been a central Palestinian urban center. After 1948, it lost most of its cultural and political elites. The dispossession of Palestinians also meant the scattering of these men of capital across the world.

As for Ramallah, it was a small town prior to 1948 and remained so afterwards until the early 1990s. Citing the histories of the city written mostly by its natives and emigres, Taraki (2008a) notes that the arrival of the British in 1917 marked an important moment for the town, particularly because a significant number of its residents were employed by the mandate. She

[25] Seikaly notes that, during the mandate era, Palestinian men of capital used 'al-tabaka al-wusta' (middle class) to define themselves and their social world. By the 1940s, they sought to include the 'authentic' fellah and Bedouin in this category, (12). See Seikaly, Sherene. 2016. *Men of Capital.*

also cites the early emigration of some of Ramallah's residents to the United States and the presence of a significant number of church-related institutions as reasons for the gradual emergence of Ramallah as central (Taraki, 2008, p.9). It is noteworthy here that prior to 1948, Haifa had a similar presence of church-related institutions that added to the cosmopolitanism of the city (Seikaly 2002, p.22). Both Taraki and Seikaly warn against sectarian readings of class relations in Palestine, however, as such readings tend to overlook other power relations. While Seikaly (2016, p.11) notes that "the sectarian representation of men of capital is a drastic misreading," Taraki (2008, p.14) notes that the residents of 'Ayn 'Arik and Tayyiba, two predominantly Christian villages in Ramallah, have more in common with their fellow Muslim villagers than they do with the Christian upper-class residents of Masyoun.

In Ramallah, after 1948, "new bases of social differentiation began to appear with the influx of refugees following the war" (Taraki, 2008b, 66). Recall that Ramallah was under Jordanian, not Israeli, control between 1948 and 1967. The governing principles for a middle class after 1948 were still in place and their continuity was ensured with the arrival of urban refugees from al-Lidd, Jaffa, and Ramla. Taraki also cites the presence of educational institutions under Jordanian rule (1948-1967), particularly Birzeit College in the nearby village of Birzeit, as attracting more professionals and government employees that would join the middle-class ranks. These historical factors have contributed to the enduring, urban significance of Haifa and the urban emergence of Ramallah as two centers of Palestinian cultural and political life.

Since the 1990s, Haifa has witnessed a notable re-articulation of this Palestinian urbanity. As Beshara (2018) highlights, the forcible absence of the 'city' (what he calls in Arabic *al-madina al-gha'eba*) was one of the main political and sociological factors defining the lives

of Palestinians living within Israel after 1948. Yet, by the 1990s, Haifa still retained a symbolic capital that would allow it to articulate a limited yet concentrated Palestinian urban and cultural presence. Furthermore, the establishment of the University of Haifa in 1968 marks a central date. Although the university is an extension of the settler colonial order (see la paperson, 2017)[26], it nonetheless "greatly contributed to this increase due to its geographical accessibility to the large Palestinian population in the Galilee, today remaining the most popular university among Palestinians in Israel, and especially among Palestinian women" (Karkabi 2018, p.1174).

As for Ramallah, it has become the center of articulation for a classed iteration of the urban that places emphasis on the cultural. The urban expansion of Ramallah and the concentration of wealth within it occurs within a particular configuration of power that consists of the settler state, an indigenous state, the settlers, and the market. The 1985 ESP and the 1993 Oslo Agreement have enabled an urban expansion in the city that is contingent on a 'rearticulation' between the state and the market, in which the latter comes to play a direct role that remains embroiled in logics of dispossession and racialization

Conclusion

In the contemporary historical conjuncture of post-Oslo, the emergence of spatialized Palestinian cultural scenes in the two cities of Haifa and Ramallah occurs in parallel with a rearticulation between, on the one hand, settler colonialism and dispossession, and capital on the other. The urban classed taxonomies of Ramallah proliferate against the backdrop of continuing dispossession enabled through the Military-Civil occupation and a dependent Palestinian capitalist state formation (without sovereignty). The ESP and the Oslo Agreement

[26] la paperson argues that the university is part and parcel of an order of conquest. Similarily, Harney and Moten (2013) approach the university as a site of 'conquest denial.'

ushered in a rearticulation, whereby the market comes to exploit the contradictions underpinning the settler colonial order in the '67 territories. This does not mean, however, that the state does not hamper the imposition of market logics. Through the Military-Civil government and the settlers, the state relies primarily on coercive possession of the land. In the contemporary historical conjuncture of post-Oslo, unlike '48 Palestinians who face the settler colonial order as a determinate configuration of power consisting of settler state/market, the '67 Palestinians face it through another determinate configuration of settler state/indigenous state/market.

In both configurations, the settler state partially relies on the market to perpetuate its modes of dispossession, just like the market relies on the settler state to propagate political, economic and social inequalities. The production of the urban in both realities is mediated through these wider, differentiated socio-spatial processes. Urbanization is *one* of various socio-spatial processes that reproduce the urban fabrics of the two city-forms. These are processes "that have their own generative dynamics that cannot be collapsed into the capacious logic of urbanization" (Jazeel, 2018, p.411). The urbicide in Haifa and urban expansion in Ramallah are mediated through settler colonialism, racialization, dispossession and capitalism. The overall aim of the chapter has been to show the 'messiness' of reading these 'articulating principles' in conjunction with one another and to challenge tendencies within urban theory that continue to reify 'urbanization' as an all-encompassing process, rather than as *one* amongst varying socio-spatial and scalar processes that exist within relations of power.

The disucrsive, material and imaginative spatialities within the city-form may extend into the non-urban (i.e.g, the village) and vice versa. *Country and City* are "indissolubly linked" as Raymond Williams (1989, p.227) has once put it. The generative confluence I am advocating

for here between Marxist cultural studies, urban studies and settler colonial studies points to what Goonewardena (2015) calls—in his insistent reading of Henri Lefebvre's *Urban Revolution* alongside Raymond William's *The Country and the City*—"the dialectical mediations of space and social struggle as they pertain to the fundamental relations between city, country and capitalism, which in turn would bring us to the intersections of urbanization, imperialism and colonization" (p.220). My analysis of the Palestinian village of 'Ayn Hawd in the next chapter explores the 'concrete' of these relationalities between the urban and the non-urban, where I show how a certain politics of modernism that is linked to the Dada arts movement in Zurich of 1915 coalesces with settler colonial logics to aestheticize the Palestinian village-form and transform it into a settler arts colony. This aesthetic dispossession is a rehearsal that anticipates the linking of arts and urban renewal (often referred to as gentrification) and urban expansion in this post-Oslo neoliberal conjuncture.

Chapter Two

‘Scenes of Dispossession’ and Haunting in ‘Ayn Hawd

“Erasure and defacement concoct ghosts; I don’t want to haunt you, but I will.”
- Eve Tuck and C. Ree (2013, p.643)



Figure 11. Gallery in Ein Hod artists’ colony, formerly the Palestinian village of ‘Ayn Hawd. Photograph: Sama Haddad, 2022.

I looked through the photographs to glimpse into the artists’ village. There was a photo of the gallery (see Figure 9), which announced itself with a written sign (The Gallery) and an imposing symbol (the Israeli flag). The skeleton of the gallery—its built structure, ‘preserved’

after the dispossession of its Palestinian residents—belongs to another time—or even more—to another temporality. Although it is tempting to read it as such, it neither simply condenses a past into the present. Nor does it merely point to a *past*. Rather, it has a haunting effect that demonstrates the seamless continuity of the past into the preset, makes an unintelligible demand on the present and anticipates future ghosts. In a settler colonial order, which takes the erasure of the Indigenous as its condition of possibility, ghosts and haunting proliferate. "Haunting," Eve Tuck and C. Ree (2013) remind us, "is the relentless remembering and reminding that will not be appeased by settler society's assurances of innocence and reconciliation. Haunting is both acute and general; individuals are haunted, but so are societies" (p.642). Thus, haunting makes a demand and articulates a presence that cannot be contained within the order that organizes settler societies. The unintelligibility of this demand—though intensely disorienting—constitutes its power.

The village I try to narrate in this chapter is 'Ayn Hawd, a Palestinian village that shared the fate of another 450 villages that were dispossessed of their residents in 1948. It was and remains a picturesque and small village on the Western slope of Jabil el Karmil (Mount Carmel), located eighteen kilometers to the south of the city of Haifa. In 1948, the village had around 650 residents, though its lands covered 12,605 dunums (3,115 acres) (Kanāʿnah, 1987). After 1948, its residents were dispossessed and displaced. Some escaped to nearing Palestinian villages and to the city of Jenin in the West Bank; others escaped to Irbid in Jordan; and one family fled to a nearby location and started a new village that they named 'Ayn Hawd al-Jadida (the new 'Ayn Hawd). While most Palestinian villages were destroyed in 1948, 'Ayn Hawd was not. Instead, it became an artists' colony.

Between 1948 and 1953, the nascent Israeli state attempt to resettle the village with settlers, including a group of North African Jews who, "claiming the soil was terrible, left to establish the *moshav* (smallholders' cooperative settlement) of Tsofah five kilometres to the south" (Slyomovis, 1998, p.31). In 1953, Marcel Janco, a Romanian visual artist and a European settler on the land of Palestine established an artists' colony within 'Ayn Hawd. Janco was not only a visual artist. He was an architect and a planner. He was working for the planning department of the Interior Ministry of the newly-established state when he came across 'Ayn Hawd and decided to turn into Ein Hod. Notably, Janco was also one of the co-founders of the avant-garde Dada movement in Zurich, Switzerland, during World War I. How a self-proclaimed anti-art, anti-nationalism and anti-bourgeoise arts movement can be materialized into a settler artists' village as soon as it reaches Palestine is a conundrum I explore in this chapter.

In this chapter, I think with and through archival fragments, photography, and artworks in order to explore both the relationship between settler arts and dispossession, as well as the haunting of the Palestinian village of 'Ayn Hawd by Palestinian memories of dispossession. The destroyed world of 'Ayn Hawd figures in many places. Kamal Boullata (2000) notes, for example, that the Palestinian visual artist Abdullah al-Qarra (b.1936) was introduced to painting while working as a gardener in the settler colony of Ein Hod. To read the layers of dispossession, arts, and haunting, I curate a collection of Palestinian references to 'Ayn Hawd: a poem written by a Palestinian poet in the early 1960s on the village; an oral history booklet developed by Palestinian researcher Sharif Kana'neh (1987) and his team at Brizeit University's Centre for Research in the 1980s; and photographs from the website *Palestine Remembered*, an online medium used by some Palestinian refugees to document and archive their villages, cities, and

livelihoods. These fragments, documents, and photographs point to these mechanisms and their continuous haunting effect.

I take up the Palestinian village-form here for two reasons. The first relates to a particular understanding of the production of space as "situated simultaneity"—namely, a "momentary coexistence of trajectories" (Massey, 2000, p.229) all in the process of being articulated within particular historical circumstances. In her generative theory of the production of space, geographer Doreen Massey (2000) notes that a 'landscape' "is no spatial surface; it is a contemporaneity of trajectories" (p.228). Her method thus starts with *practices* and *processes*, highlighting that villages and cities are vantage points into "peculiarly intense, and probably heterogenous constellations of social trajectories" (p.226). Thus, the ravaging of Palestinian villages in 1948, including 'Ayn Hawd, was not a "horizontal movement across a space that is a surface" but "engagements of previously separate trajectories" (p.231) that coalesce into practices and processes of dispossession, remembrance and resistance. In the material landscape of 'Ayn Hawd, the previously separate trajectories of Marcel Janco (the artist-settler), Europe of 1915 and Dada's *Cabaret Voltaire* in Switzerland, the dispossessed Palestinian inhabitants of 'Ayn Hawd, contemporary Israeli artists in 'Ein Hod,' and the continuous unfolding of 'future ghosts' coalesce into a complex, 'situated simultaneity.' The village is not a bounded entity, but a contemporaneity of different trajectories, whose terms of articulation are determined by particular historical circumstances.

The second reason pertains to how this understanding of space/time offers a radical opening for conceptualizing a '*relational geography*' at work between village-form (the so-called non-urban) and city-form that dialectically emphasizes the interconnections between the two as well as their enmeshment within multiscalar processes of capitalism, settler colonialism

and dispossession. A 'relational geography' builds upon geographer Gilian Hart's (2018) open, non-teleological and dialectical method of 'relational comparison.' In its emphasis on a dialectical understanding of practices and processes, a 'relational comparison' is far from what Philip McMichael (1990) and Charles Tilly (1984; see also Hart, 2018, pp.376-378) identify as an 'encompassing comparison'—i.e., a comparative strategy of 'selecting' case studies (e.g., 'settler colonial cities') and measuring them against an engulfing whole (settler colonialism and capitalism). Such a strategy is common within critical urban studies (see Hugill, 2017, for an example). Brenner (2015), for example, conceives of capitalism as "world-encompassing" and "world-*making*-process" within which the "non-urban realm is increasingly subsumed" (p.16). Rather than centering the multiple *practices* and socio-spatial *processes* as well as the slippages, openings, contradictions, transformations and (re)articulations amongst them, Brenner's encompassing method "asserts 'common generative processes' of which particular cases are variations" (Hart, 2018, p.382). Crucially, it posits a linear relation that extends from an encompassing-urban towards a non-urban awaiting to be subsumed.

The particular practices, scenes and processes of both dispossession and haunting within it point to a different and relational understanding of the non-urban that avoids such guarantees. I argue that 'Ayn Hawd has multiple, layered and relational geographies ('Ayn Hawd, the new 'Ayn Hawd, Ein Hod, the litanies of return by Palestinian refugees to the village and its non-linear relation to the 'urban'). The condensing of previously separate trajectories into its fabric foregrounds the primacy of the colonial relation in articulating a relation between arts and dispossession, which serves as a rehearsal for, and an anticipation of, the contemporary, so-called 'neoliberal gentrification' of the city. As well as being capitalist in nature, the shifting Israeli strategies of re-shaping Palestinian space are manifestations of the settler's anxiety to

hide and re-name the stories, narratives, architecture, street and village names that signify a Palestinian ghostly presence that continues to haunt settler colonial formations (see Gordon, 2008). "And it is the terms of that meeting" between capitalism, settler colonialism and dispossession, on the one hand, and the multiple human, non-human and ghostly life-worlds of the village-form "that are the stuff of politics" (p.231). In the next section, I take up how political Zionism facilitated this meeting.

Conquest of Labour

Ariella Azoulay (2019) takes 1492 as a 'marker of reversibility' and sets out to unlearn it as "history, as a distant point in a linear timeline from which things have followed as they should have" (p.22). Instead, she argues for what she terms a 'potential history', which runs on the assumption that the relentless, unstoppable imperial movement, "enamored of the new, started in the late fifteenth century and inaugurated the destruction of diverse worlds in order to create a brand new world, inaugurated the production of carelessness for people (and extra care for their expropriated objects) now seen as wordless and available for enslavement, exploitation, rape, and dispossession" (p.22). In Azoulay's register, Zionism does not emerge out of a vacuum; rather, it is constituted by the racializing and dispossessing logics of Europe and is an extension of its hierarchies of the human that have been nurtured over the past few centuries. Zionism is an embodiment of imperial violence, differential rule (citizen, noncitizen, refugees, enslaved peoples, stateless) and imperial citizenship. The imperial aesthetic technologies of power—including the novel, the museum, the artists-colony-as-museum, the looting of artefacts—are predicated on the destruction of worlds and the systemic barring of certain peoples from the categories of citizenship. 'Ayn Hawd and its dispossession and transformation

into an arts' colony may be read as a manifestation of an imperial, aesthetic technology of power.

I start with Azoulay's observations because they offer a generative point of thinking about political Zionism that locates the genesis of the movement in the centuries before it even became a movement and link the museum and the archive to an unstoppable imperial violence first ushered in the late fifteenth century. They further contextualize the emergence of Zionism in nineteenth century Europe and see it as an extension of imperial violence. Azoulay reorients our understanding of temporality and periodization to account for connections—both in imperial forms of violence *and* in the unfolding contestations *against* them—that are rarely acknowledged. Political Zionism was born in 19th century Europe, where it borrows much of its colonial, racial, classed and gendered taxonomies. However, the translation of this political program into a material, endurable structure of dispossession in Palestine occurred through a series of socio-spatial processes that are historically specific and socially embedded.

Political Zionism is not merely reflective of political contradictions *within* Europe. In its mandate to create a Jewish homeland in Palestine, the movement was both ideational and material; its *discourse* of dispossession was contingent upon the material translation of its ideals into an actual *space* of dispossession (see Shafir, 1996; Ben-Portat, 1993; and Wolfe, 2016). It shifted, mutated, and was transformed in its encounter with Palestinian bodies and geographies, articulating in the process different practices that were, and continue to be condensed—through a series of processes—into a sustained structure of dispossession. Examining this history does not merely point to this structure's contingent nature upon configurations of power in particular historical conjunctures; it also points to potential frictions, ruptures and transformations and avoids the pitfalls of reading structures as all encompassing. Structures are based on sets of

political, economic, juridical, and cultural relations as well as on certain articulations (linkages and connections) that have to be sustained through certain processes. Linkages can be re-made, adjusted, overthrown or abolished, destabilizing the structure.

In his study of Zionist literature first published in Beirut in 1967, the Palestinian novelist, writer, and theorist Ghassan Kanafani persistently describes the Israeli order as *Iqtila'i,* which is Arabic for *eliminatory or uprooting.* Halfway through the study, Kanafani (2015) describes the atrocities in Palestine as "the uprooting of the indigenous people (*asliyyīn*) of Palestine" (p.103). Kanafani is not only aware of the eliminatory structure of Israeli settler colonialism (which, to some extent, distinguishes it from other forms of colonialism), but is also cognizant of the classed nature of the European sociohistorical context under which the Zionist movement emerged.[27] In the study, he argues that in nineteenth century Europe, there emerged a bourgeoisie class of Jewish thinkers, including Theodor Herzel (a journalist, playwright, and writer who enjoyed close proximity to the centers of European power), who appropriated European colonial ideals to propose a racialized and ethnoreligious solution to the Jewish question (Kanafani, 2015). In other words, for Kanafani, the settler colonial project of Zionism cannot be understood without a proper assessment of the particular sociohistorical context from which it borrows not only its logics of power but also the ideological and mythical justifications for its oppression of the non-European Other.

[27] Kanafani was well immersed in the Marxist-Leninist tradition, which places particular emphasis on the objective material conditions according to which history unfolds. However, he did not simply supplant Marxist-Leninist analysis from its specific historical and geographic location to the Palestinian context. In his other writings, particularly his chapter "Marxism: In the Theoretical Terrain, in the Applied Terrain", he contends that Marxist thought failed to account for the anti-colonial revolutions in its analysis. He says that one exception was Mirsaid Sultan-Galiev, a Muslim Tatar revolutionary, who argued that Marxist-Leninist thought cannot be simply applied to other countries in the 'East'. In this specific chapter, Kanafani was clearly committed to the pan-Arab nationalist movement and was consequently hesitant to accept Marxist analysis, as it reformulates the nationalist question as one of international class struggle. Later on, particularly in his study of the 1936 Palestinian Revolution, we can sense a more nuanced analysis that attempts to delineate the intricate relationship between class and nationalism in the Palestinian struggle.

Kanafani uses Zionist cultural production, particularly literature, in order to understand the Zionist protagonist that this bourgeoisie stratum was gradually weaving. His analysis starts from the first half of the 19th century and traces the protagonists of different novels, as they gradually weave the central Zionist protagonist that would organize the First Zionist Congress in Basel in 1897: an ethnoreligious and superior white European Jewish figure, in search of self-determination. While Zionism introduces itself as a collective political solution to the oppression of Jews in Europe of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, Kanafani argues this obfuscates the classed, racialized and colonial roots of the ideology of this stratum, which insistently advocated for a settler colonial Zionism.

Kanafani's analysis presupposes a direct correspondence between the economic, the political and the ideological reminiscent of classical Marxist notions (see Hall, 1986). To him, early Zionist novels directly corresponded to their bourgeois position within the relations of production of nineteenth century Europe. Furthermore, to Kanafani, the translation of these artistic iterations of an ideology of conquest into a material reality of dispossession in Palestine was enabled by this bourgeois position that claimed to formulate a critique of Europe in its brutal treatment of the Jewish subject. This critique-solution, however, only remapped these same racial hierarchies in a settler colonial, nationalist project that positioned the European Ashkenazi male Jew at its top (see Shohat, 2017). This creates the bold lines under which Zionism continues to introduce itself to the world: "a rejection of racial oppression that becomes an expression of a contemporary racial position" (Kanafani, 2015, p.27).

Although Kanafani's analysis brings to the forefront the relationship between the ideational (the novel) and the material (the settler colony), his analysis presupposes a correspondence between the two that neglects the intrinsic and internal contradictions of Zionist

settlement in Palestine prior to and after the establishment of the Israeli state in 1948. The proposition that Zionism emerges from nineteenth century Europe—now well documented by many scholars—should not mean that the translation of the ideational into the material occurred unilaterally and teleologically. The bourgeois position of early Zionist writers should not blind our analysis to the actual lived dynamics of Zionist settlement in Palestine and the European context out of which it emerged. Indeed, as Gershon Shafir (1996) writes, the organizing notions of 'conquest of labour' and 'conquest of land' had become material harbingers of the Zionist project primarily through the European Jewish-settler working class in Ottoman Palestine, particularly during the *Second Aliyah* (wave of European Jewish settlement in Palestine) (p.81). Rather than tracing notions of 'conquest of labor'—which would become constitutive to the political Zionist vision—to the productivization[28] movement in Eastern Europe, Shaffir asserts that 'conquest of labor' was "born of Palestinian circumstances and advocated a struggle against Palestinian Arab workers" (p.81-82). Thus, we can neither merely conceive of Zionism as developing anachronistically and in a linear manner from Europe to Palestine. Nor can we presume that the cultural production of early Zionist writers corresponds linearly to their subject position within Europe's relations of production. There are frictions, ruptures, and transformations that occur in the concrete historical circumstances of early Zionist settlement in Palestine that led to the increasing centrality of the 'conquest of labor' as an organizing principle of Zionist polity.

The logic of 'conquest of labour' dates back to the Second *Aliyah* between 1904-1914. It emerged as a potentially-effective strategy of settlement—following the failure of the First

[28] Productivization mainly refers to the drive for the "entry of Jews into the primary branches of the economy, above all agriculture and industry" and was "a struggle against the exclusion and displacement of Jews from various industrial occupations in modernizing Eastern Europe as soon as they had a foothold in them"(p.81-82).

Aliyah (1881-1903)—that would 'protect' European settler-workers from competition by the cheaper labour of Palestinian Arab workers. After the first Aliyah, the concern became with maintaining the endurability and sustainability of settlement by ensuring that wage levels for European settlers are compatible with their living standards in Palestine (Shafir, 1996, p.80). This increasingly meant that Palestinian Arab workers had to be expelled from the labour sphere altogether to protect the higher wages of European settlers. It is from this encounter that political Zionism shifts—not only discursively but also materially—towards an ethnonationalist project focused on the 'conquest of labour.'

The institutions that came to create the Israeli state in 1948 predate it: the Hebrew Workers Union (Histadrut) established in 1920, the Jewish National Fund for land purchases established in 1901 with its first office in Jaffa established in 1908, and the World Zionist Organization. The raison d'etre of the Histadrut, states Elia Zureik (1979), "was to ensure the creation of a Jewish state" (p.35). These constituted exclusivist nationalist institutions during the British Mandate, and were to develop, through a series of processes, into a state. They upheld the slogans of the 'conquest of labour,' the 'conquest of land' and 'produce of the land'. In other words, the European settlers were to systematically purchase land through the market, and then systematically exclude the Arab Palestinians from labour on these lands. Gershon Shafir (1996) notes that the impact of 'conquest of labour' lies in "its potential long-term structural contribution to state formation" (p.89), an observation of central importance to my attempt to foreground the continuity of these logics into the contemporary historical conjuncture of post-Oslo Palestine. Not only was this project ethnonationalist, but also heteropatriarchal, formulating its desires in strictly heteropatriarchal terms typical of nineteenth century Europe.

Walaa Al Qaisiya (2020) traces the narratives of conquest and desire for the land of Palestine expressed by the *halutzim*—the early Zionist 'pioneers' on the land. She (2020) quotes from Boaz Neumann's uncritical work on the *halutzim*. We are told that they imagined and desired "an always female, virgin beloved mother earth" and that they sought to "pierce that virginity and cause their beloved to fall in love with, and even wed them" (p.95). Drawing on this work, Al Qaisiya traces what she calls "performances of gender and sexuality that constitute the Zionist project as a desiring project" (p.96). These performances are not separate or locked in the past but continue to underwrite Israeli settler colonial formations of power until today. The settler's desire for the land presumes the incapacity of the 'Arab' to desire the land. She 'troubles' this account by "grasping how [this] desire is the effect of conquest in its violent form and comprehending how violent assumptions constitute the Zionist 'story of origin'" (p.97).

The settler's natural capacity to desire and work the land is juxtaposed with the image of the Arab Other, who is neither capable of desire nor work. This narrative of the desiring and capable settler would later on, particularly in the 1930s and 1940s, be used as the grounds onto which the Palestinian economic apparatus becomes obliterated and Palestinian labor structurally alienated. Al Qaisiya (2020) notes that "Sustained by the figure of the New Jew who is strong and works the land, this early conquest of labour played a fundamental role in clearing natives from the land and instituting zones of insulated Jewish only lands—*Kibbutzim*—that then became the base to 'fashion their ethnocratic state—in waiting—in Mandate Palestine'" (p.98). By the 1930s and under the British Mandate of Palestine (1918 – 1947), this logic of conquest becomes constitutive, creating a 'split labour market' (Shafir, 1996), separate neighborhoods, and electoral systems to the detriment of Palestinian workers and *fellahin* (peasants). The Great Revolution in Palestine (1936-1939), brutally quelled by the British colonial authorities, was a

culmination of the Palestinian fellahin's resistance against their gradual and systemic alienation from both the land and the labour sphere.

It is now well documented by scholars that relationship between British colonialism and Zionist settlement in Palestine ranged from collaboration to hostility (see Norris, 2013; Matthews, 2006; Seikaly, 1995).[29] Nonetheless, the Israeli state reappropriated physical (institutions, prisons, etc.) and juridical structures established under the British mandate. In the cultural realm, the settler state still upholds legal decrees established under the British Mandate, most notably the 1933 Press Ordinance and the 1939 Dealing with the Enemy Act. The former was initially issued by the British authorities to circumvent the licensing and control the content of publications in Palestine. Its intent was to control the use of the press—prominent at the time amongst the different Palestinian Arab political parties/collectives. As Nassar (2017; see Lahav, 1985) notes, the ordinance gave "the high commissioner wide-ranging discretionary powers to suspend any newspaper for any period of time if he deemed it likely to "endanger the public peace" (p.15-45). After 1948, the Israeli authorities would use the same ordinance to circumvent Palestinian access to Arab regional press. The latter act stipulates a 'total ban on all forms of trade with enemy nationals'; gives the authority to the Minister of Interior to declare states as enemy states; and consequently regulates and limits the circulation of ideas and goods between Palestinian Arabs and other nationals. The law is still in use today by the Israeli authorities and has been "used to ban the import of books in the Arabic language published and/or printed in Lebanon and Syria and [in 2010] to prevent Arab Author Ala Helhel to travel to Lebanon to receive the prestigious literary prize 'Beirut 39'" (Adalah, 2020). Although initially instituted

[29] In the early years of the Mandate, the relations between the British administration and the Zionist Jewish settlers were characterized by cooperation. This was so until the 1930s, when new factors (including the Palestinian Arab revolt 1936-1939) challenged this cooperation (see Norris, 2013).

in the particular historical context of the interwar period and the Great Revolution in Palestine for the colonial purpose of suppressing indigenous revolt, these decrees would take another life in a new settler colonial legal architecture with a mandate to dispossess.

The quelling of the revolution meant the seizure of the economic apparatus in Palestine by European Jewish settlers and the initiation of a process of codification of these logics of conquest (land and labour) and the institutions that propagated them (the WZO, the JNF, Histadrut) into a state. From this angle, the dispossession of 750,000 Palestinians in 1948 was not a historical rupture but a culmination of an unfolding process of dispossession. To my mind, the seemingly singular nature of 1948 lies both in the sheer violent nature of this dispossession *as well as* the establishment of a state predicated on these ethnonationalist institutions and practices of dispossession. As argued in the previous chapter, 1948 ushers in the settler state as a 'site of condensation' of these institutions and practices into 'systems of rules' that continue to proliferate differentiated modes of dispossession across Palestinian geographies. That year, the expropriation of Palestinian land meant both the alienation of the Palestinian from the land and the creation of the settler as propertied and, thus, as the proper legal subject. Here, dispossession "was both a prerequisite and a consequence of the coproduction of racial value and property ownership, rendered possible by a logic of abstraction that was central to emergent capitalist forms of property and the racial subjugation of indigenous peoples and their lands and resources" (Bhandar, p.102).

Dispossession in 'Ayn Hawd

During and after 1948, dispossession was carried out primarily by the state, mapping a particular configuration of power. The December 1948 Emergency Regulations and 1950 Absentee Property Law were central juridical means to the expropriation of Palestinian property

(Fischbach, 2003; Robinson, 2013). Homes of Palestinian refugees in the few villages that remained intact after 1948, including ‘Ayn Hawd, were declared as ‘absentee’ properties. As is well documented, the Regulations and later the 1950 Law stipulated that even refugees who remained within Israel were ‘absentee,’ whose properties could be expropriated by the state (Fischbach, 2003, p.22). Thus, as I discuss below, the ‘Ayn Hawd Palestinian residents who fled to a nearby location and declared a New ‘Ayn Hawd (‘Ayn Hawd al-Jadida) were considered ‘absentee’, despite being in close geographic proximity to their former homes and land. In this sense, the state played a direct and primary role in expropriating Palestinian land and property and in enabling the layering of a geography of dispossession atop Palestinian villages.

Susan Slyomovics (1998) notes that between 1948 and 1953, “Israeli authorities attempted several times to resettle Ein Houd with new Jewish immigrants. A group of North African Jews, claiming the soil was terrible, left to establish the moshav (smallholders’ cooperative settlement) of Tsofah five kilometers to the south (p.31). Recall from the previous chapter that due to the particular Israeli racial regime of ownership, most remaining Palestinian homes were used to settle arriving Arab Jews (see Weiss, 2011; Milner, 2020). The village was then used to train Israeli soldiers, “such requisition being typically a prelude to destruction of a village” (Slyomovics, 1998, p.31).

Narrating a story of discovery, Janco recalls how he stumbled upon ‘Ayn Hawd while working for the Government Planning Authority in 1950: “In this connection, I came upon the hill of the Carmel range opposite the Crusaders’ Castle off Atlit. The beauty of the place was staggering. I had been told this village was to be demolished. The sea, the special character of the stone buildings, the feeling grew: forbidden to touch here” (Cited in Slyomovics, p.47).

Janco experimented with different ideas until he decided to turn it into an artists' village, fulfilling a dream that "comes from my experience with Dada in Zurich" (p.31). He made a call on the radio, inviting artists to join the village. It was then and there that Dada met Zionism, spatializing 'scenes of dispossession' that continue into the present.

Throughout the years following 1948, including after the establishment of the arts' colony, former residents of 'Ayn Hawd (now residents of the new 'Ayn Hawd) continued to come back to the village. They were characterized by the Israeli artists as 'squatters' or 'infiltrators' (Slyomovics, 1998, p.115). Slyomovics narrates how one Israeli artist, Isaiah Hillel, offered to compensate Abu Hilmi, a leading Palestinian figure of the adjacent and unrecognized New 'Ayn Hawd, for his home. Abu Hilmi refused, replying: "Because it is a house and you cannot sell a house" (p.112). Abu Hilmi was classified an 'absentee' and it is dispossession and the codification of this dispossession into law that created him as 'propertyless' and the settler-artist as 'propertiered.' The attempted compensation by the settler-artist recasts land and home as property that can be monetized and commodified. Abu Hilmi's response rejects this codification and implies his rejection of the legal structure that recast his home as property.

Political Zionism is embedded within a wider arch of imperial violence. Its modes of dispossession were and are determined by particular historical circumstances. Although the ideals of the movement were first uttered by bourgeois European Jewish thinkers and writers, the material translation of these ideals into a political movement on the land of historical Palestine was determined by the internal and intrinsic contradictions of the movement (the colonial planters and the worker-settlers), and more importantly, by Palestinian rebellion and resistance as attested by the Great Revolution. The organizing notions of 'conquest of labour'

and ‘conquest of land,’ which emerge in tandem with a Jewish working-class nationalism in Palestine, created ethnonationalist institutions that became the harbingers of a settler state in 1948. Janco, a co-founder of the Dada movement in Zurich and a settler on the land of Palestine, was able to translate a dream he had first conceived in Zurich through the dispossession of Palestinians and the expropriation of their land in Palestine.

Both Zionism and Dadaism formulate a critique of Europe by inverting its underpinning logics of imperial violence. By doing so, their critique remains insufficient and tied to what Sylvia Wynter names a ‘particular genre of the human’ that takes a white, propertied, legal, able Man as its proper subject. Wynter argues that a specific deconstruction of gender, per se, “leaves intact the genre of the human to which it is attached, and thus cannot serve as a harbinger of true emancipation” (Wehelieye, 2014, p.22). As Azoulay argues, this genre of the human was created and is sustained by imperial violence, differential rule, and imperial citizenship. I aim to show in this chapter that both political Zionism and Dadaism are iterations—albeit differentiated and historically determined—of this imperial violence. While political Zionism relies on the dispossession of Palestinians to spatialize its insufficient critique, Dadaism relies on the theft of colonial artefacts through the destruction and dispossession of indigenous and colonized worlds. It is Janco that brings the two logics together in the village in ‘Ayn Hawd in Palestine, effecting a re-articulation between dispossession and modern arts that Dadaism had rehearsed in Zurich of the early twentieth century.

The Destroyed World of ‘Ayan Hawd

‘Ayn Hawd is a Palestinian village in Haifa that was systematically dispossessed from its indigenous inhabitants in 1948, following the establishment of the state of Israel. There were 72 Palestinian villages in Haifa prior to 1948, 45 of which were destroyed following that year

(Fischbach, 2003, p.5). In 1945, the village had only 650 residents, though its lands covered 12,605 dunums (3,115 acres) (Kanāʿnah, 1987). In the 1940s, the village had a mosque and two olive presses (ma'asir zaytun). Its population mostly relied on agriculture. According to interviews conducted in the 1980s with the former residents of the village by Palestinian researcher Sharif Kana'nah (1987), the village was famous for its cacti, carob, and olive trees.

During the Great Palestinian revolution (1936-1939), many of the residents were arrested and tortured in British prisons. When the Zionist forces tried to uproot the residents of the village, the residents mounted staunch resistance against them; they formed a 'defense committee' and decided to take up arms in 1948 to protect themselves from the Zionist forces (p.55). The village deterred two attacks by Zionist militias in April and May, as reported by the *Filastin* newspaper on April 13th, 1948 (see Figure 10). One family fled to a nearby location and started a new village that they named 'Ayn Hawd El Jadida (the new 'Ayn Hawd; see Figure 11). From then until 2005, the new village was not recognized by the Israeli state and was consequently deprived of essential services (Al Hayja and Leah Jones, 2001).


عين هوض وعين غزال تدحران اعتداء يهوديا

حيفا في ١٢ نيسان — لمراسل فلسطين الخاص — هاجم ١٥٠ من الاشرار اليهود قرى عين حوض وعين غزال في نحو الساعة الثامنة من مساء امس وبدأوا يطلقون اسلحتهم الالية ومدافعهم الهاون ، وقد تصدى لهم الحرس الوطني في القريتين واصلاهم نارا حامية ردتهم على اعقابهم وهم يحملون ١٢ قتيلا وجريحا واصيب من المهاجمين محمد تمر علي بجراح بسيطة ونقل الى مستشفى الامين بحيفا

Figure 10. 'Ayn Hawd and 'Ayn Ghazal Deter a Zionist Attack. Filastin Newspaper, April 13th, 1948. The National Library of Israel.

The interviews collected by Kana'neh offer a glimpse into the life of the village prior to its dispossession in 1948. They include stories, family trees, descriptions of the schooling system, and detailed description of the experiences of revolt in 1936 and 1948. The interviews, however, were all conducted with men, and the family trees only show a patriarchal lineage, effecting a gender-based erasure and narrating a rather masculinist account of the village. In one interview, we are told that the land was *'waqf land'*, which prior to 1948 meant land "held in trust for Muslim religious and charitable purposes" (Home, 2003, p.297; see Bhandar, 2018). The ownership of the land, then, was restricted only to men: "*waqf* for males, not females" (Kana'neh, 1987, p.33). This raises questions not only about the mere inclusion of women into the apparatus of ownership, but the material ways in which regimes of ownership in Palestine—prior to 1948 and afterwards—are based on capitalist, gendered and colonial notions of property that take the exclusion of others (i.e., the non-owner women) as its condition.



Figure 11. 'Ayn Hawd Mosque, established in 1967, in the new 'Ayn Hawd village. Photograph by Sama Haddad, 2022.

In an interview, Ruth Wilson Gilmore discusses Cedric Robinson's notion of the 'survival of the community.' She then makes an important distinction, relevant to my discussion of ownership and imaginaries for liberation for Palestine. She says, "having a commitment to

what he calls the survival of the community, means that one's pursuit of liberation is different from having a commitment to, say, the restoration of land to the landed bourgeoisie in Palestine from before 1948" (Bhandar and Ziadah, 2020, p.167). In living, thinking, and embodying the right of Palestinian refugees to *return*, we have to ask: return to what and by whom? If we take the categories of racial ownership solidified successively under Ottoman, British, and Israeli rule as a normative site of and for return, we risk reproducing the same colonial, capitalist and heteropatriarchal hierarchies that took the exclusion of women, among others, as their condition of existence.

Five years after the systematic expulsion of the Palestinians, the village's mosque was turned into a restaurant and a bar (see Figure 12); one of its olive presses into an arts exhibition; a house into a museum; and another into a theatre. In a visit to village in the 1980s, Sharif Kana'neh (1987) notes,

> Whoever enters the village now will be deluded by its first appearance, thinking that it is still a Palestinian Arab traditional village. But when walking through its streets and getting closer to the houses of its inhabitants, one will quickly find out that the inhabitants who live there are European Jews; that the courtyards of the houses are decorated with statues of animals and naked women; that the village's mosque is not used for prayer but has been turned into a restaurant and a *khammara* (a bar); and that the olive press has been turned into an arts exhibition, and that the houses that the Israeli artists did not like are left vacant (p.4).



Figure 12. Photograph of the 'Ayn Hawd mosque, which has been turned into a restuarant and a bar. Photograph: Sama Haddad, 2022.

Kana'neh's description is of the transformation of the Palestinian rural architecture of 'Ayn Hawd into an Israeli artists' colony—named Ein Hod. It is an elimination through 'preservation'. Around 418 Palestinian villages were ethnically cleansed in 1948 (Khalidi,

1992).[30] 'Ayn Hawd is one of the few villages where the Palestinian rural fabric was not fully demolished. Instead, it was 'preserved' to create the façade of a settler indigeneity – a process of naturalizing the settler's presence on the land by re-creating the narrative around conquered space. It is a process that requires impressive psychic energies from the settler[31]—to create a narrative that simultaneously suppresses Palestinian presence while pretending to preserve it in a totally disfigured form: as a 'thing' that the settler relates to in order to make sense of and naturalize their reality. This explains why the first settlers of the village chose to keep its name, with some minor adjustments. Other villages, such as al-Zib on the Mediterranean coast in the north of 'Akka (Acre) and al-Tanturah to the south of Haifa, were destroyed and their ruins used to adorn recreation areas and parks established on stolen Palestinian lands (Slyomovics 1998, p.30). The story of 'Ayn Hawd is unique in that it was first established as an artists' colony inspired by the Dada movement—what Susan Slyomovics refers to as 'Dada colonialism'. But the story of 'Ayn Hawd is not unique; the ways in which the racializing logics of the settler state unfold within it can tell us much about the Israeli settler colonial order more generally.

Dada Meets Zionism for a Scene of Dispossession

In 1953, Marcel Janco, a Romanian visual artist and a European settler on the land of Palestine, established an artists' colony in the ethnically cleansed Palestinian village of 'Ayn Hawd. Janco was one of the co-founders of the avant-garde Dada movement in Zurich, Switzerland, during World War I. It is Janco and his colleagues that met at the *Cabaret Voltaire*

[30] There have been varying estimates of the number of destroyed Palestinian villages. While Khalidi (1992) puts it at 418, others put it at 427. See Fischbasch, 2003, pp.5-7.

[31] Cedric Robinson uses this formulation to explain the efforts of the West, across centuries, to create racializing and capitalist foundations. I find his formulation helpful in that it posits the hegemonic presence of Western capitalism as a process, which requires impressive energies to perpetuate itself. Robinson, Cedric J. 2000. *Black Marxism: The Making of the Black Radical Tradition*..

in Zurich to produce art that critiqued the underpinning logics of modern European societies. Since its inception, Dada sought to challenge the founding logics of bourgeois capitalist society, primarily logic, reason, and aestheticism and to formulate an artistic practice that is anti-war, anti-nationalist, and anti-'art' (Slyomovics, 1998). One is compelled to wonder, then, how does an anti-war movement that purports to challenge the founding logics of Western thought take a settler colonial form when it reaches Palestine? We cannot come up with an adequate answer to this question without interrogating the Dada movement's enmeshment within racializing and colonial networks of power at the time.

Both the Surrealist Movement and Dada Movement were international in scope and offered a generative ground for anti-colonial thinkers within and beyond the West that redefined modernism in the 20th century. Aimé Césaire was one of the most successful writers in formulating a profound anti-colonial critique based on the ideals and methodologies of the surrealist movement. Both movements aimed to address the situation in the colonies. Furthermore, both sought to challenge the presumptions of Western thought by 'exploring' non-European arts and cultures.

Antle and Conley (2015) argue that the surrealists "were more concerned with the exploration of exoticism than in actual research on the specificity of various colonial contexts." They further add that, "for the surrealists, the appeal of far-off lands pertains more to myth than to a true knowledge of unfamiliar cultures founded upon a dialogue" (p.2). The same can be said of the Dada Movement. Lewer (2016) argues that 'Dada' "served well the stylized topos of a radical break with the past inherent to the cultural politics and 'propaganda' (as the Dadaists themselves called it) of the wider avant-garde" (p.22). She warns, however, against the tendency to take the founders of Dada at their word and read the movement as a radical break. Doing so

risks overlooking the sociohistorical context within which the movement emerged and their connection "even to the institutions that were the very object of its critique" (p.22).

Despite its generative capacities for anti-colonial and anti-racist non-European thinkers, as demonstrated by the South African arts movement Dada South? (Toussaint, 2017; DadaSouth website) as well as Amiri Baraka's (Roney, 2003; Gillespie, 2018) poem 'Black Dada Nihilismus' (Buckley et al, 2020),[32] the European founders of the movement formulated artistic practices that exoticized the Others of the West through a European gaze and by relativizing their existence to that of Europe. The Other was relevant insofar as they made it possible to critique Europe—move beyond its Arts, States, Markets, and Nationalisms. In an interview with *Arts* magazine (1982), Janco uses precisely these terms to explain Dada's art:

> As I told you, we had evenings of popular art. And don't forget that French artists like Picasso were influenced by Negro Art. My work was perhaps influenced for a moment by Paris, but we went further. We not only thought of primitive art as the real art, but we also regarded the art of childhood as a real art. We even came to the idea of exhibiting the art of the insane… We always thought that the peasant who didn't know the academies made better art than the academies and the schools of Paris (p.83).

To consider primitive art—referring to non-European art—as 'real' was as transgressive as regarding as real the art of children and the 'insane'. The 'primitive'—already a colonial and developmentalist categorization—is implicitly infantilized and pathologized. Janco, then, shares his romantic celebration of the 'peasant' as a better artist than the 'schools of Paris.' In a colonial move, he elevates the primitive and the peasant to the status of the 'real' only to instrumentalize both in rejecting the academies of Paris.

Janco was not the only European espousing these ideas and then materializing them into institutions of dispossession. For example, Mira Alfassa, the founder of the French 'utopian'

[32] Amiri Baraka first published this poem as a track on an album with the Jazz band, the New York Art Quartet, in 1964. It may be found here, in Baraka's voice: Jerkicus. 2009. *New York Art Quartet / Amiri Baraka - Black Dada Nihilismus*. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=98oK6zZXmQw&ab_channel=Jerkicus.

colonial city of *Auroville* on dispossessed Tamil lands in southern India, once proclaimed, in astoundingly similar terms: "a simple and ignorant [Indian] peasant was closer to the divine than the intellectuals of Europe" (Namakkal, 2021, p.180).[33] In a manner akin to Janco, the Mother—the title Alfassa chose for herself—advocated for a utopian city grounded in liberal notions of multiculturalism, spirituality, and equality that resulted in the displacement of "Tamil populations from land and history, time and place" (p.177). *The peasant is metaphorized in discourse, dispossessed in reality.* The dispossession occurs through a language of neutrality: art, museum, utopia.

The Dadaists' exposure to non-European arts was mediated and made possible through the circuits of stealing and dislocating that colonialism enabled. In a commentary on the special exhibition *Dada Afrika – Dialog mit dem Fremden,* held at the Berlinische Galerie in 2016, Le Gall (2016) notes that the Dadaists' exposure to non-European arts was in and of itself mediated through colonialism: it "emerged from the collecting and exhibitory craze of ethnological museums made possible by colonial rule, as the collages by Hannah Höch[34] remind us" and from an encounter with "non-European artistic expression in scientific publications of that time fraught with colonial thinking"(Le Gall, 2016). Le Gall critiques the exhibition, which in its emphasis on 'dialogue', fails to explore the power relations between the European Dadaists and the African, Oceanian, and Indigenous artists in today's North America. "Only the mediated gaze provided by the Dadaists is granted a space in the canon." Le Gall's critique of the exhibition may as well capture the conundrum of Dada's stance on colonialism:

[33] I would like to thank Sneha Krishnan for bringing this to my attention.
[34] Hannah Höch was one of the most influential Dada artists, as she was one of the generators of photomontage, which, through manipulation, destabilized the perceived authority of the photograph as a source of truth at the time. For more on Hoch's work, read Cole, Merrill. 2015. "Uncapture This Image." *South Central Review* 32 (1): 23–42. https://doi.org/10.1353/scr.2015.0006.

> In the subtitle and in the midst of the exhibition, these objects remain *Fremde* [foreign]: they are foreign to the continuum of artistic evolution, detached from the timeline of artistic production. Only a more courageous curatorial work could have helped them to break free from their shackling colonial entanglements, to speak, to be real, to be granted back their actual ritualistic and artistic values.

In its European iterations, then, the Dada movement propagated Western bourgeois thought by neither properly interrogating its colonial presumptions nor questioning the circuits of stolen cultural artefacts that made its exposure to the non-European possible. If the role of the archive and museum is to pursue the new and reproduce the destroyed as past, Dada's concern was with pursuing the new in the stolen artefacts that were supposed to represent the past, the childish, the primitive, the insane. In this sense, the Dada movement, like the exhibition, "[fixates] non-European art forms, maybe not to a remote past, but to the margins of art history, presenting them only as sources of inspiration, as aesthetic tools used by Dadaists against a European moral and rational consciousness in crisis" (Le Gall, 2016).

This brief overview of Dada's relationship to colonialism is of major relevance to our discussion of Marcel Janco and his settler colony on the stolen Palestinian land of 'Ayn Hawd. It is also an extension of my discussion above of Azoulay's work and of Kanafani's, whose works place Zionism—as an ideology and a movement—within its specific sociohistorical context of Europe. Susan Slyomovics (1998) states that "The ways in which Zionism and Dada, two seemingly unrelated movements, have intersected and sustained each other cannot be understood without invoking a pithy axiom of one of Janco's contemporaries, the singer and poet Emmy Ball-Hennings[35], who said about Dada that 'paradox triumphed'" (p.35). When we consider the overview of Dada's founding members' relationship to non-European arts and

[35] Emmy Ball-Hennings was one of the founders of the Dada Movement in Zurich and was the only woman among the founding members. She was a singer, a dance, and a poet. For more on her, read Rugh, Thomas F. "Emmy Hennings and the Emergence of Zurich Dada." *Woman's Art Journal* 2, no. 1 (1981): 1-6. Accessed February 11, 2021. doi:10.2307/1357892.

cultures delineated above, we come to view Marcel Janco's settler art not as a paradox, as Sylomovics suggests, but as a natural extension of a colonial iteration of the Dada movement.

The Artist Settler Colony



Figure 13. Photograph titled 'Planting the Future,' which shows Israeli settlers working the land in the early stages of the artists colony of Ein Hod. Source: Ein Hod Website.

'Planting the future' is the title of the photograph (see Figure 13). It shows two settler women, carrying tools and aligning the pathways. In the middle of the photograph, we see a male settler standing next to a built structure—what appears to be a Palestinian rural house. To the right of the photograph, we see another settler at work, perhaps aligning blocks around a basin. These are the desiring settlers, in AlQaisiya's parlance (2020, p.98). The conquest of labour in Palestine, as discussed above, was central to the material spatialization of Zionist ideals into a reality (see Shafir, 1996). The caption captures these settlers at work as an act of

‘planting the future’. But the future needs a past, especially when the violence of the past is inscribed in the very structures within which a future is to be built.

In discussing the archive, Azoulay (2019) argues that the distinction often made between the ‘documents’ and the archive’s ‘neutral procedures’ is constitutive in that “it endows the archive itself with neutrality, just as the handling of art objects through normative procedures endows museums with its veneer of neutrality” (p.29). Recall Azoulay’s observation, discussed at the beginning of this chapter, that the museum and the archive are both institutions that are the effect of a process of destruction and a “substitute for destroyed worlds” (p.20). I read ‘Ayn Hawd as the material documentation of Palestinian world-making prior to 1948, and its ‘preservation’ as an arts colony as an articulation of both an imperial and colonial archive and museum. In claiming neutrality, Janco and the contemporary Israeli artists occupying ‘Ayn Hawd continuously aim to turn it into an archive and a museum—a moment of the past that needs selective preservation. Preservation and arts endow the village and its settlers with a constitutive sense of neutrality that denies the past and present of dispossession in Palestine. Ein Hod—the artists’ colony—is what Azoulay (2019) calls a “nonqualified institution, a cornerstone of any political regime that is to operate properly” (p.29). In hiding its tracks of violence, the artists’ colony reproduces a constitutive sense of neutrality that does not even relegate dispossession to the past; it participates in it today. Using Wolfe’s (2006) register, we may say that Ein Hod is a ‘structure, not an event.’ Its establishment a few years after 1948 by a European settler, who was an employed official of the state, points to its role as a cornerstone of the settler colonial order within which it operates.

Zionism and Dadaism meet in the Palestinian village of ‘Ayn Hawd in order to enact a critique of Europe that only re-spatializes Europe and its imperial, colonial, and racial

taxonomies. It is no coincidence, then, that the museum, the gallery, and the 'preservation' of the Palestinian village as an 'archive' coincide directly with the destruction of Palestinian world-making prior to 1948. The museum (see Figure 14) and the archive are technologies of manufacturing a past and maintaining a constitutive distance from this destruction. Except that the distance we often presume between the geography from which an artefact is stolen and the geography where the museum is established—the colonial metropole and the colonial periphery, respectively—does not exist in the transformation of 'Ayn Hawd into Ein Hod. The looted object—the house, the mosque, the olive press—is quite directly turned into a museum and an archive. The preservation occurs exactly where the looting and destruction had occurred.



Figure 14. Photograph of Janco-Dada Museum in Ein Hod ('Ayn Hawd). Photograph: Sama Haddad, 2022.

Janco arrived in Palestine in 1941, having fled Romania as the forces of Nazi and fascist Europe systematically targeted Jewish communities. In the interview with Arts magazine (1982), Janco notes that he was asked by his friends in New York to join them. But he refused, proclaiming himself a devout Israeli settler: "I didn't want to be another wandering Jew. I wanted to settle in my own land, so I went to Israel. I brought here the ideas we started in Zurich and Romania." Slyomovics (1998) states that in his early days in Palestine, Janco struggled as fine arts were not a priority for the settler-state-in-formation (p.32-33). It did not take long,

however, for him to find a way to articulate his Dadaist artistic commitments unparadoxically through his newly acquired settler subjectivity. The settler colonial logics of forced expulsion and murderous elimination enabled a translation of Dada into a material and physical reality that continued to engage the non-European only in their absence—as an exotic framework through which to build new artistic practices that claim to be anti-war, anti-nationalist, and anti-art but are in reality made possible only through perpetual war and conquest denial.

In 1953, five years after the forced expulsion of Palestinian refugees from their village of ‘Ayn Hawd, Janco received permission from the settler state to establish a cooperative artist village in the vacant village of Ein Houd [‘Ayn Hawd] (Slyomovics 1998, p.31). According to the website of Ein Hod, “After the War of Independence, the area was abandoned and left in ruin” (Ein Hod website). Abandonment here connotes the act of voluntarily leaving something behind with no intention of returning. This is in contradiction to our account of the village above and the forced expulsion of its native residents. The original Palestinian residents are forcibly made absent from the history of the village, though their architecture and olive presses are still preserved as a generative ground for a Zionist Dada. The colony’s website states that

> Very few places in Israel have managed to retain the authentic quality of the Mediterranean. One can still discern in the old structures the many textures and architectural forms of earlier occupants – from the Christian Crusades to the Turkish Empire.

In this framing, one is made to believe there has never been a Palestinian presence in the village. Simply, we are told, many people have passed through the land—from the Crusades in the twelfth century reaching the Turkish Empire of the early twentieth century—whose ‘authentic Mediterranean’ contributions are preserved. We can locate here the original Dada mode of relationality to the non-European, whereby the contributions of the latter are ‘preserved’ as an authentic source of inspiration, but the power relations, especially the settler colonial murderous

elimination that allowed for this encounter between Zionist Dadaism and the 'authentic' architecture, are not only obscured but actively denied through reference to 'independence' and a unified, mythical and 'authentic' Mediterranean quality (see Slyomovics, 2014).[36]

The reference to an 'authentic Mediterranean' works here to obscure and burry the Arab and Palestinian origins of 'Ayn Hawd. As Slyomovics (2014) elaborates, citing David Ohana, the "Mediterranean option" celebrated by Ein Hod artists and Israel more generally refers to a "special settler narrative form [that] subsumes a geopolitical entity, Mediterranean Israel, to a narrative of respectful storytelling between sovereign states, namely Israel and its Arab neighbors" (p.33). While Ohana celebrates this option as one that brings to view the "closeness and a rich fabric of geo-cultural affinities among the peoples living in the Mediterranean Basin", Slyomovics identifies this as a settler narrative of indigenization—an attempt to naturalize and rationalize the inherent violence of the Israeli settler colonial formation through reference to 'geo-cultural' affinity. The Mediterranean option allows Israeli arts, as produced by and productive of the settler state, to claim a geo-cultural affinity, which in turn works to hide Israel's settler colonization of Syrian, Lebanese and Palestinian lands within this imagined Mediterranean basin.

By claiming this 'Mediterranean option,' the Zionist Dada's eliminatory relation to Palestinian physical and bodily geographies is disguised. Let us consider, for example, what Slyomovics (1998) calls the "notoriously raucous Purim parties and costume balls" (p.33) held in Ein Hod in its first years. Slyomovics highlights how these parties were held simultaneously, in different locations within Ein Hod: one in the mosque- turned-into-café; another in the house-turned-into-gallery, and yet another in a house occupied by an Israeli dancer. The sites of

[36] Sylomovics makes a compelling argument about the competing versions of the Mediterranean and how Israeli arts has woven together a particular notion of the Mediterranean that hides circuits of coloniality.

dispossession of the Palestinian become sites of settler entertainment. The costumes used by the artists at the time suggest a clear racializing logic reminiscent of Dada's original exoticizing gaze. Slyomovics (1998) tells us that in one of the parties, "on a high platform of an Arab house largely unrenovated and so dubbed the harem for the evening, Janco reclined Oriental-style (*yeshivah mizrahit*) costumed as "a Persian shaykh" complete with turban and wide pants" (p.33). The description of what I will term, following Latty et al (2016) '*scenes of dispossession*'[37], is replete with exoticizing and colonial gestures: the *harem*, the 'Oriental-style' costume, and the 'Persian shaykh' with his turban and wide pants. The exoticizing gaze of Dada, rooted in colonialism, reaches Palestine, and like the original paintings of African, Oceanic, and Indigenous Artists whose names are occluded from the Dada Afrika exhibition, we are presented with a 'scene of dispossession,' where the inhabitants and builders of the ethnically-cleansed Arab house are unnamed and unaccounted for, and where the non-European Other—here represented by a Persian shaykh—is yet another (bodily) territory of leisure and exploration for the European Other of Europe.

In reality, the establishment of the settler colonial artist village of Ein Hod is a manifestation of a dominant art, a cornerstone of the political order that made it possible: the settler colony. It is a result of a physical, material and violent conquest that forcibly expelled the Palestinians, then discursively framed our forced absence (which makes us always present) as an unnameable architectural 'antiquity' to be 'preserved' in order to generate new imaginaries and new arts—an Israeli settler colonial art. Except that these imaginaries were

[37] Building on Saidiya Hartman's influential work *Scenes of Subjection: Terror, Slavery, and Self-Making in Nineteenth-Century America* and Audra Simpson's *Mohawk Interruptus: Political Life Across the Borders of Settler States*, Stephanie Latty and Megan Scribe write about "scenes of dispossession," which can be understood as repetitive iterations of a settler colonial reality that instruct us to forget. See Stephanie Latty, Megan Scribe, Alena Peters, and Anthony Morgan. 2016. "Not Enough Human: At the Scenes of Indigenous and Black Dispossession."

never new: they are from and of Europe's racializing hierarchies and its violent lust for capital and land. It is this conquest denial on which Israeli arts are predicated. It is the pain, tears, stories, memories, songs, and myths of the Palestinian residents of 'Ayn Hawd that will continue to haunt and denaturalize Ein Hod as a settler colony.

Scenes of Haunting

Objects—such as the olive press, the museum, and the house—are not "standalone artifacts whose inscribed content exists for experts to interpret (Azoulay, 2019, p.24). They were and are inscribed in materials worlds "out of which people's rights are made manifest" (p.24). In this sense, the material objects that make up Ein Hod today are simultaneously the mediums through which the apparatus of Israeli colonial citizenship and its regeneration of citizen-rights are practiced and the ones through which Palestinian rights are denied.

In my conversations with Sama Haddad, the photographer with whom I collaborated, we discussed ghosts and haunting and their presence in 'Ayn Hawd (Figure 15). Her photograph of the seeming silhouette, passing by a Palestinian home, represents a scene of haunting. It reminds us of the "relentless remembering and reminding", in Tuck's and Ree's (2016) words, that refuses to take the settler state as a site of



Figure 15. Photograph of a silhouette passing by a Palestinian house in 'Ayn Hawd. Photograph: Sama Haddad

appeal and redress and that cannot be intelligible to the settler society's modes of knowing. Its unintelligibility is what constitutes its power.

Stones do haunt. While reading the oral history of 'Ayn Hawd collected by Kana'neh, I came across a telling story of haunting, narrated by one of the former Palestinian residents of the village. He said:

> After the forced migration [1948], five or six different peoples lived in our *balad* (village). There were not a people or a category of people who lived in our *balad* and stayed for more than two months; they escaped because they used to be attacked with stones while sleeping… This continued until the Jewish residents decided to ask one of the [balad's] former residents, who used to sleep in Dalyet al-Druze [a nearing village]…He told them: this *balad* was poor and its residents *darawish*[38]; they were living together in peace… He said: this balad might have *ashbah* (ghosts) and these might be good custodians that do not want you to live here, (cited in Kana'neh, 1987, p.33).

The story narrates a scene of haunting. It names a frightening experience—the settlers being attacked in their sleep with stones, without the ability to determine the source. In this sense, the ghosts' presence is felt precisely through their absence. In her study of what she terms 'ghostly matters,' Gordon (2008) argues that what distinguishes haunting from trauma is that it demands that 'something-be-done.' To her, these spectres or ghosts that haunting summons arise when the "trouble they represent and symptomize is no longer being contained or repressed or blocked from view." In this sense, what distinguishes a ghost is "that it has a real presence and demands its due, your attention" (p.xvi); it throws stones to disrupt the sleep of those whose social reality is constituted by the forced dispossession of Palestinian refugees and the silence and absence that such a dispossession enacted and continues to enact. The fact that this former resident recalls the aftermath of the dispossession of his village through the register of haunting names the necessity of accounting for the social relations that enable the artists' settler colony

[38] This is the Arabic plural of 'dervish', which in this context roughly means modest.

to claim a neutrality and to spatialize itself as an unproblematized archive and museum. Haunting, says Gordon, "is about putting life back in where only a vague memory or a bare trace was visible to those who bothered to look" (p.22). Haunting is about recalling the destroyed and repressed world of the Palestinian village of 'Ayn Hawd and refusing for it to be repressed. It is about naming the destruction-through-preservation of the village and the constitutive role that the repression of this memory of destruction plays in its transformation into a Dadaist shrine. It is also about demanding that something-be-done, though this demand, as Tuck and Ree (2016) remind us, cannot be contained by "settler society's assurances of innocence and reconciliation" (p.642).

A house whose center is shaken by the ghost from every direction. Haunting names persistent histories that disrupt our normative understanding of temporality. But it also names a process of mediation: "the process that links an institution and an individual, a social structure and a subject, and history and a biography" (Gordon, 2008, p.19). It is such mediation that the late Palestinian poet Isam El 'Abbasi (1924-1989) names in a poem he wrote in the Haifa-based *Al-Jadid* newspaper in September, 1962 and dedicated to 'Ayn Hawd (see Figure 16).[39] The poet addresses the artist-painter in Ein Hod—the settler colony—and asks him to "tear apart your *sitar* and throw it away from your studio/spell the remnants of your tint and break your brush." Sitar in Arabic means cover or mask or curtain. After the poet asks the painter to tear apart the *sitar,* the poet narrates what he sees: "I have seen over the painting my blood,

[39] For more on the cultural legacy of *Al-Jadid* newspaper, see Morgenstern, H. (2019, September 23). *An Archive of Literary Reconstruction after the Palestinian Nakba*. MERIP.

bleeding/and I have seen the shadow of deception distort your painting." The painting and its colors are enabled by a mask of deception that denies the dispossession the painter and the painting enacted; once torn, this dispossession is brought forward, demanding that something-be-done. The poet then asks the painter: "do not you feel the center of your house shaking/its ashbah (ghosts) standing in every direction." The painter, as a subject, is seen as connected to the institution that enacted the dispossession, his painting as a medium of mediation linking the institution and the individual. The silencing of the suffering and dispossession of the Palestinian, the poet means to tell us, creates the condition for the painting. Haunting raises the spectres living in every direction of the house that the painter occupies, demanding that the painting is torn apart. Something-to-be-done.


عين حوض

للشاعر عصام العباسي

Figure 16. Poem by Palestinian poet 'Isam El 'Abbasi, titled 'Ayn Hawd and published in Al Jadid magazine in Haifa in 1962. Source: Al Jadid Magazine, September, 1962, housed at the Palestinian Museum Online Archive.

The house of Ali Al Nimer. In my search for fragments of the destroyed world-making of 'Ayn Hawd, I came across images posted to the online platform *Palestine Remembered*, a platform that allows Palestinian refugees to submit photographs or documents pertaining to their destroyed villages and cities. 'Ayn Hawd is one entry. Amongst the photographs are ones dated with the year 2000 and that picture two Palestinian women, standing near houses in 'Ayn Hawd and naming their original owners. In the description, we are told that one of the women is Om Faisal (Figure 10, to the left) and the other is her sister (to the right). They both live in Jordan, though they are originally from 'Ayn Hawd. In one of the photographs, titled 'The

Stolen/Looted house of Ali al-Nimir" (see Figure 17), we see Om Faisal and her sister standing in front of an old house that, we are told, belongs to Ali al-Nimir.



Figure 17.Photograph titled 'The Stolen/Looted House of Ali al-Nimir. Om Faisal and Her Sister stand in front of the house. Source: Palestine Remembered website.

I went back to the booklet on 'Ayn Hawd, compiled by the team at Birzeit University. I opened the section that had the patrilineal family trees that map the names of males in the family and silence the names of females. In one of them, particularly family no.5, there was the name Ali and that of his father Nimir (circled below in Figure 18). Om Faisal and her sister stand in front of the house and point to the names of their original owners. By doing so, they demand to resituate these homes in the destroyed worlds that the settler colony of Ein Hod seeks to bury. They summon the ghosts by putting "life back in where only a vague memory or a bare trace was visible to those who bothered to look" (Gordon, 2008, p.22). They point to stories that, as Gordon argues, "not only repair representational mistakes, but also strive to understand the conditions under which a memory was produced in the first place, towards a countermemory, for the future" (p.22). The something-to-be-done is not about re-narrating the story of the artists' settler colony to include these fragments of history that point to the destroyed worlds of the Palestinian village. But to understand, rethink, and ask for the abolition of the

conditions that not merely relegate these fragments to memory but wholeheartedly deny them. Just as Azoulay (2019) approaches the stolen artefacts of the museum "as objects in which the rights of violated communities are inscribed" (p.24), through haunting, the former resident of the village cited in the booklet, the poet, and Om Faisal approach the houses as material objects in which the violation of their rights is inscribed.

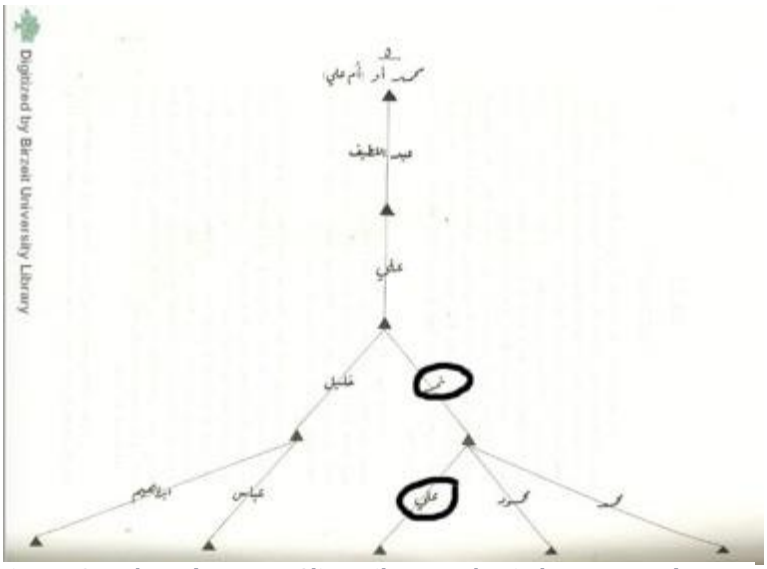


Figure 18. Mohamed or Umm 'Ali Family Tree. The circles are around 'Nemer' and 'Ali'. Source: Sharif Kana'neh, al-Qurá al-Filasṭīnīyah al-mudammarah., Raqam 1: 'Ayn Hawd.

Conclusion

In his study of Zionist literature, Kanafani (2015) notes that the Zionist novelist "will always find himself, within the context of justifying Israel, called upon to take racist stances" (p.37). I have tried to develop this further in this chapter by showing how Zionism as the ideological edifice of the material structures of the settler state of Israel is a racializing ideology that starts within the specific sociohistorical context of Europe and later, through its encounter with the Indigenous Palestinian, metamorphizes into a condensed structure of dispossession. Political Zionism reorders the racializing hierarchies of Europe in order to instantiate a white-Jewish-supremacist, racializing, capitalist and heteropatriarchal settler colonial order that denies the humanity of the majority of those living on the land of Palestine. In this sense, like the novelist, settler artists predicate their work on what Moten and Harney (2013) call a "conquest denial" (pp.41-42). By doing so, they fall into a colonial and position.

Such was the case with Marcel Janco. As one of the founders of the Dada Movement, Janco articulated a critique that ridiculed nationalism, arts (as hegemonic) and war. However, in its gaze upon the non-European Other, the Dada Movement never left the colonial and racializing grounds of Europe. The Other was to be categorized as explorable, exotic, and understandable in order for a critique of Western bourgeois thought to emerge. Slyomovics (1998) puts it succinctly: "Folk art, naïve art, the art of Africa and Oceania, children's art, Amerinidian art, and Palestinian Arab material culture were all thought by Dada artists to be untouched by bourgeois, capitalist sensibilities and were pure expression of a deep, inchoate reservoir of human feeling" (p.36). It is only for that aim that the Dada Movement explores the non-European Other: as a State of Nature reservoir of human feeling, outside History. Of course, it does not occur to Janco or his contemporaries that the non-European Other was and still is being subjected to the most brutal manifestations of European bourgeois thought (slavery, colonialism, and genocide). This is where Zionism and Dadaism meet: where a critique of European bourgeois thought ends up only re-ordering and remapping its racializing and colonial hierarchies; where a critique is enabled only by conquest denial that justifies the material structures that allowed Janco to be in Palestine, deny Palestinian geographies, and orchestrate a scene of dispossession that continues until today: Ein Hod.

The story of 'Ayn Hawd points to an early iteration of an instrumentalization of art for the sake of reproducing and enhancing geographies of dispossession. This linking between art and displacement within 'authentic' fabrics is now most commonly associated with 'gentrification' in the city. Analyzing the logics underpinning this linkage in the non-urban shows their relationality with contemporary, neoliberal re-articulations between the artistic and

dispossession. It anticipates such re-articulations and shows their contingency. It also opens up our analytical lens to other-than-urban socio-spatial processes and practices, including haunting.

The Palestinian scenes of haunting that I explored insist on the rights of the violated community of ‘Ayn Hawd from whom the houses, mosques, and streets were stolen. They point us to not merely ask to re-narrate the story of the artists’ settler colony in order to make room for the Palestinian worlds that ‘precede’ it. Ghosts, as argued above, appear when the social and political violence refuses to continue to be repressed. In ‘Ayn Hawd, they appear not simply because this violence from the ‘past’ is yet to be accounted for. Rather, they appear because this violence continues, and the mandate to dispossess is still unfolding in Palestine. In the next chapter, I explore how contemporary neoliberal ‘gentrification’ of the Palestinian city of Haifa enlists arts for the purpose of burying yet another Palestinian geography: Wadi Salib. ‘Ayn Hawd became Ein Hod through direct state intervention. The gentrification of Wadi Salib is occurring through both state-intervention and market forces. In both, the colonial relation is what persists and serves as the background through which dispossession through state-intervention and through market forces occurs. Ein Hod is a settler colonial artist village. Ein Hod is the settler colony.

Chapter Three

Arts in the Parallel City

Introduction



Figure 19. The gentrification of Wadi Salib. Pictured is Al-Burj building, which has been turned into law offices. It is now owned by four real estate companies (Ibraheem-Sa'di, 2021, p.698). Photograph by Sama Haddad, 2022.

For the last three decades, the cities of Haifa and Ramallah have witnessed the emergence of notable urban Palestinian cultural scenes. Haifa is a city in the north of today's Israel. It was occupied in 1948 by Zionist paramilitary groups, when 60,000 of its indigenous Palestinian inhabitants were forcibly displaced (Khalidi, 1988; Khalidi, 2008). Those who

remained were relocated to the Wadi Nisnas neighborhood and placed under a strict military rule. The city lies within the Green Line—the 1949 Armistice Line, demarcating the 'official' borders of the Israeli state. Ramallah was occupied in 1967 and its population is still under military occupation. Since 1993, following the signing of the Oslo Peace Agreement, the town-turned-city has undergone significant transformations—its population has significantly increased (from 45,000 in 1985 to 350,000, including al Bireh, in 2021)[40]; its urban fabric has expanded; and its political and socioeconomic impact on the rest of the West Bank has grown more significant.

In both cities, non-governmental cultural organizations and privately-run cultural venues proliferate, attracting artists from other Palestinian villages and cities. The Palestinian cultural fields in both cities are directly influenced by the Israeli settler colonial order. However, the relations of force that structure each differs according to its relation to the settler colonial paradigm. While Haifa faces urban renewal schemes directly instituted by the Israeli municipality as well as Israeli and international capital and facilitated by a multilayered history of dispossession of the Palestinian and racialization of the Arab Jew, Ramallah is the product of international funding, Palestinian capitalism and colonial recognition politics. Thus, Palestinian artists in both cities negotiate political and cultural terrains shaped differentially by settler colonialism.

Scholars have situated the proliferation of cultural sensibilities in the two cities within a wider terrain of shifting political and socioeconomic relations. These include the neoliberalisation of the Israeli economy in 1985 and its consequent reshaping of Palestinian economy, the Oslo Agreement and its enshrining of consumerist and colonial recognition

[40] See Ramallah Municipality's table of Ramallah's population over the years. https://www.ramallah.ps/ar_page.aspx?id=c5Hv4Pa1657001973ac5Hv4P, last accessed November 4, 2021.

politics across the Green Line, rural-urban migration in Haifa and the return of segments of the diaspora to Ramallah (Taraki, 2008a, 2008b; Karkabi, 2018; Withers, 2021; Hilal, 2006) and an increasing Western interest in arts in the Arab World, particularly in the wake of the Arab Spring in 2011 (Toukan, 2021). In this chapter, I follow the works of these scholars to suggest a reading of urban Palestinian arts that simultaneously attends to these structuring forces as well as the ways in which Palestinian artists negotiate them. Following my discussion of dispossession and ‘Ayn Hawd in the previous chapter, which explored the direct role of the state in dispossessing Palestinians of their lands in the rural areas, this chapter is more attuned to the complex relationship between the settler state and the neoliberal capitalist networks of power. While the world of ‘Ayn Hawd was directly destroyed by the Israeli state, in Ramallah and Haifa the market forces play a fundamental role in the expansion and renewal of their fabrics. The relational geography of the urban and non-urban serves here to highlight how the colonial relation facilitates the dispossessing force of the market.

This work aims to contribute to an emerging body of literature engaged in the analysis of culture and urbanization in the Global South. It is primarily interested in tracing how Palestinian artists, in different locations in relation to the Israeli settler colonial paradigm, make sense of their cultural struggles within the city. It offers a close reading of two case studies: Ramallah and Haifa. This is meant to methodologically upset the tendency to view the two cities as discrete entities by showing how the settler colonial order continues into the present of Haifa as much as it does into Ramallah’s.

The chapter examines the relationship between, on the one hand, urban renewal and expansion under settler colonialism and, on the other, Palestinian artists. I make the argument that gentrification theory makes presumptions that reduce the multilayered struggles condensed

in city-form and neglects the constitutive role of the colonial relation. It also locks the complex levels of mediation within the urban and cultural spheres to a production/consumption (and submission/resistance) binary that fails to highlight modes of subjectivation and the contradictory positions artists embody.

I approach the cultural scenes in the two cities relationally in order to delineate the limits and potentialities for a politics of cultural resistance. I am not merely interested in demonstrating how these wider urban forces limit and condition the production and consumption of Palestinian arts. Nor am I in search of recuperating a redemptive agency for Palestinian artists. Rather, building on Stuart Hall's formulations as well as discussions within human geography on the 'critical infrastructure' for arts in the city, I find that Palestinian artists in the two cities embody contradictory positions. Their production of art is facilitated by their middle-class mobility and the neoliberalisation of the Israeli economy and its dependent Palestinian economy. In the case of Haifa, I argue that the Palestinian cultural scene directly benefits from the Israeli municipality's urban renewal schemes, which target the Palestinian neighborhoods of downtown, Wadi Nisnas and Wadi Salib. Yet, by articulating political difference against the backdrop of settler colonial erasure, I find that the artists engage in 'practices of articulation' that point towards and activate new political subjectivities.

Gentrification as Encompassing Comparison

Geographers have written prolifically on 'gentrification' since the term was first coined by British sociologist Ruth Glass in 1964. Notwithstanding this wide literature, gentrification can generally be defined as "nothing more than a rising rent environment and associated forms of market-induced displacement" (Ghertner, 2015, p.552). In earlier literature on gentrification, scholars (pioneered by Sharon Zukin's work, 1982) noted a clear link between arts and

displacement and proposed that we understand the intricate relationships between urban transformations and the spatialization of 'creative districts' (Zukin & Braslow, 2011). Capital-centered as these expositions were, they inaugurated a stratified debate between demand (economic and production-centered) and supply-oriented (culture and consumption-centered) explanations (see Lees, 2000, for an overview). While the former critiqued the constitutive role arts play in furthering the displacement of the poor (see Zukin, 1982), others demonstrated a sympathetic approach to artists as they themselves become displaced in the cycle of gentrification (see Ley, 2003 for an example).

Scholars have argued that gentrification in cities in the Global North has gone through three waves (see Smith, 1996). The first involves "the small scale" and "autonomous movement of individual middle-class households into old, working class inner city neighborhoods" (Cameron and Coaffee, 2006, p.42); the second, lasting till the end of the 1980s, was "characterized by the integration of gentrification into a wider range of economic and cultural processes at the global and national scales" (Hackworth and Smith, 2001, p.467-468); and, the third, 'post-recession' wave is associated with the "hard branding of the cultural city" (Cameron and Coaffee, 2005, p.44; see also Evans, 2003). The first wave involved the "creation by artists of a milieu for the production of art" (Cameron and Coaffee, 2005, p.46), where artists—endowed with significant cultural, rather than economic, capital—move into neglected or dilapidated neighborhoods. Zukin's innovative work on loft living in New York focuses on the second-wave gentrification. Zukin and Braslow (2011) argue that artists face a financial constraint, which "pulls' them to underused residential and commercial space and low-income neighborhood" (p.135). They further add that, "cultural producers show patterns of chain migration when a large percentage of recent graduates of individual art schools and colleges

settle in the same neighborhood" (p.135). The third wave of gentrification has included a "valorization of cultural capital" as "resurgent neoliberal economics and a harsher, more individuated civil society has appropriated cultural production" (Ley, 2003 as cited in Cameron and Coaffee, 2006, p.44). In the third wave, then, we see arts and cultural capital more clearly sutured to the logic of a 'creative city' whose creativity merely serves to augment capitalist accumulation.

These schematic and temporal descriptions of gentrification rest on case studies from the Global North and on particular presumptions about land tenure systems, planning systems as well as *particular* capitalisms. Scholars have attempted to provincialize gentrification theory by looking at cities in the Global South (see Ghertner, 2015 for an overview; see Merrifield, 2014 for an example). However, these attempts do not escape the 'encompassing comparison'—i.e., measuring historically specific and socially embedded processes against a more general and unified whole—that permeates much of contemporary urban theory (Hart, 2018). As Ghertner (2015) notes, gentrification literature, including that which focuses on the Global South, utilizes a "diffusionist model of theory that uses conditions 'there', in the South, to confirm theory from 'here', in the North" (p.553).

In thinking about contemporary 'urban renewal' in Haifa and 'urban expansion' in Ramallah and their associated power-laden forms of cultural production, I aim to move away from this model by (1) stressing the historical contingency of these modes of urban production on particular private and non-private colonial tenure systems; and (2) by closely examining the different levels of spatial and cultural mediation that Palestinian artists both encounter and enact. By noting the limitations of this 'diffusionist model,' I am as careful to not reproduce an analysis of the cultural as fully subsumed within an all-encompassing 'urban' or of advocating

for what Goonewardena (2015, paraphrasing Gramsci) has so succinctly put as a "pessimism of the habitat, optimism of the inhabitant" (p.219). Such a misrecognition/misrepresentation avoids a critical and rigorous reading of the different levels of spatial mediation between the urban, the cultural, the juridical and the social within particular historical conjunctures. In this section, I engage with contemporary debates within human geography and urban studies to argue that 'urban renewal' and 'urban expansion' in Haifa and Ramallah and their associated modes of cultural production cannot be understood merely through gentrification literature.

Ghertner's (2015) observation rests on a wider argument that notes a "property centrism" within gentrification literature, one that presumes that "private property is already the exclusive, or predominant, form of tenure in the places it seeks to describe." He is careful to note that this does not merely point to a postcolonial gesture, but to the "great political risks associated with ignoring the rich lifeworlds sustained by diverse, non-privatized land-regimes" (p.553). Thus, gentrification theory explains the mechanisms of rising rents and displacements of the poor while failing to interrogate the wider and historically specific "elimination of the very possibility of non-private forms of tenure" (p.553). In 'much of the world,' he notes, we have non-private tenure regimes (public, common and customary land uses) that are "being targeted by the planetary trends of land privatization, property formalization and tenure regulation" (p.552). The displacements that gentrification enacts are thus qualitative; they connote a re-articulation of *land* to modes of capitalist accumulation, and in the process of doing so, they rely on extra-economic force. It is the state that becomes the primary condensing site of these displacements—what I call 'practices of dispossession.'

While I am sympathetic to Ghertner's claims, there is a notable difference between the pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial non-private land tenure systems he focuses on in the

Global South and the Israeli mix of non-private and private settler colonial tenure systems. Through a series of processes (see Chapter One), the Israeli state gradually claimed public ownership of 93% of the lands it had occupied in 1948 (see Forman and Kedar, 2004; see also Home, 2003). Article 1 of the Basic Law: Israel Lands stipulates that "the ownership of Israel lands… shall not be transferred either by sale or in any other manner" (see Adalah, Basic Law: Israel Lands). Since the early 2000s and with the increasing hegemony of neoliberalism across Israel/Palestine, the *de facto* situation is that "the rights granted to leaseholders under the current Israeli leasehold system closely resemble full property rights" (Jewish Virtual Library). In this particular context, the public, state ownership of the land has served (and continues to serve) a settler colonial order intent on dispossessing the indigenous Palestinians.

The Israeli state plays a direct and major role in facilitating 'gentrification' schemes. More than half of the housing units in the pre-dominantly Palestinian neighborhood of Wadi Nisnas, for example, are categorized as 'absentee properties.' Consequently, they are managed by Amidar, a state-owned housing company that manages properties owned by the Israel Land Authority (Kallus and Kolodney, 2010). Similarly, Wadi Salib, which was forcibly dispossessed of its Palestinian residents in 1948 by the newly-formed state, includes many properties that were classified as 'absentees' property in 1948 until being recently sold by the state to Israeli and international corporates. The selling, for example, of Palestinian refugee homes in the Wadi Salib neighbourhood by the state-owned company Amidar to real estate companies in recent years (Sa'di-Ibraheem, 2021, p.698) rests on a series of dispossessions in order to formalize, privatize and regulate land and property stolen from Palestinian refugees through settler colonial power (i.e., extra-economic force) in 1948. In this sense, unlike Ghertner's example of India,

Israel represents a case where both non-private as well as private tenure systems are utilized to *enact* dispossession.

With this qualification in mind, his point still stands, though, that gentrification theory is unable to account for these processes of formalization, the displacements they enact and the particular mechanisms they rely upon. In other words, it remains "'agnostic' on the question of extra-economic forces" and explains the 'when' and 'why' of state violence through an 'economic functionalism' that says: "when capital so requires" (Ghertner, 2015, p.553). In doing so, it neglects the structuring forces of wider socio-spatial processes—namely, settler colonialism and racialization. In the particular context of post-Oslo Israel/Palestine, the settler state still plays a major role that relies on differentiated practices of dispossession across the multiple Palestinian geographies in order to enact an articulation between settler colonialism and neoliberal capitalism. The contemporary targeting of Palestinian neighborhoods in the 1948 territories with 'urban renewal schemes,' including in Haifa, Jaffa and elsewhere, is simultaneously implicated in a continuous dispossession of the Palestinian as well as on a series of historical dispossessions (1948, 1959, 1967, etc.). The spatialization of limited and classed cultural scenes in Haifa and Ramallah, I hope to demonstrate, occurs in the midst of these contradictions.

As scholars have argued (Fedirici, 2021; Harvey, 2003; and Coulthard, 2014), the ongoing state-orchestrated enclosures demonstrate "the persistent role that unconcealed, violent dispossession continues to play in the reproduction of colonial and capitalist relations in both the domestic and global contexts" (P.9). David Harvey's 'accumulation by dispossession' (ABD thesis, 2004) thesis re-evaluates Marx's negligence of the continuous, rather than 'original' or 'primitive', role violence plays in furthering capitalism. Marx's thesis of 'primitive

accumulation' locks the violent and coercive nature of capitalism into a pre-capital past, though Kanishka Goonewardena (2015) is careful to remind us that the translation 'primitive' suggests connotations not present in the original German text. In contrast, Harvey's formulation brings to the forefront the violent relation of expropriation, "which has not yet taken the fetishistic character assumed by capital's normalization, or the ordinary run of things" (De Angelis 2004, p.67, as cited in Ghertner, p.1566; see also Glassman, 2006). In doing so, the ABD thesis frees 'primitive accumulation' from its developmentalist and temporal limitations.

The 'Accumulation by Dispossession' thesis is generative insofar as it highlights the continuous reliance of capitalist modes of accumulation on violent dispossession. However, as Levien points out (), it still retains an 'economic functionalism' in that it explains this dispossession as a process of "absorbing over-accumulated capital in the global economy" (p.382; see Harvey, 2003, p.149). The thesis thus "under-theorizes the deeply political role of states in orchestrating dispossession and the implications that follow from this" (p.382). In Levien's reading, the state plays a fundamental role in the 'ideological legitimation' of dispossession in that it "must explicitly justify to the dispossessed and the public at large why expropriating property from one group for the benefit of another serves a 'public purpose'" (p.382). Ideological legitimation is contingent on historical and social factors. Thus, Levien's critique reformulates dispossession as historically specific and socially embedded within multiple, coalescing socio-spatial processes.

I am sympathetic to this critique, though it is predicated on a definition of the state as an already-condensed site of dispossession that works to 'justify' dispossession, when the settler colonial reality shows how dispossession is sustained by practices and processes that are *constitutive* of the settler state and vice versa, as I elaborate in Chapter One. The settler colonial

order is in a continuous state of articulation that takes dispossession as *constitutive.* Its ideological legitimation is historically specific and socially embedded. However, it rests on unconcealed violence that often does not offer a justification and a rationale. In the particular historical conjuncture of post-Oslo, there has occurred a re-articulation between, on the one hand, settler colonialism and racialization, and on the other, capital and class—a re-articulation that has animated particular modes of cultural production and particular forms of spatial and cultural mediation.

Scholars have begun to explore the relationship between neoliberalism and settler colonialism (Strakosch, 2015; Lloyd and Wolfe, 2015; Milner, 2020). Both paradigms produce their own threat: superfluous surplus labor. Settler colonialism produces the Native population as surplus, while "the neoliberal world order resides in the exigencies of managing surplus populations" that cannot be integrated into the economic apparatus (Lloyd and Wolfe, 2015, p.112). Although neoliberalism is often understood as the withdrawal of the state in the face of intensified privatization, these scholars highlight that the "state authority in the social sphere is reconfigured (and in some ways intensified) rather than withdrawn" (Strakosch, 2015, p.36; see also Rabie, 2021). In Haifa, the urban renewal schemes, which ironically create the conditions of possibility for a Palestinian cultural scene, are made possible by a multilayered history of state-orchestrated racialization and dispossession, a settler municipality, and Israeli and global neoliberal regimes of accumulation. In Ramallah, the urban expansion occurs because the city has become the primary location for development and market building in the Occupied Territories (Rabie, 2021, p.4). As socially embedded and historically specific phenomena, dispossession and enclosures are spatialized differentially but also relationally across these two geographies so that the 'naturalization' of Haifa as a 'settler colonial city' with a direct

articulation between a settler state and a settler market rests on the exclusion of Ramallah as an occupied territory where the market/state articulation is mediated through yet another level: the Palestinian nationalist elites and their state building project.

Scholars have shown how Palestinian neoliberal capitalism, epitomized by Ramallah, is "coloniality cloaked and diffused through the seemingly apolitical and neutral expansion of (neo)liberalized economic relations" (Abourahme, 2009, p.506; see also Rabie, 2021; Haddad, 2016; Clarno, 2017; and Harker, 2017). What sets Haifa and Ramallah apart (see Figure 20) are the particular conglomerations of power—the racial, classed, and gendered power relations that coalesce within a settler colonial order to determine certain spaces as erasable. In such a context, it is insufficient to account for the political-economic structuring forces without understanding the colonial relation that serves as their background. There are coalescing socio-spatial processes of settler colonialism, neoliberal capitalism and racialization.



Figure 20. Map showing the Green Line, Haifa and Ramallah. Source: BBC News.

'Pessoptimism' and Arts in the Parallel City

Urban renewal and urban expansion are condensed sites for the coalescence of multiple socio-spatial processes, including settler colonialism, racialization and neoliberal capitalism. Palestinian arts and artistic subjectivities are mediated through these wider structuring forces. The capital-centered approach of earlier gentrification literature created a theoretical logjam

between a supply and demand-oriented explanation. Understanding urbanization as a socio-spatial process of capitalist agglomeration that is historically and geographically specific and as *one process* in articulation with other socio-spatial processes already moves away from this logjam. The cultural contestations articulated by Palestinian artists in Haifa—like Ramallah—cannot be simply reduced to a mere effect of urban transformations. Indeed, when viewed from these lenses alone, Palestinian artists can only be seen as, in the words of Hall, "cultural dopes" (Hall, 2019, p.352) or as consumers in capital-induced cycles of displacement. The focus on the political economies of the 'creative industries' and 'creative districts' has often neglected not only the constitutive role colonialism plays, but the different levels of cultural and spatial mediation.

In the midst of these structural contradictions, what some have dubbed 'alternative cultural scenes' (Karkabi, 2013) emerged in the two cities. The 'alternative cultural scene' refers to cultural venues and initiatives that have gradually emerged since the early 1990s and that fuse local and international genres. To define this alternative cultural scene is a difficult task since. Indeed, the designation 'alternative' may disguise more than it reveals. Karkabi (2013) defines these scenes as productive of a "politicized counterculture that innovatively fuses local and international musical expressions as a form of protest that aims to challenge external and internal impositions of structural oppression and othering" (p.308). To him, the alternative capacity of these scenes—despite being structurally conditioned and restricted to a Palestinian middle class across the Green Line—lies in their fusion of music genres as well as their political oppositional capacities. In this chapter, I show how difficult it is to uphold the thesis that these scenes, a priori, constitute a form of protest. This depends on the particular historical conditions

and structuring forces within which these scenes are produced, particularly class, race, and gender as they intersect under a settler colonial order.

These scenes are associated with a particular stratum, who are, in the case of Haifa, mostly composed of Palestinians who migrated into the city from neighboring towns and villages for work or to study at universities in Haifa (Karkabi, 2018). As argued by other scholars (Karkabi, 2018; Taraki, 2008a and 2008b), the neoliberalisation of the Israeli economy, followed by the introduction of intensified modes of neoliberal accumulation via the Palestinian Authority in the West Bank, created a margin for the development of a Palestinian middle-class across the Green Line. These wider socioeconomic shifts influence the form and scale of the cultural sensibilities in the two cities. In her recent study of 'raves' in Ramallah and Haifa, Withers zooms in on the 'rave-habitus' in the two cities, arguing that the habitus manages to challenge social relations and gender binaries while simultaneously upholding class distinctions (Withers, 2021). The scene is directly sutured to a middle-class stratum with financial and linguistic (English, Hebrew, Arabic) mobility, who can afford entry fees into bars and venues, dressing alternatively, drinks, music equipment, and travel (Withers, 2021). Before I explore the different responses by Palestinian artists to these contradictions, I want to offer a brief analysis of the particular nature of gentrification in Haifa. I focus in particular on Haifa because its multilayered history of dispossession and racialization bring to the forefront wider Israeli settler colonial logics—ones that are different, but not separate, from the logics that fragment, contain, and neutralize Ramallah.

The cultural contestations (limited, fragmentary, contradictory) occur against the backdrop of a settler colonial relation that aims to eliminate-through-liquidation the Palestinian history and present in Haifa and to fragment, contain, surveil and eliminate Palestinian presence

in Ramallah. Palestinian modes of artistic and cultural productions are mediated through wider settler colonial and neoliberal logics: urban renewal in Haifa and neoliberal urban expansion in Ramallah. However, as has been argued by Hall, following Gramsci, the objective relations determine the terrain within which ideas are formed and contested, but they do not guarantee the outcome of these struggles (Hall, 2021, p.307). As Stuart Hall (2016) aptly puts it, "The conditions within which people are able to construct subjective possibilities and new political subjectivities for themselves are not simply given in the dominant system. They are won in the practices of articulation which produce them" (p.206). As cities expand and are remade, new terrains for the formation of subjectivities are introduced. I argue that Palestinian artists still enact contradictory "practices of articulation" (Hall, 2016, p.206) that may point towards new political subjectivities. They can neither be rendered progressive, nor anti-progressive, at the outset, as that depends on their negotiation of these wider objective relations. It is not a "pessimism of the habitat, optimism of the inhabitant" approach. Rather, as geographer Abourahme poetically puts it in reference to Emile Habibi's novel *The Secret Life of Saeed: The Pessoptimist (1982)*, "if the Palestinian condition has taught us anything, it is that despair and hope are not opposites: it is never pessimism or optimism; it is always pessoptimism" (Abourahme, 2021).

Arts, Dispossession, and Gentrification

In December 2020, the Palestinian singer Faraj Suleiman released the album *"Better than Berlin."* The entire album was written by the Palestinian novelist, Majd Kayyal. It articulates a distinct and self-critical Palestinian response to a landscape constantly changing due to Israeli settler colonial capitalist logics (see Abushama, 2021; Mende, 2021). The song, *"Hymn to Gentrification",* narrates questions by a Berlin-based lover to his partner, who

remained in Haifa (Suleiman, 2020). With a soundtrack suggesting sadness and pain, the singer asks about the changing urban landscape of Haifa. His questions focus in particular on the unfolding Israeli 'urban renewal' schemes within the city. He asks about the increased commodification of Arab Palestinian culture and the gradual remaking and erasure of Palestinian space, including the forcibly depopulated neighborhood of Wadi Salib. Suleiman sings:

> Who put al-Souq in a mall?
> Who evicted us from the houses
> Divided them, then rented us studios smaller than coffins
> Who came from Tel Aviv
> I mean, who came from Poland?
> Who built glass towers and destroyed our balcony?

The narrator asks his lover, 'who came from Tel Aviv?' Then quickly changes the question to, 'I mean, who came from Poland?' Asking who came from Tel Aviv explains the question of urban change in Haifa as a mere change in demographics and a class-based migration from the more affluent and expensive Tel Aviv to the more affordable and artistic Haifa. The shift to Poland, on the other hand, highlights the issue of colonial settlement and the gradual transfer of European Jewish settlers to the land of Palestine. In other words, it names the settler colonial relation at play and its direct rule in reshaping Palestinian urban landscapes. Put simply, dispossession in the context of Haifa appears as "a crystal-clear' relation of expropriation, a relation that has not yet taken the fetishistic character assumed by capital's normalization" (De Angelis, 2004, p.67).

As Sa'di-Ibraheem (2018, 2021) argues in her article on downtown Haifa, while these projects resemble other neoliberal urban renewal projects around the world, they are specific in that the colonial relation serves as the background against which market-led dispossession and renewal take place. This does not mean that the specifity of Haifa or Ramallah lies in the

presence of a singular logic of erasure. Scholars have noted how renewal enacts erasure in multiple contexts (see Brickell, Arrigoitia, and Vasudevan, 2017). Haifa and Ramallah are condensed nodal points for the coalescence of settler colonialism, capitalism, colonial and anti-colonial state-building into a particular mode of urban production. In such a context, the colonial relation serves as the inherited background against which logics of capitalist accumulation unfold. The preclusion of this relation from gentrification theory, or its inclusion as an additive to a replica of the north (encompassing comparison), neglects histories, presents and layers of dispossession that, to a large extent, determine the urban restructuring of settler colonial cities.

Urban displacement, as Yiftachel argues (2020), has become "a major policy instrument" (p.154), whose ubiquity has created what he terms 'displaceability.' Displaceability refers to "the state of being susceptible to involuntary distancing from these rights and resources" (p.155). In my reading, it names the ever-present threat of displacement, which looms large over the majority of urban populations in the Global South, or what Yiftachel (2020) names the Southeast, which highlights a North-South political economic (albeit colonial and racial) divide and an East-West connoting cultures and identities (p.158). If displacement has become ubiquitous and displaceability has become a widespread state of precarity, then we need to account for the particular ways in which various power relations coalesce to enact displacement and displaceability. In Palestine, where a settler colonial mandate to dispossess continues to unfold, displacement and displaceability can be traced as historically and geographically differentiated modalities that refract an inherited colonial background within which a capitalist, gendered, and racial order continues to unfold. This requires that, in addition

to understanding the market logic, we also have to understand the persistent role of the state in facilitating or hampering market-led dispossession.

The racial hierarchies in Israel, however, are specific to its settler colonial structure, requiring the dispossession of the Palestinian and the racialization of the Arab Jew to materialize its settler geographies. The particular targeting of Palestinian places clearly demonstrates that the colonial and the capitalist relation go hand in hand in reshaping the urban fabric. As shown in the map (Figure 21), designed by Palestinian architect and musician Haya Zaatry, Palestinian spaces are often formulated as vacant, in need of intervention, and messy—a longstanding Zionist trope justifying conquest. In her mapping, the Palestinian neighborhoods are represented without street networks, names, or topographical scales to simultaneously reflect and critique Israel's characterization of them as messy and vacant and demonstrate their unintelligibility to normative geographic analysis. Gentrification is the contemporary, neoliberal garb that accumulation by dispossession takes.

I engage with urban renewal in Haifa because it is the inherited background within which the city's contemporary Palestinian cultural scene is spatialized. Concomitant with gentrification, Haifa has seen the emergence of many Palestinian cultural venues, both non-profit and privately-run. These include Kashabi Theater, Scene Bar, Fattoush Bar & Gallery, Fattoush Café and Restaurant, Al Rai Café, Elika Art Café, and Kabareet Bar, among others (see Figure 22). These constitute what Murkus has dubbed the 'Parallel City'—the city that simultaneously exists despite, and because of, the settler colonial city. These are spaces that exist within an urban fabric produced by the displacement of Palestinian refugees in 1948 and that continues to be reproduced through a logic of displaceability across the land of historic Palestine, where every Palestinian is targeted with erasure.



Figure 21 Map of Haifa, highlighting Palestinian neighborhoods. By Haya Zaatry, 2021.

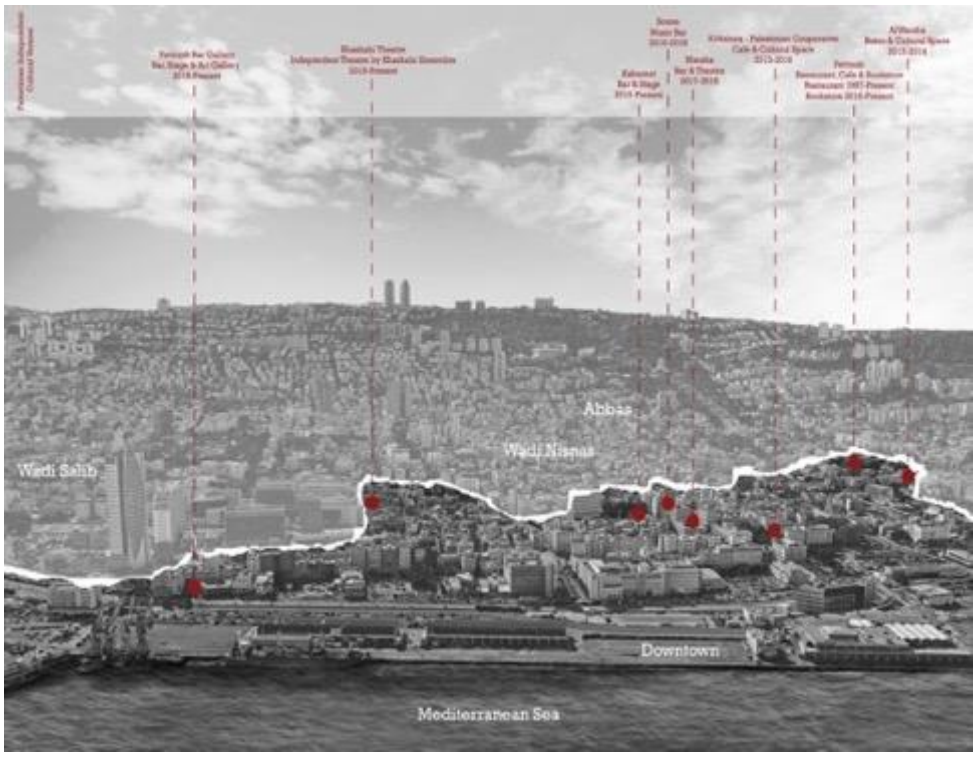


Figure 22. Map showing Palestinian cultural spaces in Haifa and the years in which they sprang up in the city. The first was Fattoush Restaurant in the late 1990s. Design by Haya Zaatry.

The urban renewal projects in Haifa date back to at least the 1990s, though they can be traced back to 1948, when entire parts of Haifa were demolished by the newly-formed Israeli state (Kallus and Kolodney, 2010). In 2000, the Haifa Municipality issued a plan to expand Al Jabal Street (Tzionut Avenue, in Israeli terms), leading to Wadi Nisnas. The implementation of the project meant the demolition of 54 Palestinian residential and business constructions (see Kolodney and Kallus, 2010, p.415). These demolitions were accompanied by an intense commodification of Wadi Nisnas as an attractive touristic site. The neighborhood has attracted municipal events, such as the *Holiday of Holidays* festival, which marketizes the neighborhood for its 'unique Arab heritage' (Holiday of Holidays Festival website). An old Turkish Hammam in Wadi Nisnas, dating back to the Ottoman era, has been turned into a cutting-edge restaurant and an art gallery (*Studio 99*). The Municipality also has a 'waterfront project' (Archdaily, 2013; Ynet, 2021), which will transform the commercial port into a touristic site.

Between 2010 and 2012, Israeli developers purchased the whole neighborhood of Wadi Salib with the purpose of transforming it into arts galleries and housing units (Hakai Magazine, 2016; Sa'di-Ibraheem, 2021). Sa'di-Ibraheem (2021) notes that, "In seeming unison with the real-estate marketing strategy, the city council and local media outlets took to describing the neighborhood as a mixture of authenticity and modernity" (p.694). She shows how neoliberal policies of privatization do not only seek to increase the land values of properties "but also to generate a different spatial experience and representation of the place through common neoliberal discourse, while maintaining the veiled structural violence of the settler colonial regime" (p.696). What Sa'di-Ibraheem characterizes as neoliberal discourse manifests in Haifa not as a rupture where displaceability becomes a widespread state of being, but a continuity of

a logic of settler colonial erasure. Neoliberal discourse exploits the logics of the settler colony; the settler colony exploits the logics of neoliberalism.

Wadi Salib is a neighborhood with a multilayered history of dispossession and racialization, having been a center of Palestinian urban life before the dispossession of its Palestinian residents in 1948 and for the newly-arrived Arab Jewish settlers between 1948 until their dispersal into other neighborhoods in 1959. In 2018, the Pyramida Art Center—an art complex built in a school structure from 1953 that was originally opened to serve primarily North African Arab Jewish settlers in Wadi Salib—opened its doors to the public (see Figure 23). An Israeli governmental website describes the center as "a beautifully refurbished complex, which will house an art gallery and 24 workshops for emerging and established artists" (HelloHaifa website). The governmental website goes on to describe Wadi Salib as a "paradox and a vision of unrealized potential." The municipal director of the Art Center describes the neighborhood in similar terms: "Due to its romantic architecture and landscapes, the neighborhood naturally appeals to the artistic soul and to the visionary" (HelloHaifa website).



Figure 23. Plan for the renovation of 'Pyramida', which used to be The Ahiezer School 1954-1975. Sketch produced by a group of Israeli artists and architects—the 'Tav Group'. Reproduced from Pyramida, Contemporary Art Center website.

Wadi Salib, Wadi Nisnas and downtown Haifa represent arenas of 're-frontiering' (Sa'di-Ibraheem, 2021) to the Israeli settler state. In discussing the genealogy of the Arab Jewish Giv'at-Amal neighborhood in Tel Aviv, built on the ruins of the depopulated Palestinian village of Jamassin and now targeted with eviction by Israeli developers, Milner (2020) argues that the neighborhood represents an 'open frontier'—"codified as empty, but never institutionally codified as full" (p.227). She argues that the genealogy reflects a 'racial hierarchy', inherent to settler colonialism: the dispossession of the Palestinians, followed by the racial displacement of the Arab Jew, as preconditions for the "current neoliberal restructuring of the city" (p.276). In this sense, in contemporary Tel Aviv and in Israel more widely, "neoliberal forces operate to materialize a geography that can, and may eventually will, be institutionalized" (p.270). The racial hierarchies produce the Palestinian as the Other of the Israeli citizen and the erasure of the former serves as the condition of possibility for the latter. Arab Jews, though racialized by the settler state, are deemed 'qualifiable settlers,' who through labor and participation in settlement may, one day, if they work hard enough, be admitted into the settler apparatus. The logics of power vis-à-vis both differ: the Palestinian is threatened with erasure, the Arab Jew is racialized, but is still classified by the settler state as a qualifiable settler. The particular urban reality in Ramallah complicates Milner's conclusion that the neoliberal order works to close the 'open frontier' by institutionally codifying it. Ramallah shows us how the neoliberal logic exploits the contradictions embedded within the frontier but does not necessarily close it.

In many ways, what is happening in Haifa resembles 'models of gentrification' from other localities: rising rents, particular forms of cultural production and promotion, displacements, authentic architecture. The gradual transformation of Wadi Salib and Wadi Nisnas since the 1990s rests on a mixture of—to use a rather schematic lens—'first wave' and

'third wave' gentrifying strategies. The movement of the artists into dilapidated neighborhoods (often associated with first wave) has occurred simultaneously with the state-sponsored promotion of Haifa as a 'tolerant', 'multicultural,' 'mixed' and 'creative city.'

To argue that what is happening in Haifa is gentrification does not mean that we need to simply take these temporal models, largely dependent on case studies from the Global northwest, and apply them to the 'case study'. Rather, these abstracted observations help us identify the historically determined relationship between arts and modes and logics of capitalist accumulation. We can argue, based on these theoretical formulations, that the emergence of Haifa as a 'creative middle-class district' for Palestinians occurs due to particular political economic reasons that nonetheless have to be understood in relation to the engulfing colonial order. As Karkabi (2018) argues, the University of Haifa and its attraction of a significant number of Palestinian students plays a major role in facilitating a chain migration of Palestinian artists and creative producers from nearing villages and cities. Some of them have become "artist-entrepreneurs", who, through either business ownership or collective and non-profit organizations, "open and manage art galleries, cafes, restaurants, bars, theaters, clothing shops, and an array of consumption spaces that create an impression of the whole neighborhood as different from others" (Zukin and Braslow, 2011, p.136). Zukin and Braslow (2011) note that the reason behind their entrepreneurship can be either economic—for money—or social and cultural: "to help form a community of fellow artists or to supply the needs of men and women with specific, "different" tastes" (p. 136).

Palestinian venues are run and managed by artist-entrepreneurs. Some—such as Khashabi Theater—are non-profit and are established with a clear message of strengthening Palestinian presence in the city. Others, such as Fattoush Restaurant and Bar, are commercial spaces. They, nonetheless, stress their role in articulating Palestinian difference within a settler colonial city. The private venues' ability to cling to a political and cultural message, however, is more curtailed by their vulnerability to the forces of the market. Consider, for example, the story of Fattoush Restaurant (see Figure 24). It is a restaurant established in 1997 and has served as a cultural center, offering a space for Palestinian writers and artists in a city that denies their existence. Yet, in 2018, the Restaurant opened a new branch—"Fattoush Bar and Gallery"—in downtown Haifa. The new venue marks a significant commercial jump: the aesthetics of the place are luxurious, its entry fees are significantly high, and it charges performing artists high fees.[41] The venue has been established in a British Mandate era building, which was historically



Figure 24. Inside Fattoush Bar & Gallery. Source: Archello Website (https://archello.com/project/fattoush-bar-gallery)

41 In my interviews with artists in Haifa, some expressed concern that the new venue is incapable of balancing its for-profit project with its commitment to Palestinian culture, excluding both audiences and artists due to its high fees.

used to store goods and weapons, hence its notable proximity to the rail station (Archello, 2019). In the story of Fattoush, as a restaurant first opened in the 1990s through Palestinian capital and then expanded in 2018, reflects the conundrums of the Palestinian cultural scene in Haifa and its vulnerability to the market.

'To the Contrary': Ramallah

The neoliberal settler colonial order in Haifa, and its intent on transforming the layered geographies of Palestinian neighborhoods occurs as part of an overarching political economy managed through unequal relations. In this sense, spatial strategies of urban renewal in Haifa do not occur in isolation from the enclavization and Bantustanization (Abourahme, 2009) of the Palestinian cities in the West Bank. The two differentiated political economies are structurally sustained through a relation of inequality. Thus, neoliberal settler colonialism in Haifa enforces neoliberal settler colonialism in the West Bank, and vice versa. The differentiation in the manifestations of this neoliberal phenomenon should not lead us to treat these cities as separate. Rather, we should read this differentiation as integral to the workings of settler colonialism in Palestine.

As Ramallah expands, its cafes, bars, night clubs, biking lanes, free municipality-run wifi networks, restaurants, party venues, art collectives and exhibitions, and NGO's proliferate. The neoliberal order in Ramallah, facilitated by an internationally financed state-building project, has enabled a significant urban expansion. Since the signing of the Oslo Agreement, Ramallah has also witnessed the spatialization of an institutionalized as well as privately-run cultural venues. Cultural organizations, such as Al Qattan Foundation, the Palestinian Museum, and Khalil Al Sakakini Cultural Center, have been opened in the city (see Toukan, 2021, for an overview).

Bil3aX, a Palestinian band from Ramallah, best captures the conundrum. Bel3ks (To the Contrary) is a Ramallah-based Palestinian band that was formed in 2011 and released only one album in 2014. Their album, titled "12 Richter," includes songs that critique the social, cultural, and political reality of their city Ramallah. Throughout, the album demonstrates an ironic gaze towards the city, highlighting its class-based contradictions. Their first song, "Ramallah", gives a glimpse into the ironies of the city:

> Ramallah, oh Ramallah, a café on the sideway
> Far away from the streets, though you are on the sideway
> Ramallah, oh Ramallah, a city of glass
> Shining and lighting, though you have no base
> Ramallah, oh Ramallah, how many people you have
> They talk of politics, and their talk is all false
> Ramallah, oh Ramallah, so many intellectuals
> They talk, talk, talk, and forget who they are.

The cafés, the intellectuals, the constant talk, the NGO's, the distance between the street and the sideway, and the glass draw an image of a city ripe with contradictions. Abourahme (2009) describes Ramallah as a "gravy train" that has attracted musicians, intellectuals, artists, filmmakers and activists (p.502). *Bel3ks*, as a band, itself names a contradiction: it is a band produced within Ramallah and embedded within its social and political contradictions, but one that offers a riveting critique of the city. Similar to Suleiman and Kayyal, they are profoundly aware of the contradictions engulfed within their cities and deploy the artistic to pierce through them.

Ramallah has become a symbol of class stratification in the West Bank. Abourahme (2009) argues that, "The current evolution of the built environment is, to a large extent, part of a clear and ostentatious mobilization of a middle class determined to become more socially visible" (p.505). In discussing the middle classes in Ramallah, Taraki highlights the presence of a new cultural sensibility that constantly feels the necessity to articulate a position vis-à-vis

resistance. She argues, “In Ramallah’s contemporary cultural scene, emphases on resistance and authenticity wane or surge according to the severity of Israeli assaults” (Taraki, 2008a, p.17). She notes that the still present a ‘hegemonic’ framework for the cultural, to which the middle classes always feel the necessity to respond. She adds that a “new conception of resilience has been taking root, one that is not based on an ascetic denial of frivolity, joy, or entertainment, but rather renders the very pursuit of happiness a manifestation of resilience and of resistance at the same time” (Taraki, 2008a, p.17).

We can cite multiple examples, one of the most elaborate being Mohammed Assaf’s concert in Ramallah (see Figure. 26), which attracted a large number of attendees and an equally large number of boycotts. The performance, which was held in the planned city of Rawabi near Ramallah (a city that makes most palpable the complicit relationship between Israeli settler colonialism and Palestinian capital; see Rabie, 2021), presented keffiyehs and popular political songs that incorporated folklore but pointed to the new cultural sensibilities that Taraki highlights. Assaf, a Palestinian refugee and pop singer from Khan Yunis Refugee Camp in Gaza, became known for songs that use Palestinian resistance iconography and idioms. Winning ‘Arab Idol’ brought him regional and global fame (BBC, 2013). But it also brought him to the attention of the Palestinian political elites in Ramallah, who rushed to claim him as a cultural ambassador. He performed at the Wadina Amphitheater at Rawabi, a large open-air Roman theater (Rawabi website). While the attendees of the concerts likely came from all corners of Palestine, Rawabi and the amphitheater reflect a consumerism engineered by Palestinian capital, geared towards the Palestinian middle class, and inclusive of idioms and icons of Palestinian resistance (see Rabie, 2021).



Figure 25. Mohammed Assaf's concert in Rawabi ampitheatre. Source: Rawabi website, 2016.

It is against the backdrop of these wider power relations that arts are produced within the two cities. In analyzing the cultural productions, one has to make an analytical move from the structural to the subjective, without collapsing the two into one another. As cities expand and are remade, new terrains for the formation of subjectivities are introduced. It is within these terrains that "practices of articulation" are enacted (Stuart Hall, 2016, p.206). They can neither be rendered progressive, nor anti-progressive, at the outset, as that depends on their negotiation of these wider objective relations. As Stuart Hall (2016) aptly puts it, "The conditions within which people are able to construct subjective possibilities and new political subjectivities for themselves are not simply given in the dominant system. They are won in the practices of articulation which produce them" (p.206).

The proliferation of cultural venues and sensibilities in Haifa and Ramallah is undeniably related to the urban remaking and urban expansion of the two cities, respectively, and the wider structuring forces of neoliberal capitalism and settler colonialism. The existing literature on the relationship between cities and arts, discussed above, helps us take account of the multiple ways in which these structuring forces determine the horizons of possibilities for

Palestinian arts. Yet, it rests on political-economic presumptions that neglect the socially embedded and historically specific modes of dispossession across historic Palestine that enable urban renewal and expansion. Furthermore, by relegating artistic production to a realm of economic causality, it locks the various cultural forms in the two cities within a binary of submission (demand-oriented explanation) or resistance and subversion (supply-oriented explanation) that fails to capture the different levels of cultural and spatial mediation. The aim is to understand how artists make sense of these wider shifts and manage to articulate new political subjectivities. This question is particularly relevant in a context of settler colonialism, where the material and cultural erasure of the Palestinian is taken as the pre-condition for the spatialization of settler polity. Might it be, then, that we need to venture beyond a reductive political economic lens in order to account for the potential contestations that these artists and their ventures present? I now turn to analyzing the responses of Palestinian artists in the two cities to offer an answer, however fragmented.

The Conundrum of Resistance

In both Haifa and Ramallah, there is a vivid discussion amongst emerging middle class artists of what constitutes cultural resistance. Some are critical of the scenes and their capacity to resist in the midst of neoliberal accumulation by dispossession. Others see potential in their work within, but at the margins of the wider structuring forces. Still others take distance from the 'political' altogether, arguing that 'its days are gone.' These varying responses, which I explore at length in this section, remind us of Stuart Hall's formulation, via Gramsci, that the objective relations informing a particular historical epoch determine the terrain on which historical forces unfold. "But they can, in neither the first nor the last instance, fully determine the content of political and economic struggles, much less objectively fix or guarantee the

outcomes of such struggles" (Hall, 2021, p.307). From this angle, the cultural contradictions in Haifa and Ramallah cannot be determined, a priori, as mere expressions of a neoliberal economic logic. As Hall reminds us, what makes Gramsci's formulations particularly electrifying is their rejection of the classical Marxist position that the cultural merely mirrors the economic. Through the notion of 'hegemony', Gramsci expanded our understanding of the state by accounting for its educative and informative capacities (Gramsci, 1971, p.247). Such a definition brings "a range of new institutions and arenas of struggle into the traditional conceptualization of the state and politics" (Hall, 2021, p.316). It allows us to account for the differentiated types of struggle across society—in cultural organizations, arts collectives and scenes, sexual politics, the educational system, and so on. By stressing the contingency of the state on both coercive and consensual apparatuses, Gramsci's formulations also open up the space for us to think of transformations, ruptures, and negotiations.

This dynamic historical framework allows us to see, following Hall (2021), that "Cultural domination has real effects, even if these are neither all-powerful nor all-inclusive" (p.353). Artists are not mere "cultural dopes" (p.353), whose works are simply incorporated into the dominant relations of force. By the same token, artists' and their work do not exist "outside the distribution of cultural power and the relations of cultural force" (p.354). In this unequal terrain, there are contestations and struggles—'points of resistance' and 'points of suppression'—as the dominant culture aims to rework cultural forms and inscribe them within its more inclusive range (p.354).

In discussing cultural resistance, Stuart Hall (2016) argues that a "politics of cultural resistance that neglects the internal and intrinsic forms of the cultural field in which it operates is not likely to create alternative subjectivities." Hall made this observation in discussing the

emergence of ‘rock’ and its articulation to serve fascist ends in 1960s Britain. Hall notes that rock, at the time, “looked like anything but a potentially progressive form” (p.195). This was later contested, not by the innate ability of rock to articulate itself as progressive, but by an ‘alternative cultural practice’: Rock Against Racism. A politics of cultural resistance, therefore, has to take seriously the internal forms and contradictions of its cultural field, identifying and enhancing “practices of articulation” (p.26) that point towards and activate new political subjectivities. The aim here is to perceive of resistance as a continual process and to understand how people are able “to construct subjective possibilities and new political subjectivities for themselves [that] are not simply given in the dominant system” (Hall, 2016, p.206). Thus, “[r]ather than reserving the notion of class struggle only for the moment of the barricades, we need to see resistance as the continual process of working on the cultural domain and opening up cultural possibilities” (p.206).

Hall’s observations hold especially true in the contexts of Haifa and Ramallah, where the relationship to ‘resistance’—as an idea, a cultural project, and a memory of a pre-Oslo time when culture and resistance were, for better or worse, clearly intertwined—is constantly contested and negotiated. Taraki’s (2008a) observation that the reference to resistance ‘wanes or surges’ according to the intensity of Israeli assaults on Ramallah is suggestive. It pushes us to take account of how the shifting everyday context affects the production, consumption, and circulation of arts. In my reading, the waning and surging of ‘resistance’ in relation to Israeli assaults is not merely reflective of an opportunistic middle class, protective of its ‘*joie de vivre*’, and promoting a false, resistant consciousness in order to protect its limited gains. It is also reflective of a momentary ‘practice of articulation’ that has to do not only with artists, but also their audiences. Consider, for example, this interview with the prominent Palestinian rapper,

Shabjdeed, with the online music magazine, Ma3azef (2019). When asked why he does not sing about politics, he says:

> Why aren't we capitalizing on misery? Because it is shameful for us to do so, *sidi*. First. Second, Palestinians are by nature proud of being Palestinian. I felt like in the past, all of rap was centered around the cause because there was no space for something else. No one will listen to you, but the foreigners will listen to you. So, you have to give them a sobbing story. As for us, we do not perform the sobbing story, and as you can see, it is working for us. Second, I think our cause stopped being 'mainstream'. If you go out there and sing about the cause, you will come across as stupid.

Shabjdeed's statement is not surprising. He is part of the collective 'BLTNM', which is an independent record label that was established in 2016 and is based in Ramallah. The collective has been open about their aspiration to 'make money' out of the music—to produce commercial music. This stands in stark contrast to the reductive and simplistic celebration of their music as 'underground' in many journalistic accounts. It also stands in contrast to the early days of their genre in Palestine—hip hop, or rap music. The genre, having first been popularized by al-Lud-based group 'DAM,' had explicit political content in its first days (McDonald, 2013). Even Ramallah-based rap dating back to 2010, such as the 'Ramallah Underground' collective, produced passionate and explicitly-political songs that critiqued the Palestinian Authority and the Israeli settler colonial state, such as their song 'Sijen b Sijen' (Prison within Prison; see Stormtrap Asfeh, 2011). Since then, 'DAM' has turned to producing commercial music, though their songs still engage with politics. As for the Ramallah Underground collective, it has disintegrated, though their lead rapper, Muqata'a, is still a prolific music producer.

Rap, which emerged as a progressive, political genre amongst Black and Puerto Rican youth in the United States and became popularized globally, does not have an 'innate progressive' capacity, to recall Stuart Hall. Maira and Shihade (2012) suggest that '[h]ip hop today is inevitably embedded in the complex relationship between music and the culture

industry that makes the question of resistance and cooptation for progressive rap a complicated one, in the United States and also in Palestine" (p.10). The progressiveness of 'hip hop' depends upon 'practices of articulation'. Its journey in Palestine from the explicitly-political to the politically-ambivalent, and sometimes straightforwardly commercial, is clearly reflective of the wider changes within the urban fabrics of Palestinian cities—the consumerism engineered by neoliberal settler colonialism and neoliberal Palestinian capitalism. Both the politically ambivalent and the explicitly political are particular, historically determined articulations of the relationship between arts and politics. These are practices that reflect shifting articulations that evoke a particular understanding of the political and the artistic, mediated through wider structuring forces, including neoliberal capitalism and settler colonialism.

A major change has occurred since the heyday of political rap that Shabjdeed feels justified to say, "if you go out there and sing about the cause, you will come across as stupid." There is a clear commercial logic behind his statement: the cause is not mainstream essentially means that 'we sing to the mainstream'. The goal, it is clear, is not to disrupt the mainstream but to cater to it. In the short documentary about the scene in Haifa and Ramallah by Boiler Room, a prominent online music broadcasting platform based in London, the question of resistance also figures prominently. In discussing the role of their music, Jazar Crew, one of the main groups behind this inter-urban underground scene, similarly notes that "We do not want to victimize ourselves any more. We are bored actually of that" (Boiler Room, 2018). This is what I call the 'conundrum of resistance', the shifting cultural and artistic articulations of the relationship between politics and arts. The multiple ways in which resistance is evoked can be approached as 'practices of articulation' that rely upon shifting understandings of what constitutes arts and politics as well as the relationship between them.

Yet, in *al-Quds Uprising* (the Jerusalem Uprising), which started in April 2021 with protests by Palestinian Jerusalemites against the Israeli state's attempt to dispossess 28 Palestinian refugee families from their homes in Sheikh Jarrah, an album produced by BLTNM became undeniably the uprising's soundtrack. The album is titled "*Inn Ann*," which roughly translates to "If the time has come", and directly celebrates the "sons of Jerusalem" (see Figure 26). Not only the lyrics, but also the musical landscape of the song suggests enthusiastic rebellion, making it a protest song *par excellence*. It is also profoundly rhythmic and repetitive, which contributes to its capacity to protest. It was produced by a for-profit music company, BLTNM, whose main rapper, Shabjdeed, had previously distanced himself from the explicitly political.

In the particular moment of uprising, the song traveled across all cities in historic Palestine and was shared all across social media. The protestors and the audiences sutured the song to the political moment, enacting a "practice of articulation" of a rebellious political subjectivity. Stuart Hall's observation here that resistance is a continual process and that the conditions of elaboration of new subjectivities are not given in the dominant structures is



Figure 26. A snapshot from 'Inn Ann' music video featuring 'Daboor', a rapper who is part of the BLTNM group. Source: Inn Ann music video, youtube.

relevant. The song emerges from a commercial soil, reflective of the contradictions of post-Oslo Ramallah, but travels, reaches audiences, and is put to use to serve the purpose of protest. This is neither to dismiss an analysis of the class-based nature of much of these productions, nor to neglect the palpable commercialization of Palestinian cultural productions since the 1990s. To the contrary, it is to acknowledge the contradictions that these subject positions produce for the artists and their audiences, while simultaneously recognizing the contradictory work being done on the "cultural domain and [on] opening up cultural possibilities" (Hall, 2016, p.206).

This is also true in Haifa, though the shape of the structuring forces vis-à-vis the city's Palestinian cultural field takes different forms—urban remaking schemes that directly target Palestinian spaces. The story of Kashabi Theater demonstrates these contradictions.

The Theater emerged as an independent space that refused funding from the Israeli settler state, following structural attempts by Israeli officials to silence and censor Palestinian artists working at al-Midan Theater. Al-Midan Theater was the first 'Arab Israeli' theater to be funded by the Israeli government. Following the release at al-Midan of the play "Parallel Time", which narrates the struggle of Palestinian prisoners through the life of the Palestinian political prisoner Walid al Dakka, the theater was systematically attacked by the Israeli Minister of Culture and eventually defunded (Times of Israel, 2015). The play was written by the Palestinian playwright Bashar Murkus.

It is noteworthy that al-Midan Theater was established in 1994 and received full support from the then-Minister of the Science and Arts, Shulamit Aloni. Aloni was part of the twenty-fifth government of Israel—the same government, headed by Yitzhak Rabin, to sign the Oslo Accords. The decision to fund al-Midan Theater as an 'Arab Israeli' cultural space is significant in that it marks another moment of settler colonial politics of cultural exclusion through

misrecognized inclusion. It is a natural continuation of what Mordechai Namir, the Chair of the Arab Affairs Committee designed to deal with Palestinians living in Israel in the 1950s and 1960s, posited as the 'distracting cultural field'—an attempt to carve out a structural space within the settler colonial apparatus for a Palestinian (in the settler state's jargon of recognition, an Arab Israeli) cultural presence that may be tolerated only insofar as it does not directly threaten the agenda of the settler state (Sa'di, 2014, p.42). As soon as al-Midan disrupts this misrecognition by highlighting the plight of Palestinian prisoners, it gets defunded by the Israeli state.

In hindsight, we can see that Kashabi Theater, in its emphasis on 'independence' and 'autonomy', emerges as a response. The theater's website states that it unapologetically works towards "a Palestinian society that freely practices art and creativity as a natural right, and strives to renew its cultural identity by placing independent culture front and center" (Kashabi Theater Website). The theater was opened in a house that belonged to Al-Khatib family, a Palestinian refugee family that was forcibly expelled in 1948. The building became available to market forces through an Israeli municipality scheme for urban renewal.

Haya Zaatry has produced a cartography of the building of Kashabi Theater (see Figure 28), producing a non-linear understanding of its geography and temporality. It shows Kashabi Theater (marked by the year 2015). The map shows urban plans, documents, and maps that relate to the building: a 1945 communique between Al Khatib family and the British Mandate authorities; a 1911 aerial map of the area; and a 1953 document in Hebrew, classifying the building as 'abandoned property.' The cartography highlights the complex history of the building—having survived the British colonial city and struggling to survive the eliminatory logics of the Israeli settler colonial city. The joining of these fragments of history and present

constitutes a cartographic 'self-critique', as Zaatry dubbed it (Personal Interview, Online, December, 2021), which brings to the forefront the colonial, settler colonial, and cultural logics

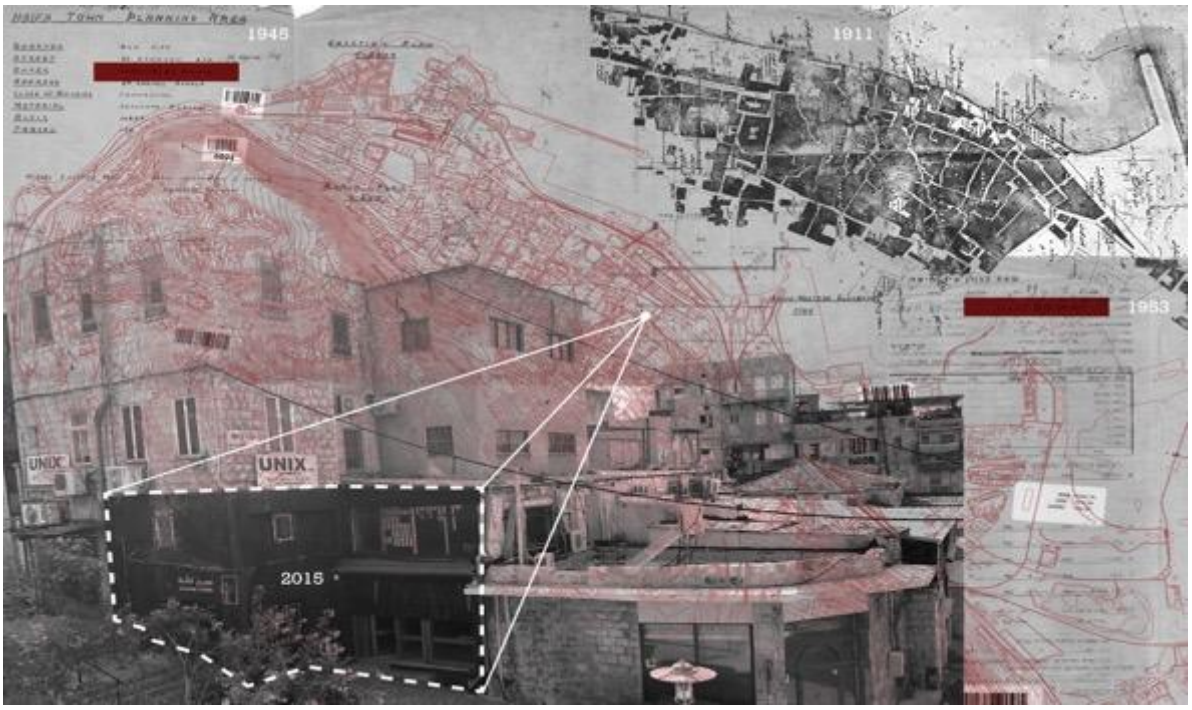


Figure 27. Map showing Kashabi Theater and copies of documents relating to its building. By Haya Zaatry, 2021.

underpinning contemporary Haifa.

Kashabi Theater articulates an independent Palestinian cultural center that rejects Israeli funding. Yet, contradictorily, it enacts this articulation in a building that used to belong to Palestinian refugees and in an area targeted with Israeli plans of urban remaking and renewal. Indeed, as Hall (2016) argued, "Forms remain contradictory in spite of their manifest meanings" (p.199). In my interview with Bashar Murkus, a Palestinian playwright and founding member of Kashabi Theater, he spoke of this contradiction:

> We, as Palestinian organizations or businesses, when we try to do significant things at the Palestinian level, are serving this gentrifying plan? This question emerges when you come to know that you are, at the end of the day, some dice in the middle of a large game… When you open a stage and a bar, such as Fattoush bar [in downtown Haifa], which is in the middle of an area they are trying to renovate; when you open a venue such as Kabareet [bar]; and when you open a restaurant.. are you serving this plan? As a result, even if you are trying to

> establish these venues as independent, without a direct relation to the settler state, and with political awareness and decisions.. but the result… this is a dangerous question. I do not know how to respond to. But at the same time, I do not have the privilege to play outside this game. As a cultural practitioner [*fa'il thaqafi*] living within the parameters of the settler state, do I have another possibility and I chose this one instead? No, I do not (Personal Interview, Haifa, 2020).

Murkus here is aware of the parameters within which his cultural struggles take place. Given the economic reliance on the Israeli settler colonial order, the spaces for a genuine, completely separate Palestinian urban fabric are impossible. It is no surprise, then, that Murkus describes the Palestinian urban presence in Haifa as a 'Parallel City' (Murkus, 2017)—it simultaneously exists despite, but also because of, the settler colonial city.

Majd Kayyal, a Palestinian novelist and activist, further explained this. In his novel *Al Mawt Fi Haifa* (Death in Haifa, 2019), he critiques the notion of cultural resistance. During an interview, I asked him why (Personal Interview, 2021). He noted, "what I meant is the idea that cultural work is enough to liberate yourself from anything, and it serves to help you escape from a political/social responsibility as a human being, through what is called 'creativity'… and you go to the comfort zone.' Then, he adds: "what we have reached to is that you use the space that repression gives you, you express yourself within it, then persuade yourself this is how you face repression. In reality, that is not true." Kayyal notes that these contradictions emerge because the cultural scene "sits on a very fragile Palestinian economic infrastructure, which, in the first opportunity to garner more profit through its relationship with the Israeli state, as happened in downtown, it has all gone through gentrification; we have done gentrification to ourselves under the title 'culture, nightlife.'" Kayyal here points to the limitations of building a cultural scene through private capital—by renting places, individually, that depend on the ebbs and flows of the Israeli market. Kayyal, who wrote the words for the song '*Hymn to Gentrification*,' is wary of the Israeli dominant culture's capacity to expand its definitions and forms in order to

constitute a more inclusive terrain, where inclusion still works to exclude. The systematic economic deprivation of Palestinian polity within the Green Line since 1948 makes it economically dependent on the settler state, and therefore susceptible to its market's structuring logics.

Palestinian artists in Haifa, including at Kashabi Theater, have worked on the cultural domain and opened up cultural possibilities for the articulation and spatialization of a Palestinian urban presence. They have made some advance, however limited, fragmented and provisional, within a structure designed to eliminate their presence. These venues and their attraction of Palestinian students and activists participated, directly and indirectly, in providing an impetus for scenes of protest in Haifa during the latest *Al-Quds Uprising*. Haifa played a leading role in organizing political as well as cultural and artistic protests. Palestinians in the city participated in the Palestinian Unified Week of Culture (see Figure 29), held in cities all across historic Palestine in July, 2021 (Arab 48, 2021). The German Colony and Wadi Nisnas served as central points for protests against the Israeli assault on Gaza and Jerusalem. In Haifa, artists and protestors held discussion circles, mural drawings, and music circles during Al-Karameh Strike on May 18, 2021. Artists and the arts played a role,



Figure 28. Poster of the Palestine Unifying Culture Week. Source: Usbu' El Iktisad El Watani (The Unified National Economy, 2021)

even if partial, in further activating these political subjectivities and in creating a space where Palestinian difference is enunciated, not as an 'Arab Israeli' difference but as a political protest against the settler colonial order. The cultural struggle in the city is part of a wider political struggle against the gradual elimination of the Palestinian first through dispossession, and then through liquidation and cultural misrecognition. The result of this struggle is neither total incorporation, nor a total reclaiming of the city. It is a "continuous and necessarily uneven and unequal struggle" (Hall, 2021, p.354).

Conclusion

Palestinian artists in Haifa and Ramallah face settler colonial, neoliberal capitalist forces that coalesce into a particular mode of urban production that permeates their cultural production. I have argued that in both cities, modes of urban production and their associated modes of cultural production are mediated through these wider socio-spatial processes. While in Haifa artists negotiate Israeli gentrification schemes that particularly target Palestinian history and present, in Ramallah they negotiate an expanding urban fabric fueled by a dependent Palestinian neoliberal, capitalist order. Although Haifa can be categorized as a 'settler colonial city', where a parallel Palestinian city still persists, Ramallah defies such a categorization, as its urban expansion is enabled by the Palestinian state institutions. Bringing the two cities in relation to one another through the lens of neoliberal capitalist accumulation challenges the common tendency to view them as discrete and separate. By looking at the specific historical circumstances and the social embeddedness of logics of dispossession and enclosure across the two geographies, I have demonstrated how 'gentrification theory' is insufficient for accounting for the particular modes of urban production and the concomitant shifts in modes of cultural production in the two cities. As researchers and social scientists, we already have the conceptual

tools to approach cities, such as Ramallah and Haifa, as creative districts without reducing the subjectivities of their residents as mere effects of power. In the particular contexts of settler colonialism, this runs the risk of overseeing the contradictory and fragmented geographies of contestation and resistance within the city.

Neoliberal modes of accumulation are enabled in the two cities by an overarching settler colonial order. These modes structure and define the limits of negotiation within which Palestinian artists operate. However, they do not already predict or determine the conditions of subjectivation for the artists and their works. These depend, I have argued, on 'practices of articulation' that can either sustain, upend, or contest structural forces in order to articulate new political subjectivities. The 'settler colonial city' and the colonial enclave or Bantustan are not complete and permanent projects. Palestinian artists produce within an order determined on their erasure. Although they do not transcend the determined structural forces, tracing their contradictory negotiation of these forces can help us articulate the role culture and arts can play in the face not only of settler colonial erasure, but the conglomeration of power relations that the settler colony needs to sustain itself: capitalism, racism, and heteropatriarchy.

The cultural struggles artists engage in within these cities can be one way to look into how these contestations take place. However, particular caution is required when approaching such a theoretical endeavor. The aim should be neither to demonstrate how arts are simply incorporated into wider settler colonial structures. Nor should it be to assign a redemptive agency for the indigenous artist by virtue of their articulation of indigenous difference in the face of settler colonialism. Rather, we should aim for a meticulous reading for the specific forms of historically contingent settler colonial power, as it manifests differentially across urban fabrics, while paying attention to the contestations against this power.

Chapter Four

Cultural Boycotts as Anti-Recognition

In September 2011, the exiled Palestinian band *Firqit al-'Ashqin* performed at Duwwar al-Sa'a (the Clock Square) in Ramallah. The band's visit to the West Bank was sponsored by the Palestinian Authority as part of its campaigning for Palestine statehood at the United Nations (UN). On September 23, two days after the visit, the head of the Palestinian Authority submitted an application to the UN Secretary-General for full UN membership. The application failed as it was vetoed in the UN Security Council. The Statehood bid eventually succeeded in earning Palestine a 'non-member observer state' status at the United Nations' General Assembly (United Nations, 2012). The PA's sponsorship of *Firqit al-'Ashqin* works to enlist for its state-building project an iconic band that emerged at the height of the 1970s Palestinian revolution against Israel. In Palestinian collective memory both in Palestine and in the diaspora, al-'Ashqin represents this moment of revolutionary fervour. In 2010, one year prior to the bid, the Authority had turned the band into an official national institution (Al-Watan Voice, 2010).

The band was originally formed in the Syrian capital, Damascus, in 1977 with sponsorship from the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO). It was made up of Palestinians living in Syria, with Hussain Nazek as the principal composer. The band adapted Palestinian folklore music for the purposes of the public stage. Boulous (2013) highlights that this movement "went beyond the mere politicization of lyrics to include the addition of instrumental accompaniment, changes in rhythms, maqams[42], and some standardization of diverse folk

[42] This refers to the melodic modes used in Arabic traditional music. For further discussion of maqams and Palestinian music, see McDonlad, D. (2013).

tunes" (60). The band was part of a wider PLO strategy to expand and mobilize its base of support. This had ramifications not only on the Palestinian music-making scene in the diaspora, but also within Palestine. In the West Bank, "activists and PLO affiliates who were in line with PLO ideals started to influence music making" (p.60). Although some artists were critical of this collapsing of the artistic into the purely political, by the end of the 1970s, the "authoritarian principles of the PLO's cultural policy" (p.61) had reshaped the parameters of the cultural field and widened the gap between *fann multazim* (committed art) and *fann ghayr multazim* (non-committed art).

Almost three decades later, the Palestinian struggle for liberation has a different political and socioeconomic landscape, though this landscape clearly grew out of these earlier contradictions. Firqit al-'Ashqin, a band composed mostly of Palestinian refugees, came to the West Bank with sponsorship from the Palestinian Authority for the purpose of promoting its state-building project. Here, the PA clearly sutures the cultural and artistic to the purposes of state building. Although the band members experienced a temporary taste of their inalienable right of return, arousing feelings of jubilation, their entry was enabled by the Palestinian Authority, and by extension, by the Israeli settler state that controls all borders of historic Palestine. As Israel controls all the borders, it ultimately has control over who enters both the territories occupied in 1948 and those occupied in 1967. However, the differences in the entry regimes imposed on these territories are not as straightforward. While entry into '48 Territories is directly handled by the Israeli settler state and requires an Israeli official visa, entry for Arab and Palestinian artists into '67 Territories is facilitated by the Palestinian Authority and handled by the Israeli military-civil occupation regime.

These differences in the entry regimes have created confusion around the Palestinian Call for the Academic and Cultural Boycott of Israel (henceforth, PACBI), launched in 2004. PACBI is a founding member of the Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions Movement (BDS).[43] It advocates for a boycott of Israeli academic and cultural institutions, and individuals representing them. It also urges international cultural workers to respect the BDS 'picket line' by refusing to extend recognition to Israeli cultural organizations and the Israeli settler colonial regime writ large. Both BDS and PACBI have garnered notable success in enlisting the support of artists, cultural practitioners, academics, and activists from around the world. This has been noted by the Israeli state, which passed the "Anti-Boycott Law" in 2011 to prohibit "the public promotion of academic, economic or cultural boycott by Israeli citizens and organisations against Israeli institutions or illegal Israeli settlements in the West Bank" (Adalah, 2011). This particularly makes it difficult for Palestinians in the 48 territories and their Israeli Jewish allies to express support for the boycott.

Nonetheless, in light of the fragmented geography of Palestine, and the different spatio-temporal realities of Palestinians living in the Gaza Strip, the West Bank, the 1948 Territories, and the diaspora, PACBI faces the tremendous challenge of adapting this call to take into account the specific political and legal arrangements underpinning these realities. For the cases of the West Bank and the 1948 Territories, this creates a differential criterion: while PACBI does not directly prohibit international and Arab artists from performing in the West Bank, it does prohibit these same artists from performing in the 1948 Territories. The BDS campaign argues that the former involves an indirect relation whereby the artist is granted a 'permit' while

[43] Practices of boycott have long been present in the Palestinian and Arab repertoire of resistance. For example, even prior to the official establishment of the Israeli settler state, the Arab League, which was established in 1944, issued a boycott of Jewish settler products in Palestine in 1945. I take up the question of the regional boycott and anti-normalisation politics in the Arab World in later sections (see p.240).

the latter involves a direct relationship with the Israeli embassies, which 'normalizes' the settler colonial order. Both in my personal interviews with Palestinian artists and in online journalistic pieces, some have critiqued this inconsistency, arguing that both the permit and the visa are ultimately issued by the Israeli state. Another common critique is that the prohibition of Arab artists from performing in the 1948 Territories further isolates Palestinian artists living within the Green Line, who are already fragmented from the Arab world due to Israeli policies, including the state's adoption of the 1939 Dealing with the Enemy Act from the British Mandate (see literature review). In this sense, there are similarities between the controversies around the South African cultural boycott and the Palestinian one.

The BDS Campaign often comes under criticism for its unclear criteria both from artists and commentators. To offer clear criteria for assessing the chains of complicity for every cultural production or producer was also a challenge for the South African cultural boycott. However, in the South African case, the cultural boycott was total and occurred in parallel with a mass anti-apartheid movement within South Africa. In contrast, the Palestinian boycott has been selective since the beginning and is unfolding within a challenging geopolitical climate in Palestine and the wider Arab world. Not only does Palestine not have an organized mass movement at the moment that works in tandem with the boycott movement, but it also has a Ramallah-based state-building project that openly works in collaboration with the Israeli state. On multiple occasions, the president of the Palestinian Authority, Mahmoud Abbas, has encouraged visits by Arabs to Jerusalem and elsewhere. His rationale is that "To visit the prisoner does not mean to visit the jailer" (Maan News, 2018).[44] It is within this context that al

[44] The president of the Palestinian Authority has repeatedly made this argument. This is one example from a speech he gave in 2018 at the Celebration of Jerusalem as the Capital of Islamic Youth. See Maan News, Al Ra'ees: Nahnu Ashab El Qarar Au Hatha El Kalam Faqat Allathi Yuaqqi', 2018.

‘Ashqin’s visit took place. While the band’s visit to the West Bank did not violate the boycott, it starkly reflects the conundrum of the emerging—partially autonomous, yet significantly-dependent—Palestinian cultural fields in a moment of intensified and differentiated colonial recognition politics across Palestine. This makes it all the more difficult for the boycott campaign to uphold an anti-normalization campaign. It also unfairly pushes commentators and critics to place on it responsibilities that it does not itself uptake, particularly that of offering a clear political vision for Palestinians in their different locations. Therefore, the critiques I highlight in this chapter are not meant to question the necessity of the boycott. Rather, I approach them as a generative ground for envisioning emancipatory and liberatory Palestinian cultural fields.

While entry into ’48 Territories is directly handled by the Israeli settler state and requires an Israeli official visa, entry for Arab and Palestinian artists into ’67 Territories is facilitated by the Palestinian Authority and handled by the Israeli military-civil occupation regime. Whilst the previous chapters have been concerned with how to read urban artworks in the midst of settler colonial modes of dispossession fragmentation, this chapter zooms in on the explicitly- political practice of ‘cultural boycott.’ I conceive of this practice as a pivotal site for the production of spatialities and politics that resist—however provisionally and contradictorily—the limits imposed by the settler colony. The focus on ‘boycott’ serves to disrupt critical urban interventions that reify an all-encompassing settler colonial city (see Hugil, 2017) and to re-present the settler colonial city as a particular socio-spatial form that exists in an equal relation to other (both imagined and lived) socio-spatial forms and practices.

If, as geographer Doreen Massey (2000) notes, a ‘landscape’ “is no spatial surface; it is a contemporaneity of trajectories” (p.228), then ‘boycott’ names a historically-embedded socio-

spatial practice that produces space. McFarlane's notion of 'fragment urbanism' is helpful insofar as it highlights both the ways in which a city is a "fundamental theatre for the drama of fragmentation" (p.1008) as well as for the re-making of fragments into political tools. I argue that the conversations around the boycotts, and its differential criteria across the Green Line, offer an insight into a grassroots politics of 'fragment urbanism.'

In this sense, I approach the boycott as the refusal to recognize the legitimacy of settler socio-spatial forms and to engage in political, cultural and economic circuits with it. Boycott, then, is a socio-spatial practice that constitutes a reversed gaze, a constant questioning of the settler state apparatus and its legitimacy. Boycott, I argue, is not merely about 'withdrawal' from chains of complicity, but about building worlds where this complicity no longer makes sense. Boycott names a series of socio-spatial practices that contest the dominant spatialization of the settler colony onto Palestinian geographies and that refute the geographic fragmentation of the Palestinian indigenous polity. These practices circulate and proliferate across urban and non-urban condensed sites. To take the concrete contestations around them as another entry point into a politics of cultural resistance, one that delves into the intricacies of struggles to highlight avenues for new political subjectivities. Practices of boycott imagine and produce intermittent, contradictory and fragmented anti-colonial geographies

In this chapter, I focus on the conversations around PACBI in these different locations, paying particular attention to this conundrum. To do so, I rely on Arabic media reports, existing literature in Arabic, PACBI statements, and in-depth interviews with artists. Given the polarizing nature of the debate around the boycott even within Palestine, I have chosen to anonymize the names of the artists cited in this chapter in order to focus the readers' attention on the boycott, its contradictions, and its potentialities. I pay particular attention to the

conversations around the differential criteria for the West Bank and the ’48 territories. I argue that the emergence of independent cultural scenes within the ’48 territories has reinvigorated conversations around the necessity of re-instituting sustainable and effective cultural relations between Palestinians living in these territories and the wider Arab world. I argue that while it is not the goal of the BDS movement to rejuvenate and articulate a liberatory Palestinian cultural field in the post-Oslo moment, the frictions around its call help us identify the parameters of Palestinian cultural vision(s) that are simultaneously attuned to the spatio-temporal differences between the fragmented geographies of Palestinian livelihoods while remaining collective and united. Understood this way, boycott becomes less about mere ‘withdrawal’ and more about ‘building’ and ‘renewing’ intra-Palestinian cultural relations as well as Arab-Palestinian cultural relations.

Before proceeding, it may be helpful to remind the reader that I use the ’67 territories’ to refer to the territories that came under Israel’s control in 1967 after the Arab defeat in the so-called “Six-Day War”. I use ’48 territories’ to refer to Palestinian territories that had been occupied by Israel in 1948. Following Nassar (2017), I recognize that while the term ‘Arab Israeli’ is widely used within Israel, ’48 Palestinians/Territories are more consistent with how Palestinians in these territories articulate their own subjectivity and outlook (p.14).

Recognition and Boycott

Boycott targets the subjective and objective circuits of recognition. When an artist abstains from participating in events or activities with direct complicity in the settler colonial order, they are withdrawing their ‘recognition’ of the event as well as the settler colonial order it promotes. Boycott brings under questioning the interlocking relations of power that sustain the settler colonial order; it demands a subjective and an objective reorientation of relations that

'turns the gaze' and challenges the settler's ability to be assured of their 'consciousness'. Boycott is about building alternative imaginaries as much as it is about withdrawing from certain relations. Boycott targets recognition.

The relationship between colonialism and politics of recognition have been at the centre of debate for decades (Coulthard, 2014; Fraser, 2003; Povinelli, 2002; Taylor, 1992). I understand recognition as the incorporation of Indigenous struggles for nationhood and self-determination into rights-based liberal frameworks that end up reifying, rather than abolishing, colonial, racial, and heteropatriarchal hierarchies. Coulthard (2014), writing in the context of today's Canada, defines politics of recognition as the

> now expansive range of recognition-based models of liberal pluralism that seek to "reconcile" Indigenous assertions of nationhood with settler-state sovereignty via the accommodation of Indigenous identity claims in some form of renewed legal and political relationship with the Canadian state, (p.3).

Politics of recognition, in this sense, works to accommodate Indigenous assertions of nationhood without bringing into question the settler-state sovereignty, which is accumulated through a structuring force of dispossession. Coulthard is mostly concerned with the gradual co-optation of Indigenous struggles since the 1970s into frameworks of multicultural recognition within the Canadian settler state. This politics of recognition, he argues, promises "to reproduce the very configurations of colonialist, racist, patriarchal state power that Indigenous peoples' demands for recognition have historically sought to transcend" (p.3). He, therefore, distinguishes Indigenous demands for recognition from the liberal and colonialist politics of recognition.

Although Coulthard's observations have some resonance with the realities in Palestine, the nature of Israeli settler colonial power and Palestinian resistance to it is different from that in today's Canada. In her discussion of the 'culturalisation' of Palestinian Bedouin Indigenous

rights in Israel/Palestine, Tatour argues that sympathetic critical scholars and NGOs have mobilized a restricted, multicultural understanding of 'Indigeneity' that erodes the Palestinian native identity of Bedouins. This resulted in the international recognition of Bedouins as Indigenous. Such analysis, Tatour argues, places 'Bedouin difference' in their 'distinct' culture rather than in their relation as a native population threatened with settler colonial erasure. When rendered in these terms by international organizations, the struggle of Palestinian Bedouins is turned into a cultural rights-based struggle, rather than an Indigenous struggle against colonial dispossession. Tatour (2019) is careful to point out, however, that "Israel, unlike Canada and Australia, is not characterized by multicultural governance. Israel, a country that has no treaties with its indigenous population, resembles terra nullius era in pre-Mabo Australia, exhibiting a total denial of indigenous title" (p.14). Furthermore, unlike settler colonies in African, Asian, and Pacific states, which bypass the 'Indigenous' by claiming 'we are all Indigenous,' the Israeli settler colony is premised on an "exclusive definition of Indigeneity in which the Jewish people (regardless of whether or not they are citizens of Israel) are the *only* population Indigenous to the land" (p.9; Emphasis in Original). The Israeli settler state does not, therefore, uphold a multicultural model of recognition that attempts to reconcile Palestinian demand for nationhood and self-determination with settler sovereignty via 'cultural difference.'

Instead, deploying this exclusive definition of Indigeneity, the Israeli state seeks to misrecognize Palestinians living in the territories it occupied in 1948 as 'Arab Israeli' and systematically exclude them from its citizenship apparatus (Robinson, 2013). The state has particular resistance to 'assimilation,' preferring instead to maintain a white Jewish supremacist structure (Wolfe, 2016).[45] As I demonstrated in Chapter One, the Israeli settler state relies on

[45] On this, Wolfe adds that the Zionist settler colony, unlike other settler colonies, had to prefabricate its settler society, i.e., ideologically build it before its translation into an actual polity. This is also consistent with the

direct, coercive relations that continue to dispossess Palestinians. In Chapters Two and Three, I have shown how the settler state has systematically fragmented Palestinian urban and rural fabrics in these territories, prevented Palestinians from having a geographic contiguity and a unified political vision, and incorporated them into its regulatory and hierarchal citizenship apparatus. This structural violence is coupled with the misrecognition of Palestinians as 'Arab Israelis.' As for Palestinians living in East Jerusalem, the West Bank, and the Gaza Strip, they are subjected to a differentiated military occupation regime: the systematic expulsion of Palestinians living in Jerusalem, the brutal siege imposed on the Gaza Strip, and the arrests, murders, and dispossession of Palestinians living in the West Bank. Since the signing of the Oslo Agreement, these territories have been further subjected to the contradictions of settler colonialism and Palestinian neoliberal, capitalist state-building. The Oslo Agreement enshrined a politics of limited *political* recognition that fuels a Palestinian state-building project that serves, rather than subverts, the settler colonial state. I hope to show here that while the Israeli settler state does not need the recognition by the Indigenous Palestinian to further its structures of oppression, it does nonetheless need this recognition from both Palestinians and Arabs to introduce new modes of settler colonial governance and to further naturalize its settler colonial apparatus. This is the relation that the cultural boycott, and arguably the whole Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions Movement, aims to target.

In a chapter titled "The Black Man and Recognition" in his book *Black Skin, White Masks*, Fanon explains that Hegel's typology of the impossibility of reciprocal recognition between the master and the slave does not apply to colonial contexts. Although this chapter

Palestinian novelist, Ghassan Kanafani's, argument that Zionist literature predated Zionist polity. For more on this, see Chapter 8 in Wolfe, P. (2016). *Traces of History*. See also Kanafānī, G. (1967). *Fī al-adab al-Ṣihyūnī (On Zionist Literature)*.

contains the most sustained critique of Hegel, the concern with reciprocity, as Gibson argues (2002), "is a central feature of the radical humanist project that constitutes *Black Skin*" (p.30). Hegel (2018) had argued that "Self-consciousness is *in* and *for itself,* and by the fact that, it is in and for itself for another self-consciousness; that is, it is only as something recognized" (p.76). He identified a 'movement of recognition', where self-consciousness moves out of itself, superseding the other and, by virtue of doing so, superseding itself. This ideal movement of recognition is described at first as occurring between two self-determining consciousnesses. Coulthard (2014, p.28) calls this "the intersubjective nature of identity formation", which distinguishes Hegel's formulations from liberal framings that fail to take into account the social relations within which recognition takes place. What is important here is to recognize that in Hegel's formulation, a reciprocal recognition can only occur between two self-determining self-consciousnesses.

This reciprocity is denied when the movement of recognition is between a master and a slave, in Hegel's terms. Before I proceed, it is important to note here that Hegel's abstraction of the 'slave/master' dialectic fits within a larger tendency in Western political philosophy to relegate slavery to the sphere of the abstract and metaphorical, while actually-existing chattel slavery was happening across the Western hemisphere. Indeed, Susan Buck-Morss (2000) shows how this 'metaphor' emerged precisely at the moment when "the economic practice of slavery—the systematic, highly sophisticated enslavement of non-Europeans as a labor force in the colonies—was increasing quantitatively and intensifying qualitatively to the point that by the mid-eighteenth century it came to underwrite the entire economic system of the West" (p.821). Hegel's abstract slave/master dialectic, it would appear, is the product of his own subjectivity and sociohistorical context—a context in which an actual revolution of enslaved

peoples against colonial planters was taking place: the Haitian revolution (see Trouillot, 2015). Buck-Morss (2000) argues that, "Beyond a doubt Hegel knew about real slaves and their revolutionary struggles" (p.852). It is with that in mind that I read the second movement in Hegel's dialectic.

In Hegel's slave/master dialectic, the master is confronted with a dilemma. He has a self-determining consciousness, but given that the slave lacks it, the master is unable to be assured of himself. Hegel says, "But for recognition proper the moment is lacking, that what the lord does to the other he should also do to himself, and what the bondsman does to himself he should also do to the other" (p.80). In other words, the conditions outlined above for a reciprocal movement of recognition are not fulfilled; lacking another fully determined self consciousness, the master is unable to get his recognition. The slave, in contrast, "realizes that it is precisely in its labour, wherein it seemed to have only an *alienated mind*, that it acquires a *mind of its own*" (p.81). As the master realizes his dependency on his object, the slave becomes assured of his being through 'labor'. Coulthard (2014) puts it in clear terms: "as the master continues to wallow in his sluggish state of increased dependency, the slave, through his or her transformative labor, 'becomes conscious of what he truly is' and 'qua worker' come to realize 'his own independence'" (p.28).

Fanon (2008) refutes Hegel's thesis, arguing it is inapplicable to colonial contexts. He says, "For Hegel there is reciprocity: here [in the colony] the master scorns the consciousness of the slave. What he wants from the slave is not recognition but work" (p.195). Conversely, he adds, "the slave here can in no way be equated with the slave who loses himself in the object and finds the source of his liberation in his work. The black slave wants to be like his master," (p.195). To Fanon, in colonial contexts, the master does not seek the recognition of the

colonized and does not 'wallow in his sluggish state of increased dependency.' The master, rather, despises the consciousness of the colonized.

Coulthard (2014) cites this analysis by Fanon to demonstrate that "the problem with this [Hegel's] formulation is that when applied to actual struggles for recognition between hegemonic and subaltern communities the mutual character of dependency rarely exists" (p.40). There is no reciprocal desire for recognition, as the settler state "does not require recognition from the previously self-determining communities upon which its territorial, economic, and social infrastructure is constituted" (p.40). The result of the dialectic, in actually-existing settler colonialisms, is either "the explicit nonrecognition of the equal status of the colonized population" or "the strategic 'domestication' of the terms of recognition leaving the foundation of the colonial relationship relatively undisturbed" (p.40). Coulthard here means domestication in the sense evoked by is Schulte-Tenckhoff (1998): as the process "through which states aimed to subvert the position of Indigenous peoples as peoples, often ignoring or unilaterally amending treaties" (p.240).

I find Coulthard's reading of Fanon particularly relevant for making sense of the multiple and varying responses to the call for a cultural boycott of Israel. Yet, the boycott suggests another result of the dialectic: *anti-recognition*. Boycott demonstrates that the settler state—Israel in this case—does need recognition from the Palestinians as well as from Arab countries in order to further legitimize its settler colonial order and introduce new modes of oppressive governance. This is especially true in the case of Israeli settler colonialism, where reciprocal, state-level, recognition has not yet been achieved with all other nation-states, particularly Arab nation-states.

Even prior to the official establishment of the Israeli settler state, the Arab League, which was established in 1944, issued a boycott of Jewish settler products in Palestine in 1945 (Iskander, 1966). In 1949, the League established boycott offices across Arab countries to monitor the boycott, a process that was further elaborated by 1951 (Iskandar, 1966; Takriti, 2019, p.78). In 1954, the League passed Resolution No.849, effectively forbidding any "agreement or transaction with any person or organization (i) situated in Israel; (ii) affiliated with Israel through nationality; or (iii) working for or on behalf of Israel, regardless of place of business or residence" (Gilat, 1992, Appendix). This history of boycott in the region predates the BDS movement and anticipates the power of boycott—both subjective and objective—in materially and ideologically affecting the settler state. As we will see in the next sections, however, this boycott is also not without contradictions, as it had, and continues to have, an unintended effect of culturally and physically isolating Palestinians living in the 1948 territories from the wider Arab world.

The realities have changed, however, since 1954, with many Arab countries formally normalizing their relations with Israel, including Egypt (1979), Jordan (1994), Bahrain (2020), and United Arab Emirates (2020). The Oslo Peace Agreement, signed in 1993/4, further legitimized some of the Arab states' intent on normalizing relations with the Israeli state. Yet, even in Arab countries where a normalization agreement has been signed, given the entangled history of Palestine and the Arab world, such normalization still receives active clear resistance from the countries' populations (see Albzour, 2020).

In this sense, we can add one more result of the dialectic. In addition to 'nonrecognition' and 'domestication', it can lead to the proliferation of subjective and embodied pathways of recognition that, in turn, work to normalize the settler colonial structures. In a context of unequal

power relations, boycott—the refusal to recognize the legitimacy of a settler state and to engage in political and economic circuits with it—constitutes a reversed gaze, a constant questioning of the settler state apparatus and its legitimacy. The call for boycott calls into question these pathways, though not without contradictions, as the next sections aim to show. While, as we will hear artists argue in the next sections, Israel does not need an entry by an Arab artist into its territory for its apparatus to be recognized, such an entry may legitimate colonial pathways of recognition that, in turn, work to naturalize settler colonialism.

The main contradiction for the Palestinian BDS movement lies in its differential criteria for the West Bank, the Gaza Strip, and the territories occupied in 1948. While the movement directly boycotts the visa and sees it as a 'direct' embodiment of the settler colonial apparatus, it refrains from listing visits to the West Bank, facilitated by the Israeli permit regime, under the boycott. This distinction fails to interrogate the differential imposition of colonial recognition politics across the land of historic Palestine. While it manifests as a self-rule in the West Bank, this politics manifests as an exclusionary citizenship logic in the territories occupied in 1948. In both, however, the visa and the permit work as mechanisms of naturalization of Israeli settler colonial control.

Despite this tactical contradiction, the boycott movement is about anti-recognition—it is about challenging relations of recognition not only at the state level, but also at the subjective level. The cultural boycott, in particular, makes a demand on artists and cultural workers to abstain from upholding a relation of recognition of the Israeli state by attending its festivals, promoting its cultural products, or performing within its borders. While these boycotts do not materially and fundamentally change the realities of living under the settler colonial order, they do highlight the settler colonial state's reliance on both state-based recognition and subjective

recognition (e.g., by artists) to normalize its apparatus. The settler state does not need recognition by artists, Arab, Palestinian or International, to be certain of itself as a state. Recognition, however, works as a gradual strategy of co-optation—it enables new modes of settler colonial governance that predict the shape of Palestinian-Arab relations and interactions. Boycott is a socio-spatial practice, grounded in anti-recognition, that produces provisional and contradictory anti-colonial, imagined geographies. Anti-recognition reverses the gaze and can work as a generative ground for socio-spatial forms and practices within Palestine and beyond that anticipate an emancipatory future. Boycott is not strictly about withdrawal; it is also about world-making.

The Call for a Cultural Boycott

The Oxford English Dictionary traces the etymological root of the word 'boycott' to nineteenth century Ireland. According to the Dictionary, Boycott refers to "the name of Captain Charles C. Boycott (1832-97), a land agent in Ireland, who was a prominent early recipient of such treatment with the encouragement of the Irish Land League) in the autumn of 1880." Boycott refused to reduce rents for the Irish peasants working his estate and evicted three tenants. In September 1880, his farm labourers were encouraged by the Irish Land League to withdraw their labour. The term 'Boycott' was most likely formed by the local priest John O'Malley, who coined it as an alternative for the Irish peasants to use instead of the less familiar word 'ostracize'. Upon taking his case to the press, particularly *The Times* and the *London Daily News*, his case became widely popular, eliciting support from unionist newspapers. Under the protection of a thousand troops, around fifty-seven loyalists from Cavan and Monaghan, 'The Boycott Relief Expedition', descended upon Boycott's farm to harvest Boycott's crops (Irish Central, 2021; see also Boycott, 1997). The word 'Boycott' is therefore born in an industrial

action by Irish peasants against an English land agent and former soldier. It is born in the terrain of Irish anti-colonial struggle.

Since then, the word has had many lives. We can mention a few: the Montgomery Bus Boycott of 1955, the anti-Apartheid Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions Movement in South Africa, and the contemporary Palestinian, transnational Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions Movement. Across these contexts, the word has offered a tactic of resistance against racial settler colonial/colonial oppression. However, the Palestinian BDS movement, the focus of this chapter, seeks its inspiration mainly from the South African experience.

The Palestinian Call for the Cultural and Academic Boycott of Israel (PACBI) was formed in 2004 by a group of Palestinian intellectuals and academics (BDS Website; see also Estefan et al, 2017). It precedes the Palestinian BDS Movement, which was established in 2005 by Palestinian civil society organisations. Indeed, the campaign is one of the founding members of the BDS Movement. The campaign sees cultural institutions as "part and parcel of the ideological and institutional scaffolding of Israel's regime of occupation, settler colonialism and apartheid against the Palestinian people" (PACBI Guidelines for the International Cultural Boycott of Israel, 2014 henceforth PACBI guidelines). It argues that the 'cultural' is closely sutured to the "hegemonic Zionist establishment in Israel" and serves to further the latter's regimes of oppression. The cultural, in this sense, is understood as enmeshed within wider power relations. It is approached as an arena of articulation for the founding principles of Israeli settler colonialism. Israeli arts (its practitioners, infrastructures, and visions) do not transcend the logic of structured dispossession that serves as a prerequisite for the spatialization of a settler state.

According to the campaign's guidelines document, the cultural boycott seeks its inspiration mainly from the boycott campaign against apartheid South Africa, "despite some crucial differences." Unlike the South African cultural boycott, the Palestinian boycott "is institutional and does not target individuals as such." Therefore, "mere affiliation of Israeli cultural workers to an Israeli cultural institution is.. not grounds for applying the boycott." The boycott is applicable only if an "individual is representing the state of Israel or a complicit Israeli institution or is commissioned/recruited to participate in Israel's efforts to "rebrand" itself." The document highlights the necessity to target "not only the complicit institutions but also the inherent and organic links between them which reproduce the machinery of colonial subjugation and apartheid." The guidelines then add a point on "common sense boycotts", which refer to boycotts by "conscientious citizens around the world" against individuals (Israeli or otherwise) for their "individual complicity in, responsibility for, or advocacy of violations of international law." While the campaign does not provide the grounds for these "common sense" boycotts, it does not stand against them.

Before discussing how these criteria unfold differentially in the West Bank and the 1948 Territories, it is necessary to offer a brief introduction of the South African cultural boycott, which the Palestinian cultural boycott takes as its model. As countries in the African continent were gaining formal independence from European colonialism in the 1950s into the 1960s, the Apartheid regime in South Africa was entrenching its rule through legislative acts, systemic segregation (most notably, the Bantu Education System), and brutal dispossession of black South Africans, most epitomized by the bulldozing of Sophiatown and the forced eviction of its black residents. In light of this, as early as 1954, Father Trevor Huddleston, who would later become president of the British anti-Apartheid Movement (AAM) called for a cultural boycott

of South Africa (Peffer, 2009, p.48). In 1959, the ANC president Albert Luthuli called for a total boycott of South Africa. In 1961, the British musicians' union "urged its members to turn down engagements in South Africa." Although the sports boycott was the most prominent up until the early 1970s, the opening by the Apartheid government of the amusement park 'Sun City' in the Bantustan of Bophuthatswana at the end of 1979 brought the cultural boycott to prominence (Siegfried, 2017, p.5). While the United Nations General Assembly had encouraged its members to suspend their relations with the apartheid regime in the fields of education, culture, and sports in 1969, it called in 1980 "on writers, artists, and musicians to boycott the country." In 1983, the United Nations Special Committee against apartheid began publishing a "cultural register' listing artists who failed to comply" (Siegfried, 2017, p.5).

The South African cultural boycott was total: "South African artists were not supposed to be traveling overseas, and international performers were routinely blacklisted by the progressive movement for playing in South Africa" (Peffer, 2009, p.169). While boycotting Western artists performing in South Africa was uncontroversial, the question of whether to boycott all South African artists performing abroad was a much more difficult question (see Siegfried, 2017). This contradiction intensified and, consequently, the total boycott became untenable by the late 1980s, as the United Democratic Front (UDF) had made notable gains and as cultural activism surged within South Africa itself (Peffer, 2009, p.170). During and after the boycott, there were critical conversations around the impact of the cultural boycott on the cultural scenes in South Africa. If the circulation of cultural ideas and visions into and out of South Africa was to be limited, then how would that impact culture and arts within the country? This is a question that would, almost three decades later, become of equal significance to the Palestinian cultural boycott.

In 1986, Barbara Masekela, Head of the ANC's cultural department in Lusaka (Zambia), remarked that the artists within South Africa "should also be beneficiaries of cultural exchange in the form of studies, workshops and opportunities to perform, which were often absent in the country itself." She highlighted that the confusion around the cultural boycott, especially in light of the controversy around Paul Simon's album *Graceland*,[46] "came out of the fact that people thought that the cultural boycott was aimed at South Africa, whereas it was aimed at apartheid South Africa. And it became ridiculous when the Movement itself was picketing these South African artists who were not part of the system" (as cited in Siegfried, 2017, p.24). Soon thereafter, in 1987, ANC president Oliver Tambo announced a 'selective cultural boycott'. He explained that "this change of direction was due to the emergence of a 'popular culture' that should not be boycotted but rather encouraged, supported and shared with the rest of the world" (Siegfried, 2017, p.14). The selective boycott was meant to encourage the expanding and emerging anti-apartheid culture within South Africa.

The Palestinian cultural boycott differs from the South African one, in that the former does not constitute a 'total boycott'. According to its guidelines, the Palestinian cultural boycott "is institutional and does not target individuals as such." Palestinian artists, from any location in historic Palestine, are not prohibited from performing abroad, as long as their works "*do not represent the state of Israel or a complicit Israeli institution, or is commissioned/recruited to participate in Israel's efforts to rebrand 'itself'."* In clearer terms, the guidelines state that "we consider all non-Israeli (e.g., international, Palestinian) cultural productions that are funded by

[46] In 1985, Paul Simon collaborated with South African artists on the album *Graceland*. He visited South Africa to record the album there and invited South African artists to New York to tour with him. Throughout the process, he "sought to play down the political implications of his collaboration with South African artists; he also ignored the decision-making authority of the ANC and the Anti-Apartheid Movement" (Siegfried, 2017, p.8).

official Israeli bodies or international "brand Israel" organisations to be commissioned and to be politically motivated, therefore being subject to boycott." Therefore, Palestinian artists, as long as they are not representative of the chains of 'complicity,' are able to perform abroad.

For many Palestinian artists and cultural practitioners, the controversial question for the Palestinian cultural boycott revolves around where international and Arab artists are allowed to perform in historic Palestine, i.e., in both the lands occupied in 1948 and the lands occupied in 1967. This question is particularly controversial for Arab artists, who, given the history and present of the Palestinian cause, bear an additional responsibility for not normalising relations with the Israeli settler colonial regime. In a statement by PACBI in 2011, the campaign highlights that the

> peoples of the Arab world, with their diverse national, religious and cultural backgrounds and identities, whose future is more tangibly tied to the future of Palestinians than the larger international community, not least because of continued Israeli political, economic and military threats on their countries, and the still prevalent and strong kinship with the Palestinians, face similar issues [to those faced by Palestinian artists] with regards to normalization.[47]

This is especially true in light of the refusal of some governments in the Arab World to normalize relations with the Israeli state, though we have witnessed in the past few years increased government-level normalization, including by the United Arab Emirates and Bahrain in their signing of the so-called 'Abraham Accords' in 2020.[48]

According to an interview with the London-based and Qatar-funded Arabic newspaper *Al-Araby Al-Jadid*, the general coordinator for the National Palestinian Committee for the Boycott, Mahmoud Nawaj'a, explained that the criteria for determining where Arab artists can perform depends on "the nature of the relation [with the Israeli state] that is upheld by this visit."

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[47] PACBI. (2011.). *Israel's Exceptionalism: Normalizing the Abnormal | BDS Movement*. Retrieved December 21, 2021, from https://bdsmovement.net/news/israel's-exceptionalism-normalizing-abnormal

[48] To see the full text of the declaration, see United States Department of State. (2020). *The Abraham Accords—United States Department of State*. https://www.state.gov/the-abraham-accords/

After highlighting that the BDS criteria constitute the 'bare minimum for limiting normalisation with the Israeli state,' Nawaj'a mentions two possible relations for Arab artists intending to visit Palestine. The first is "a direct normalising relation, which occurs when an Arab applies for an entry visa from the Occupation's embassy." The second, which is not considered 'normalisation' according to the BDS guidelines, is the "permit". "Although the permit is issued by the occupation," adds Nawaj'a, "it is nonetheless not issued through a direct relationship between Arabs and the occupation's embassy but through the Palestinian Civil Affairs but does not constitute a direct relation between Arabs and the occupation" (Al-Araby Al-Jadid, 2019a). In other words, the focus here is on whether a direct relation with the Israeli state is constituted or not. The campaign argues that while the visa constitutes a direct relation and therefore legitimizes and 'normalizes' the Israeli state structures, the 'permit' constitutes an indirect relation. This distinction has brought the campaign under criticism by some artists and activists, who question the validity of the distinction, as both the visa and the permit are ultimately issued by the Israeli state. Indeed, the same article that quotes Nawaj'a in Al-Araby Al-Jadid asks: "Does not the Palestinian Authority have to contact the occupation authorities to issue the permit?"

In Arabic, normalisation is referred to as *tatbi',* from the root *tabba'a*, which means to return things to where they were before a conflict or a fight. It is important to note here that, in the particular context of Palestine and the wider Arab World, the term 'normalization' is associated with the official peace processes with the Israeli state. Beshara (2016) notes that 'normalization' is a shortcut for "normalization with the occupation state, in the context of the Israeli-Arab peace process, and particularly the negotiations that started with the Camp David Accords [1978] between Israel and Egypt." According to Al Bustani (2013), *tatbi'* took another

life after the Madrid Peace Conference in 1991, which paved the way for the Oslo Peace Agreement in 1993 and the Wadi Arabeh Israel-Jordan Peace Treaty in 1994 and "moved the relations that brought together the official Arab regime with Zionist institutions from the sphere of the 'secretive' to the 'public'." Afterwards, in the official Arab sphere, Israel became either "a 'partner,' or, at worst, a 'friend'" and it publicly announced its trade, political, and cultural relations with a number of Arab capitals. Therefore, 'normalization' in the Palestinian context means the gradual formal (state-level, economic, and political) and subjective (social and cultural) recognition of the Israeli state by Arab states and their populations.

The question of whether or not Arab artists should visit either side of the Green Line has to be understood in this particular context, where widespread recognition of the Israeli state is not achieved through popular consent, but through coercive relations instituted by certain Arab governments and the Israeli state. Anti-normalization efforts, including efforts by the boycott campaign, demonstrate the lack of 'popular consent' of the masses in government-led and state-level recognition of the Israeli settler state.

Palestinian novelist and writer, Eyad Barghouti (2018), distinguishes between two definitions of normalization. The first is 'total' and emerges from the Arab League's 1954 resolution, which banned any dealings with any organisations or persons, resident in Israel or belonging to its citizenship (see Takriti, 2019). The second definition Barghouti identifies is *tafsili* (detailed), which takes into account the multiple political and historical conditions defining a particular location and its relationship to the Israeli settler state. He further adds that the BDS campaign's definition fits within the second type of definitions.

PACBI issued a statement in November 2007 offering its own definition of 'normalization'. The statement was then updated in October 2020; the new statement is

particularly attuned to the differences between the territories occupied in 1948 and those occupied in 1967. The old statement defined normalization as "the participation in any local or international project, initiative, or activity that is particularly designed to bring together (directly or indirectly) Palestinians (and/or Arabs) and Israelis (be it institutions or individuals) and that does not directly aim at 'co-resistance' and expose the occupation and all the different forms of discrimination and oppression practiced against the Palestinian people" (PACBI, 2007). What is evident from this definition is that it targets 'relations' rather than 'identities.' In a document released by PACBI in 2011, this point is further clarified: "Countering normalisation is a means to resist oppression, its mechanisms and structure. As such, it is categorically unrelated to or conditioned upon the identity of the oppressor" (PACBI, 2011).

The new definition of normalization, published in 2020, stresses this focus on 'relations'. This focus, in turn, works to open up the space for the campaign to take seriously the differentiated nature of the settler colonial relation as it unfolds in different locations in historic Palestine. Importantly, the statement argues that 'normalisation' falls within the realm of 'voluntary', rather than 'coercive relations.' It adds,

> the latter [i.e., coercive relations] change according to the nature of the settler colonial relation that controls our Palestinian communities in their different locations. Therefore, the anti-normalisation criteria take seriously the specifity of these relations, so that the criteria for the territories occupied in 1967 differ from those for the territories occupied in 1948. Jerusalem has a particular situation, whereby its circumstances of colonization and apartheid lie between these in the 1948 territories and these in the 1967 territories (PACBI, 2020).

The campaign, therefore, recognizes that the settler colonial order manifests differentially vis-à-vis Palestinian communities. Anti-normalisation efforts should take the specifity of each context into account. In a document released by PACBI almost a decade earlier, in 2011 titled "Israel's Exceptionalism: Normalizing the Abnormal", the campaign clarifies what it means by this distinction between relations. The document says that the Palestinian citizens of Israel (from

the territories occupied in 1948) face two types of relations—the first are 'coercive everyday relations' and the second are what may be termed, based on the 2020 document, 'voluntary relations.' Coercive relations refer to "those relations that a colonized people, and those living under apartheid, are forced to take part in if they are to survive, conduct their everyday lives and make a living within the established oppressive structures." For Palestinian citizens of Israel, these many include "daily employment in Israeli places of work and the use of public services and institutions such as schools, universities, and hospitals" (PACBI, 2011). Palestinian intellectual, 'Azmi Beshara (2016, 2-3), notes that this cannot be called normalization, as Palestinians born within 1948 territories "carry an Israeli citizenship and an Israeli passport", and their struggle is therefore highly determined by a rights-based approach that aims to "institutionalize this citizenship based on the right of the native population." In responding to this particular condition, the document clarifies that Palestinian citizens of Israel cannot "be rationally asked to cut such ties, at least not yet."

As for the second type of relations, these are relations that Palestinian citizens of Israel do not have to engage as "a requirement of survival." "The key to understanding this form of normalization," the document adds, "is to consider that when Palestinians engage in such activities without placing them within the same resistance framework mentioned above, they contribute, even if inadvertently, to a deceptive appearance of tolerance, democracy, and normal life in Israel for an international audience who may not know better." In the statement's discussion of the Palestinians in the territories occupied in 1967, this difference between 'coercive' and 'voluntary' is implied, rather than being explicitly stated; the focus is on the voluntary participation in projects, initiatives and activities that are not grounded in a co-resistance framework.

There is a difficulty here for the campaign to take into account the different realities of Palestinian communities residing within historical Palestine. Palestinians living under military occupation, i.e., within the territories occupied in 1967, are not holders of an Israeli citizenship. They are holders of a Palestinian identity card, which is issued by the Palestinian Civil Affairs Committee through its coordination with the Israeli settler state. The relation, again, is indirect, but remains a 'coercive relation'. As for the Palestinians who hold an Israeli citizenship, their passports are issued directly by the Israeli settler state and their everyday reality, including education, work and health, are governed by the Israeli state. They have been called the 'citizen strangers' (Robinson, 2013) as they are the subject of more than fifty discriminatory laws (Adalah, 2017).

This brings us back to the question of who has the ultimate control over the definition of citizenship and belonging in Israel/Palestine. The reductive distinction the campaign makes here between the two locations is reminiscent of the distinction it makes between the 'direct' relation embodied by the Israeli visa, and the 'indirect' relation embodied by the Israeli permit. For Arab artists visiting Palestine, this has meant that the campaign does not see their visits to the Gaza Strip and the West Bank as a violation of the call for boycott. However, as the campaign made clear in recent years, it does *see* visits by Arab artists to the territories occupied in 1948 as a violation. This distinction was brought under scrutiny by some of the artists and musical bands that visited the territories occupied in 1948, including the Jordanian Autostrad Band and the Jordanian singer Aziz Maraka.

Palestinian Artists and the Arab World

The Palestine International Festival for Dance and Music, held annually since 1993 and organised by the Popular Arts Centre, has hosted both international and Arab artists in Ramallah

and other Palestinian cities in the West Bank. It has hosted, among others, the Algerian Rai singers Cheb Faudel and Rachid Taha, Tunisian singer Saber Ruba'i, Emirati singer Ahlam, and Egyptian singer Mohammad Fouad. In addition, the annual festival 'Wein 'A Ramallah' (Where to? Ramallah), which is organised by the Ramallah Municipality, has hosted Arab artists in the West Bank. In the summer of 2019, the festival hosted the Egyptian singer Hamza Nimra (Al Araby Al Jadid, 2019b).

In any other context, these festivals and their hosting of Arab artists would be normalized moments of a city celebrating and rejuvenating its public sphere. However, given the continuous reality of living under a settler colonial military occupation and an ongoing call for a cultural boycott, these events often stir conversations about the role of arts in Palestine, the purpose behind these festivals, and their implications for the ongoing Palestinian struggle against settler colonialism. Nimra's visit to Ramallah reinvigorated the conversation around the cultural boycott and its criteria. While some supported the visit as one of 'solidarity with the Palestinian people,' others refuted it as a form of 'normalization' (see Maan News, 2019; Al Araby Al Jadid, 2019c). The BDS movement, however, published a short statement in Arabic on their Facebook page, stating that "it does not consider Hamza Nimra's visit to the West Bank through a permit a form of normalization, according to the criteria of anti-normalization agreed upon by the majority of Palestinian civil society since 2007" (BDS Arabic, 2019; see also Arab48, 2019). This stance is consistent with the campaign's criteria outlined above, which distinguishes visits by Arab artists via 'permits' from those facilitated by an Israeli visa, directly issued by the Israeli embassies in the Arab countries that recognize Israel, including Egypt.

Nonetheless, in a statement published in multiple Arabic platforms, including Al-Shabka (the Palestinian Policy Network), the Gaza-based BDS member Haidar Eid encouraged

Nimra prior to the visit to abstain from visiting the West Bank. He stressed that even though the official campaign makes a distinction between permit-authorized visits and visa-authorized visits, the campaign "also considers the positions of the campaigns and the committees for boycott in Arab countries as abiding to the citizens of these countries, even when the 'ceiling' of the latter's definition is higher than that adopted by the Palestinian national committee" (Eid, 2019). In other words, according to Eid, given that "unions, parties, popular and cultural forces, and the Egypt BDS campaign" refuse *any* form of normalization with Israel, including through a visit to the territories occupied in 1967, then that criterion takes precedence over that issued by the official Palestinian BDS campaign. Eid's statement further compounds the confusion over whether or not Nimra's visit to Ramallah constitutes a form of normalization, and consequently, whether or not it should be boycotted.

The Palestinian BDS campaign had a different stance on the visit by the Jordanian pop singer Aziz Maraka to Kufr Yassif, a Palestinian village located in the northern district of today's Israel (i.e., within the territories occupied in 1948). In 2019, Maraka visited the village to perform at its annual Christmas celebrations. Shortly thereafter, PACBI issued a statement on their Twitter account denouncing Maraka's visit as a form of normalization. It clarified that the event was sponsored by "Israeli institutions" and it consequently qualified for a cultural boycott. By participating in such events, the campaign argued, the artist is transformed from the role of the "actor, who entertains the besieged Palestinians wherever they are to the role of the 'object', where the enemy uses the artist for promoting itself and its good intention." The confusion around Maraka's visit was compounded by his entry into the 1948 Territories through a permit, issued in coordination with the Palestinian Authority, rather than a visa directly issued by the Israeli embassy in Amman. In a video released on his Facebook page, the singer also

contested that the concert was sponsored by an Israeli bank. In a statement issued by the head of the Kufr Yasif Local Council, Shadi Shwiri, he clarified that unlike the Christmas festival at which Maraka performed—which was sponsored by Israeli ministries and banks—Maraka's visit was solely funded through the Local Council's budget itself (see AlItihad 44). The debate around Aziz Maraka's visit further intensified after he had conducted an interview with the Israeli newspaper, *Haaretz*, during his visit, in which he was cited criticizing the BDS Movement (Haaretz, 2020).

To clarify this confusion, in an interview with the newspaper *Al-Hadath*, the Coordinator for PACBI, Nada Hussein, added that "it is not an issue for an Arab artist from outside the 1948 territories to perform in an activity or a festival organised by Palestinians in the 1948 Territories, as long as these events do not contradict the official criteria for anti-normalization and boycott agreed upon by the majority of the Palestinian civil society" (Al-Hadath, 2020). She further added that the campaign does not have a total ban on Arab artists performing in the 1948 Territories. Hussein posited that an Arab artist performing in these territories is boycottable if they: a) "obtain an Israeli visa"; b) "participate in an activity supported by Israeli ministries, institutions, banks, or companies"; or c) "participate in an activity organised by Palestinian institutions complicit with the occupation state, such as the normalization institutions" (Al-Hadath, 2020).

The discussions around these two concerts suffice to show the difficulty for the cultural boycott to determine and then boycott the circuits of subjective recognition by Arab artists visiting Palestine. This conversation resurfaces, however, with every visit by an Arab artist, be it to the territories occupied in 1967 or those occupied in 1948. In 2012, for example, a similar conversation occurred around the visit by the Jordanian funk-rock band, Autostrad, to Nazareth.

They also did another visit to Haifa in 2013. In both, the band had obtained an Israeli visa to enter the territories occupied in 1948, clearly violating the cultural boycott's criteria (Scene Noise, 2018). The band has been the most adamant in its challenge to the cultural boycott. It released a song in 2018 titled "Mgat3ni" (You Are Boycotting Me), criticizing the discourse of normalization (Autostrad, 2018). Visually, the video starts with footage of a roadway in the middle of a desert, resembling the landscape around the crossing point between the West Bank and Jordan. It then shows footage of their performances in Palestine, the separation wall, and the Mediterranean. The chorus of the song questions the call for boycott:

You are boycotting me, and you are saying
I am getting normalized
You are turning me into a traitor and a *kaffir*
You do not want to listen

Then, the chorus develops to suggest a passivity (or, perhaps, a nihilism) of arts in the face of wider power relations:

We are beans, in al Mihbash[49]
Wherever the heart loves, it lands
How stunning is my country, the beautiful country

"We are beans, in al Mihbash" suggests a passive role, whereby the artist is merely a 'passive' agent being grounded within wider power relations. Autostrad's song, both lyrically and visually, aims to show that the band's visit to Palestine is a visit to the Palestinians, not the settler state. "How stunning is my country" is supposed to demonstrate that the band sees Palestine as an extension of the Arab World. The band landed in Palestine because that is where the heart points. The band opts out for this language of passivity to bypass the implications and contradictions of their visit. Their performances took place at Palestinian venues. They performed for Palestinian Arab audiences. In order to do that, however, they had to seek an

[49] A traditional tool used in many of the Arab countries, including Jordan, to ground coffee beans.

official visa from the Israeli embassy in Amman, offering a subjective recognition of an already-established Jordanian state-based recognition of the Israeli state. The cultural boycott targets particularly this relation.

Some of the Arab artists, including Maraka, stress that they are there to perform for Palestinians and that the boycott should not further isolate the Palestinians living in the 1948 territories. Recall that these performances by Arab artists occur against the backdrop of a long history of systematic isolation of Palestinians living in the 1948 territories from the Arab World. Since 1948, the Israeli state deployed multiple legal decrees, including the 1933 Press Law and the 1939 Trading with the Enemy Act to control and ban any relations between its Palestinian citizens and the Arab World. In her book *Brothers Apart: Palestinian Citizens and the Arab World*, Maha Nassar (2017) shows how Palestinian cultural producers and intellectuals within the 1948 territories devised multiple strategies in the 1950s and 1960s to surpass this isolation from the Arab World. As soon as Israel was established, she reminds us, "the Arab League enforced a boycott of all Israeli goods and citizens, while Israel banned its own citizens from traveling to Arab countries and restricted Palestinian citizens' access to textual material from the Arab world, citing fears of incitement" (p.5). This created a double isolation: "the physical and cultural isolation within Israel" and the "physical and cultural isolation from the Arab world" (p.5). Since then, relations between Palestinians living in Israel and the wider Arab world became mostly reliant on individual initiatives, as a collective articulation of this affinity is legally and juridically repressed by the settler state (Barghouti, 2018).

The 1939 Trading with the Enemy Act, first issued by the British colonial authorities in Palestine during the interwar period, is still used by the Israeli authorities both to prevent Palestinian citizens from traveling to Arab countries that have not normalised their relations

with Israel as well as to prevent the import of written texts from these countries. In 2010, the Israeli state used the law to prevent Palestinian writer Ala' Hlehel from traveling to Lebanon to receive a literary award (Adalah, 2010). Arab artists from countries that are considered 'enemy states', including, among others, Syria, Lebanon, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, and Iran, are banned from coming to the territories occupied in 1948. It appears, then, that the Israeli juridical apparatus plays the main role in isolating the Palestinian cultural fields within its borders. Performances by Arab artists in these territories are historically significant, in that they offer articulations, however contradictory, of new direct cultural links between the Palestinians living in Israel and Arab artists.

Yet, the hegemonic grip the settler state holds over the Palestinian cultural fields within its borders prevents the latter from developing organic and direct relations with cultural producers, intellectuals, and artists from the neighbouring Arab countries. This grip is what facilitates the overarching contradiction underpinning these conversations: on the one hand, there is the necessity to maintain cultural links with the Arab world. On the other, there is the political necessity to challenge state-based and subjective circuits of recognition in order to continue to bring into question the settler colonial edifice that had severed these links in the first place.

Arts without a State

During my fieldwork in Haifa in January 2019, a month after the debacle around Maraka's performance, the conversations around the boycott were vivid. While it is beyond the scope of this chapter to offer a comprehensive analysis of the discursive fields within which these conversations took place, I want to work through some of the arguments of the artists in Haifa around the boycott to highlight the contestations around the boycott and its implications.

The aim is neither to show whether the boycott is effective or not, nor to offer a conclusive answer to how the boycott should look like. Boycott, as a tactic, is bound to have contradictions and to multiply contestations. These contestations are generative for practices of world-making. Boycott is world-making. Therefore, my aim is to demonstrate how these contestations point to the varying realities that Palestinians, and particularly Palestinian artists, encounter under the settler colonial regime. Outlining these contestations also help us identify the crucial questions that should be taken into account when thinking of the material, physical, political, and cultural parameters of our visions for liberatory Palestinian cultural fields across the spatio-temporal locations of Palestinians.

In my interviews with artists in Haifa, there were varying opinions about the boycott. Thematically, these revolved around four main pillars: 1) the necessity to cultivate a solid artistic 'reference' for the Palestinian cultural fields within the 1948 territories by nurturing links with the Arab world; 2) the difference the boycott upholds between performances in the West Bank and those in the 1948 territories; 3) the effect that performances by Arab artists may have on nurturing wider links with the Arab world; and 4) the importance of boycotting Israeli institutions and venues. The artists expressed their unwavering support for a cultural boycott of Israeli institutions; the contestation revolved around whether or not Arab artists should be allowed to perform in Palestinian spaces within the territories occupied in 1948, which lie more directly, according to the boycott's criteria, under settler colonial control.

One of the artists, Malik, who is well-versed in the Palestinian alternative music scene in Haifa, stated that they initially supported visits by Arab artists. He started by highlighting that Palestinians living in the 1948 territories "do not have a state. The state we have to work within is the Israeli state. In principal, you can fight it. In practice, you cannot. You cannot

because you have to work. You have to live." The artist here is referring to the 'coercive relations' that Palestinians face under the settler colonial order, whereby their livelihood has been made systematically dependent on the settler colonial apparatus. When asked about the ability to cultivate relations with the Arab world, the artist states that his relationships with Arab bands started effectively in 2012 during the Jordanian band Autostrad's visit. The artist stated:

> There was communication with them when they wanted to come here. Because there was nothing, we needed someone to come. I was one of the people who advocated that it is necessary for artists to come from the Arab world. Normalization or not, we need this. Because we do not have anything. If we want to build something, we need a reference to stir the wheel. We want the audience to come and see that there is something like this [alternative music]. And we want [local] artists to come and see that there is something like this and start experimenting and imitating. Today, I retreated from this position, and publicly, because I realized it is a slippery slope and people start going to Israeli venues and seeking sponsorship from Israeli institutions and so on. So, I said no, if that is the case, we do not want this (Personal Interview, Haifa, January 2020).

The artist here highlights the necessity for visits by Arab artists, as they can provide a referential framework for the developing Palestinian cultural scene in Haifa. To him, the necessity to build this framework initially took precedence over the question of normalization. In light of the Maraka controversy, however, it became clear to him that this is a 'slippery slope', where visiting artists end up normalizing by performing in Israeli venues and seeking sponsorship from Israeli institutions. The artist recognizes here the necessity for rejecting a 'colonial politics of recognition' as a step towards keeping the settler colonial formation under question—to continue to abnormalize this formation and highlight its oppressive apparatus.

The Haifa-based writer, Hanan, had a different opinion. She stated that "it became clear in the last few years the necessity for Palestinian youth to become part of the Arab world." When I asked her about the impact of the cultural boycott on Arab-Palestinian relations, she highlighted that "we did not previously live this Arab-Palestinian link in order for me to assess

life with it." Hanan here is careful to point out that Palestinian cultural fields within the 1948 territories were systematically severed from the Arab world, though, as Nassar (2017) reminds us, cultural producers and artists always sought alternative ways of maintaining and fostering this transnational relation. Hanan added that the main issue is the "occupation", by which she did not only mean the occupation of the 1967 territories but the occupation of the entire Palestine. "A Palestinian refugee cannot come here, for example. This has nothing to do with the boycott; it has to do with the occupation. My problem is not the boycott; my problem is the occupation." In her formulation, it is the settler state formation, not the boycott, that systematically severs this relationship with the Arab world and creates the contestations around performances by Arab artists in Palestine.

Hanan then argues that, despite this, her issue with the cultural boycott is that it does not necessarily impact the Israeli state. She states:

> A Bahraini poet wants to enter, with a permit not a visa, into the West Bank. This, according to BDS, is ok. But can he enter here? No… Israel needs a piece of paper… Now, my problem with the boycott is that, ok, everything is good, we do not want the Arabs to enter here. But what are you doing? What are you enhancing? Giving legitimacy? What? Israel needs a piece of paper, needs a Bahraini poet to give it legitimacy? This is how it gets its legitimacy—through a Bahraini poet who entered Haifa to read for the Palestinians? (Personal Interview, Haifa, January 2020).

The writer, who spoke passionately, highlights the contradictions around the cultural boycott. She highlights the inconsistency in the BDS criteria for the different Palestinian communities in the West Bank and the 1948 territories. She also questions the idea that subjective recognition of the Israeli state via visas and permits can legitimize the state. In her formulation, Israel, as an established colonial state, does not need recognition by an artist to legitimize its colonial apparatus.

Throughout the interview, the writer stressed the importance and necessity of allowing Arab artists to perform in Haifa and elsewhere, especially in light of the cultural and physical isolation of Palestinians living in the 1948 territories. Crucially, the writer added: "If you want to act as police at the border to prevent Adam from eating the apple, he will eat the apple outside the border." She explained this by saying: "The real danger lies in the ideology, in our heads, not in the movement of our bodies and where they go." The writer here refers to the necessity to focus on the ideas of the artists and whether or not they align themselves with the Palestinian cause, rather than the general movement of bodies across borders. She therefore stresses the agency of the artist, as someone capable of distinguishing a Palestinian space from an Israeli space. This stands in contrast to the cultural boycott's focus on the objective relations under which the circulation of people and ideas takes place and the boycott's insistence on the hegemonic grip the Israeli state holds over cultural relations within the 1948 territories. To her, subjective recognition of the settler state does not revolve around legal encounters; rather, it mainly concerns the inability of the artist, Arab or Palestinian, to critically and continuously assess how their cultural productions stand in relation to the settler state, on the one hand, and the Palestinian communities in their different locations, on the other.

Indie Palestinian singer, Nadia, expressed a similar opinion. She stated, unequivocally:

> It should be allowed for Arab artists to enter here. I mean, the visa that Arab artists get is not going to verify whether Israel exists or not. It is a reality. We are sitting here, talking about this, paying with the shekel, and I have a blue ID [Israeli citizen ID]….If we are this isolated… is it the visa that someone takes, whoever they may be, someone Arab like Autostrad or Maraka or I do not know who… this visa would change [anything]? No, not at all. Let us open up to each other a bit. We are isolated. I do not know anything about Arab countries (Personal Interview, Haifa, January 2020).

Nadia focuses directly on the necessity to establish Arab-Palestinian links and to challenge the physical and cultural isolation experienced by Palestinians living in the 1948 territories. She also—like Hanan—questions the ability of a subjective recognition of the state through a visa to challenge the settler state's apparatus. She stresses the necessity of learning about Arab countries—to reinvigorate a relationship that has been systematically severed.

The Palestinian singer, Basem, seemed most concerned with the distinction the movement makes between the visa and the permit. He says:

> I am with the BDS movement. But my problem is with the compartmentalization of the West Bank and here and whatnot. You either ban everyone from entering everywhere in Palestine, or you ban none. I mean, because whoever enters the West Bank enters through an Israeli security coordination (Personal Interview, Haifa, January 2020).

Basem here explains that both the visa and the permit are directly facilitated by the Israeli state. While the visa is issued through official Israeli embassies, the permit is issued through security coordination between the Palestinian Authority and the Israeli state. Both, however, are reflections of inter-state colonial recognition politics. Basem stressed that this is an ongoing discussion that is yet to be settled. He added:

> There are two sides, and the discussion is ongoing; no one can give you a clear answer. I mean… the BDS criteria are unclear in all cases and not agreed upon in all cases. If the criteria are agreed upon, then that is another discussion, but when Mohammed Assaf (a Palestinian pop singer) comes and Aziz Maraka comes and many people attend their concerts, that means a large number is not responding to BDS. The question: Why are not they responding to BDS? Is it because they are bad people who are traitors, or is it because we need to reassess?

Basel highlights here a recurring discussion around the BDS criteria. Like the South African cultural boycott, the Palestinian boycott faces the immense challenge of offering clear criteria

for the cultural activities, products, and institutions that qualify for a boycott. The selective nature of the Palestinian boycott, however, and the different realities that Palestinian communities face in their different locations compounds the challenge. The settler colonial historic and systematic alienation of Palestinians living in the 1948 territories from the wider Arab world also makes it necessary to strive to establish these connections. The fact that these artists, cited above, are all involved in establishing an independent urban Palestinian cultural scene—one that rejects funding from and/or association with Israeli institutions—is what lies behind their demand for Arab artists to perform in these places. Given the particular reality of Palestinians in the 1948 territories, however, this independence reaches a limit when it comes to the circulation of people and ideas across borders. While the cultural boycott seems adamant about the 'visa' as a form of colonial recognition, in the case of the West Bank, it neglects the 'permit' as another face of colonial recognition. This inconsistency justifies these artists' questions about the cultural boycott and its limitations in its current iteration.

Palestinian novelist and writer, Eyad Barghouti, takes up precisely these questions in a study in Arabic titled "Cultural Normalization as an Obstacle in the Cultural Relation between 48 Palestinians and the Arab World," published on the BDS48 website (the website for the BDS Campaign within the 1948 territories). Barghouti posits that the "cultural relation between creative people and frameworks in the 48 territories and the Arab world is usually relegated, and an in automatic manner, to the realm of boycott, leading to its consideration as cultural normalization, which the Arab civil societies, peoples, and cultural elites resist, particularly in the countries that signed peace treaties with the Israeli state." Barghouti examines two case studies: the visit of the '48 Palestinian (i.e., holds an Israeli passport) artist Mohamed Bakri to Lebanon in 2017, which was enabled by a temporary Palestinian passport issued by the

Palestinian Authority. Upon the visit, the Israeli Minister of Culture at the time, Miri Regev, opened an investigation because Bakri visited "an enemy state." Furthermore, despite Bakri's initiative to receive a Palestinian passport and not violate the terms of the cultural boycott, his visit was still categorized by some as 'normalization.' Nonetheless, Barghouti approaches this liminal space where the Ramallah-based Palestinian Ministry of Culture issues temporary passports for Palestinian artists in the 1948 territories to attend events in Arab countries as productive and necessary.

The second case Barghouti studies is that of The General Union of Arab Writers, which was established in 1954. The Union had a strong stance against normalization, having frozen even the membership of the Palestinian Union after the signing of the Oslo Agreement in 1993. In addition, until recently, the Union used to "boycott and ban any official cultural relation with the Arab literary and cultural movement within the 48 territories" (Barghouti, 2018). In 2014, the General Union for Palestinian Writers, headed by Murad Al Sudani, made efforts to re-establish the membership. Following this, the Palestinian membership was reinstated. This time, however, it was stipulated that the "membership represents all components of the historically-fragmented Palestinian literary scene" (Barghouti, 2018). This meant the establishment in 2015, for the first time, of the General Union for 48 Arab Palestinian Writers. Barghouti argues that the independent character of this association and its refusal to have any entanglements with the Israeli associations is what enabled this relation with the regional Arab association. In this sense, declaring independence from any association with Israeli institutions serves as a prerequisite for establishing Arab-Palestinian cultural relations that avoid normalization.

Barghouti concludes by accommodating the call for a cultural boycott with this necessity for independence. He argues that "independent cultural work facilitates building the cultural

relation, and through collective work and organizing there is a possibility for establishing an institutional and sustainable relation." Unlike Hanan, Nadine, and Basel, his formulation does not reduce relations with the Arab world to that of visits by Arab artists to the 1948 territories. Rather, he sees a necessity to clearly adopt the boycott's particular principles for Palestinians living in these territories while "working proactively and effectively with the campaign to develop the document and build upon it." In addition to this recommendation, he also suggests

> establishing a cultural diplomatic committee composed of intellectuals, artists and public personalities, with support from the Palestinian Ministry of Culture, to communicate with those instituting policies for unions and associations as well as influential cultural personalities across Arab countries, starting with the most strategic countries, culturally and politically, with the aim of a radical transformation of trends within them that consider the relation with Palestinians in 48 territories normalization, especially Egypt and Jordan.

Barghouti's recommendations bridge the principles of the cultural boycott with the necessity to establish working and sustainable relationships between Palestinians and the Arab world. It also capitalizes on the ability of the official Palestinian Ministry of Culture to work as a mediator, through passports and diplomacy, to enhance and further these relations. Though Barghouti does not directly address this in his study, by clearly calling for upholding the principles of the cultural boycott, he still clings to the necessity for a ban on performances by Arab artists within the 1948 territories.

These artists offer competing understandings of the cultural boycott. While they all stress the importance of boycott as a strategy and the necessity to establish, uphold, and enhance cultural relations with the Arab world, they differ in their opinions on how best to do that. The artists also meet in their vision for an independent cultural field within the 1948 territories—one that constantly interrogates its relationship with Israeli political, economic, and cultural infrastructures. The development of an independent Palestinian cultural scene since the 1990s

that has partially contributed to reinvigorating the necessity for the relations between Palestinians in these territories and the Arab world to be further enhanced.

Conclusion

These conversations offer glimpses into the ongoing contestations and frictions around the cultural boycott within Palestine. The boycott targets both the objective and subjective relations under which cultures are produced: it targets the complicit institutional infrastructures, and the subjective complicity and recognition of these infrastructures. By offering a 'detailed' definition of normalization, the campaign articulates a refusal of colonial recognition politics. It highlights the colonized's (Arab and Palestinian) capacity to turn the gaze, refuse colonial recognition, and use that as a generative ground for a transnational cultural vision that does not fully succumb to the arrangements between settler colonial order and the Arab reactionary regimes.

Yet, the campaign does not fully escape this colonial politics of recognition. It faces real challenges in its application of a selective boycott. Its inconsistent criteria for the West Bank and the 1948 territories risks upholding a false distinction between the realities within these two different locations of Palestinian livelihood. They also risk accepting a particular form of colonial recognition (i.e., the permit and what it represents) over another (i.e., the visa). Even Barghouti's suggestion that a temporary Palestinian passport, issued by the Palestinian Authority, can serve as a mediator of visits by 48 Palestinians to the Arab world rests, partially, on a contemporary colonial arrangement between the Israeli settler state and a Palestinian neoliberal state-building project. Nonetheless, it is a strategy that makes use of these contradictions in order to resist the physical and cultural isolation of Palestinians living in the 1948 territories from the Arab world. As Barghouti suggests, then, the contestations and

frictions around the boycott can serve as an energizing force for innovating cultural strategies that work around the current status quo in order to re-establish and enhance relations between the Arab world and the Palestinians. They can serve as a powerful entry point into bringing the settler colonial order into question while articulating transnational and emancipatory cultural strategies.

Nonetheless, in its demand on artists and cultural workers to abstain from upholding a relation of recognition of the Israeli state, the Palestinian cultural boycott sheds light on an uninterrogated politics of anti-recognition. While these boycotts do not materially and fundamentally change the realities of living under the settler colonial order, they do highlight the settler colonial state's reliance on both state-based recognition and subjective recognition (by artists, for example) to normalize its apparatus. Recognition within a context of colonial and unequal power relations, therefore, does not necessarily always lead to either nonrecognition or domestication, as both Fanon and Coulthard contend. There is a possibility to turn the gaze, withdraw recognition, bring the settler colonial apparatus into question and use that as a generative ground to envision emancipatory and liberatory cultural relations that transcend the settler colony's circuits of recognition; this is ***boycott as world-making.***

Conclusion

Fragmentation is fundamental to the workings of capitalist urbanization; the latter, McFarlane (2018) notes, proceeds through fragmentation and 'not in spite of it' (p.1007). Urbanization proliferates fragments and exploits already-existing ones. In Haifa and Ramallah, fragmentation is mediated not merely through an engulfing urbanization-as-capitalist-agglomeration. Rather, it is the settler colonial condition that serves as the inherited background against which contemporary modes of urban production in the two cities unfold. Following McFarlane's (2018) reading of Lefebvre (1991), fragments are not to be understood 'on their own terms' but should be "positioned as part of processes of fragmentation across global capitalist space" (p.1011). They are condensed vantage points. Understanding the linkages, slippages, contradictions and ruptures within these socially embedded logics of fragmentation promises to shed light on wider socio-spatial processes of settler colonialism and capitalism.

It is the coalescence of settler colonialism, racialization and capitalism in the condensed urban fragments of Ramallah and Haifa that reproduces the inequalities between and within them. The *relationality* between the two cities of Ramallah and Haifa relies upon unequal modalities of differentiation: citizenship versus military-civil occupation, Israeli market versus a dependent Palestinian market, a minoritarian elite and a nationalist elite, urban renewal versus urban expansion. These modalities are contingent upon particular mappings of power—political, economic, juridical, urban and cultural—that are defined by particular historical circumstances. Modes of urban production and cultural production within the two cities are mediated through this wider settler colonial context.

Palestinian artists live and persist within these fragments and they do so along the lines of power relations, including race, gender and class. They embody contradictory subject-

positions that may contribute to the production of these fragments while weaving together socio-spatial practices (boycott, music, theatre) that refute processes of fragmentation and dispossession and the condensed structures of capitalism and settler colonialism that activate them. But these are fragments. They are both a 'noun,' a "material form in the landscape of the city" as well as a 'verb,' "a process, something that is pulled into different relations, forms of work and angles of vision" (McFarlane, 2018, p.1012). And, by being pulled into different relations, they are historically contingent upon how these relations are articulated to one another. Fragments offer differentiated and relational vantage points into wider socio-spatial processes. Such is the case in Ramallah and Haifa.

For example, as excluded-citizen subjects of the Israeli state, Palestinian artists in Haifa face a conundrum of conditional settler state funding that Palestinians in Ramallah rarely face. They also face an Israeli municipality that artists in Ramallah do not. The artists in Ramallah face a Palestinian nationalist elitist project (i.e., the Palestinian Authority) that directly participates in discursively and materially organizing the space within which they produce, circulate and consume their music. The Palestinian Authority police in Ramallah, for example, limits the opening and closing hours of Palestinian restaurants, bars, and clubs, especially when live, alternative music is involved.[50] The artists, then, face differentiated realities mediated by determined relations of power that shift according to particular historical circumstances. Throughout the dissertation, my analysis has aimed to prove that this differentiation is integral to the workings of Israeli settler colonialism in the post-Oslo conjuncture *and* therefore determines the form of the intrinsic and internal contradictions of the Palestinian cultural fields in two geographies: the '48 territories and the '67 territories.

[50] This came up in most of the interviews with the artists, who expressed that—due to the nature of PA rule as well as the disciplinary power of family structure, Ramallah is more socially restricted than Haifa.

Summary

This study aimed to trace the articulations (or lack thereof) between the political and the artistic in the two cities of Ramallah and Haifa. Such articulations, I have argued, offer a generative entry point into examining both the complex nature of the Israeli settler colonial formation in this post-Oslo historical conjuncture as well as the potentialities for and limitations of emancipatory Palestinian cultural field(s). My analysis of the in-depth interviews, archival materials, and audio-visual materials indicates that this contemporary conjuncture is distinguished by an increasing reliance by the settler state on the mechanisms of the market. However, this reliance remains facilitated by (and sometimes hindered by) the settler colonial mandate to coercively possess land—to dispossess and erase. By tracing Palestinian artistic practices across the so-called Green Line, I have shown how this 'rearticulation' between the state and the market manifests differentially across the fragmented Palestinian geographies. While Palestinian artists in the '48 territories face this rearticulation as directly mediated by a settler state/neoliberal market, it is the complex configuration of the indigenous Palestinian capitalist state, the settler state as military occupation, the settler as an agent of the frontier, and international funding that determine the limits of the Palestinian cultural fields in the '67 territories. I have aimed to show how these articulations between, on the one hand, the artistic, and the economic, urban and juridical on the other are not *fixed* once and for all. Rather, they are contingent upon practices and processes that may sustain, expand, or supersede them as articulations, leading to 'rearticulations.'

Reading the intertwined urban histories of Ramallah and Haifa helps shed light on the contingent nature of the articulation between settler colonialism and capitalism. The normative tendency to treat these two cities and the geographies they represent as isolated, separate, and irrelevant to one another has created a tangible dearth of analyses attuned to the unequal modes

of relationality amongst them. Rather than approaching the two cities as replicas of a 'general whole' (i.e., an all-encompassing settler colonial logic that manifests similarly across time and space and that moves forward with a clear and undisrupted intent on dispossession), I have insisted on reading them as socio-spatial forms produced by historically determined articulations between settler colonialism and capitalism.

My insistence throughout the project on reading urban fragments as equally constitutive of the whole—and not as mere replicas of it—makes a pertinent intervention in urban Marxist geography that highlights the importance of historical context. Against the backdrop of tendencies in the field to measure different urban fabrics as variations of an all-encompassing capitalist whole (see Hart, 2018), I stress the importance of assessing the particular determinations, processes and mediations that reproduce particular cities. I do this while still upholding an understanding of capitalism as a world-historical process constituted by interconnected, mutually conditioning parts. Such determinations, processes and mediations produce fragments that exist in relations of inequality that reproduce the whole. Therefore, the expulsion of Ramallah from the edifice of Israeli citizenship reproduces the inclusion/exclusion of Haifa into the same edifice, and vice versa. The two cities are not mere replicas of an all-encompassing and global mode of capitalist agglomeration. Rather, they are "vantage points from which to try to begin to grasp the coming together and interconnections of what (at least initially) appear as key processes" (Hart, 2018, p.389).

Such an approach to cities and urbanization has a few advantages that I will summarize in three points. First, this approach already opens the way for an analysis that moves beyond capital as *the* primary force and towards understanding the inherited colonial background within which capital violently dispossesses and exploits. In particular, the case of Haifa demonstrates

how genealogies of colonial and racial dispossession continue to inform contemporary, neoliberal plans for the re-making of the city. It is not capital alone that determines which neighbourhood is to be dispossessed; racial and colonial hierarchies inform why, how and where such dispossession takes place—sometimes to the detriment of the 'rational logic of the market.'

Second, focusing on practices and processes, rather than on bounded entities that replicate overarching structures, opens the way for understanding a dominant socio-spatial form (such as the 'settler colonial city') as existing amongst other socio-spatial forms that contest, upend, subvert and resist it. Rather than a bounded unit, we have dynamic processes and practices, frictions and ruptures, leading to possibilities for transformation. And, rather than an all-encompassing settler colonial city that moves infinitely and tirelessly towards dispossession, we have a settler colonial socio-spatial form contested by the imagined and lived socio-social practices of the indigenous and the racialized communities.

Third, if a city is a complex series of processes and practices, then there is no reason why an analysis of a bounded unit of a 'city' cannot reach the 'village' or the 'refugee camp.' In other words, processes and practices do not only travel but also manifest interconnectedly. Therefore, throughout, I have insisted on reading practices and processes of dispossession in the city and village relationally. I have shown how the linking between dispossession and arts that critics associate with the advent of neoliberalism had long been anticipated in the Palestinian village in the 1950s. The village, the rural, and the non-urban are not mere arenas of eventual subsumption by an all-encompassing urbanizing impulse. They, too, are constituted by practices and processes that exist in relations of inequality.

Fourth, the move away from capital-centered analysis highlights a complex politics of cultural production within the city that transcends binaries of supply/demand and co-

optation/resistance. This is particularly true, I have argued, in the case literature (see Zukin 1982, 1991; Smith, 1996; and Ley, 2003) which explains gentrification merely through a focus on the class positionality of the gentrifying artists, or through a reductive consumption/production and supply/demand debate that subsumes and neglects other spatial and cultural mediations. In the particular setting of urban reproduction under settler colonialism, I have argued, indigenous Palestinian artists still engage in provisional and contradictory 'practices of articulation' that can neither be classified as resistant to, nor as subsumed into capitalist and colonial logics. Although Palestinian arts in the two cities are mediated by wider logics of settler colonialism and capitalist accumulation, they cannot be reduced to mere effects of these structures, which a capitalist-centered approach would insist on.

Instead, following Stuart Hall (2016, 2021), I have insisted on reading these practices as re-elaborations of the intrinsic and internal contradictions integral to the differentiated Palestinian cultural fields. This brings urban Marxist geography in a generative conversation with Marxist-inspired formulations within cultural studies. Using Gramsci's notion of the state as multidimensional, I have argued that if such understanding expands our analysis of the state to account for its educative and informative functions, it equally broadens our perspective on the contradictory consciousness of subjects. If the state can neither be smashed with one blow, nor completely incorporate (swallow?) any and every critique, then Palestinian artists are embedded in contestations and struggles within an 'unequal terrain,' in which there are 'points of resistance' and 'points of suppression' (Hall, 2021, p.354). My analysis holds in tension the classed positionality of the Palestinian artists and its reliance on wider political, economic, and juridical shifts *and* their position as indigenous subjects within a continuous reality of settler colonial urbicide. While these structural positions determine the horizon of possibilities for

Palestinian artists, they do not determine the content of their cultural struggles within and against the settler state and the neoliberal market.

It is, perhaps, the practice of 'boycott' that most primarily brings to the forefront the politics of cultural struggles within the city. By looking at the differentiated terrains of Haifa and Ramallah, I have shown how conversations around boycott are determined by wider settler colonial and capitalist logics. 'Boycott,' I have insisted, can be read as generative of socio-spatial practices that contest, upend, subvert or resist dominant forms. The contestations and frictions around the call for boycott then served as a generative entry point into for thinking and envisioning emancipatory Palestinian cultural fields that are rigorously cognizant of the differentiated realities of dispossession in the multiple Palestinian geographies as well of the *relationalities between and collective potentialities of* such realities.

Boycott, thus, can be approached here as a socially embedded practice, emanating from different 'fragments.' In its focus on relations and certain linkages (articulations) between these relations, boycott generates an active analytical gaze that examines the historically specific nature of these articulations and offers contradictory thoughts on how to disentangle them, thereby weaving together a politics of cultural resistance. Boycott makes us cognizant of the fragments without forgetting the whole—the whole as the engulfing processes of oppression *and* the whole of practices and processes of resistance.

Contributions and Limitations

The research project has made three overarching contributions. The first pertains to a historical analysis that expands our understanding of settler colonialism as a structure by showing its contingency on the linking, sustenance, and superseding of particular articulations between the urban, economic, juridical, and cultural spheres. The recognition of this

contingency opens the space for us as scholars and students to account for the ways in which the state and the market adapt themselves to the ever-shifting imperatives of settler colonialism. It also simultaneously disrupts the tendency in Settler Colonial Studies to narrate the settler-subject by disappearing him into a structure and the other tendency to evade the indigenous modes of sociality that exist within, against, and beyond the backdrop of the settler colonial ordering of geography and polity.

The second contribution relates to Urban Geography and discussions around the relationship between the urban and the artistic. By tracing the constitutive role arts have continued to play for the spatialization of scenes of dispossession across historic Palestine, I have shown—following Glen Coulthard (2014)—that the colonial relation serves as the inherited background for the unfolding of capitalist, racist and patriarchal market logics. Such an understanding stretches the limits of political economic explanations of the role of arts in Urban Geography to account for the contradictory consciousness of subjects whose participation in the spatialization of the cultural in the city may activate a gentrifying relation while enhancing indigenous practices of articulation that challenge and refute the continuous settler colonial urbicide. In this sense, my bridging of Gramscian analysis from Cultural Studies (via Stuart Hall) with Marxist explanations of arts and gentrification in Urban Geography opens the space for us to examine the different levels of mediation between the urban and the cultural. Furthermore, this transcends the tired and tiring debate of the hegemonic/counterhegemonic and resistant/submissive binaries within which discussions of urban arts. It also pushes against this binaristic tendency in the analysis of Arab arts in general and Palestinian arts in particular that emerged since the unleashing of the so-called ‘War on Terror’ after 9/11 and the revolutions of the Arab Spring in 2011. By examining arts and the city as socially embedded and as condensed

‘sites’ of articulations, we can move away from these binaries towards a more rigorous understanding of urbanization and arts.

Thus, the last contribution relates to Cultural Studies and offers a novel interpretation of the different levels of mediation between the cultural and the urban in contexts of colonialism and settler colonialism. It stresses the importance of placing artists and their works within the ‘intrinsic and internal contradictions’ of the cultural fields instead of assigning them a priori resistant or submissive roles. Notions of ‘resistance’ and ‘agency’ assume a particular understanding of politics and subjectivity “obfuscate—and not in a productive way—the textures of enfleshment, that is, the modes of being which outlive the dusk of the law and the dawn of political violence” (Wehelieye, 2014, p.91). In this sense, I have shown how the ‘waning’ or ‘surging’ of notions of resistance in a particular historical conjuncture may be taken as an entry point into an analysis of the different mappings of power relations.

Despite these contributions, the research has faced limitations since the beginning that have influenced my analysis. The first limitation pertains to mobility and access. I returned from my second fieldtrip just as the global COVID-19 pandemic started in February 2020. Since then, I have struggled to visit Palestine again as modes of mobility across borders have been made more restrictive. Although this creatively pushed the project to consider archival and audio-visual materials that I might not have incorporated otherwise, it denied me access to interviews as well as materials in Arabic that may have further enriched the research. Furthermore, given my positionality as a Palestinian researcher from the ’67 territories, my access to plundered Palestinian archives in the Israeli National Library was severely restricted. I also regretfully do not speak the Hebrew language, which meant that I have often had to rely on secondary sources that discuss relevant archival materials in Hebrew.

Crucially, due to these mobility restrictions as well as the scanty nature of literature on the contemporary realities in Gaza City, my analysis of the '67 territories regretfully does not incorporate a thorough discussion of the Gaza Strip. This risks perpetuating the fragmentation of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip into 'separate political and economic polities' since the elections of 2006. While I do not incorporate the dynamics in the Gaza Strip and the *shatat* (diaspora), I nonetheless approach the West Bank and the '48 territories as embedded in an unequal relation to them. In some ways, these frictions and tensions only enunciate my overall arguments about the nature of settler colonial power formations and the continuous uneven struggles within and against them.

Future directions

There are a few future directions that the research points to and that other students and scholars may fruitfully uptake. The first is a potential to synthesize a more systemic analysis of Israeli settler colonialism by incorporating a thorough discussion of the unequal relations that govern the circuits of political, economic, juridical, and cultural ideas between the '48 territories, the West Bank, and the Gaza Strip. Such research may shed light not only on the exceptionally murderous logics of Israeli settler colonialism in the Gaza Strip, but also on the central and primary role that such brutal targeting of Palestinian life plays in facilitating a particular mode of urban production in the Strip. In the same vein, a discussion of Palestinian cultural productions beyond the space of the urban—i.e., in the village, the refugee camp, and even the Israeli prison—would give us a different yet complementary perspective on the materiality of Palestinian arts.

Furthermore, there is room to conduct a relational comparison between the contemporary realities of Palestinian cities and other cities around the world that face a similar

yet historically differentiated configuration of settler colonial power, including Toronto, New York, Johannesburg, and Belfast. This would give us a more systemic analysis of the nature, form, and content of articulations between the artistic and the urban in contexts of settler colonialism.

And, finally, by focusing on power relations and subjectivity my research admittedly neglects some of the aesthetic and sonic qualities of the Palestinian cultural productions. Building upon the expanding field of Sonic Studies, there is room to explore them in future research (see, for example, Goodman, 2016 and James 2020). Tracing how the forms of various Palestinian cultural productions have shifted, not only in terms of written and spoken content, but also sonically, theatrically, and choreographically may reveal profound insights about the intricate relationship between cultural forms and their contexts. In its focus on the various levels of mediation between the structural and the cultural, this research project does not uptake these questions. However, it does offer a methodological approach of linking the structural and the cultural that may be expanded and stretched to trace the historically determined transformations and shifts in cultural forms. These shifts and transformations in design also do not occur in a vacuum, and are contingent upon, among many other factors, the circulation of ideas and skills, market relations, and differential access to equipment and instruments.

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