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Everyday resistance and settler colonialism in Palestine

Maysa Shqerat  
2018

A thesis submitted for the degree of PhD in Development Studies at the  
University of Sussex  
School of global studies

### Declaration

I hereby declare that this thesis has not been and will not be, submitted in whole or in part to another University for the award of any other degree.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Maysa Shqerat \_\_\_\_\_

**UNIVERSITY OF SUSSEX**

**Maysa Shqerat**

**Summary of thesis submitted for the degree of PhD in Development Studies**

**Everyday Resistance and Settler Colonialism in Palestine**

In recent years, scholarship on settler colonialism has gained much attention. Many scholars, activists and thinkers have welcomed the “settler colonial turn” because it bridges gaps post-colonial theory cannot adequately cover. While scholarship on settler colonialism has much to offer, however as I argue in this thesis, it has its limitations and risks. Even though this literature is relatively recent and is continually developing, it has an important limitation: there is within it no hope for decolonisation. The reason for this absence of hope is, I argue in this thesis, because the ‘settler colonial turn is rooted in the concept of ‘the logic of elimination’.

The overarching aim of this thesis is to question the distorted image of Palestine in the literature on settler colonialism, and draw attention to the harm that may be inflicted by the absence in that literature of stories of hope and resistance. This thesis adopts the Latin American school of decoloniality and the tradition of standpoint epistemology in feminist scholarship, both of which challenge official versions of history and the hegemony of one way of seeing and knowing the world. The philosophy of decolonial research is crucial in this thesis because it acknowledges and brings uncomfortable questions to the fore. Seen through a decolonial lens, knowledge production can be understood as consisting of multiple ways of knowing, ways that can be colonial or resistive. Decolonial literature appreciates different resources of knowledge and places attention on the relation between material experience, power, and epistemology.

This thesis argues that the hegemony of a singular way of analysis currently employed to understanding the settler colonial situation in Palestine must be carefully re-examined and refuted. In it, I develop the main argument that challenges the settler colonial logic of elimination, and I build the case and develop the argument for alternative ways of conceptualising settler colonialism as seen through, as I call them, the *Ahl Al-Ard* eyes.<sup>1</sup> I do so by establishing resistance rather than elimination as the

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<sup>1</sup> *Ahl Al Ard* literally means the land inhabitants. Ahl is also used to refer to family relationship and entitlement.

primary analytical lens. I situate the case of Palestine as a context of a struggle for liberation rather than an endless “slow-motion Nakba”.

Approaching the research for this thesis from the perspective of hope and resistance, I conducted a ten month period of fieldwork in Palestine in 2013-2014, using a multi-sited “ethnography of hope”. I followed and explored the “spirit of resistance”, as a nomadic science. I uncovered multiple dimensions and manifestations of hope and resistance embodied in spatialities of resistance in various sites in Jerusalem, in life and death moments of the survivors of the Gaza War, and in the defying narratives of the Al-Muwahhidun individuals and defectors from Haifa. Collectively, these sites, moments and life stories challenge the singular narrative of settler colonialism, as put forward in the influential works of the white Australian settler colonial scholars Patrick Wolfe and Lorenzo Veracini, and the distorted images of Palestine in the “Eurocentric mirror” as it appears in the settler colonial studies’ framework. There are, I suggest, wider political implications beyond the academic realm of using the single narrative of settler colonialism. If the elimination story is taken for granted and repeatedly recited without challenging its underlying assumptions, then, it may well be established as the main narrative – the only truth – in other spheres of academic disciplines and political debates. Then, the elimination story may well become a self-fulfilling prophecy.

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## **Chapter One. Everyday resistance and settler colonialism in Palestine**

So that is how to create a single story, show a people as one thing, as only one thing, over and over again, and that is what they become. It is impossible to talk about the single story without talking about power. There is a word, an Igbo word that I think about whenever I think about the power structures of the world and it is "nkali." It's a noun that loosely translates to "to be greater than another." Like our economic and political worlds, stories too are defined by the principle of nkali: How they are told, who tells them, when they're told, how many stories are told, are really dependent on power. Power is the ability not just to tell the story of another person, but to make it the definitive story of that person. The Palestinian poet Mourid Barghouti writes that if you want to dispossess a people, the simplest way to do it is to tell their story and to start with, "secondly." Start the story with the arrows of the Native Americans, and not with the arrival of the British, and you have an entirely different story. Start the story with the failure of the African state, and not with the colonial creation of the African state, and you have an entirely different story. The single story creates stereotypes, and the problem with stereotypes is not that they are untrue, but that they are incomplete. They make one story become the only story. The danger of the single story.

Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie (2009)

### **Introduction**

This thesis is about everyday resistance in Palestine. It draws on ten months of fieldwork carried out from October 2013 to September 2014 in various parts of historical Palestine. In this thesis, I explore the experiences of the inhabitants of this land, Ahl Al-Ard, of living under settler colonialism. In their perceptions and their realities, I locate critical sites of resistance in the relationship with their land, and in their hope for a different future. I analyse narratives, images and moments of individual and collective, violent and nonviolent resistance from Jerusalem, Gaza Strip, and Haifa. My intention is not to romanticise everyday resistance in Palestine. Rather, I aim to present a different story, one that reveals the rhizomatic (Deleuze & Guattari, 1988) character of resistance in everyday life in Palestine, in spatial, temporal, and consciousness dimensions. As part of my quest for alternative conceptualisation of settler colonialism - as seen through Ahl Al-Ard eyes – I challenge the 'single story of elimination' as it appears in scholarship on settler colonialism (Veracini, 2010a; Wolfe, 1999, 2006).

A great number of philosophers and scholars, in particular from the global South, have engaged with different single Western stories about the Others – Black, Indigenous,

Arab, Jew, Muslim, Indian, Aborigine, etc. – comparable to the ‘single story’ to which Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie refers in the epigraph.<sup>2</sup> Exemplary amongst those scholars is the Peruvian Anabil Quijano, who shows how Eurocentric knowledge operates as a “mirror that distorts what it reflects” (2000, p.556). In the context of Latin America, Quijano writes: “when we look in our Eurocentric mirror, the image that we see is not just composite, but also necessarily partial and distorted” (p.556). In “The Missing Chapter of Empire”,<sup>3</sup> Gomez Santiago Castro writes that for the last five hundred years “the scientific-technical rationality of the Occident, has been postulated as the only valid episteme, that is to say the only episteme capable of generating real knowledge about nature, the economy, society, morality and people’s happiness” (2007, p.428). Eurocentric knowledge assumes a superior position, where “the first world has knowledge, the third world has culture; Native Americans have wisdom, Anglo-Americans have science” (W. D. Mignolo, 2009, p.1). Within this structure of knowledge, the Other became “research subjects” for Western epistemologies, and their “languages, knowledges and cultures have been silenced or misrepresented, ridiculed or condemned in thousands of ways in academic and popular discourses” (L. T. Smith, 1999, p.21).<sup>4</sup> This structure of knowledge and knowledge production makes research itself as a battlefield and a potential colonial or resistive tool (1999).

The Eurocentric mirror with which I am engaging in this thesis is a recent development of settler colonialism scholarship on Palestine, and the story I am problematizing is the ‘story of elimination’. This fast-growing literature is mainly influenced by two White-settler-Australian scholars<sup>5</sup>, namely Patrick Wolfe and Lorenzo Veracini, in whose work their concept of ‘the logic of elimination’ plays a significant part. While their intellectual contribution and impact in the literature are unquestionable, their use of ‘the logic of elimination’ and their underpinning assumptions remain largely unquestioned. Settler colonialism debates correctly register that post-colonial theory is problematic when

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<sup>2</sup> The dangerous story Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie refers to was the Nigerians’ as it appears in USA popular images, in which they are portrayed as “incomprehensible people, fighting senseless wars, dying of poverty and AIDS, unable to speak for themselves and waiting to be saved by a kind, white foreigner” (2009).

<sup>3</sup> A critical account of Antonio Negri and Michael Hardt’s thesis on the end of colonialism appears in their book “Empire” (2000). Castro-Gomez’s main thesis is that colonialism does not disappear in postmodern capitalism, but is reorganized in a postcolonial way.

<sup>4</sup> Smith discusses how knowledge about the “indigenous” is collected, classified, and then represented in various ways back to the West and then through the eyes of the West back to those who were colonized (p.1).

<sup>5</sup> ‘White’ in this thesis is not a biological category, rather it is a way of thinking and seeing the world as I will further clarify in the following chapters (James & Michelle D., 1997; Santos, 2015).

applied to contexts such as the 'United States of America' and 'Australia'.<sup>6</sup> Wolfe argues that "for all the homage paid to heterogeneity and difference, the bulk of 'post'-colonial theorizing is disabled by an oddly monolithic, and surprisingly unexamined, notion of colonialism" (1999, p.1). Wolfe maintains that the "territorial character" of settler colonies is what post-colonialism theory is unable to recognise. Territoriality, i.e. access to the land, is the "irreducible element" for settler colonies. Unlike other European colonies, "[a] society premised on the exploitation of colonized labour requires the continuing reproduction of its human providers. By contrast, a society premised on the expropriation of Native people's land requires that the people who provided it should never be allowed back" (Wolfe, 2011b, p.272). Wolfe builds his theorisation of settler colonialism by tracing the development of the 'frontier' - a concept borrowed from a military context and based on the experiences of settler colonialism in 'Australia'.<sup>7</sup> He uses this to conclude that settler colonialism is a "land centred project", and therefore "premised on the securing—the obtaining and the maintaining—of territory", which "requires the elimination of the owners of that territory, but not in any particular way" (Wolfe, 2006, p.402).

In Wolfe's conceptual case, the context and framing matter. 'Australia' is where settler colonialism is assumed to be "a structure not event", where "settlers come to stay", and where the settlers have "the intention to eliminate" the land inhabitants.<sup>8</sup> According to this understanding, Wolfe argued that not being eliminated is the exception in settler colonies. Elimination is biological and cultural, it entails construction of spatial and temporal difference between the settler and land inhabitants, and it targets them as individuals and groups. Settler colonialism, from the perspective of the frontier and 'logic of elimination' is a "zero-sum game" and the "winner takes all" (Veracini, 2011b).

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<sup>6</sup> Because "naming is political", in this thesis I use inverted commas when I write the names of the land as given by the settler colonisers such as 'Australia' and 'Israel' (Das, 2007).

<sup>7</sup> 'Frontier' is first introduced by the American historian Fredrick Jackson Turner (1861–1932) who defined it as "the meeting point between savagery and civilization". Turner's study *The Significance of the Frontier in American History* was presented at the meeting of the American Historical Association in Chicago, 12 July 1893, during the World Columbian Exposition on the occasion of the 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary of European arrival to the 'Americas'. Turner focuses on the history of the 'U.S.A' and democracy. He compares the European frontier and American frontier to argue that the latter is "a fortified boundary line running through dense populations. The most significant thing about the American frontier is, that it lies at the hither edge of free land". Turner's main thesis is that the American frontier was moving west, "[w]hat the Mediterranean Sea was to the Greeks, breaking the bond of custom, offering new experiences, calling out new institutions and activities, that, and more, the ever retreating frontier has been to the United States directly, and to the nations of Europe more remotely" (Turner 1894). Available at: <https://www.historians.org/about-aha-and-membership/aha-history-and-archives/archives/the-significance-of-the-frontier-in-american-history>

<sup>8</sup> In this thesis I use 'land inhabitants' instead of "Indigenous" or "natives".

Decolonisation is a real dilemma for this literature as settler colonies are “impervious to regime change” and post-settler colonialism is unthinkable (Wolfe, 2006, p.402).

This framework was further developed by Lorenzo Veracini, one of the most prolific scholars in this field.<sup>9</sup> Veracini emphasised the conceptual, structural and historical distinctions between colonialism and settler colonialism. He explains colonialism and settler colonialism thus: “if I come and say, ‘you, work for me’, it’s not the same as saying ‘you, go away’” (2011a, p.1). In other words, Veracini emphasises the difference between franchise colonies (you, work for me) and settler colonies (you, go away). He puts the focus onto the unique distinction between slavery and ‘going away’. Here, going away can mean “being physically eliminated or displaced, having one’s cultural practices erased, being ‘absorbed’, ‘assimilated’ or ‘amalgamated’ in the wider population, but the list could go on” (p.2). Settler colonialism for Veracini is a “process where an exogenous collective replaces an indigenous one” (2013, p.28) and in contrast to colonialism, it “actually operate[s] in dialectical tension and in specific contradistinction has not yet been fully articulated” (2010a, p.7). Therefore, colonialism and settler colonialism “should be seen as separate responses to different imperatives” (2011a p.4) and he calls for the establishment of settler colonialism as a distinct field of study. Moreover, Veracini emphasises “not to construct a coherent narrative, even less so to focus on specific locations”, but rather, he brings to attention the “settler colonial imaginaries and forms” (2010a p.12).

This call for independent settler colonialism studies materialised with the founding and launching of the Settler Colonial Studies Journal in 2011, in Melbourne, ‘Australia’. In the first issue of the journal, Veracini introduced settler colonialism as a global phenomenon, and a major article by Wolfe on the “frontier” in the context of the ‘U.S.A’ has set the scene for the emerging journal and this growing body of literature more broadly. The journal, which started as an open access publication run by volunteers, moved into the Taylor and Francis Group in 2013. Owing to Wolfe’s inceptive theorisation of settler colonialism, the journal is still largely influenced by his theoretical and conceptual ideas. Increasingly, the journal is becoming a dynamic forum that appeals to various scholars and activists to examine settler colonialism phenomena from multiple and interdisciplinary perspectives (i.e. history, law, genocide studies,

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<sup>9</sup> Veracini recently co-edited with Edward Cavanagh *The Routledge Handbook of the History of Settler Colonialism* (2016) where they start from Ancient Israel and end with the empire of Israel. Moreover, he has written several articles with propositions on how to end settler colonialism in Palestine, which I discuss in chapter three.

indigenous, colonial and postcolonial studies) and in different colonial contexts such as 'Australia', 'Canada', 'Israel' and others (Edmonds & Carey, 2013).

It is important to note here that neither settler colonialism as a different type of European colonialism, nor critique of post colonialism theory, nor referring to 'Israel' as a settler colonial state, are original in this scholarship.<sup>10</sup> What is new in this literature is the emphasis on 'the logic of elimination' as a historical and conceptual 'fact'. I chose this literature because of its increasing influence – in the time of at least four wars in the region, and the so called 'Arab Spring' – and its particular emphasis on 'the logic of elimination' in the case of Palestine and its claims of relevance to studying the past, present and future of Palestine.

### **1.1 The 'settler colonial turn' in Palestine**

The settler colonial situation in Palestine is gaining a special focus from this new emerging field. Since the journal was founded in 2011, it has published three special issues focusing on Palestine, namely 'Past is Present: Settler Colonialism in Palestine' (2012), 'Collaborative Struggles in Australia and Israel-Palestine' (2014), and 'Settler Colonial Studies, and Israel-Palestine' (2015). Also, this trend in scholarship is shown in the increasing number of academic conferences, symposiums, and workshops that have been held in the last few years in Europe, North 'America' and Palestine. Many of these gatherings brought Wolfe and Veracini together (in person) to actively engage and debate on the issues of Palestine, and on other occasions their work and perspectives were adopted and presented by other Palestinian and Israeli scholars.

This recent theorisation of settler colonialism is gaining an increased attention from academics and activists who are welcoming what they consider a key development and important shift in the study of Palestine. In 'Global Palestine' (2011b), John Collins applauded what he calls a "settler colonial turn" which "has contributed to a welcome process of gradually pulling the conversation away from its traditional nationalist moorings and opening new lines of comparative and world-historical inquiry" (p.9). Furthermore, he adds that it overcomes the limitations of the available literature to explain what is happening in Palestine: "[a]s Palestine became arguably the most visible focus of global solidarity beginning in the late 1990s, the old exceptionalist frameworks became more untenable; what was happening in Palestine could no longer

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<sup>10</sup> For critical literature on the limitation of post-colonial theory in the context of new world colonialism, see (Alva, 1992; Chibber, 2014; Dirlik, 1994; Hulme, 2008; Salvatore, 2010). Referring to 'Israel' as a settler colonial state per se is not original; such approximation was present in the political discourse of the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) during the 1960s and 1970s, and was debated by scholars such as (Abu-Lughod & Abu-Laban, 1974; El-Messiri, 1977, 2001a, 2001b, 2014; Hamdan, 1983; Sayegh, 1965)



be contained within them” (p.4). Other scholars also welcome this turn and see as “the best Academia has offered so far” to study the case of Palestine (Pappe, 2017), and as “a powerful political tool to reorient and recreate genuine bi-directional solidarity alliances and political fraternity”, which offers the potential of a “new in-gathering of movements, harnessing each other’s strengths for an active, mutual, and principled Palestinian alignment with the Arab struggle for self-determination, and indigenous struggles in North America, Latin America, Oceania, and elsewhere” (Salamanca, Qato, Rabie, & Samour, 2012, p.5).

Often, scholars who quote Wolfe argue that employing settler colonialism as an analytical category provides a conceptual and political lens to examine contemporary Palestine. This would allow scholars to interpret the ‘conflict’, challenge ‘Israel’s’ claims of exceptionalism, contest the perception of what is happening in Palestine as an ethnic conflict, and would offer solutions for the long injustice in Palestine (J. Collins, 2011b; Pappe, 2012, 2014, 2017; Rohana, 2014; Veracini, 2015b). Moreover, it would open doors to compare this context with others such as the ‘USA’, ‘Canada’ and ‘South Africa’, and affirm the “fact” that Palestinians are indigenous; this would align Palestine scholarship with indigenous and native studies (Salamanca et al., 2012). For instance, having settler colonialism on the agenda of Palestine studies is important according to Salamanca and colleagues (2012), since it offers a better understanding of the continuous Zionist offences and unlawful practices. Thus, through the structural lens of ‘the logic of elimination’ this literature understands Zionism as “an ideology and a political movement that subjects Palestine and Palestinians to structural and violent forms of dispossession, land appropriation, and erasure in the pursuit of a new Jewish state and society”, and therefore, as a settler colonial movement, the control of the land is a “zero-sum” for Zionism (p.1).

As a result, Palestinians’ existence on their land is perceived by ‘Israel’ as a problem that challenges the settler project’s completion. Building on this understanding, everything ‘Israel’ practices on the ground is with the intention of completing the settler colonial project in Palestine, i.e. overcoming the ‘mistake’ of 1948 and securing stability. They maintain that analysing “Zionism’s structural continuities and the ideology that informs Israeli policies and practices in ‘Israel’ and toward Palestinians everywhere” would be a breakthrough and help “move forward and create a transformative, liberatory research agenda” (p.2). Salamanca and colleagues insist that the settler colonial perspective would expand and empower Palestinians’ solidarity movement and reconnect it with “all anti-imperial, all anti-racist, and all struggling to make another world possible” (p.5). To further support the case of employing the settler

colonialism as developed by Wolfe, Salamanca et al. ask: “when did Palestinians ever find themselves in a ‘post-colonial’ condition? When did the ongoing struggle over land and for return become a ‘post-conflict’ situation? When did Israel become a ‘post-Zionist’ society? When did indigenous Palestinians in the Galilee (for example) become an ‘ethnic minority’? And when did the establishment of the Palestinian Authority and the consequent fortification of Palestinian reserves become ‘state-building’?” (p.3). Salamanca et al. propose that Wolfe’s theorization of settler colonialism is useful to answer these questions. They explain that:

[f]or natives’, as Patrick Wolfe puts it, ‘the issue is that, at the hands of the settlers, they face [physical and symbolic] elimination’. Given such a threat, the central question for committed scholarship and liberatory movements should be how to develop a praxis that brings back decolonisation and liberation as the imperative goal. (p.4)

Indeed, it is essential to include settler colonialism on the agenda of Palestine studies and to align the Palestinian liberation agenda with other movements in other colonial contexts. It is also important to question the capability of post-colonial theories to study the present case of Palestine. Employing the settler colonialism framework allows us to situate ‘Israel’ within the historical context of European settler colonialism, which will also help us to recognize and differentiate its unique and common features. Salamanca and colleagues’ questions are critical and relevant to the study of contemporary Palestine. Exploring them would assist us to better understand the various realities of the past and present, which would also help our foresight. However, it is not clear how it is conceivable to articulate “a liberatory research agenda” with vocabulary such as, “elimination”, “zero-sum”, “erasure”, “dispossession”, and how it is possible to hope for “another world” when it is entirely “at the hands of settlers”.

I agree with the argument of land centrality for settler colonial projects and with the conclusion that any connection between the land and its inhabitants is a threat and obstacle for settler colonial project completion (Wolfe, 1999). Considering this allows us to understand the expansion and violent features of settler colonies and to recognise the relationship between the land and its inhabitants as a critical site for resistance.<sup>11</sup> However, I disagree with their conclusion that “[t]here is no such thing as neo-settler colonialism or post-settler colonialism because settler colonialism is a resilient formation that rarely ends,” and is “resistant to decolonization”(Cavanagh & Veracini,

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<sup>11</sup> Land centrality for land inhabitants is well discussed among several scholars and activists involved in intellectual and grassroots land-centred projects, such as for example Wildcat, McDonald, Irlbacher-Fox, and Coulthard (2014, p.1) who argue given that colonisation in settler colonies is based on land dispossession, then decolonisation must be premised on land-centred education that reconnects land inhabitants to “land and the social relations, knowledges and languages that arise from the land”.

2013; Veracini, 2011b, p.204). This scholarship “isn’t exactly right” and there are still many unanswered questions and unchecked assumptions (Barker, 2011). For instance, in Veracini’s illumination of ‘you work for me or go away’, even though there is a clear difference between exploitation and “disappearance”, this elucidation does not tell us whose is speaking, who is listening, what happened before and after, and who decided the options and outcomes? In simple words, there is no hope for decolonisation in this literature. This absence brings to the fore the most central question; what is knowledge for? And makes writing and thinking about hope when studying settler colonialism in Palestine an ethical and political responsibility (Miyazaki, 2006; Zournazi, 2002).

Even before we can decide whether the settler colonialism framework is adequate for studying the case of Palestine, we must first ask critically the following questions. Whose understanding or perception of settler colonialism are we borrowing and adopting? Based on whose experience, and, in what context? What are the underpinning literatures and resources of knowledge employed to investigate Palestine studies? Which stories and narratives count? And who asks what questions? I would argue that there are plenty of reasons for doubting the application of the settler colonial framework in a wholesale manner and that the scholars who adopt this framework should first and foremost critically reflect on the above questions. Writing about present-day colonialism without thinking critically about our writing can entail ethical and political risks of reinforcing and retaining a “never innocent” discourse, which is “particularly true of academic writing” (L. T. Smith, 1999, p.37). To do any less would be to discount the knowledge production and colonialism. We may also overlook the interlinks within the unequal power relations in knowledge production and fail to critically ask what is considered knowledge and what is not, which could have unintended consequences and affect the lives of Palestinians. In the context of focusing on the elimination narratives and questions, it does not only misread the ‘Others’ (i.e. ‘Israel’ and Palestine), it misreads itself, too (Harding, 1992; James & Michelle D., 1997; W. Mignolo, 2002, 2012; Restrepo, 2014; Santos, 2015; Vimalassery, Pegues, & Goldstein, 2016). I explore this further in Chapter Two.

Undoubtedly, the suggested framework is still recent as it shows different and sometimes conflicting interests and positions. While this literature is still in development, although now two decades old, and subject to change, it is possible to trace a common thread that forms the basis of this literature. Settler colonialism scholarship’s exclusive focus on settler colonisers’ elimination policies, programs and techniques, implies two assumptions, i.e. land inhabitants are defeated, powerless and

unable to act to change their realities, and the settler colonial state is ever strong and 'young', and functions through an ever efficient 'logic of elimination' without facing any challenges or obstacles. These two assumptions are put to question in this thesis by revealing its methodological and analytical limitations, and potential political and ethical risks in the study of Palestine. As I will discuss further in Chapter Two, 'the logic of elimination' thesis, or what Tim Rowse (2014) calls the "eliminationist paradigm" has influenced the growth of 'erasure' and 'elimination' historiography, and reduced sensitivity to Indigenous heterogeneity and ignored their agency. This 'eliminationist paradigm' necessitates that settler colonies are irreversible and settler colonialism cannot be de-colonised. Rowse insists: "if there is a plot in the historiography of elimination, it is that the structure of settler colonialism has always already triumphed" (p.302). The structural impersonal theorisation of settler colonialism entails analytical and empirical limitations, likewise it has potential risks of ethical, political misuse that could reproduce and enhance settler colonialism (Kauanui, 2016; Macoun & Strakosch, 2013; Rowse, 2014; Snelgrove, Dhamoon, & Corntassel, 2014; Strakosch & Macoun, 2012; Vimalassery et al., 2016).

This thesis adopts the notion that "research is not an innocent or distance academic exercise but an activity that has something at stake and that occurs in a set of political and social conditions" (Smith, 1999 p.5). As Linda Tawahi Smith and others have shown, the very foundation of western knowledge is intimately connected to colonialism. This makes research itself as a colonial construct a "reflection of ideology" and "significant site of struggle between the interests and ways of knowing of the West and the interest and ways of resisting of the Other" (Smith 1999 p. 2). Therefore, doing research "makes us deeply implicated in colonial power relations and means that we have a responsibility to consider the foundations and consequences of our work" (Dei 2012 p.104). The onus is on the researcher because the knowledge process itself can be a colonial exercise. Questioning our conceptual lenses when examining a contemporary colonial context is not a scholarly privilege, but an ethical and political responsibility and positionality that I regard in this thesis.

I critically argue against both the concept of elimination and the appropriateness of such a concept in studying the case of Palestine. The main thrust of my argument is that there is an empirical gap between what is being discussed and debated about settler colonialism in existing academic spaces and what is happening on the ground in everyday life in Palestine. The question as to whether this gap is a deliberate omission or not is debatable, but I argue that it is partially related to the established racist structure of Eurocentric knowledge, and the hegemony of one way of seeing the world.

I argue that settler colonial literature is an inherently biased Eurocentric mirror that distorts what it reflects (Harding, 1992; James & Michelle D., 1997; Santos, 2015; D. E. Smith, 1987; L. T. Smith, 1999).

There exists scholarship that is conscious of these conceptual limitations, in particular works on the settler colonial situation in Palestine.<sup>12</sup> However, I argue that it is questionable to rely on the settler colonialism story as seen through the settlers' eyes in this literature, and to take no notice of its potentially conflicting implications of ethical and political impacts in consolidating the hegemony of a singular way of seeing the world. This point is very important, because if the elimination story is recited over and over again by scholars without challenging its underlying assumptions, and if it establishes itself as the main narrative in other academic disciplines as well, then the elimination narrative may well become the only story.

Assuming a critical stance towards the "settler colonial turn" and its assumptions and theorisation, I build upon an existing literature of Eurocentric knowledge and its colonial links and challenge the critical accounts of settler colonialism scholarship to argue against the theorisation of settler colonialism in Palestine and its use of the 'eliminationist' understanding to study the case of Palestine. On the one hand, I understand 'Israel' to be a settler colonial project, which employs and makes use of the settler colonial archive and vocabulary, and aims to follow suit of the earlier settler colonisers of the 'new world'. 'Israel' as I will further elaborate in Chapter Three is the last European settler colonial wave targeting the Arab World and a "functional settler colonial state" that is supported by the imperial powers "not because of its intrinsic worth, but because of its utility" to them (El-Messiri, 2001b). In this sense, 'Israel' is best understood as a contemporary European settler colonial project.<sup>13</sup> On the other hand, the mere understanding of settler colonialism as an endless process of elimination and accepting the readings of our past, present and the future as narrated in this literature – as the only story and truth – would never allow us to understand these realities holistically, let alone articulate a liberation agenda.

The review of settler colonialism studies of Palestine reveals that it misreads both 'Israel' and Palestine. This literature, is a 'dialogue' between 'Israel' and its allies on the one side and settler colonialism scholarship and scholars on the other, debating settler colonisers' concerns and existential questions, rather than Ahl Al-Ard's freedom and

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<sup>12</sup> See for instance (J. Collins, 2011a; Krebs & Olwan, 2012; Makdisi, 2011; Shihade, 2016).

<sup>13</sup> In Chapter Three I present my different understanding of the settler colonial project in Palestine by employing existing literature that perceives 'Israel' as a functional settler colonial state and the 9<sup>th</sup> settler colonial wave in the Arab world.

liberation. 'The logic of elimination', and impossible decolonisation are taken for granted as conceptual and historical facts and presented as an "objective" truth to which everyone adheres. The majority of this literature tends to ask questions related to how and where Palestinians are being eliminated, paying much attention to which tools and which spaces of elimination. In this literature, Palestine is portrayed as vague and fragmented 'territories' which cannot be imagined without what negates it: 'Israel'. Palestinians are hopeless, unable to resist, and are subjects of visible, invisible and all other kinds of elimination. Next to this image of Palestine and Palestinians, 'Israel' is a successfully established, 'ever young' and 'mighty' state. This literature stresses the exclusiveness of the logic of elimination in Palestine and proposes a new understanding of potential decolonisation in Palestine based on its understanding of settler colonialism in 'Australia' and 'U.S.A', because "Palestine is not Algeria" (Rohana, 2014).

My concern about this 'settler colonial turn', as explained in Chapter Four, derives from my own intellectual engagements with the settler colonialism literature and the conferences and debates that I participated in at various British universities, my political activism on the issues related to resistance, knowledge and colonialism in Palestine. Furthermore, my inspiration of Ali Shariati call to "return to the self" and believe in the self, one's own culture, knowledge, epistemology, image and narrative (Shariati, 2007).<sup>14</sup>

Marginal or not, this scholarship has political impacts and implications beyond the immediate circles of scholars and disciplinary audience. One such significant effect of the elimination story of settler colonialism scholarship is overlooking the very much alive, loud and rich stories of resistance. Hence the urgent need to examine the political and ethical implications of emphasising the elimination story when there is a large and active presence of resistance in everyday life in Palestine (Chapters Five, Six, and Seven). Settler colonialism scholarship cannot be immune to the challenges of situating/positioning itself and inspecting its lenses, assumptions and questions when studying the concurrent settler colonial issues in Palestine within the comfort and the confines of biased academic spaces (George J Sefa Dei & Asgharzadeh, 2001; L. T. Smith, 1999).

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<sup>14</sup> Ali Shariati (1933-1977) an Iranian contemporary theorist, presented his critique of Eurocentrism. He argued that since the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the West with the help of sociologists, historians, writers, artists and even revolutionists and humanists imposed on the rest of the world a Eurocentric understanding of civilization, applying it to the colonies. Shariati's understanding of resistance in this context is to 'Return to the Self' and believe in the self, one's own culture, knowledge, epistemology, image and narrative.

## **1.2 Settler colonialism through Ahl Al-Ard eyes**

This thesis aims to offer an alternative understanding of settler colonialism as seen through the Ahl Al-Ard's eyes with the intention to pursue for "futures beyond colonial constructions of the possible and sensible" (Eric Ritskes, 2017, p.1). To do so, I first establish resistance as a main analytical lens through which to read settler colonialism in Palestine. Then, I give an account of an "ethnography of hope" that follows and explores the "spirit of resistance" (Routledge & Simons, 1995) as a nomadic science, embodied in sites in Jerusalem, moments in the Gaza Strip and narratives of individuals from Haifa. I draw on this to challenge the singular story narrative and the distorted images of Palestine in the Eurocentric mirror as it appears in the settler colonial studies' framework.

Settler colonialism, as seen through the perspective of settler colonialism scholarship, is a comprehensive elimination that confirms the defeated and powerless status of the inhabitants of the land. My research approach will be different: this thesis has much to say on the resistance that is largely missing in the settler colonial literature that is founded on the logic of elimination. This literature has much to gain from broadening the empirical understanding of settler colonialism by studying resistance rather than exclusively focusing on elimination. In this thesis I write about resistance because when I read settler colonialism scholarship on Palestine, I did not recognise what I saw (L. T. Smith, 1999). In the 'elimination paradigm' I saw defeated, conquered and powerless Palestinians living in haunted geographies and spaces of death, which contradicted what I and those I worked with experience as part of everyday life in Palestine (Chapter Six, Seven, and Eight).

My research adopts the Latin American school of decoloniality and standpoint epistemology in feminist scholarship, both of which challenge the official history, singular stories and the hegemony of one way of seeing and knowing the world. The philosophy of decolonial research is crucial in this research because it acknowledges and brings the uncomfortable question to the fore, that is, there are many ways in which knowledge production can be colonial or resistive. Most importantly, this literature appreciates different resources of knowledge and gives more attention to the relation between material experience, power, and epistemology. Principally, I draw on the work of Santos's three core principles for epistemological justice. That is, "[f]irst, the understanding of the world by far exceeds the Western understanding of the world. Second, there is no global justice without global cognitive justice. Third, the emancipatory transformations in the world may follow grammars and scripts other than those developed by Western-centric critical theory, and such diversity should be

valorized" (Santos, 2015, p.viii). These traditions of decolonising knowledge inform this research. Thus in conjunction with the recent work of settler colonialism scholarship, my thesis critically engages with the Eurocentric mirror – focusing on its discussions and narratives – reflected through publications on Palestine. The stories told, and the images portrayed of others on the Eurocentric mirror, often lead the readers to believe that what the mirror shows is the real version of the stories and images. Thus, the legitimacy of the hegemony prevails, and the power of repetition further consolidates the dominant narrative.

Decolonial and standpoint epistemologies and methodologies have informed the research choice of adopting resistance as a central analytical theme in examining everyday life in Palestine. This approach pays closer attention to the relations between everyday life experiences, power, and epistemology, and the effects of power relations on knowledge production and the ways in which they have been produced, and examines the colonial role it plays. The focus on resistance is a deliberate analytical choice I take in this thesis. Centring my research focus on resistance is appropriate because a majority of contemporary settler colonialism scholarship has often cast Palestinians into the roles of victims, Homo sacer, needy, helpless, objects of elimination, living in slow-motion and endless Nakba in spaces of death and 'spaciocides'.<sup>15</sup> This literature, therefore, effectively overlooks the resistance stories such as those analysed in this thesis. Having said that, however, I want to clarify and add that this is not about the mere existence of those stories per se – a walk in the lanes of the old city of Jerusalem after a Friday prayer can tell you much about it. Resistance in Palestine, is alive, loud, and rich, and has a long tradition of collective and individual resistance that manifests in all dimensions of space, time and mind. In this thesis, I question the distorted image of Palestine in settler colonialism scholarship and draw attention to the harm caused by the absence of these stories and the hegemony of a singular way of analysis employed to understand the settler colonial situations in Palestine. The hegemony of the elimination and hopeless story forecloses any debates or discussions of different futures of settler colonialism in Palestine. As will be further elaborate upon in Chapter Two, it misreads both 'Israel' and Palestine.

### **1.3 Everyday resistance**

To study resistance to settler colonialism in Palestine, I define Ahl Al-Ard's relationship with the land as a site of resistance and positions hope as a critical element in everyday life (Wildcat et al., 2014). There is no overarching theory of resistance that

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<sup>15</sup> Spaciocide in opposition to genocide, Sari Hanafi first coined this term in his study to the space in Jerusalem.



can be presented that will hold true for all times and places; it is, in Deleuze and Guattari's (1988) terms, "rhizomatic": it consists of diversities of interactions, relations and acts of becoming. The rhizome, Deleuze and Guattari write, "connects any point to any other point, and its traits are not necessarily linked to traits of the same nature; it brings into play very different regimes of signs, and even nonsign states" (1988:21). In this sense, everyday resistance in Palestine includes an endless list of "symbolic meanings, communicative processes, political discourses, religious idioms, cultural practices, social networks, physical settings, bodily practices, and envisioned desires and hopes" (Routledge, 1997, p.68). These can be individual, or collective, violent and face to face confrontations, or hidden and behind the back of the master. This can be for little or stretched time: "metamorphic, interconnected, or hybrid; creative or self-destructive" (p.69).

Pile's conceptualisation of resistance that happens in and beyond spaces defined by power relations is useful here. This understanding is premised on two points. First, "resistance is understood not only in terms of [people's] location in power relations, but also through their intended and received meanings" (Pile 2013 p.26). Second, it adopts a spatial understanding of resistance which "necessitates a radical reinterpretation and revaluation of the concept: by thinking of resistance spatially, it becomes both about the different spaces of resistance and also about the ways in which resistance is mobilised through specific spaces and times" (p. xi).

I also follow Thiong'o in "The Decolonisation of Mind" (1994) and concur with his understanding that any individual or collective act of resistance against the settler colonials' project is significant and the accumulation of those actions, moments and stories of resistance, "no matter what weight, size, scale, location in time and space" all shapes the "national heritage" and retains the culture and spirit of resistance. In other words, as Thiong'o puts it "[a]ny blow against imperialism, no matter the ethnic and regional origins of the blow, is a victory for all anti-imperialistic elements in all the nationalities" (p.2).

Consistent with decolonial methodology, this research not only considers everyday life as a source of knowledge, but also as "resources of hope that could be galvanized in processes of restorative justice and ultimately in the unmaking of inequality" (Hammami, 2006, p.6). An alternative conceptualisation of settler colonialism implies something about hope. Not necessarily in "some future ideal sense", but a hope, "in the act of living, the ordinary elements of everyday life. This requires a 'spark' of hope – a hope that does not narrow our visions of the world but instead allows different histories,

memories and experiences to enter into present conversations on revolution, freedom and our cultural senses of belonging". Such understanding "may enable other ways of documenting how we may live and hope" (Zournazi, 2002, p.18). The key point of this thesis is that the Palestinians can and do have a sense that the oppression will end and not to imply how it will end. It is the possibility of being otherwise - as it appears in settler colonialism scholarship - that is important for my research.

This thesis, then, approximates the resonances of the potentialities of this hope and its actualisation in everyday in Palestine in spatial, temporal and conscious dimensions. To do so, I am following Dei's (2012) call to ask new questions and Fanon's (1963) suggestion to change the story.<sup>16</sup> This change is not carried out by mere thoughtful generalizations but through particular ethnographic cases and applications that give everyday life its hope.

#### **1.4 Research questions**

I seek to ask a somewhat different set of questions than those explored in settler colonialism scholarship. First of all, the focus of my attention is not so much on the questions of the exclusive elimination in Palestine. My main research question is how do Palestinians resist settler colonialism in their everyday life? To answer this question comprehensively, I approach the main research question by exploring how Palestinians resist settler colonialism in three interconnected dimensions: spatial (Chapter Five), temporal (Chapter Six) and consciousness (Chapter Seven). I approach these questions from decolonial and standpoint perspectives premised on the concept of Al-Muqawma: a Palestinian counter to settler colonialism that constantly challenges and confronts the flow of settler colonialism in their everyday life. Al-Muqawma can be literally translated as 'resistance.' In the context of Palestine, Al-Muqawma has no fixed meaning; it is rhizomatic, has no start and no end, and incarnates a myriad of denotations, manifestations and representations of resistance. Al-Muqawma is a constant and multi-dimensional encounter with the settler colonial project, which impedes its completion and challenges the flow of settler colonisation of the space, time and mind. In the context of everyday, Al-Muqawma is a Palestinian mode, spirit

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<sup>16</sup> Fanon in the 'Wretched of the Earth' in his chapter 'On National Culture' writes about the combat literature that "calls upon a whole people to join in the struggle for the existence of the nation. Combat literature, because it informs the national consciousness, gives it shape and contours, and opens up new, unlimited horizons. Combat literature, because it takes charge, because it is resolve situated in historical time" p.173. An example of this literature was the narratives of story tellers during the Algeria revolution: "Instead of "a long time ago," they substitute the more ambiguous expression "What I am going to tell you happened somewhere else, but it could happen here today or perhaps tomorrow" p.174.

and culture of active existence that constantly maintains the catalyst of hope and 'jumps over' Jabotinsky's wall and dares to dream of a free Palestine.<sup>17</sup>

### 1.5 Thesis outline

In the following chapters, I build a case for and develop the argument about alternative ways of conceptualising settler colonialism as seen through *Ahl Al-Ard* eyes (Chapter Eight), to reveal the rhizomatic character of everyday life resistance in Palestine, and challenge "the politically convenient conflation of settler desires and reality, and of the political present and the future" (Macoun & Strakosch, 2013, p.433). I do so by establishing resistance rather than elimination as the main analytical category, situating the context of Palestine as a context of struggle for liberation rather than an endless "slow-motion Nakba" (Chapter Three) and conducting an ethnography of hope of the everyday life in Palestine (Chapter Four) to follow the "spirit of resistance" as embodied in sites, moments and narratives in Jerusalem, the Gaza Strip and Haifa, and analyse them in spatial, temporal and consciousness dimension, respectively across three empirical chapters to shed light on a single overarching argument: the elimination story is not the only narrative of settler colonialism in Palestine (Chapters Five, Six and Seven).

In Chapter Two, I start with clarifications of terminologies I use. Then I move to settler colonialism scholarship to present and critically engage with its main assumptions. In particular I focus on its discussions on Palestine. Settler colonialism according to Wolfe is understood as a 'structure not an event' that started with the arrival of the 'individual frontiers' at the shores of the 'empty land', and operates within 'the logic of elimination' to control the land in spatial, temporal and conscious dimensions. Settler colonialism as Wolfe, Veracini and others tell us does not end with the leave of the frontiers, because unlike other forms of European colonies, there is "no return" of colonisers to their homelands (Veracini, 2011b, p.206). Settler colonialism ends when no one (settlers and land inhabitants) considers it as settler colonialism anymore. I engage with this literature on Palestine by demonstrating and analysing how this scholarship relates to the case of Palestine and what solutions it offers. I approach the literature with the following questions: what is Palestine, who are Palestinians and how are they

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<sup>17</sup> According to the Zionist Revisionist leader Ze'ev Jabotinsky (1880-1940), for 'Israel' to survive, the Palestinians need to believe that it is undefeatable: "if the native population should desire to hinder our work, they will find it impossible" (Jabotinsky, 1923). In a paper titled 'The Arab and the Jew' (1923) Jabotinsky wrote that for 'Israel' to stay, they need to build what he calls an 'iron wall' by killing the last spark of hope for Palestinians as he put it: "every native population in the world resists colonists as long as it has the slightest hope of being able to rid itself of the danger of being colonized", therefore he suggested building an 'Iron Wall' which *Ahl Al-Ard* "cannot breach"., which means killing the last spark of hope of a free Palestine.

portrayed in this framework? What is 'Israel' and how is it seen in this scholarship? What are the comparable and incomparable models in studying Palestine? How is decolonization imaginable and unimaginable in Palestine? In the last section of this chapter, titled 'A settler colonial turn or return?', I make use of critical literature of the logic of elimination and anticolonial literature to discuss the analytical limitations and ethical and political risks of employing 'the logic of elimination' to study the case of Palestine.

In Chapter Three, I set the contextual and conceptual backgrounds of settler colonialism in Palestine and everyday life. I bring new focus to the understanding of settler colonialism in Palestine. Firstly, I make a temporal connection and situate 'Israel' within a longer history of colonial encounters between the Arab World and the West. I make use of Abdelwahab Elmessiri's useful concept of understanding 'Israel' as a "functional settler colonial state" (2001b). I present a brief review of resistance in Palestine and finally I build on Geographies of Resistance literature in my understanding of resistance that it happens in and beyond spaces defined by power relations to set the context in Palestine as a struggle for liberation rather than the case of past, present, and future elimination. (2013; Routledge & Simons, 1995)

In Chapter Four, I trace the journey that led to the stories of resistance explored in this research. To set the context of the fieldwork, I start with a reflection upon my positionality as a Palestinian researcher studying home, but trained in a Western academic institute, and what implications this has had in my thesis and fieldwork journey. I explain my research design and how my field journey helped to guide my research focus on resistance and inspired me to conduct a multi-sited ethnography of hope in three mobile geographies of resistance using the decolonial approach. I then present and introduce my research sites and participants. Moreover, I outline the methods that allowed me to better understand the entangled narratives, life stories, images, places, and moments that make up the rich ethnographic data of everyday resistance in Palestine. Finally, I present the important issues regarding reflexivity and ethics.

In Chapter Five, I analyse Ahl Al-Ard individual and collective spatial practices as acts of resistance and focus on Ahl Al-Ard relationship with the land. My intention is to show how the encounter with the settler colonial project in the fortified city of Jerusalem is a central component of Ahl Al-Ard's day-to-day practices and highlight the importance of seeing the city of Jerusalem as not only a site of spaciocide but also to recognise and acknowledge the significant resistance of Ahl Al-Ard in Jerusalem. In this context, the

city is a construction of myriad “sites of the political”, where walking in the city becomes an act of resistance and where the collective gatherings become spatialities of resistance (Certeau, 1984; Routledge, 1997). In the section titled ‘walking in the city’, I follow the steps of and walk with research participants in the city of Jerusalem. I analyse why they walk and where they walk, what they observe and feel while they walk, and the evoked memories they shared during the walks on the streets of Jerusalem. In the section titled “Al Ard Elna”, I analyse social, political, religious and cultural gatherings of Palestinians in the city. Particularly, I examine these gatherings where “places of resistance were created, claimed, defended and used” (Routledge, 1997, p.84). I look at why they gather, who participates in these events, what chanting they chant. In the following section “Al-Quds Arabiah”, I discuss Ahl Al-Ard’s individual and collective active existence and spatialities of resistance and analyse what such narratives and gathering mean for understanding settler colonialism in Palestine. Furthermore, I am particularly interested in the relationship between the research participants’ day-to-day spatial practices and gatherings and their relation with the land and perceptions of the present and the future.

In Chapter Six, I examine ordinary life and violent resistance during the 2014 Gaza war. To set the context of this chapter, I start with my personal encounter with the ‘Gaza Time’ and highlight the links between time, resistance and “faith in the future”. Next, I analyse research participants’ narratives and texts to understand how they experienced the radical confusion of time during the days and nights of the war. Their stories and accounts demonstrate how the colonisation of time during the war resulted in instilling a wide-spread sense of uncertainty, irregularity, time confusion and a constant fear of imminent death. However, unlike most settler colonialism scholarship, I engage with these narratives in the third section ‘My hobby is to survive wars’ where I focus on hope, resistance and “faith in the future” rather than focusing on the ‘victimhood’ seen through the traumatic and psychoanalytical lenses. I analyse how research participants secured various means of survival and how they persisted and carried on in order to restore the ‘ordinary life’ and ‘normal days’ during the war (Das, 2007; Whitehead, 2012; Woroniecka-Krzyżanowska, 2014). In ‘Zero Distance’, I analyse various generative cultural schemes that were expressed through songs, poems, posters and images related to critical events of violent resistance during the war.

In Chapter Seven, I examine the ‘return to the self’ and the morale infrastructure of resistance in the narratives of my research participants. I start with highlighting the significance of the “cognitive battlefield” as a critical site for resistance. The colonisers

winning this war means the end of settler colonialism: no one can see it and everyone believes in the same story. Then, I set the context in which my research participants grew up as the subject of the Zionist cognitive war via various policies and procedures aimed at reducing them to a rootless minority. Unlike the majority of literature focused on Al-Muwahhidun in Palestine, I shift my analytical gaze from analysing how 'Israel' is constructing a Druze identity to how they resist it. In the third section, I focus on the resources that made the return to the self possible and in the fourth section I return to the significance of the cognitive battlefield as a critical site of resistance in studying everyday resistance in Palestine.

In Chapter Eight, I return to my main research question which is: how do Palestinians resist settler colonialism in their everyday life? I present my research findings and key conclusions and synthesize the essential understanding of settler colonialism in Palestine as seen through Ahl Al-Ard eyes.

## **Chapter Two. Settler colonialism scholarship and the single story of elimination**

[T]he tragedy is that we have all been led, knowingly or not, wanting it or not, to see and accept that image<sup>18</sup> as our own and as belonging to us alone. In this way, we continue being what we are not. And as a result we can never identify our true problems, much less resolve them, except in a partial and distorted way. [...] it is time to learn to free ourselves from the Eurocentric mirror where our image is always, necessarily, distorted. It is time, finally, to cease being what we are not (Quijano, 2000, p.556).

### **Introduction**

In this thesis I follow Quijano's call to liberate ourselves from the Eurocentric mirror by critically engaging with settler colonialism scholarship. The importance of engaging with this comes from its growing influence on various fields and disciplines. The impact that I am most interested in here, as I said before is on the study of Palestine, or what Collins called the welcomed "settler colonial turn". Many settler colonial scholars claim their suitability for studying the case of settler colonialism in Palestine based on the theoretical assumption of 'structural elimination' as developed largely in the contexts of 'Australia' and North 'America' (explained below). Many other scholars hold great expectations that settler colonial scholarship could offer political solutions to the 'conflict' in 'Israel/Palestine'.

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<sup>18</sup> Image of Latin Americans in the European knowledge.

It is important to note here that I do not suggest that 'Israel' is not a settler colonial project, as I will show in Chapter Three that 'Israel' is a "functional settler colonial project" that makes use of 500 years of imperial archive and colonial experiences (El-Messiri, 2001b, 2014; Hamdan, 1983; Sayegh, 1965). Rather, I would like to draw attention to the analytical and methodological limitations of this literature to study Palestine, and highlight the entanglement of colonialism and knowledge relationships in the case of the study of Palestine and settler colonialism scholarship (Bird, 2001; Macoun & Strakosch, 2013; Rowse, 2014; Santos, 2015; Snelgrove et al., 2014; Strakosch & Macoun, 2012; Vimalassery et al., 2016).

In this chapter, I return to the questions I posed earlier regarding the 'settler colonial turn' in the study of Palestine: Whose understanding of settler colonialism are we borrowing and adopting to study settler colonialism in Palestine? Based on whose experience, and, in what context? What are the underpinning literatures and resources of the knowledge employed to investigate Palestine studies? Which stories and narratives count? And who asks what questions? I aim to further shed light on this scholarship by following the three basic principles for epistemological justice as articulated by Santos, and build on critical accounts of the structural, present tense, and impersonal theorisation of settler colonialism as it appears in this literature.

From my perspective as a Palestinian researcher, accepting the elimination narrative and accepting our image as seen through the misconceived Eurocentric mirror of settler colonial studies (section 2.2) entails political and ethical risks. Therefore, it is central for us, as Palestinian researchers, to question the lenses we are employing to read ourselves and the other and to understand our past, present and future. This necessity comes from an extensively debated and long history of the intimate relation between knowledge production and colonisation. As several thinkers and philosophers noted, knowledge production can be a "colonial exercise" (Dei and Asgharzadeh 2001 p.299) that reproduces colonialism within a racist and unequal structure of knowledge production (Castro-Gómez, 2007; George J. Sefa Dei, 2006; George Jerry Sefa Dei & Kempf, 2006; Kempf, 2006; W. Mignolo, 2002, 2003; Quijano, 2007; Shariati, 2007; L. T. Smith, 1999).

What follows in this chapter is not a review of all settler colonialism scholarship, nor does it represent all the settler colonial studies scholars. Instead, I build a case for and develop the argument about alternative ways of conceptualising settler colonialism as seen through the Ahl Al-Ard eyes (Chapter Eight) to challenge the singular story of elimination in Palestine.

Any writing on Palestine (in particular by a Palestinian)<sup>19</sup> leads generally to a polarisation of positions, for confusing Zionism with Judaism, and anti-Zionism/anti-‘Israel’ with anti-Semitism.<sup>20</sup> Therefore, this chapter starts with clarifications of etymologies used in this chapter, to better situate my argument against the recent settler colonial turn in the study of Palestine and discuss briefly the important issue of what I mean when I say Jewish, Zionist and Israeli in this thesis. Then I move to a section titled “A story of frontier,” in which settler colonialism according to Wolfe is understood as a ‘structure not an event’ that started with the arrival of the ‘individual frontiers’ at the shores of the ‘empty land’, and operates within ‘the logic of elimination’ to control the land in spatial, temporal and consciousness dimensions. The story of ‘frontier’ as Wolfe, Veracini and others tell us does not end with the leave of the frontiers, because unlike other forms of European colonies, there is “no return” of colonisers to their homelands (Veracini, 2011b, p.206). Settler colonialism ends when no one (settlers and land inhabitants) considers it as settler colonialism anymore. In the third section, titled ‘Under ‘the logic of elimination’ eyes: settler colonialism scholarship and Palestine’, I engage with this literature on Palestine by demonstrating and analysing how this scholarship relates to the case of Palestine and what solutions it offers. Then I approach the literature with the following questions: what is Palestine, who are Palestinians and how are they portrayed in this framework? What is ‘Israel’ and how is it seen in this scholarship? What are the comparable and incomparable models in studying Palestine? How is decolonization imaginable and unimaginable in Palestine? In the last section of this chapter, titled ‘A settler colonial turn or return?’ I make use of critical literature of ‘the logic of elimination’ thesis to discuss the analytical and methodological limitations, besides ethical and political risks of employing ‘the logic of elimination’ to study the case of Palestine.

## 2.1 Notes on terms

After the creation of ‘Israel’ two things happened, first is that Zionism rewrote Jewish history and presented itself as a legitimate continuation of Jewish history, second “Palestinian Arab history and Zionist Jewish history have become inextricably linked”, hence, a major consequence of the Zionist project in Palestine is that the “Zionist history and Jewish history became one” (Massad, 2000, p.52). There are important differences and relationship between the terms Zionist, Israeli, and Jewish identities in the settler colonialism scholarship and debate. Zionism as several scholars have

<sup>19</sup> In Chapter Four I will elaborate more on my positionality in researching settler colonised home.

<sup>20</sup> For instance as Rohda Kanaaneh writes the Israeli Jew who refuses to serve in the West Bank and Gaza Strip were attacked by other Israelis as part of a fifth column or as anti-Semites. (R. Kanaaneh, 2003)



shown spare no effort to link Zionism with Judaism (as a national identity), and anti-Zionism and anti-'Israel' with anti-Semitism (Massad, 2006b; W. D. Mignolo, 2014; Pappe, 2008; Shohat, 1988, 1999). In this thesis, I make a clear distinction between Zionism as a colonial ideology and Judaism as a religion. Zionism is a European origin political ideology, not a religious doctrine, and I do not perceive Zionist and Jewish as equal or homogenous. In the context of this thesis's focus on everyday resistance in Palestine, the term Jewish is understood as a legal status granted by the Israeli state.

Zionist ideological and epistemological foundations are largely influenced by European national ideologies and racist epistemologies. Zionism is deeply rooted in the European Romantic tradition, it is founded in ideology and practice by a "religioracial epistemology through which it apprehends itself and the world around it", as Massad argues "[t]his religioracial grid informs and is informed by its colonial-settler venture" (2006a, p.440). It is against this background that I understand 'Israel' as a European colonial project, and it embodies 500 years of colonial expansion. Epistemologically and ideologically 'Israel' is founded in European history and philosophy. The rise of political Zionism in the late eighteenth century was not an accidental event in this history. Instead, it was consistent with the modern/colonial world, and Western religious, social and political history. In W. D. Mignolo (2014) words, Zionism was: "the unfolding of European history, self-fashioned as "modernity" that needed and invented the form nation-state. At that junction, Jews were profiled as an ethnic rather than a religious community" (2014, p.65). The idea of Zionism existed centuries before the birth of Theodor Herzl (the founding father of Zionism in the 18th century). It first appeared in the sixteenth century via the Protestant Reformation in England, openly displayed in the seventeenth century in Puritan England, and further consolidated during the so-called Age of Reason. During the European colonial expansion, the rise of national ideologies and European biological racism in the late eighteenth and nineteenth century, the new imagined self Europe portrayed Jewish people in Europe, as non-Europeans, the East in the West or the Orient within (Asali, 1992; El-Messiri, 1977, 2014; Haddad, 1974; Massad, 2006b; Rodinson, 1973; Said, 1979; Sayegh, 1965; Sharif, 1983).<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> The negative assessment of the Middle Ages by the European Renaissance was based on the rejection of the recent European barbarism, this assessment later on, as Massad argues, motivated the Enlightenment philosophers "to attempt to invent a heroic, glorious past by appropriating Greek civilization and incorporating it into the recently invented Europe". In parallel to this was the Protestantism's appropriation of the Old Testament, calling for the acceptance of enlightened European Christian culture as model and "transform Judaism into a form of Enlightened Christianity". Within this context "[t]he Jewish Haskala emerged within this European history of self-rejection and reinvention as an assimilationist project seeking to

Even though historically the Jews were discriminated against in Europe, modern anti-Semitism as Massad explains is different. Whereas religious or economic narratives justified previous oppression against Jews in Europe, modern anti-Semitism in secular Europe is based on Enlightenment philology, rational science and biology. European biological racism was “rational and scientific” in post-Enlightenment Europe, and what started as a philological grouping of languages became a biological classification.<sup>22</sup>

Within this context, for European Jews to become Europeans they had to leave Europe (Massad, 2006b; Sherene Seikaly, 2014; Shohat, 1988, 1999). Zionism – which till the Holocaust was the least favoured among Jews around the world and Zionists were in a minority<sup>23</sup> – had an answer for the increased discrimination and oppression against Jews. As Massad writes (quoting Herzl in ‘The Jewish state’ 1972 p.30):

[t]he solution seemed self-evident: Zionism, in Herzl's words, would set up a state for the Jews that would constitute "the portion of the rampart of Europe against Asia, an outpost of civilization as opposed to barbarism[...]. The settler colony was going to be the space of Jewish transformation. To become European, Jews must exit Europe. They could return to it and become part of it by emulating its culture at a geographical remove. If Jews were Asians in Europe, in Asia, they will become Europeans (Massad, 2006b, p.4)

It is in this context, that Judaism was transformed from a religion into a national and racial identity.<sup>24</sup> In favour of transforming the Jews in Europe into Europeans in Asia, Zionists realised that “they could not remain identified in tribal or religious terms, but rather in terms of race and nationhood” (p.5). The Zionist mission was not merely transferring Jews from one geography to another, rather it was to transfer the precise nature of the Jewish communities in Europe, at that time from wanderers, rootless, feminine and weak into settled and strong masculine (Massad, 2006a; Mayer, 2000; Sand & Lotan, 2010; Yuval-Davis, 2004).<sup>25</sup> The Zionist’s ultimate objective is to reach a “national, racial and religious purity” through a Jewish demographic supremacy (Massad, 2006b, p.12).<sup>26</sup> This racial supremacy is an ideological cornerstone for

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transform Jewish culture from something identified by post-Enlightened Europe as non-European, if not un-European, into something more in line with the newly invented image of Europe and its Enlightenment” (2006b, p.3)

<sup>22</sup> The word “Semite” was first used in the nineteenth century in Europe to group languages into “families” descended from one “mother” tongue.

<sup>23</sup> Lots of Jewish intellectuals refused and opposed Zionism such as Rosa Luxemburg, Leon Trotsky, Grigory Zinoviev, Ilya Ehrenburg, and Karl Kautsky, and others (El-Messiri, 1977).

<sup>24</sup> In ‘Israel’ the identity cards of the Israeli Jews read ‘Jewish’ next to nationality, while it read ‘Arab’ for Palestinians.

<sup>25</sup> Building the new strong rooted Jew required a particular focus on agriculture and soldiery (Massad, 1996). I will return to this in Chapter Three.

<sup>26</sup> The view of biologically or racially determined Jewish identity was first advocated by Moses Hess (1812-1875), the German proto-Zionist theoretician (El-Messiri, 1977).

Zionism. The Zionist's pledge – "to building a demographically exclusive Jewish state modelled after Christian Europe – a notion pervaded [...] by a religioracial epistemology of supremacy over the Palestinian Arabs, not unlike that used by European colonialism with its ideology of white supremacy over the natives" (2006a, p.440). As a result, 'Israel' – the state form of Zionism – created a new identity and culture based on nationalism, militarism and racism, this new identity as several scholars argue was alien to the Diaspora Jews and strange in pre-'Israel' Jewish cultures (Massad, 2006b; Shohat, 1988). The Jewish identity in the context of the Zionist colonial project in Palestine is not only a religious or philosophical question; it is also a legal, political and economic issue. For instance the Zionist state issued several laws for Jews only, such as the right to return issued in 1950 which gives the right to Jewish people wherever they are, the right to 'return' to the land of 'Israel'. Zionism embodied "European nationalist ideals to be realised outside Europe, in the East, and in relation to the pariahs of Europe, the Jews [and]posited itself as an extension of Europe in the Middle East, carrying its Enlightenment banner of the civilizing mission" (Shohat, 1999, p.219).

When discussing Zionism it is important to recognise its complex racism. Indeed, Palestinians in 'Israel' and Zionism are at the bottom of the racial ladder, yet they are not the only "Other". 'Israel' targets its internal Other, or the "domestic orient", namely, the Arab Jew (Mizrahi) and the Black Jew (Flasha) (Ben-eliezer, 2004; Chetrit, 2009; Shohat, 2010). Ella Shohat argues that Sephardim (Arab Jew) are victims of the structural oppression of Zionism before and after the creation of 'Israel' (1988, 1999, 2010). Shohat explains that the East (Palestine) and West ('Israel) dichotomy overlooks an essential paradox within Zionist discourse itself, while Zionist claim that it aims to end the Jewish (Eastern) diaspora in the West and return to the "East" where they 'come from', the paradox as Shohat writes "is that it presumed to 'end a diaspora' characterized by Jewish ritualistic nostalgia for the East, only to found a state whose ideological and geopolitical orientation has been almost exclusively Western" (1999, p.216). In a review of the Zionist historiography concerning Sephardim, Shohat (1988) finds that Sephardim are perceived in 'Israel' through media, writers, social scientists, politicians, and others as compared by the elite (Ashkenazi), other "lower" colonized peoples" (p.3). In 'Israel' "the hegemonic voice" as Shohat writes is the European Jews (Ashkenazi) voice. Sephardim are seen as the Third World People, while the European Jew are the First World People. In Shohat words, Sephardim "form a semi-colonized nation-within-a-nation" (p.2). Shohat refutes Zionist claims of liberating all Jews, and argues that bringing Oriental Jews to 'Israel' was for demographic and economic considerations for the Zionist colonial project:

It was only after the failure of European immigration – even in the post-Holocaust era most European Jews chose to emigrate elsewhere - that the Zionist establishment decided to bring Sephardi immigrants en masse. The European Zionist rescue phantasy concerning the Jews of the Orient, in sum masked the need to rescue itself from possible economic and political collapse (1988, p.16).

For Shohat, Zionism was a liberation movement for the minority European Jews who ended up in 'Israel' only and for their advantage. Shohat explains: "Sephardi Jews were first brought to Israel for specific European-Zionist reasons, and once there they were systematically discriminated against by Zionism which deployed its energies and material resources differentially, to the consistent advantage of European Jews and not to the consistent detriment of Oriental Jews (p.1).

It is important to stress here that I do not suggest that all Israeli-Jews share same ideological commitment to the Zionist settler colonial project in Palestine. I am attentive to differences among settler colonies in Palestine. Origin, class, colour and gender lines divide them, and those differences are important when studying these settlers and their contradictions, but their settler-colonial shared identity looms above all when studying settler colonialism in Palestine. The very presence of the settler colonisers on the land of Palestine is a colonial settler act. All settlers, regardless of their class, origin, gender, colour, sexuality, political affiliation or beliefs (left, right), etc., however, still all enjoy the settler colonial privilege even though in different degrees.

The following section will return to settler colonialism scholarship, which I will critically engage with its reading of Palestine.

## 2.2 The story of 'frontier'

Frontier, a concept borrowed from military vocabulary, is the starting point for Wolfe's theorisation of settler colonialism. Wolfe understands frontier as "a classic binarism that counter poses two pure types (civilisation vs. savagery, etc.) and admits a multitude of variants" (1999, p.165). Wolfe dates the beginning of settler colonialism in the 'new world' by the arrival of the 'individual frontier,' "the land hungry, the diggers of gold, the extractors of oil, the scalpers, the doggers, the sex workers, the pastoralists, the railroad men and the farmers" in the late 16<sup>th</sup> century (2013, p.258). Next to the individual frontier's arrival, the only available conclusions to the inhabitants of the land are to die by gun or by starvation (1999). The centrality of frontier according to Wolfe is that without it there would have never been an invasion (settler colonialism): "[t]he reality that accompanying the idea of the frontier is that of invasion" (p.165).

Wolfe stresses the importance of access to land for settler colonisers and defines settler colonialism as "an inclusive, land-centered project that coordinates a comprehensive range of agencies, from the metropolitan centre to the frontier

encampment, with a view to eliminating indigenous societies" (2008, p.108). Wolfe makes a link between the emergence of settler colonialism phenomena with so-called modernisation; the Industrial Revolution needed land (outside Europe), slaves, factories, industrial proletariat and markets (2006). Within this context, 'frontier individuals' endless appeals for state protection not only presupposed a commonality between the private and official realms" it also "presupposed a global chain of command linking remote colonial frontiers to the metropolis" (p.394).

To understand settler colonialism, Wolfe traces the historical development of the 'Australian' frontier and outlines three modes of settler colonisers' strategies for land control; confrontation, carceration and assimilation (1994). Settler colonialism started with the confrontation between the 'Individual frontiers' and the inhabitants of the land, where millions of the land inhabitants were killed and some nations became entirely extinct.<sup>27</sup> This phase is quick and short (7-10 years in 'Australia') and it aims to physically eliminate land inhabitants and take over as much land as they can. The second mode, carceration, included geographical removal of the 'dying race' survivors to fixed places where they faced elimination programmes such as confinement and child abduction.<sup>28</sup> This phase, as a technique of elimination, "eliminated Indians quickly and effectively," yet it was "an inherently temporary solution" (2011a, p.13) and became less effective after the "closure of the frontier" and the declaration of independence in 'Australia' (2006p. 400). As Wolfe tells us, once "the dust has settled"(2008, p. 108), elimination turned "inwards, seeking to penetrate through the tribal surface to the individual Indian below, who was to be co-opted out of the tribe, which would be depleted accordingly, and into White society" (2006p. 399).

According to Wolfe, frontier closing is the birth of the settler colonial state and the "social death" of the inhabitants of the land, "[a]cross the post-conquest generations, what settler colonialism reproduces is not human potential but human elimination" (2011b, p.272). Frontier closing is the start of assimilation mode, which as a technique of elimination becomes more effective than the previous two phases. This closure "forestalled spatial stop-gaps such as removal" and enhanced assimilation programmes and policies (2006, p.400). In the "post-frontier era" the settlers' colonies policy "typically favours assimilation, a range of strategies intended to separate individual Natives from their collective sovereignties and merge them irrecoverably into the settler mainstream" (2013, p.258). Assimilation is "unlike the spatial techniques of

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<sup>27</sup> Veracini refers to this stage as the "foundation violence",

<sup>28</sup> The survivors of land inhabitants in 'Australia' were located in six reserves run by the government and the missionaries. In this phase, according to Nanni as I will show in the following pages, starts the colonisation of the time of the land inhabitants (in relation to the land) through the construction of "Aboriginal Time".

removal and/or confinement, [it] is seen as permanent and not susceptible to the settler land-hunger that sooner or later arrives at the boundaries of the Native enclave" (2011a, p.34).

Carceration and assimilation endures "the invasion beyond the frontier, demographically eroding the Native constituency" (2011b, p.272). Wolfe exemplifies that the children of land inhabitants were not merely kidnapped or taken away: they were "domesticated, individualized, reprogrammed, bred White. Through the alchemy of assimilation, the social death of the Native becomes the birth of the settler" (p.273). Individualization of land inhabitants is equal to death and this means that "the tribe could disappear while its members stayed behind" (2006, p.397). For instance, the allotment programme targeted Indians' "collectivity" through breaking down tribal land into individual (citizen) allotments. Assimilation aims to "efface the distinguishing criteria - biology, culture, mode of production, religion, etc." (2008, p.103).

However, frontier closing does not mean it disappeared. In the context of 'Australia', the frontier was "shifting, contextual, negotiated, moved in and out of and suspended" (1999, p.165). What Wolfe is trying to tell us from tracing the frontier is that the principle of frontier is a past as well as a present; "[t]he violence does not go away" (2013, p.270). Frontier "not only constructs a hermitic division in space but also inserts a partition into Australian historical consciousness, [and it is] an ongoing practice" (1999, p.166). Wolfe insists on the ever presence of frontier violence and dividing binarism (civilised/primitive) in contemporary settler colonies:

[S]ettler discourse still structures itself in opposition to the Native alternative. This ongoing binarism is specific to settler colonialism, distinguishing it from other racisms and human-rights abuses [...]. Indeed, it remains ever-present and manifest in post-frontier symptoms such as disproportionate Indigenous incarceration rates, zonal police deployments, Aboriginal deaths in custody and related statistics. In being always available, however, settler violence in the post-frontier era operates as a constraining hegemonic potential: when it is not actually being deployed, its proven superiority [...] can be mobilised at any time. (2013, p.270)

Wolfe also notices from the above periodisation that 'the logic of elimination' was present at every single phase; even if it was "couched in philanthropic rhetoric", all phases "conduce to a common end." (2011a, p.40). For instance, carceration, "which contrasted strongly with the homicidal sentiments expressed in the first phase, the premise of the dying race was no less consistent with the logic of elimination" (1994, p.100). The same applies to assimilation, which "should not be seen as an invariable concomitant of settler colonialism. Rather, assimilation is one of a range of strategies of elimination that become favoured in particular historical circumstances"(2006, p.401).

Wolfe maintains that “[f]or natives, the issue is that, at the hands of the settlers, they face elimination” (2007b, p.315). This elimination takes forms in physical, biological and cultural forms and targets land inhabitants as groups as well as individuals.

The centrality of ‘the logic of elimination’ comes from the distinction between ‘work for me or go away’.<sup>29</sup> In franchise colonies black labour was “commodified” while “red labour was not even acknowledged” (1999, p.2). They were simply not there, Wolfe writes in ‘Settler colonialism and the transformation of anthropology’:

In the Indigenous case, it is difficult to speak of an articulation between colonizers and native since the determinate articulation is not to a society but directly to the land [...] Settler colonies were (are) premised on the elimination of native societies. The split tensing reflects a determinate feature of settler colonization. The colonizers come to stay – invasion is a structure not an event. (p.2)

Wolfe emphasises the split tensing of elimination in settler colonies and maintains the ever presence of ‘the logic of elimination.’ What Wolfe is trying to prove is that not being eliminated in settler colonies is the exceptional, and being eliminated is the norm, and anything else is impermanent or ‘more effective’ (rational). For instance, Wolfe explains that the enslavement of land inhabitants during the above phases was a ‘rational’ thing to do “since some Aborigines survived the confrontation phase, their labour naturally became exploitable”(1994, p.100). Land inhabitants’ slavery in ‘Australia’ was not contradictory with the logic of elimination; rather it was “subordinate to the primary project of territorial acquisition” (p.100).

In an article on settler colonialism in Palestine, Wolfe emphasises the importance of ‘the logic of elimination’ as “a political and perspectival matter as well as an analytical one” to understand settler colonialism. As Wolfe explains:

It prioritises the outcome for conquered Native peoples. This has at least two consequences. First, it enables us to distinguish between different relationships of domination. There is a basic difference between being eliminated and being exploited for one’s labour, a difference that monolithic categories such as colonialism or imperialism tend to elide, their usefulness for understanding the coordinating activities of metropolitan hegemonies notwithstanding. Second, the logic of elimination is prior to features that distinguish settler societies among themselves, such as whether they are monarchical or republican, Christian or Jewish, Black or White, communist or democratic, Asian or European. As experienced by Native peoples, categorical distinctions within a typology of invaders can hardly compare in significance to the totality of dispossession. Seen in this light, scholarly resistance to the priority of the logic of elimination represents a settler perspective. (2012, p.135)

Also, Wolfe makes a clear distinction between settler colonialism and genocide. In spite of employing ‘race’ as a colonial tool in settler colonies, the latter is “inherently

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<sup>29</sup> Veracini’s distinction between colonialism and settler colonialism mentioned in the Introduction chapter.

eliminary but not invariably genocidal" (2006, p.387).<sup>30</sup> Wolfe maintains that settler colonialism is not only a "liquidation of Indigenous people" and land inhabitants are not eliminated because of who they are (race, colour, religion, etc.) or because of "election results" (p.388); they are eliminated because of where they are (the land). For instance, in 'Australia', the Cherokee's "Trail of Tears" happened despite their being considered in "Euroamerican parlance" one of the Five Civilized Tribes in 'Australia'. Indeed, they were removed because they showed indications of settling their "farms, plantations, slaves and written constitution all signified permanence" which would challenge the settlers' stay (p.396). The centrality of access to land, not race, explains settler colonies' violence, "[t]he violence of territorial dispossession is not, of course, hard to understand. For all its notoriety, the Trail of Tears was not exceptional. Rather, it was representative" (2011b, p.280). Race is employed against land inhabitants and Blacks to achieve two contrasting objectives; the racialization of land inhabitants in 'Australia' and the 'U.S.A' promoted 'the logic of elimination', for instance racialisation through the "one-drop rule," which had the intention to eliminate land inhabitants, unlike the Blacks whose increase meant prosperity and power for their owners. Land inhabitants' presence is "counterproductive" and an obstacle for settler colonialism completion.

In other words, the importance of the territorial character for settler colonies, as settler colonialism scholarship argues, necessitates that land inhabitants have to be eliminated in physical, cultural and social terms, and as groups as well as individuals. It's all about the land. In the following subsections I further elaborate on land's significance for the individual frontiers and how this is translated on the ground in spatial, temporal and consciousness dimensions. I also present the end of settler colonialism as discussed in settler colonialism scholarship.

### 2.2.1 Land is first and last

The ultimate objective for settler colonial projects as settler colonialism scholarship argues correctly is "access to the land", which requires controlling the actual space and the time of the land and the mind of Ahl Al-Ard. As Wolfe argues, given such priority, any relationship (social, cultural, physical, etc.) between Ahl Al-Ard and their land is threatening to the settler colonial project completion. In spite of the link between land centrality and modernisation, Wolfe argues that the latter alone is not enough to explain the 'individual frontier' phenomena or the 'logic of elimination'. According to Wolfe, land

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<sup>30</sup> Wolfe proposes the concept 'structural genocide' to understand the relation between spatial expulsions, mass killing and biocultural assimilation: "since settler colonialism persists over extended periods of time, structural genocide should be easier to interrupt than short-term genocides" (p.403).



was not needed for slavery and extractive industries only. It was needed for agriculture, which with its 'never-ending' need for land,

[P]rogressively eats into Indigenous territory, a primitive accumulation that turns native flora and fauna into a dwindling resource and curtails the reproduction of Indigenous modes of production. In the event, Indigenous people are either rendered dependent on the introduced economy or reduced to the stock-raids that provide the classic pretext for colonial death-squads. (2006, p.395)

Agriculture was not, for the 'individual frontiers,' only a support sector for other areas (such as forestry, fishing, pastoralism and mining). It was "inherently sedentary and, therefore, permanent" (p.395). Agriculture was considered by settler colonisers as a "rational means/end calculus" to generate and accumulate capital to allow Europeans lacking in land at home to emigrate to terra nullius (empty lands) and most importantly, "agriculture with its life-sustaining connectedness to land is a potent symbol of settler colonial identity" (p.395). For settler colonisers to access the land and stay they tend to portray the land as 'empty' and 'virgin' territory, and its inhabitants as unsettled, landless, primitive, nomadic people who do not know how to use the land, even if they were farmers, and therefore removable. Wolfe explains by discussing the case of Palestine, saying:

Accordingly, settler-colonial discourse is resolutely impervious to glaring inconsistencies such as sedentary natives or the fact that the settlers themselves have come from somewhere else. Thus it is significant that the feminized, finance-oriented (or, for that matter, wandering) Jew of European anti-Semitism should assert an aggressively masculine agricultural self-identification in Palestine. The new Jew's formative Other was the nomadic Bedouin rather than the fellaheen farmer. The reproach of nomadism renders the native removable. Moreover, if the natives are not already nomadic, then the reproach can be turned into a self-fulfilling prophecy through the burning of corn or the uprooting of fruit trees. (Wolfe, 2006, p.396)

Several scholars built on Wolfe's theorisation of settler colonialism and further revealed the implications of the land's centrality for the settler colonisers' identity. Such importance entails that land control in settler colonies is beyond force or acquiring 'legal titles'. It includes a construction of racialized spatial and temporal differences between land inhabitants and settler colonisers, and a construction of the self and the other premised on the idea of frontier and 'the logic of elimination'. In other words, to fully control the land settler colonisers need to colonise and claim the actual space and time (in relation to the land) with the intention to cut or distort the relation between the land and its inhabitants in spatial, temporal and consciousness dimensions (Byrne,

2010; Howkins, 2010; Mar & Edmonds, 2010; Nanni, 2011, 2012; Razack, 2002b; Strakosch & Macoun, 2012; Veracini, 2010a, 2010b; Vincent, 2010).

To colonise the land in a spatial dimension means that the actual space needs to be constructed, projected and moulded by the “colonial eye” (Mar & Edmonds, 2010, p.5). The making of different spaces is central to the settler colonial project and premised on the idea that ‘no one is there’. The actual space needs to mirror the settlers’ faces by renaming, reshaping, and reimagining it by the “settlers’ gaze,” which is, according to Veracini:

[C]haracterized by a tendency to depopulate the country of indigenous peoples in representations and especially in recollections (i.e., in rationalisations that follow successful settler colonisation), settler projects are recurrently born in a perception of “emptiness”. It borders on wishful thinking, and it is a mode of perception that informs the whole history of settler colonial endeavours. (2010a, p.82)

Shireen Razack builds on the emptiness idea and examines the ‘Canadian’ context to argue that the colonisation of space is based on “racial purity”. “The story of the land as shared and as developed by enterprising settlers is manifestly a racial story” (2002a, p.2). Razack defines three different phases of how spaces are racialized in settler colonies as it appears in the ‘Canadian’ context. The first phase of conquest is where law, race, and space are bound together to justify settler colonialism in the doctrine of terra nullius, where the land is constructed as empty. Even when the land was actually inhabited it was still considered as empty in legal terms, not used for agriculture or commercial purposes. The second phase of space colonisation starts when further settler colonisers come to the ‘empty land.’ In this phase, the space is “imagined as populated by white men of grit, a robust Northern race pitting themselves against the harshness of the climate” (p.3), while land inhabitants are seen as part of the nature that needs to be removed. This is important for the newcomers, as Razack explains:

The imagined rugged independence and self-reliance of the European settlers are qualities that are considered to give birth to a greater commitment to liberty and democracy. If Northern peoples are identified with strength and liberty, then Southern peoples are viewed as the opposite: degenerate, effeminate, and associated with tyranny. (p.3)

Finally, the third phase is concerned with the people of colour and immigrants to ‘Canada’, who are portrayed as a threat to ‘Canadian’ democracy and values. Settler colonisers’ spatialized mythologies are important, as they allow them to consider themselves as a part of a community (white) and outline “who belongs and who does not belong to the nation. [...] Through claims to reciprocity and equality, the story

produces European settlers as the bearers of civilisation while simultaneously trapping Aboriginal people in the pre-modern, that is, before civilisation has occurred" (p.2).

In other words, space-making in settler colonies is not neutral or innocent; it is where the newcomers aim to materialise their colonial myths and ideologies and to impose their face and features on the land. This means that everything the settler colonisers construct on the land is a settler colonial act in order to claim it. As several scholars have noticed, the colonisation of the space in settler colonies is racial by nature, where race is employed as a colonial ideological tool and visible in the "landscapes and city spaces, where racially coded legacies continue to generate contests over the ownership and belonging of space. Viewed through the lens of race, therefore, the mutual productivity of colonialism's rearrangement of spaces and bodies becomes most keenly observable" (Mar and Edmonds 2010 p.3).

However, settler colonialism as Nanni argues is not only a spatial project; he builds on Wolfe's periodisation of the frontier development in 'Australia' and argues that settler colonialism is a temporal project too. Nanni writes that western time and western imperialism are "virtually inseparable" (2011, p.13). Nanni brings time and empire within one analytical field to examine how the British Empire used time as a colonial tool and civilization marker in order to define who is civilized and who is not in 'Australia' and 'South Africa.' Nanni focuses on the othering process produced by discourses of time and time's role as a tool of colonial reform which "relied on forms of temporal and the establishment of a specific language and consciousness of time" (2012). The importance of colonising the time is connected to the colonisation of the space - who controls the time controls the land and vice versa. Therefore, for settlers 'to stay' they need to colonise the time of the inhabitants of the land through constructing a temporal difference between the settlers and the Other.

Given the role of time and its importance as a sign of culture and identity, the colonisation of time is equal to the denial of land inhabitants' identity. Furthermore it is complementary to the actual colonisation of the land, as Nanni explains:

This had more than 'merely' cultural implications. In the light of the central economic imperative of settler colonisation - to assume exclusive control over the land - the very category of indignity carried a heightened significance in terms of its inherent claim to prior ownership. Although framed within the rhetoric of philanthropy, therefore, temporal reform complemented the process of territorial dispossession by helping to erase the cultural footprint of an Indigenous presence in Australia. Not by chance, the temporal patterns of cultural behaviour which had previously defined a sense of Aboriginality were explicitly targeted for interruption, abolishment

and removal (as were kinship ties, languages and children) – as part of the process of disempowering communities and severing the bonds which connected them to their land and to each other. (p.87)

To colonise the land in a temporal dimension means “the enforcement of a collective shift [of the land inhabitants] in the understanding of what constituted the permissible time for each and every activity, including moving through the land” (p.89). The construction of temporal differences according to Nanni is based on “discourse of absence”; terra nullius and terra sine tempore [timeless land] to justify and ‘legalise’ colonisation of the land. Nanni explains that terra nullius and terra sine tempore are interrelated and central themes of settler colonialism (p.3). In the case of ‘Australia’, Nanni argues that the construction of a temporal difference started in the second phase of frontier development (carceration). After the rapid decline of the Aboriginal population owing to the violent confrontation with ‘individual frontiers’, the survivors were moved to six different geographical locations run by the government and missionaries. In those places time was used as a colonial tool to construct “the Aboriginal time,” which:

...was partly by interrupting the cycles of Indigenous and local seasons and calendars, and replacing them with the colonisers’ rituals and routines, along with a new calendar for counting the days, months and years, that heathens were visibly Christianised, and that idle hands were put to productive work. Missionaries, settlers and colonial officials adopted different means, while also pursuing different ends in their attempt to reform the world and its inhabitants. (p.3)

In the case of Australia, ‘reforming’ and colonising land inhabitants’ time was done through disrupting the cycle of local seasons and calendars and imposing settler colonisers’ understanding of how time should be arranged and understood (i.e. replacing with a new calendar). Land inhabitants were represented as ‘time deficient’. This ‘deficiency’ of land inhabitants’ societies in settler colonial Victoria was used as a justification for colonisation. This logic was manifested to its clearest extent in the ‘Australian’ colonies, where representations of nomadic hunter-gatherers within the frameworks of lack and absence constituted the ‘legal’ foundation for British occupation. In this sense, temporal colonisation of settler colonialism is complementary to the elimination logic of settler colonialism (Nanni, 2011, 2012).

The temporal otherness of land inhabitants not only presented them as timeless (and landless), but also as there being “total unawareness of time, which was not only unable to measure time accurately, but was also seemingly confused about the distinctions between the past and the present” (Nanni, 2012, p.16). Such construction entails that the ‘uncivilised’ people’s time needs to be reformed and constructed:

Such apparent errors, so the dominant discourse would have it, marked Aboriginal society out as particularly in need of temporal reform. Teaching the virtues of punctuality, regularity, and dependability became the project of missionary and administrator alike. This experience was not confined to Australia. Wherever European explorers and colonists travelled, they took the same temporal certainties about punctuality and progress. Even today, temporal certainties lead scholars to write about other cultures' lack of concern with exactness in time: Navajo, Arabs, and Latin Americans. (p.16)

Furthermore, on time and settler colonialism, Strakosch and Macoun (2012) argue that settler colonialism functions through temporal technologies to eliminate the political difference between settler colonisers and land inhabitants. The writers explore the temporal and teleological narratives within settler-colonial policy-making in the context of 'Australia', focusing on what "the stories that Australia as a settler society tells about its present and future" (p.40). They found that settler colonialism "does not just take place in time. It constructs narratives of time, in ways that create particular political relationships in the present, and attempts to move itself through time to a certain political future" (p.49).

In sum, land centrality means that settler colonisers need to colonise the actual space and time of the land. To do so, it is important for settler colonisers to cut any connection (spatial, temporal and consciousness) between the land and its inhabitants. This means as Wolfe noticed correctly, that any relation between the land and its inhabitants poses a threat to the settlers' completion of colonisation. I will return to this last point in Chapter Three.

### 2.2.2 End of settler colonialism

Settler colonialism scholarship argues that the end of settler colonialism is not comparable to the end of colonialism. Wolfe concludes from his trace of the frontier development in 'Australia' that settler colonialism ends with the demise of the 'frontier,' which does not mean the individual frontiers leave (they do not). Rather, it means "the geographical completion of the invasion" (Wolfe 1994 p.101). According to Wolfe, settler colonialism is "relatively impervious to regime change" (2006, p.388), when he stated "invasion is a structure not an event," he meant that settler colonialism is endless and does not stop: "[i]t is both as complex social formation and as continuity through time that I term settler colonization a structure rather than an event" (p. 390). In "settler colonial present" (2015) Lorenzo Veracini builds on Wolfe's structural understanding of settler colonialism to maintain that it "never goes away":

Settler colonialism forever proclaims its passing but it never goes away. This is the meaning of Wolfe's insistence on seeing settler colonialism as a "structure". It is not about an unimaginative structuralist approach, an understanding of settler colonialism as "inevitable and transhistorical", or one that obscure "the forms of heterogeneity and incommensurability that trouble simple binary oppositions"; it is the need to recognise a specific social formation's immanence. Thus, settler "invasion", in Wolfe's analysis is not "an event" that can be ascribed to a past and no longer impinges on the present. There is less of a need to state this point, however, and those who embrace settler colonial studies as a paradigm and those who oppose it equally adopt the notion that settler colonialism is unfinished business. (p.9)

Cavanagh (2012) builds on Veracini's and Wolfe's work to stress that settler colonialism is a complex knot of the past and present "which was first tied at the moment of the conquest and has held firm ever since" (p.16). Settler colonialism is an endless past, present and future because of "the fact that the most powerful settler regimes on the planet have never relinquished, nor do they look like relinquishing, their ongoing dominance over indigenous populations" (p.30). In other words, as Veracini put it "[t]here are, after all, two ways out of both: defeat and victory and death and life" (2011a, p.9). Defeat and death in this context are for the inhabitants of the land while victory and life are for the settler colonisers.

In the introduction to the first issues of *Settler Colonial Studies* Veracini writes that, "[w]e know how one works [franchise colonies], at least in theory (the colonial state, for example, is turned into its postcolonial successor), but we do not yet exactly know how the other [post settler colonialism] should appear" (2011a, p.5). Veracini explains that the vocabulary of settler colonialism per se, does not allow us to think of any post settler colonial situation:

'Settler', for a start, underscores permanence, and 'settler' as a term is premised on a fundamental contradiction pitting the uncommitted colonist who will return home (or the greedy absent speculator and his agents) against the bona fide/actual/genuine settler who will stay. While this dyad inevitably obscures indigenous presences, yet alone the need to decolonise, 'pioneer' as a term performs a similar disappearing act: its etymology relates it to the soldiers that open the way for the army (it derives from *paonier*, an Old French term for 'foot soldier'). Thus, as it distinguishes between the newcomers who come first and the newcomers who come at a later stage, 'pioneer' also discursively erases the indigenous peoples who were there aborigine. Moreover, as 'settler' is characterised by permanence and 'indigenous' by fragility, these terms frame an inevitably lopsided relationship that pre-empts the possibility of a genuinely decolonised relationship. Besides, the prospect of reaching a settlement between contending settler and indigenous constituencies inevitably favours the settler element (striving for an indigenment may be another matter). (2011a, p.6)

This conclusion of settler colonialism scholarship faces the “difficulty of telling the end of the settler colonial story” (2011b, p.204). According to Veracini, who has a particular interest in settler colonialism decolonisation in the ‘U.S.A’, ‘Australia’ and ‘Israel,’ is “pessimistic about its feasibility” (2014, p.315). In a more recent work, Veracini (2015) attempts to theorise decolonisation in settler colonies and suggests a symbolic formulation to help thinking of decolonisation in the settler colonial relationship. Veracini argues that the different operation of “viral and bacterial” phenomena can contribute to the understanding of various functionalities of colonialism and settler colonialism:

Both viruses and bacteria are exogenous elements that often dominate their destination locales. However, while viruses need living cells to operate, bacteria may not rely on the organisms they encounter. Similarly, while both colonisers and settler’s colonisers are exogenous elements that move and assert their domination over their destination locales, a colonial system of relationships, unlike settler colonial one, is premised on the presence and subjugation of “Others”. (p.7)

Settler colonialism scholarship claims that it is irrelevant to think of the end of settler colonialism as it happened in franchise colonies. In settler colonies “the settler colonizer moves forward along a story line that can’t be turned back” (2011b, p.209). Veracini says that understanding how settler colonialism operates is not enough; there is a need to conceive how it might end, and this “has proved especially challenging” (2010a, p.108). He explains:

[O]n the one hand, the settler colonial situation is characterised by a settler capacity to control the population economy as a marker of a substantive type of sovereignty [...] on the other hand, this situation is associated with a particular state of mind and a specific narrative form [...]. Under these circumstances, the possibility of ultimately discontinuing/decolonising settler colonial forms remains problematic. (p.12)

In an article on the case of Palestine entitled: ‘The Other Shift: Settler Colonialism, Israel and the Occupation’ (2013) Veracini argues that, theoretically, there is “one crucial distinction between colonialism and settler colonialism as separate formations is that the first aims to perpetuate itself whereas the latter aims to supersede itself” (p.28). He maintains that:

The difference is absolutely critical: while a colonial society is successful only if the separation between colonizer and colonized is retained, a settler colonial project is ultimately successful only when it extinguishes itself—that is, when the settlers cease to be defined as such and become “natives,” and their position becomes normalized. To succeed, a settler project must emancipate itself from external supervision and control, establish local sovereign political and cultural forms, terminate substantive indigenous autonomies, and tame a landscape once perceived as intractably alien. In other words, a

settler colonial project that has successfully run its course is no longer settler colonial. (p.26)

What Veracini is trying to conceptualise and rationalise is that decolonisation in other contexts is irrelevant and impossible. There is no “middle passage” for settler colonialism (2010a, 2011b). Veracini maintains that there is a “structural reason why the two should be different.” Decolonisation in exploitation colonies “ruptures the colonial cycle” while in settler colonies:

On the contrary and logically whereas settler colonialism is designed to produce a fundamental discontinuity as its ‘logic of elimination’ runs its course until it actually extinguishes the settler colonial relation, the struggle against settler colonialism must aim to keep the settler-indigenous relationship ongoing. [...] In other words, if colonialism ends with the coloniser’s departure [...] settler colonialism ends with an indigenous ultimate permanence [self-determination].<sup>31</sup> There must be distinct ways out of structurally dissimilar situations. (2011a, p.7)

Furthermore, Veracini argues that the decolonisation of the 19<sup>th</sup> century settler colonies confirms his conclusion that ‘winners take all’ and that “settler colonialism still tells a story of either total victory or total failure” (2011b, p.215). Veracini explains:

[W]here decolonisation takes the form of a settler collective exodus, as happened in Algeria, Libya, Kenya, Angola, Mozambique, North and South Rhodesia/Zimbabwe, South West Africa/Namibia, and more recently, in the Gaza Strip (evacuation of Israeli settlers, but not yet of colonial control), the decolonisation of territory is not matched, even symbolically, by an attempt to build decolonised relationships. Indeed, in these cases, settler departure conceptually mirrors and reinforces settler colonialism’s inherent exclusivism, and confirms a “winner takes all” settler colonial frame of mind that demands that settler sovereignties entirely replace indigenous ones (or vice versa). By denying the very possibility of a relation between coloniser and colonised after the discontinuation of a settler colonial regime, settler departure thus produces a circumstance where decolonisation cannot be construed as a relationship between formally (yet not substantively) equal subjects. (2010a, p.106)

Building on this ‘rational’ and ‘logical’ conclusion, Veracini offers solutions to deal with this “impasse” and proposes a new understanding of decolonisation in settler colonial contexts. Veracini writes, “As Patrick Wolfe has concluded, settler colonialism has remained ‘impervious to regime change’. A new language and imagination are needed; we must become able to represent the decolonisation of settler colonial forms. Imagination are needed; we must become able to represent the decolonisation of settler colonial forms” (p.5). Such new language should according to Veracini not understand decolonisation in settler colonialism as it happened in non-settler colonies:

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<sup>31</sup> This is debated by various scholars as another settler colonial tool, as I will further discuss in the third section titled: A settler colonial turn or return?



[T]o start from what the decolonisation of settler colonial forms is not: decolonisation as it is normally understood [as in franchise colonies]. Independence ostensibly proclaims that the polity is no longer exogenously ruled, emancipation ostensibly proclaims that the person is no longer exogenously owned or otherwise impaired. But under settler colonial conditions the independent polity is the settler polity and sanctioning the equal rights of indigenous peoples has historically been used as a powerful weapon in the denial of indigenous entitlement and in the enactment of various forms of coercive assimilation. This decolonisation actually enhances the subjection of indigenous peoples under settler colonialism. It is at best irrelevant and at worst detrimental to indigenous peoples in settler societies. (p.6)

Settler colonialism as the above literature suggests is a past, present and future. In short, there is no hope for decolonisation in settler colonies. Settler colonialism scholarship over emphasises the difference between colonialism and settler colonialism and maintains that the latter never ends.

So far, I have presented the story of settler colonialism as it appears by tracing the path of 'individual frontiers' in 'Australia'. I highlighted the centrality and the ever presence of the 'frontier' and 'the logic of elimination' for the 'individual frontier' who 'comes to stay'. According to Wolfe, this stay necessitates the elimination of land inhabitants but "not in a particular way"(Wolfe, 2006, p.402). Wolfe tells us "settler colonialism always needs more land" (2006, p.395) and unlike other European colonies, settler colonisers need to control the land, not its inhabitants. The main idea behind the 'frontier' and 'the logic of elimination' is to control the land. Unlike other forms of European colonialism, "[t]he primary object of settler-colonization is the land itself rather than the surplus value to be derived from mixing native labour with it" (1999, p.163). Wolfe maintains that 'the logic of elimination' is the main organising principle of this project; "[t]he logic of this project, a sustained institutional tendency to eliminate the Indigenous population, informs a range of historical practices that might otherwise appear distinct – invasion is a structure not an event"(p.163).

In the following section, I focus on settler colonialism scholarship and critically engage with its assumptions in the study of Palestine. I critically review the foundational assumptions of how this literature has influenced the image of Palestine and Palestinians in the Eurocentric mirror of settler colonial studies. I approach the literature with the following questions: what is Palestine, who are Palestinians and how are they portrayed in this framework? What is 'Israel' and how is it seen in this scholarship? What are the comparable and incomparable models in studying Palestine? How is decolonization imaginable and unimaginable in Palestine?

### 2.3 Under 'the logic of elimination' eyes: settler colonialism scholarship and Palestine

As I said before, settler colonialism scholarship draws an analogy between settler colonialism in Palestine and other settler colonial projects such as 'U.S.A', 'Australia', 'South Africa' and 'French Algeria'. It situates 'Israel' as an ethnically exclusive settler colonial project that was part of European colonial expansion in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and it aims to follow the steps of the earlier European individual frontiers of the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries. At the ideological level Zionism, as Wolfe correctly writes, "was organic to the nineteenth century, a European secular-colonial-nationalist movement" (2012, p.140), which intended "transferring Palestinian land into exclusively and irreversibly Jewish ownership" (p.154). 'Israel' in this literature is "the only case of successful settler nation building" of the 20<sup>th</sup> century settler projects such as Algeria and 'South Africa' (Elkins and Pedersen 2005 p.3).<sup>32</sup>

Through the optic of 'the logic of elimination' and 'structure not an event', settler colonialism scholarship reads the past and present of Palestine as a continuous slow-motion Nakba. The structural reading of settler colonialism in the case of Palestine means that Nakba never ended, it happens every day, everywhere, and could be accelerated at any time, as happened in 1948. A review of settler colonialism scholarship in particular the writings of Wolfe and Veracini shows that in spite of the similarities and differences between the settler colonial project in Palestine and earlier examples, this literature emphasises two conceptual and historical 'facts'. First, the exclusiveness of the logic of elimination (2.2.1) and the impossibility of decolonisation (2.2.2.) in Palestine. Based on these two assumptions, this literature proposes solutions to the dilemma in what they call 'conflict' in the 'Middle East' (2.2.3).

#### 2.3.1 Exclusive logic of elimination

In Wolfe's (2012) most-cited article by scholars who study settler colonialism in Palestine, 'Purchase by other means: the Palestinian Nakba and Zionism's conquest of economics', he shows that in spite of the distinctions between the "techniques of dispossessions" in both 'Australia' and 'Israel,' "the eliminatory outcome has been

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<sup>32</sup> Elkins and Pedersen build on Wolfe's conceptualisation of the logic of elimination and draw a comparison between the old and new settler colonial projects. They argue that while "new world states were born of dual defeat - the defeat of the indigenous populations and the defeat (or weakening) of the imperial metropolises that held settlers in dependence - twentieth-century settler colonies did not follow this trajectory." In the case of the 20<sup>th</sup> century settler colonies, they failed (except 'Israel') because of two differences (with older settler colonies), demography and the settler's relation with the metropole. The 20<sup>th</sup> century settler colonies "had to content with increasingly opinion-sensitive metropolises, and indigenous majorities that could neither be decisively defeated nor be made to go away" (2005, p.4).

consistent" (p.135).<sup>33</sup> Wolfe focuses on the singular event of Nakba in an analytical mission "to map the particular histories that sustain settler colonialism in any given locale, distinguishing the contingent from the systematic as well as the autochthonous from the transnational" (p.135). Wolfe perceives Nakba as a historical watershed and understands his role as a historian to reveal the historical preconditions started prior to the foundation of the frontier that "equipped the invaders for settlement before they first set foot in the Native country" and made Nakba happen (p.137). Wolfe engages mainly with 'Israeli' scholars and literature, and employs his concept of "settler preaccumulation", a "metropolitan inheritance" to reveal the economic, technological and military preaccumulation, which was "mainly done through a strategic combination of metropolitan funding".<sup>34</sup> Wolfe writes in great detail about the "preaccumulation" of the Zionist settler colonial project during the Ottoman Empire and the British mandate in Palestine, focusing on land purchase and the "transnational network that placed and maintained Jewish settlers in Palestine" (p.136). As Wolfe argues, in spite of the similarities between 'Israel' and Australia, the Zionist preaccumulation was different in two respects, namely "the lack of a unitary metropole and the policy of purchase [of land]" and most importantly there was no refund required from the donors of the Zionist project in Palestine. As Wolfe explains, "[c]ombining their unconditional funding with the ethnically exclusive strategy known as the Conquest of Labour, Zionists built up a contiguous zone of Jewish-only land on which to fashion their ethnocratic state-in-waiting in Mandate Palestine" (Wolfe 2012 p. 133). Wolfe concludes that what happened in 1948 was a "consolidation rather than a point of origin, [It] simply accelerated, very radically, the slow-motion means to those ends that had been the only means available to Zionists while they were still building their colonial state" (p.159).

Wolfe begins his paper, with the idea that Zionism is not exceptional (in comparison with earlier settler colonial projects) yet it "constitutes a more exclusive exercise of the settler logic of elimination than we encounter in the Australian and US examples" (p.137). This is particularly so because, in the annals of settler colonialism, Zionism presents "an unparalleled example of deliberate, and explicit, planning. [...] No campaign of territorial dispossession was ever waged more thoughtfully" (p.137). According to Wolfe, Zionism has a "uniquely developed programme of Indigenous dispossession" (p.136). The settler colonial project in Palestine "combined elements

<sup>33</sup> Published by Settler Colonial Studies Journal in the first special issue on Palestine (2012)

<sup>34</sup> He engages mainly with Gershon Shafir's (1996) thesis on the conquest of labour and conquest of land 'Land, Labor and the Origins of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict, 1882-1914' which is a study that focused on the economic aspect of the settler project in Palestine and overlooked its ideological dimension.

that had converged more haphazardly in other disposessions” (p.137). Wolfe exemplifies that what happened in Nakba “dwarfs” the events of “the late-1830s seizure of Australia’s Port Phillip grasslands or the postbellum invasion of the US Plains” (p.132). Furthermore, Wolfe epitomises that Ahl Al-Ard in Palestine do not have the ‘assimilation privilege’ similar to their counterparts in the ‘new world.’ Wolfe writes that “[i]n stark contrast to the Australian or United States models, for instance, Zionism rigorously refused, as it continues to refuse, any suggestion of Native assimilation” (p.136). Settler colonisers in Palestine are not interested in converting Palestinians to Judaism as their counterparts did in the ‘U.S.A’ and ‘Australia.’ The exclusiveness of the settler project in Palestine, according to Wolfe, comes also from the nature of ‘Israel’s’ frontier, which is a combination of European on one side and ‘U.S.A’ and ‘Australia’ frontiers on the other. This feature makes the removal of Ahl Al-Ard as the only available option, Wolfe explains:

Israel’s borders partake of both qualities [European and U.S.A frontiers]. Despite Zionism’s chronic addiction to territorial expansion, Israel’s borders do not preclude the option of removal. [...] As the logic of elimination has taken on a variety of forms in other settler-colonial situations, so, in Israel, the continuing tendency to Palestinian expulsion has not been limited to the unelaborated exercise of force. As Baruch Kimmerling and Joel Migdal have observed, for instance, Israeli officials have only permitted family unions [of Palestinians] in one direction—out of Israel. (2006, p.401)

Another important difference between the case of ‘Israel’ and ‘Australia’ that confirms ‘Israel’s’ exclusiveness according to Wolfe is ideological and related to renaming. Wolfe points to this in another paper where he further develops ‘the logic of elimination’, observing that, unlike in ‘Australia,’ renaming “Hebrew place-names [...] back to their Arabic counterparts is almost unimaginable.” Wolfe exemplifies; “[o]ne cannot imagine the Al-Quds/Jerusalem suburb of Kfar Sha’ul being renamed Deir Yasin” (p.389). In ‘Australia,’ this is not the case, as “the erasure of indigeneity conflicts with the assertion of settler nationalism” (p.389). In other words, there are no places for Palestinians on their land because the Zionist settler colonial project is ‘irreversible’ exclusive Jewish project (Wolfe, 2006, 2007b, 2012).

This ‘exclusive logic of elimination,’ according to Wolfe, highlights the importance of studying the case of Zionism. Analytically, it gives us the prospect “to explore settler colonialism’s strategic versatility” (2012, p.135). This makes ‘Israel’ the best place to examine ‘the logic of elimination’ since it allows us to see “some general features of settler colonialism with enhanced clarity” (p.137). At the methodological level, this distinctiveness “makes Zionism a particularly revealing archive for research into the

logic of settler colonialism” (p.137). Such analysis of the importance of the case of settler colonialism in Palestine inspired scholars to focus their analysis on “Zionism’s structural continuities and the ideology that informs Israeli policies and practices in Israel and toward Palestinians everywhere” (Salamanca et al., 2012, p.2). As Salamanca and colleagues continue, “while Israel’s tactics have often been described as settler colonial, the settler colonial structure underpinning them must be a central object of analysis” (p.2). Indeed, the majority of settler colonialism scholarship on Palestine focused on the Zionist logic of elimination as a central analytical object asks questions related to its structure and investigates the ever-presence and manifestations of this ‘logic’ in every single aspect of Palestinians’ life in private and public spaces (Hanafi, 2009; Jabary Salamanca, 2011; Lloyd, 2012; Makdisi, 2010; Salamanca, Graham, & McFarlane, 2015; Shalhoub-Kevorkian, 2016; Shihade, 2014).

### 2.3.2 The impossible decolonization

Alongside the emphasis on the exclusive logic of elimination in Palestine, this literature stresses another related assumption, which is the unfeasibility of decolonization in Palestine. The decolonisation dilemma discussed in the previous pages (subsection 2.1.2) appears even more cynical when examined in the case of Palestine. In ‘Settler colonialism: A theoretical review’ (2010a) Veracini discusses Albert Camus’ theory of Absurdism and draws on a comparison between ‘Israel’ and ‘U.S.A’ to offer a solution to what he calls the ‘conflict in the middle east’ and explains the difficulty of decolonisation in both contexts. Veracini writes “Albert Camus, who knew how to tell a story and knew about settler colonialism, tried [but failed]. For Camus, the end of the settler colonial story is indeed the end of everything” (p.103-104). This argument is further developed by Veracini in several studies where he compares ‘Israel’ with other colonial projects such as ‘U.S.A’, ‘Australia’, ‘French Algeria’ and others. Veracini’s main conclusion is that ‘Israel’ is not French Algeria or Zimbabwe and it is most likely similar to ‘U.S.A’ and ‘Australia.’ In a comparison of decolonisation possibilities between ‘Australia’ and ‘Israel’ on the one side and Zimbabwe on the other, Veracini concludes that “Australia and Israel remain exceptional among settler societies in their inability to develop any genuinely postcolonial framework of institutional action” (2003, p.344). Veracini studies the reasons of the failure of the treaties and peace process in the two settler colonies and finds that it failed because “returning the land remains taboo” for these two settler colonies (p.340).

A comparative analysis supports the notion that the postcolonial passage is particularly difficult in a context where unresolved issues are still active and where a conspiracy of silence on the ‘founding

violence' remains hegemonic in significant sectors of the public opinion. The very nature of these discussions suggests that 'colonial' projects are still operating. While this is obviously true in a context in which new Jewish settlements are constantly projected and militarily enforced, in the Australian case the idea of assimilation [...] is also still present in administrative and political practices. While a final settlement is not possible without a strong political commitment, this is not likely to occur as long as public perceptions are strongly opposed to accepting the idea that the original settlement of European settlers entailed Indigenous dispossession and negation of Indigenous sovereignty. It is not a coincidence that both 'Mabo' and 'Oslo' failed irrevocably at the very moment of acknowledging Aboriginal sovereignty / Palestinian statehood. (2003, p.344)

A review of this literature shows that the focus on 'the exclusive logic of elimination', and the taken for granted impossible decolonisation in Palestine is an enhancement of the elimination story itself. The focus on 'the logic of elimination' in the case of Palestine portrayed a faceless Palestine and Palestinians. Palestinians in this literature are cast into the role of victims, powerless, faceless and defeated 'unpeople'. In the first special issue of the Settler Colonial Studies Journal on Palestine, David Lloyd (2012) writes: "[w]henver one thinks of Palestine, one is thus faced immediately with the paradox of the 'present absentee', of the one whose identity is shadowed by non-identity, in the peculiar after-life or afterglow of the disappeared" (p.61). Palestinians in this literature are "subject both to management and gradual elimination" (p.67). Palestinians, as Shalhoub-Kevorkian (2015b) writes in a study on the politics of fear and settler colonialism in Palestine, are "bound to their context and to global political powers by the manufacture of fear of Others who are situated in zones of nonexistence" (p.14). Palestinians in this literature are not only expelled from their land they are also, as Veracini (2003) writes, "erased from the historical record" (p.331). Palestinians in this literature are Agambin's homo-sacer and Foucault's subjected bodies. Palestinians are still stuck in the frontier stage and are "subject to policies of removal and confinement that recall those adopted by other settler states while the expansion of their frontiers remained incomplete" (Lloyd & Wolfe, 2015, p.3). This situation makes Palestinians "guinea pigs" living in a massive laboratory for "the logic of permanent war" (J. Collins, 2011a, p.173). As Collins explains, "[f]ar from being simply shaped by processes of globalization, Palestine has served as a laboratory for many of these processes [ongoing structures of colonization, militarization, and social acceleration], a kind of monadic unit that contains clues to a series of global truths in the way that a cell contains the genetic coding of an entire body" (p.169).

Next to the faceless and defeated image of Palestinians, Palestine itself is also ambiguous and it is something that cannot be imagined without that which negates it: 'Israel'. In the same article by Lloyd, he wonders why one cannot imagine Palestine

without 'Israel' and writes: "I was trying to think Palestine, Palestine for itself, 'itself alone', as the Irish say. But instead, I found myself thinking, and writing, 'Palestine/Israel', as if Palestine cannot be thought of and by itself" (p.59). The difficulty of imagining Palestine as Palestine is clear. Lloyd insists after few pages: "it is impossible to think Palestine without thinking it in relation to that which covers it, displaces it, namely, Israel and Zionism" (p.61).

Palestine in this literature is represented as fragmented and haunted geographies and spaces of death (Busbridge, 2015). It is isolated "reservations" in the Gaza Strip and "Bantustans" in the West Bank (Wolfe, 2006, p.404). Furthermore, Palestine is different things in this literature; it could be 'Israel/Palestine', 'Palestine/Israel'<sup>35</sup>, West Bank Gaza Strip and East Jerusalem', or 'occupied territories', among others. Furthermore, in spite of this literature's emphasis on it being a settler colonial situation, nevertheless many scholars when writing about Palestine refer to it as a 'conflict' or 'dispute'.

In sum this literature emphasises the exclusiveness of the logic of elimination in Palestine and the impossibility of decolonisation. Furthermore, this literature emphasises an analogy between older settler colonies such as 'U.S.A' and 'Australia' on one side, and 'Israel' on the other. Based on these foundational assumptions, this literature presents solutions to what they call the 'conflict' in 'Israel/Palestine'. The following is the last subsection on settler colonialism scholarship on Palestine. I present and discuss what settler colonialism scholarship can offer the study of Palestine, with which I will critically engage in the third section.

### 2.3.3 What settler colonial studies offer the study of Palestine

In spite of the dark picture of settler colonialism as demonstrated and analysed in the first section, and the challenges this literature faces to tell the end story of settler colonialism, this literature claims that it might have the answers to what could help to end settler colonialism in Palestine. This renewed conceptualisation of the situation in Palestine, as settler colonial, and never ending Nakba that could be accelerated at any time, is welcomed by several scholars and activists from different disciplines and

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<sup>35</sup> Which comes first ('Israel' or Palestine) also reveals something about this literature. In 'Israel settler society' Veracini writes 'Israel/Palestine' and adds a footnote explaining that he is following an alphabetical order, even though he does not follow the same order in the third chapter 'The Trouble of Decolonization' when he compares "Israel/Palestine" and "France/Algeria". Also in his introduction Veracini writes about his motivation to write his book saying: "Approaching the Israeli-Palestinian dispute and its dynamics without an informed perception of its colonial character can be frustrating. To read, for example, a football game one needs to refer to its code(s); that is how I ended up writing this book. Besides, in an era of pre-emptive surgical strikes, it is perhaps wise to suggest the homeopathic principle that *similia similibus*, that is, that similarity and comparisons are one way to cure." (Veracini, 2006, p.13)

geographies including Palestinians and 'Israelis' who are enthusiastic about the applicability of settler colonialism to the study of Palestine. They call for reclaiming the settler colonialism framework to better read the past and present, and most importantly to offer solutions for the future of Palestine and Palestinians (Busbridge, 2017; J. Collins, 2011b; Pappe, 2012, 2014; Rohana, 2014; Salamanca et al., 2012; Veracini, 2015b).

Scholars who quote Wolfe and Veracini in the study of Palestine argue that the settler colonialism framework would allow us to "get the tense right" (Veracini, 2015b, p.268) in order to challenge 'Israel's' claims of democracy or exceptionalism, and would offer a cohesive basis for Palestinians to articulate a liberation agenda and a "brave national project" (Rohana, 2014, p.24). In addition, they claim that this framework would confirm the "fact" that Palestinians are "indigenous" and it does not only "provide international audiences a far more readable and cohesive frame with which to understand the conflict, but it comes with a built-in solidarity" (Salamanca et al., 2012, p.4). Furthermore, it can present political solutions and "promises to rejuvenate the Palestinian struggle under the prescriptive banner of decolonization, opening up new debates and alternatives outside of an evidently failing two-state paradigm" (Busbridge, 2017, p.21).

At a conference at the University of Exeter Veracini presented at least four points on what settler colonialism can offer Palestine.<sup>36</sup> First, it allows us to "get the tense right" and understand the context, because "paradigms inform perceptions" (p.268). Veracini elaborates and reminds us of the victory of 'Israel' and defeat of Palestinians, asserting:

What is in front of us is not a conflict situation, is actually a postconflict (postconflicts are rarely peaceful). The conflict for Greater Palestine was resolved in 1948 and sealed in 1967. Like settlers elsewhere, Zionists came to stay, and like the descendants of settlers in other settler societies, they won decisively. This is why Israel no longer wins conflicts the decisive way it used to: as winning can be defined as no longer needing to win, it is inevitably facing diminishing returns. The current predicament is the result of a victory that has already been attained, and, conversely, a defeat that has already been suffered. (p.268)

Second, it is useful to find answers for the incompleteness of the settler project in Palestine by looking "beyond the confrontation opposing Israelis and Palestinians. Detailing the opposition [...] Settler colonial studies can explain why [...] the Zionist

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<sup>36</sup> Conference on Settler Colonialism in Palestine and the Workshop on the Naqab Bedouin, held at the University of Exeter, 2-4 October 2015. Veracini lecture was later published in the third special issue of *Settler Colonial Studies Journal on Palestine* (2015).



settler colonial project is ultimately unable to complete the settler colonial conquest of Palestine and become like the other settler societies” (p.268-269). Third, settler colonialism scholarship, according to Veracini, allows us to understand that Zionism (which he sees as a response to anti-Semitism)<sup>37</sup> is about settlement, “[t]hus, settlement was not a means to an end, and Zionism was not primarily about the state. It was primarily about settlement. In the context of a prefigurative practice it was the end. Settler colonial studies can help decentre the state from the analysis of the conflict” (p.269). Finally, it can explain Zionist claims about indigeneity; “[t]hese are fraught claims, and all settlers claim to be ‘indigenous’” (p.270). Veracini explains:

One cannot celebrate the movement to the land and understand oneself as having always been there. This is not about being anti-Semitic or unreasonable. This is about following the logic that is inherent to the specific stories that define a particular settler sociopolitical collective (even in its non-religious versions Zionism, like all settler colonialisms, has a Promised Land and sees itself re-enacting a Biblical story). Zionists are not indigenous; they entertain an historical, that is, a non-ontological relationship to the land. It is a meaningful relationship, but is not that of an indigenous collective. (p.270)

Given that Zionist settlers are not indigenous, and in spite of the “indigenising” process, they cannot go native. “Being the subject of indigenising processes is not the same as being indigenous, and one type of being rules the other out; this is why settlers can never become ‘natives’”. Therefore, “the question then is how to be efficient self-indigenisers?” The answer that Veracini proposes in response to the settlers’ concern is to change the “foundational stories”, “as new stories must be told, some stories should be let go of” (p.270). More solutions were also proposed in the special issues of ‘Collaborative struggles in Australia and Israel’.<sup>38</sup> Three ‘Israeli’ and one Palestinian scholar contributed to the issue (Azoulay, 2014; Barghouti, 2014; Pappe, 2014; Svirsky, 2014). Omar Al Barghouti employed human rights and international law vocabulary to invite the “conscientious Israelis” to be “partners in the struggle” and support Palestinians’ self-determination, freedom, justice and peace (2014). Marcelo Svirsky calls for “collaborative struggle” and engages with ‘Israel’ scholars and literature to focus on what he calls “collaborative alliances, of shared life between Palestinian and Jews forged in Ottoman times, maintained during the British Mandate, and, importantly, sustained even during the very days of the ethnic cleansing of the Palestinians in 1948” (2014, p.345). Svirsky suggests a “conceptualisation of anti-settlerist alliances oriented to de-emphasise the role of belonging and identity in favour

<sup>37</sup> This is inaccurate as I explained in Chapter Two, the idea of Zionism existed in Europe centuries before the birth of Herzl. .

<sup>38</sup> Co-edited by the ‘Israeli’ scholar Marcelo Svirsky and Lorenzo Veracini

of a perspective that focus on relations and their productions” (p.436). While Ariella Azoulay, the only cited writer by Svirsky in his reference to what he called “collaborative alliances”, presented a paper as part of a film she directed on what she calls the “shared life” of 25 Arabs and Jews. The writer builds on material from the Zionist archive depicting the moment of “many Jewish and Arab communities who cared for their country intensified the negotiations between themselves and initiated urgent encounters” (2014). Finally, Pappe, who believes that this framework is the best academia has offered so far,<sup>39</sup> asks, “how far, is the distance one is willing to travel out of one’s ethnic, ideological or national comfort zone in order to create a joint space and how much time is one willing to stay inside this space?” Pappe tries to offer an explanation of the settler colonialism dilemma in Palestine by tracing what he calls the “collaborative [Jewish and Arab] resistance in Palestine” of the Communist Party before 1948 and other attempts after 1948. In so doing he conceptualises “this type of resistance in terms of ‘thirdspaces’ and problematizes the history of the creation and sharing of these spaces by Palestinians and Jews” (2014, p.396). Pappe concludes that “these endeavours cannot succeed without an Israeli acknowledgment that Zionism is a settler colonialist movement still busy these days in trying and complete the dispossession of Palestine” (p.396).

Also inspired by Wolfe and Veracini, Nadim Rohana published an article in Arabic in the Journal of Palestine Studies where he called for the urgent reclaiming of settler colonialism framework to articulate a national project based on this framework. Rohana calls Palestinians to be ‘rational’ and ‘pragmatic’ in dealing with the Zionist settler colonialism in Palestine. Rohana’s main thesis in this paper is that “Palestine is not Algeria” and based on this given ‘truth’ he invites us to articulate a national agenda. Rohana of course makes use of Wolfe’s theorisation of settler colonialism and study of ‘Israel’ to confirm that “there is no other option” (2014, p.26) for Palestinians and they have to accept the presence of ‘Israel’ and the impossibility of decolonisation.

If one were to accept the story of settler colonialism as narrated in this literature and to accept the defeated Palestinians and impossible decolonisation conclusions, one would find these proposals suitable. If not, then these offers crumble. My concern with the above offers is that it is mainly concerned about ‘Israel’ concerns and questions as well as misreading the case of settler colonialism in Palestine. The starting points for settler colonialism scholarship in the study of Palestine resulted in the narrative of defeated Palestinians and mighty ‘Israel’. As I said before, there are many reasons for

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<sup>39</sup> In a workshop on Zionism and settler colonialism organised by Mada Al Carmel Research Centre 2016

questioning not only the relevance of this literature but also the risks of the taken for granted assumptions of this literature and accepting our image as it appears in settler colonialism scholarship. These offers or solutions are irrelevant, and incapable to analyse or recognise Ahl Al-Ard significant resistance and the settler colonial project ruptures and contradictions in Palestine. Those offers are premised on misreading of the self and the other and they dehumanise both the settlers and the inhabitants of the land. To further elaborate on the risks and limitations of such offers, in the following section, I make use of critical accounts of settler colonialism scholarship and engage with settler colonial studies in the study of Palestine.

#### 2.4 A 'settler colonial turn' or return?

This critical turn has made an impact such as maintaining that colonialism in a context such as 'Australia' is never in the past. The 'logic of elimination' thesis, as Macoun and Strakosch argue, is a counter argument to the "temporal political narratives [that] emphasizes the partisan nature of settler institutions" (2013, p.428) and challenges equally the conventional "progressive-conservative distinction in settler policy-making" in 'Australia' (p.429). This literature contests the settler state's "claims to neutrality" (p.431) and shows that "settler colonial investments operate at the level of the state, society and the individual self" (p.431). This understanding of settler colonialism, according to Macoun and Strakosch, allows them, as settler scholars, to understand their "discomforting position" (p.429) and role within settler colonial structure and would focus more attention on the settler colonial face of "a range of important (but often obscured) political investments that connect settler institutions, knowledges, emotions and selves" (p.431). Both critical and non-critical accounts of this framework have enriched several fields, disciplines and discussions on issues related to the temporalities and spatialities of settler colonialism, and the relation between settler colonialism and issues related to patriarchy, anti-Blackness, bio-power and "deployment of Indianness" (Snelgrove et al., 2014, p.8).

However, settler colonialism scholarship as Joanne Barker writes "isn't exactly right". In her critical account of Wolfe, Veracini and Cavanagh and others, Barker starts with etymologies of 'settle' (comes to rest) which establishes "permanent residence", and 'settler colonialism,' which forestalls the "reconciling" of genocide and dispossession histories within the present nation-state's structure and social formation. Baker adds that settler colonialism scholarship perceived the nation-state "as having moved beyond its own tragically imperial and colonial history to be something else, albeit still colonial, but not quite entirely colonial because it is "reconciled" and "consistent" (Barker, 2011). Snelgrove and colleagues complement Barker and argue that settler

colonialism scholarship's concepts (settler, settler colonialism and solidarity) are ahistorical, decontextualized and play a role in the enduring of "colonial power by failing to attend to its conditions and contingency" (2014, p.26). This failure "has fostered over-characterisation of binary positions. [...] this binary, at times, has the effect of treating settler colonialism as meta-structure, thus erasing both its contingency and the dynamics that constitute racist, patriarchal, homonationalist, ablest and capitalist settler colonialism" (p.9).

Macoun and Strakosch (2013; 2012) also argue that the emphasis on the inevitability of the elimination structure in settler colonial scholarship would "foreclose more productive debates about how settler and Indigenous people might live together differently across time" (2012, p.42). The emphasis on the "unidirectional" and "progressive temporality," as Strakosch and Macoun argue, "is not just an analytical mistake, but a 'technology of temporality'" (p.51). In the Australian context, the writers examine how Australian academics debated the Northern Territory (NT) intervention and conclude that the emphasis on the "present tense" in this scholarship "can depict colonization as structurally inevitable, and can be deployed in ways that re-inscribe settler colonialism" (2013, p.435). They explain:

...emphasizing continuities in colonial relationships between the past and the present can tend to construct existing political relationships as inevitable and unchanging. When deployed with a neutral descriptive authority, SCT [Settler Colonial Theory] can also re-inscribe settler academics' political authority and re-enact the foundational settler fantasy that we constitute, comprehend and control the whole political space of our relationships with Indigenous people. (p.427)

Tim Rowse also argues that Wolfe and Veracini's theorisation of settler colonialism or what he refers to as the 'eliminationist paradigm', has influenced the growth of 'erasure' and 'elimination' historiography, reduced sensitivity to Indigenous heterogeneity and ignored their agency. The 'eliminationist paradigm' necessitates that settler colonies are irreversible and settler colonialism cannot be de-colonised. This conclusion means the role of social and historical analysis is "to infer the underlying logic of settler colonisation, and to demonstrate that the most significant feature of any instance of settler colonial authority is its conformity to this underlying logic" (p.298). This means mapping "[t]he continuities, discontinuities, adjustments, and departures whereby a logic that initially informed frontier killing transmutes into different modalities, discourses and institutional formations as it undergirds the historical development and complexification of settler society" (p.298). Rowse asserts: "if there is a plot in the historiography of elimination, it is that the structure of settler colonialism has always

already triumphed” (p.302). The historiography of settler colonialism as presented by the eliminationist paradigm is a “historiography of continuity, of repetition, of demonstrating persistent patterns beneath the surface of apparent discontinuities” (p.298).

This literature, as Rowse (2014) notes, is “homogenising, psychologising and dehistoricising” settler colonialism through “attaching its analytical ambition to establishing the teleological sameness of all narratives of colonisation” (p.310). Such an approach, as Rowse argues in the Australian context, “not only dampens historical curiosity about distinctions of period, place and agent, it also renders uninteresting an arresting feature of the recent empowerment of Indigenous Australians: the diversity of their remembered pasts and projected futures” (p.310). In Rowse’s account of settler colonialism he states three main concerns related to the influence of the ‘eliminationist paradigm’. First, Rowse asks: “can it [settler colonialism paradigm] account for itself? If the settler colonial narrative is so pervasive, how can we be sure that our self-consciously critical historiography is not just another one of its tactics?” (2014, p.300) Second, ‘the logic of elimination’ is unqualified to recognise or deal with land inhabitants’ agency and difference. Such ‘eliminationist’ theorisation misreads agency as ‘state-conceded’ and resistance in this literature is beyond “empirical specification”:

For practitioners of the eliminationist paradigm, the inscription of ‘Indigenous agency’ is something to be left to others; for the practitioners of the eliminationist paradigm any such characterisation is always already known to be yet another manifestation of elimination’s inexorable logic. Honouring Indigeneity as ineradicable ‘difference’ tends to be a gesture made at the end of a description of the settler colonial edifice. The tendency of this paradigm is to render Indigenous agency either as ‘state-conceded’ or as an empty, counterfactual narrative space, mentioned out of political piety. The resistant Indigenous subject is beyond empirical specification, an unrepresented and unrepresentable thing that is always already external to the exhaustive discursive work of the settler colonial imagination. (p.300)

Rowse’s third point is related to understanding settler colonial collective agency as “tactical, shape-shifting, never absent, but variously manifest.” Rowse notes that there are two different forms of settler colonial agency as it appears in the eliminationist paradigm:

On the one hand, one evokes its adaptive fluidity, as the structure of settler colonial society somehow finds and invents the agents that perform the myriad tasks of elimination, erasure and repressive recognition; the settler colonial structure is always tactically resourceful in the agencies of its deployment. On the other hand, settler colonial agency is evoked as a collective agent, an enduring

national psyche that is anxious, divided, ambivalent, troubled by unresolvable tensions within its project. The attribution of affect to the settler colonial mentality or archive preserves the idea of a singular collective settler agency, as if settler colonies were persons. (Rowse, 2014)

Vimalassery and colleagues (2016) also present a critical account of settler colonialism scholarship and examine it as an example of colonial unknowing. They explain that “settler colonialism as a discrete analytic and academic field formation is potentially itself a manner of colonial unknowing. Specifically, [...] the ways in which the generative work of Patrick Wolfe has been taken up reductively.” Vimalassery and colleagues conclude that “settler colonialism [is] constitutively entangled with broader imperial formations” (p.1). Settler Colonial Studies does not acknowledge or engage with the histories and contemporary relations of colonialism, in particular in relation to “Indigenous peoples and colonial entanglements of differential racialization.” This, according to the writers,

[I]s not simply a matter of collective amnesia or omission. The magnitude of this disavowal is not primarily a matter of a forgotten or hidden past, at least to the extent that forgetting might be viewed as a passive relation or a concealed past might suspend culpability. Instead, this ignorance—this act of ignoring—is aggressively made and reproduced, affectively invested and effectively distributed in ways that conform the social relations and economies of the here and now. Colonial unknowing endeavors to render unintelligible the entanglements of racialization and colonization, occluding the mutable historicity of colonial structures and attributing finality to events of conquest and dispossession. (p.1)

In addition to the above critical accounts, this literature as it appeared in the story of the frontier (section 2.1.), narrates the settler colonialism story as seen through the eyes of the settler colonisers (frontier) and focuses on the centrality of the land for the settler colonial project. The voice and the story of the land inhabitants about settler colonialism are missed in this literature, as well as, overlooking land centrality and significance for its inhabitants. However, in spite of the deterministic accounts found in this literature, it shaped and influenced the recent ‘settler colonial turn’ in the study of Palestine. The rise in the number of publications and the international conferences where Wolfe and Veracini came to discuss the case of settler colonialism in Palestine attest to this end. Thus, the point of departure from the settler colonialism literature is the starting point of my thesis, that is, it is crucial to be aware of “the roles that knowledge, knowledge production, knowledge hierarchies and knowledge institutions play in decolonization and social transformation” (Smith, 1999p.xii). Equally, to be aware of the colonial role of knowledge, one needs to be sensible and sensitive to the

potential risks and implications of the hegemony of the elimination narrative and the exclusive focus on 'the logic of elimination' to read our past, present and future.

The above critical voices are not so present in the study of settler colonialism in Palestine. The majority of scholars who quote Wolfe and Veracini in their study of Palestine are uncritical of 'the logic of elimination' or the differences between their case studies where they developed their understanding of settler colonialism and the case of Palestine. To the best of my knowledge, there are three critical papers of the settler colonial turn in the context of Palestine (Barakat, 2017; Bhandar & Ziadah, 2016; Busbridge, 2017). In a recent paper Barakat argues that a settler colonialism framework is relevant to study Zionism as an ideology and its history. However, it is more relevant to engage with Indigenous Studies when studying Palestinian history (Barakat, 2017). Bhandar and Ziadah also critiqued the "intellectual amnesia" of settler colonial studies in the case of Palestine where earlier literature of Palestinians is missed from settler colonialism scholarship. They argued that settler colonialism scholarship,

Have reinforced certain myths about the realities of settler colonialism in Canada, Australia, the United States and elsewhere, establishing a temporal distinction that posits settler colonialism in Canada, for example, as something that happened to First Nations, and continues to happen in Palestine. Thereby presenting Israel as the exceptional and "unfinished" settler colonial project. That somehow their "past" is Palestine's "present". (2016)

Also Busbridge (2017) presented a critical account of the 'settler colonial turn' in the case of Palestine and engaged in particular with the decolonisation dilemma of this literature. Busbridge was also critical of the blind employment and comparison of this literature between the new world and Palestine, and argued that the offers this literature present for solutions in Palestine are "bounded by certain presumptions that flow from New World contexts which are reductive of the peculiar nationalist dimensions of Zionism and fail to fully address the political resonances of the distinction between settler and native in that context" (p.3). Busbridge is particularly critical of the binarism of settler/native this literature is enhancing, she adds:

"If Wolfe and Veracini fail to fully engage the conflict's nationalist dimensions, they are also strangely silent on the resonances and implications of the settler/native distinction in the Israeli-Palestinian context. Indeed, one of the weaknesses of the settler colonial paradigm as a whole is its inability to fully reckon with indigenous and settler identities as interactive, mutable and contingent processes of social signification". (p.18)

I agree with the above critical accounts of settler colonialism scholarship. I also agree with the critical voices of the unquestionable analogy between the case of settler colonialism in Palestine and the 'new world'. As I will further explain in the following pages, this comparison blinded this literature from critical historical and contextual differences between the two cases that led to misreading settler colonialism in Palestine. In addition to the analytical and methodological limitations of this paradigm, I echo the above critiques and add that it also has critical ethical and political consequence and may reproduce settler colonialism within academic spaces. In the following, I build on the above critiques to argue against the employment of settler colonialism as theorised by Wolfe and Veracini in the study of Palestine. I engage with this literature on Palestine by demonstrating and analysing how this scholarship relates to the case of Palestine and what solutions it offers. I organise the discussion in two interrelated subsections: 'they talk to each other' and '(mis)reading settler colonialism in Palestine'.

#### 2.4.1 'They talk to each other'

If one was to use a metaphor to describe this literature, it would be a dialogue between settler colonialism scholars on one side, and 'Israel' and its allies and devotees on the other. In this dialogue, settler colonialism scholars are trying to convince the other party that 'Israel' is a 'settler colonial,' not a democratic, state or exceptional, as they claim. These scholars raise questions and concerns related to 'Israel's fears and 'anxiety', and how to close the frontier opened 135 years ago. Settler colonialism scholarship offers to 'decolonise' or end settler colonialism in Palestine is concerned primarily about the settlers' not the land inhabitants' "sovereignty and futurity" (Tuck & Yang, 2012, p.35). I argue that settler colonialism scholarship study of Palestine attempts to "reconcile settler guilt and complicity, and rescue settler futurity" (p.3). For instance, next to his concern about "how to be efficient self-indigenisers?" (subsection 2.2.3), Veracini, in a paper published in the Journal of Palestine studies (2013), starts by claiming that "Israeli/Zionist settler colonialism was remarkably successful before 1967, and was largely unsuccessful thereafter" (p.28). Therefore his epistemological concern is why it failed in 'occupied territories' yet it succeeded in the lands of 1948. This literature is not talking to the Palestinians; it is talking mainly to 'Israel' and its allies. For instance, Pappé (2008) engages with the argument of whether Zionism is a national or colonial movement and asserts that it is a colonial movement inspired by national desires. Pappé comments that this argument "has not been easily accepted until today in the United States and Israel" (p.612).



This literature engages mainly with 'Israel's' claims of being a democratic or 'normal' state, for instance Lloyd and Pulido (2010) engage with claims of defenders of the 2008-2009 war on the Gaza Strip who claim that it is 'Israel's' right to defend itself. Lloyd engages with 'Israel's' self-claims as part of western civilisation in the middle of the non-Western uncivilised world and engages with the claims of 'Israel' being "as normal – a normal democracy, a normal Western society, a normal state – and at others as exceptional: a democracy uniquely embattled among hostile neighbours, a secular state that historically fulfils the religious destiny of a people, a democracy that defines itself as a state for a single people and religion, the only democracy in the region, and so forth" (2012, p.59). This dialogue is only about 'Israel'. Palestinians are not there (as people and knowledge), and if they are present, they are in the background as faceless victims of 'the logic of elimination'.

The review of settler colonialism literature on Palestine, it appears that it favours 'Israeli' scholars and literature. A majority of this literature relies mainly on Zionist writings, archives, and diaries to analyse the case of settler colonialism in Palestine. This engagement was not only settler colonial scholars with 'Israeli' scholars; it was also engagement with personal diaries of the founding fathers of Zionism and Zionist fiction writers and poets. For instance, Wolfe quotes Theodore Herzl and Meron Benvenisti to explain the "destroy to replace" principle of settler colonialism. Meanwhile Veracini explains his thesis of the emptiness idea of settler colonialism by quoting an 'Israeli' poem written after the 1967 war by poet and journalist Haim Gouri's on the perception of the newly conquered West Bank as an example of the incapacity to register land inhabitants' presence:

It seemed to me I'd died and was waking up, resurrected [. . .] All that I loved was cast at my feet, stunningly ownerless, landscapes revealed as in a dream. The old Land of Israel, the homeland of my youth, the other half of my cleft country. And their land, the land of the unseen ones, hiding behind their walls [original emphasis]. (2010a, p.82)

Furthermore, for some scholars, it is not only that Palestinians do not exist. Palestinian scholarship is invisible for these scholars. For instance, Veracini, in a comparative study of historiography in Israel and Palestine, says that "Until two decades ago a systematic historiography on the origins of the State of Israel did not exist" (2003, p.330). He adds that before the emergence of that literature, "Palestinians were not acknowledged" and their "presence was denied" (p.330). Overlooking Ahl Al-Ard's knowledge and their resistance are connected in this literature the logic of elimination thesis "can be mobilized by settler scholars in ways that delegitimize Indigenous resistance and reinforce violent colonial relationships" (Macoun and Strakosch 2013 p.

433). In their critique of settler colonialism scholarship, Snelgrove and colleagues argue that Veracini in his theorisation of the history of settler colonialism concept he “pretty much erased” both Indigenous studies and Indigenous resistance. (P. 11). The consequences of dismissing Ahl Al-Ard articulations “run the risk of reifying (and possibly replicating) settler colonial, as well as other, modes of domination” (p.22). Therefore they call for employing a “relational approach to settler colonial power” and to consider “the conditions and contingencies of settler colonialism, studies of settler colonialism and practices of solidarity” (p.4).

The engagement of settler colonialism scholarship with one side mainly is an example of “racist epistemology” (James & Michelle D., 1997). The consequences of this is that other epistemologies are not acknowledged as “legitimate within the mainstream research community” (p.9). The dominant epistemologies and methodologies tend to “distort the lives of other racial groups” and favours white scholars over non-whites “because they accord most easily with their social history” (p.9).

#### 2.4.2 (Mis) reading settler colonialism in Palestine

The focus of settler colonialism scholarship on the ‘logic of elimination’ and engaging mainly with ‘Israel’ led settler colonialism scholars to misreading both ‘Israel’ and Palestine. I define three unique contextual aspects in the case of settler colonialism in Palestine which are overlooked by settler colonialism scholarship; demography, resistance, and the larger Arab and Muslim context of Palestine and Palestinians. Demography in the context of Palestine is not a number, and studying settler colonialism in Palestine cannot be “detached from the Israeli project and Palestinian responses to that project” (Courbage, 2013) p1. According PCBS figures, by 2020 Palestinians will outnumber the settler colonisers and by 2050 the Palestinians will be 56% (PCBS, 2015). The demographic matter is critical and in the case of the Zionist project it is an exclusive Jewish demography. This fact makes the settler colonisers in Palestine minority in the middle of 300 million of the Arab. Unlike other settler colonial projects, the settler colonisers failed to reduce Palestinians into an unthreatening minority, and Palestinians demography is perceived by the settler state as a ‘bomb’. As figure 1 shows, by 2020 the Palestinians will outnumber the settler colonisers, and by 2050, the estimated number of settler colonisers will be 9.2 million (46%) while Palestinians will be 11.8 million. These figures are crucial and this war between settler colonisers and Ahl Al-Ard in Palestine is real, and it is particularly tense in the city of

Jerusalem (Courbage 2013 p.6).<sup>40</sup> In the following chapter I will elaborate more on resistance in the case of Palestine.

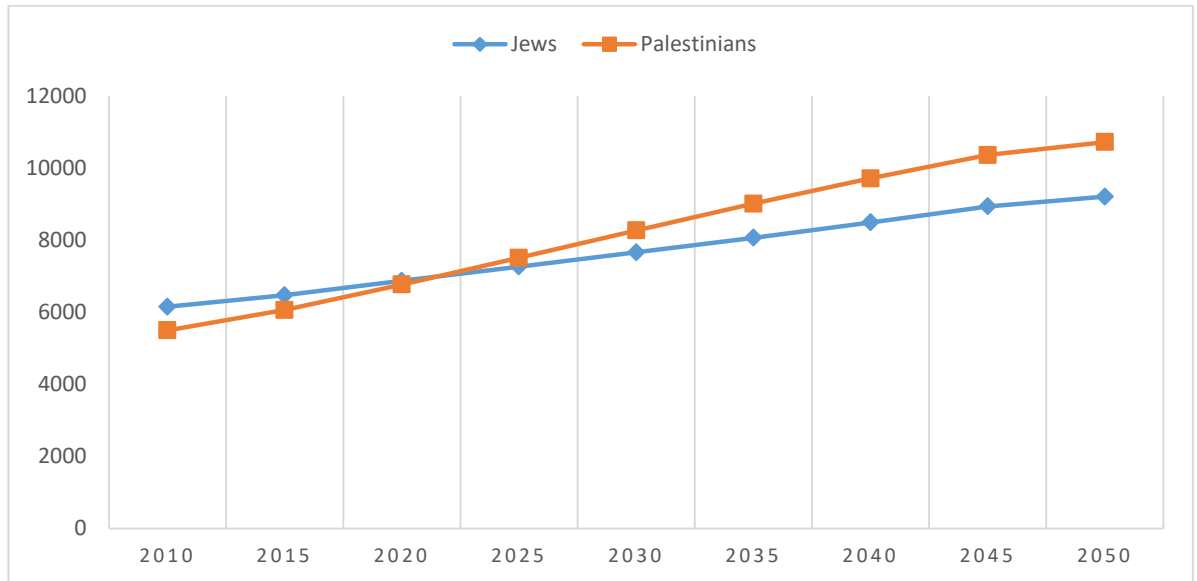


Figure 1. The demographic trends of the Palestinian and Jewish populations in historical Palestine.

Source: (Courbage, 2013).

## Conclusion

In this chapter, I started with clarification of terms used in this thesis. I made a clear distinction between Zionism as a colonial ideology and Judaism as a religion. Zionism is a political ideology of European origin, not a religious doctrine, and I do not perceive Zionist and Jewish as equal or homogenous. 'Jewish' is used in this thesis as a status afforded by 'Israel', and not as an ethnic or biological category.

I demonstrated and critically analysed the recent theorisation of settler colonialism as mainly developed by Patrick Wolfe and Lorenzo Veracini. Settler colonialism scholarship places emphasis on the significance of "territoriality" - access to land - for the 'individual frontiers' as Wolfe calls settler colonisers, and the unique distinctions between settler colonialism and colonialism. This literature argues rightly that post colonialism theory alone is unable to explain the many forms of European expansion that started in 1492 and have evolved ever since. However, settler colonialism as a field of study has not yet been well conceptualised. Settler colonialism offers, instead, an alternative explanatory framework. This literature establishes settler colonialism as

<sup>40</sup> Owing to the violent nature of the conquest and the new diseases brought by the conquistadors, for instance, "[b]etween the Aztec-Maya-Caribbean and the Tawantinsuyana (or Inca) areas, about 65 million inhabitants were exterminated in a period of less than 50 years. The scale of this extermination was so huge that it involved not only a demographic catastrophe, but also the destruction of societies and cultures" (Quijano, 2007 p.170). However, this is not the case in the 'old world' where "the high cultures could never be destroyed with such intensity and profundity" (Quijano, 2007 p.170).

different – in historical and theoretical terms – from colonialism (of the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries), genocide, immigration and human rights violations studies. In an editorial statement in the *Journal of Settler Colonial Studies*, Veracini and Cavanagh define settler colonialism as a “global and transnational phenomena and as much a thing of the past as a thing of the present” (2013). Settler colonialism scholarship claims the relevance of reading the past, present and future of settler colonialism seen through the lenses of, for example, ‘Australia’ and ‘North America’ as firmly established settler colonialism projects. Wolfe and Veracini have confirmed in several places that the relation between settler colonisers and land inhabitants is not an exploitative or unequal relationship; settler colonialism is not a single event that has an easily definable beginning and end (in specific time and space), and settlers are not immigrants. Settler colonialism scholarship maintains that the relationship between settler colonisers and land inhabitants is a zero-sum game (where settlers only win), that settler colonialism is in a continuous occurrence, and “no return is envisaged” (Veracini, 2010a, p.97). The main reason for this type of relationship is the land: “[w]hatever settlers may say — and they generally have a lot to say — the primary motive for elimination is not race (or religion, ethnicity, grade of civilization, etc.) but territoriality - access to the land - is settler colonialism’s specific “irreducible element” (2006, p.388). In short and as reiterated over and over again, Wolfe maintains that “settler colonizers come to stay: invasion is a structure not an event [and] elimination is an organizing principal of settler-colonial society rather than a one-off (and superseded) occurrence” and it “destroys to replace” (2006, p.388).

Patrick Wolfe was the first to introduce ‘the logic of elimination’ as an organising principle of settler colonialism to overcome the postcolonial theory’s limitations of understanding colonialism in contexts such as ‘Australia’ and the ‘USA’. Wolfe developed his concept of ‘the logic of elimination’ by tracing the historical development of the ‘frontier’ in ‘Australia’, where he concluded that territoriality – i.e. access to the land – is the irreducible element for settler colonialism and it is premised on ‘the logic of elimination’ of land inhabitants. According to his paradigm, elimination is the only available option for the land inhabitants, and it is not only physical, but it is also cultural, social and political, and it targets the land inhabitants both as individuals and groups. Therefore, according to Wolfe and many other scholars who followed suit in his logic, settler colonialism is “a structure not event”, where “settlers come to stay”, and it “destroys to replace”. Settler colonialism as theorised by Wolfe, Veracini and others is a “zero-sum game”, in which “winner takes all” and it is irreversible and does not end

(Veracini, 2011b). In other words, settler colonialism is “impervious to regime change” (Wolfe, 2006, p.402) and its end is “the end of everything” (Veracini, 2010a, p.104)

This field has gained and increased its influence in various fields of research, including the study of Palestine, by primarily drawing an analogy between settler colonialism in Palestine and other, older projects from ‘Australia’, and the ‘USA’. As I said before, I agree with this literature in its emphasis on the centrality of access to land for settler colonial projects. Land centrality for settler colonial projects means that settler colonisers need to colonise the actual space and time of the land, and most importantly to colonise the mind of Ahl Al-Ard to make them believe that land is not theirs and there is no hope for its return. The ultimate goal of settler colonialism is to defeat the land’s inhabitants at the personal level and put an end to any historical, epistemological, philosophical, moral and political attachment or claim to the land. This would allow us to understand the relation between the land and its inhabitants as the target of the settler colonial projects, and would also allow us to understand this relation as a site of resistance and struggle (Chapter Three). However, I disagree with this literature’s foundational assumption, its impersonal and detached writings, and conclusions in the study of Palestine as it appears in the second section of this chapter (2.2.1. and 2.2.2.) This theorisation, as several scholars have shown, has analytical and methodological limitations and entails ethical and political risks of reproducing settler colonialism (Barker, 2011; Bird, 2001; 2013; Eric Ritskes, 2017; Rowse, 2014; Santos, 2015; Snelgrove et al., 2014; Strakosch & Macoun, 2012; Vimalassery et al., 2016) Settler colonialism scholarship’s present tense, impersonal and structural theorisation of settler colonialism, and its exclusive focus on ‘the logic of elimination,’ entail analytical and methodological limitations as well as political and ethical risks of enhancing settler colonialism. The theorisation of settler colonialism is largely white and premised mainly by the scholars who are based in and are drawing from the “frontier” development experiences in ‘Australia’ where ‘the logic of elimination’ as an analytical concept is used to explain settler colonialism phenomena. Settler colonialism scholarship depicts two interrelated assumptions: that is, the land inhabitants are defeated and powerless, and the settler colonial project is ‘mighty’, ‘efficient’ and ‘eternal’. The ‘logic of elimination’ thesis influences the historiography of elimination and dispassion, and overlooks the land inhabitants’ agency and heterogeneity., Furthermore, it can play a role in the endurance of settler colonialism by misreading it and “failing to attend to its conditions and contingency” (Strakosch and Macoun, 2012;, Macoun and Strakosch, 2013;, Rowse, 2014;, Snelgrove, Dhamoon et al., 2014 p.26;, Vimalassery, Pegues et al., 2016).

In this chapter I argued against the recent 'settler colonial turn' to study the case of Palestine, by critically examining how this literature has studied Palestine and revealed its limits and risks. Settler colonialism scholarship, I claimed, misreads the settler colonial situation in Palestine because it overlooks Ahl Al-Ard resistance and knowledge, and unique contextual particularities of the settler colonial case in Palestine, as well as it is unable to recognise the Zionist settler colonial project fractures and contradictions.

Settler colonialism scholarship insists on two points in the case of Palestine, the exclusiveness of the logic of elimination and the impossibility of decolonisation. This literature portrayed Palestinians as defeated and as subjects of elimination, who live in haunted geographies, while 'Israel' is the mighty settler colonial state that operates with exclusive logic of elimination. Building on these weak assumptions and untenable premises, this literature attempts to offer political solutions to end settler colonialism in Palestine. Settler Colonialism scholars focus on 'the exclusive logic of elimination' in Palestine, and emphasis on analogy between 'Australia' and 'U.S.A' on one side and 'Israel' on the other (regards decolonisation), portray a dark image of the past, present and future of Palestine and Palestinians. Such a gloomy image is not only partial and distorted, it is dangerous, since it forecloses any debates on different possibilities to change the present or hope for a future liberated of settler colonialism in Palestine.

Even though this literature is recent and is subject to changes, yet, I find a common thread in this scholarship; there is no "hope" in this literature, this point is very critical in this thesis. The lack of hope in this literature is particularly dangerous and problematic in the liberation contexts such as the one in Palestine. As I have presented in this chapter the subtext of the majority of this literature is that Palestinians are 'defeated' and are objects of "exclusive logic of elimination", and that 'Israel' is an invincible, successful and impossible to decolonise. I argued that these two foundational assumption lead to (mis)reading our past and present, as well as misread 'Israel' and 'Palestine'.

This framework is incapable of reading the present of Palestine, and much less offer solutions to the 'conflict' in 'Israel/Palestine'. This literature enhances the elimination story and pays less attention to the resistive stories. This omission is part of colonial ignorance and racist epistemology. This literature is misreading both 'Israel' and 'Palestine', therefore in the following chapter I build on existing literature to present my alternative understanding of the settler colonial situation in Palestine in a way to set the

contextual and analytical backgrounds of the stories explored and analysed in this thesis.

## **Chapter Three. The settler colonial situation in Palestine**

### **Introduction**

As we saw in the previous chapter, the (mis)reading of 'Israel' and Palestine in settler colonialism scholarship implies that 'Israel' is a successful settler colonial project that cannot be ended and is pervaded by an 'exclusive logic of elimination'. On the other hand, in this literature, Palestine is (mis)seen as ambiguous geographies of death, where Palestinians are defeated and faceless, a hopeless 'unpeople' subject to an endless 'exclusive logic of elimination'. My understanding of settler colonialism in Palestine, however, goes beyond settler colonialism scholarship's understanding of it. In this chapter, I provide a brief historical and contemporary overview of the settler colonial project and resistance in Palestine, and present an original perspective – i.e. within the (embedded) context and history – of the 'everyday life resistance' in Palestine. I make use of the knowledge and literature from non-Western traditions, which allows us to read 'Israel' and 'Palestine' differently (Santos, 2015).

There is no dearth of scholarship on the histories of the European settler colonial project on the land of Palestine and 'Zionism' – the ideological instrument of this project (i.e. Abdelwahab Elmessiri, Nur Masalha, Walid Khalidi, H. S. Haddad, Fayez Abdullah Sayegh, Salman abu Sitta). I carefully dissect the literature, shedding light on the currently neglected areas, and bring new focus to the understanding of settler colonialism in Palestine. As Samir Amin argued in several places, understanding the Zionist-Arab struggle, should be seen as part of the larger context and history of the conflict between the Arab World and Imperialism (Samir Amin & Kenz, 2005). Therefore, first, I make a temporal connection and situate 'Israel' within a longer history of colonial encounters between the Arab World and the West (Shohat & Stam, 1994). Viewed within this context, 'Israel' is not the first colonial encounter between the Arab world and the European colonisers: they know each other. The current settler colonial project in the Arab land of Palestine is a "return" – not in biblical terms but of old/new colonisers and unlike a 'new coming' or 'discovery' (like central colonies in Africa or the 'New World'). Second, I make use of Abdelwahab Elmessiri's useful concept of understanding 'Israel' as a "functional settler colonial state" that is supported by the imperial powers "not because of its intrinsic worth, but because of its utility" (2001b). Third, I present a brief review of the 'mobile geographies of resistance' in Palestine and

finally I build on Geographies of Resistance literature by making use of Routledge and Simons' (1995) concept of "spirits of resistance." Moreover, I review Pile's (2013) useful conceptualisation of resistance that happens in and beyond spaces defined by power relations to understand the context in Palestine as a struggle for liberation rather than the case of past, present, and future elimination. This understanding of both 'Israel' and Palestine provides us with a different reading and understanding of this project and helps us to better articulate the liberation agenda based on more relevant history, context and knowledge. From this perspective, it is possible to recognise that settler colonialism can be resisted, challenged, and undone. This has many implications, as I will discuss later, for an alternative conceptualisation of settler colonialism in Palestine based on the material that I have collected from everyday life in Palestine (Chapter Eight).

### 3.1 Settler colonial return

In 'Strategies of Colonisation and Liberation' (1983),<sup>41</sup> Hamdan traces the history of colonialism and liberation in the world with a focus on the Arab world. Hamdan argues that owing to the geographical location of the Arab world, it has faced various colonial encounters with invaders from both the East (Asia) and the West (Europe). This is evidently shown throughout its long history, from the classic colonisation of ancient history, followed by the crusaders, Mongolians and Tatars in the Middle Ages, and finally to 19<sup>th</sup> century colonialism. Hamdan notices that colonial encounters with Western invaders were historically more dangerous for the Arab world. For instance, Hamdan compares the Middle Ages' European Crusaders with the Mongolians and Tartars and says that while the latter were armies of men who came to destroy, loot and leave, the former came as entire communities comprised of men and women, old and young, a mixture of fighters, merchants, farmers, criminals, religious officials and so on who marched from all over Europe towards the Arab and Muslim world with a sword and the Bible to settle in the 'Holy land'.<sup>42</sup> This made the colonial encounter with the Europeans more dangerous because it challenged the fundamental ideology and core religious traditions. Within this context and history, Hamdan makes a temporal

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<sup>41</sup> Gamal Hamdan traces the history of colonialism from ancient history to 19th century colonial expansion and the liberation of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

<sup>42</sup> Throughout the twelfth and thirteenth centuries (1096-1291), at least eight major settler colonial crusaders waves targeted different geographies of the Arab land, including Palestine. Hamdan presents more differences between them. The crusaders were religious, agricultural, and settled in their homelands, whereas Mongolians and Tatars were nomadic, paganist, and their invasions were seasonal. The confrontation with the crusaders was much more pervasive because it was also ideological and religious.



thread linking 'Israel' with much a longer history of colonialism and locates it as another example of colonial encounter with old/new colonisers.<sup>43</sup>

After the Europeans (led mainly by Spain and Portugal) had looted the newly 'discovered' lands, which resulted in the killing of millions of inhabitants during the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries, Europe amassed an unprecedented amount of wealth, which later led to its development. Other great powers joined the venture (now led by England and France) and returned in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries to the old world, including the Arab World.<sup>44</sup> This link is not merely historical; it is ideological, too. Hamdan says that the colonial return to the Arab world, unlike other places, was not coated with race or colour language between the colonisers and land inhabitants, rather it was based on religious language similar to the crusaders' narrative.<sup>45</sup> The vocabulary and narratives

<sup>43</sup> In 'Resistance: The Essence of the Islamist Revolution' Alastair Crooke writes that the Muslim world, has been "firmly established as the Christian 'enemy'" since the 11<sup>th</sup> century, he argues that "as such was both necessary and integral to the emerging identity of western Christendom. He was made to carry the burden of western anxiety about Christian violence during the crusades; but the persistence of the stereotyping of Islam as the 'religion of the sword' suggests that it touches on deeply buried myths and apocryphal currents underlying contemporary Christian attitudes" (Crooke, 2009, p.17).

<sup>44</sup> Columbus's ultimate goal behind his enterprise was to free the holy land of Jerusalem from the 'infidels (Muslim) as a precondition for the "second coming" of Christ before the "End of Days". Therefore the aim of his voyage was to fund another Crusade. Indeed, the majority of literature focused on the economic (avaricious) motivations of Columbus in funding different routes to India, however, the ideological and religious motivation of Columbus's journey are largely missing in the modern day account, even though his ideas were perceived as old fashioned after the 'discovery'. Columbus wrote in his diary, "in such quantity that the sovereigns. . . will undertake and prepare to go conquer the Holy Sepulchre; for thus I urged Your Highnesses to spend all the profits of this my enterprise on the conquest of Jerusalem" (Quoted in Delaney, 2006:261). Also on 4 March 1493, Columbus sent a letter to King Ferdinand and Queen Isabela: "in seven years from today I will be able to pay Your Highnesses for five thousand cavalry and fifty thousand foot soldiers for the war and conquest of Jerusalem, for which purpose this enterprise was undertaken" Quoted in Delaney, 2006:266). For more on Jerusalem and Columbus see; Abbas Hamdani (1979) Columbus and the Recovery of Jerusalem. *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, Vol. 99, No. 1 (Jan. - Mar., 1979), pp. 39-48; Carol Delaney (2006) Columbus's ultimate goal: Jerusalem. *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 2006, Vol.48 (2), pp.260-292. Carol Delaney (2011) 'Columbus and the Quest for Jerusalem: How Religion Drove the Voyages that Led to America. Free Press, New York. Indeed perceiving Israel as another crusaders' wave does not suggest a complete analogy; there are similarities and differences, which I will elaborate in my discussion in chapter eight. Bringing crusaders (and other settler colonial projects; French Algeria, Zimbabwe) into the discussion can give us different insights to understand the current settler colonial project in Palestine.

<sup>45</sup> Several scholars draw on the analogy between 'Israel' and the crusaders (Avenry Uri, Ziad Asali, Gamal Hamdan, and Abdelwahab Elmessiri). For instance Abdelwahab Elmessiri argues that 'Israel' shares with the crusaders six features; (1) both were solutions for European internal problems (the Jewish question in the case of 'Israel' and a population problem in the case of crusaders) to displace the 'unwanted' Europeans or the internal Other in Europe. (2) Both consisted of heterogeneous strangers who came to settle by force on the Muslim and Arab world with the aim of creating a western pocket at the Mediterranean shores. (3) Militarism, is a key common feature, therefore a ghetto or fortress entity is crucial for such militant entities. (4) Crusaders and 'Israel' are in a continuous need of the mother countries to support them with the finance and fighters. (5) Both colonial waves employed Holy narrative to justify their wars and to

that 'Israel' uses to 'justify' the colonisation of Palestine are borrowed from European colonial heritage (holy land, terra nullius) (El-Messiri, 1977, 2014; Massad, 2006b). Additionally, 'Israel' inherited, adopted, and improved the 500 years of European colonial experience and tools, in particular those of British and French colonialism.<sup>46</sup> 'Israel' in this sense is the last settler colonial wave in modern history, which presents a unique example of settler colonialism, by employing the best (or the worst) of the other settler colonisation examples; i.e. 'Australia', 'U.S.A', Algeria, and 'South Africa' (Hamdan, 1982).<sup>47</sup>

The attempts to colonise the land of Palestine started at least 83 years before the arrival of the first Zionist settler coloniser to Palestine in 1882. Ernest Laharanne, the private secretary of Napoleon III during the period of increasing French intervention in Syria, promised in 1799 that "all Europe would support Jewish acquisition of Palestine from Turkey to call the ancient nations back to life, so as to open new highways and byways for European civilisation" (Halboork, 1974, p.22). However, Napoleon was defeated in front of the walls of Acre and never made it to Palestine. Other failed attempt were carried out by western Christian groups, such as the evangelist, messianic German Templars who established the first agricultural settlement in Haifa in 1868 (Yazbak, 1999).<sup>48</sup> The Historian Mahmoud Yazbak also shows that during the Ottoman Empire era, the great powers at that time (Britain, France and Russia) tended to "adopt a local Christian community to protect its interests through special privileges extracted from the Porte" (Yazbak, 1999, p.42).<sup>49</sup> The French adopted the local Roman Catholics, and the Russians adopted the Orthodox community. The British Empire did not have any Palestinian Christian community who needed their 'protection', but that was not a concern as "such a community had to be created or even 'invented'" (Yazbak, 1999, p.43). In the midst of all this power brokering comes Jewish Zionism.

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recruit fighters, and both believed that they are 'chosen' in a way or another. (6) Both entities played a functional role to serve the interest of the mother countries. El-Messiri argues that the support to Israel is more than the support to the crusaders due to the increase of realizing the importance of the entity of 'Israel', 'Israel' is seen as a good strategic investment for the imperial powers. Similarities are also in the problems faced by 'Israel' and the crusaders; demography and resistance (El-Messiri, 2014).

<sup>46</sup> In the 1960s the Zionist leaders Moshe Dayan and Chaim Herzog went to Algeria to learn from the French experience in suppressing the Algerian revolution.

<sup>47</sup> Algeria 1830, Aden 1839, Tunis 1881, Egypt 1882, Libya 1911, Palestine, Lebanon, Syria and Iraq in 1920. Upon their return to the old world, the colonial and oppression tools employed against Indigenous peoples in the new world were also employed and improved upon in live laboratories in Africa and other parts of the world. For instance, Namibia was a lab for concentration camps, which were later used against Europeans themselves in Nazi Germany's extermination of millions of European internal others, namely Jews, Romani and Slavs, among others.

<sup>48</sup> Followed by another six settlements: Jaffa (1869), Sarona (1878), Jerusalem (1878), Wilhelma (1902), Galilean Bethlehem (1906), and Waldheim (1907)

<sup>49</sup> The Sublime or Ottoman or High Porte, the central government of the Ottoman Empire.

Founded in 1897 by secular Jewish Journalist Theodor Herzl, who was seeking a donor for his colonial project, Zionism was proposed as an ideological instrument, or calling for the support of, an exclusive Jewish State to solve what was known by then as the Jewish Question in Europe and to provide colonial services to the imperial powers.<sup>50</sup>

The events of the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century changed the map of the world and made what Abdel Nasser called 'the crazy idea of Israel' possible. England needed the land of Palestine and Herzl was looking for a donor.

As part of its imperial design, Britain needed Palestine to protect the northern eastern flank of its all-important sea route to India and the East – the Suez Canal. In addition, control of Palestine and the Fertile Crescent would make possible a land route across Asia, which would guarantee contact with India in the event of loss of the Suez. [...] Britain turned to a more permanent and safer client [unlike Sharif Hussien] - the Zionist movement. Founded and directed by Theodor Herzl, Zionism was by definition a servant of imperialism. It was a colonial movement in search of a patron, and it therefore courted a number of imperialist powers". (Zogby, 1974, p.95-96)

As a "servant of Imperialism", Theodor Herzl claimed in his diary that Zionism could help in two fronts "through draining off the surplus Jewish proletariat [in Europe] and through harnessing international capital" (1962, p.120). The Zionist project in Palestine, was seen to be in the interest of Jewish and non-Jewish European Imperialist bourgeoisie, as Halbrook writes in a materialist interpretation of Zionism, "[f]inance capital would profit from the export of investment funds; industrial capital would conquer new markets, natural resources, and cheap labor; and merchant capital would win new commercial routes on land and sea, all protected by the white Jewish settlers and the empire militaries" (1974, p.24). This mutual interest between Zionism and imperial powers guarantees the survival and continuity of the Zionist project in Palestine through providing it with financial, political economic and militant aid,

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<sup>50</sup> In Herzl's book 'Der Judenstaat' [the Jewish state] published in 1896 he called for a Jewish state. Palestine is one option of the countries the Zionist movement considered to establish its state. After the first congress of the Zionist Congress in Basel, the congress adopted this ideology and called for working to achieve the goal of a Jewish state. In 1897 the Zionist Movement organised the First Zionist Congress in Basel, and called for the foundation of a Jewish nation state for the Jewish. They defined three methods to do this: (a) organisation, which was translated through the foundation of World Zionist Organisation (WZO) (1897-1960) as a quasi-state body to play an organisational role in state-structuring and master-minding the colonisation process, which was carried out through several agencies – the Jewish Colonial Trust and Colonisation Commission (1898), the Jewish National Fund (1901), and the Palestine Land Development Company and Palestine Office (1908); (b) colonisation, which was translated into groups 'immigration' and situating communities on the land of Palestine and (c) negotiation with the great powers of the time to "produce political conditions that would permit, facilitate and protect large-scale colonisation" (p. 6).

necessary for its survival, in other words as El-Messiri puts it this makes 'Israel' "a functional state" (Quoted in: Kasrils, 2015, p.22).

The outbreak of the First World War (1914-1918) created new realities on the ground; the defeat of the Ottoman Empire put their land under the imperial powers' domination. The French, English and Russians in May 1916 made the Sykes-Picot Agreement, which arranged for the partitioning of Ottoman holdings in the 'Middle East', and for European control of much of the area. This put Palestine, Trans Jordan and Iraq under British colonisation and Syria and Lebanon under French control. At the same time, the Balfour Declaration was made in 1917: a declaration of a promise from His Majesty's Government to the Jews to create a home for the Jews on the land of Palestine. In 1920, Palestine was under the colonisation of the British army. The Balfour promise was more than mere words, the British Empire's role went beyond this in facilitating Jewish immigration to Palestine during the Mandate period (1920-1948). The British army and the settlers' paramilitary groups also fought shoulder-to-shoulder to quash the Palestinian Revolution (1936-1939) (section 3.3.).<sup>51</sup> As Wolfe noticed correctly, the British "offered an incubator in which international Zionism was able to make crucial progress towards assembling the demographic and territorial prerequisites for a European settler state in Palestine" (2012, p.145). The outbreak of the Second World War (1939-1945) increased the Jewish Zionist immigration to Palestine in parallel with Nazi Germany's extermination of millions of European internal others, namely Jews, Romani and Slavs, among others. And the outcome of the war resulted in the withdrawal of the British troops from Palestine. In November 1947 the United Nation issued a partition plan to divide the land of Palestine between the settler colonisers and Ahl Al-Ard. This withdrawal was a well calculated and organised event with the Zionist movement. The day the British left, the Zionist settler colonial movement declared itself as an independent state in 1948. This declaration entailed that more than 800,000

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<sup>51</sup> The majority of contemporary 'Israel's' colonial tools, including house demolition, night raids and group punishment, were inherited from the British Empire. For instance, the Tegar's Wall was built jointly by the British army and the Yishuv settlers in 1938 to suppress Palestinian resistance. To read on Zionist and British militant cooperation: (Anglim, 2007; Hughes, 2015)

The military hostility between Zionist paramilitary groups (Irgun, Etzel, Lehi and Stern) and the British army occurred later on after a relative settling of Yishuv in Palestine, Maxim Rodinson writes in "Israel: a colonial-settler state?":

"...the struggle for the ultimate goals could be begun once the organizational foundation of the Jewish state was well in place, and once the immigration carried out as a result of and under the protection of the British mandate had increased its demographic base to the point where it comprised one-third of the total population of the country. This struggle took place in two stages. Although very few Zionists had come from Great Britain, this country, in regard to Palestine, played the role of mother country for a colony that was being settled, because, like it or not, it had protected the formation and growth of the Yishuv as it had, for example, once protected British colonization in North America, and as France had protected French colonization in Algeria" (Rodinson, 1973, p.64).

Palestinians were forced to leave their land, and only 154 thousands stayed, more than 500 Palestinians towns, cities and villages were totally or partly destroyed, 70 massacres in which more than 15 thousands were killed (PCBS, 2015).

What I would like to highlight in this brief historical review is the European roots and links of the settler colonial project. As I discussed in Chapter Two, the idea of Zionism builds on an “integral element in Western religious, social and political history” (Sharif, 1983, p.3). In spite of the fact the Jewish people themselves were historically subject to racism and discrimination in Europe, the links and relation between Zionism and Europe makes Zionism, as Asali writes, “the heir - albeit an illegitimate one - of the Crusader movement. It was born out of the depth of the Crusader residue in Western societies as it combined the dreams of re-conquest of the Holy Land with the historical antipathy toward the Easterners along with the solution of the Jewish problem in the West” (1992, p.57).

Zionism was advocated by several non-Jewish scholars as an ideology that “would offer to the European empires a loyal outpost to guard the routes to the East and to suppress Arab nationalism, and that the new colony would provide Europe with raw materials and markets” (Halboork 1974 p.22). Halbrook quotes Moses Hess, a non-Jewish philosopher, who wrote in 1862:

After the work on the Suez Canal is completed, the interests of the world commerce will undoubtedly demand the establishment of depots and settlements along the road to India and China, settlements of such a character as will transform the neglected and anarchic states of the countries lying along this road into legal and cultivated States. This can occur only under the military protection of the European powers. [To the Jews] A great calling is reserved for you: to be a living channel of communication to the primitive people of Asia... you should be the mediators between Europe and far Asia, open the roads that lead to India and China - those unknown regions which must ultimately be thrown open to civilization. (Halboork 1974 p.22)

This leads me to the second point I would like to draw attention to; the functional role of the settler colonial project in Palestine. The above history entails, as Hamdan argues, that ‘Israel’ is colonisation on behalf of itself and on behalf of the others (for the British Empire and then later for the ‘U.S.A’) (1983). El-Messiri’s analytical framework of ‘Israel’ as a “functional settler colonial” project is relevant here. El-Messiri developed his framework through his study of the functional exploitation of the Jewish elite in Medieval Europe in particular in Poland, Ukraine and Russia, El-Messiri argues that ‘Israel’ as a colonial project is “maintained not because of its intrinsic worth, but because of its utility” (Qouted in: Kasrils, 2015, p.22). He further elaborates on the functional role of ‘Israel’:

This was done on the premise that the Jews in Palestine are an independent demographic element whose security could be guaranteed by the West, and for which it could realise a high standard of living, provided that the settler enclave performed the function of defending Western strategic interests in the region. Financial support was extended to a colonial and alien demographic element, in return for it performing a strategic military role. The said role is the basic commodity that the settler colonial enclave produces and that the West acquires in return for the financial, political, and military support it provides. Anything apart from this is no more than mere apologetics or marginal details that have very little explanatory power. (p.38)

The aim of the above brief historical review of the settler colonial project in Palestine highlights two points, first the European links and roots (historical and ideological) of the Zionist settler colonial project in Palestine and second to stress the functional colonial role of 'Israel' in the Arab World. In sum, 'Israel' is an organic part of European colonialism and Zionism is a colonial ideology with religious masks. It is a return of an older/new coloniser. The difference between settler colonialism in Palestine and the 'new world' is clear: Palestine is not a discovery (as Australia) nor a new coming (central Africa) for the settler colonisers. As Samir Amin argued in several places, understanding the Zionist-Arab struggle, should be seen as part of the larger context and history of the conflict between the Arab World and Imperialism (Amin, 1989; Samir Amin & Kenz, 2005).

The following section will outline the features of the settler colonial project in Palestine as they appear in the empirical chapters.

### **3.2 Topographies of settler colonialism in Palestine**

The features of settler colonialism in Palestine are shaped by the above history and long-standing ideology of European colonialism. As a settler colonial state, 'Israel' aims to control the land in spatial, temporal, and consciousness dimensions. The main features of 'Israel' as many scholars have shown are racism, violence and land expansion (Alam, 2009; El-Messiri, 2001a, 2014; Masalha, 2012, 2015; Massad, 2006b; Sayegh, 1965).

First, racism is a crucial and integral feature of Zionist ideology and its perception of the national self, which is based on the assumption of the common ancestry of Jewish people: "the sheer biological fact of descent from other Jews – that makes a person "Jewish" in Zionist eyes" (Sayegh, 1965, p.22). Zionist racial identification of the self implies racial self-segregation since any integration or assimilation of the Jew would be "a loss of the self". Self-segregation for Zionism is merely the way to "national redemption, salvation, and fulfilment" (p.23). Racial self-segregation also entails "racial

purity” and “racial exclusiveness,” which contradicts the very nature of coexistence with non-Jews:

The Zionist ideal of racial self-segregation demands, with equal imperativeness, the departure of all Jews from the land of their “exile” and the eviction of all non-Jews from the land of “Jewish destination”, namely Palestine. Both are essential conditions of “Zionist fulfilment” and Jewish “national redemption”. It is only such a condition of thoroughgoing self-segregation that “Jewish superiority” can at least manifest itself, according to the teachings of Zionism: the “Chosen People” can attain its “special destiny” only when it is all together and all by itself. (p.23)

The settler colonial project in Palestine is racist by definition. The settler colonial project in Palestine is founded as a state for the Jews only and determined to continue and perpetuate this Jewish identity, has integrated discriminatory laws into its very legal framework. “Israel-Zionist discrimination as such is not merely a matter of personal bigotry or de facto segregation; it is primarily a matter of de jure discrimination. This particular trait is what sets the racial discrimination practiced by settler-colonial enclaves apart from racial discrimination in the rest of the world” (El-Messiri, 1977, p.147). Assumptions of race supremacy and exclusiveness are the distinctive feature of Zionist racism unlike European racism in Asian and Africa contexts. While the former is premised on racial discrimination against the “inferior other”, Zionist racism is based on the racial exclusion of the non-Jew other. The Zionist movement claims of ethnic and race continuity and purity makes assimilation a danger targets the Jewish national identity. This reflects the absence of the notion of assimilation in the settler colonial project in Palestine (Chapter two 2.2.1).

Second, the violence of the Zionist settler state is not a detail or a “fall-back plan” but rather it is the core feature of the settler colonial project in Palestine, and is a necessary means or one tool to control the land. As Alam noticed, “[t]he Zionists could not long uphold their fiction of creating a Jewish state in Palestine without violence” (2009, p.27). El-Messiri argues that “[t]he militaristic aspect of the Zionist state is essential for the maintenance not only of the state machinery but also for the promotion of the political Zionism as a living ideology” (1977, p.187). In *Zionism and Violence*<sup>52</sup> El-Messiri emphasizes the kernel position of violence and the military for the Zionist state. He argues that ‘Israel’ is a “militant ghetto state” an “advanced fortress state” for international colonial powers, and connected with mother colonizers by an umbilical cord (2001a). Violence for the Zionist state is not temporal or random; it is a sole and central element for the survival of the strange colonial state in the middle of the Arab

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<sup>52</sup> In Arabic: *Al-Saheuniya Wal O'unf*. My translation

World; it is a “state of an army”. The structures and infrastructures of every single Zionist organization (agricultural, industrial, health, education, economic) are designed to serve a militant role and contribute to the ultimate goal of settler colonialism in Palestine. The militarism of ‘Israel’ is a matter of being or not being. As the Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu put it <sup>53</sup>: “I’m asked if we will forever live by the sword — yes” (Horowitz, 2015). Living by the sword has translated into ten major wars since its foundation, not to mention the everyday violent confrontations with Palestinians.<sup>54</sup> This makes the context of Palestine as Shihade and others have noticed an “open frontiers” (2016, p.8).

The confrontations happen beyond the sword and physical violence. ‘Israel’ employs a variety of material and non-material colonial tools to settle on the land of Palestine and to make Palestinians ‘find it impossible’ to resist ‘Israel’. They are manifested in topographies and relations of power in Palestine, and they are “reflected in ordinary, routine, everyday practices: language, vocabularies, bureaucracies, spatial arrangements and control of time, space, place and home” (Shalhoub-Kevorkian, 2015b, p.234). ‘Israel’ exercises its power through employing militant, legal, political, economic, social and cultural channels to control all aspects of the everyday life of Palestinians. It aims to “set out systematically to reduce the Palestinian either to a non-existent population or to strip down those who remained [in Palestine after Nakba] to the status of a silent coolie class” and to alienate the Palestinians from their land (Said, 1979, p.13). Violence in Palestine is “behind the scenes” in day to day practices and “potentially ready to re-emerge in ever more intense forms” (Kelly, 2008, p.372).

Third, territorial expansion is a ‘to be or not to be’ question for the settler colonial Project of ‘Israel’. Sayegh says that the Zionist project is an “unfinished business” (1965, p.38), therefore “for the Zionist state, to be is to prepare and strive for territorial expansion” and Zionise and de-Arabize Palestine by clearing the land of its inhabitants and creating a Jewish State on Jewish homeland. Expansion is an essential part of the settler colonial project; ‘Israel’ has no defined borders, indeed its borders are wherever the boots of their soldiers march. Through employing the European colonial vocabulary and tools such as *terra nullius*, the Zionist slogan of “a land without a people for a people without a land” was more than a Zionist propaganda to influence settlers to move to Palestine; it was performative more than descriptive (Lloyd, 2012). Zionism is premised on institutionalised and legalised exclusive presence of Zionist Jews and the

<sup>53</sup> In a meeting with the ‘Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defence Committee’ (Horowitz, 2015)

<sup>54</sup> The wars of 1948, 1956, 1967, 1973, 1982, 1996, 2006, 2008, 2012 and 2014 (I witnessed five of them),



absence of Palestinians who would remain in the “non-place” (Said, 1979, p.29). The Zionist slogan of empty land not only repeats the claim of terra nullius; it also underpins the claim that Palestinians were/are not a people:

The land was not simply empty; the people living there were not people. Thus, the incorporation of native Palestinians into the colonial legal system and politics aims simultaneously at constructing and keeping them as feared Others, which allows the Israeli state to further pursue their elimination. (Shalhoub-Kevorkian, 2015b, p.7)

To summarise, racism, violence and land expansion are core features of the settler colonial project in Palestine. As I will further elaborate in the ensuing thesis, these features are institutionalised within the very structure of ‘Israel’.

### **3.3 Mobile geographies of resistance**

The history of colonialism has always, in one form or another, created a history of resistance. However, the history of settler colonialism in Palestine appears in settler colonialism scholarship as a ‘fait accompli’: as if the master plan of elimination was infallible and no challenges or resistance could arise. In this section, I bring attention to the history of resistance in Palestine, which is overlooked in settler colonialism scholarship. This brief overview of resistance does not mirror the history of settler colonialism. Indeed, “the map of resistance is not simply [the] underside of the map of domination” (Pile, 1997, p.23). The resistance in Palestine “does not just act on topographies imposed through the spatial technologies of domination; it moves across them under the noses of the enemy, seeking to create new meanings out of imposed meanings, to re-work and divert space to other ends [...] Resistance, then, not only takes place in place, but also seeks to appropriate spaces, to make new spaces” (p.16) (Section 3.4.).

Resistance to the settler project, as long as oppression continues, is in a continuous and ongoing manifestation; it has never stopped, and it has no barriers, moving between different geographies and spaces. In total, the Palestinians revolted against the armed newcomers eighteen times in the last 100 years. This is, on average, one revolution or Intifada every ten to fifteen years<sup>55</sup> (Halabi, 2015).

Since the very beginning of this project [Israel], in particular after the state form was established, there has always been a geographical area where a violent and militant confrontation took place with Arab or Palestinian. If we to review the history of the geography of resistance in Palestine, we will find that there has always been a

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<sup>55</sup> الانتفاضة (*alaintifada*) means ‘uprising’ in Arabic. It was not peaceful in these gap years, which usually witnessed several incidents of violent confrontation between Palestinians the settler state, which is further explained in chapter two.

resistant geography in a direct and violent confrontation with this project...it is important to remember that resistance in Palestine never ever stopped, it is a geographically mobile resistance moving from one place to another ... militant resistance never stopped for one moment, nor one hour, nor one day. (S. A. Halabi, 2014) (My translation)

Resistance to contemporary settler colonialism in Palestine started as early as the first wave of settlers' emigration to Palestine in 1882 and continues to the present uprising in Jerusalem. As one Zionist historian wrote, (quoted in Daraj) "there was almost no single Jewish settlement founded without 'problems' with its Arab neighbours over the issue of land".<sup>56</sup> The Arabs and Palestinians have been conscious of the Zionist movement from the beginning and this awareness has been translated on the ground into violent and nonviolent resistance, and political, cultural and diplomatic efforts since the 1890s (Abu-Ghazaleh, 1974).

This early detection according to Daraj is because the majority of Palestinians were Falahin [farmers]. Daraj says that the Palestinian Falahin were the foremost in sensing the danger coming from the strangers who came from the sea and lived in Qelaa.<sup>57</sup> The land for the Falahin is not merely a form of income, asset or livelihood, but it is also a culture, life, identity and a home, irrespective of whether they own it or work on it. Therefore, accepting the strangers was out of the question and defending the land was a matter of instinct for Falahin.

The first major resistance act by the Palestinians was in March 1886 when a group of 50 to 60 Palestinian Falahin attacked Petah Tikva and wounded five settlers, taking their animals to the court in Jaffa because they were grazing on their land. Individual and group attacks against the settler colonisers accelerated with their increased emigration to Palestine, particularly after the Balfour Declaration (1917). In 1920, the Al Nabi Mousa uprising occurred, followed by the Jaffa revolution in 1921, and then again in 1929, the Al Buraq rising, which culminated in the great Palestinian revolution in 1936-1939. The Palestinian resistance in the first years of the British colonisation was mainly against the settler colonisers. In the 1920s, there were some diplomatic efforts with some Palestinian bourgeoisie and Arab kings (appointed by the British Empire) who were trying to appeal to England for fairness in the question of Palestine. However, during the revolution of 1936, the Palestinian Falahin targeted the militant

<sup>56</sup> Zionist Historian Yosef Lamdan Quoted in Faisal Daraj; my translation.

<sup>57</sup> قلاع Arabic, means fortress. Abdelwahab Elmessiri mentions that the Palestinian farmers used to refer to the Zionist settlement as Qelaa because of its militant structure.

settler colonisers as well as the British army.<sup>58</sup> Resistance during Nakba in Palestine in some locations endured until the last bullet, in that Palestinians fought tirelessly and to the very ends of their means in order to resist colonisation. In only one year of the Nakba, there were over 1300 different battles that took place across Palestine (Odeh, 2015). Even after Nakba, Palestinian resistance did not stop. Palestinians started to attack the state form of the settler colonial project on their land and attack them from the West Bank and other Arab territories during the 1950s. In the 1960s and 1970s, new militant groups were formed and started to attack the settlers from outside of Palestine, in addition to the resistance within Palestine.<sup>59</sup> In 1987, the First Intifada brought together the spirit of resistance from all Palestinians in all walks of life, but it was during the Second Intifada in 2000-2004 that witnessed an organised militant development of the Palestinian resistance.

The following section, combined with the above historical context of the settler colonial project in Palestine, situates the modern day context and background of the lived experiences and stories explored in this thesis. I discuss the strengths and weaknesses of resistance as an analytical category, and engage with the Palestinian discussions on Sumud and nonviolent resistance, then I introduce the concept of 'everyday life resistance in Palestine'.

### 3.4 Everyday resistance

Resistance theorisation has been a debatable subject among scholars from various disciplines in particular with the rise of Resistance Studies and Subaltern Studies in the 1970s and the 1980s. In spite of the important contributions of this scholarship in exploring resistance to slavery and colonialism and revealing various forms of everyday resistance (e.g. J. Comaroff, 1985; Guha, 1982; Scott, 1985; Stoler, 1985; Taussig, 1980), it has raised questions and critiques in particular of the ways resistance and power are treated and conceptualised (Abu-Lughod, 1990; Brown, 1996; Kelley, 1992; Mitchell, 1990; O'hanlon, 1988; Ortner, 1995). These critiques include "essentialising" of subordinates groups (O'hanlon, 1988), romanticisation of resistance (Abu-Lughod, 1990; Ortner, 1995), an "excessive focus on resistance" (Brown, 1996, p.733).

For instance Rosalind O'hanlon (1988) argues that the main problem with the Subaltern studies concerning resistance is essentialism; a key consequence to this is a conceptual limitation and distortion of the themes of domination and resistance.

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<sup>58</sup> Daraj writes that during the great revolution Palestinians did 10,595 attacks against Zionist and British targets

<sup>59</sup> Al Hala Lake (the 1950s), Al Khalsa (1970s), Land day (1976), the First Intifada (1987-1992), Ahdath Al Nafaq (1996).

O'hanlon debates the problems with humanism in the historiographical project of the contributors of Subaltern Studies, and focuses on the themes of subject and agency in the context of social historiography of colonial South Asia. O'hanlon argues that the way Subaltern Studies treated themes of power and resistance has a "strategic weakness" in their representation of collective cultures and traditions of the subordinate groups in negative aspects such as timelessness. O'hanlon suggests that "[t]his is not a merely poor historical or anthropological practice; it undermines just that sense of power which it is the contributors concern to restore" (p.211). O'hanlon adds that Subaltern Studies "insistence" that resistance should be overt, violent and masculine and overlooks other strategies and practices that "do not take the masculine for of full-blooded rebellion by a subject-agent such as it tends to have enriched within it" (p.214).

Another critical account of anthropological studies of power and resistance is resistance romanticisation (Abu-Lughod, 1990; Ortner, 1995). Abu-Lughod engages with Foucault's discussion of power and suggests an analytical shift in understanding resistance by perceiving it as a "diagnostic of power" (1990, p.42). Abu-Lughod inverts Foucault's quote "where there is power, there is resistance," into "where there is resistance, there is power" (p.42), this shift would allow us "to move away from abstract theories of power toward methodological strategies for the study of power in particular situations" (p.42). Abu-Lughod's main critique to resistance studies is that the "partial or reductionist theories of power" (p.53) tend to romanticise resistance by reading it "as signs of the ineffectiveness of systems of power and of the resilience and creativity of the human spirit in its refusal to be dominated" (1990, p.42). Resistance romanticisation led to overlooking the dynamic nature and structures of power as a whole, which would limit our understanding of or ability to register resistance. Abu Lughod explains: "Yet it seems to me that we respect everyday resistance not just by arguing for the dignity or heroism of the resisters but by letting their practices teach us about the complex interworkings of historically changing structures of power" (p.53).

In Parallel with Abu Lughod, Ortner argues that studies on resistance fail to register or represent "the ambiguity of resistance and the subjective ambivalence of the acts for those who engage in them" (1995, p.175). This failure is because of what she calls "refusal of ethnographic thickness" (p.174). Ortner defines three forms of the ethnographic refusal; "sanitizing politics", "thinning culture", and "dissolving subjects" and explains it as; "a kind of bizarre refusal to know and speak and write of the lived worlds inhabited by those who resist" (p.187). Ortner's main critique to resistance studies is that they are "thin because they are ethnographically thin" and maintains that Resistance Studies are "thin on the internal politics of dominated groups, thin on the

cultural richness of those groups, thin on the subjectivity-the intentions, desires, fears, projects-of the actors engaged in these dramas" (p.190). Ortner argues that studies of resistance failed to address questions of the internal politics and the cultural authenticity of the studied groups as well as failed to answer questions related to the "crisis of representation" (p.190).

In spite of its major contributions, a majority of this literature overlooked the role everyday life plays in the "authentic nationalist production" (Jean-Klein, 2001, p.84). Jean-Klein explains in a study on nationalism and resistance in everyday life during the first Intifada, that such omission made the majority of literature treat the everyday life as a "space where nationalism is perhaps acted out but not initiated or authored" (p.89). According to Jean-Klein this is "more than a question of intellectual and conceptual preparedness. It requires a political-cum-moral readiness to locate authentic subjectivity in everyday life" (p.89). This necessitates acknowledgement of individual agency in the day to day practices which "can have multiple objectives and effects (e.g., opposing one center of authority but supporting another in place), engender a variety of transformative tactics, and be positional and hegemonizing" (p.90). In the context of Palestine, the everyday life itself becomes a political category.

Literature on Palestinian resistance is inspired, influenced and engaging with the above discussions on resistance scholars from different disciplines employed Abu-Lughod's analytical shift of understanding resistance as a diagnostic of power (Jean-Klein, 2001; Salih & Richter-Devroe, 2014), and James Scott's *infra* politics (Johansson & Vinthagen, 2015; Richter-Devroe, 2011).

Studies on resistance in Palestine discussed various forms of individual and collective resistance manifestations including; cultural (Abu-Ghazaleh, 1974; Furani, 2013; Kanafani, 1968; Salih & Richter-Devroe, 2014), Violent (Abufarha, 2006; Nakhleh, 1971; Singh, 2012; Whitehead & Abufarha, 2008; Zogby, 1974), nonviolent everyday (Hammami, 2006; Johnson, 2007; Makdisi, 2010; Pain & Smith, 2008; Qumsiyeh, 2011), as well as exploring resistance among different groups such as women and youth (R. A. Kanaaneh & Nusair, 2010; Peteet, 1994; Richter-Devroe, 2011; Shalhoub-Kevorkian, 2015a) and registered resistance in virtual spaces (Shalhoub-Kevorkian, 2011; Tawil-Souri & Aouragh, 2014) and behind closed doors (Abdo-Zubi, 2014; Meari, 2014).

A majority of this scholarship approached resistance from the perspective of Sumud (e.g. Halper, 2006; Johansson & Vinthagen, 2015; Khalili, 2007; Meari, 2014; Ryan, 2015; Sazzad, 2016). Sumud is "a revolutionary becoming; a Palestinian anticolonial

mode of being” (Meari, 2014, p.550). Sumud, literally means steadfastness. In the Palestinian context, it is used in political and intellectual arenas to refer to a range of Sumud practices. Sumud is individual and collective and it embraces various manifestations. Sumud, means the mere existence in the face of colonialism (Rijke & Van Teeffelen, 2014). Sumud, means contradictory things; resisting immobility and one getting to their job, school, etc. in their everyday life (Hammami, 2006) and “the ability to remain in place” and not to be erased from the map (Bier, 2017, p.54). Sumud, is being able to make jokes during a war time and insisting on enjoying life despite all odds (Richter-Devroe, 2011), Sumud means remembering a Shahid and commemorating national heroes (Khalili, 2007; Laïdi-Hanieh, 2014). Sumud, is reciting a poem or performing a dance (Furani, 2013; Salih & Richter-Devroe, 2014; Sazzad, 2016).

In relation to the existing Sumud literature, I aim to contribute to it in this thesis by following Thiong’o in “The Decolonisation of Mind” (1994) and concur with his understanding that any individual or collective act of resistance against the settler colonials’ project is significant and the accumulation of those actions, moments and sties of resistance, “no matter what weight, size, scale, location in time and space” all shapes the “national heritage” and retains the culture and spirit of resistance. In other words, as Thiong’o puts it “[a]ny blow against imperialism, no matter the ethnic and regional origins of the blow, is a victory for all anti-imperialistic elements in all the nationalities” (p.2). Having said that, I do not intend to “romanticise” nor “essentialise” nor “theorise resistance” in Palestine (Abu-Lughod, 1990; Ortner, 1995). Instead of tracing human suffering and tragedy or exploring the endless list of elimination tools and policies, I aim to analyse how Ahl Al-Ard resist settler colonialism in their day to day life (Das, 2007, 2013) as a vehicle in my quest for new orientations in analysing and theorising settler colonialism in Palestine.

My departure point with this literature is their understanding of resistance in a dichotomy with power, and insistence on taming resistance by theorising it (Routledge & Simons, 1995). In this thesis I understand resistance in its Rhizomatic sense, and I agree with Routledge on the notion that theorising resistance will tame it. As I mentioned in the Introduction to this thesis, my understanding of resistance builds on Deleuze and Guattari’s (1988) terms, “rhizomatic”: in this sense resistance comprises of multiplicities of interactions, relations and acts of becoming. The rhizome as Deleuze and Guattari write, “connects any point to any other point, and its traits are not necessarily linked to traits of the same nature; it brings into play very different regimes of signs, and even nonsign states” (1988:21). Drawing on the rhizomatic understanding

of resistance, I treat everyday resistance of Ahl Al-Ard as “multiplicities of interactions, relations, and acts of becoming—a ceaseless process of struggle, confrontations, and transformations” (Routledge & Simons, 1995, p.481). By focusing on resistance in everyday life, one can establish what it means to stand in different locations and how positions affect the constitution of knowledge and understanding of one's realities and the surrounding world (Chapter Four) (Collins, 1998; Santos, 2015; Smith, 1987).

Furthermore, majority of recent scholarship on everyday resistance in Palestine focused on the invisible, salient, and silent resistance and overlooked other forms of resistance, in particular violent resistance (i.e. Johansson & Vinthagen, 2015, 2016; Makdisi, 2010; Qumsiyeh, 2011; Rijke & Van Teeffelen, 2014; Ryan, 2015; Salamanca et al., 2015). What I would like to highlight here is the politics of knowledge of the recent studies on resistance in Palestine. My concern is that the exclusive focus on nonviolent resistance and overlooking violent resistance may cause harm to the Palestinian resistance by redefining what is acceptable and not acceptable as a resistance, as well as limit our understanding of realities on the ground (L. A. Allen, 2002; Baroud, 2010; Massad, 1997). The excessive focus on nonviolent resistance is misrepresentative, advocated as an ideology associated with a political solution that accepts the “land for peace formula” and presented as a “realist and pragmatist strategy” (Massad, 1997, p.26).<sup>60</sup> Finally, interconnected to my previous points, focusing largely on nonviolent resistance misses the “poetics of violence” (Whitehead, 2004) and more seriously it carries connotations of delegitimizing violent resistance by judging it morally or as useless (Al-sakka, 2015; L. A. Allen, 2002; Baroud, 2010; Massad, 1997; Odeh, 2013).

The internal discussion among Palestinian intellectuals on violent and nonviolent resistance appeared to the surface in the 1980s in the post USSR and post-Cold War era, when the PLO decided to go for the so-called ‘peace process’. This new orientation rose in parallel with a “new discourse of pragmatism” among Palestinian intellectuals which made “those who support Oslo are considered ‘realists’ or ‘pragmatists’, while those who do not are described as anachronisms relegated to the dustbin of history” (Massad, 1997, p.22). Needless to say that those who were

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<sup>60</sup> The “Land for peace” formula as Massad showed in several places (Massad, 1997, 2006b) is racist despite its appearance as a political compromise. Massad comments that “this formula is, in fact, a reflection of the racial views characterizing (European Jewish) Israelis and Palestinian and other Arabs. Whereas the Israelis are being asked and ostensibly are (presented as) willing to negotiate about property, the recognized Western white bourgeois right par excellence, Palestinians and other Arabs are being asked to give up their struggle, coded as “violence”—or more precisely “their” violent means—which is an illegitimate unrecognized method attributable only to uncivilized barbarians” (p.26).

portrayed as unrealistic are those who opposed the peace talks and those who refused to put down their guns when Arafat did. Massad argues that the 'peace process' era brought a 'new value system' among those intellectuals. This new system according to Massad replaced the old slogans of nation liberation, anti-colonial, utopianism, and nostalgia, with the new slogans of nation building, liberal democracy, pragmatism and realism (p.23).

The debate on violent and nonviolent resistance increased in particular in the 2000s during the Second Intifada with the emergence of self-bombing attacks against the 'Israeli' settlers. Realists and pragmatists Intellectuals argued largely against such attacks arguing that such attacks will harm the Palestinians image and will only get Palestinian people "total failure to get a fair hearing for the Palestinian side in the Western media" (Hammami & Tamari, 2001, p.15).<sup>61</sup> In an article titled Political realists or comprador intelligentsia: Palestinian intellectuals and the national struggle, Massad presents a critical account of what he calls "intellectual compradors"<sup>62</sup> and situate their discourse within the context of "heralding of the final victory of modernization theory" among Western political scientists (p.24). Massad explains that the domination of the modernisation discourse in the post USSR and Post Oslo era inspired some intellectuals to argue that Palestine is free and could become the "Singapore of the Middle East" (p.25). The significance of this discourse according to Massad is presented in "the way its axioms are articulated and in the way it produces a Palestinian politico-intellectual idiom that forms the cornerstone of realist-pragmatist thinking" (p.25). Part of the problem of ignoring violence and focusing on the nonviolent

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<sup>61</sup> On June 19, 2002 around 58 of Palestinian academics, intellectuals and public figures signed a petition published in *al-Quds* newspaper, the petition reads:

"We the undersigned feel that it is our national responsibility to issue this appeal in light of the dangerous situation engulfing the Palestinian people. We call upon the parties behind military operations targeting civilians in Israel to reconsider their policies and stop driving our young men to carry out these operations. Suicide bombings deepen the hatred and widen the gap between the Palestinian and Israeli people... We see that these bombings do not contribute towards achieving our national project which calls for freedom and independence. On the contrary, they strengthen the enemies of peace on the Israeli side and give Israel's aggressive government under Sharon the excuse to continue its harsh war against our people". The petition and the signatures received strong critical accounts from intellectual and Palestinian public figures. Source: <http://www.miftah.org/Display.cfm?DocId=820&CategoryId=15>

<sup>62</sup> Joseph Massad presents a critical account to the Palestinian realist intellectuals who are "reduced to the function of the Palestinian comprador bourgeoisie whom they serve" (p.35). Massad adds that those intellectual compradors' job is to import and export, "[t]hey export opinion polls, sociological data, official apologies, and personal memoirs, in addition to their own voices and images, which are featured in the New York Times, on CNN television, and on speaking tours in the United States. They import International Monetary Fund (IMF) ideas, World Bank plans, international invitations, USAID-sponsored training, Western funding for their local institutions, and Western public and media accolades. They oppose any critical intellectual production at home or in the diaspora, and are linked like the class with which they are allied to imperial interests and policies of which they are the main local beneficiaries" (p.35)



resistance is as Massad writes: “[t]he need to be accepted by the West, to present Palestinians, or at least their liberal intellectuals, as Western white people, is a desire that both the PLO leadership and these intellectuals have tried to realize in the last ten years” (p.31). Massad concluded that “[t]hese Palestinian apologist intellectuals are not realists at all. Their fantastic schemes demonstrate that "realism" is an effect of a Western liberal discourse that they fail to question” (p.34).

Nonviolent resistance is not an alien idea for Palestinians, as I showed earlier in this chapter, resistance in Palestine took all types and forms of strategies and manifestations (cultural, strikes, disobedience, militancy, etc. The problem with studies on nonviolent resistance is that it is linked to a political agenda of the ‘new Palestinian’ discourse that emerged after the Oslo agreement and it is misrepresentative and gives a partial and distorted account of realities on the ground, which would limit our understanding of the past, present and future (Al-sakka, 2015; Baroud, 2010). For instance, the first Intifada is portrayed as non-violent and successful in comparison with the second Intifada which is presented as violent and a failure (Hammami & Tamari, 2001). Indeed, the second Intifada was much more violent and bloody than the first Intifada, and that doesn't mean that the first Intifada was not violent. The first Intifada as I mentioned earlier witnessed the birth of two militant groups ( Hamas and Islamic Jihad, which are today capable of launching rockets and reaching to the heart of Tel Aviv). The issue here is that excessive focus on nonviolent resistance in the case of Palestine is similar to reducing the Indian anti-colonial struggle to Ghandi's peaceful walks or as focusing on Martin Luther King and ignoring Malcolm X and glorify Mandela the peaceful man and overlooking Mandela the fighter (Baroud, 2010). This will only give us partial accounts and incomplete stories of realities on the ground.

Despite the flaws and unrepresentative views that it provides, how did the nonviolent narrative gain such prominence in the literature? What is interesting in the case of nonviolent resistance or “polite resistance” as Allen writes about Palestine, is that it is largely endorsed by intellectuals, expatriates and internationals working in solidarity with the Palestinian (L. A. Allen, 2002). Indeed, there are Palestinian intellectuals and activists who support and practice nonviolent resistance, yet, as Al-Sakka (2015) argues, it overlooks the violent realities on the ground, and furthermore some of the nonviolent resistance activities are reduced into ‘theatrics festivals’. Al-Sakka echoes with Massad's argument that the main concern of those who call for “polite resistance” is their image portrayed in the West and not the more factual reality on the ground.

In a lecture titled “In the violence of nonviolence”, Khaled Odettalah argued that when studying nonviolence it is important to make a distinction between nonviolence as a philosophy and nonviolence as an ideology. In the case of Palestine the non-violence is

advocated as an ideology with the aim to redefine resistance. In other words, the focus within intellectual and political spaces where nonviolent resistance is debated, the issue is to redefine what is acceptable (by the West) as a resistance, and what is not (2013). As I demonstrated the counter-arguments of solely focusing on the nonviolent resistance and the significant implications related to this oversight, what I would like to highlight in this thesis is the politics of knowledge in the case of studying everyday resistance in Palestine. As I will further elaborate in Chapter Four, my understanding of everyday resistance is in line with the decolonial research and standpoint epistemology in feminist scholarship, where I locate resistance as an ethnographic category to study everyday life in Palestine by focusing on three mobile geographies of resistance; Jerusalem, Gaza and Haifa (P. H. Collins, 1998; Harding, 1989, 1992; Sium & Ritskes, 2013; D. E. Smith, 1987).

To study resistance to settler colonialism in Palestine, I define Ahl Al-Ard's relationship with the land as a site of resistance and positions hope as a critical element in everyday life (Wildcat et al., 2014). This is important because within settler colonial contexts "[l]and is what is most valuable, contested, required" not only to make it the new home and source of capital for the settler colonisers but likewise because "the disruption of Indigenous relationships to land represents a profound epistemic, ontological, cosmological violence. This violence is not temporally contained in the arrival of the settler but is reasserted each day of occupation" (Tuck & Yang, 2012, p.5).

To understand everyday resistance in Palestine Michel De Certeau (1984) work on the *Practice of Everyday Life* is useful here. Certeau insists on the centrality of human agency, sees everyday life as a site with opportunities for spontaneity and the potential for diverse outcomes. Even if Certeau's theory is based on the context of an urban study in a capitalist society, yet his understanding of the everyday practices as acts of resistance is useful to study the-every day in Palestine. Certeau argues that the routine of ordinary people of walking, cooking, etc., are tactics and practices of subverting the power. According to Certeau, the fact that everyday life takes place within a forced system does not mean that everyday actors have no freedom. He sees them not as automatons but as artful "poachers," using the products provided by the dominant cultural economy in the service of projects and desires which elude public definition or control.

I also review Pile's useful conceptualisation of resistance that happens in and beyond spaces defined by power relations. This understanding is premised on two points. First,

“resistance is understood not only in terms of [people’s] location in power relations but also through their intended and received meanings” (Pile 2013 p.26). Second, it adopts a spatial understanding of resistance which “necessitates a radical reinterpretation and reevaluation of the concept: by thinking resistance spatially, it becomes both about the different spaces of resistance and also about the ways in which resistance is mobilised through specific spaces and times” (p. xi). In this sense, resistance centres not only the countless “spaces of political struggles,” but also draws attention to “the politics of everyday spaces, through which political identities constantly flow and fix” (p. xi). These spaces, are not necessarily “glamorous or heroic, about fighting back and opposition, but may subsist in enduring, in refusing to be wiped off the map of history” (p. xi). In this sense, “resistance does not just act on topographies imposed through the spatial technologies of domination; it moves across them under the noses of the enemy, seeking to create new meanings out of imposed meanings, to re-work and divert space to other ends....Resistance, then, not only takes place in place, but also seeks to appropriate spaces, to make new spaces” (Pile 2013 p. 16).

## **Conclusion**

In this chapter, I built on existing literature to understand the settler colonialism project in Palestine as a return of old colonisers in a new form and it serves as a functional settler colonial project that is well aligned with the interests of the Western empires (first Great Britain, then the USA). I located the Zionist settler colonial project in Palestine within the larger historical colonial encounters between the European colonisers and the Arab World. I pointed out that settler colonialism in Palestine is neither a discovery (as Australia) nor a new coming (central Africa) for the settler colonisers. I presented my alternative understanding of the settler colonial situation in Palestine and established the context in Palestine as a struggle for liberation rather than endless elimination. I showed how the settler colonial project in Palestine employed the vocabulary of race and emptiness – similar to the older settler colonisers – to spatialize its mythologies and reshape the current space according to their imagination. I demonstrated the topographies of the settler colonial project in Palestine, which build on European settler colonial vocabulary, racism, violence and land expansion.

I presented that there is no fixed meaning for my understanding of resistance in Palestine, it is, in Deleuze and Guattari’s (1988) terms, “rhizomatic”: it consists of diversities of interactions, relations and acts of becoming. Everyday resistance in Palestine includes an endless list of “symbolic meanings, communicative processes, political discourses, religious idioms, cultural practices, social networks, physical

settings, bodily practices, and envisioned desires and hopes” (Routledge, 1997, p.68). These can be individual, or collective, violent and face to face confrontations, or hidden and behind the back of the master. This can be for little or stretched time: “metamorphic, interconnected, or hybrid; creative or self-destructive” (p.69). My understanding of resistance is premised on two points; First, “resistance is understood not only in terms of [people’s] location in power relations, but also through their intended and received meanings” (Pile 2013 p.26). Second, it adopts a spatial understanding of resistance which “necessitates a radical reinterpretation and revaluation of the concept: by thinking of resistance spatially, it becomes both about the different spaces of resistance and also about the ways in which resistance is mobilised through specific spaces and times” (p. xi).

The following chapter presents the journey of my field work in settler colonised home.

## Chapter Four. Ethnography of hope<sup>63</sup>

### Introduction

In Chapter Two, I discussed the theoretical and methodological limitations of settler colonialism scholarship and the potential political and ethical risks when studying Palestine. I indicated the critical assumptions and omissions made in this literature when it engages with the study of Palestine, which led to serious implications of misreading both 'Israel' and Palestine. In Chapter Three, I followed Ali Shariati's call to "return to the self" and brought to the fore examples of lesser known, but useful knowledge from non-Western academics. I recognised 'Israel' as being a settler colonial project derivative of the European colonialism that started 500 years ago and it is likened to another settler colonial encounter between the Arab world and the European invaders. I also followed Deleuze and Guattari (1988) concept of the "rhizome" and geographies of resistance literature to explain the context of Palestine as a struggle for liberation rather than a story of endless oppression and elimination. My critical account of settler colonialism scholarship and the "return to the self" not only pushed me to look into different knowledge and seek new lenses to read the self and the other, but also influenced and guided my research journey itself.

This chapter explains how this journey of 'ethnography of hope' was shaped and how I later discovered myself walking in it. During the journey I was led and guided to witness and experience various aspects of the "spirits of resistance" in everyday life in Palestine. This thesis draws on ten months of fieldwork carried out from October 2013 to September 2014 in various parts of the historical Palestine. My fieldwork focused on the embodiments and instances of struggle and resistance found in three geographies in Palestine. Firstly, Jerusalem tells the stories of unceasing and active resistive sites. Secondly, the survivors from the Gaza Strip recalled their accounts of resistive moments during the Gaza war in 2014. Finally, the stories from Haifa show how "resistance morale infrastructure" is endless in the time or space (Daqqa, 2009). The methodology used is informed by the concepts propounded by standpoint scholars and I adopted the 'decolonial research' approach with the intention to challenge the conventional, taken for granted conduct of research and the domination of one way of seeing the world. In particular, I was inspired by works interested in decolonial inquiry that asked new and different questions - about ourselves and the social world in which we live – but which also appreciated other ways of knowing, thinking, being and seeing. This allowed me to make clearer a sense of the entanglement of the 'self' and the

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<sup>63</sup> See Rima Hammami (2006).

others, whose voices, stories, emotions and experiences contributed to the complex but also insightful ethnographic data (Gaudry, 2011; Harding, 1989, 1992; Nakata, Nakata, Keech, & Bolt, 2012; E Ritskes, 2011; D. E. Smith, 1987; L. T. Smith, 1999).

Standpoint theory is relevant because it allows me to ground my research on Ahl Al-Ard experiences and “in their terms”, it values their material experiences and ways of being (Harding, 1992, p.187). It is relevant because it allows me to consider “practices outside academia as valid, and even as necessary. Attempts at the construction of knowledge in other perspectives, politically and philosophically nourishes the decolonial proposal, and challenges the methodological order of the Western Social Sciences” (Restrepo, 2014, p.141). Moreover, it allows me to consider the everyday life in Palestine as a resource of knowledge rather than a resource of information. Standpoint theory is relevant because it “creates knowledge – not just opinion – that is, nevertheless, socially situated” (Harding, 1992, p.181).

I was further inspired by Fanon’s call to take the responsibility of changing the story and tell the untold stories of resistance neglected in Western academia, rather than the stories of surrender (1963). In what follows, I trace my thesis journey that led to following the stories of resistance explored in this research. Structurally, this chapter is divided into four sections. To set the context of the fieldwork, I start with a reflection upon my positionality as a Palestinian researcher studying home, but trained in a Western academic institute, and what implications this has had for my thesis and the fieldwork journey. I explain my research design and how my field journey helped to guide my research focus on resistance and inspired me to conduct a multi-sited ethnography of hope in three mobile geographies of resistance using the decolonial approach and analyse it in three dimensional themes - namely in spatial, temporal and mind dimensions. I then present and introduce my research sites and participants. Moreover, I outline the methods that allowed me to better understand the entangled narratives, life stories, images, places, and moments that make up the rich ethnographic data of everyday resistance in Palestine. Finally, I present the important issues regarding reflexivity and ethics.

#### **4.1 Studying settler colonised home: Field journey of ethnography of hope**

“How we see a thing – even with our eyes – is very much dependent on where we stand in relationship to it”. (Thiong'o 1994 p.88)

My understanding of research itself, “as a set of ideas, practices and privileges that were embedded in imperial expansionism and colonization and institutionalized in academic disciplines, schools, curricula, universities and power,” (L. T. Smith, 1999,

p.x) makes it hard to discuss the study of the methodology examining settler colonialism in Palestine without clarifying where I stand in relation to my the subject of enquiry, i.e. resistance in everyday life in Palestine. In “The vulnerable observer” (1996) Ruth Behar questions ‘subjectivity’ in knowledge and criticises the tendency “to depersonalize one’s connection to the field” and to treat fieldwork as “other” to the “self”. Behar maintains that such engagements produce “unpeopled” accounts about different concepts of “isms” (p.25).

To investigate settler colonialism in Palestine for some scholars, as I have shown in chapter two, is like watching a ‘football match,’ where one only needs to know the rules, or is comparable to the observation of bacterial colonies in a science laboratory. Conversely, from where I stand as an Arab-Palestinian woman, studying settler colonialism in Palestine was not comparable to watching a sport game or observing a cell under a microscope at all. It is research about me, my family, and the people who settler colonial scholars assume are hopeless and will be eliminated sooner or later. It was a study of my land, where I worry about my mere physical existence on it and on which, according to settler colonialism scholarship, is a “taboo” territory where I have no place.

Furthermore, it was a study carried out in a context in which I was in confrontation with the settler colonial project since day one.<sup>64</sup> These realities influence how I see, think and ask in my study of settler colonialism in Palestine. It might not be problematic for Australian or Israeli scholars, for instance, to intellectualise elimination and rationalise the impossibility of decolonisation in settler colonies, or what it means to lose hope of the end of settler colonialism. They do not have to prove their mere existence on the land, nor do they have F16s in their skies. Some of these scholars theorise in the safe confines of their Western ivory towers, and they belong to the ‘winners’ who ‘took it all’ and now live on a territory that has been seized by the same ‘logic of elimination’ that they profess, hence the focus and reiteration of their scholarship.

My concern about the domination of the elimination narrative and the lack of hope for an alternative comes from my own intellectual engagement with settler colonialism literature and the conferences in which I participated at British universities. I reflect on these encounters with my personal understanding gained through many years of engagement in political activism on issues related to resistance, knowledge and colonialism, and personal experiences lived and learned growing up in Palestine. In settler colonialism scholarship, I did not recognize the Palestine or the Palestinians that

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<sup>64</sup> On my way to Palestine, while I was crossing the borders I was detained and interrogated for a few hours because I was ‘rude’ to the soldier who was checking my papers.

I know and understand intimately. This literature seemed to be oblivious to the many things and facts on the ground that I grew up knowing and seeing in Palestine. For instance, while David Lloyd cannot imagine Palestine without 'Israel', where I come from, Palestine is Palestine, and there is no confusion about it. We also know clearly that Palestine is currently under a colonial occupation, and that they renamed our land 'Israel', but we did not rename it, and we still call it Palestine. As the Palestinian poet Mahmoud Darwish once said, "She was called Palestine. Her name later became Palestine".

My divergence with settler colonialism scholarship is not only because it reflects an incomplete or distorted image of us, but also because it is an invitation for losing hope and it is unable empirically to recognize the rhizomatic character of resistance in Palestine too. I start with the personal, which is "not an end in itself" (Behar, 1996, p.14). It provides me with an opportunity to set the context of my research journey. I present a more "peopled" personal account of everyday life in Palestine and explain the relevance of standpoint theory and the decolonial approach to the study of settler colonialism in Palestine (p.14) .

#### My Everyday life in Palestine

In positioning myself as an Arab-Palestinian woman, I am claiming a cultural and political set of experiences. I was born and grew up in Jerusalem in a neighbourhood called Jabal Al-Mukaber, which was seized by the settler colonisers in the 1967 war. My grandmother remembered the troubled day very well. She recollected: "we ran away to Al-Bareh [area between Jerusalem and the Dead Sea], we stayed there for a few days; when we came back, there was a big hole in our house, and it was a bomb. They killed Mustafa; he was the only child for his mother. Allah ekserek ya Israeel [May God destroy you, Israel]". Culturally, I did not grow up learning about Palestine from Haim Gouri poems or Herzl's diary (as quoted in settler colonialism scholarship). I learned about Palestine from my grandmother: from the stories of the 1936 revolution and her fearless and determined arguments, which I used to watch and hear when I was a little girl, with the Israeli soldiers every time they stopped their armoured vehicles next to her small grocery shop. I learnt about Palestine from my mother's anger at 'Israel' every time she heard news of another senseless killing, arrest or house demolition; her hope when she heard news of active resistance, and from her belief that 'Israel' is not forever. Earlier on in my childhood, I learnt about the politics in Palestine from my father's political activism and a small but influential collection of books we had in our house. I learnt about Palestine from Ghassan Kanafani novels, and poems of Mahmoud Darwish, Samih Al Qassem, Amal Dunqul, Tawfiq Zayad and



others. I grew up in a highly politically aware household; politics was what we breathed and discussed over meals – it was a de facto politicised life, and you could not escape it.

I live with my family in a house that's getting smaller and smaller, since it is very difficult to obtain a construction permit in Jerusalem. My family, like thousands of Jerusalem families, divided the house when my two brothers married. Growing up in Jerusalem, I witnessed changes in the topography of my hometown. My maternal grandparents lived twenty minutes' walk away from our house. As a little girl, I often walked to my grandparents. On my way, I used to pass through many olive orchards where I also used to join my cousins and relatives once every year in a collective social ritual to collect olives. These olive trees do not exist anymore – they were uprooted to build the Wall, and now the same distance would take me about two hours of driving. Also, I witnessed changes in the social fabric of family relations because of restricted movement. All of my uncles and aunts from my mother's side live in the West Bank, which means that they cannot come to visit us in Jerusalem, including my aunt who literally lives ten minutes' walk away from our house. This restriction became even harder to live alongside after the wall was erected in 2004. Restrictions on religious and social gatherings also disrupted our unity. As a little girl, I fondly remember the busy gatherings of Iftar feasts (the breaking of fast) almost every night during Ramadan. Those gatherings are much less common nowadays. During Ramadan in 2013, we had only one Iftar feast with an aunt who entered Jerusalem 'illegally'. Eid days and Ramadan in my childhood were very busy days with relatives coming from different places in Palestine. This does not happen anymore. Family gatherings are rare and there are always some who do not make it because they do not have a permit to enter Jerusalem. Such moments force Israel to the social relations of daily life. Growing up in Jerusalem, even at an early age we learn all the legal terms and conditions that entail various court fines, building permissions and demolition orders as these issues constantly featured in family conversations. We would often end up cursing 'Israel' at the Iftar table and family visits, and I would always hear someone say in a concluding note: "Allah kber [God is Great] Israel is not staying forever".

When the first Intifada started in 1987, I was six years old and I have vivid memories of demonstrators chanting: "Broh Bdm Nafdeek Ya Shaid" ["Martyr: with our souls and blood we will honour you"]. I also remember a big and bold 'No 181' written on a wall next to our house. Another vivid memory is the smell of the tear gas and soldiers invading our house. The soldiers forced my father to clean the writing on the wall; I proudly gave them a grimace of defiance. On another occasion, I recall hiding under

the bed shaking in fear when they invaded our house once again while my parents were away. I also remember vividly my mother shouting “Shahid!” [Martyr!] When our neighbour Jamal Shqerat was shot in the head during a Muthaura in the town. I remember the framed words of “sa asber hata e’jaz asabru an sabri” [I will endure more than endurance can do] hung on the wall in my aunt’s living room, whose husband was sentenced to 18 years’ imprisonment. I attended the school in Jerusalem that was founded in support of the survivors of the Deir Yassin Massacre in 1948. I remember my History and Science teachers, who spent many years in prison for their resistance activism and who had visible torture marks on their bodies. Both teachers told us stories about the iconic resistance movement leaders such as Laila Khaled, Dalal Al Mughrabi, Abdel Qader Al- Hussein, and others.

For my undergraduate studies, I enrolled at Birzeit University or Jameat Al-Shuhada [University of Martyrs] as it is known in Palestine. When the Second Intifada (2000-2004) started, I was in my second year. During this period, I participated in several political activities including demonstrations at the Surda checkpoint, which cuts the main road between Ramallah and tens of Palestinian towns including Birzeit where the university town is located. The university campus and the student accommodation (where I resided) were invaded several times by the Israeli army with many students interrogated and arrested. The study at the university at the time was interrupted repeatedly and for months during 2002 when Ramallah was invaded. It was also during this time, the second Intifada, that I collected the most violent memories of my life in Palestine. I saw friends and colleagues being arrested, shot and killed. During the siege in Ramallah in March 2002, I was living in a building less than a kilometre away from Arafat’s compound, which was heavily bombarded in March 2002.

After my graduation I worked with various local and international organisations, which involved travelling widely throughout different cities, villages and refugee camps in Palestine. I went through hundreds of different checkpoints and visited hundreds of Palestinians homes. Almost every house I visited during my fieldwork had a framed embroidered map of Palestine (like the one I have in my parents’ house and the one David Lloyd cannot imagine in Chapter Two), and it was common to find various resistance icons in the house, Hanthala drawings, powerful resistance poems and words, and photo of a Shahid or prisoners.

Although it is difficult to pinpoint precisely how these experiences have influenced my life and career in general, my memories of growing up in Palestine certainly played a significant part in shaping my interests in reading, writing and researching further afield

on everyday resistance in Palestine, which led me to pursue a PhD. While my understanding and reading continued to grow and develop, the focus of my research always centred on the Palestinian's resistance to the settler colonial project in Palestine.

#### Field Journey



Figure 2. Map of Palestine.

Source: Retrieved from <http://www.palestineremembered.com>

In 2013 I secured Ethical Approval from the University of Sussex to carry out my field work. When I first arrived home as a PhD researcher in 2013 I was interested in looking at how the imagined, visualised and narrated nation was gendered and sexualised in the context of everyday life in Palestine. I was based mainly in Jerusalem and Ramallah and travelled extensively throughout Palestine. For the kind of research and fieldwork that I aimed to do I required a wide social connection across various locations in Palestine. I conducted formal initial interviews with some Palestinian cartoonists<sup>65</sup> and used my personal and professional networks, to find research participants and entered their social circles and spaces. Also, I made use of online social media spaces (Facebook and Twitter) to learn about events and activities and to collect political cartoons on the everyday life. Throughout my field journey, I was completely taken aback to be suddenly confronted with a violent and tense context, in which my planned research questions and focus were challenged. This influenced my understanding of my role as a researcher, studying settler colonised home. As I said in Chapter Three, the 'normal' day in Palestine is – most of the time – interrupted or about to be interrupted at any moment by violent and face-to-face confrontations with various visible and invisible, and violent and nonviolent, encounters between Ahl Al-Ard and the settler colonial presence and forces. Growing up in Palestine, this was not a surprise, but what struck me anew was pervasiveness of violence in everyday life and how it constituted a core feature of the settler colonial project in Palestine. The year of 2013-2014 witnessed an increase in the violence level in comparison with the year before in particular in Jerusalem and experienced the longest war ever since the foundation of 'Israel'.<sup>66</sup> This violence made me "look" for 'Israel' and its different kinds of violence in everyday life when I first arrived Palestine. I found 'Israel' everywhere manifested in countless embodiments; in my family discussions on our 'illegal' construction fines, on my best friend's body<sup>67</sup>, in the street (i.e. 'Israeli' soldiers, flags, and David star) and many other places. The presence of the Zionist settler colonial project was overwhelming, depressing and an invitation for losing hope.

After two months of my arrival to the field, my focus radically shifted from investigating how and where 'Israel' is colonising us to how this colonisation is resisted. This shift

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<sup>65</sup> Baha Al Bukhari, Muhammaed Sabaneh, and Ramzi Taweel

<sup>66</sup> According to Zionist resources there were 2139 Palestinians attacks against settler colonisers (soldiers and settlers) during 2014,<sup>66</sup> while it was 1397 during 2013. Palestinian resources register that Palestinians carried out 3966 attacks against different settlers' targets the same period.

<sup>67</sup> He has mark of chains on his wrist from the time of his imprisonment for his involvement in the First Intifada.

was largely influenced by two things: my everyday observations of traveling throughout historical Palestine and my involvement with the Centre for Colonial Studies and Epistemological Decolonisation<sup>68</sup>. First, in the middle of the violent context of the everyday life in Palestine I found countless embodiments and manifestations of resistance through walking in the city of Jerusalem and drinking coffee at the Bab Al-amoud gate stairs and speaking Arabic on an Israeli bus in Haifa, just to name a few. For instance, it was during one of my walks in the old city of Jerusalem that I saw Israeli soldiers aggressively arguing with an old woman who was selling her vegetables at Bab Al-amoud. The soldiers were forcing her to vacate. While the woman was packing her boxes and cursing 'Israel', a man passing-by approached her and gave her a hand and said to the woman: 'Ma'lesh [it's okay], God is greater than 'Israel' and its army and its government' and the man finished his sentence by saying: 'dawam al hal mn al muhal [literally translates to 'nothing lasts forever'] Hajah' (a respectful title for elderly women). The Hajah held her vegetable boxes and walked away saying loudly: "May Allah destroy you Israel! May Allah curse you Israel" While still angry, Hajah turned back twice to make sure that the soldiers heard her cursing at them. This scene was witnessed by many people walking nearby and many of them would stop and would echo with Hajah or give her a hand of support. The above encounter and other similar events influenced and informed the political perspective of my analysis and my focus on resistance and hope in this thesis. The Hajah cursing 'Israel', and the man believing that 'dawam al hal mn al muhal' gave me hope.

The second equally important source of hope that influenced my research Journey was my engagement with the Suleiman Al Halabi; a research and community learning centre founded in 2011 in Jerusalem by a group of volunteers,<sup>69</sup> was most influential. This research group is unique in combining both the academic and community-based researches focusing on three main areas, Zionist colonisation in Palestine, national culture, and resistance, with the aim of producing community-based and academically sound knowledge on resistance in Palestine, fostering a sense of culture that supports the national and social struggle for liberation. Suleiman Al Halabi organises reading

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<sup>68</sup> Suleiman Al Halabi is named after a Syrian theology student who assassinated Jean-Baptiste Kléber, the General of French army in Egypt in 1800. This assassination delayed the colonisation of the Arab World by at least 100 years. After the assassination, Al Halabi was arrested and sentenced to death. Al Halabi's skull was later taken and exhibited in a museum in France with a label indicating he was a criminal written underneath it. The presentation of Al Halabi's skull in the museum exemplifies an important aspect of knowledge production, colonialism and resistance. The resistive act of Suleiman Al Halabi as seen through *Ahl Al-Ard* eyes was considered to have been a criminal act in the French anthropological museum. This point is very important for the Suleiman Al Halabi centre in Palestine.

<sup>69</sup> Appendix 1 provides a list of the activities in which I participated at the Suleiman Al Halabi centre during my fieldwork.

and research groups, courses and seminars through the Popular University project, which was launched in 2012. The university provides free courses and organises research groups on colonial studies, Palestinian resistance, and Zionist society. Suleiman Al Halabi activities also include screenings and discussions of films related to resistance and colonisation in different contexts, as well as lectures and discussions on issues related to resistance and colonialism in Palestine. Suleiman Al Halabi launched its website in 2014 where it publishes its audio, visual and written productions.<sup>70</sup> The latest project at Suleiman Al Halabi is Shahid Basel Al Araj course on decolonial research, which started in 2017 in memory of Basel, one of the founders of the centre who was assassinated in March 2017 in Ramallah. My participation in Suleiman Al Halabi events and activities also contributed to the shift from exploring 'Israel' in everyday life to resistance and hope. Furthermore, in this thesis, I use the intellectual and cultural expertise of Suleiman Al Halabi as a source of locally unique and important knowledge, which can enrich our understanding of settler colonialism in Palestine through non-conventional, at least according to the Western academic standard, but nevertheless original, analytical lenses.

During my fieldwork I attended and participated in different cultural, political, social, and academic events, including: art and photo exhibitions, film discussions, reading chain around the old city Jerusalem wall, Shahid funerals (Muhammad Abu Khdeir, Adel and Imad Awadallah, and Samih Al Qassem) weddings (i.e. Mutasem –Chapter Five-). I also organised informal meetings and hang outs with research participants. I followed groups both in virtual and actual arenas. I participated and accompanied local youth groups on political tours to different geographies in Palestine, including parts of Jerusalem colonised in 1948, Haifa, land day villages in Al-Jalil, Al Walajah, and the sites of destroyed villages in Jerusalem (Appendix 2). Attending these events and activities helped me meet research participants whose stories and experiences informed my research journey and correlated with the central theme of this thesis, which is everyday resistance. I will introduce them and analyse their cases in detail in the following chapters.

During my field journey, I found resistance in “everything” (Pile, 1997, p.14) and everywhere, as “there is never one geography of resistance” (p.23). Resistance in Palestine is not only overt and violent. Resistance for Ahl Al-Ard in Palestine – as field data suggests – is manifested in various ways, from existing on its soil to being buried underneath it: from throwing stones and fireworks at soldiers on Ramadan nights in Jerusalem, to firing rockets at settler colonisers' settlements (Chapter Five). From

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<sup>70</sup> Suleiman Al-Halabi publishes its papers and lectures on: <http://www.babelwad.com/>

calling it Palestine to dreaming of a free land from the river to the sea. From watching the drones in their sky, to digging fighting-tunnels under the ground of Gaza Strip (Chapter Six). From graffiti and political cartoons depicting an incapacitated army (Figure 3) to Jihad drinking coffee at Damascus gate stairs while staring at the Zionist soldiers in front of him (Chapter Five). From chanting in demonstrations: 'Al-Quds A'rabe' (Jerusalem is Arab), to giving an Israeli soldier the finger in Souk Al Qataneen in the old city of Jerusalem (Chapter Five). From refusing the settlers' narrative about their past to planting an olive tree in confiscated land in Al Walajeh (Chapter Seven). From documenting the history of resistance and knowing one's self to holding a Palestinian flag at Damascus gate in the old city of Jerusalem and in Haifa (Chapter Five). From surviving a war, to a Palestinian prisoner smuggling his semen back to his wife to ensure his contribution to the demographic battle. From quarrelling with a soldier at a checkpoint and insisting on speaking Arabic with them, to celebrating the arrest of 'Israeli' soldier by the Palestinian resistance groups (Chapter Six). From armed confrontation between 'Israeli' soldiers and Palestinian freedom fighters at a settlement bypass road in Hebron, to a Palestinian woman selling her vegetables in Jerusalem cursing 'Israel': 'Alah Ehedk Ya Israeel, Alah Ekserk Ya Israeel' [May god destroy you 'Israel', May god break you down 'Israel'] (Chapter Five). From a defiant and proud Palestinian drone flying over Tel Aviv to believing that settlers "eventually will leave one day" and "it will not stay forever like this" as Maram and Jihad said in Chapter Five puts it. From Yamin believing that he defeated 'Israel' at the personal level (Chapter Seven) to the introduction of 'Zero distance' to the dictionary of everyday life resistance in Palestine (Chapter Six).



Figure 3. 'End of a Legend' – Baha' Al Bukhari. Published in Al-Ayyam local newspaper during the war on Gaza 2014.

Source: Retrieved from <http://www.al-ayyam.ps>

I conducted a total of 51 of formal and informal interviews (followed by 11 in-depth thematically oriented interviews) and collected other ethnographic data which represents and portrays different spaces across the geography of historical Palestine I collected data about Ahl Al-Ard resistance to 'Israel' in their everyday life and documented their perceptions of realities and lives in Palestine. Ethnographic objects available to me for writing this thesis include; field notes, recorded interviews, diaries and blogs of research participants, political cartoons, and images, relationships, sentiments, chanting at demonstrations, weddings possessions, Shahid funerals, Intifada and revolution songs, memories of my everyday life in Palestine, and political-personal-affective attachments to the subject matter of this thesis.

Following the completion of primary data collection in Sep 2014, I returned to the University of Sussex where I coded the data in three main categories of everyday resistance in Palestine; resistance and space (Chapter Five), resistance and time (Chapter Six), and resistance and mind (Chapter Seven). I used Thematic Analysis (Bamberg, 1997; Josselson & Lieblich, 1999) that helped me identify the following sub-themes related to these categories: active existence and spatialities of resistance (Chapter Five); ordinary life and poetics of violence (Chapter Six); return to the self; and morale infrastructure of resistance (Chapter Seven). I analysed the data in spatial, temporal and mind dimensions to reveal the rhizomatic character of everyday resistance in Palestine. Each empirical chapter focuses predominantly on one of these dimensions. However, it is important to emphasise that all these dimensions are interrelated and synchronise with each other, as I will make clearer in the ensuing chapters.

Fieldwork, data collection and analytical approaches used methods that were revised to suit the specific context and subject of decolonial research in Palestine. Consistent with a decolonial approach and standpoint epistemology in the feminist scholarship, this thesis acknowledges the significance of Ahl Al-Ard ways of seeing and knowing their realities and attempts to account for how and why such perceptions may have developed. In 'The everyday world as problematic: A feminist sociology', Dorothy E. Smith (1987) critiqued the domination of the male perspective in Western theories and argued that social sciences should not be abstract and disconnected from the material experiences of the social subjects of their study. Smith argues that to understand a society, scholars must reflect the particulars of their subjects' lives, which influences how they see the world through their eyes and from their standpoint. A decolonial approach can contribute to the debate on the decolonisation of settler colonialism in



Palestine and is relevant because it allows us to go beyond the phenomena and reasons and look for the resistive subjectivity in ourselves. Moreover, this approach, inspired me to go beyond what is written in settler colonialism scholarship and to believe that the world is in a state of constant change. Most importantly, it allowed me to better understand my relation with the research subject, the sites I observed, the moments I lived and the stories I heard and to recognise my role – in studying my settler colonised home - as a writer of the “collective diary” of the Palestinian people, rather than an ‘objective’ researcher representing them (Al Halabi 2013). I chose a decolonial approach and standpoint theory because it allows me not only to collect and analyse resistive stories but it to also critically engage with the story of elimination and reveal the gap between what is happening in everyday life in Palestine and what is discussed in academic spaces (Chapter Eight).

Consistent with decolonial methodology, this research not only considers everyday life as a source of knowledge, but also as “resources of hope that could be galvanized in processes of restorative justice and ultimately in the unmaking of inequality” (Hammami, 2006, p.6). Hope in this thesis is a method for “radical temporal reorientation of knowledge” about who we are (Miyazaki, 2006, p.5). It is not “an emotional state of positive feeling about the future or a religious sense of expectation; it is not even a subject of analysis” (p.5). An alternative conceptualisation of settler colonialism implies something about hope “in the act of living, the ordinary elements of everyday life. This requires a ‘spark’ of hope – a hope that does not narrow our visions of the world but instead allows different histories, memories and experiences to enter into present conversations on revolution, freedom and our cultural senses of belonging”. Such understanding “may enable other ways of documenting how we may live and hope” (Zournazi, 2002, p.18). Finally, “thinking through hope as a method allows us to begin to confront the most fundamental problem-what knowledge is for” (Miyazaki, 2006, p.9).

The study is postulated as an ethnography of hope because, similar to other settler colonial states, the ultimate goal of ‘Israel’ is to kill the “slightest hope” of freedom; as the Zionist leader Jabotinsky put it: “Every native population in the world resists colonists as long as it has the slightest hope of being able to rid itself of the danger of being colonized”, therefore he suggests building an ‘Iron Wall’ which Ahl Al-Ard “cannot breach”. Jabotinsky’s ‘Iron Wall’ means the creation of conditions, myths and stories that make it impossible to resist; “if the native population should desire to hinder our work, they will find it unobtainable” (Jabotinsky 1923). In other words, ‘Israel’ is after making Ahl Al-Ard accept two myths as truth; Palestinians are defeated (the land is not

theirs anymore) and 'Israel' is undefeatable (impossible to resist and the land is theirs). This research is an ethnography of hope because it is who I am and my subjectivity led me to choosing standpoint theory and a decolonial approach. It is also well grounded in the scholarship and thorough review of literature. Unless we are able to also see through the Ahl Al- Ard eyes, we will only continue to generate partial (and even distorted) accounts of settler colonialism in Palestine.

The following section outlines the research design, details the selection criteria and methodological justification for selected geographies, events and research participants to study resistance in Palestine.

## **4.2 Research design: Multi-sited ethnography of hope**

To explore the lived resistance and hope, I conducted a multi-sited ethnography that focuses on the relationship between Ahl Al-Ard and their land, and the myriad embodiments of spirits of resistance across the geography of historical Palestine. A multi-sited ethnography, as Marcus explains, allows us to “examine the circulation of cultural meanings, objects, and identities in diffuse time-space” (Marcus 1995 p.96). The multi-sited ethnography is relevant because it does not aim for a “holistic representation” of everyday life (Marcus, 1995, p.99). Instead, its analytical focus is set on the connections between, rather than comparisons of, explored spirits of resistance as they are embodied in the stories of resistive sites, moments and narratives. In the preliminary phase of exploration, I collected data from various locations including major cities in the West Bank such as Ramallah, Hebron and Bethlehem, and major cities of the 1948 lands such as Naqab (South), Arabeh and Nazareth (North) to capture the broad ranges of experiences of colonisation and resistance. What emerged from this initial enquiry and field journey were the three distinctive dimensions and manifestations of colonisation of the physical space, time and mind (in relation to land). Respectively, the structures of settler colonialism in Jerusalem, Gaza Strip and Haifa, represented these dimensions particularly well. Therefore, I was able to pursue more focused analyses of the daily engagements and experiences of the people who navigated and counteracted these structures of colonisation through follow-up in-depth interviews.

### **4.2.1 Research sites**

To answer my main research question of how Palestinians resist settler colonialism in their everyday life? – I focused on three different geographies that embodied the spatial (Chapter Five), temporal (Chapter Six) and mental dimensions (Chapter Seven) of colonisation and resistance. As I detailed in the previous pages, the focus on

resistance in these geographies was further developed and influenced by my field journey. Each geography faces specific settler colonial tools and structures. In Jerusalem the very structure of the space aims to fully 'Judaize' the land and the demography of the city. This process is an everyday reality for Jerusalemites and is still ongoing through hundreds of laws and policies aiming to make Jerusalem a Jewish only city (Chapter Five). On the other hand, as a more extreme case of spatial isolation, the Gaza Strip (one of the most densely populated areas in the world) has been under strict air, land and water siege since 2007. Although such an extreme form of spatial control deserves further investigation, I was struck more by how my research participants experienced the colonial construction of a temporal difference during the 2014 war (Chapter Six).

Finally, Al-Muwahhidun in Haifa are subject to an institutionalised set of policies and laws that aim to reduce them into rootless "non-Arab Arab" (Chapter Seven). In total all of these colonial tools and structures harmonise and complete each other to finish the business of settler colonialism by fully controlling the land (space, time and the land inhabitants' minds) and reduce Ahl Al-Ard into an unthreatening manageable minority. It is not my intention in this thesis to focus on or analyse the settler colonial tools and structures of each geography. This is a subject that is thoroughly examined by other scholars (i.e. Bhungalia, 2010; Hanafi, 2012; Li, 2006; Makdisi, 2010; Sa'Di, 2016; Shalhoub-Kevorkian, 2015b). Rather, my main objective is to ask different questions and bring different stories of everyday life in Palestine to challenge the domination of the single story of elimination.

In the following, I specify in detail the methodological justification and rationale of selection of each sites and research participants to explore and analyse resistance to settler colonialism in multiple dimensions and geographies of Palestine.

#### **Jerusalem:** Resistance and Space (Chapter Five)

Similar to other settler colonial projects, 'Israel' tends to spatialise its foundational myths through the construction of a racist space, projected through and imagined by the settlers' eye (Chapter Two). The city of Jerusalem, is at the epicentre of the settler colonial project to Judaize the land and people of Palestine. The ultimate objective of 'Israel' in Jerusalem is "nothing less than to dispossess Palestinians and turn them into a numerical minority, and this is achieved through implanting a fortified Jewish presence that will dwarf or marginalize all the other of the city's myriad actualities" (Said, 1995, p.10). The militant and racist features of 'Israel' (Chapter Five) are visibly demonstrated in the changes of the scenery of the city and carried out through its plans for the city's future (Pullan, 2011, 2013a; Pullan & Sternberg, 2012; Razack, 2002b).

This gives the simple day-to-day life activities such as walking, shopping, cooking, and so on a different dimension that deliberately changes mundane life in Jerusalem into an extraordinary challenge. As Pullan noticed, the frontier in the “embattled city” of Jerusalem is “designed to be not just separate but confrontational” (2011, p.17). This confrontational situation is echoed in Jihad’s words (in Chapter Five): ‘when I walk in Jerusalem I feel I am a mobile militant target’.

In Jerusalem, I focused on resistance and space due to the specific context of the city which makes the mere existence and day to day practices a constant challenge for Palestinians. I did not chose Jerusalem to study how ‘Israel’ is alienating Palestinians and producing exilic conditions to, in effect, force them to leave the city, nor how the settler colonisers are imposing their features on the face of the city, as such issues are well covered by others (Alkhalili, Dajani, & Leo, 2014; Dumper, 2013; Khalidi, 1999; Makdisi, 2009; Nolte, 2016; Pullan, 2013a, 2013b; Pullan & Sternberg, 2012; Yacobi & Pullan, 2014). In spite of the racist and militant structures and characters of the city, my research participants walk every day through the fortified lanes and roads of Jerusalem performing their everyday life activities. As well as, they join others in social, religious, cultural and political gatherings and events in different sites in Jerusalem. Therefore, I employ Routledge’s useful concept of “spatiality of resistance” (1997) and Certeau (1984) theorisation of “walking the city” as resistance (Chapter Three) to analyse Ahl Al-Ard’s individual (walking, shopping) and collective (political, social, religious, and cultural) spatial practices, within the context of fortified and racist Jerusalem. In this chapter I ask, how those practices influence Ahl Al-Ard’s relation with their land, disrupts settler colonialism flow, and most importantly, maintains the spark of hope (Zournazi, 2002).

To explore Ahl Al-Ard resistance in spatial dimension in Jerusalem I chose Bab Al-amoud as a site of resistance. Bab Al-amoud (the Damascus gate)<sup>71</sup> is one of the main entrances to the old city and was one of the main sites of my fieldwork in Jerusalem. Bab Al Amoud is walked everyday by thousands of Palestinians, settlers, soldiers and tourists. Moreover, it is a gateway that leads to several holy sites in the city such as the Al-Aqsa Mosque and the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, as well as, commercial districts, schools, and houses of Palestinians and Jewish settlers.<sup>72</sup> Bab Al-amoud exemplifies the confrontational feature of the space structure in Jerusalem. As Pullan

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<sup>71</sup> The different names given to the place also epitomise the contested nature of the site as a site of conflict. For instance, Palestinians refer to it as Bab Al Amoud which literally means the Gate of Pillar, while the English name is the Damascus gate, and the Hebrew name of it is ‘Shaar Shchem’ according to the biblical reference to the first capital city of ‘Samaria’.

<sup>72</sup> The old city is divided into four quarters: Jewish, Muslim, Christian and Arminian.

noticed, Bab Al-amoud with its fortress structure is a typical panopticon (2006). I also chose Bab Al-amoud because it was the place where most of the activities and protests I participated at took place. Moreover, as I will further explain in section 4.4.2, it was also the meeting point with my research participants and where we spent time and had coffee together. Bab Al-amoud is not only a frontier and a space of death but also a hub of social, political and cultural network and gatherings. At Bab Al-amoud, I was able to observe and engage with various individual and collective spatial practices that challenged and disturbed the settler colonial order in the city.

My involvement in these events and activities gave me the opportunity to join and find my research participants and hearing and learning the stories of resistance and colonial features of the visited sites. Furthermore, my participation in such activities influenced my focus on resistance and on the relation between Ahl Al Ard and their land. For example, in February 2014, I joined a group of Palestinian men and women (aged between 18 and 50) in a tour called At-talleh to Al-qatamoun neighbourhood in Jerusalem which is part of what 'Israel' calls 'West Jerusalem'. At-talleh, is a special type of visit, not a touristic but a visit to a beloved place where the visitor has an emotional connection to the visited place. During the At-talleh we roamed the streets and lanes of Al-qatamoun for hours listening to the stories of resistance and colonisation of the streets and the Palestinian houses (which are still there but inhabited by Jewish settlers) (Figure 4 and 5).<sup>73</sup> The At-talleh at Al Qatamoun and other political tours to Palestinian destroyed villages in Jerusalem helped inform and guide my focus on the relationship between Ahl Al-ard and their land as a site of resistance.

The analysed stories in this chapter are based on materials collected through fourteen interviews, which were followed by four in-depth thematically oriented interviews with the research participants (section 4.2.2). Focusing on their life history of growing up in Jerusalem and their memories of the place, I actively engaged with my research participants through walking in the old city lanes and participating in cultural (e.g. the Reading Festival) and political activities (e.g. demonstrations and organised tours to various sites)<sup>74</sup> in Jerusalem, which enriched the ethnographic data collection and interpretation. I also collected related online materials (e.g. Ramadan nights, Friday prayers) (see Annex 1). In these events, I focused on the motivation and purpose of the gatherings such as who participates in these events and what they chant, and so on. My intention was to explore and analyse the new meanings of the space for those who

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<sup>73</sup> The Guide was the Palestinian historian Anwar Ben Bidas who specialised in the history of Jerusalem.

<sup>74</sup> Tours to destroyed villages of Jerusalem included Qolonia, Sarees, Al-qasstal, and Al-qatamoun in Jerusalem (colonised in 1948).

participate in such events, and to explore how the day-to-day spatial practices of Ahl Al-Ard in Jerusalem keeps the “spirit of resistance” alive, endlessly, and most importantly, in return, how it feeds into their hope for a different future free of settler colonialism (Routledge & Simons, 1995).



Figure 4. At-talleh to Al-qatamoun.

The house of Khalil Al-sakakini – a Palestinian teacher, scholar and poet. The house now is colonised by an organisation that provides social services for Jewish women and children. Source: Fadi Amerah (2014).



Figure 5. At-talleh to Al-qatamoun.

Stories of colonialism and resistance. Semiramis hotel which was bombed by the Haganah movement on Christmas evening of 4th January, 1948 (Orthodox Christians). 44 Palestinians were killed in the attack (most of them were children). Source: Fadi Amerah (2014).

#### The Gaza Strip: Resistance and time (Chapter Six)

The Gaza Strip is one of the most populated areas in the world: 4,904 individuals per square kilometre (PCBS, 2015). Around 80 percent of Palestinians who live in the Gaza Strip are refugees (who mainly live in eight refugee camps) from the Palestinian land colonised in the 1948 war. At the start of the fieldwork, I was initially interested in including the Gaza Strip as one of the research sites. However, it was very difficult for me to obtain a permit to enter Gaza which forced me to exclude it but the war in 2014 reversed this. Between the 7<sup>th</sup> of July and 26<sup>th</sup> of August 2014, 'Israel' waged its longest ever war since its foundation and it was the third war in a six-year period (the first one in 2008-2009 and the second war in 2012). In the 2014 War, the settler colonisers' military forces carried out more than 6,000 airstrikes in Gaza, many of which unscrupulously hit residential buildings. According to the Office for the

Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), there were 2,251 Palestinians killed during the Gaza war, including 1,462 civilians (OCHA, 2015). Amongst the casualties, there were 551 children and 299 women. A staggering number of injuries were reported: over 11,000 Palestinians were injured, which included 3,436 children and 3,540 women, of which 10 percent suffered permanent disabilities. More than 1,500 Palestinian children were orphaned and 142 Palestinian families had three or more family members killed in the same incident, a total of 742 fatalities. Almost all the infrastructure and housing, over 18,000 housing units, were destroyed in whole or in part. Making matters worse, most of the major medical facilities in Gaza and many of the ambulances were damaged and unable to respond to the influx of emergencies. At the height of the destruction, the number of internally displaced people (IDP) reached 500,000, or 28 percent of the population in Gaza (OCHA, 2015). On the other side, the Palestinians fired more than 3,000 rockets targeted at the surrounding settlements, Jerusalem, Tel Aviv and Haifa, and killed 70, of 67 of whom were soldiers killed in battle and arrested a number of Israeli soldiers.

The above figures are presented to depict the magnitude of horror of the war that unfolded unending for days and nights which was full of explosions, violence and death everywhere. According to official Israeli sources, during the war, 'Israel' used 23,400 tank shells, 20,400 artillery shells and 2.9 million bullets; that is, "almost two bullets for every man, woman and child in Gaza" (Abunimah, 2014). All these shells and bullets radically disordered and invaded the temporal and spatial spaces in Gaza during the 2014 war. Instilling a wide-spread sense of uncertainty, irregularity, time confusion and a constant fear of imminent death. On the other hand, the figures also show that the Palestinians (armed groups) were not entirely passive during the war. There was also an active presence of forces of 'resistance' on the ground and under the ground (tunnels). This resistance was more than 'noisy' and created a 'balance of fear' between Ahl Al-Ard and the settler colonisers (Johannsen, 2011; Rubin, 2011).

In Palestine, whenever Gaza is mentioned it is followed with Al E'zah: Ghazah Ramz Al E'zah [Gaza is symbol of glory and dignity]. Gaza represents a unique metaphor for resistance for Palestinians and Arabs. This is not only evident in Ahl Al-Ard's chanting at Bab Al-amoud for Gaza to hold on strong during the 2014 War, and women's ululations in Jerusalem and West Bank rooftops after hearing a siren indicating a rocket launch from Gaza to settlements in Jerusalem (Chapter Five). It was also evident in my research participants' narratives, for instance Kareem, who will be introduced in Chapter Six, during one of our conversations who told me about his memories of growing up in a refugee camp in Gaza city. He proudly remembers how the Zionist

soldiers would patrol while constantly rotating around themselves for cover because they did not know when and from where they may be attacked by Ahl Al-Ard.

My aim here is not to romanticise the war days nor analyse the military efficiency of the violent resistance movement. Rather, it is to recognise and to unmask the other face of Gaza that we Palestinians know and to ask new questions and present different narratives that counter the dominant narrative of hopelessness found in the settler colonialism scholarship. For instance, Gaza as seen through the Ahl Al-Ard eyes<sup>75</sup> is the place where Palestinians manufacture and develop heavy weapons capable of attacking 'Israel'.<sup>76</sup> Gaza is the place where Palestinians fight literally under and above the land, and it is the place where the Palestinian resisters "invaded the enemy front". Gaza is a pride of Palestine because, against all odds, it manages to manufacture hundreds of locally made rockets for defending the land and fighting effectively: that is, by hitting the intended targets, it instils the fear of threat to the nuclear armed 'Israel'. The names of the rockets also carry the spirit of resistance and fighters such as Al Qassam, Al Naser, Al-Aqsa, Al-Quds, M75 (named after a Maqadmeh freedom fighter who was assassinated in 2003), J80 (named after a Jabaari freedom fighter who was assassinated in 2012), R160 (named after a Rantissi freedom fighter who was assassinated in 2004). Gaza has accumulated a history of struggles and resistance which did not start in 2014 - it is the most recent war, but it goes back to the Crusades, and the subsequent waves of European colonization. Gaza's reputation in Palestine is notorious for invaders and legendary for Ahl Al-Ard: that it is the place where people are fearless and are hardly intimidated by oppression.

In Chapter Six, I bring to the fore the overlooked, but yet, significant examples of resistance in the Gaza Strip during the events of the 2014 war by focusing on the ordinary life of research participants and the cultural schemes of violent resistance on the ground during the war. I focus on hope, resistance and "faith in the future" rather than focusing on the 'victimhood' seen through the traumatic and psychoanalytical lenses (Perkins, 2001; Whitehead, 2012). I aim to challenge the dominance of the scholarship which reduce Gaza to a hopeless humanitarian case and a live laboratory for all kinds of surveillance, bio-politics and micro-politics targeting 1.91 million

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<sup>75</sup> On the other hand, Gaza as seen by 'Israel' is literally "hell": instead of saying "go to hell", the Israelis would often say "go to Gaza" in Hebrew. When the first Intifada started in Gaza, the Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin once said: "I wish I [would] wake up one morning and find Gaza swallowed by the sea". Despite his wishes, Gaza was neither swallowed by the sea nor do Gazans fear the sea. As the well-known proverb in Palestine said by Thaer during the war (who will also be introduced in Chapter Six) says: "If Gaza fears the sea's angry waves, it would not settle in front of it." It was the settlers who had to leave Gaza Strip and close down and retreat from their settlements in 2005.

<sup>76</sup> Syria and Palestine are the only Arab countries where they produce their own weapons.



Palestinians (i.e. Bhungalia, 2010; J. Collins, 2008; Jabary Salamanca, 2011; Li, 2006; Tawil-Souri, 2012).

During the war I was based in Jerusalem, and for 51 days I was in daily contact with people I know from the Gaza Strip.<sup>77</sup> I would spend the whole nights talking to friends and colleagues. I joined other research participants in demonstrations in Jerusalem, Haifa and Ramallah protesting against the war. I visited severely wounded Gazans who were transferred by international organisations to Jerusalem hospitals during and after the war. Even though initially I was not considering these activities as part of my fieldwork, yet active involvements and close engagements with people and situations in Gaza helped unlocking a timely dimension of resistance: i.e. temporal resistance. My notes on the war events, the discussions I had with friends and colleagues from Gaza, the songs broadcasted and images published during the war, revealed to me various manifestations and embodiments of resistance.

The stories analysed in this chapter are based on the materials collected during the war and the follow-up in-depth, thematically oriented interviews conducted in the post-war aftermath (section 4.2.2). There are also the images and videos related to the key events of the war. I analyse the narratives of research participants who lived through and survived the war, paying particular attention to the time confusion caused by night attacks in order to understand how violent moments and events in Palestine shapes their relationship with the land and informs their perceptions of life. Also, I analyse the poetics of generative cultural schemes (political cartoons of the war, songs, Abu Obieda's speeches) related to certain violent resistance actions during the war (e.g. arrest of the Israeli soldier, the 9:00 PM Challenge), to understand how these events helped shape and reproduce the ongoing culture of resistance.

Haifa: Resistance and mind (Chapter Seven)

Al-Muwahhidun is an Arab Muslim religious community which arose in the 9th and 10th centuries from the Ismailiyah Islamic movement during the Fatimid Caliphate era. The estimated population of Al-Muwahhidun across the world is around one million (SOURCE). In the Arab region, most of the Al-Muwahhidun live in the Levant countries such as Syria, Lebanon, Jordan and Palestine. There are approximately 120,000 Palestinian Al-Muwahhidun and they live in 16 villages and towns in Al Jalil and Haifa (Khyzaran, 2013). As a settler colonial state, 'Israel' follows a divide and conquer tactic - which was previously developed and employed by the British colonials in Palestine - as a colonial tool against Ahl Al-Ard in Palestine to control the land. After the 1948 war,

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<sup>77</sup> I knew several people from Gaza through my personal and professional relations and previous visits to the Gaza Strip.

'Israel' addressed Palestinians who stayed on their land as non-Jewish minorities and divided them into Muslim, Druze, Bedouin, Christian and Circassian (Firro, 2001; Hamdy, 2008).

My motivation to study Al-Muwahhidun, and hence the focus in Haifa, stems from the Zionist settler colonial movement and the settler colonial state which instrumentalised the 'minority complex' as an imperial tool to detach Al-Muwahhidun from their people and neighbours and subvert the Palestinian social fabric. For 'Israel', the only country that recognizes 'Druze as a national minority', Al-Muwahhidun is a "minority within a minority" specifically as "non-Muslim Arabs" and later "non-Arab Arab" (Hajjar, 1996, p.2). Al-Muwahhidun are targets of specific moral distortion that aims to construct a new identity, history, belonging, past, present and future of Al-Muwahhidun in Palestine through 'Israelization' and 'Druzisation' policies (such as obligatory army service, officially recognised 'Druze holidays', and Druze History museum, among others) that aim to detach Al-Muwahhidun from their Palestinian and Arab roots and commonly shared social, historical and cultural belongings, and reduce them to a rootless religious minority unable to recognise itself. In short, Israelization and Druzification policies entail a colonial construction of a 'Druze identity' that is friendly with 'Israel' but hostile to Arab, which is according to the colonial narrative, because the Jews and the Druze share same interest and enemy (i.e. Arab and Muslim) (Aboultaif, 2015; Hajjar, 1996; R. Kanaaneh, 2003).

My focus on Al-Muwahhidun in Haifa started when I first met Yamin<sup>78</sup> during a protest against the Praver plan - (Chapter Seven). Yamin is a Palestinian who lived all his life in Palestine yet he discovered his Palestinianness when he was 23. For me, as someone who always knew myself as a Palestinian, I was surprised when Yamin said: 'I had to discover that I am a Palestinian, I did not know!'. Later, when I met Yamin again for an interview he told me when I expressed to him my shock "there is a land colonisation and mind colonisation [...] the most dangerous form of colonisation is the mind colonisation, to erase our identity, not only deforming it but to uproot us". Yamin's word inspired me to focus on resistance to the colonisation of the mind by refusing the settler colonial constructed identity and narrative about the self and the other.

In Chapter Seven, I analyse Yamin's and others' narratives of the "return to the self" as an act of resistance that challenges the colonialism of the mind. Unlike the majority of the literature that focused on how Al-Muwahhidun are being subjected to 'Israel'

structured and institutionalised colonial invented and imagined ethnonationality. In this chapter, I asked how Palestinians resist and challenge the war waged against their existence and belonging to the land. I explored the overlooked resistance among Al-Muwahhidun in Palestine, analysed the resources that made the return to the self possible and discussed the significance of the “cognitive battlefield” as a critical site for resistance.

To answer my question in chapter seven, I chose to focus on Al-Muwahhidun who consider themselves Palestinians and refuse ‘Israel’s imposed tools such as the mandatory army service. Some studies on Al-Muwahhidun in Palestine tend to divide them as “traitors” or “accommodationists” (R. Kanaaneh, 2003, p.7). However, such a dichotomy as Hajjar and Kanaaneh suggest, prevent us from understanding the complex context of Al-Muwahhidun living in Palestine under Zionist settler colonialism (Hajjar, 1996; R. Kanaaneh, 2003). Therefore, my focus on those who define themselves as an Arab does not put them in a dichotomy with those who do not. The identity politics, contradictions and ambiguities of Al-Muwahhidun in Palestine is more complex than such binary as I will explain in Chapter Seven (Firro, 2001; Hajjar, 1996, 2000; R. Halabi, 2014; Hamdy, 2008; Isleem, 2015; R. Kanaaneh, 2003; Kaufman, 2004; Nisan, 2010). My intention is to bring different stories from Al-Muwahhidun in Palestine by focusing on the emancipatory resistance of those who challenge and refuse the imposed colonial identity.

For the recruitment of my research participants, I used a snowball technique and participated in events related to refusing the army service to find “refusers”. I actively engaged with my research participants in other events and activities including Samih Al Qassem’s funeral, demonstrations and protests (against the war on Gaza Strip and against the Praver plan) and an organised tour in Haifa city and collected related online materials against the army service. My involvement with these events enriched the ethnographic data collection, focus and interpretation (Annex 1). For example, the funeral of Samih Al Qassem influenced my focus on the resources that allowed Al-Muwahhidun in Palestine to resist the colonisation of their mind. Samih Al Qassem - a well-known and respected Palestinian resistance poet who belonged to the Al-Muwahhidun faith - passed away in August 2014 during my fieldwork and his funeral took place in a football field in Al rameh.<sup>79</sup> Samih Al Qassem’s funeral was attended by thousands of Palestinians from all over Palestine and all faiths. Loud speakers were playing audio recordings of Samih Al Qassem reading revolutionary poems. Palestinian flags were raised high in the sky. In spite of the hot weather, lots of men and women

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<sup>79</sup> Where a mixed population of Christians, Muslims and Al Muwahhidun live.

from all ages wore black, Kufiyah and some of them wore T-Shirts with Palestinian national icons such as the map of Palestine, Hanthala or famous quotes such as: “We will return”, “I am Palestinian”, “Resist”, among others. In this event I met some refusers who were volunteering and organising the event. My chat with some of these young men during the funeral influenced my focus and analyses of challenging the settler colonial narratives about the self and the other among Al-Muwahhidun.

The stories analysed in this chapter are based on the materials collected through eleven interviews followed by three in-depth thematically oriented interviews with research participants (section 4.2.2), focusing on their upbringing and life stories and memories of growing up in a Druze village and education experiences of attending Druze-only schools.

#### 4.2.2 Research participants

A majority of my research participants (36 out of 51) come from the three selected geographies, Jerusalem, Gaza Strip and Haifa to answer my research questions on how Ahl Al-Ard resist the colonisation of their space, time and mind. The rest of my research participants (i.e. 15 out of 51) come from different areas in Palestine in particular from the West Bank who I had formal and informal interviews with during the first few months of my field work. These preliminary interviews as I will further elaborate in the section 4.3.1, informed the subsequent development of my interview themes that focused on resistance and hope.

All research participants were Palestinians residing in Palestine. Two participants (out of 51 in total) were Palestinians born outside of Palestine (Jordan and Kuwait). However, they all defined themselves as Palestinian Arabs. The research participants composed of men (28) and women (23) aged between 20 and 60 years old. Twenty out of 51 were refugees of the 1948 and 1967 wars. A majority of the research participants were born as Muslims (two were Christians), but some considered themselves atheist and while others considered themselves believers and active religious practitioners (fasting and daily prayers). All research participants had at least a secondary-level education. More than half (33 out of 51) of them had or were enrolled or were studying in a Palestinian or Israeli university in pursuit of a Bachelor’s degree. Most of the research participants could be described as living a mix of middle and working classes lifestyle. Some of the research participants were employees of ‘Israeli’ or Palestinian government or private sectors (education, health and services). The professions of

research participants included teachers, social workers, farmers, administrators, taxi drivers, waitresses, bakers, and artists.

The majority of the male research participants (20 out of 28) had been arrested at least once in their lives for a period ranging from three months to 24 years. Two female research participants were arrested for four and seven years. Most of the research participants lost beloved ones during their life, and half of them have/had a beloved one who was arrested or wounded by the Israelis.

The research participants had a range of political commitments. Some of them were explicit about not 'following' or 'trusting' any political party. For instance, Samia was explicit: "No Fatah, no Hamas, no whatsoever, my affiliation is to Palestine only, it's above all" (in Chapter Six). On the other hand, other research participants were open about their empathy or affiliation to a particular political party such as Fatah, Hamas, Islamic Jihad and PFLP.

The research participants shared varying views on resistance, some of them supported violent resistance while others believed that violent resistance will bring more violence because "Israel is strong", as Majd put it, "we need to find other ways". However, in other instances such as during the war on Gaza Strip, all my research participants expressed sentiments of support and feeling proud of the violent resistance achievements on the ground. For instance, Motasem, commented once on hearing the siren in Jerusalem during the war: "when I hear it my heart dances. I feel very proud. We are attacking Israel, do you know what that means? It gives me hope. I do not know how to say it. I feel happy".

Table 1. Number of interviews in each site.

Area	Total interviews	In-depth thematically oriented interviews
Jerusalem	14	4
Gaza Strip	11	4
Haifa	11	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>11</b>

To find research participants, first, I used my personal and professional networks to reach out to potential research participants and approached their social circles and spaces. I also joined a number of social networking websites to learn about events and activities where I could find potential research participants. I found snowballing to be the most effective way to get access to a variety of people with wide-ranging backgrounds. After a few months of my fieldwork, I established a trusted group of people who were willing to participate in the research and share with me their personal stories of everyday life in Palestine. By the mid-point of my fieldwork, the momentum gathered from snowballing and social networking was in full swing: I found myself interviewing and moving from various groups of people, while in other times, I met new people coming to me while I hung out at Bab Al-Amoud. I was also invited to join various places and occasions which included different social, political, and cultural activities such as protests, weddings, funerals, festivals, and others. The social context and cultural environments in which these activities took place offered extraordinarily rich insights and reflected the various manifestations and embodiments of resistance and hope in Palestine.

Here is an example of how I identified and searched for suitable candidates for my research. To understand how Palestinians resist the colonisation of the space in Jerusalem, I decided to find people who live in and are in daily engagement with the space of the city. Being a Jerusalemite facilitated my access to nearly all spaces and sites accessible to Palestinians. Not all spaces were allowed nor permanently available. For instance, when I first arrived in Jerusalem, I was invited to join a meeting of a committee group of activists who work on issues related to youth, culture and education in Jerusalem. However, the committee office in Jerusalem was invaded a week later by the Israeli soldiers and one of the committee members was arrested. Fortunately, in that meeting I met Ibrahim, who was released in 2012 after spending 24 years in the prison. Then through Ibrahim I met Jihad, and Rami, from whom I got the volunteering opportunity to teach English for high school boys in the old city of Jerusalem. This opportunity led me to walk through Bab Al-amoud and the streets of Jerusalem three days of the week for two months. My observations of my walks in the city enriched my analyses in Chapter Five by focusing on the themes of active existence and spatialities of resistance. Some of the research participants I met by coincidence. Take for example the case of Sami. Sami was born and lives in the old city of Jerusalem and works as a taxi driver. I got to know him through our chat during long waiting in traffic in Jerusalem due to the closure of the city after an attack against Israeli soldier in Bab Al-amoud. Sami drives daily through the streets of fortified

Jerusalem moving between Jewish only and Palestinians areas. Almost by every other day, Sami met with his friends, Mousa and Jamal, at Bab Al-amoud, to hang out there, drink coffee, and chat. I joined their conversations to listen to their everyday experiences and perspectives.

In Jerusalem, my criteria were the place of residence and routes taken in day to day life in Jerusalem. I mainly applied a purposive approach focusing on individual and collective spatial practices of life in the fortified city of Jerusalem. I interviewed fourteen research participants followed with four in-depth thematically oriented interviews. I walked with research participants in the city of Jerusalem as well as joined them in demonstrations, weddings, funerals and festivals in Jerusalem. I selected the research participants who live inside and outside the walls of the city and walked every day the lanes and streets of the city of Jerusalem. Five out of ten lived inside the old city while the rest resided in nearby Palestinian neighbourhoods such as Ras Al Amoud, Shufat Refugee Camp, Bet Hanina, and Al Tour. The place of residence and the routes taken in their everyday routines are particularly important in the context of Jerusalem, as I discussed above, the mere day to day life in the context of racist and fortified construction of the space gives the day-to-day walks, weddings, festivals, shopping, etc. a different dimension.

To recruit research participants, I used a snowball technique and contacted potential participants via social media and then interviewed them via skype. I ended up interviewing eleven people followed with four in-depth thematically oriented interviews focused on the day wars and how it was lived. The research participants come from different locations in Gaza Strip (north, middle, and south). Nine of them live in refugee camps and two in Gaza city. Two of the research participants shared with me their written war diaries. Almost all research participants were displaced or had to evacuate their houses at least once during the war. Half of them were displaced for the entire war period. I focused on how they experienced the radical confusion of time during the days and nights of the war? And how they secured various means of survival and how they persisted and carried on in order to restore the ordinary life and normal days during the war (Das, 2007; Woroniecka-Krzyżanowska, 2014).

Finally, to find refusers I mainly used a snowball technique where refusers introduced me to other refusers. Others I met in different events such as Samih Al Qassem's funeral or protest against the Praver Plan and Gaza War, or cultural events in Ramallah. I interviewed eleven followed by three in-depth, thematically oriented interviews. All of the research participants - nine men, two women - live in different

'Druze towns' nearby Haifa where they attended Druze schools. All the interviewed men were sentenced between six to fourteen months for refusing the army service, while four of them faked documents.

The following details the research methods I employed during my fieldwork.



### 4.3 Research methods

Fieldwork data collection focused on the cases and instances of resistance found in three different geographies in Palestine; Jerusalem, Gaza Strip and Haifa. Research methods included in-depth, thematically oriented interviews focusing on growing up in Palestine, relationship with the land, and perceptions of the past, present and future of Palestine. Second, I employed participant observation of sites (Bab Al-amoud, Salah Adin street) and events (political, religious, social, cultural, academic) Finally, I conducted a related online ethnography of virtual spaces (mainly Twitter, Facebook, YouTube and blogs of three research participants) focusing on images, texts and videos related to the research subject. These methods allowed me to understand not only how Palestinians narrate their everyday life, but also how they visualise it and write about it in virtual spaces (Table 2). These methods were combined in order to follow the “spirits of resistance” embodied in various sites, moments, and minds in everyday life in Palestine with the intention to answer the main research question: how do Palestinians resist settler colonialism in their everyday life?

Table 2. Summary of research methods, sites, participants and activities.

	<b>Chapter Five: Resistance to colonisation of space</b>	<b>Chapter Six: Resistance to colonisation of time</b>	<b>Chapter Seven: Resistance to colonisation of mind</b>
<b>Research sites</b>	Jerusalem	The Gaza Strip	Haifa
<b>Methods</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collecting and analysing political cartoons, images, and stories</li> <li>• In-depth interviews</li> <li>• Informal interviews and ‘hang out’</li> <li>• Participant observation</li> <li>• Sites visits, walks, and photography</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In-depth thematically oriented Interviews</li> <li>• Online ethnography: war blogs and diaries, visual analysis of the images in social media, and emails and online video calls communication</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In-depth thematically oriented interviews</li> <li>• Informal interviews and hang out</li> <li>• Participant observation</li> </ul>
<b>Key research participants’ profile</b>	Four (out of ten) in-depth thematically oriented interviews were with the key	Four (out of eleven) thematically oriented interviews were with the key	Three (out of eleven) thematically oriented interviews were with the key research

research participants: Rami – Mid-twenties, works and studies at Israeli places, lives in Shufat Refugee camp in Jerusalem.	research participants: Kareem – Late thirties, married with three children. Kareem is a refugee and he lives in Gaza city. He is originally from a village called Majdal. At the beginning of the war, Kareem moved from his house to stay with his in-law's family. They lived in a relatively safer area. Kareem works as an engineer for the only electricity company in the Gaza Strip.	participants: Yamin – Mid-thirties, used to work in Israeli prisons as a jailer. He studied law and now works as a lawyer defending Palestinian prisoners in Israeli courts. Yamin is an active and prominent advocate of the anti-military service campaigns.
Ahmad - Early twenties, single lives inside the old city of Jerusalem. Works as an accountant with Israeli company.	Thaer – Late forties, married with six children and lives in Gaza. During the war, he moved to Rafah – south of the Gaza Strip – to stay with his extended family. Thaer is a refugee and works for INGOs. Thaer has a personal blog where he shared his experiences and stories during and the post-war.	Majd – Early twenties, studies at the Open University but also works as a salesman. Majd refused to serve in the army and was arrested and prisoned for 3 months.
Jihad – Late thirties, he lives in Ras Al-amoud and works as a builder. Married with one child.	Samia – Late thirties and single. She was displaced with her family during the war.	Dana – Late twenties, enrolled in Israeli academic institutions but has not completed her degree. She works in a private business and is active in anti-military service campaigns.
Maram – Late thirties, lives in the old city of Jerusalem. Works as a teacher. Married with three children.	Ibrahim, late twenties, single. He was displaced during the war.	
<b>Other relevant social</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Volunteering in a project to document the</li> <li>• Participating in demonstrations,</li> <li>• Participating in site visits and attending national</li> </ul>		

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<b>and political activities</b>	first Intifada stories and teaching English at a school in the old city of Jerusalem • Participating in demonstrations and various cultural and political events • Engaging with “Tijwal Safar” group <sup>80</sup> • Participating in “Suleiman Al Halabi” reading and discussion groups in Jerusalem and in the West Bank	attending various cultural and political events particularly related to the war on Gaza	events and demonstrations • Engaging with “Sahel ma Bestahel” <sup>81</sup> • Engaging with “Stop Praver Plan” and visiting unrecognized villages
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<sup>80</sup> A self-funded foundation that organises tours to different locations in Palestine with the aim of raising and building awareness of Palestinian land and history. Their motto is “travel in your land”.

<sup>81</sup> A group of Palestinian Al-Muwahhidun refusing the mandatory military service in the Israeli army.

### 4.3.1 Interviews

First, I conducted 51 interviews with Palestinian men and women with diverse age, gender, locality, social and economic backgrounds and political affiliations, followed by 11 thematically-oriented, in-depth interviews (Table 3). Including 15 formal and informal unplanned interviews in different places in Palestine during my fieldwork. Some were with people who are knowledgeable about issues related to resistance, and colonialism in Palestine, and with people who I met randomly during my participation in various events. These interviews enriched my analyses and argument throughout the entire thesis (Appendix 2). For instance my conversations and discussions with farmers in Al Walajeh made me pay more attention to the land and the relationship between Ahl Al Ard and their land. The event was planting trees in Al Walajeh in land threatened by confiscation, As Abu Ibrahim put it, “this land is our land, we water it with our sweat and blood, and we have been here for ever. Some of these interviews were also with scholars such as Wisam Al Rafidi, Sharif Kananneh and Abdel Rahim Al Shekh, all of whom have different interests in issues related to the history and present of colonialism and resistance in Palestine.

I chose interviews as a research method because it allowed me to understand how research participants “generate and deploy meaning in social life” (May, 2011, p.135). In depth thematically oriented interviews were appropriate because it allowed me to have “more latitude to probe beyond the answers and thus enter into a dialogue the interviewee” (May, 2011, p.134). Such stories are important for understanding the notions of the self and identity. As such, interviews generated rich insights into Ahl Al-Ard accounts, experiences, views, beliefs, aspirations, practices and feelings.

Table 3. Number of interviews.  
Area

Area	Total interviews	In-depth thematically oriented interviews
Jerusalem	14	4
Gaza Strip	11	4
Haifa	11	3
Formal and informal interviews in different locations in Palestine (Appendix 2)	15	
<b>Total</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>11</b>

All interviews were conducted in Arabic and the majority of interviews were face-to-face with individuals (interview with research participants from Gaza Strip was via Skype). I asked participants where to meet and what time. The majority of the interviews took place in Jerusalem and Ramallah. Most of these were one-to-one interviews. Nevertheless, in my interview with Thaer, his daughters and wife joined the conversation for some time. Also, on another occasion, I interviewed two men who participated in the violent nights of Jerusalem analysed in chapter five. The length of interviews was on average, 2 hours, although some were longer. For instance, my interview with Majd lasted three hours. The majority of participants were interviewed once. However, I interacted with most of them in varied and multi-sited situations. During the interviews I would follow the thread of the conversation rather than strictly adhering to predetermined questions. Most of the interviews though would start by discussing general situation and the events of the day. The interviews explored, growing up in Palestine, memories of the space, critical events in relation to their realisation of their life under settler colonialism, and how these factors have shaped the research participants' understanding of their life. I recorded most of the interviews, however, in some cases I chose not to audio-record interviews to avoid posing any security or legal risks for the people I interviewed. These recorded and unrecorded interviews were supplemented by innumerable informal actual and virtual conversations

Some interviews were random and unplanned. For instance, my interviews with shop owners, bus drivers, students, and others. I interviewed during particular events such as the reading chain in Jerusalem, Samih Al Qassem funeral, and the other political, cultural, religious and social activities I participated in. My questions in those interviews were about the event itself and the meaning of it for the interviewee.

#### 4.3.2 Participant observation

Second, I employed participant observation because I wanted to immerse myself in the sites and moments of the Ahl Al-Ard's active existence on their land. Thus, the research involved participant observation in formal and informal spaces, such as academic seminars, public lectures, demonstrations, historical and political tours, film screenings and art exhibitions. It also extended beyond the public and included other spaces and situations, for example sharing meals and shopping. The situation ranged from encounters with individuals to groups. Participant observation as a research method is relevant because it allowed me to capture the dynamics of observed sites and events, which in turn allowed me to understand their connections with everyday life (May, 2011) . Furthermore, it provided me with the opportunity to obtain "insights into people's social lives and relationships" to bridge the gap

“between people’s understanding of alternative lifestyles and the prejudices which difference and diversity so often meet” (p.170).

I followed groups both in virtual and actual arenas. I joined a local cultural centre to collect stories and memories of the First Intifada. I participated in and accompanied local youth groups on political tours to different geographies in Palestine, including the old city of Jerusalem, Haifa, Land Day villages, Al-Walajah, and the sites of destroyed villages in Jerusalem. I also volunteered to teach English at a school in the old city of Jerusalem.

#### 4.3.3 Online and social media ethnography

Finally, I employed an online ethnography because it complements the offline ethnography by exploring and analysing texts and images related to the research subject. Online and social media spaces are important to understand not only how Palestinians narrate their everyday life, but also how they visualise and write about it (Varis & Georgakopoulou, 2016, p.2). Social media and cyber spaces in the context of Palestine, are important sites of resistance and unsettling the “settler-colonial matrix” (Alloul, 2016; Shalhoub-Kevorkian, 2011; Tawil-Souri & Aouragh, 2014). I collected images and videos related to events I

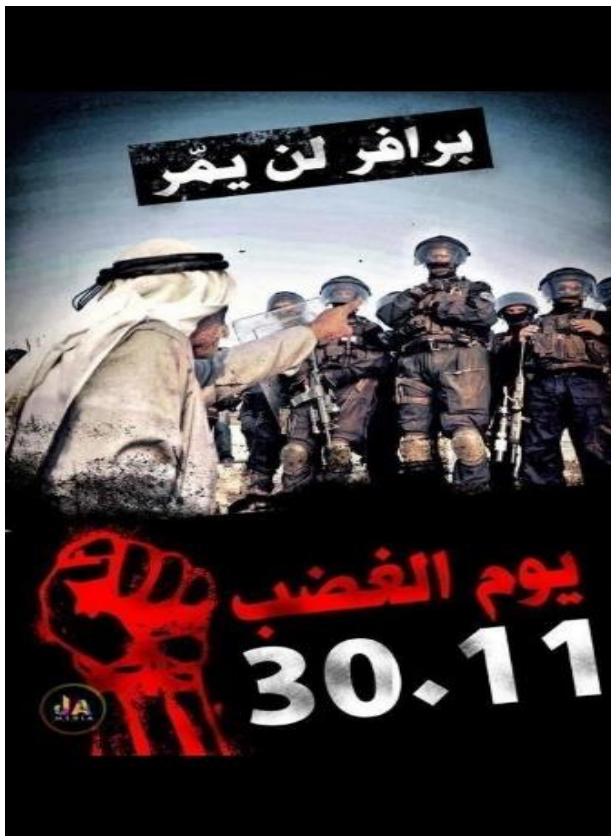


Figure 6. A poster calling for “Anger Day”. The poster reads: “Prayer will not pass”.

participated in. I focused on images that visualise resistance in Palestine, I analysed those images and cartoons thematically. In Chapter Five I used collected photographs related to the violent events in Jerusalem. Those images are important for setting the context as well as supporting the analysis of my research stories. In Chapter Six I used collected cartoons related to the violent resistance in Gaza and analyse it as generative cultural schemes of resistance. In Chapter Seven, I used collected photographs related to the anti-army service campaign and analysed them in relation to being morale infrastructure of resistance.

Those images and videos enriched my analysis and helped me to better understand how Palestinians resist settler

colonialism in their everyday life, and how those images and videos represent generative

cultural schemes that keep the spark of the “spirit of resistance” alive. (Bamberg, 1997; Josselson & Lieblich, 1999). Also I used videos and images of other events such as the land day demonstration in Jerusalem, Prisoners support and others (Varis & Georgakopoulou, 2016) (Appendix 2)



A photo shared on social media during the war on Gaza after the massacre of Al-Shujaayaa'. The writing on the wall reads: “The neighbourhood of Swanaeh [in Jerusalem]”. July 2014. Retrieved from social media spaces.

Figure 7. Writings on the wall.



Young protestors holding the flag of Algeria in Ramallah August 2014. Retrieved from social medial spaces.

Figure 8. Algerian flag in a protest in Ramallah.

#### 4.4 Reflexively and ethics

While this thesis studies resistance to settler colonialism in everyday life in Palestine, this does not mean that I generalise Palestinians as a homogeneous group, particularly in respect of their understanding of colonisation in Palestine. In every colonial context, there are people who resist and people who do not, and of course there are also those who collaborate with the colonisers, and Palestine is not an exception in this regard. In this thesis, I focus on those who resist. As I mentioned before, I secured Ethical Approval from the University of Sussex in order to carry out my research. During my field work I was aware that even with following guidelines of the ethical approval; including confidentiality, privacy and anonymity, conducting a research within an ongoing violent settler colonial context

requires further considerations of ethical issues related to the safety of my research participants and myself.

Although my own background became 'useful' and part of the process of understanding the whole question of everyday resistance in Palestine, it also presented a number of challenges. Even though I have tried to overcome and reflect on the various biases and ethical dilemmas posed by my own ethnic and socioeconomic identity, this thesis is inevitably a product of these same experiences, thoughts and dilemmas. It has been written from the perspective of a Palestinian woman from Jerusalem. In this sense, this thesis could be seen as ethnography of everyday resistance and therefore a contribution to the understanding of how people resist settler colonialism on a daily basis. I recognise that the findings of this thesis apply to my research participants and I do not claim that the argument developed in the thesis applies generally to all Palestinians. Also, it is important to acknowledge that the analytical framework used to study resistance is established according to my own informed political, personal and ethical positions. I do, however, suggest that the main argument developed in this thesis, that employing different lenses and tools into the discussion of settler colonialism in Palestine, would provide us with a different perception of settler colonialism that may theoretically and politically be more relevant than the current reading of settler colonial scholarship. Therefore, it may be worth exploring and testing this argument further in work and research on resistance more broadly and consider Ahl Al-Ard perceptions of their realities and future when articulating a liberation agenda.

As I showed in Chapter Two, settler colonialism scholarship exclusively sees through the settler colonial act of elimination. From this perspective, this literature entails that land inhabitants are defeated, powerless and unable to take any action to change their realities. Moreover, the settler colonial state is ever strong and eternal, and it executes its competent plan of elimination unchallenged and without any objection or resistance by the land inhabitants. The field data collection and analysis, therefore, contributes to filling the current empirical gap in the settler colonialism scholarship. As long as the debates and discussions exclusively focus on 'the logic of elimination', they will fail to understand and engage with what is happening in the everyday life in Palestine. Thus, this thesis draws attention to the greater need for decolonial approach to understand everyday life in Palestine through the optic of the overlooked resistance in Palestine, which also brings to the proposal of a theorisation of settler colonialism as seen through the eyes of the Ahl Al-Ard.



## Chapter Five. Al-Quds Arabiah: <sup>82</sup> The fortified city and the myriad sites of resistance



Figure 9. Fun festival at Bab Al-Amoud.  
Source: Fadi Amereh

### Introduction

In the previous chapters I argued that settler colonial scholars have focused on the Zionist structural elimination of Palestine and Palestinian's while overlooking (among other omissions) the active resistance of the Ahl Al-Ard. Additionally, this literature focused on the centrality of the land for the settler colonisers' identity and survival while disregarding its significance for Ahl Al-Ard. In spite of the positive contributions of settler colonialism scholarship to the study of Palestine, such omissions and the emphasis on the story of elimination as I argued in the Chapter Three and Four, entail analytical and methodological limitations as well as political and ethical risks of enhancing settler colonialism by emphasising the elimination story and overlooking Ahl Al-Ard resistance, knowledge and perceptions of settler colonialism (Barakat, 2017; Bird, 2001; Kauanui, 2016; Macoun & Strakosch, 2013; Rowse, 2014). The case of settler colonialism in Palestine as it appears through the 'logic of elimination' eyes is a 'hopeless case' where the end of colonialism is the "end of everything" (Veracini, 2010a, p.104).

In this chapter, contrary to what are often known and analysed as "spaces of death" and "ghost geographies" by some settler colonialism scholars (Busbridge, 2015; Hanafi, 2004,

<sup>82</sup> Al-Quds is the Arabic name of Jerusalem, Arabiah means Arab. *Al-Quds Arabiah* is a common chanting in social, religious and political gatherings in the city.

2009, 2012), I present and analyse different stories from Palestine by focusing on the everyday life in Jerusalem. I examine Ahl Al-Ard individual and collective spatial practices and discuss how such practices frustrates settler colonialism in the city and most importantly how it influences Ahl Al-Ard relationship with their city and keeps the spirit of resistance alive, spaceless and timeless. A spatial analysis of the everyday resistance in Palestine would allow us to understand the influence of Ahl Al-Ard spatial practices on their understanding of their life under Zionist settler colonialism, and on their connection with their land. Centring resistance in my analyses to the everyday spatial practices of Ahl Al-Ard; walking the city and collective gatherings, would enrich an alternative understanding of realities of settler colonialism as seen through and walked in the shoes of the Ahl Al-Ard in the city of Jerusalem. In doing so, I aim to encounter settler colonialism scholarship elimination narrative, as well as, I aim to contribute to Sumud and resistance literature, and decolonial knowledge scholarship (Certeau, 1984; Keith & Pile, 2013; Pile, 1997; Routledge, 1997; Routledge & Simons, 1995).

The everyday resistance in Jerusalem is made visible through the optic of active existence and experiences of Ahl Al-Ard's in the city. Conceptually, I directly engage with the body of scholarship that highlights the centrality of resistance in daily spatial practices, and analytically, I study how places and acts of resistance mutually constituted each other (Certeau, 1984; Routledge, 1997). Moreover, by looking at both the physical existence (day to day practices) of Ahl Al-Ard and the repercussions of their presence beyond the physical boundaries, we can better understand the rhizomatic character of resistance, which can take diverse forms and move through different dimensions (Deleuze & Guattari, 1988). I trace and identify these movements and forms of resistance from the data gathered through interviews and participant observations made during various events, multiple site visits and walks in the city with my research participants.

I develop my main argument of this chapter as follows. I briefly set the Ahl Al-Ard's context of living in Jerusalem and elaborate on the main analytical themes of this chapter, namely the 'active existence' and 'spatialities of resistance'. The context of the fortified city of Jerusalem and these two guiding themes help us understand how the daily encounters with the settler colonial project in Jerusalem is a central component of Ahl Al-Ard's day-to-day spatial practices. The evidence gathered from my research observations and the participants' experiences attests that the city of Jerusalem is not only a site of "spacio-cide" (Hanafi, 2009) but also the significant site of Ahl Al-Ard "spatiality of resistance" (Routledge, 1997). In section 5.2. 'Walking in the city', I walk with the research participants in the city of Jerusalem, following their steps and probing where they walk, why they walk to certain places, which routes they choose to take, and what they observed and felt during their

journeys. I recorded the evoked and cherished memories they shared with me during many of these walks on the streets of Jerusalem, which were important in creating a sense of belonging and entitlement to the land (Certeau, 1984). In the section titled “The myriad sites of resistance”, I analyse the social (wedding), political (demonstrations) and religious (Friday prayers) gatherings of Palestinians in the city. I closely examine the gatherings where “places of resistance were created, claimed, defended and used” (Routledge, 1997, p.84). My intention is to explore and analyse the new meanings of the space for those who participate in such events, and to explore how the day-to-day spatial practices of Ahl Al-Ard in Jerusalem keeps the “spirit of resistance” alive, endless and most importantly feeds into their hope for a different future free of settler colonialism (Routledge & Simons, 1995). Finally, I return to conclude highlighting the survival and beyond in the context of Jerusalem and the significance of Ahl Al-Ard individual and collective spatial practices in the city of Jerusalem.

### 5.1 The Jewish-only fortified city

To understand the significance of ‘Al-Quds Arabiah’ (this Chapter title) chanting at Bab Al-amoud, it is important to understand the construction of the space in Jerusalem. It is not my intention here to historicise or analyse the exilic or ‘elimination’ policies and procedures in Jerusalem. This is a subject that is thoroughly examined by other scholars (in particular see Shalhoub-Kevorkian (2015)). Rather, my main objective in this section is to establish the context of the Ahl Al-Ard’s lives in the city of Jerusalem and to better understand the significance of such a chant and other chants and stories analysed in this chapter (see figure 10).

In Jerusalem – the city claimed to be the ‘eternal’ and ‘unified’ capital of the Jewish state – settler coloniser’s mythologies are materialised through a combination of Judaisation and militarisation of the city. Similar to other settler colonial projects, ‘Israel’ employs the colonial concepts of race and emptiness to spatialize its foundational mythologies and to reform the actual space according to their colonial vision and plan, so that the land inhabitants do not recognize it anymore. As several scholars have analysed, the Zionist construction of the space in Jerusalem is racist and fortified with the intention to Judaize both the geography and demography by reducing Palestinians to an unthreatening and ‘manageable’ minority living in an “enclave city” and Judaize the face (appearance) of the city (see figure 8) (Baumann, 2016, p.173; Makdisi, 2009; Pullan, 2011, 2013a; Pullan & Sternberg, 2012; Razack, 2002b; Yacobi & Pullan, 2014).

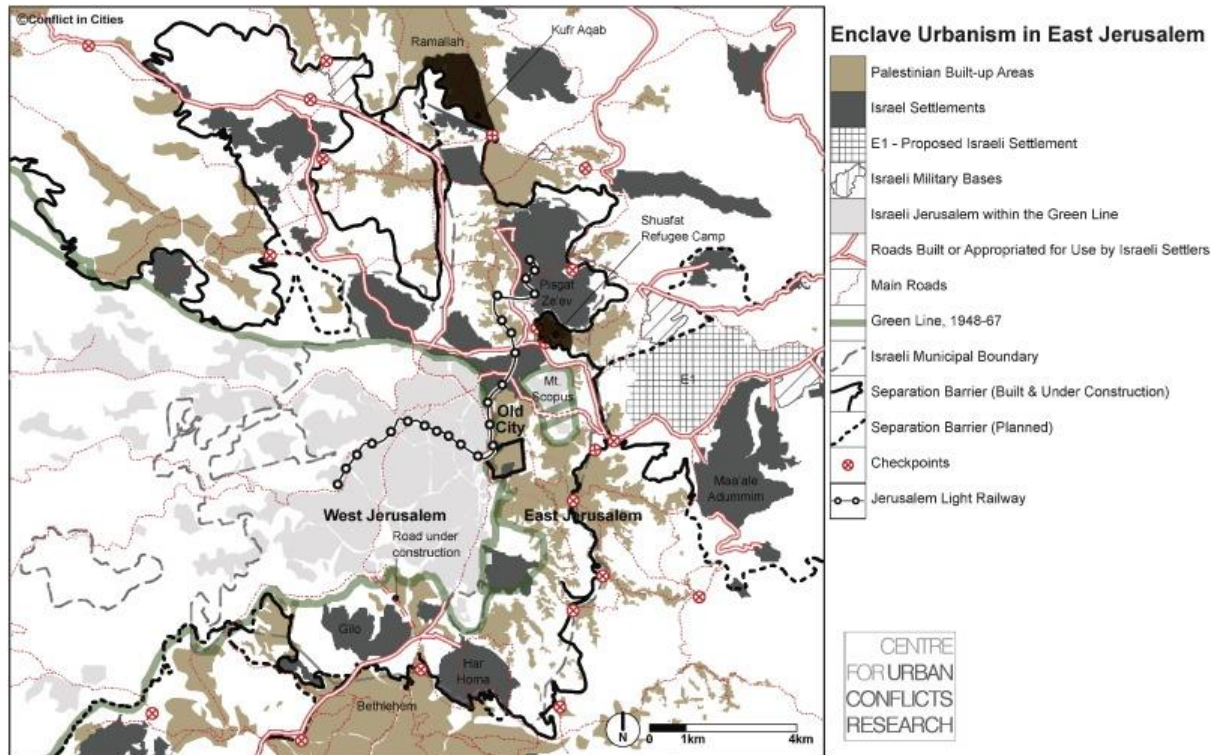


Figure 10. Enclave urbanism in East Jerusalem.

Source: (Baumann, 2016)

A Jewish-only city means a demographic domination of the Jews, as Veracini writes correctly, settler colonialism survival is premised on demographic domination of the settler colonisers (2010a) therefore winning the “war of cradles” for ‘Israel’ is essential to finish the business of settler colonialism and to fully control the land (Courbage 2013, p.6). The demographic factor in the case of settler colonialism in Palestine (Chapter Two: section 2.4.2) presents a threat to the completion of the settler colonial project in Palestine. The demographic issue in Palestine is articulated by ‘Israel’ in militarised and security language such as referring to the presence of the Palestinians as a demographic ‘bomb’ and ‘threat’ (Makdisi, 2009; Nolte, 2016; Shalhoub-Kevorkian, 2015b; Yacobi & Pullan, 2014).

The war of cradles between the settler colonisers and Ahl Al-Ard in Palestine is particularly intense in the city of Jerusalem (Courbage, 2013).<sup>83</sup> The strategies in the Municipality of Jerusalem 2020 plan aim to cap and curtail the Palestinian population below 30 per cent of the total population. ‘Israel’s plans of Jewish domination in Jerusalem are forcefully carried out through various land policies, building codes and regulation, and urban plans that target the Palestinian land and expropriate the people out of the city.

<sup>83</sup> In a speech by the ‘Israeli’ Prime Minister David Ben-Gurion after the 1967 War, he urged the ‘Israeli’ Knesset to attract and bring more Jews to populate the newly conquered land even if they lived in “shacks”: “We must bring Jews to eastern Jerusalem at any cost. We must settle tens of thousands of Jews in a brief time. Jews will agree to settle in eastern Jerusalem even in shacks. We cannot await the construction of orderly neighbourhoods. The essential thing is that Jews will be there”.



A Jewish demographic domination in Jerusalem entails Palestinians' physical, cultural, political and social 'disappearance' by pushing them out of space and time and make them "anomalous in their own lands" (Mar and Edmonds, 2010). This alienation, takes place parallel to changing the material 'face of the city' into a Jewish Zionist appearance, so that the Palestinians would no longer belong to and recognise the place (Khalidi, 1999). Such a change of the space in Jerusalem is profoundly disturbing and, as Said writes, is "an assault not only on the geography of the city but also on its culture, history, and of course religion" (Said 1995, p.9).

The Jewish only settlements on the hilltops of Jerusalem look like "sentries" and "watchtowers" and "fortresses" unlike the other buildings which seem to have "an organic relation" to the surrounding environment (1999, p.23).<sup>84</sup> The infrastructure and the city planning of Jerusalem are designed to fulfil the ideological and colonial objectives, which aim to include and exclude, and territorialise and deterritorialise (Nolte, 2016). Since 1967,<sup>85</sup> the Municipality of Jerusalem started implementing two consistent strategies of construction of an outer ring of Jewish-only neighbourhoods at Jerusalem hilltops, at the same time restricting and reducing the Palestinian's expansion. This strategy was followed by other policies including the house demolitions, delaying and denying building permits, construction of national parks in the Palestinian areas, and so on (Yacobi & Pullan, 2014).

The space construction in the city of Jerusalem is never neutral and it transfers the city into a fortified city. The very infrastructure of the city (i.e. roads, street lights, water pipes, sewage system, electricity, etc.),<sup>86</sup> is designed to achieve an ideological and colonial objective and it is part of an inclusion and exclusion, territorialisation and de-territorialisation process. The construction of the space in Jerusalem mirrors the "unmediated conflict" between Ahl Al-Ard and the settler colonisers, it is "divided into that of "self" and "other," "us" and "them," resulting in islands of cultural containment and social exclusion" (Misselwitz & Rieniets, 2009, p.73). The structures of the racist space in Jerusalem, "[e]mbody the tensions and contradictions of a landscape that has been rapidly urbanized under conditions of intense conflict. They are symptoms of a hidden fight over identity, ownership, and aesthetic

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<sup>84</sup> Khalidi describes the Jewish settlements in Jerusalem saying : "[t]hey loom on the horizon, massive, bulky and square, filling space and covering land, often giving the impression of having been dropped onto their sites with no respect for the topography, except for careful attention to the need to be high up, defensible, and in a strategic position" (1999, p.23).

<sup>85</sup> Jerusalem was conquered in two different wars. The Western part of the city was conquered in the 1948 war and it is a Jewish-only area, while the Eastern part of the city including the old city were conquered in the 1967 war.

<sup>86</sup> Part of the city militarisation is the streets naming. The names of the streets in Jerusalem hold names of 'Israeli' militants, such as "Mavo Hamaavak (the Struggle Alley), the Partizan Alley, Mavo Hahitnadvut (the Volunteering Alley, commemorating Jewish volunteers during World War II), and HaEtzel and HaLehi Streets, recognising Jewish militant groups who fought the British for independence in the late 1940s" (Yacobi and Pullan).

domination of an otherwise seemingly ordinary suburban landscape” (p.71-72). In a study on mobility in Jerusalem’s spatial structures Pullan argues that the space in Jerusalem “continues to figure significantly in the processes of ethno-national identification and political control. This is now characterising the city in ways that are not just a setting for but a perpetrator of further forms of conflict” (2013b, p.141). The very racist structure of the space in Jerusalem produces a fragmented city with “civilian frontiers”. Pullan adds: “[t]his is a city pushed to extremes, where the employment of boundaries and borders has become the primary structural reality articulated by different speeds and opportunities for mobility. Ethnicity is the determining factor for these discrepancies” (p.142).

The result of such racist constructions is a production of a stranger, fortified, racist space that promotes ongoing violence. For jihad, this makes him feel that he is a militant target who can be shot at any time: “every day when I wake up and leave to go to work, I do not know if I will be back alive or not because I might be killed without even knowing why. We are a militant target. This is how I feel; I feel that I am a moving shooting target” Jihad’s words echo Pullan’s analysis of the construction of Jerusalem. as a fortified and embattled city, and such a context inevitably brings violence into the day to day practices in the city (2006, 2011, 2013a, 2013b; Yacobi & Pullan, 2014) The Jewish settlers’ presence in the city of Jerusalem – in particular in the old city - is a frontier presence, in Jerusalem, settler houses becomes a “micro frontier” (Pullan, 2011, p.20). The most drastic characteristic of space construction and city planning in Jerusalem as Pullan notices is “that which assures it as frontier urbanism, is the intentional segregation of civilian populations in residential configurations designed to be not just separate but confrontational” (p.17). In other words, the very structure of the space in Jerusalem makes violence “a subtext that is close to the surface and constantly at the point of erupting” (2013a, p.337).

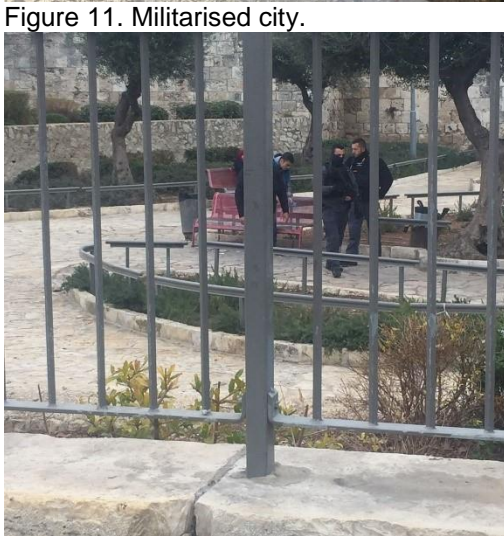
The presence of such a frontier makes the place itself a perpetrator of violence and this brings violence to everyday walking, talking, and life in general. Such a context is an invitation to confrontation and violence between the two people that can occur at any moment and in any place: “wherever Israeli and Palestinian urban fragments collide, there exists a host of frontier spaces-territories of fear and anxiety, hostile wildernesses, and buffer zones that shield communities from one another” (Misselwitz & Rieniets, 2009, p.72). In the violent context of everyday life in Palestine, “the unexpected is never entirely a surprise, and the expected is always partly surprising” (Kelly 2008 p.366) (see figures 11, 12, 13, 14, 15 and 16,).

In spite of “Israel’s” plans for Jerusalem, the figures show that Palestinians in the whole ‘reunified’ city constitute 37.6 per cent (296 000 Palestinians for a total of 788 000 inhabitants) (PCBS, 2015). This number exceeds the level of the “alarm” zone and it

presents a “demographic bomb” for the settler colonisers. In the context of Jerusalem, the mere existence of Ahl Al-Ard is an act of resistance and the mundane life activities in Jerusalem transform the daily encounters with the settler colonial project into myriad sites of confrontation and resistance (Nolte, 2016; Routledge, 1997). This threat is not only related to the absolute increase of the Palestinian population in the city. As the ‘Israeli’ scholar Klein explains, “the perception of the Other as a demographic threat stems not only from the growth of the Palestinian population in Jerusalem, it derives also from the fact that the Other built community institutions and forged a national identity in the city” (2004, p.194).



‘Israeli soldier’ behind a metal block at Bab Al-Majles in the old city of Jerusalem. March 2014. Photo by author.



Special security forces at Bab Al-amoud. February 2014. Photo by author.

Figure 12. Militarised city.



Israeli security forces in the lanes of the old city of Jerusalem guarding armed settlers walk in the city and Palestinians pass by. April 2014. Photo by author.

Figure 13. Confrontational space.



Israeli flag, and Jewish menorah on the walls of a house confiscated and owned by the 'Israeli' prime minister Ariel Sharon. April 2014. Photo by author.

Figure 14. Space Judaisation.





Palestinian students stopped for ID checking by Israeli female soldiers on their way back from school. March 2014. Photo taken by me from the bus on my way back home.

Figure 15. Mobility in fortified and racist space.



Israeli police roam the streets of Jerusalem on horses. May 2014. Photo by author.

Figure 16. Fortified city.

## 5.2 Active existence and spatialities of resistance in Jerusalem

You are Bint Al-Quds [the daughter of Jerusalem] Maysa, and you know what I am talking about. Waking up every morning in your house in Jerusalem is resistance. Walad Al Kalb [sons of dogs] do not want to see us. If you take my house by force, and I have nothing to do but to shout, even though I know that shouting will not return my house, it will give you a headache. I will continue shouting and screaming at you. I will not shut up. This is the situation here: we know that the situation is difficult now, but it will not stay forever like this. If shouting is the only thing we can do, yes, I will keep shouting and making noise and give you a headache...If you pinch them with a pin every day, it's still good...We didn't give up, the

political parties have signed agreements, but we [the people] didn't. (Jihad, 2014)

Ana Ibn Al-Quds w mn hon, Mesh metzh'ze'h, qa'ad feha. Esm'ani ya kul al koun; lah'mi o dami mnha o feha.

[I am the son of Jerusalem, and I am from here I am not moving from here. I am staying. O world, listen to me, my flesh and bones are from it and in it] (Chanting at a Wedding procession in the old city of Jerusalem, 2014)

The first quote is part of a conversation with Jihad while we were having coffee at Darj Bab Al-amoud [stairs of Damascus Gate) on a quiet Friday afternoon in April 2014, while the second was chanting during a Zafeh (wedding procession) that I attended in the old city of Jerusalem in August the same year. The context and stories of these two quotations epitomise the main themes of my discussion and analysis of everyday resistance in this chapter, namely the Ahl Al-Ard's active existence and spatialities of resistance in Jerusalem.

In the first quote, when Jihad explains that waking up every morning in Jerusalem is an act of resistance, he is not repeating a slogan, nor expressing a poetic idea: he is referring to the fundamental reality of Ahl Al-Ard's presence in Jerusalem. "What I am talking about" is a package of racist laws and structures of the space make the mere living and walking in Jerusalem a battle for Jerusalemites. As explained in the previous pages, 'Israel' construction of racist and fortified space in Jerusalem aims to make the Palestinians' living places an exilic space, as more and more Palestinians are forced to move out 'voluntarily' and reduce them into an unthreatening and manageable minority. Having and being able to keep a roof above your head in Jerusalem means constantly fighting against tens of laws and procedures that aim to make Jerusalem a Jewish-only city. For Jihad, in spite of his realisation of the difficult situation and awareness of that "[the Israeli] do not want to see us [Palestinians]", he added "it will not stay forever like this". This hope for change of the difficult situation in the city, makes him believe that a "pinch with a pin everyday" can lead to the change of the realities on the ground.

The pinch and the headache Jihad refers to might include drinking coffee or just hanging out at Bab Al-amoud. Every other day Jihad and others would find a corner and stop at Bab Al-amoud after a long day of work or on their everyday walks. They would hang out there (individually or with others) chatting, smoking, drinking coffee and watching passers-by. When asked about Bab Al-amoud and hanging out there Sami said: "I like to come here to rest my mind with a cup of coffee and cigarette, I like it more in the evening, it's quiet. I look at the sky, the wall of Jerusalem, think of life, work, everything, or sometimes I think of nothing, I rest my mind then go home". For Sami and his friends, walking Bab Al-amoud is part of their everyday walk to home where they live in the old city and to work in different areas. However, as I explained in the previous pages, the context of the city of Jerusalem

makes the mere hanging out or drinking coffee at Bab Al-amoud into a direct confrontation with different kinds of frontiers. When I was chatting with Sami and his friend, one of two security men - guarding some settlers' students on their way back from school to the old city where they live in a "micro frontier"-, pushed Jamal - who nearly fell - and continued walking fast and pushing more people out of the way. Jamal raised his hand with anger and shouted at the guard "Hey you, do not push!" and cursed the security guard and "the day we [Palestinians] saw them [settlers]". For Sami and friends, their hanging out there, being visible to the settler colonisers' eye is what makes the settlers angry and push them, as Mousa put it: "they do not want to see us, they want to take it all [Jerusalem]"



Tareeq Al-Wad; a main route leads to Al Aqsa mosque and Al Buraq wall. Photo by author. June 2014

Figure 17. Fortified city,

This leads me to the second theme; the "spatialities of resistance" created by Ahl Al-Ard gatherings such as the wedding in the lanes of the old city. The second quote above "Ana Ibn Al-Quds" was chanted during a Zafeh in the old city of Jerusalem. Zafeh in the old city of Jerusalem is a commonplace occurrence; every year there are around 20 Zafeh marches for different occasions, such as weddings and the release of prisoners, and Shahid Zafeh in the lanes of the old city. Zafeh starts from Al-Aqsa mosque, where the legal marriage is signed and then the men walk the lanes of the old city holding the bridegroom on their shoulders and chanting for blessings for his marriage as well as national and political slogans. The Zafeh chanting quoted in the beginning of this chapter is one of the most popular chants sung during the Zafeh walks in the old city. During this particular chanting with its enthusiastic melody, some of the men will close their eyes while chanting, accompanied by rhythmic clapping and a drum, which gives the chanting a powerful feeling. Videos of Zafeh, and of this chant, are widely shared on social media spaces. Palestinians in Jerusalem are unified in that moment, their soul and feet rooted deep on the streets of Jerusalem. For Maram, one of my research participants, who lives in the old city and often heard similar chanting on several occasion in the city, it makes her feel strong: 'I do not know how to

explain it, I feel we are strong, I love hearing it, even my children, they run outside to join the Shabab,<sup>87</sup> they love it.' For Jihad, such chanting in the lanes of the old city gives him hope: 'it gives me hope, it's powerful. I also think that the arches of the old city make it even more powerful. It tells them [settlers] that we are here and our voice is loud'.

In a study of a different context of the relation between space and resistance Routledge calls for "a spatiality contextualized interpretation of collective action" (p.83). This would allow us to understand the "relationship between resistance practices and the places in which, and from which, they are articulated" (p.83). In spite of the absence of clear definitions of both resistance and space, Routledge insists that "the articulation of resistance is always contingent upon the spatio-cultural conditions of its emergence and the character of its participants". In his case a study of the Nepal revolution in 1990s, Routledge builds on Deleuze and Guattari rhizomatic concept and argues that

"resistances are rhizomatic multiplicities than can involve myriad interwoven processes, relations and meaning, be the symbolic, imaginative, political, cultural, or material. Attentive to these caveats, a spatiality of resistance requires into why resistances emerge where they do; how practices of resistance are constitutive of different relationships to space; how these relationships enable or constrain such articulations of resistance; and how the character and meaning of place may change when it becomes a site of resistance" (p.83).

Such gathering transforms those spaces into sites of resistance and creates what Routledge calls 'spatialities of resistance'; "sites of conflict where the social structures and relations of power, knowledge and resistance intersect" (p.70).

Chanting in the lanes of the old city in Jerusalem takes on a new meaning and dimension – its repercussion echoes beyond space and time: "I am here, not moving", said Motasem, who had his Zafeh in the old city' lanes. "My body feels tingly when I hear or participate in those chants, I cannot describe it. When people say Allah Akbar, it feels very powerful. In Zafeh I feel we are strong, we are united and chanting together in front of them [Israeli soldiers]. Those moments give me hope that we will kick those bastards out one day, it is Haq [Truth]". Motasem's Zafeh in the lanes of the old city not only created moments of resistance, but reclaimed, although temporally, a concrete space of resistance. Such gatherings and chanting that take place in front of different kinds of frontiers (soldiers, CCTV, settlers) in Jerusalem are heard by Palestinians, settlers and soldiers in the city. For Maram, who lives in the old city and often hears similar chanting on several occasions in the city, Maram says: 'I love hearing it, even my children, they run outside to join the Shabab. They love it'. While for Jihad, such chanting in the lanes of the old city, it gives him hope, 'it gives

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<sup>87</sup> Young men

me hope, its powerful, also I think because of the arches of the old city, it makes it even more powerful. It tells them [settlers] that we are here and our voice is loud’.

Similar sentiments were expressed also by Jerusalemites who participated in the longest reading chain surrounding the walls of Jerusalem (Figure 18 and 19). The event was an initiative organised by a group of young Palestinian men and women on March 2014 to form a reading chain to be registered in the Guinness book of world records as the longest reading chain.<sup>88</sup> Jerusalem that day was full of thousands Palestinians reading books, who later marched and gathered at Bab Al-amoud chanting for Palestine. For a few hours Palestinians in Jerusalem fully claimed Bab Al-amoud and the surrounding areas. They read books, danced Dabka, sung national songs, and chanted for Palestine and Jerusalem la sharqeh walah gharbeh, [No Easter, No Wester]. Hae El Quds Arabeh [Jerusalem is Arab], Falsteen Arabiah, mn el mayeh lal mayeh, which literally means Palestine is an Arab from the water (Mediterranean sea) to the water (the river of Jordan) and other chants emphasising the Arab face and identity of Jerusalem. In spite of the nonviolent feature of such event, it ended up violently when the Israeli soldiers and police men and women attacked the gatherings and started shooting tear gas, sound bombs and arrested some of the participants.



Bab Al-amoud. The main gathering point for the reading event. March 2014. Photo by author.

Figure 18. Active existence and a space of resistance.

<sup>88</sup> Among the organisers was Baha Elyan. Baha was the main organiser of the event who initiated several initiatives in Jabal Al Mukaber, the same town where I live, including a public library. When I returned back from the field, Baha initiated an attack against ‘Israeli’ settlers in Jerusalem where he was shot dead and his partner was wounded and arrested.





The Palestinian flag in the sky of Jerusalem during the event March 2014. Photo by author.

Figure 19. Active existence and a space of resistance.

So far, I have set the context of the everyday life in the city of Jerusalem where all research participants live and walk every day. I presented how the fortified and racist construction of the city brings confrontation with all kinds of frontiers and violence into the day to day life in the city of Jerusalem. Also, I elaborated the significance of Ahl Al-Ard active existence and the spatialities of resistance as main analytical themes of understanding everyday resistance in the city of Jerusalem. Within this context, one can suggest that Ahl Al-Ard active existence through every day walks or hanging out, and gatherings in the city is an act of resistance,

In the following two sections, I focus on Ahl Al-Ard everyday life in the context of the embattled city of Jerusalem. I analyse Ahl Al-Ard Individual and collective spatial practices.

### 5.3 Walking the city

Jihad, Maram, and Rami walk every day along the old lanes and roads of the fortified city of Jerusalem. Maram lives in the old city next to the 'micro frontiers', while Jihad and Rami live outside the walls in nearby neighbourhoods of Jerusalem, Ras Al-amoud and Shufat Refugee camp, respectively. While all my research participants walked on different routes and roads in their day to day activities, they shared and faced the same fortified racist space of Jerusalem. Often, along their walks, my research participants encountered various frontiers. Walking in the city of Jerusalem involves everyone from passers-by to bystanders, are constantly witnessing or being involved in numerous encounters and different kinds of frontiers along the way. Such encounters can be verbal or physical, visible or invisible, direct or indirect, and so on. The significance of these encounters, whether people participate in or only witness it, may last a long time. It is often the case that a particular encounter imbues meaning in people's memory about the space, and these individual and collective memories can also take on a new meaning for those who witnessed or participated in the encounter.

Furthermore, such memories influence and shape people's perceptions of living in the fortified and colonial city of Jerusalem.

Drawing on de Certeau's understanding of walking in the city, this section traces the research participants' footsteps in the old lanes and the roads of Jerusalem to explore how Ahl Al-Ard negotiate and navigate through the fortified and racist space of Jerusalem and recreate an ordinary rhythm of everyday life. By doing so, we will be able to better understand how the mundane movement of Ahl Al-Ard on the land actively shapes and reinforces their understanding of their reality of life under settler colonialism in the city of Jerusalem.

Al-Ard Elna [The land it ours]

Rami, grew up in Shufat Refugee camp where also he attended the UN primary school. Growing up in an 'ugly mosaic' as Rami would call the refugee camp, and his walks in the city of Jerusalem made Rami realise, at an early age, what living under colonisation means, as his words illustrate: 'I always felt that there is something that does not make sense in the presence of this camp, people's life in the camp, sewage and trash in the streets and lanes. The refugee camp for me is like a mosaic, but it is not an artistic beautiful mosaic, it's an ugly one, this social mosaic did not make any sense, there were lots of contradictions, some people come from Lud, others from Beit Toula, and other destroyed villages, all in one ugly crowded place. I always knew why we live there; my grandmother told me about Haret Esharaf<sup>89</sup>, and how they were kicked out of it, she calls them ['settlers] Klab Wardeh<sup>90</sup>. [...] I did not see things as I see now, but I always knew that we are under colonisation and always knew what that means'. Rami's feelings that 'there is something wrong' did not only include the Refuge Camp where he lives. Coming from a poor family, Rami worked during the summer vacations in Jewish areas in the city of Jerusalem. Those days, when Rami walked everyday between the Jewish and Palestinian areas of the city of Jerusalem, he also felt that there was something that did not make sense: 'I always felt that there is something that doesn't make any sense, there is something irrational happening, people's life in the camp, the trash in the streets and roads in the camp, I always felt there is something wrong. The refugee camp for me was like a mosaic, but it was not like an art beautiful mosaic, this social mosaic didn't make any sense for me, there were lots of contradictions, some people are coming from Lud, others from Beit Toula, Hebron, from all destroyed villages'.

<sup>89</sup> A neighbourhood in the old city of Jerusalem which was entirely destroyed in 1967 by the Israeli.

<sup>90</sup> It is a local proverb, Wardeh is a name of a woman and Klab means dogs, so Klab Wardeh is the dogs of Wardeh. Maram used the same proverb when she talked about settlers in Jerusalem, when I asked her to explain it, she said: I do not know, we always use this, Wardeh is a woman who used to have lots of dogs and she would let them walk in the streets to scare people, so they are like Klab Wardeh everywhere in the streets to scare people'.

Walking between the Refugee camp and the Jewish areas in Jerusalem made Rami feel that he was moving between two time zones not only through space: 'During school, I used to work in the summer time. That time I didn't realize it as am doing now, it was the master/slave relationship. I used to work as a cleaner in Jewish houses, there was always discussions with them, they always would say oh those Palestinians are trouble makers but you are a good Palestinian. I was at their house, so I would be diplomatic and not argue, and I say I hope things get better. I was the good Arab, who is loyal to his master and not a terrorist. Through my interaction with the Israeli society through my work at Israeli shops, I was amazed, their women are very free, I felt that we live in the Middle Ages in Jerusalem and Ramallah, I felt that we have different timing. There is a chronological difference between us and them! But all this made me think that my only capital is my education. Education is the only way for us. We don't have anything else, only education"

Rami remembers from his life in the refugee camp what he calls the 'daily rituals': after-school clashes between the soldiers and the students of the primary school where he studied, Rami says; "I remember during my primary school time, there were daily clashes between the students and the soldiers, it was a daily ritual. I never participated in those rituals, I was afraid but also I always thought that a stone will do nothing to a gun'. Rami, never participated in such rituals because he feared the soldiers and because he thought that a stone cannot defeat a gun: 'Since my childhood I have this fear, I fear the coloniser. This fear started a long time ago when I first came here to Palestine in 1998. I remember it was Netanyahu's government and there was something called the 'breaking bones policy', I remember the borders' soldiers<sup>91</sup> used to have a beige militant costume, there were curfews, it was scary, sometimes I feel it till today. Once at Birzeit I was walking back from dinner to our hostel with my friends and we were stopped by the Palestinian soldiers with green costume. They were Palestinians not Israeli, but their green uniform was linked in my mind with the Israeli uniform, also one of them had a metal thing between his teeth, they were like Al Jesh [Israeli army]. When they asked for our IDs, I was clearly stressed and worried, even though they were not speaking Hebrew, my reaction made them suspicious about me, they delayed us to check our IDs over the telecom after they asked us our names. When we left, my friend asked me what had happened to me. I didn't know what to answer him, I was very afraid'.

Those daily rituals led Rami's focus on his education as well as into learning Hebrew. Rami says: 'since I was very young, I was very interested in learning Hebrew, I did self-learning, we didn't study it at school. I learnt it step by step; I learnt the letters and started to watch

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<sup>91</sup> Soldiers of the borders are part of the city militarisation, in the context of 'Israel' the border's soldiers are not only at the borders of the colonised land, they are everywhere.



news in Hebrew. I also focused on my studies as I realized that my education is my weapon'. Rami was particularly interested in knowing 'this thing called Israel, I wanted to know who they are and how they think and why they are here, I wanted to know 'Israel' because I fear them'.

Even though Rami was never arrested or participated in any violent confrontation with the 'Israeli' soldiers, yet his growing up in the fortified racist city of Jerusalem and what he saw in his walks every day in Jerusalem made him fear 'Israel': I was never arrested, but I witnessed lots of arrests of other people. Once at Shufat checkpoint, I was in the bus and there was a car queuing in front of us; suddenly the soldiers and Special Forces pointed their guns at the car and dragged a man from it and took him away. Such images are stuck in my mind. In particular the images of the Intifada; I remember the moments when massive numbers of foot soldiers invade the camp, the curfews, the strikes and the clashes between the Shabab and the soldiers. I lived it every day, it's all stuck in my head. I remember Ahdath Al Nafaq<sup>92</sup> in 1996 very well too. When I remember these events today, when I read about it, I say that these moments are important for me, those moments made me as a child know and realise the colonisation of our land and made me realise that we have a right and we are, the Palestinians, our land was taken by force'.

However, Rami's memories of the space in Jerusalem are not only about violent incidents and what he saw in his walks are not only one side violence by the 'Israeli' towards other Palestinians. For three years Rami used the public transportation from Shufat Refugee Camp. Rami walked Salah Al Din Street in Jerusalem in his way to Al-Rashidiya school next to Jerusalem walls. Also, he remembers several times that he would give a hand to a Hajah (respectful title of old women) coming from Shufat Camp or other nearby areas to sell their vegetables at Salah Al Din Street or Bab Al-amoud area. 'I always gave a hand to the Hajah and I particularly liked their prayers for me. They would say 'May Allah protect you, May Allah make you achieve what you want. Those women always amazed me, they are always followed by the police and soldiers and sometimes they would destroy their vegetables, but they still come every day and sell their vegetables and they argue very strongly with the soldiers and the police. Those women always inspired me'. Another source of inspiration and memory of Rami's walks in the city of Jerusalem is Shabaneh, the famous newspaper man who had a small booth selling newspapers next to the main entrance of Al-Rashidiya school. Shabaneh, for Rami is part of his memories of his walks in the city which also influenced his understanding of his life in Jerusalem: I will never ever forget Shabaneh, the guy who sells newspapers [next to Bab Asahreh gate] there are always foot soldiers walking and passing

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<sup>92</sup> In 1996 the Palestinians rise up against the Israeli construction of tunnels underneath Al Aqsa mosque.

by him, he always mocks them in a comedy way. I remember once he was holding the newspaper and pointing at a headline in the front page saying in a loud voice: haeo, haeo [here it is, here it is], they [Lebanese resistance] killed twelve soldiers [during 2006 war]. Haeo, haeo, they [Lebanese resistance] will screw you, Sometimes, he would say: walak [hey you], I was here before you. Walak [hey you], I used to sell newspapers in Jaffa Street and Maman Allah [ in 'West Jerusalem'] before you and your state were born. I always liked how he mocks them, he did not fear them, and he teases them in a cynical way. Even though he always receives fines from the municipality, but he never moved or closed down his business. For me, I think this man is part of the scene there. I do not imagine that street without Shabaneh, everyone in Jerusalem knows him, his words are stuck in my head. I feel that this man represents the story of Jerusalem, this man sitting all the time next to the school wall and facing Jerusalem old city made me pay more attention to the walls, I built a relation with the city wall and stones, texts might be something debatable or questionable, but no one can question the credibility of the stone".

Jihad who also walks every day from his house in Ras Al-amoud to the Jewish side of the city, where he works as a construction worker, used the word 'schizophrenia' to describe living in Jerusalem, while he refuses to work in settlements for political reasons yet he works in other 'Israeli' constructions which he knows are also part of the colonisation of the city: If someone hears me they will think that this is schizophrenic, but you are from Jerusalem Maysa, and you know how is the situation, if I want to drive a car I need to get an Israeli licence, if I need to see a doctor you have to go to their hospitals, everything is connected to with those bastards' we are forced to work with these bastards, for someone like me, I didn't finish my degree, so I have to do this work,' Jihad's walk takes about 15 to 20 minutes, every day he passes all kinds of soldiers and police men and women who keep roaming the city on foot or in military and police cars : 'in Jerusalem everyday there is something new, you engage with them whether you want or not. Every day I see men arrested and detained next to the walls, my neighbourhood main entrance is blocked with big concrete blocks, all Jerusalem neighbourhoods has soldiers and blocks at the entrance. So, they are in your face all the time'. This everyday face to face encounter with the soldiers in Jerusalem gave Jihad 'immunity' as he talks about not fearing their presence. In contrast, Jihad understands the tense presence of soldiers and police in the city as a fear from their side: 'I was stopped by a soldier the other day, he was a boy, he asked me for my ID, I put my hand in my back pocket to get it for him, he stepped back and was in a standby position to shoot, I smiled and asked him, what's up why are you scared, he said get your hand out of your pocket. Why are you afraid, do not be afraid, relax, relax I said. Do not ask me to relax, the soldier said. Then another female soldier came and asked me where I live, then she let me go. Their soldiers

are afraid in Jerusalem, if you walk next to any of Israeli soldiers or close to them they freak out they would shoot you or get into a shooting position. Even when they check us, they check us while they are anxious'. Jihad interprets this fear saying: "by logic if you know that you are liar, you are always afraid that your lie will be revealed, even if you have people who believe your lie, you still know that you are liar." Even though as Jihad says, the 'Israeli' did everything they can do to overcome this lie: They did everything they do, wars, invasion, illegal weapons, phosphor, all kind of illegal bullets, closures of Jerusalem neighbourhoods, they made a border between me and my neighbour, there is only one thing they didn't use, atom bomb, and maybe they used it in Gaza already, what else can they do, arrest! They arrest every day! Lynching in the streets! They did and do, what else they can do!'

Like Rami, Jihad has a special relation with the stones of the city of Jerusalem because of where he lives. Jihad has a panoramic view of the old city of Jerusalem, and he enjoys his coffee or shisha. However Jihad's favourite place in the city is Daraj Bab Al-amoud:

'Every other day I come here [Damascus gate stair] after work in the evening. I come alone or with the Shabab. I like sitting here. I always say those who did not drink coffee at the Darj Bab Al-amoud are missing a lot. I watch people come and go; Palestinians, tourists, soldiers, settlers, all kinds of people. I drink coffee and smoke cigarettes. Some days, foot-soldiers or the Yassam would ask for our IDs, they check us then ask us to leave, or leave us and go. When settlers pass us they walk quickly and their guards run after them, we mock them and laugh at them. They [settlers and soldiers] do not like to see us here, they do not want us, they want to take it [Jerusalem] all for them, and it screws their mood when they see us. Yet I feel frustrated when I see them dancing and singing here in their holidays, the bastards make me angry when they sing "yrashalem lena"<sup>93</sup>. If these stones can talk it will tell you [settlers] how many bastards came and left this city before you, bastards'.

The most annoying days for Jihad in Jerusalem is the Jewish holidays, in those holidays the city of Jerusalem would be under tight closure and the entrances of Palestinian neighbourhood in Jerusalem would be blocked. Between September and December there are around five Jewish holidays following a Hebrew calendar:

"In their holidays it looks like they are so excited about their state, hay we have a state we have a state, flags are everywhere, It used to bother me, now I laugh at them, because after 67 years they are still trying to prove themselves, they have a problem, till today Israeli is trying to prove itself that it is a country, and they still say I feel threats, their economy, technology and everything, yet they are still afraid and feel threat and try to prove themselves, even their crimes are justified as a self-defence, after 67 years; and they still say we are defending our selves. Why do they do that? Because they are lying, if you lie in something, you know that you are lying in; so, we stay worried because you know that you are a liar, they you know they are liars that's why'

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<sup>93</sup> Jerusalem is ours in Hebrew

From Rami's words, we can see how his memories about Shabaneh for instance<sup>94</sup> are part of his memory about the space, which made him develop a relation with the stones of the city. Memories of the space for Rami also include violent incidents and encounters which made Rami fear the soldiers as well as wanting to know more about 'Israel'.

#### Little victories

Jihad's memories of walking in the city includes lots of stories of him and others being in direct confrontation with the Israeli soldiers. However, those memories are not only about the settler colonisers violence, it also about the resistance, it's about the 'little victory' as Jihad calls it, Ahl Al-Ard make in their encounters with the soldiers. Jihad: "We were five, we decided to find any Musta'reb<sup>95</sup> to beat him. We had a goal; we want to attack a Musta'reb, there was already Mwajahat<sup>96</sup> at Bab Al-amoud. We found one at Bab Asahreh, we recognised his weapon in spite of his civil outfit, we walked after him, and we caught him at Bab Al-amoud, I hit him one punch directly to his face! Apparently, he noticed us, and entrapped us. (Other soldiers attacked us one time, I got arrested and the others ran away. I was beaten up and taken to Al Maskubeh.<sup>97</sup> When I remembered the moment, I hit him on the face, I feel good, and I feel that I had a little victory on this bastard. Even though I was beaten very, very bad, they kicked me with their legs and their guns, still it was painless because at least I hit him first"

Those little victories -not necessarily heroic - (Deleuze & Guattari, 1988), can be laughing at an Israeli soldier who nearly fell down when he was walking fast when a young boy shouted loudly in Hebrew 'You son of a bitch' and other boys were whistling and shouting making fun loud voices to annoy the soldier. I witnessed several of such incidents in my walking around the old city in Jerusalem. What was amazing were the comments I would hear from the passers-by. For instance, during my field work, I heard several times the proverb 'dawam al hal mn al muhal' which literally translates to 'nothing lasts forever', and usually this proverb would be followed by la elah ela Allah - 'No God but God'- which means 'Allah is the one and only, the Eternal'. Such comments are rooted in the culture of the Palestinian society and are often heard when someone comments on hardships or tragic situations, which could be political, personal, social, cultural or economic.

#### Walking with confidence:

For Maram the first thing they see the minute they step out of their houses are the security guards of the fortified house next to them. Maram grew up walking the old city roads. She remembers when she was a little girl, she passed every day by what is called now the city of

<sup>94</sup> Growing up in Jerusalem, I witnessed several incidents similar to the one Rami is referring to.

<sup>95</sup> *Undercover arabized special Israeli security forces*

<sup>96</sup> The Arabic word for confrontation between the soldiers and the Palestinians

<sup>97</sup> Main police station in Jerusalem.

David. For Maram, the Israeli are good in planning and organising, 'they said we will build the city of David, and they did, since I was in the elementary school they were building it, and now it's done, they are better than us in planning'.

When I met Maram she was already changing her route to go back home inside the walls of the city, even though it is closer for her to take the Bab Al-Amoud gate Bab Al-Amoud, The main entrance to the city became more and more violent. Some Palestinians were killed at Bab Al-Amoud gates and at the same time soldiers aggression increased. Maram's daughters fear Bab Al-Amoud gate, the last time they walked there they started crying and did not want to walk there and started running in the other direction. Since then, Maram told them to take a slightly longer route through Bab Asahreh. Maram says; 'it's not safe, my daughters start running in the street when they see Bab Al-Amoud, they get very scared, all the killings happen there, I do not go from there anymore, and I asked my daughters to use Bab Asahreh, even if it's more walk, it's alright, relatively safer, even though there is no safe entrance to Al Balad'.

When I asked Maram if she thinks that the situation in Jerusalem will stay as it is for ever or if Israel is staying for ever she answered me:

"It will not stay like this for ever, how old is Israeli, 60, 70 years! There were empires lived much more, I am nearly 40. Even if it lives 100 years or more, at the end it will collapse. Maybe it will not happen in my life time, but I am sure it will happen. The French stayed 150 years in Algeria, the Ottoman stayed here 500 years, but what happened then, they are a past now, they are a history. The present moment is very difficult; they said they want to make David paradise, and they are making David Paradise. They started digging since I was a little girl, I used to see them on my way to the school, they are working 24 hours, they are digging and working to kick us out, we all know that, but at the end of the day the situation will not stay like this for ever. 'Dwam Al hal mn Al Muhal', there is always an end for everything, the only eternal is Allah. You are talking about state only 70 years old, it might live another 100 years, ok! But then what! It will go soon or later. The USSR was a great power and it collapsed. They are the minority. Sometimes I think and I say what a gut! They live alone here, a stranger body in the Middle East, right! An alien body. I wonder, how they convince their children that they have a right here! Do not their children ask them: why are we here in the middle of the Arab? This is what keeping them, they plan for 100 years ahead, for us we only think of today. But as I told you, how old is Israel, 70 years, you know the story of Noah when he walked by a woman crying with her son, he asked her how old was he, she said 300, he told her do not be sad. There will come an Umma. We will live only 70 years. How old are we, what is 70 years, look at us, we are close to 40'.

When Maram walks in the lanes she also commented on the walk of the settlers in the city, Maram said:

'They always walk quickly and with fear, look at us, look how we walk, we walk with lots of confidence, we are relaxed [laughed and rested more her shoulders and raised up her head] unlike them'. Maram thinks that Palestinians walk in confidence because it is their land; 'Al Ard elna, that's why we walk in confidence and that's why they walk in fear. We remind them that it is not their land, that's why when they pass us they want to avoid us quickly. Of course, the soldiers or the armed settlers walk with lots of arrogance and sometimes push people with their guns when they walk in the city, but if they do not have guns they would not dare do that, deep inside their hearts they know that this is our land. I always wondered what they tell their children. Every morning when their children go to school there is a security man in front and another one in the back, at the entrance and the roof they have security, what a life! They live in fear. They are citizens of the strongest state in the world and do not feel safe'.



Figure 20. View from Jihad's House. January 2014.



Figure 21. Maram's route to her house. April 2014

Certeau's understanding of "space [as] practiced place" and of how "urban planning is transformed into spaces of walkers" are relevant for analysing the above accounts of walking in the fortified city of Jerusalem. In 'The Practice of Everyday Life', Michel de Certeau perceives walking in the city as an act of resistance. He describes and compares the act of walking in the city as an act of speech that has an "enunciative function", seeing from the "enunciative" function, de Certeau writes that:

[t]he pedestrian speech act has three characteristics which distinguish it at the outset from the spatial system: the present, the discrete, the "phatic." First, if it is true that a spatial order organizes an ensemble of possibilities (e.g., by a place in which one can move) and interdictions (e.g., by a wall that prevents one from going further), then the walker actualizes some of these possibilities. In that way, he makes them exist as well as emerge. But he also moves them about and he invents others, since the crossing, drifting away, or improvisation of walking privilege, transform or abandon spatial elements. (Certeau, 1984, p.98)

Walking in the city is an act of resistance in the sense that "the walker transforms each spatial signifier into something else" and makes selections of where to walk and where not to walk (Certeau, 1984, p.99). On some occasions the walker realises the available options of the imposed order such as no access areas, but also the walkers find and create other possibilities such as walking a different route. Through walking in the city, the walker,

.. creates a discreteness, whether by making choices among the signifiers of the spatial "language" or by displacing them through the use he makes of them. He condemns certain places to inertia or disappearance and composes with others spatial "turns of phrase" that are "rare," "accidental" or illegitimate. But that already leads into a rhetoric of walking."(Certeau, 1984, p.99)

The everyday practices of people (walking, cooking, etc.) are tactics and practices of disrupting the power and walking everyday in racist and fortified spaces does not mean that everyday actors have no freedom. Walking the streets of Jerusalem means that walkers might witness or be involved in not heroic “little victories” such as attacking the soldiers first or mocking and laughing at settlers walks with fear in the old lanes of the old city.

For de Certeau the walking “affirms, suspects, tries out, transgresses and respects the trajectories it “speaks” (99). Understanding walking in Jerusalem as an act of resistance to the very racist and fortified structure of the city would allow one to understand how these walks influenced the understanding of my research participants of their realities and their relation with the space. Growing up in an “ugly mosaic” of a place as Rami described Shufat Refugee Camp and walking the city everyday moving between Arab and Jewish neighbourhoods made him at early age understand, what being colonised means. Living in the city of Jerusalem for my research participants is to live in a kind of “schizophrenic” space as Jihad described the life of Jerusalemites in the city. The very construction of the space is a continuous reminder that “there is something wrong” as Rami said above. Walking in the city made my research participants develop a kind of relation with the walls, streets and corners of the city which make them walk with confidence because they believe and understand that they belong to the land and the land belongs to them. The following section moves to collective spatial practices in Jerusalem.

#### **5.4 The myriad sites of resistance**

In this section I elaborate more on Ahl Al-Ard resistance in the city by focusing on the collective spatial practices of Ahl Al-Ard similar to the Zafeh analysed in the first section of this chapter (5.1). I examine those spaces are “created, claimed, defended, and used (strategically or tactically)” (1997, p.71) and explore the new meaning of the spaces where these events took place. Routledge build on the rhizomatic understanding and argues that practices of resistance may change the meaning of specific places, such meaning can be understood in various ways within and between different groups or could mean nothing for some. Building in his case study of Nepal revolution Routledge concludes that:

“[e]very resistance, whatever its outcome, leaves a trace in the memory of those who have lived and witnessed the drama of collective action. These traces may be evoked in songs, poems, tactics and strategies that may inspire and inform future resistances. They may remain stories retold across generations and cultures, [...] they may also reside in the memories that particular places evoke” (p.85)

In the following I present snapshots of Jerusalem nights and Fridays in Jerusalem drawing on Routledge’s concept of spatialities of resistance, I examine how the violent nights of Jerusalem and the rituals of Friday prayers transform the site into myriad sites of resistance.



### Ramadan nights

As I mentioned in Chapter Four, the level of everyday violence in the city of Jerusalem was increasing gradually and by June almost every Jerusalemite neighbourhood would have a violent confrontation every night between the soldiers and the Shabab. In those nights, I was very close to these events. I was close enough to hear the bullets, the Shabab shouting of Allah Akbar, and smell the tear gas (see figure 22).



A photo of a live coverage of night demonstrations at Al-tour I was watching on TV while I was able to smell the tear gas and hear the shooting of similar demonstrations happening nearby where I live. That night, and many other nights, witnessed violent confrontation between the Israeli soldiers and security forces and Palestinians men till the early hours of the morning when the time of morning prayers come. July 2014

Figure 22. Jerusalem nights.

The violence during these Jerusalem nights increased after the incident of kidnapping Muhammad Abu Khdiar; a Palestinians boy aged 12 years, in front of his house by three settlers who burnt him alive and threw him into a nearby wood in Jerusalem. Before Abu Khdiar's kidnapping, the environment in Jerusalem was already tense with several warnings shared by people on social media about potential kidnapping of children. Families in areas such as Beit Hanina and Shufat had already prevented at least one kidnapping. On the morning of 2<sup>nd</sup> of July 2014 at 5:30 news spread about the disappearance of a boy called Muhammad Abu Khdiar. Muhammad got up early in the morning, had his Suhur<sup>98</sup> and did his Wudu<sup>99</sup> and headed to a nearby mosque to do the morning prayers, after the prayers his cousin came to check on him, the mother confirmed he left to the mosque one hour before the prayers finished and Muhammad was not there.; People in Shufat thought Muhammad was kidnaped by settlers. Some people talked about a car that had stopped nearby where Muhammad would walk. A review of CCTV images nearby, revealed that Muhammad was pushed into that car. The father informed the Israeli police and provided them with the evidence. Before hearing back from the police, which Ibrahim one of Shufat residents does not trust or believe, 'they are the judge and the criminal in the same time, we

<sup>98</sup> Morning meal during Ramadan

<sup>99</sup> Washing for prayers.

do not believe them, they know who kidnapped Muhammad, we gave them the number of the car and a copy of the CCTV data. If it was a Jewish boy, he would have been with his mother quickly'. That's why that day, Ibrahim and with other Shabab from the area by 7:00 in the morning put fire on the rail line of the train which connects Jerusalem's settlements together and passes through Shufat and Beit Hanina areas. Ibrahim with others, vandalised the ticket machines, electric poles, and rails were destroyed and removed. Muhammad's friends were chanting, 'Mn Shufat tel'e Al Qarar, mn hon ma fe Qetar' [the decision has been made in Shufat, there is no train anymore]. The Shabab decision was executed in no time. Ibrahim and his friends managed to paralyse the train and forced thousands of settlers who used to take it every day to change their life style. Furthermore, Ibrahim during those seven days declared Shufat as a 'liberated land': "We liberated Shufat, there are no settlers allowed to pass from here. This is a liberated land'. The train was back on the 13<sup>th</sup> of July. When the train returned to service it was accompanied with militant cars, and surveillance balloon. Yet the train was still targeted by Molotov's or stones.

The infrastructure of the settler colonial project in Palestine, becomes sites for political action and sites for violence (Nolte, 2016). During this period, Palestinians in different areas in Jerusalem, attacked traffic lights, settlers' cars, and blocked the roads with huge rubbish bins and put them on fire on the streets. During this period, the image number 23 was widely shared. As we can see from the image, it calls for vandalising all kinds of infrastructure (see figures 24,25,26,27,28,29,30 and 31).



Vandalism as resistance. The caption on the top of the image reads 'the enemy's infrastructure' and small icons refer to infrastructures including railway trains, traffic lights, phone lines and settlement fences. The caption in the bottom of the image reads: Vandalise it and you will be rewarded. The language of this caption borrows from Islamic language which calls for doing good deeds that people would be rewarded by God. This image was largely shared on social media spaces. Aug 2014. Retrieved from social media.

Figure 23. Call for vandalism.

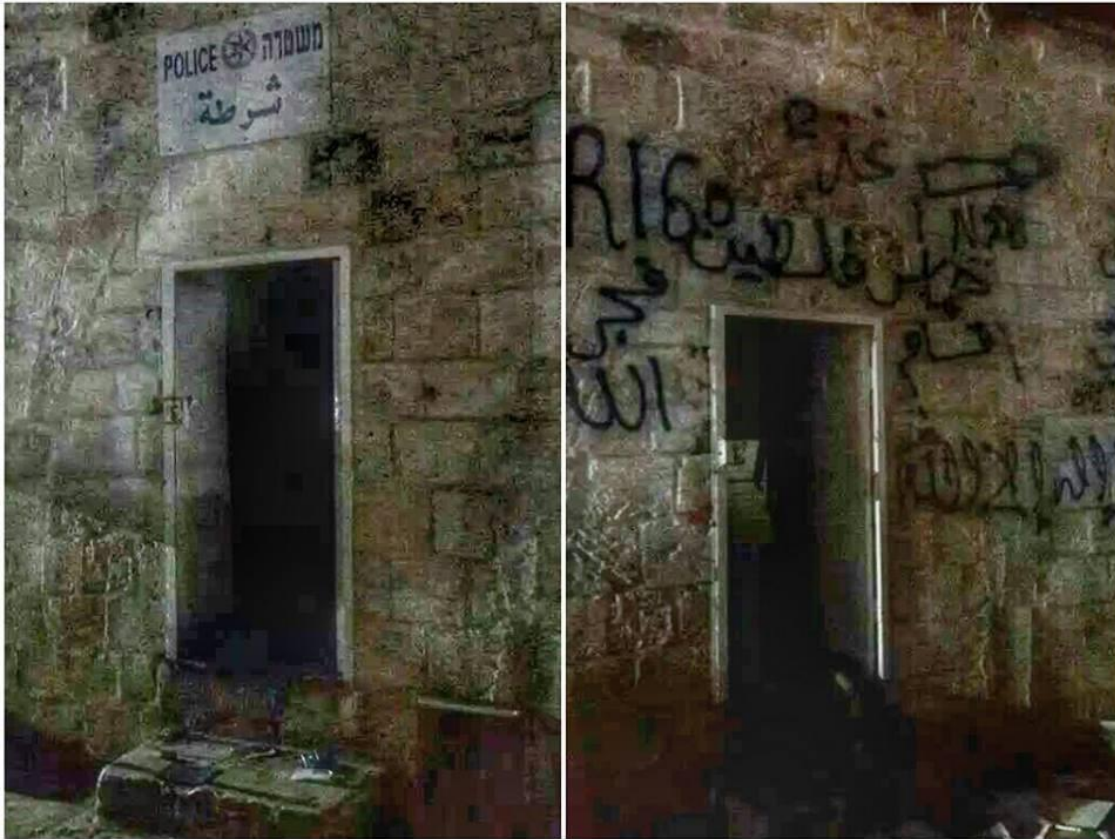


Figure 24. Burnt Israeli police station in Jerusalem.

This is how the Israeli police station in Al-Aqsa mosque looked like after one of the Jerusalem nights. The photograph was shared in social spaces. A group of Palestinians threw Molotov cocktails and burnt the centre. The writings on the wall says Palestine, Hamas, No God but God, the writing of R160 refers to a rocket produced by Hamas and named after Rantissi a Palestinian freedom fighter assassinated by Israel. July 2014. Retrieved from social media



A Palestinian man cut a tower belonging to the 'Israeli' train that connects the settlements. After the kidnapping and killing of Muhammad Abu Khdair which started a wave of resistance took place almost all the nights of Ramadan in various towns and neighbourhood in Jerusalem. July 2014. Retrieved from social media.

Figure 25. Settler colonialism infrastructure as sites of resistance.





Destruction of the train rail as an act of resistance. Destruction of the train rail connecting Israeli settlements in Jerusalem. July 2014. Retrieved from social media.

Figure 26. Settler colonialism infrastructure as sites of resistance.



Putting fire on rail train as an act of resistance. Shufat. July 2014. Retrieved from social media.

Figure 27. Train rails on fire.



CCTV cameras covered by black plastic bags. Shufat. Aug 2014 Retrieved from social media.

Figure 28. Settler colonialism infrastructure as sites of resistance.



Figure 29. Writings on the wall.

Writings on the wall say: Intifada, free Palestine and long live resistance. July 2014. Retrieved from social media.



Figure 30. Settler colonialism infrastructure as sites of resistance.

'Mn Shufat tel'e Al Qarar, mn hon ma fe Qetar' [the decision has been made in Shufat, there is no train anymore]. The train railway blocked by Palestinians July 2014. All photos are from Shufat and retrieved from social media spaces.

### Friday prayers

Jerusalem indeed is an important city for Muslim and it has the second most important Islamic religious sites.<sup>100</sup> Friday prayers in the context of the city of Jerusalem, gives a very different dimension to such religious practices which become more than religious or ritual practices. Friday prayers in the context of the racist and fortified construction of the city become a ritual of the political. The entire scene of the Friday prayers in Jerusalem is confrontational between Ahl Al-ard and the settler colonialist through all kinds of frontiers in the city. The Palestinians walking to the city and gathering for a particular time for prayers is a challenge to the spatial domination of the city.

The colonial moment is intensified in that day. Jerusalem on Fridays is particularly tense and violent most of the time. The number of Israeli soldiers on Fridays usually increases, at every single gate and corner there are soldiers barricades and roaming police. On some Fridays a

<sup>100</sup> The al-Aqsa mosque and the Dome of the Rock, furthermore the importance comes from the fact the Jerusalem was the first Qibla of Islam [direction of prayers] also it is the place where the prophet Muhammad ascended to Heaven according to the Islamic belief [al-Isra' wal Mi'raj].

route of five minutes would take around two hours and some days there were literally eleven checkpoints in less than three kilometres distance. Above all, in most of the cases there are age restrictions on access to the Al-Aqsa mosque for prayers. As a result lots of Palestinians end up performing their prayers on the streets of Jerusalem (see figures 31, 32, 33).

On the other hand, the entire scene of Friday prayers embodies the active existence of Ahl Al-Ard which challenges the settler colonial plans for the city by their collective spatial practices. Friday prayers and many of its rituals and practices performed in Jerusalem, such as individuals and groups walking to the Al-Aqsa mosque, organised group prayers on the streets next to road blocks and the settlers' army, and megaphoning calls to prayers. Among other social and political gatherings, and individual mundane movements across the land such as walking in the city or shopping, typical, everyday spatial practices, represent embodiments of the 'spirit of resistance' and create 'spatialities of resistance' that contest the violent and racist construction of the space in the city. They shape the Ahl Al-Ard relation with their land and most importantly it ruptures the flow of the settler colonisers' control of the space.

Such practices not only challenge the spatialized mythologies of settler colonialism, but also hold out against the colonisation of Ahl Al-Ard time especially in relation to the land. The Palestinian's existence on this land gives the settler colonisers a disturbing reminder of the temporal dimensions of their occupation. Thus, I would argue that Ahl Al-Ard Individual and collective movement and gatherings in Palestine are a constant interruption of the settler colonisers' attempts to reform Ahl Al-Ard time.



Friday prayers on the road in Jerusalem.  
July 2014

Figure 31. Fridays in Jerusalem.





Friday in Wadi Al Joz, after Friday prayers. A Palestinian flag, barricades by Palestinians and Israeli soldiers in action. September 2014. Photo by Jihad.

Figure 32. Fridays in Jerusalem.



6:00 am Friday morning at Al-Aqsa Mosque. April 2014. Retrieved from social media.

Figure 33. Fridays in Jerusalem.

## Conclusion

In this chapter I have argued that Ahl Al-Ard individual and collective spatial practices are acts of everyday resistance which play a significant role in shaping their understanding of the realities of living under settler colonialism. Through these practices they challenge the flow of the settler colonial project in the city. The evidence presented showed that the day to day walking in the city and the different kinds of Ahl Al-Ard gatherings transforms the fortified city of Jerusalem into myriad sites of resistance and sites of learning about the self and the

other. I focus on Ahl Al-Ard individual (walking, shopping) and collective (political, social, religious, and cultural) spatial practices, within the context of fortified, racist Jerusalem, to examine how those practices influence Ahl Al-Ard relations with their land, and reveal the rhizomatic character of everyday resistance in its spatial dimension, disrupting the flow of settler colonialism, and most importantly, maintaining the spark of hope (Zournazi, 2002). The most significant finding from the analysis is the day-to-day practices of the Ahl al-Ard, such as walking in the city, shopping in the old city and hanging out on the streets which further deepens the Ahl Al-Ard's sense of space, place and resistance, frustrating the settler colonial plans in Jerusalem, and most importantly giving them hope for freedom (Hammami, 2006; Miyazaki, 2006; Zournazi, 2002).

In the first section I showed how the fortified and racist construction of the city brings violence and confrontation with all kinds of frontiers into the day to day practices. In the chapter I highlight how this structure brings violence into everyday life in Jerusalem, as well as transforming the city into myriad sites encountering all kinds of frontiers (soldiers, infrastructure, roadblocks, and checkpoints). This context would allow us to better understand the significance of the stories, walks and gatherings explored in this chapter. In other words, this context allows us to appreciate the active existence of the Ahl Al-Ard in the city. Seeing through Ahl Al-Ard eyes, one can approach and analyse such narratives and spatial practices as acts of resistance taking place in various spaces in the city. I presented how this spatialisation is particularly intense in the city of Jerusalem, which is claimed to be the 'eternal' and 'unified' capital city of the Jewish-only state. The spatial design and construction of the settler colonial city of Jerusalem aims to expel the Palestinians into exile. That is, as Pullan explains, the frontier in Jerusalem is "designed to be not just separate but confrontational" (Pullan 2011, p.17). The confrontational context of living in Jerusalem gives the simple day-to-day life activities such as walking, sitting at Darj Bab Al-Amoud [Damascus Gate's stairs], shopping, cooking, and so on, a different meaning.

The chanting and marching in the lanes of the old city created moments of resistance to the colonisation of the space in Jerusalem. The chanting presents a powerful understanding of the battle ongoing in Jerusalem. The battle in Jerusalem is waged by Palestinians simply by living their everyday life on its soil.

At the collective level, the Palestinian's continuing existence is not only a figure which has already exceeded the threshold. It is a cultural, political and social fact. The importance of these events is that they create spatialities of resistance that challenge and encounter the settler colonial flow. Furthermore it reveals Palestinian resistance in the land, assuming cultural, social, political and religious forms.



## Chapter Six. Ghazah ramz al-ezza: Ordinary life and poetics of violence in 2014 War



Figure 34. "The Palestinian Spirit": Gaza rising up in the aftermath of the war. Graphic designed by Imad Abu Ishtayia (2014). Retrieved on 21 August 2014.

### Introduction

In the previous chapter I focused on resistance and space in Jerusalem focusing on individual and collective spatial practices. In this chapter, I focus on time and resistance through the story of the Gaza war in 2014, to continue my exploration of the rhizomatic character of everyday resistance in Palestine and analyse it in its temporal dimension. Time plays an important part of our understanding of ourselves and the world surrounding us because it is "a component of cultural communication, part of the discourse through which we structure our experiences in order to convey them to each other and to ourselves" (Perkins, 2001). The importance of controlling time and people's sense of time for settler

colonisers, as argued I earlier, comes from the importance for them of controlling the land, and it is “part of the process of disempowering communities and severing the bonds which connected them to their land and to each other” (Nanni, 2012, p.87). Given the role of time and its importance as a sign of culture and identity, the colonisation of time is equal to the denial of land inhabitants’ identity. In the Chapter Two, I explained that ‘land first, land last’ formula entails that settler colonisers need to control the space and the time (in relation to the land) by constructing a temporal difference between the settler colonisers and the land inhabitants (Chapter Two. Section 2.1.1). In the case of Palestine, ‘Israel’ attempts to construct a temporal difference and a sense of uncertainty among Palestinians, not through church bells (as the ‘Australian’ and ‘South African’ cases) but through hundreds of fixed and ‘flying’ checkpoints across the land of Palestine, night invasions, arrests, house demolitions, random invasions of Palestinian cities and towns, and so on (Peteet, 2008). In the case of the war in Gaza Strip, ironically the construction of Palestinian time was a result of a violent construction, which was fuelled and made by fire and bombs that the Israeli ammunition factories worked twenty-four hours a day to supply the army.

In the following sections, I develop my investigation by focusing on two interrelated points. Firstly, I focus on ordinary life during the war time by analysing research participants’ narratives and texts to examine how they managed to live an ordinary life during the violent and radical confusion of their sense of time, rather than asking them how they were traumatised by the war. Then, I carefully unpack the generative cultural schemes of violent resistance on the ground during the war. I analyse narratives, texts and images related to resistance events on the ground during the war time (e.g. the arrest of the Israeli soldier Shaoal, and the 9.00 p.m. challenge) by focusing on how such events celebrated, narrated and imagined resistance to help us better understand how such events produced a shared idiom for resistance and fed into national awareness (Abufarha, 2006; Das, 2007; Jean-Klein, 2001; Whitehead, 2004, 2007; Whitehead & Abufarha, 2008). It is not my intention in this thesis to romanticise everyday life in Gaza Strip during the war or to analyse the military efficiency of violent resistance on the ground. Rather, I aim to ask new questions and present different narratives that counter the dominant narrative of hopelessness found in settler colonialism scholarship.

To set the context of this chapter, I start with my personal encounter with the ‘Gaza Time’ and highlight the links between time, resistance and “faith in the future” (Perkins, 2001). Next, I analyse research participants’ narratives and texts to understand how they experienced the radical confusion of time during the days and nights of the war. Their stories and accounts demonstrate how the colonisation of time during the war resulted in instilling a wide-spread sense of uncertainty, irregularity, time confusion and a constant fear of

imminent death. However, unlike most settler colonialism scholarship, I engage with these narratives in the third section 'My hobby is to survive wars' where I focus on hope, resistance and faith in the future rather than focusing on the 'victimhood' seen through the traumatic and psychoanalytical lenses (Whitehead, 2012). I analyse how research participants secured various means of survival and how they persisted and carried on in order to restore their ordinary life and normal days during the war (Das, 2007; Woroniecka-Krzyżanowska, 2014). In 'Ghazah ramz al-ezza, I analyse various generative cultural schemes that were expressed through songs, poems, posters and images related to critical events of violent resistance during the war. I focus on how these events helped shape and reproduce the ongoing culture of resistance. Finally, I return to resistance and time and conclude with main findings of this chapter.

## **6.1 Gaza Time**

My first time visiting the Gaza Strip was made possible through an International Non-Governmental Organisation (INGO) that I worked for in 2007 which was an unforgettable experience. Erez, the main checkpoint to enter the Gaza Strip, was different to any other checkpoints that I have experienced in Palestine. The driver dropped me afar – less than a kilometre away from the first checkpoint area – and I had to walk to reach Erez. Gaza was literally less than a kilometre away from where the driver dropped me and I could only see the sky above Gaza, but not Gaza itself, because of the Wall: the 'Israel'-Gaza barrier wall that has separated and isolated the Gaza strip from the rest of the Palestine since 1994. Even the sky, the airspace, in Gaza is occupied: the first thing that I noticed even before entering Gaza was a large, white surveillance balloon (see figure 34), which kept the Gaza strip under 24-hour watch with another 300 to 500 different kinds of drones. Although I was familiar with the surveillance balloon that circulated in my hometown, Jerusalem, what shocked me at the entrance of Gaza was the paranoid and pervasive Israeli surveillance, and the intrusive feeling that you get from the sights, sounds and vibes at Erez. I walked to the first checkpoint right outside the main gate of Erez. There was a small room where a soldier was stationed. The soldier pointed to a table outside the room, which he can see through bulletproof glass. I walked towards the table, opened my bag, put everything on the table, and stepped back. The soldier, from his room and with his gun pointing at me, had a look at my belongings. Then he made a gesture with his hands, meaning "where is your permit?" I got closer and showed him my documents through a slit similar to the transaction windows at a post office. That day I only waited for a half an hour, and it was the shortest waiting time (out of four times) I have visited Gaza. In the subsequent trips, I had to wait several hours there and once I had to go back to Jerusalem after seven hours of waiting.

Having a permit to enter the Gaza Strip does not guarantee access and it can be denied at any moment without any reason.



Figure 35. Surveillance balloon in the sky of Gaza Strip. Photo taken by Ibrahim in 2013



Figure 36. Inside the Erez checkpoint

Once the soldier let me through the main gate of the Erez building, it felt as if I had entered another world and another time zone. Inside the building, there was more waiting and more verification of papers to go through. One of the soldiers who approved my papers behind the bullet proof glass even wished me a happy stay in Gaza! Yet I was still in Erez building and I was wondering: where is Gaza?

I found myself, alone in a huge maze made of concrete, surrounded by CCTVs. There was a small sign that read Gaza in Arabic and Hebrew (see figure 36) at the entrance of a very narrow corridor

that led to more direction arrows and more long corridors, one after another. All the corridors were gated with heavy metal High Entrance-Exit Turnstile (HEET). Walking this maze was a scary experience; it felt like being lost in the desert, as you see no one and hear no one, but the minute I stopped walking and looked around, I heard voices in broken Arabic asking me to move. When I finally reached what I thought was the end of the maze, there was a massive door made of steel and concrete, very similar to war shelter doors: grey, heavy, gigantic and cold. I got closer but it didn't open. I stopped there for a few minutes, which felt like hours. I couldn't go back and the door was not opening, and there was no one to talk to or ask for help. Then I noticed that there was a telecom next to the big door, but it was broken: the wires were disconnected and clearly it was not in working order. Suddenly, the heavy door started opening and I stepped back. The door opened slowly, very slowly, and its eerie slowness made me feel uncomfortable: the entire maze was disorientating and confusing, and I just wanted to get out. When it was opened wide enough for me to go through, I walked out as fast as I could, but then I entered another maze. I walked another fifteen minutes through a long, narrow corridor under the watchful eye of CCTV, and finally at the end of the corridor was Gaza. Later that evening, I met Kareem. I shared with him my experience of crossing Erez and he shared a similar experience when he crossed Erez in 2002:<sup>101</sup> "When I was crossing Erez I felt I was travelling between two different time zones.

When I entered Gaza, I felt as though I was arriving at a pre-history phase, as if time had stopped there (figure 37). Everything was different; streets, buildings, cars, even people, their faces looked like they were living in different era". In the four times that I crossed Erez, I always had the same feeling of going through a time loop. The very construction of Erez, the maze, the grey, cold heavy metal door, the CCTV, hearing people who can see me while I cannot, all were constructed to give the person the sense of disconnectedness and timelessness and feeling lost and alone in the middle of an endless maze.

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<sup>101</sup> During seven years at Birziet (1995-2002) Kareem never visited his family in Gaza Strip because his visit to Gaza Strip meant the 'Israeli' will never be able to get back to the University.



Figure 37. The road after Erez to the Gaza Strip.  
Photo taken by author in 2009

The very construction and design of the Erez checkpoint epitomises the settler colonisers' use of time as a "civilisation marker" to construct a temporal difference and categorise other people and cultures differently in their relation to time, and impose the settlers' understanding of time and temporality. Erez is one of time (land and mind) colonisation tools, in which the very construction is designed to create the sense of being lost, out of space and out of time.

Time is not simply 'out there', but it entails various aspects of cultural, social, political life and identity. Every culture understands, arranges and names the physical phenomena of time passing. Every society articulates "its own understandings of different kinds of temporality, and, in fact, contains varieties of temporal understanding that differ from the dominant interpretations, sometimes consciously articulated as forms of resistance, sometimes subverted and shameful" (Perkins, 2001, p.12). The temporal, as Perkins notes, is not only about time, but it is also about power, in particular in relation to "faith in the future" (p.102).<sup>102</sup> In 'The Reform of Time: Magic and Modernity', Perkins studies the relationship between time and modernity and makes a connection between time reform (imposing new understandings

<sup>102</sup> In particular, Perkins analyses how Britain in the 19th century reformed the time of working class in England by imposing different perceptions of time and temporality and how it categorised the 'Others' (internal and external) differently in their relation to time. For instance, while the tramps and gypsies of Europe were categorised as lazy and irresponsible, the land inhabitants of its faraway colonies were presented as 'timeless' and 'totally unaware of time'. Such reform, Perkin argues, emphasised individualism and the virtue of planning and predictability for the working class in Britain, whereas for the land inhabitants of the colonies, there was no future.



of time, temporality) of working class and land inhabitants in colonies and the concepts of “faith in the future” (p.102). Perkins’s link between time reform and faith in the future is relevant for the analysis in this chapter. Perkins showed that while in the case of the working class in Britain agency was stressed, therefore “the future seems full of potential” (p.2), on the other hand in the case of British colonies, human agency was perceived as limited and narrow (owing to the lack of sense of time), and therefore “the future is seen as more bleak” (p.2).

In the following section, I outline the features of the temporal colonisation in the violent context of the Gaza war as experienced and lived by the research participants.

## 6.2 The lapse of time from standstill to a ticking time bomb

‘There was something in my head that tells me, “If you sleep, you die”. Every time the sun sets, people go home and say: here comes the night and its worries. It is in the night time the Israeli’s thirst for blood is at its peak. Night is the time where they commit their crimes. The last time I slept at night was 27 days ago, me and my family will be awake all night, most of the time watching news or just talking and talking and talking. They like bombing at night to kill some and scare the hell of the rest of us. Under the dark everything is maximized, the rockets’ sounds, the war-planes and the deadly silence...They enjoy killing people while they are asleep, they want to spread horror, and wake the children in the middle of the night screaming and running, they want to break our strength and our faith. They are just some cowards hitting under the cover of the dark. It is when the sun rises [that] we release the breath we were holding all night long, it is the sun that clears our sky and sends us some peace, yet they do hit under the daylight [as well]. Hopefully the sun rises early today so [that] we can finally sleep’. (Samia, Day 26 of the third war, war diary)

‘Who can sleep now, all Gaza is awake, I will sleep when the sun rises’. (Kareem, August 4 2014)

‘We feel like the sky is going to attack us. There is nothing worse than being tired, needing to sleep so badly, but being unable to sleep. We feel [that] if we close our eyes for a moment, we will die’. (Thaer, July 20 2014: 4:45 a.m., local time. War diary).

Samia, Thaer, and Kareem’s words – their fear and anger against war nights, coupling sleep with death and holding their breath all night, waiting for the sunrise, the ways in which such violent nights are lived and experienced – inform the overarching discussion points of this chapter. The narratives cited above are not simply expressing the individual experiences of violent temporal chaos, but also testify to the general experiences of the Palestinians of the Gaza Strip who lived through the war of 2014.

‘Sleep’ and issues related to sleeping (in terms of time and place) were one of the main topics that I would ask Kareem, Thaer, Samia and others about: ‘What time did you sleep last night? Where did the children sleep? Is it safe to sleep there? Why don’t you sleep now

if it is quiet and the bombings have abated?’ For Kareem, he had to leave his flat in Gaza city owing to heavy bombing in the neighbourhood and instead he stayed in a room at his parents-in-law’s with his three children. It was heart breaking for Kareem to see his children trying to sleep with their hands covering their ears. Yaffa was five and a half years old and had already lived through three wars so far. Kareem explained: ‘We are staying in one room. We all sleep together, in a square shape, me on one side, my wife on the other, and the walls on two sides. The children sleep in the middle, so if something happens we [would] all die together’. Kareem would stay awake most nights. His worries kept him up and he endured countless sleepless nights. He could not bear the thought of falling asleep and something happening to his family: ‘I cannot sleep, Maysa, I worry about them’. At the break of day, Kareem would sleep for a few hours. Kareem’s worry was everyone’s concern during the war. On one of the war nights, Samia shared with me a chat she had on her house stairs with some of her neighbours.

A mother told me today that last night all her children wanted to sleep together in one room, as the weather was hot and the room was airy. She did not allow them and asked them to sleep in different rooms. She said: “if anything happened and the house was targeted, at least they will be in different places, if they all sleep in one room and it was hit by a rocket I will lose them all, but like this at least some will survive”. Another woman was sitting next to her disagreed and explained that she would rather sleep together and die together, she didn’t want anyone to be left behind suffering the loss of their family. I would say that it makes no difference at all, because the rocket which will hit the house usually takes the entire house down; it doesn’t matter which room you sleep in, what really matters is to tell your children how much you love them before they go to sleep. You never know who will wake them up first, you or a warplane (Samia).

War nights were very long and Samia lived through such nights desperately waiting for the daylight: “I always wondered how long we can hold our breath. We spent all night waiting for the sunrise to erase some of the darkness.” However, sunrise did not necessarily mean time to sleep and rest and a ceasefire: on several occasions, heavy bombing ensued during and after sunrise, too. Thaer described one of those mornings in his war diary: “It was 7:00 a.m. in the morning today [August 1 2014], when I suddenly jumped out of my bed with my eyes half closed to find my kids running aimlessly within the house borders. The house was shaking as if there was an earthquake. My kids were fleeing, hiding, frozen to the spot, and literally losing bladder control”. That morning, Thaer’s neighbourhood was heavily bombed and it felt like an earthquake. Thaer continues describing that morning and the horror it spread in his house among his six children and the entire neighbourhood.

“Dad, they are killing us” screamed my nine-year-old son, “where should



we go now dad?" He continued with fear and aggression. The sound of ambulances was deafening our ears as they were emitting the siren sound at a constant frequency leaving signs of horror and approaching death in our neighbourhood. Kuwait hospital, which is located right behind my house, was very crowded and receiving tens of casualties. Hundreds of people gathered at the gate, screaming and crying for their family members. Each time there was an air raid it feels like an earthquake. My little daughters were petrified as the loud explosions approached our house. There is no break, said one of the people who fled his house from the east towards my neighbourhood at the gate of the hospital (Thaer, War diary).

'No break' meant in some nights literally a tank shell being fired every two minutes (figure 38). For instance on the night of the 20<sup>th</sup> of July alone, "some 600 explosive artillery shells were shot within one hour" into the eastern Gaza City neighbourhood of Al-Shujaayaa'. Abunimah (2014) writes that according to the Israeli sources, Israeli warplanes carried out 'a broad aerial attack that included about 100 one-ton bombs'. That figure was for only in one location, but Israeli warplanes were bombing all over Gaza as well. Thaer described one of those nights:

Does anyone of you have the slightest clue to what life is like living under the "hellish" airstrikes over your head each and every single minute? What a night! I'm surprised I'm still able to concentrate and write something about the frightening feelings, and that we're still alive. The bombardment and airstrikes didn't stop for a second, it was mad, and we closed our eyes and surrendered to death, my children and my self-hugging one another in one room and we were ready to die all together. I can't really explain the kind of feelings I had this night, everything is mad, just mad and inhuman. The shelling was too heavy, spreading smoke and the smell of death and horror and forcing it into our respiratory canals to continuously smell the sense of coming closer to death (Thaer, July 29 2014, 4:30 p.m.).



Figure 38. "Every two minutes we fire a shell"

A screenshot of a news report by Israeli Channel 2 during the Gaza war<sup>103</sup>  
 But before the Gazans could see the sunrise (alive), they had to stay awake and to fight through the gruelling and darkest experiences of physical and emotional violence every night. Such nights were full of explosions coming from all sides - the sky, the land and the sea - and everything was maximised at night: the horrific sounds of explosions and people's cries, 'bed time' became the equivalent to death time and night and darkness became full-time fear of death.

It is the crying of children in the neighbourhood with each bombing which hurts us the most. It is unbelievable, and this is the first night we have heard this screaming and crying. Everyone is exhausted. I couldn't help but to go downstairs and was surprised to see almost all my neighbours gathered in the main road by their houses. It is safer out here. "At least we will not be buried under a demolished house," said one of my neighbours. Another bombing happened when I was in the street and people raised their hands together simultaneously and looked at the sky seeking the help of God, and it looked like they all agreed to do this at the same time. The air strikes kept coming, one after another, with people looking to the sky seeking the help of God. Children continued to scream and cry with every bombing (Thaer, War diary).

The most disturbing, aggravating and scariest moments of these nights of war were the sound of "wiss", or the sound of the incoming rockets. Samia explained: 'the hardest thing for me was hearing the "wiss" sound of a rocket, it gets on my nerves, and I could hear it very close by. When I hear the explosion, I relax, but then I feel guilty, [as] it did not hit me, but it hit someone else. Anyways, we have learnt that the rocket that will kill you is the one you won't hear'. The sense of time in Gaza war was compressed between the time of a rocket launching and the time of explosion: while the moments of life and death elapsed, the sounds of wiss would fill the space, time and mind – it was a question of "Are you going to make it this time or not?" The wiss moment is violence in the imaginary is also constructed by the tales of those who experienced or witnessed the acts of physical violence (e.g. arrest, torture, and killing) (Abufarha, 2006) The wiss moments were never the same: they were still and chaotic, a split second but also endless, very fast and very slow, but always full of death and violence in the imaginary. During the war, violence was amplified in all senses as it was imagined, lived, smelled and heard. The dangers (and the anticipating awareness) of being hit by a rocket during the nights were imminent and constantly threatening. Death was everywhere, coming from all directions - the sea, the sky and the land, and no place was safe in Gaza.

Where are we supposed to go? Nowhere is safe anymore. The 25th day of the war on Gaza, Rafah is in hell. A 72 hour ceasefire was supposed to start at 8 in the morning today, when everything was turned upside down.

<sup>103</sup> Original reportage produced by Israeli Channel 2 (3 August 2014). Broadcasted online by *boycott apartheid BDS* (9 August 2014). Available from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JbrsHszM3Xg>

Bombardment and air strikes started at 8 in the morning in east Rafah. The bombardment started in George Street east of Rafah with the killing of tens of civilians. The assault involved Israeli artillery shelling which killed at least 40 people and wounded more than 150 according to the Ministry of Health. Many Rafah residents have seen their neighbourhoods hit hard and loved ones killed. Civilians die at the roads, as they are run off the road by military vehicles occupying the main roads of eastern Rafah in Kherbet Al adas, Al tanour, Al jonaina and Alshoka (Thaer, War diary).

In a study of the everyday in violent contexts, Das argues that “in the regions of the imaginary, violence creates divisions and connections that point to the tremendous dangers that human beings pose to each other” Das analyses social suffering narratives and focuses on ordinary life to understand “how these dangers are mastered, domesticated, lived through” rather than how it traumatised the people (Das, 2007, p.14).

These narratives show that for 51 days and nights of the 2014 war, time and sense of time for Samia and others, were fundamentally confused, shifted and disturbed. The violation of time caused by routine night attacks resulted in uncertainty, irregularity, time confusion, and a constant fear of imminent death. New understandings of and relations to time emerged particularly during the war. Sunset time was the time for the ‘big party,’ as Kareem called the nights of the Gaza war. In the violent context of the 2014 war, ‘Israel’ radically disordered the sense of time of Ahl Al-Ard in Gaza by routinely carrying out night and day shelling attacks, which created uncertainty, irregularity, time confusion, and a constant expectation of imminent death. In one of my online interview calls with Thaer and his family after the war, Suha (Thaer’s daughter) said: ‘It was almost every day, my mother will suddenly jump and start counting, one, two, three....six, then she would go back to her cooking, or sleeping, or whatever she was doing’. The mother commented that ‘It may never happen again, it was very difficult days, what else we can do? We got used to it’. For 51 days and nights of the war, the sense of time for my research participants and most likely the others living in the same circumstances was fundamentally confused, shifted and disturbed. The perspective of time oscillated from a standstill to a ticking time bomb: unpredictable, volatile, and completely upside-down. People lived to survive the next explosion and their sense of time counted backwards, that is, time did not tick forward, rather it counted down to their ‘time of death’. Decisions related to basic human needs became incredibly difficult to make. As a result, there was no certain time for any activity during the day or night and everything that related to an established time frame became irregular and unstable; there was no ‘bed time’, ‘coffee time’, school time’, ‘work time’ and so on.

The following section will continue the discussion on the war days and nights and focus on the research participants’ reliance on cultural, social and religious settings to cope with the war days. I pay attention to the ordinary life to understand “how these dangers are mastered,

domesticated, lived through” rather than how it traumatised the people (Das, 2007, p.14). The majority of settler colonialism scholarship has focused on the human suffering in Palestine and interpreted violence of everyday life in Palestine through the logic of elimination. In this thesis I avoid such an approach and focus on how the above violent days and human sufferings were ‘managed’ and lived, “not [as] some kind of an ascent into the transcendent but a descent into everyday life” (Das, 2007, p.15).

### **6.3 “My hobby is to survive wars”**

The above words were said to me by Kareem during the war days. Kareem and all research participants survived the war this time, even though they lost relatives and friends. All research participants I talked to after the war had a sense of ‘we made it [again] this time’, ‘we got used to it’, and ‘we will die only when Allah decides, not ‘Israel’’. The long history of wars, Intifadas and revolutions as shown in Chapter Three makes no clear margin between war and peace in Palestine. Violence becomes part of the everyday and “expands to include the normal and the critical, the everyday and the event” (Das, 2013, p.800). All of the research participants commented on more than one occasion during and after the war that ‘this is not the first or the last, and the next war is just a matter of time’. This means that people who live in such a context learn and develop the skills to live an ordinary life, even during a war.

The theme of living an ordinary or normal life in the violent context of Palestine has been discussed by several scholars (Jean-Klein, 2000; Kelly, 2008; Peteet, 1994; Woroniecka-Krzyżanowska, 2014). Surviving the everyday violence is an act of resistance and “a nationalistically inflected form of stoicism”, as Allen writes in studying the violent context of everyday in the West Bank during the Second Intifada:

[I]n its everydayness is itself partly the result of concerted, collective production. There is something beyond political motives and awareness that inspire the incorporation of disorder into a quotidian order, however. The necessities of survival, and the physical and psychological capacities that people have to learn and adapt to sustain themselves in changing circumstances also feed into a kind of agency that is no doubt quite prevalent in situations of ongoing violence, but that scholars have yet to adequately explore. (L. Allen, 2008, p.456)

In this section, I build on this literature and explore survival and beyond, by focusing on the ordinary moments of the war days through shifting my analytical gaze from stories of horror and death to examine how everyday life during the war “allowed life to be knitted together, pair by pair in a viable rhythm” (Das, 2013, p.798).

Forgetting about the war

Despite experiencing the scenes described and analysed in the previous section, life did not stop in Gaza Strip. During the war life continues in one way or another. On several

occasions during the war, research participants would refer to their day as A'adi' (normal). For instance, Kareem managed to take the kids out and buy them treats, Thaer enjoyed washing the laundry and Ibrahim made his mother 'forget about the war for three days'. During the war, Ibrahim worked as a translator for foreign journalists. This gave him more mobility than others. Before the war, Ibrahim was unemployed. He comes from a poor family but his "good English and the war made him earn money in Euros," as he says. Before the war Ibrahim lived with his family in Al-Shujaayaa', a poor neighbourhood in the eastern side of Gaza city. After seven days of the war, Ibrahim had to leave his house with his family owing to the heavy bombing of his area. They were lucky to find a place with one of his father's friends. They got their own flat and with the help of his brother, they moved in with only basic items from their house. During the war Ibrahim was paid in cash, so he was able to help the family with their expenses. He made his mother forget the war for three days: 'one day in the war I got her a Tefal frying pan; she forgot about the war for 3 days, she was so excited. She didn't have one before the war'. Also, in one of my chats with Kareem during the war, he said 'life does not stop in Gaza; some shops are open for slightly less time, though. Sometimes it feels like a normal day, it looks as if people have forgotten about the war.'

All male research participants would get out of the house almost every day, but they would be careful. Indeed, when there is clear danger and heavy bombing people would not move much, but when it's 'quite' people would go out to secure food, water, or even to socialise with friends and family members nearby in the area. Some would go to the refugee centres to help other displaced families there. Kareem, for instance, would meet with friends and neighbours. They would avoid talking about the war, unless something big had happened:

We would gather in one of the rooms, or even outside the house when it's very hot. We do not walk in the street so Om Kamel<sup>104</sup> doesn't see us. If someone starts talking about the war we shut him up. We would say we are here to rest our minds of the war news. We smoke, drink coffee, chat about various things. If there is something very serious we would talk about it, the Khuzaa'a massacre, for instance. When we feel the explosions are strong or closer, we go back home (Kareem).

In the war evenings, Samia would get together with her female cousins and neighbours. They would drink tea, eat Bezer (toasted watermelon seeds) and talk about life. They would laugh when one of them shares an old funny childhood story about the other. At other gatherings they would talk about life, kids, marriage and future plans. Samia remembered those moments with a smile on her face, and then followed it with 'what can we do, war not war, it does not matter, we are used to it'.

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<sup>104</sup> One of the derogatory nicknames given to drones

The first twenty days of war coincided with the holy month of Ramadan, which can be said to have a kind of a universal 'culture of time' when all Muslims around the world live through the holy month together as one community. The holy month of Ramadan is full of special Islamic temporal rituals and meanings and the people in Gaza were adamant not to give up their practices because of the war. Ramadan's temporal rituals included the start and end times of fasting, which are related to the sunrise and sunset times. The beginning and the breaking of the fast are accompanied by two main meals: one in the morning before the sunrise is called Suhur, and the second one is the main Iftar meal after the sunset. One of the main Ramadan rituals is the family gathering at the Iftar time. All Gazans would come together and wait for the Iftar time so that all can break their fasts together. Such holy gatherings in the evenings in Gaza, however, became for many their last supper. There were high numbers of heavy bombings in particular during Iftar time, which clearly was done on purpose to break the unity. During the war, there was a sense of unity and community among research participants. In the times of violence, as Kelly noticed in the case of Palestine, community and sense of community plays an important role in keeping life going (Kelly, 2008). In spite of the suggested construction of time, Samia found some time to make a cake during a Ramadan competition among the women in her family. Furthermore, Samia and her family and other research participants managed to retain the culture and rituals of time during Ramadan. One important feature of Ramadan is inviting friends and relatives over for a breakfast meal. These invitations did not stop during the war amongst Samia's family. People would invite relatives and friends to break their fast together:

During the war, we were invited at least seven times by relatives to join them at the breakfast meal. They were relatively close and we were able to go to their place. My father was really embarrassed, he didn't want to go. But they would say; this is a custom we should not stop. In Ramadan we had homemade sweets every day! Women were competing over who can make the best Ramadan sweet (Samia).

For Ibrahim, coming from a poor neighbourhood and moving to a better of area in the Gaza city was an interesting experience. He talked about the dynamics during the war between his family and their new rich neighbour:

The new neighbour cooked for us 3 days. It was Ramadan and for three nights he brought us Iftar meal. He is very rich man, but even this guy during the war, he suffered. Cash ran out at some point and also the food resources are the same for all of us; poor and rich bought bread from the same place, bakeries sold the same amount of bread to all during the war. But on the third night my father thanked him and said to him 'you are very kind but we don't want to be a burden'.

Ibrahim's brother used to work before that war in a restaurant on the beach side and after around three weeks of the war, he remembered that the fridge there was stuffed with food.

He went there and got it all, as it would have gone bad anyways: "During the war we ate better than the normal days and we sent some food to our rich neighbour, too. We were equal during the war. During the war we didn't find drinkable water but we had Knafah".<sup>105</sup>

Forgetting about the war does not mean the people are not aware of it; rather it means they neutralise it because they get used to it. As Ibrahim put it 'everything [during the war] is ugly but we get used to it'. Allen's study on everyday life during the second Intifada labels such practices as 'getting used to violence'. She argues that such practice is a form of "political resistance" which is not "intentionally signified". Allen argues that in spite of 'Israel's violence during the second Intifada, still 'Israel' was not able to "control the processes of subjectification in Palestine". This kind of resistance and agency was neither violent nor organized, it was "entailed in practices whereby people manage, get by, and adapt was simply "getting used to it." (L. Allen, 2008, p.457).

Getting used to or forgetting about the war does not mean that people do not feel frightened or affected emotionally. This war was the longest war for all research participants, but it was not the first. Experience of war equips a person with the skills to find the ordinary during the war. In a study of violent everyday life in Al Amari camp during the First Intifada Woroniecka-Krzyżanowska (2014) shows how normalisation of violent events "could be understood as a performative strategy of restoring agency amidst critical situations. By presenting them as 'normal' actors express their familiarity with the situation, their knowledge of how it can be handled, as well as a degree control over it" (p.405). As Woroniecka-Krzyżanowska notices "familiarizing" violence "does not mean general immunity against unexpected and more brutal violent acts." Rather, it "helps to reduce the level of fear and allows individuals to treat some events as "normal" and others as threatening" (p.406). The normalisation of everyday in violent contexts is a "strategy to routinize the experience of conflict in order to be able to function regardless." Furthermore it is "a tactic of resisting it's devastating influence by restoring the individual sense of agency" (p.405).

Knowing about the war:

During the war research participants' day-to-day practices did not stop, but they had to make adjustments and changes based on the situation. For instance, Kareem and others stopped attending prayers at the mosque because mosques were targeted in the previous wars; people had learnt that when the war starts, it's safer to do their prayers at home. Getting used to the war means knowing about the war itself and learning to differentiate the different sounds of bombs, estimate the location of the attack and to be able to estimate the danger, or try to guess what is happening. For instance, in the nights when the bombing was non-

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<sup>105</sup> Cheese-based sweets

stop, people would guess that there is a strong resistance on the ground, that the Israelis are losing lives on the ground, hence they got 'mad', as research participants would say, on those nights. In one of these nights Kareem said, 'the amount of bombing is unbelievable, that means that they are losing and Al-Muqawma is resisting on the ground, may Allah protect them and protect Gaza from these nights'. In another night of heavy bombing, Samia and other research participants thought that it was so intense because 'maybe the A Al-Muqawma arrested a soldier, I hope so, Inshallah'.

Another example of knowing the war comes from Ibrahim. Ibrahim, who was 25 in 2014, lived in an area that had been invaded 20 times in his lifetime. So, as he said, he knows how to deal with such situations because he knows what weapon is used and for what purpose: "My area (Al-Shujaayaa') was invaded at least 20 times, so I developed the skill to know what is happening depending on the sound; for instance, when the Apache fires, it means it will be followed by a tank missile". Furthermore, as Ibrahim would explain to me as if he was a drone expert, he spends hours watching videos and reading about it:

I have a special interest in drones, how they are produced, their different types, the kind of rockets it holds, and how they control it. Some stay in the sky for 30 minutes, others would stay for 3 days, and they function differently. Once, during the first war [2008], our neighbour was on the roof feeding his pigeons and they [Israeli's controlling the drone] thought that he was holding a weapon, so they targeted him. And once my brother was playing with my cousins and they were holding a metal thing so they targeted them. Luckily the rocket landed on some wet ground, which was just watered, so the explosive head didn't explode. We were very lucky because we were all sitting outside, otherwise we would have all been dead by now.

The night Ibrahim had to leave his house during the war, he counted more than 36 drones flying over his house. Ibrahim watched and studied the drones carefully (even before and after the war), and he explained to me his 'games' with drones and what he discovered about drones:

My brother would say this is a 7-metre drone and my father would say no, its 2 metres. We play games guessing the type of drone. I think we are afraid but we pretend that we are not, and we play games, so when a drone fires a rocket, we start to count for the next F16 rocket. We sometimes guess: is this one for firing or for taking photos only? I used to teach my nieces and nephews geography during the war. For instance, light is faster than the sound, and to explain that to them, I used to explain that when we see an explosion first then we hear the sound, we can calculate how far the explosion site is. So say we hear it after 5 seconds and we try to guess where the bombing happened, then we listen to the radio and check if what we guessed is right. We would bet what was the rocket's target. For instance one day when we saw the Apache, we made bets on where the Apache was, was it above us or above another area?



It was not only Ibrahim who watched the drones in the Gaza sky during the war. Samia would sometimes watch the drone with her cousins and siblings: "If you can see it, that means you are not a target, it means it's aiming at someone else. We know Om Kamel very well now. It watches us 24 hours, and we watch it too" (Samia). Om Kamel, is the nickname Gazans have for the drones. Drones fly over the Gaza Strip all the time, 24 hours a day and seven days a week. Palestinians have several nicknames for it. Om Kamel, which literally means the mother of Kamel (a male name) and the other name is Zananah, which is the Arabic adjective of the word 'purr,' and Fawzyeh (a female name) after a character of a bad woman in a famous Syrian TV series.

In such a violent context, the sheer fear and utter haplessness of individual experiences could also be turned into "greater" national, ideological and (even) religious beliefs. For example, one of the expressions that I heard the most from my research participants (even those who are not religious at all) was 'life and death are only in the hands of god'. In the violent context of Palestine, as Abufarha shows, "turning to religious and ideological beliefs that provide a sense of certainty relieves the suspense and anxiety created by long intervals of imaginary violence" (2006). All my research participants would express during the war other religious expressions to ward off their fear such as "Allah Akbar mn Israel' [God is greater than 'Israel']. Having faith in a power greater than 'Israel', "relieves and relaxes the effects of the imaginary violence in that the ultimate form of violence", such beliefs make people endure and resist violence and 'not allowing it to affect [them] psychologically and socially" (p.105).

Furthermore, research participants would always say 'at least we have a roof above our heads, may Allah help those who are in the schools and the streets'. The religious beliefs and the sense of community during the war - as I will further elaborate in the next section - are emphasised to deal with the war. The shared experience of the war acquired according to Abufarha 'durable and transposable dispositions' to deal with the challenges of the violent context and social settings (2006, p.259). Abufarha writes that "[n]ew meanings that emerge in the dynamics of the encounter become cultural ideas and concepts that serve as reference points to subsequent cultural processes" (p.259). These dispositions are informed and influenced by people's beliefs, knowledge and culture. Such dispositions present methods that are combined as "as an objective necessity or conditions that are deployed in daily life through symbolically constructed systems of ideas" to stimulate peoples actions and behaviours and help them to deal with the chaos created by the war (p.259).

The following section will engage with generative cultural production of specific (some violent resistance) events during the war on Gaza Strip.

#### 6.4 Ghazah ramz al-ezza

In Chapter Four, I explained that my choice to focus on Gaza Strip in this research because its resistive image is often buried under the narratives that depict Gaza as a laboratory for Michelle Foucault's biopolitics, Achille Mbembe's 'necropolitics' and Agambin's Homo sacer, etc. (Bhungalia, 2010; J. Collins, 2008; Tawil-Souri, 2012). However, I make a clear distinction that this is not the only reason, but the case of settler colonialism and resistance in Gaza Strip confirms settler colonialism scholarship's incapacity and limitations of reading Ahl Al-Ard and settler colonisers in Palestine (Chapter Two). Gaza Strip is classified as a 'strategic threat,' a hostile entity and an insurgent zone. Indeed, several scholars have argued that such classification is a subtext to 'justification' for killing Palestinians in the war on terror era, yet I argue that this classification is also because Gaza Strip is resisting. The significance of Ahl Al-Ard resistance in Gaza Strip, is that it presents a 'balance of fear' with the settler colonisers. Gaza resistance has a "psychological value" that creates a "balance of fear" between the settlers and Ahl Al-Ard by eroding the sense of security for millions of settlers with locally manufactured rockets, regardless of the casualties those rockets might cause (Johannsen, 2011).

Only one year after the first fatal rocket attack on Zionist settlements in Gaza, the settlers left the Gaza Strip. The Palestinian resistance groups gained experience and improved their fighting strategies, tactics and technology. The presence of Palestinian resistance increased beyond the confines of the Gaza Strip. For instance, their drones flew over the Ministry of 'Defence' during the war, they created an intricate network of militant tunnels and their fighters 'invaded the enemy lines' from the land and the sea and engaged with Israeli soldiers from Zero Distance. The Gaza Rockets (smuggled and locally produced) could now cover nearly all the historical land of Palestine (see figure 39) and the rockets:

ha[ve] become, within less than a decade, a significant threat to Israeli population centers, national infrastructure and central military installations. The rocket offensive has evolved into a war in its own right, exacting a significant cost in life, damage, and economic disruption. The threat, initially affecting about 50,000 Israeli citizens in the Gaza envelope communities, has increased more than twenty-fold and now threatens more than one million civilians in southern and central Israel. It is no longer mere harassment, but a strategic threat capable of inflicting severe civilian casualties and paralyzing Israel's economy. (Rubin, 2011, p.26)

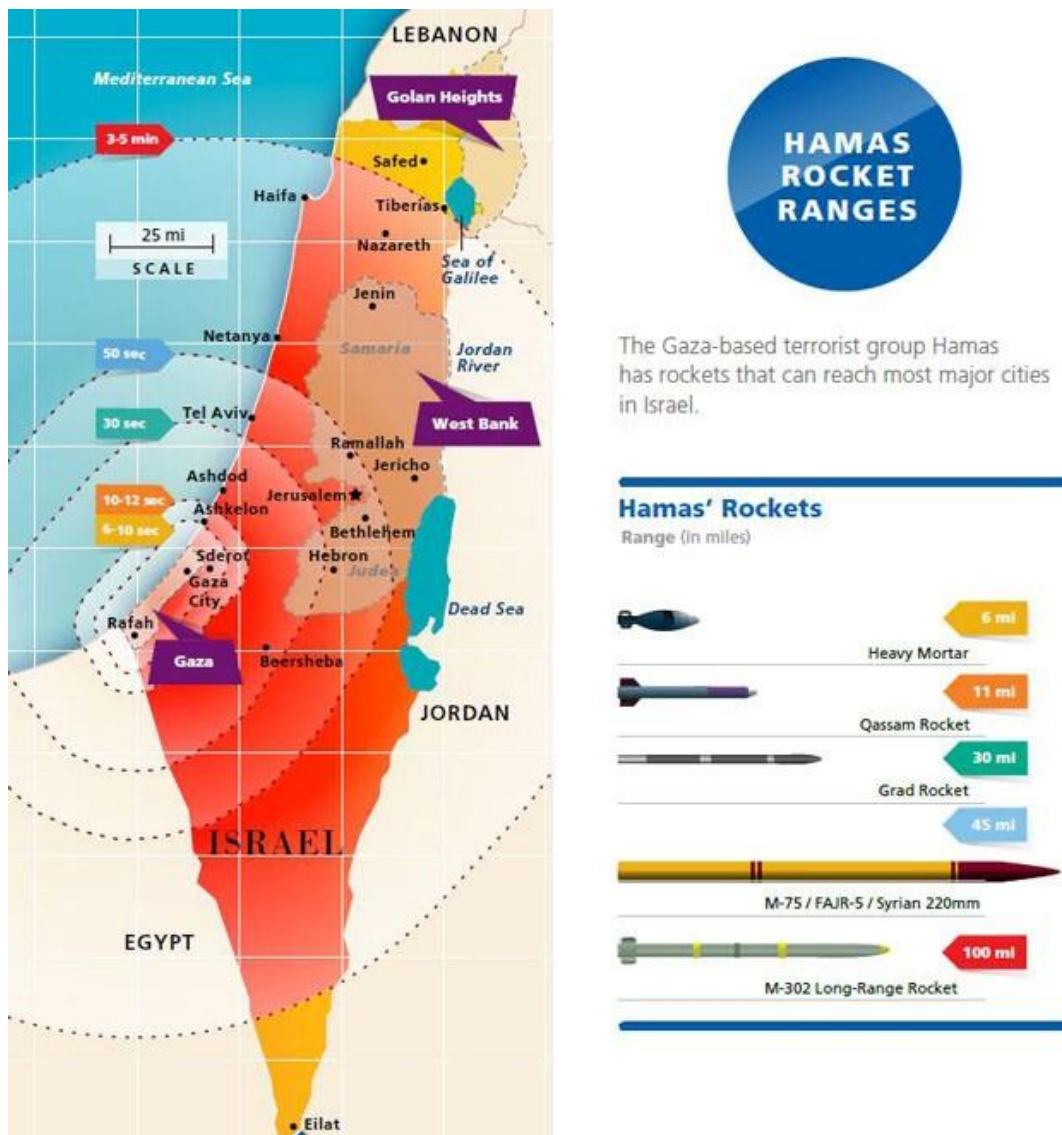


Figure 39. Map of Palestinians rocket ranges.

Retrieved from: <http://www.aipac.org>

The structural understanding of settler colonialism in the case of Gaza Strip and the primary focus on the 'victim' image of Gaza, "high-tech" and "frictionless" (Tawil-Souri, 2012) elimination techniques deployed in the Gaza Strip blinds these scholars from recognising the examples of significant resistance on the ground, which is more than 'noisy' and creates a 'balance of fear' between Ahl Al-Ard and the settler colonisers (Johannsen, 2011; Rubin, 2011). Most of the observers overlook the moments when the "frictionless" control is challenged by a zero-distance confrontation between Ahl Al-Ard and the individual frontier on the "enemy land" (see figure 40). Furthermore, this literature is incapable of recognising the contradictions and ruptures in this project. For instance, the withdrawal of settler colonisers from the land in Gaza presents a theoretical challenge to settler colonialism scholarship's study of Palestine and further challenges the core principle of 'come to stay' and the taboo notion of the land return. As I argued in Chapter Two, Settler Colonialism scholars have not only overlooked violent resistance, but they judged it morally or considered it useless in the

face of the 'exclusive logic of elimination'. Furthermore, they also underestimated its cultural and national importance and value for Ahl Al-Ard. Violent resistance in Palestine is embodied as being "complex aspects of symbolism that relate to both order and disorder", and such symbolic aspects entailed that violent resistance "has many potential cultural meanings" and "conform[s] to a set of 'moral' or 'patriotic' teachings directly linked to specific ideologies" (Whitehead, 2007, p.7).



The Logo, created by Al-Muqawma refers to the Zero Distance. A widely celebrated and shared symbol during the Gaza war. Designed by Al Tiabi.

Figure 40. Zero distance.

In the following pages, I discuss generative cultural schemes of the violent resistance on the ground expressed in songs, images and narratives and analyse how it reproduces a shared idiom of resistance that feeds into the national awareness and enhances hope for liberation and most importantly keeps the spark of hope alive (Whitehead, 2004).

#### Udrub Udrub Tel Aviv

During the 2014 war, new concepts, songs, and terms appeared in Palestinians' talk about resistance. These songs would be published with videos and images of violent resistance on the ground. During this war the resistance groups recorded some of its operations and published them online. These videos were shared widely by many Palestinians and they also coined the terms 'zero distance' and 'behind the enemy line'. For instance, "Udrub Udrub [attack, attack] Tel Aviv," was a very famous song during the war and it was played everywhere in the streets, cafes, on public transport, etc. The song lyrics call on the Palestinian resistance to attack Tel Aviv with rockets and destroy 'Israel'. It says: 'Hit, hit Tel Aviv, make them leave, for you Palestine we will hit Tel Aviv, burn, burn Tel Aviv, we fight and don't give up, we will hit Tel Aviv. Resist, resist, and don't compromise on your land. Palestinians are not terrorists, Israel is a liar.' "Udrub Udrub Tel Aviv" was not the only song. Palestinians also produced songs in Hebrew for Israeli audience, one of them being "We will

quake Israel's security" with the words "Attack them [Zionists], shake their entity, make them unsettled, kill all Zionists. Quake Israel's security, walk ahead [and] burn their camps, quake Israel's security and ignite a volcano.... Expel all Zionists."

The spread and popularity of this song and others during the war time reflect a general mood of supporting violent resistance such as firing rockets at Tel Aviv. All research participants expressed feelings of pride about living the day to hear the sirens in Jerusalem or in Haifa and see the settlers run to the shelters. As Kareem put it once, 'thank God I lived the day to see Haifa and Jerusalem targeted', and Thaer, despite the fear and worry about his six children, would say with pride, 'this little Gaza, this besieged Gaza, is fighting them'. In Jerusalem, where I was based during the war, I heard similar narratives, for instance Motasem (Chapter Five) once said when commenting on hearing or seeing Palestinian rockets in the sky of Jerusalem, 'I feel like I want to hug it, it gives me hope'.

Shaol Aron 6092065

Another popular song during the war was produced three days after Abu Obieda's<sup>106</sup> famous appearance on 19th July 2014. That day, Palestinian resistance declared that Abu Obieda will deliver an important speech after Iftar. I had Iftar that night with my family with the TV on so we didn't miss the important speech. Abu Obieda was on TV at 10:00 pm Jerusalem time and his background showed a hand catching an Israeli soldier, which meant that Al Muqawma had arrested a soldier (see figure 41). After seven minutes of his appearance, Abu Obieda confirmed what we sensed: "Our brave fighters arrested a Zionist soldier; his name is Shaol Aron and his number is 6092065." In no time, I could hear fireworks and ululations coming from everywhere in my neighbourhood in Jerusalem. That moment, Palestinians in the Gaza Strip, Jerusalem, West Bank, Haifa and everywhere were on the street celebrating. I went to the roof to watch the fireworks and joined the women in their ululation (see figure 42). Later, Samia and I talked about this moment, and she said:

Despite of all this anger, we would be very proud when we heard the al Muqawma news. We used to wait for Abu Obieda's speeches. When it started [on the 19<sup>th</sup> of July] and there was an image behind him of a fighter's hand holding a Zionist soldier, we couldn't believe it. When he [finally] said 'we declare that we arrested a [Israeli] soldier,' I remember we all jumped happily, we looked from the windows [and saw] lots of people were on the street celebrating, fireworks, people were distributing sweets. We were very happy and we felt that the war would be ending soon, and prisoners will be freed and returned back finally. I remember it was the happiest moment ever since the war began, and we were all singing Udrub Udrub Tel Aviv<sup>107</sup>

<sup>106</sup> The spokesperson of *Ezz Adin Al Qassam*, the militant wing of the Islamic resistance movement in Palestine (Hamas).

Three days later, a new song was heard everywhere called 'Shaol Aron 6092065,' after the name and the military number of the Israeli soldier who was arrested by the Palestinian resistance group. Its lyrics calling for fighting, resisting and expelling the colonisers out of Palestine are not new in Palestinian culture; Palestinian literature, poems and songs are full of similar works calling for resistance and not giving up.



Figure 41. A Screenshot of Abu Obieda's speech.

The message reads the battle of "Al asf al Maa'koul", the name of the war as officially called by Hamas. Abu Obieda's speeches included videos of "Zero Distance" – close range and hand-to-hand combat – fighting between Palestinian fighters and the settler's soldiers on the "enemy land". Taken by author





Figure 42. Political cartoon.

Published after Abu Obieda's announcement. The injured Gazan woman is ululating. Retrieved from <http://www.arabi21.com> 21<sup>st</sup> July 2014

#### 9:00 PM challenge

I would also hear narratives sometimes on public transport showing passion, pride and support for resistance actions on the ground (as well as bitterness and anger of the massacres in Gaza Strip). For instance, on the 12<sup>th</sup> of July 2014 at 8:00 pm, Abu Obieda, announced in both Arabic and Hebrew: "We announce that we will target Tel Aviv and the surrounding areas with J 80 after 9:00 p.m. today; Saturday, the 12<sup>th</sup> of July 2014". Abu Obieda's announcement was to challenge the "Iron Dome" stopping Palestinian rockets from invading the sky of Tel Aviv and hitting their targets, and it was later referred to among Palestinians as the "9:00 p.m. challenge" (see figure 43). Twenty minutes before 9 p.m., I was on my way back home, travelling from Ramallah back to Jerusalem using public transport. I did not know about the 9:00 pm story and I heard it through a man telling another man sitting next to him: "they [Palestinian resistance] said it will be at 9:00; they should fire rockets, even if it hits my house, they should fire". At 9:00 p.m. all cameras and journalists were waiting for Al-Qassam's announced delivery. Eight minutes after 9:00 p.m. sirens were heard everywhere in Tel Aviv. Settlers had to run to shelters as Palestinian rockets hit the city and fireworks and ululations were heard in different neighbourhoods in Jerusalem.



The Al Qassam Challenge for Tel Aviv at 9:00 pm source: <https://www.alqassam.net>

Figure 43. 9:00 pm challenge.

Palestinian rockets in Jerusalem, Tel Aviv or Haifa skies, Zero distance and face to face fighting between Palestinian fighters and Israeli soldiers in spite of the closure and the harsh realities of life in Gaza Strip, I interpret as a “transcendence of boundaries” (Abufarha, 2006, p.364) physical and conceptual, as the Palestinian rockets and fighters “penetrate” the Israeli land, sky and water and pass through all the restrictions. This spirit of challenge and resistance is embodied in visualising Gaza as a grave for the invaders or as the new Spartans (see figure 44 and 45). The mere reach of a Palestinian fighter or a Palestinian rocket to the enemy’s space is viewed as an achievement of breaking “boundary conceptions in polarization with the ontological conditions of encapsulation and confinement” (Abufarha, 2006, p.363).



“Welcome to Gaza” reads the inscription on the tombstone. Muhammad Sabaneh. Published 27 July 2014 in Al Ayyam local newspaper, (source: From the artist).

Figure 44. Political cartoon. Welcome to Gaza.





The caption reads: The new Spartans. On the T-shirt of the strong masculine man reads Gaza. By Baha Al Bukhari.

Figure 45. Political cartoon. The new Spartans.

Furthermore, the Palestinian fighters who engage with violent resistance, “conceptually transcend[s] the oppressive political order, the negligent international order, the moral order, and even transcends the imagination” (Abufarha, 2006, p.363). For instance, in figure 46, the image borrows from an Islamic Quranic story and represents the Palestinian fighter as Yousef who prevailed after years of oppression and injustice.



In this image there is a recall of the Quranic story of Yousef [Joseph], when he entered the room of the women they were struck by the extraordinary handsome man, and they couldn't take their eyes off him, they were very excited and cut their hands with their knives. Image by Muhammad Sabaneh.

Figure 46. Political cartoon.

Violent resistance on the ground in Palestine is “conceived in cultural forms related to local knowledge and historical memory that are poorly understood by Western researchers and reporters” (Whitehead & Abufarha, 2008, p.395). These cultural and national representations of violent resistance during the war are full of meanings and values of Ahl Al-Ard, and these meanings resonate with the study of the Al-istishhadiyeen:

[Generating] social and political processes within which this form of violence takes on its own cultural form. The martyrdom operations gained their popularity in Palestine through the multiple articulations and representations that accompany their application in the broader Palestinian cultural discourse of resistance, sensory meanings embedded in the aesthetics of their performance, and the nature of the

encounter with the state of Israel and the ways in which these operations mimic Israeli state violence. This cultural discourse of martyrdom in Palestine is materialized through the various cultural productions for every martyrdom operation. (Abufarha, 2006, p.363)

The findings and analysis of the above stories also echoes Eric Ritskes (2017) analysis of a short story of a Palestinian writer (Nizar Zuabi) from Gaza. Ritskes brings Indigenous and radical Black literature into the study of Palestine to discuss the “politics of refusal” (of settler colonialism various modes of oppression) in the story with the intention to theorise “fugitive futurities of decolonisation”. Ritskes concludes that “[i]n the midst of profound violence, Nizar Zuabi is creatively activating decolonial futures” (p.2).

Palestinian violence in the Gaza Strip reproduces a shared idiom of resistance that feeds into the national awareness and enhances hope for liberation. Indeed, Gaza is under military confinement from sky, to land, to water, but beyond the physical borders, the resistance (and the fighting) continues literally both above and under the ground, in private and public spaces, violent and nonviolent, behind the backs of the settler colonisers and face-to-face. Such acts of resistance represent cultural themes of the transcendence of boundaries, revival, unity and assertion of Palestinian rootedness, peoplehood and independence, secure inner peace and most importantly it presents a mimetic of settler colonialist violence, which asserts their hope for freedom and liberation.

## **Conclusion**

In this chapter, I focused on everyday life resistance during the 2014 war on Gaza Strip and the explored everyday life of research participants and the poetics of violent resistance. I explored and analysed narratives of my research participants’ focus on time and resistance during the 2014 Gaza war. I explored ordinary life during the war and analysed how my research participants managed to live in and resist the violent radical confusion of their time. I found that knowing and forgetting about the war allowed my research participants to manage surviving the war. Furthermore, I argued that sense of community and having faith were also equally important sources for hope and resistance. Likewise, I examined the generative cultural schemes of the violent resistance on the ground expressed in songs, images and narratives. I highlighted the poetics of such violent resistance acts by analysing its importance in keeping the spirit of resistance and the spark of hope alive (Whitehead, 2004). I argued that resistance does not only make Ahl Al-Ard dream of free Palestine, as Kareem did in the previous chapter, but it also serves as a resource for hope, strengthens Ahl Al-Ard in the cognitive war waged at them by the settler colonial project and allows them to encounter settler colonisers’ story about the self and the other.

The war on Gaza Strip was tough and heart breaking on all accounts be it physically, emotionally, and mentally – for many of the people that I met and talked to during the war. While they expressed their anger and frustration about the unceasing massacres and destruction that became their daily routine, they never stopped praying for the end of the war. Moreover, many of them, even those who were directly under fire and affected by the heavy bombing at the time of the interview, expressed strong sentiments for and belief in the resistance and the need to face the challenge head-on and not give up. This attitude was expressed both in dealing with personal tragedy and in relation to the Palestinian Resistance Groups' counteractions on the ground. During the war, people not only talked about the horror of casualties and the mass destruction, but they also often referred to Abu Obieda, 'Zero distance' and the 'behind the enemy line' resistance actions. They sang the popular song 'Udrub Tel Abib' and shared videos of Palestinian rockets in the sky of Tel Aviv and Haifa with the sounds of sirens in the background, bringing them moments of relief and pride. It is not my intention here to evaluate or celebrate the Palestinians' violent resistance on the ground during the war. Rather, I will analyse the generative cultural schemes (narratives, texts and images) of violent resistance on the ground during the 2014 war to understand how it is narrated and visualised and how it reproduces a shared idiom of resistance that feeds into the national awareness and enhances hope for liberation (Whitehead, 2004).

## Chapter Seven. 'I defeated 'Israel': The cognitive battlefield and the return to the self

The most potent weapon in the hands of the oppressor is the mind of the oppressed.

Steve Biko



Figure 47: A protest against mandatory military service.

The placard reads "Don't try to erase my mind, I am aware". Organised by the Sahel Ma Bestahel group, anti-army service. Retrieved from the Sahel Ma Bestahel website.

### Introduction

In the previous chapter, I focused on resistance and time during the 2014 Gaza war. In this chapter I focus on resistance and mind. All kinds of colonisers aim to conquer the mind of the land inhabitants by taming their will to resist and killing their hope for a different future (Thiong'o, 1994). To fully control the land, it is vital for the settlers to colonise the minds of the 'survivors' of land inhabitants and put an end to any emotional, historical, epistemological, philosophical, moral and political attachment or claim to the land (L. T. Smith, 1999). This detachment (or uprooting) can be achieved in a combination of the colonisation of space and time of the land, which synchronises spatial and temporal dimensions of colonisation, until no one can see it (neither settlers nor Ahl Al-Ard ) and everyone believes in the same "creation

story” (Donald, 2009; Tuck & Gaztambide-Fernández, 2013). Settler colonial states are premised on the denial of any story, knowledge or history which challenges their colonisation of the land. Therefore, they tend to construct and impose their stories and myths about the self and the other concerning the land. The circulation of what Donald (2009) calls the “creation story” of the settlers entails a construction of the self and the other premised on the idea of frontier and civilised/savage dichotomies. The completion of the settler colonial project in Palestine requires killing the “slightest hope” of freedom by making Ahl Al-Ard accept two myths as truth: they are defeated (the land is not theirs anymore) and ‘Israel’ is undefeatable (impossible to resist and the land is theirs).

In this chapter, I continue my exploration of resistance in Palestine and focus on how Ahl Al-Ard fight what I call the cognitive war by focusing on Al-Muwahhidun. As I discussed in Chapter Four Al-Muwahhidun in Palestine are targeted by particular policies and procedures which aim to detach them from their larger Palestinian and Arab belonging, through Druzisation and Israelization policies and through the circulation of false stories about their identity, history, belonging, past, present and future. In the case of Al-Muwahhidun the circulated myth enhances the narrative that Druze and Jew share a common interest and enemy. The story starts with the idea that all Al-Muwahhidun welcomed the foundation of ‘Israel’ which protected them from the ‘oppressive Muslim domination and local persecution’ and to pay the favour back the Al-Muwahhidun serve in the army. It is not my intention in this chapter to historicise these tools, although I will discuss the historical context when relevant. Rather, my aim is to examine how it is experienced and resisted by my research participants in my quest for new orientations in analysing resistance and everyday life in Palestine. In spite of the fact that Al-Muwahhidun historically resisted and continue to resist the colonial attempts to detach them from their larger belonging, yet fewer studies have focused on resistance and refusers (of army service) among Al-Muwahhidun in Palestine (Aboultaif, 2015; Hamdy, 2008; Yiftachel & Segal, 1998). A majority of studies on Al-Muwahhidun have focused on the colonial tools or on those who serve in the Israeli army and have discussed issues related to identity politics, identity contradictions and ambiguities, and the making of Druze a nation (Firro, 2001; Hajjar, 1996, 2000; Halabi, 2014; Hamdy, 2008; Isleem, 2015; Kanaaneh, 2003; Kaufman, 2004; Nisan, 2010). In this chapter, I aim to study the less researched aspect of resistance among Al-Muwahhidun by focusing on the narratives of those who refused Israeli army service.

This chapter is consequently theorised from a decolonial framework to critically examine how Palestinians resist the above two myths in their everyday life. This orientation not only provides the tools to reveal the rhizomatic character of resistance in Palestine, but also equips one with the necessary insight to proclaim and position the existence of counter stories of life

in Palestine and enriches a different conceptualisation of settler colonialism premised on resistance and hope, rather than endless elimination and hopelessness (Dei & Asgharzadeh, 2001; Santos, 2015; D. E. Smith, 1987). I make use of Ali Shariati's understanding of the "return to the self" to explore my participants' journey of returning to the self by analysing data gathered through interviews and participant observations made during various events. In doing so, I aim to encounter settler colonialism scholarship's elimination narrative, as well as contributing to decolonial knowledge scholarship by bringing a different understanding of settler colonialism to the discussion of settler colonialism and decolonisation.

Structurally, this chapter is organised in four sections. I begin by setting the context of my argument through highlighting the important issue of contradictions and ambiguity of the constructed and invented 'Druze' Identity and introduce my main concepts and situate my argument in the broader debate. I then focus on the overlooked resistance among Al-Muwahhidun in Palestine and discuss the significance of the "cognitive battlefield" as a critical site for resistance (Hajjar, 1996, 2000; Halabi, 2014; Kanaaneh, 2003). Following this, I explain the context in which my research participants grew up as the subject of the Zionist cognitive war via various policies and procedures aimed at reducing them to a rootless minority. There is then a section where I focus on the resources that made the return to the self possible and finally, I return to the significance of the cognitive battlefield as a critical site of resistance in studying everyday resistance in Palestine.

### **7.1 'Israel' creation story, cognitive battlefield and the morale infrastructure of resistance**

The cover photograph of this chapter illustrates a protest against army service next to one of the Israeli prisons where some of Al-Muwahhidun youth are sentenced for some months due to their refusal of the army service. The Arabic words "Don't try to erase my mind, I am aware" written on the sign articulates a powerful understanding of mind colonisation in Palestine; as it recognises the mind as a target of a colonial act. Resisting erasure also recognises the fact of 'being aware' as an act of resistance. The themes evoked from the statement and image influence the conceptualisation of colonisation of the mind and resistance to it in the context of Palestine. To better understand the significance of such words and events, it is also important to contextualise the process in which the focus of this chapter is set.

One day during my field work I was driving back from Ramallah to Jerusalem. Along this route, I had to go through the Qalandia checkpoint, and I had two cars in front of me when a soldier approached me. He first said something in Hebrew which I did not understand, and I asked him to speak in Arabic.

Soldier: Mn ween enti? [Where are you from? With a Palestinian Arabic accent]

Maysa: Ana mn Al Quds. [I am from Jerusalem.]

Maysa: Enta Arabi? [Are you an Arab?]

Soldier: Yes, I am Druze Arab. From Dalet Al Karmel, come and visit us.

Our chat ended there. I did not reply and it was already my turn to go through the security check with my documents and I proceeded through the checkpoint where other soldiers waited. This was not my first time to meet a Palestinian serving in the Israeli army. It is common to see these soldiers (Christians, Muslim, and Al-Muwahhidun) at checkpoints, in particular, those at the entrance of Palestinian neighbourhoods in Jerusalem, inside the old city of Jerusalem and Al-Aqsa mosque gates. However, it was my first time engaging with one of these soldiers or asking them such a question. Indeed I knew that he was an Arab Palestinian (it was clear from his accent) and my question was intentional because I was interested in knowing how he would answer. My involvement with activities against the army services as I discussed in Chapter Four, made me pay more attention to the complex status of Al-Muwahhidun in Palestine where they are subject to a colonial package of policies and procedures (including the obligatory army service) that target their very identity with the aim of detaching them from their larger Palestinian Arab and Islamic belongings and reduce them to a rootless minority.

In 'Israel', 'Arabs' and the 'Druze' are different sub-groups, which makes Al-Muwahhidun as Hajjar writes the 'non-Arab Arabs'. On the one hand, they are Arab in terms of the language and culture, but on the other hand, they are the non-Arab (Druze). This categorisation is supported with Israeli historiography and governmental narrative of Al-Muwahhidun conserved and discrete identity, closed religion, geographical isolation and long history of Muslim and Christian persecution (Hajjar, 2000, p.321). After 1948 Al-Muwahhidun came under militant administration similar to the rest of the Palestinians who stayed on their land after the Nakba. They faced the same policies of land confiscation, house demolition, and other discriminatory laws. Above all, there are precise colonial tools designed to target Al-Muwahhidun only. 'Israel' – the only country in the world that recognizes 'Druze as a national minority' – in cooperation with some of Al-Muwahhidun elite, seeks to politicise Al-Muwahhidun "communal and sectarian dimensions while depoliticizing their noncommunal and national dimensions" (Firro, 2001, p.40). As a result Al-Muwahhidun in Palestine are treated by 'Israel' as an ethnic group rather than a religious community through instrumentalising their faith and systematically working on reshaping their particularity.

Even before the creation of 'Israel' itself, the Zionist perception was to politicise Al-Muwahhidun and use them as a strategic colonial tool. In the Great Palestinian Revolution (1936-1939), the Zionist paramilitary leaders tried to find 'allies' from Al-Muwahhidun by using the principle that they are both 'minorities'. In 1938, another plan was made to transfer Al-



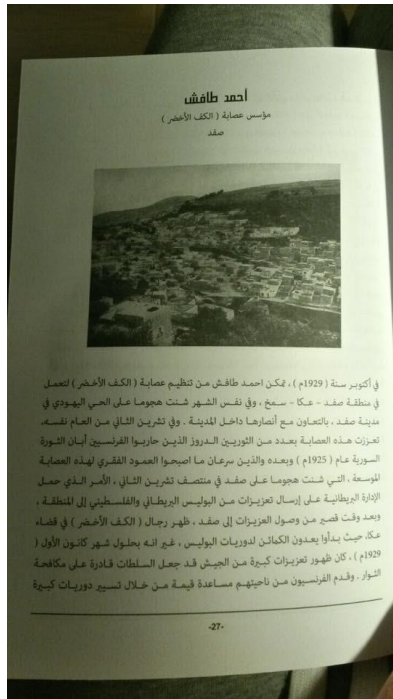
Muwahhidun from Al Jalil and Al-Karmel in the north of Palestine to the south of Syria. However Sultan Basha Al-Atrash, a national resistance figure who played a great role in resisting French colonisation in Syria and Lebanon, refused the plan. After the 1948 war, Al-Muwahhidun with the rest of the Palestine who stayed on the land came under militant rule. In 1956, 'Israel' recognised Al-Muwahhidun as a national group and imposed obligatory conscription on males in the same year. A 'Druze' ad hoc tribunal was founded in 1963. In 1969 'Israel' cancelled Eid al-Fitr [a religious holiday that is celebrated by Muslims across the world which marks the end of Ramadan] for Al-Muwahhidun and recognised Nabi Shuaib as a 'Druze' holy religious site. A 'Druze education' sector and a 'Druze curriculum' were introduced by 'Israel' in 1976, in addition to the propagation of the myth about blood covenant and special historical ties between the Jew and the Druze (explained below). Moreover, the construction of a 'Druze ethnonational identity' is supported by Israeli historiography which offers the justifications and rationalisation of Al-Muwahhidun categorisation, such as 'historical Druze autarky', and 'traditional' Druze lifestyle and 'mentality' (Aboultaif, 2015; Firro, 2001; Hajjar, 1996; Halabi, 2013; Hamdy, 2008; Khyzaran, 2013).

The use of certain local groups by colonisers is not unique. All colonisers recruited local elites (land lords, merchants and other influential figures) as mediators between the colonisers and the colonised to control the local political and economic systems. In the Arab world for instance, there are the Southern Lebanese Army in Lebanon and the Heraki in Algeria. In both cases, Lebanese and Algerian were at the frontlines confronting their brothers and sisters. Seen from this perspective it is not exceptional to have Palestinians serve in the Israeli army (Robinson, 1972). My intention here is to focus on the under-researched narratives and stories of resistance by focusing on those who refused to serve in the Israeli army rather than on those who do. Having said that, this is not to propose a traitor/hero dichotomy when studying Al-Muwahhidun in Palestine nor suggest that those who serve in the army are committed to the Zionist ideology. The complex context of colonialism as I will further discuss below, is more nuanced than the simple colonialism/resistance dichotomy. Moreover, colonialism is not "a matter of political economy" or "a linear, coherent, coercive process involving between two clearly defined protagonists, an expansive metropolitan society and a subordinate population," rather it is a context of ambiguity and contradictions that requires careful unpacking and nuanced analysis (J. L. Comaroff & Comaroff, 1991, p.367).

The above colonial package and history were not left unchallenged, however, and the enforcement of army service never fully succeeded. In the same year of enforcing the compulsory army service and recognition of Druze as a nation, Attorney Muhammad Hawari sent a letter to the Israeli government refusing the army service on the basis that they are part of the larger Arab community and that the leaders who agreed on the compulsory draft are not



authorised to represent the entire community. In 1972 a group of Al-Muwahhidun including the poet Samih Al Qassem founded the Druze Initiative Committee for Conscientious Objection, to work against and end the compulsory army draft, land confiscation, and Israel's intervention in the national and religious matters of Al-Muwahhidun (Aboultaif, 2015).



There is also a long history of Al-Muwahhidun resistance to the Zionist project that started even before the foundation of 'Israel' itself (Aboultaif, 2015; Naffa, 2010). Al-Muwahhidun fighters in Palestine participated in the militant resistance against the Zionists and British with other Arab and Palestinians in the revolutions and Intifada's of 1920s, 1930s and 1940s. Several of them engaged in leading positions of militant groups, such as; Ahmad Tafesh, Qasim Ghabba, Hamad Sa'ab, Kamal Al Kanj, Nihad Arslan, Husayn Hassun , Qasim Halabi, Naif Huzayfa and others. One of the first Palestinian militant groups who fought Zionists militant groups and British army was Al-kaf Al-akhdar [Green Palm] founded in 1929 by Ahmad Tafesh. Their campaigns against the Zionist settlers in Safad and Tabarayah are narrated in the

biography of Ahmad Tafesh shown in Figure 48.<sup>108</sup>

Figure 48: Ahmad Tafesh biography.

In the same month the group attacked the Jewish neighbourhood in Safad in cooperation with their supporters inside the city. In November same year, a group of Al-Muwahhidun who fought the French during the Syrian revolution (in 1925) joined the group which enhanced their force. In mid-November the group attacked Safad again and engaged in a battle with the British army. In 1948, Al-Muwahhidun fighters participated in the Arab Salvation Army (ASA) where they numbered 500 out of 2755 and they fought in the battles of Hoshi and Kasayer, Shafaamr and Yanuuh.

The historical account of resistance leaders such as Ahmad Tafesh might not necessarily represent the general sentiment of the Al-Muwahhidun (as a whole), but it demonstrates the ongoing disagreement amongst Al-Muwahhidun in relation to the Zionist project that is 'Israel'. While investigating the general opinion of Al-Muwahhidun is not possible under the current system and regime, however, it is evident how 'Israel' tries to conceal the expression and representation of Al-Muwahhidun in their midst. For instance, the soldier that met me at the checkpoint as introduced earlier is one of a couple of thousands or so of Al-Muwahhidun who

<sup>108</sup> The text in Figure 48 reads: In October 1929, Ahmad Tafesh founded Al-kaf Al-akhdar which operated in Safad, Acre and Samakh.

serve in the Israeli army. The presence of this soldier and others at checkpoints used mainly by Palestinians is no accident; it is an intentional colonial act that feeds into the construction of a rootless Druze identity. The politics of the positioning of this soldier in a confrontational situation with other Palestinians or Arabs (at the Lebanese borders) aims to give the impression that all 'Druze' are loyal to 'Israel' and all 'Druze' men serve in the Israeli army, and thus, enhance a generalisation of the idea that all the 'Druze' are traitors and collaborators.

In fact, there is no reliable and accurate number of how many Arab serve in the Israeli army. According to a study by Aboultaif, 93% of the Israeli army are Jewish, and 7% are non-Jewish (2015). Among the 7% of the non-Jewish, Al-Muwahhidun account for 50%, Christians 19%, Muslims 18% and Bedouin 6%. In the Border Police, Aboultaif says that 75% are Jewish, among the remaining 25%, Al-Muwahhidun are 66%, Muslims 10%, Christians 4%, and Bedouins 6% (2015, p.540). What I would like to stress here is that the army service is not a reflection of a complete hegemony of 'Israel' or an ideological commitment to Zionism. As several scholars have argued, dominance is not equal to hegemony, the latter "is always intrinsically unstable, always vulnerable" (J. L. Comaroff & Comaroff, 1991, p.27; Guha, 1982; Scott, 1985). The loyalty of this soldier and others to 'Israel' as Kanaaneh argued, "is not necessarily more fragile than that of their Jewish colleagues — rather, human loyalties and identities in general are more complicated than they might appear" (2003, p.18). The decision to serve in the army could be motivated more by career ambition and as a means to livelihood. There is a strong element of influence of Israeli policies against Al-Muwahhidun communities that has made army service a main income source for them since the confiscation of their lands (Hajjar, 1996). Furthermore, Al-Muwahhidun who refuse army service receive different 'punishment' than do Jewish objectors. For instance, they receive more severe sentences, pay more income tax, are entitled to less government subsidy in mortgage loans, and in some cases are not entitled to any social security payments until they are 20 years old (Aboultaif, 2015).

In a study on the politicisation of the 'Druze identity' Hajjar discussed the ambiguities and the contradictory status of Druze as citizens in a Jewish state by examining the experience of Al-Muwahhidun soldiers who work as translators in the militant courts. Hajjar focused on the politics of language in militant courts and elaborated how 'Israel' employs Al-Muwahhidun bilingualism (Arabic/Hebrew) to maintain its oppression. In the military court settings, the "us" versus "them" dynamics are tangible and visible (uniforms and guns), and marked by the language where "Hebrew is the language of the Jewish 'we', and Arabic is the language of the enemy 'other'" (2000, p.305). Within this context translators are positioned on the side of "us" the 'Israeli', versus "them" the Palestinians. This positioning as Hajjar showed make these

soldiers “sensitive to the fact that their fluency in Arabic makes them appear less ‘Israeli’”, as it was clear in some cases when translators refused to speak Arabic (even when they were asked to) to not sound different from Jewish soldiers or to be considered part of the “other” (p.321). This distinction between “us” and “them” as it appears in the setting of the militant courts reveals the contradictions and confusion of these soldiers; “who they are in and for Israel” (p.322). The translation role within the ‘Israeli’ militant courts is a reminder of their similarities with the other Palestinian, given that they were chosen (over Arab-Jew) because of a common culture with Palestinians. Through the translation experience at the militant’s courts, these soldiers encounter the paradoxes of being ‘non-Arab Arabs’ in a Jewish state involved in constant conflict with an Arab enemy. Hajjar explains that:

“[T]ranslators’ speech position in the courtroom is analogous to the social location of the Druze community in the broader context: they are present yet terminal ‘outsiders’. Individuals have few options to contest the terms of their difference from all others because of the strategic value it bears both for local leaders and for the state. It is through the translators’ particular mode of service to the state, and the importance of that service in legitimizing the legal character of the occupation that these contradictions can be seen not as an oversight but as an imperative of Israeli state rule over ‘non-Jewish’ populations on both sides of the Green Line”. (p.322)

This contradictory context resulted in a pragmatic “adaptive mechanism to ‘be’ whatever the situation requires” (p.322). In parallel with Hajjar, Kanaaneh argues that the ‘Druze’ identity is “shifty” (2003, p.16) Kanaaneh focused on the contradictory loyalties of Al-Muwahhidun soldiers who identified themselves in various and conflicting ways and showed how the multiple loyalties of the soldiers reveal the conditional nature of identity and the composite relationships subalterns have to institutions of rule.

Similarly, in the weapons of the weak, James Scott (1985) discusses hegemony and consciousness among subordinated groups by critically engaging with Marxist scholars in particular Gramsci. Scott refuses the notion that there is a total ideological hegemony and a total consent of the subordinates. Scott’s main argument in his case study of peasants in Sedaka is that they are aware of their inferior position in the social hierarchy, therefore they avoided an open and direct confrontation with the rich farmers. However, Scott argues that when it is comparatively safe, the poor peasants had the capacity “to penetrate behind the pieties and rationales of the rich farmers”. Furthermore, Scott adds that the poor peasants were able ‘to understand the larger realities of capital accumulation, proletarianization and marginalization” (Scott, 1985, p.304).

Within this contradiction rely also the seeds of resistance. As Comaroff and Comaroff write, “this follows a very common pattern: once something leaves the domain of the hegemonic, it frequently becomes a major site of ideological struggle. Even when there is no well-formed

opposing ideology, no clearly articulated collective consciousness among subordinate populations, such struggles may still occur" (1991, p.27). In the context of South Africa, Comaroff and Comaroff study what they call "the colonisation of consciousness and the consciousness of colonisation" focusing on the impact of processes by the colonial evangelism which "sought to change the hearts and minds, the signs and practices of the Southern Tswana" (p.xi). To understand how consciousness is made and remade in a colonial context, in their case study, the writers detail the complexities and contradictions of people's actions with a focus on the "the dialectics of culture, power, ideology and consciousness that reshape such historical processes" (p.6). The Comaroffs understand hegemony and ideology as two different modalities, yet they exist as the two ends of a continuum, when hegemony and ideology come into conflict, new forms of consciousness and conflicted representations arise. They suggest that:

"[Hegemony] exists in reciprocal interdependence with ideology: it is that part of a dominant worldview which has been naturalised and, having hidden itself in orthodoxy, no more appears as ideology at all. Inversely, the ideologies of the subordinate groups may give expression to discordant but hitherto voiceless experience of contradictions that a prevailing hegemony can no longer conceal. Self-evidently, the hegemonic proportion of any dominant ideology may be greater or lesser. It will never be total, save perhaps in the fanciful dreams of fascists, and only rarely will it shrink to nothing. (p.25)

According to the Comaroffs, the contradictions between the world as embodied and the world as lived in a colonial context become ever more tangible and more unsupportable. One key feature of the colonisation of the consciousness was "the process by which they were drawn unwittingly into the dominion of European "civilisation" while at the same time often contesting its presence and the explicit context of its worldview" (p.26). In their case study, the Comaroffs found that a new hegemonic order, was founded within ideological struggle besides an expanding, failing cultural frontier. Furthermore, the Comaroffs argue that this contradiction could reproduce relations of domination as well as create resistance. They explain:

"Of course, dominant groups usually seek to paper over such contradictions and to suppress their revelation by means both symbolic and violent; it is, more often than not, a very long road from the dawning of an antihegemonic consciousness to an ideological struggle won. That is why the history of colonialism, even in the most remote backwaters of the modern world, is such a drawn out affair, such an intricate fugue of challenge and riposte, mastery and misery". (p.26)

In line with the above debate of hegemony and ideology in colonial contexts, I situate my argument and discussion on mind colonisation centred on Ahl Al-Ard relationship with their land. It is about making Ahl Al-Ard believe that land is not theirs and there is no hope for its return. In other words, the ultimate goal of settler colonialism is to defeat the land's inhabitants

at the personal level and put an end to any historical, epistemological, philosophical, moral and political attachment or claim to the land. Several scholars and thinkers, in particular from the global south, have discussed the theme of colonisation and decolonisation of the mind (Battiste, 1984; Fanon, 1967; Freire, 2000; Thiong'o, 1994; Tuck & Gaztambide-Fernández, 2013). The ultimate goal of any colonialism requires conquering land inhabitants at the cognitive level, making them feel inferior and doubting themselves, believing in the coloniser's story about the self and the other, unwilling to resist and most importantly to make them lose hope. In colonising the mind of the land inhabitants, the colonisers aim to deform, devalue, and mutilate their consciousness, knowledge, culture, language, history, image and relation with the land. This is implemented through various violent and nonviolent, visible and invisible tools and channels such as education institutions, media, literature and wars (Odettalah, 2012).

Battiste (1984) uses "cognitive assimilation" and "cognitive imperialism" to describe the 'Canadian' educational processes of the Micmac people. Battiste argues that settlers' education enforced onto the Micmac "created transitional problems of cognitive incoherence and cultural ambiguity" (p.25). Battiste writes "it is the systemic nature of colonization that creates cognitive imperialism, our cognitive prisons" (2000a, p.xvii). In her case study, Battiste shows that the Federal education was the "annihilation of Micmac history, knowledge, language, and collective habits, thereby making Micmac youth believe that Anglo-Canadian society was culturally and technically superior to Micmac society. Inherent in this policy was the destruction of tribal identity and values along with the tribal soul" (1984, p.37). Battiste further elaborates that cognitive imperialism is a:

...form of cognitive manipulation used to disclaim other knowledge bases and values. Validated through one's knowledge base and empowered through public education, it has been the means by which whole groups of people have been denied existence and have had their wealth confiscated. Cognitive imperialism denies people their language and cultural integrity by maintaining the legitimacy of only one language, one culture and one frame of reference (2000b, p.198).

Cognitive imperialism functions through the circulation of "false assumptions and interpretations" of the land inhabitants' past and present. At the same time it rejects and devalues the land inhabitants' knowledge, history, language, and culture (1984, p.37). Taming the will to resist is what the colonisers want to achieve, Asanti writes, the colonialism "doesn't engender creativity; it stifles it, suppresses it under the cloak of assistance when in fact it is creating conditions that make it impossible for humans to effectively resist" (2006, p.ix). In the context of Africa, Thiong'o writes: "[t]he oppressed and the exploited of the earth maintain their defiance: liberty from theft. But the biggest weapon wielded and actually daily unleashed by imperialism against that collective defiance is the cultural bomb" (1994, p.3). The consequence of a cultural bomb is to defeat the land inhabitants at the personal level

and make them believe that liberation and victory are “ridiculous dreams”, as Thiong'o explains:

The effect of a cultural bomb is to annihilate a people's belief in their names, in their languages, in their environment, in their heritage of struggle, in their unity, in their capacities and ultimately in themselves; for instance, with other peoples' languages rather than their own. It makes them identify with that which is decadent and reactionary, all those forces which would stop their own springs of life. It even plants serious doubts about the moral rightness of struggle. Possibilities of triumph of victory are seen as remote, ridiculous dreams. The intended results are despair, despondency and a collective death-wish. (p.3)

In the context of Palestine, Walid Abu Daqqa uses ‘mind smearing’ to analyse the ‘Israeli’ processes to tame the Palestinians’ will to resist. Abu Daqqa argues that ‘Israel’s’ attempts to subjugate Palestinians’ hope and will to resist is manifested in suppressing and torturing the body, soul and mind of Ahl Al-Ard in order to distort their morale and reform their consciousness according to the Zionist vision. Abu Daqqa studies the prison as a case study to analyse the mind smearing inside and outside the prison.<sup>109</sup> Mind smearing is “to make the very idea of resistance, an extravagant thinking”, writes Abu Daqqa. He argues that “Israel’s ultimate goal is to deform what he calls the ‘morale infrastructure of resistance’”.<sup>110</sup> This is done through various means and channels, yet Abu Daqqa insists that in the case of ‘Israel,’ the army plays a significant role in targeting the morale and material infrastructures of resistance. Abu Daqqa explains that any resistance would need morale and material infrastructures. The destruction of material infrastructure also targets the morale infrastructure of resistance; “the mass killing and deconstruction tells the Palestinians that if you ever think to resist this is what will happen to you” (Daqqa, 2009). Targeting the morale infrastructure of resistance in Palestine happens through the subjugation of everyday minor and major embodiments of any sense of community and unity among Palestinians, including organised/disorganised, individual/group, central/decentral activities, and any action that symbolises a mind-set that makes active resistance and steadfastness possible. Mind smearing aims to deform “the shared values that unify Palestinians in their everyday life,” including social solidarity, sense of community and any sense of shared destiny that would make Palestinians active steadfastness and resistance possible (Daqqa, 2009). Khaled Odetallah agrees with Abu Daqqa’s analysis and maintains that ‘Israel’ is waging a morale war against Palestinians with the intention to defeat them at the cognitive level. The ultimate objective of this war is to reform Ahl al-Ard’s morale and make them unable to know

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<sup>109</sup> Walid Abu Daqqa is a Palestinian writer and fighter. He was arrested in 1986 for his resistance and is serving a life sentence in prison.

<sup>110</sup> Hatikva is the ‘Israeli National’ anthem. Walid Abu Daqqa quotes in his study Yaakov Ganot, head of ‘Israel’ prisons: ““I will make them hold the Israeli flag and sing Hatikva”, addressing the ‘Israeli’ Interior Minister Gideon Levy, and referring to the Palestinian prisoners during a visit to *Jalbou* prison in 2006. Ganot’s words were heard by Abu Daqqa and other prisoners.

themselves, to reduce them to rootless individuals, constantly worrying about their basic daily needs and having no sense of belonging to the land or community and most importantly to make them believe that “resistance is useless” (2012)<sup>111</sup>. Odettalah argues that the cognitive battlefield is fundamental to ‘Israel’; “the combative settlers know that to win a war they need to conquer the enemy at the cognitive battlefield, and not only the actual battlefield”. In other words, the cognitive war aims to tame the will to resist. “Being defeated or not defeated is determined at the cognitive level. Our battle is at the cognitive level; it is a morale war. [...] It is all about the will. If you have all the weapons on earth and you do not have the will to resist you will not resist, and if you have nothing and have the will to resist” (Odettalah, 2012). The consequence of the colonisers winning this war is the completion and domination of the oppression “inside and outside,” as Freire (2000) argued: “If this domination inside and outside was complete, definitive, we could never think of social transformation” (Freire, 2000, p.13). For the settler coloniser, winning this war means that settler colonialism becomes normal, natural, and unquestionable because no one can see it and everyone believes in the same creation story, Freire writes:

“But, transformation is possible because consciousness is not a mirror of reality, not a mere reflection, but is reflexive and reflective of reality. As conscious human beings, we can discover how we are conditioned by the dominant ideology. We can gain distance on our moment of existence. Therefore, we can learn how to become free through a political struggle in society. We can struggle to become free precisely because we can know we are not free! That is why we can think of transformation” (2000, p.13).

In this chapter I make use of the above literature in my understanding of the war waged in the mind of Ahl Al-Ard to analyse the significance of the narratives and stories explored in this chapter. In the following sections, I explore how the above policies, laws and procedures were lived and resisted by Yamin, Dana and Majd. I start with setting the context in which my research participants grew up. This context is important as it allows us to better understand the significance of the return to the self stories analysed in section 7.3 and to identify the ‘Resistance Morale infrastructure’ in Palestine in section 7.4

## **7.2 ‘I did not know that I am a Palestinian’: Settler colonialism cognitive maze**

The above quote was said to me by Yamin when he was explaining why some of Al-Muwahhidun youth join the army. Yamin explained:

Maysa, these guys don’t know that they are Palestinians, I did not know that I am Palestinian, I had to discover that I am a Palestinian and return to myself.... they grew up believing that Israel is their state, they don’t see it as a colonisation. It was something normal for me [going to the army]...What else would you expect me to do? But not everyone believes so; there are those who don’t believe in this. I can

<sup>111</sup> In a public lecture in 2012 titled: *Gazah wa Kai Al Wai'i Al Ma'akus* غزة وكي الوعي المعكوس [Gaza and the reverse mind smearing]. Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ljptbKZL0b0>

summarise it in one sentence; our youth have to discover their Palestinian identity, for me this is my life discovery, I discovered that I am a Palestinian.

Not knowing the self nor seeing 'Israel' as a colonial entity is what 'Israel' is trying to achieve through imposing several policies, laws, plans and procedures on Al-Muwahhidun in Palestine, including the obligatory army service forced on them since 1956. As Yamin's words suggest, growing up as a member of the Al-Muwahhidun faith in Palestine would not only make it normal for them to join the settler colonisers' army, 'what else would you expect me to do?' or not knowing themselves, but it would also make them not recognise 'Israel' as a colonial state; they don't see it as a colonisation, as Yamin said.

All my research participants grew up in what the 'Israel' calls 'Druze towns' and enrolled at 'Druze schools'. In a 'Druze town', it is common to see 'Israel' and Druze flags on electric poles or official buildings, such as the Druze Soldier Martyr Museum<sup>112</sup>, schools, and village councils. Also, it is common to see some of Al-Muwahhidun youth walking in the lanes of the town with their army uniform. All my research participants have siblings, relatives, and cousins who serve in the 'Israeli' army. Some of them even lost loved ones during their army service. In Druze towns there are also Druze schools, where all my research participants studied a Druze curriculum, which includes; Arabic for Druze, Mathematics for Druze, History for Druze, and so on. At school my research participants learnt how to draw the Druze and 'Israeli' flags. They learnt that they are Druze of 'Israel' and have a 'blood pact' with the 'Israeli' state. They learn about 'Druze icons' such as Kamal Junblat, Sultan Basha Al-Atrash, and others. Growing up in such a context means that all my research participants would have countless encounters with scenes and moments enhancing their Druze identity; Druze flags, Druze curriculum, Druze holidays, Druze museum, etc.

The following elaborates on how my research participants experienced and lived the colonial construction of a Druze identity, which aims to "deform their consciousness" and control their minds (Freire, 2000).

'I was lost'

Yamin grew up in a context where his father worked for the 'Israeli' police; "My dream was to be like my father, a policeman". Yamin has four siblings (two boys and two girls). His brothers were killed during their army service (1987 in West Bank, and 1996 in Lebanon).<sup>113</sup> The two brothers' photos, in which they are wearing the 'Israeli' army uniform, are placed on the wall in the living room. Yamin has relatives, cousins, friends and neighbours who serve in the Israeli

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<sup>112</sup> *Mathaf Al-Shaid Al-Durzi* opened in 1993 in Dalet Al-Karmel and is recognized as an official memorial museum and as a national heritage place. Israeli government and official personnel visit the museum on Druze soldiers martyr day and once hosted a conference on Druze Identity.

<sup>113</sup> He also has an uncle who was killed during his army service (1971)



army. When Yamin's brothers were killed the coffin was wrapped with the 'Israeli' flag and in Yamin's town there is a big sculpture that commemorates 'Shuhada Al-Druze' [Martyrs of Druze] who were killed in 'Israel wars'. The names of his brothers and uncle, among others, are written on the tombstone. Yamin grew up going to the military cemetery once every year on April 24<sup>th</sup> to participate in 'Yom Al Shahid Al Durzi' [Martyrs of Druze Day]<sup>114</sup> to honour his brothers. In this day, Yamin says with a sarcastic tone, 'it is the day when 'bereaved' families visit their son's tombs, those who 'sacrificed' themselves in Israeli wars and battles'. Like everyone else who attends such events, Yamin used to hold 'Israeli' and Druze flags, pray, put flowers on the tombs, and sings Hatikva<sup>115</sup>. Such events would also include speeches by military personnel from the 'Israeli' army who would confirm the 'shared destiny' and the blood pact between the Jew and the Druze. Also some of the 'Israeli' appointed Druze leaders would give speeches following the same narrative of the 'shared destiny' between the Druze and the 'Israeli' Jew.

When Yamin was 18 he had the option not to do the obligatory military service. He received an exemption because he lost two brothers. Yet he insisted on joining the army against the will of his family, who still grieve the loss of two sons. Yamin ended up joining the prisons unit in the Zionist military institution and became a jailer. Yamin said: "When I joined the prison my dream was to reach a high position. It was a well-paid job for me".

When Yamin recalled his life growing up in a context where it is normal for him to end up serving in the 'Israeli' army, he used the word 'lost' as he explained: "I was lost, it feels like being lost, like living a big lie." Yamin elaborates more on his lost status with a frustrated tone:

I don't know from where to start, shall I start from the Nakba or before that? Shall I start from 1936 revolution or 1929 uprising or English Mandate? Shall start from Dier Yassin, Egreth, Faradah, Semhata<sup>116</sup>, or the ugly obligatory army service? It's all related. I am the forgotten on the shores, I swim and dive to find the truth. I always wonder how my people transferred from a sect in Palestine into a commodity in Israel. I travel into my memory trying to find the reason, how we became an icon for coffee and Labaneh when we were once an icon for resistance and heroism.

Yamin's tone becomes sharper when he talks about the lies he learnt growing up:

...they say that in the 1948 we were not displaced and our villages were not destroyed, this is not true, even Benny Morris ['Israeli' historian] wrote about our villages were destroyed in 1948 and before 1948...not only that, they say that we asked them to fight with them in 1948.. They say Sultan Basha Atrash is a Druze icon;

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<sup>114</sup> Officially started in 1982

<sup>115</sup> Israeli national anthem, means 'hope', which talks about how the Jewish people were lost and finally found their homeland. During the war on Gaza, a Palestinian music group of Islamic Jihad broadcast a song called 'Lost Hope' with the same melody but different words singing about settlers having two options at the end to die in Palestine or leave it.

<sup>116</sup> Palestinian destroyed villages, where its inhabitants were massacred and expelled by the Zionist military groups in 1948

he is an Arab icon, not a Druze icon. They teach us that he started the revolution because he wanted to protect his visitor, not because he is a nationalist and Arab leader; they vacuum our heroic icons and mutilate them. Kamal Junblat, for instance, they are not introducing him as an Arab intellectual and thinker, they introduce him as a Druze thinker, they are not only trying to vanish our belonging to Palestine but also our belonging to the bigger Arab nation. The colonizers managed to create Druze traditions, Druze heritage, Druze language, Druze coffee, Druze oil, Druze Labaneh and education for Druze.

Yamin understands this transformation of Al-Muwahhidun image as a “mind colonisation,” which he explained: “there is a land colonization and mind colonization; we [Al-Muwahhidun] are the largest group who lost land, our land was confiscated, but the most dangerous form of colonisation is the mind colonisation, to erase our identity, not only deforming it but to uproot us”.

The main source of these lies according to Yamin and others is the school. Yamin believes that the main role of Druze schools is to make pupils graduate as “good Druze soldiers” who believe in the settlers’ stories and are convinced of the need to defend ‘Israel’ from the ‘shared’ (Muslim) enemy:

...the education enhances the Israelization, militarization and Druzisation of our community, therefore army service is a very natural result of the education; once a person is 17 you don’t need to convince them to go to the army, they are already convinced as a result of the education system. They realize that this is a normal path they should take. In the last three years of high school they bring soldiers from different army units to convince them to join those units. It becomes a matter of masculinity and manhood.

A fundamental feature of ‘Israeli’ schooling and its curriculum are the joint Ministry of Education and army programmes and activities, including the soldier-teacher programme. Initially, the role of soldier-teacher is to encourage Jewish students to join the army. Following the enforcement of army service the soldier-teacher started visiting ‘Druze schools’ to prepare the ‘good Druze soldier’.

Yamin’s narrative suggests that Zionists fabricated myths and stories about Arab nationalist figures such as Junblat and Al Atrash, which strengthen the colonisation of the land. The representation of a ‘Druze leader’, who started the revolution for the sake of a visitor who asked for his protection, and a ‘Druze thinker’ enhances the ‘Druze’ identity, dismisses Arab belonging and reduces Al-Muwahhidun to a ‘rootless minority’

‘It always felt wrong’

Even though military service is only forced on men of the Al-Muwahhidun, this does not mean that women of Al-Muwahhidun are excluded from the Zionist colonial construction of a Druze identity. The obligatory army service is only one of the Zionist tools to deform the consciousness of Al-Muwahhidun in Palestine. Dana also grew up in a Druze town and she has relatives and cousins who serve in the army, as well as enrolling at a Druze school. Dana

also participated in school activities on the 'Israeli independence day' and 'Yom Al-Shahid Al Durzi'. Dana said:

"I was very Israeli, I remember when I was 13 or 14, and I used to listen to Hebrew songs, I used to text and write in Hebrew a lot. At school, on what they call Independence Day, they would give us Israeli flags, the one you put on the cars, I remember I came back home with one of these flags, and I wanted to have it on our car.

When Dana recalled her growing up and school days she said: "it always felt like there is something wrong, I could not point it out as I would do now, but it always felt like there is something wrong'. When Dana attended her history and civic education classes, she was not aware that there are two stories; one she should know, and one she should not; "our teacher was trying not to tell us the Israeli narrative". She elaborates:

I remember very well that I used to love in particular two main subjects, history and civil education. In the history classes I think our teacher was trying not to tell us the Israeli narrative of what happened in 1948. The narrative that they teach us is that Arab Muslims attacked the Jew and the Druze in 1948 and Israel protected the Druze from the Muslims so we are giving them a favour back by going into the army. They do not call it Nakba they call it 'Independence war'. Civil education class was full of contradictions, I used to wonder how it's a Jew-only state and we are supposed to be part of it?

Dana also expresses a particular interest in the Arabic language 'I love the Arabic language, I love the words, the poems, it's very rich, I was always amazed how beautiful our language is'. After school she decided to enrol at Haifa University to study Arabic literature, however, after a few months, Dana withdrew from the course; "we were studying Arabic in Hebrew, so my Arabic was much better than the teachers! I couldn't handle it, studying Arabic in Hebrew. It just did not feel right for me'.

The memorisation of the Shahid Al Durzi is what most puzzled Dana and made her feel that there is something wrong. As she explained:

For us [Al-Muwahhidun] it is not allowed to visit tombs; we believe in reincarnation, the spirit is holy and death is a transient, therefore the body is not important or central in that context; this belief is reflected in our death rituals all over the world. A coffin is a simple wooden box covered with a white cloth, no tomb signs, bodies are not buried in graves, coffins are organized over each other, in a room, and once it's full, all coffins are burnt with the body remains then ash would be moved in one coffin.

What puzzled Dana is that she was not allowed to visit the place where her grandmother's body is, but she had to participate in visiting the tombs of the Druze soldiers. She said: 'this was something I did not understand, I always wondered why it is ok to visit the soldiers' tombs, but it is against our faith to visit my grandmother's! But at that age when I was 13 or 14, I did not think much about it. But when I look back now, I see how it's all wrong'. In one

of my walks with Dana in her town, she commented when we passed a sculpture of the Al Shahid Al Durzi, 'they are not Shahid, Shahid dies for a good cause, these are dying for an evil cause. See, this always confused me, growing up here is very confusing, it's just wrong'. Dana added with a cynical tone: "Number of 'Druze Martyrs' increases with time, but the Zionist institution confiscated more than 90% of our land, so where are we going to bury them?' Dana further commented on the army service:

The Israelis have a well-planned strategy for the Druze military service, not only do they force them to go to the army, they also put them on the frontline with their Palestinian and Arab brothers, for instance at the checkpoints in West Bank or Jerusalem, there are Druze soldiers. When any war happens, Druze soldiers are always at the frontlines, also at the borders, the soldiers there are Druze. The Israeli plan is to put the Druze soldiers in a confrontational situation with their Palestinian brothers. The Israeli story of the Druze military services aims to create a cultural and historical gap between us and the rest of the Palestinian people. It aims to create a particular stereotype about Druze. The Israeli story says that a group of the Druze community leaders approached the Israelis and asked them to serve in the army. Also they [Israeli] show a document signed by those community and religious leaders. This document is called the Blood Pact between the Druze and Israel state, but actually what happened was totally the opposite. Obligatory military service was by force. The main income of people was farming and working in the land, so the Israelis started to prevent people going to their land, arrested men who worked on the land in order to force them to serve in the army. Furthermore, on the other hand, unfortunately we were left alone. We resisted military service; lots of young people were arrested for years because of their refusal of military service.

'I was fooled'

Majd is the youngest of four brothers. He did not serve in the army (he was sentenced to three months for that and I will return to this in section 7.4) but his father and one of his brothers served in the army for a short period. Majd also has relatives and cousins who serve in the army and one of them was killed during their army service.<sup>117</sup> Majd said: "my father was a soldier in the military, but he met some Palestinian communists in Haifa; after lots of discussions and talks with them he decided to leave the army, [because he is] an Arab Palestinian'. Majd was 12 when his brother insisted on going to the army against his father's will. Majd remembers tense arguments between his brother and his father. Majd said:" he [the brother] wanted to try it [military service], that's what he said. My brother was thinking in a practical way, if you want anything from the government ['Israeli'] you need to have a paper to show that you did the army service. But my father did not accept this and for him it was a matter of principle'. The brother ended up joining the military. Majd remembers that his brother was not allowed to come back home with the army uniform. Majd added; 'my brother was not allowed to come home wearing the army uniform. My father said if you have the uniform on you do not come to my house. He was not allowed even to wash it in the house. I remember my father said once with lots of anger 'it will never happen in my house to hang an Israeli

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<sup>117</sup> One of them was killed during my field work in an attack in Jerusalem.

solder's uniform on the laundry rack'. Even though Majd's brother did join the army, he decided to leave after one and a half years. Majd says:

[...] he decided that he doesn't want to be in the army anymore. During his service he witnessed lots of ugly things, he argued with his boss and left. The incident that made him leave is that an old man was passing the checkpoint with a donkey with some vegetables to sell in the market. The boss ordered my brother to throw away the vegetables but my brother refused and it was the straw that broke the Camel's back.

For Majd, even though he did not join the army and he grew up in a house where there was an opposition to army service, he nonetheless believes that he was fooled, in particular when he recalls his school days. Similar to the above reflection of being lost or feeling that there is something wrong, Majd who always used the word 'Mataha' [maze] whenever he referred to his school. When I asked him why, he replied:

Because it is a maze, I did not think much about it that time, but now when I remember school, I feel I have been fooled and lied to. Everything is special for Druze; geography for Druze. History for Druze. Maths for Druze. They call it 'special' for Druze so that they can move to something even more dangerous. They did not tell me anything about Palestine or my Arab hood; they only said that I am Druze and I should do army service.

Majd further explains how he was fooled:

...there is a difference between Al-Muwahhidun of Golan and Al-Muwahhidun of Palestine. If you ask the Al-Muwahhidun from Golan what is your nationality? They would say Arab from Syria, and if you ask him what is your religion? He will say Al-Muwahhidun. But if you ask Al-Muwahhidun from Palestine what is your nationality, they would say I am Druze! The Israeli made this.

Majd refers to his school as a "maze", as it is confusing and misleading. Majd recalls a day when he was going back home from school holding an 'Israeli' flag because he was celebrating the 'Independence day of Israel'. That day, Majd knew that he was not 'Israeli' but a Palestinian. Majd recalls. The then-10-year-old Majd learnt that what he was celebrating at school is a sad day for those who he belongs to.

I remember when I was in the fourth grade, the teacher chose me to hold the flag in the street march, then I went back home holding it. Later on I knew that he chose me on purpose to bother my father, who is against the Israeli state. My father got very angry, but he talked to me calmly and explained to me that this is not our flag and that this day is a sad day for our people.

Settler colonialism cognitive maze:

All my research participants reflected on growing up in such a context as 'feeling lost,' as Yamin says, 'being fooled,' as Majd would put and 'It always felt like there is something wrong,' as Dana put it. All my research participants referred to growing up in a Druze town and enrolling at Druze school as being a 'huge brainwashing machine,' as Majd put it. It is confusing and there were lots of contradictions. School is an important channel for the settler colonisers to impose their narrative of the creation. 'Israel' deforms and mutilates Al-

Muwahhidun history, in particular resistance icons, and segregates it from any national content.

The 'Independence War' story rationalises colonisation. It is introduced as 'something good'; 'Israel protected them', they 'were not displaced and their villages were not destroyed', colonisation of land is presented as a 'mutual' destiny and interest for Jew and 'Druze' in the face of the common enemy (Muslim).

The above narratives of feeling puzzled, "how it's a Jew-only state and we are supposed to be part of it", and feeling lost in a "mataha" illustrates how 'Druze school' creates a condition to make Al-Muwahhidun to recognise themselves as Druze only. The above narratives of the Zionist story of land colonisation, 'Independence war' and the 'Druzisation' of Arab nationalist figures like Sultan Basha and Junblat illustrate how 'Druze school' is employed as colonial space to spread the colonisers' "creation story" (Donald, 2009; Tuck & Gaztambide-Fernández, 2013) and shows how education is a tool of "cognitive imperialism" (Battiste, 1984), mind smearing and consciousness deformation (Daqqa, 2009). This tool is used to accomplish the final stage of settler colonialism, "wherein the imperialist seeks to whitewash the tribal mind and soul and to create doubt" (Battiste, 1984 pp. 36-37). Features of the colonial stories circulated at 'Druze school' synchronise the colonial militant and orientalist attributions of spatial and temporal manifestations, of Jabotinsky's Iron Wall in 'Druze town' discussed earlier. Schooling in settler colonial states "does not simply convey knowledge, but go[es] much further and construct[s] it through conscious and unconscious inclusion and exclusion of historical perspectives, contributions and events" (Kempf, 2006, p.131). 'Druze school' is a cognitive imperialist tool that consciously constructs, includes and excludes historical events. Linda Tuhiwai Smith cites a talk by the Maori writer, Patricia Grace, on the danger of school books. She writes, 'books are dangerous', "(1) when they do not reinforce our values, actions, customs, culture and identity. (2) When they tell us only about others, they are saying that we do not exist. (3) They may be writing about us but are writing things which are untrue; and (4) they are writing about us but saying negative and insensitive things which tell us that we are not good" (L. T. Smith, 1999 p. 36). In the context of Palestine, 'Druze education' is a critical colonisation tool to circulate untrue stories about the self and the other. 'Druze school' is a dangerous colonial apparatus and medium for the Zionist settler entity to deform Palestinians' morale infrastructure by circulating its "creation story" and validating its foundation myths (Donald, 2009). The construction of 'Druze' education is a conscious and ideological colonial act, the intention of which is to impose settlers' stories (L. T. Smith, 1999).

The following section explores the return to the self journey as narrated by my research participants. In particular, I focus on the resources, incidents and moments that triggered the return to the self for my research participants.

### 7.3 Return to the Self

In the previous section, I elaborated on how growing up in a Druze town and enrolling at Druze school made my research participants feel like they were living in a 'maze', feeling 'lost' and 'fooled'. Growing up in such a context created doubt and incoherence. As the narratives in the previous section suggested, growing up as a member of Al-Muwahhidun faith in Palestine entails facing contradictions, which made Dana, for instance, feel that there was something wrong. The colonial construction of the Druze identity aims to detach Al-Muwahhidun from their larger Palestinian and Arab belonging and reduce them to a rootless minority that believes in the settlers' creation story about themselves and the Others. Although this context indeed created doubt, it also made my research participants ask themselves, 'who are we?' In the context of the Algerian revolution, Fanon writes that "colonialism forces the people it dominates to ask themselves the question: 'In reality, who am I?' (1963, p.200). Asking this question, according to Fanon, is where the spirit of revolt arises. In a different context, Ali Shariati suggested an answer to Fanon's question: "return to the self"; to believe in one's knowledge, history, culture, image and language. This section explores my research participants' journey to find their answers to 'who they are in reality'. In particular, I focus on the memories, incidents, and resources that made them ask such a question and allowed them to return to themselves. I follow the journey that made Yamin become a lawyer defending Palestinians in front of Israeli courts, in particular those who refuse the army service, and made Dana and Majd active in anti-army service campaigns.

In spite of this special education system, Druze of Palestine found their Palestinian identity through these schools and through teachers who refused the Zionist story and talked about Palestine in history classes. Or Dana even found this identity through conflict, which changed her life and made her know that she is Palestinian. As I will further explain below, the narratives of my research participants suggest that the sense of contradiction was the first trigger for them to wonder who they are. Such contradictions were not discovered overnight; their discovery entailed questioning, doubting, reading and discussions. In the following, I define and analyze the themes that served as the tools and mediums of this return. My analysis of research participants' narratives in this section shows the influence of certain historical events and intellectual and political figures of Al-Muwahhidun (in Palestine, or Syria or Lebanon) on this return.

Being human

Yamin, who grew up not knowing that he is a Palestinian as we saw in the previous section, refers his 'return' and discovery of his Palestinianness to growing up in what he calls a 'human house'. Yamin grew up in a 'Druze village' but not a 'Druze house'. Yamin recalls that despite the fact that his father worked for the Israeli police, he only remembers stories of him helping Palestinians and being nice to them:

I didn't know that I am Palestinian, but I grew up in a house that I call very human. My father was a police officer, but I grew up listening to my father's stories on how he used to help Palestinians. I strongly believe that you cannot be a nationalist and love your land if you are not a human. You need to be a human first, love your land, your people, and your history; being human is very central to being a nationalist. It's about loving yourself, your people and your homeland".

Yamin recalls events that happened in his house that made him find his Palestinian self later on. One of those moments was when his brother was killed in Lebanon in 1996:

I remember when my second brother was killed during his military service in Lebanon [1996]. The Israeli media came to my father and asked him what do you say to those who killed your son? Of course it was a provocative question, and shows how dirty the Israeli media is, however my father's answer was a shock for them. He said: "first, I want to send my condolences to the family of the guy who killed my son. I am sure they are having the funeral of their son now, too. It's not only my son who is a victim of this painful conflict." My mother's answer was: "What are you doing in Lebanon?! If you want to protect the borders, stay at the borders and protect it from there. The guy didn't kill my son because he is Druze; he killed him because he is a soldier in the Israeli army." My mother and my father didn't teach me anything about Palestine. They were the first generation of victims, but they taught me how to be a human and that was enough to show me the truth"

When Yamin joined the prison, he used to have little chats with the Palestinian prisoners sometimes, particularly on religious issues. In one of these chats, Yamin heard for the first time from one of the prisoners that 'Druze' is not a Muslim sect and 'Druze' historically collaborated with the colonizers. As Yamin explains:

I remember one incident happened with me in the prison that made me think and read. I used to have discussions with prisoners sometimes, mainly religious discussions. I had a discussion with a guy from Hammas. He told me that Druze are not Muslim and he showed it to me written in a book. I used my authority and confiscated all the books and started reading all the books talking about 'Druze'. What I read about Druze was contradicting my understanding of my religious beliefs. I used to think that Druze is an Islamic sect.

Yamin did not only find that he is not Muslim, he was shocked by 'image of betrayal associated with the sect. His reading made him find even more images of the self that he did not recognize. Yamin didn't recognize himself or his sect in the confiscated books, so he then started a two-year journey of reading and knowing the self:

I started reading about Al-Muwahhidun. Through these readings I discovered that I am a Palestinian and my relationship with the prisoners changed. We had many discussions, I started helping them [prisoners], I felt solidarity with them and I started



believing in their cause, which was my cause, too. My readings about Al-Muwahhidun led me to gain knowledge and this knowledge made me believe that those prisoners are here because they are fighting for my cause. I was married at that time with two children and it was my only income, so I faced huge social pressure to not quit my job. I was 25. I started reading when I was 23, so it took me two years to realize that. Before I left on my last shift, I spent it saying goodbye to the prisoners and their farewell for me was like any other farewell for a prisoner. I went to their rooms, they hugged and kissed me, they gave me their mobile numbers; it was a great, unbelievable moment. Those feelings from the prisoners made me even more assured about my decisions.

Yamin's reading included the history of Al-Muwahhidun and their natural presence in the region. He also read about Al-Muwahhidun fighting and leading revolutions against the French and English colonizers and their resistance to the settler project in Palestine before the declaration of this project as a state;

For Yamin, his grandmother's stories were a great influence on his return. Yamin's grandmother, as he would say, 'is older than 'Israel' (97 now). Yamin remembers that his grandmother always referred to the 'Israeli' as 'Al Makatee,' which literally means 'rootless', and he recalls her saying 'Al Makatee' who came in 1948 with guns and took Ard Al-Khayat (a land nearby Yamin's town, of which 1300 hectares were confiscated by the 'Israeli' government in 1953). Yamin recalls that day when the land was confiscated as his grandmother would narrate it to him:

It was very hot. El Makatee came and started shooting at us. People started to run away, we ran away, too. Your grandfather forgot his gun there. I reminded him of it, he said leave it there, I said, no. I got back there, I got the gun and I saw Al Makatee there, and I saw one of our villagers with them [collaborator], he is shameless [referring to the collaborator]. That's how Ard Al Khayat was taken".

Shahid photos

In her journey to return to the self, Dana started to read intellectual and political works by Al Maghout, Sultan Basha Al Atrash who belongs to her faith. What Dana read provided her with stories and narratives about herself, contradicting what 'Israel' was telling her. In spite of Dana believing that she is an Israeli (texting in Hebrew and listening to Hebrew music), she recalls Palestinian influences at home:

I remember I came back home with one [Israeli flag], and I wanted to have it on our car, but my father refused and he said no, we can't do this. I did not understand why? I grew up in a house where we had in the living room photos of the 13 Palestinian shahid of October 2000. I started to develop my political awareness through going with my father to the theatre. My father used to write and do theatre productions. I remember that his plays rang a bell for me. Also, I started reading Al Maghout, Sultan Basha Al Atrash.

Dana recalls that the framed photos of 13 Palestinian Shahid in their living room and the violent events of October 2000 made her realise that there was something wrong because she felt that she belonged to the people who were being killed, not to the killers.<sup>118</sup>

Of course I did not think like this at that time [she was 10], but the memories of those 10 days flashed back later in similar situations. One of the guys who were killed was a cousin of my classmate, he was only 17. She told me and others how they killed him - one soldier hit him with the M16 first then the other shot him from zero distance with a dum-dum bullet [expanding bullet]. But at that age, it was scary for me to imagine how his head looked after the dum-dum bullet had exploded in his head. Now, when I think about it and think of all the moments when I was in a confrontation with them ['Israeli'] I think that all these incidents just made me think that they are targeting me also with another type of dum-dum. They target my identity and my being.

One unforgettable day for Dana was when she decided to go to the school wearing a Palestinian scarf (Kufiya):

There is one day I will never forget, when I decided to go one day to school wearing my Kufiya. The school guardian stopped me at the entrance and said I can't enter with the Kufiya on me. I refused to take it off so the school headmaster came out to convince me to take it off, but I didn't. I argued with the guardian and he said that you are not allowed because this is a terrorist Kufiyah, then I asked him what his grandfather used to wear, and he said this one, so I said then why you are not letting me in? I called my father and I told him the situation and he said don't take it off. Then I entered the school and the students started to call me Palestinian as an insult. I had it on all day. The math teacher, the one I used to go to for private lessons, she told me don't you dare come to my house with this on. I told her, you know what; I don't want private lessons any more.

#### **7.4 'I defeated Israel': Resistance morale infrastructure**

In this last section, I return to my main question about how Palestinians resist the settler colonisers' myths; they are defeated and the land is not theirs. I identify and elaborate the significance of the morale infrastructure of resistance in Palestine, which serves as a steady and strong weapon in the cognitive battlefield waged against them.

Asked about his return to the self, Yamin told me that, "at the personal level, I feel that I defeated Israel, since 1956 and even before, Israel spent millions and millions of Shekels to make me believe that I am Israeli Druze, and it failed. I am an Arab Palestinian with Arabic first and last names; I am the grandson of Sultan Basha Al Atrsh. We are Arab Palestinians, we belong to the east, there is nothing called Druze nationality. It's a myth, like the Zionists' nationality." His statement is an example of how the larger Arab sense of belonging enables Yamin and others to fight the cognitive war waged at them by 'Israel' and provides them with the tools and medium to not only challenge the settler colonial creation story but to refute it, too. Yamin added: 'since 1956 until today, even before that, since 1948, in order to tame me

<sup>118</sup> They were killed in what is known as *Habet* October in 2000. Ten days (1-10 October) of violent confrontations between Palestinians in the lands of 1948 and the 'Israeli' army.

and tame people like me, however, in spite of all their money, effort, time and plans, there is a new generation resisting and challenging this. Everything and everywhere in Palestine tells me that I am Palestinian. In this café where we are sitting, something is telling me that I am Palestinian. When I go to Jaffa and walk around in areas where Palestinians used to live, I feel I am Palestinian. When I go to Al Naqab and sit in an Israeli café and talk Arabic, I feel my Palestinianness, everything tells me that I am Palestinian. Everything tells me that I am a Palestinian. The stone, the oak trees and my grandma. My Palestinian identity is not an identity card; it's my history, my belonging, and the absolute truth'

This also was evident in the publications of the campaigns and efforts of Al-Muwahhidun in resisting obligatory army service (figure 49, 50 and 51). As analysed in the previous section, in spite of the 'Israeli' efforts to construct a colonial Druze identity for Al-Muwahhidun in Palestine, these efforts are not going unchallenged. My research participants found themselves through the very system that is designed to deform their consciousness. As the previous narratives suggested, my research participants are not only refusing the settlers' story about themselves, they also refute it and outline its lies and contradictions.



The sign reads: "we are [our] land guards not [Israeli] border guards". And the T Shirts feature a slogan that says: "Refuse, your people protect you".

Figure 49: Refuse army service event.



The collection includes novels and poems by Palestinian writers including Salman Natour, Samih Al Qassem, and others.

Figure 50: A collection of the recommended books for Al-Muwahhidun youth to read.



This quote is part of the anti-army service campaign. The writings can be translated loosely as “my precept to you is to have endurance with dignity, and to be unified and strong believers in order to fight your enemies and expel the rapists and liberate the land. You must know that what is taken by sword, returns by sword. Faith is stronger than any other weapon; to die with dignity is better than to live with humiliation. Having faith enhances endurance, maintain justice, and strengthens by resistance’.

Figure 51. Letter from Sultan Basha Al Atrash to Al Muwhadun youth.

## Conclusion

I began this chapter by stressing the significance of the “cognitive battlefield” and as several scholars have argued, the ultimate objective of settler colonialism is to tame the will to resist by defeating the land inhabitants at the cognitive level and make them lose hope. The cognitive battlefield involves various policies and plans, visible/invisible, violent/nonviolent, all aim to making Ahl Al-Ard “believe the worst about themselves” (Fanon), to feel inferior and doubt themselves and their own culture, history and knowledge. Also it involves a circulation of the settler’s “creation story” about the self and the other (Battiste, 1984; Fanon, 1967; Freire, 2000; Odetallah, 2012; Shariati, 2007; Thiong'o, 1994). The importance of the cognitive battlefield is that it ends settler colonialism and synchronises with the spatial and temporal colonisation of the land.

I presented the context in which my research participants grew up not knowing themselves. As I showed, the settler colonial project plan for Al-Muwahhidun in Palestine is to uproot them from their Palestinian and Arab belonging by constructing a new 'Druze' identity, history, belonging, past, present and future through Israelization and Druzisation policies including the mandatory army service imposed on Al-Muwahhidun.

Narratives of research participants suggest that the contradiction about what they know about themselves and what they are told were their trigger for their return to the self. I argued that growing up in a Druze town and enrolling at Druze schools created a sense of being lost and not knowing the self for my research participants. All of my participants emphasized the critical role of schools and the education system in targeting the mind of Al-Muwahhidun in Palestine. Schools are widely and consistently used as colonial tools and spaces throughout settler colonial history to naturalise land colonisation and to end any historical, epistemological, philosophical, moral and political attachment or claim to the land. However, growing up in a 'Druze town' doesn't necessarily mean growing up in a 'Druze house', and attending a 'Druze school' certainly does not mean graduating as a 'Druze Soldier'.

This chapter analysed the way in which participants would experience and resist the cognitive war waged at them and how they encounter the settler coloniser's "creation story" about the self and the other; they are defeated and [my emphasis] 'Israel' is undefeatable. I focused on what influenced this return and how this influence reveals the significance of the larger Arab and Muslim belonging to this return and how this belonging is an infinite source of resistance and hope. This belonging was a resistive tool and medium that provided research participants with the strength to refuse and challenge the settler colonial story about the self and the other.

I identified resistive practices that 'Israel' cannot defeat and showed how the shared language, history and culture represented significant sources for research participants to refute and resist the settler colonisers' creation story about the self and the other. For instance, Sultan Basha Al Atrash (1891-1982), a political, intellectual and revolutionist Arab figure, words and stories presented an important inspiration for research participants' journey to return to the self. As I showed, research participants' narratives and the refusers' campaign were premised on highlighting the resistive history of the Al-Muwahhidun in Palestine. Those resistive stories are narrated visualised and discussed to refute the settler colonial story, which cast Al-Muwahhidun into the role of collaborators.

## Chapter Eight. Seeing through Ahl Al-Ard eyes: Settler colonialism in Palestine



Figure 52. The assassination of Jean Baptiste Kleber by Sulieman Al Halabi.

On 14 June 1800, Suleiman Al-Halabi - an Arab Syrian theology student- assassinated Jean Baptiste Kleber - General of French Army-. The militant French court verdict was to burn his right hand (the one used to kill Kleber) then impale him to death. Halabi's remains were taken later to France for an anthropological exhibition in Musee de l'Homme (Museum of Man), where his skull is displayed; "Criminal" is written in French.

### Introduction

"Stories matter. Many stories matter. Stories have been used to dispossess and to malign, but stories can also be used to empower and to humanize. Stories can break the dignity of a people, but stories can also repair that broken dignity. When we reject the single story, when we realize that there is never a single story about any place, we regain a kind of paradise. The danger of a single story". Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie (2009)

In this thesis, I suggested that there is a different story of life in Palestine other than the elimination narrative that is predominantly featured in settler colonialism scholarship. Because stories matter, I sought to achieve this by seeing resistance rather than elimination as my main analytical focus. Thus, I conducted a multi-sited ethnography of hope, and followed the 'spirit of resistance' as embodied in sites, moments and narratives in everyday life in Palestine. I collected stories of resistance from Jerusalem, the Gaza Strip and Haifa, and analysed them in spatial, temporal and consciousness dimensions, respectively, to reveal the rhizomatic character of everyday life resistance in Palestine, and to tell and expose the existence of counter stories in Palestine (Deleuze & Guattari, 1988; D. E. Smith, 1987; L. T. Smith, 1999). My research adopted the Latin American school of



modernity/decoloniality and standpoint epistemology in feminist scholarship. That allowed me to appreciate different sources of knowledge and ways of seeing the world, which gave support to my main argument (Harding, 1989, 1992; Harding & Norberg, 2005; Quijano, 2000; Santos, 2015). My inquiry began with raising questions related to the relevance and potential risks and limitations of the recent 'settler colonial turn', which is influenced mainly by Patrick Wolfe and Lorenzo Veracini and largely based on the study of frontier development in 'Australia'. I critically discussed and analysed the distorted and partial images of Palestine and Palestinians currently upheld in the Eurocentric mirror of settler colonialism scholarship. I argued that settler colonialism scholarship study of Palestine is decontextual as well as ahistorical. I also highlighted the importance of developing an alternative understanding of settler colonialism that centred on Ahl Al-Ard's knowledge, perceptions and experiences of their realities, past, present and future. Currently, settler colonialism scholarship is mainly engaging with 'Israel' and its concerns and claims about itself. As I argued in chapter two, the result of this one-sided engagement leads to a misreading of both 'Israel' and Palestine. This literature dehumanizes both settler colonisers and Ahl Al-Ard, while unjustifiably reducing Ahl Al-Ard into powerless victims and the subjects of elimination. It also overlooks the fact that settler colonisers are people, just like everyone else; they can stay or leave, conquer or be conquered, and in settler colonialism it can be "at the hands of the settlers" (Wolfe, 2007b, p.315) as well as at the hands of the Ahl Al-Ard.

I have argued that the main problem with this literature is that it has no hope for decolonisation and worse still, this literature presumes the case of Palestine as already hopeless. This is problematic because it forecloses any debates or discussions about alternative (and different) perceptions and the imagined future of settler colonialism in Palestine by scholars who adopt 'the logic of elimination' framework in the study of Palestine. Upholding the settler colonisers' narrative (only) and overlooking the active and on-going resistance on the ground by the recent 'settler colonial turn' should be viewed as presumptuous, "colonial ignorance" and "racist epistemology" practice as I showed in Chapter Two (James & Michelle D., 1997; Vimalassery et al., 2016). 135 years after the start of the settler colonial project in Palestine, and in spite of the harsh realities of everyday life in Palestine, resistance to this project continues to be loud, alive and rhizomatic in the space time and mind. Resistance, as I showed in Chapter Three, can be violent and nonviolent, visible and invisible, in the face or behind the back of the settler colonisers, inside and outside the spaces of domination, and it has no beginning or end (Deleuze & Guattari, 1988). In this concluding chapter, I would like to return to Santos's three principles for epistemological justice introduced in Chapter One: "[F]irst, the understanding of the world by

far exceeds the Western understanding of the world. Second, there is no global justice without global cognitive justice. Third, the emancipatory transformations in the world may follow grammars and scripts other than those developed by Western-centric critical theory, and such diversity should be valorized" (Santos, 2015, p.viii). Furthermore, I wish to remind us of Quijano's call – in the introduction to Chapter Two- "to free ourselves from the Eurocentric mirror where our image is always, necessarily, distorted. It is time, finally, to cease being what we are not" (Quijano, 2000, p.556). My intention in this thesis was to "free ourselves from the Eurocentric mirror" and call for not accepting the image of Palestine and Palestinians portrayed and typecast in the settler colonial studies and to cease being what we are not, i.e. defeated. In light of Santos' three principles and Quijano's call, I present in the following sections my main arguments and findings of this thesis, focusing on everyday resistance in Palestine, and the implications for future debates on everyday resistance and settler colonialism, Palestine Studies, and knowledge and decolonisation.

### **8.1 The problem of the single story of elimination: Research argument and focus**

In this thesis, I questioned the relevance of the recent settler colonial turn and then critically examined the foundational assumptions of settler colonialism scholarship. I argued that there is an empirical gap between what is being discussed and debated about settler colonialism in the literature and what is happening on the ground in everyday life in Palestine. To bridge this gap, I approached my research subject from decolonial and standpoint perspectives, and built on underutilised literature to ask new questions and recognise different sources of knowledge in reading and analysing the case of settler colonialism in Palestine. In Chapter Two, I presented how this literature approaches the study of Palestine with an exclusive logic of elimination and accepts as a fait accompli the impossibility of decolonisation. In Chapter Two, I showed that this literature primarily focuses on the questions related to how and where Palestinians are being eliminated, but by doing so overlooks the Ahl Al-Ard resistance and the counter narrative of settler colonialism on the ground. Furthermore, settler colonialism scholarship overlooks the ruptures and contradictions of the settler colonial project itself in the case of Palestine. I argued that settler colonialism scholarship's study of Palestine has analytical and methodological limitations that have resulted in misreading not only Palestine, but also the case of settler colonialism in Palestine. 'Israel' is indeed a settler colonial project, employing similar vocabulary (race and emptiness), and yet by comparing it with the experiences in 'Australia' and drawing analogies from it, three centuries of temporal difference between the old ('Australia' and the 'USA') and the new settler colonies ('Israel') are disregarded, the critical contextual distinctions between the two cases are overlooked.



Contextually, I defined three interrelated areas that are overlooked by settler colonialism scholarship. First, this literature discounts the significance of the “war of cradles” in the case of Palestine (Courbage 2013). Unlike most of the other settler colonial projects in particular of the new world, the settler colonial project in Palestine has failed to reduce the Palestinians in historical Palestine into an unthreatening minority. In the case of Palestine as I analysed in Chapter Five by focusing on the city of Jerusalem, Palestinians are ‘othered’ as a ‘demographic bomb’. Demographic studies show that by 2020, Palestinians will outnumber the settler colonisers in the land of Palestine and by 2050 the proportion will be 46 per cent settler colonisers and 54 per cent Ahl Al-Ard . These are not mere figures, demography is an important site of contestation between the settler colonisers and land inhabitants; as Veracini writes in his theorisation of settler colonialism the settlers numerical domination is essential since settler colonialism is “premised on demography” (Veracini, 2010a, p.5).

Second, this literature not only overlooks resistance in Palestine; it judges the violent resistance useless and immoral and disregards the cultural importance and the ‘poetics of violent resistance’ in Palestine (Whitehead, 2004; Whitehead & Abufarha, 2008). Palestinians’ violent resistance has been present since 1882. Currently, Palestinians’ violent resistance presents a strategic threat, which forced over five million settlers to run to shelter in the 2014 war, for instance, and affects the patterns of the settlers’ everyday life (Ochs, 2011; Rubin, 2011). By overlooking or judging violent resistance in Palestine morally or rationally, this literature has missed the role of the violent resistance in Palestine historically in enhancing and feeding into a national culture of resistance.

Third, settler colonialism scholarship has missed the importance of the larger Arab and Muslim context for Palestine and the cross-solidarity for the Palestinian cause. The cultural, social and religious belonging serves as an infinite source of hope and resistance. For instance, as I showed in Chapters Five, the religious practices of Friday prayers in Jerusalem, signified a challenge to the settler colonial plans to Judaize Jerusalem. Also, as I analysed in Chapter Six, having faith and believing that ‘only Allah decides when we die’, were important elements allowing people to survive the 2014 Gaza war. In the case of Palestine, Palestinians are part of a larger people in the ‘Arab-hood’, where we share the language, culture, religion, and history. I particularly highlighted the importance of this belonging in my analyses of the case of everyday resistance among Al-Muwahhidun in Chapter Seven. I showed how belonging to a larger culture, history and community served as a critical site for resistance and hope for research participants in their journey to return to the self.

In Chapter Three, I presented my alternative understanding of the settler colonial situation in Palestine and established the context in Palestine as a struggle for liberation rather than endless elimination. I located the Zionist settler colonial project in Palestine within the larger historical colonial encounters between the European colonisers and the Arab World. I pointed out that settler colonialism in Palestine is neither a discovery (as Australia) nor a new coming (central Africa) for the settler colonisers. The chapter built on existing literature to understand the settler colonialism project in Palestine as a return of old colonisers in a new form and it serves as a functional settler colonial project that is well aligned with the interests of the Western empires (first Great Britain, then the USA). Also in Chapter Three, I demonstrated the topographies of the settler colonial project in Palestine, which build on European settler colonial vocabulary, racism, violence and land expansion.

With this understanding of the settler colonial situation in Palestine, I employed a decolonial research approach and standpoint epistemology to examine everyday resistance in Palestine. My methodological and epistemological choices allowed me to recognise and study the significance of Ahl Al-Ard's ways of seeing and knowing their realities and attempted to account for how and why such perceptions developed. I argued in Chapter Four that decolonial and hope-centred methodological choice inspired and allowed me to challenge and take the debate beyond what is written in settler colonialism scholarship, but more importantly it led me to understand that the world is in a state of constant change and therefore scholars also need to constantly reassess the established beliefs and check underlying assumptions. Personally, as a scholar/activist, this research allowed me to better understand myself and my relations with my research subjects: i.e. the sites I observed, the moments I lived and the stories I heard and witnessed, as well as the self-realization of my role in studying my own people and my (settler colonised) home. Throughout the doctoral research process, I became more of a writer of the "collective diary" of the Palestinian people, rather than an 'objective' researcher representing them (Al Halabi, 2013).

## **8.2 Everyday resistance in Palestine: Discussion and findings**

As outlined in Chapters Three and Four, the focus of my research was on everyday resistance in Palestine. I collected ethnographic data of everyday resistance and analysed this data in spatial, temporal and conscious dimensions to reveal the rhizomatic character of resistance in the midst of the settler colonialism elimination narrative. This focus, therefore, addresses the critical gap in the literature by examining through resistance and hope, rather than seeing only through the elimination paradigm. Most importantly, the overall aim was to raise the potential political and ethical implications of not exposing and omitting these stories from settler colonialism discussions on Palestine. I argued in Chapters Three and Four, that the completion of the current form of Zionist settler colonial project in Palestine requires

killing the “slightest hope” of freedom. Controlling the land as I explained in Chapter Two, entails not only the control of the actual space, but also the time (in relation to the land) and “the minds” of the land inhabitants. The settler colonial project in Palestine as I analysed in Chapter Three is premised upon making Ahl Al-Ard accept two myths as truth; Palestinians are defeated (land is not theirs anymore) and ‘Israel’ is undefeatable (impossible to resist and land is theirs). The spatial, temporal and conscious are not separable, the ‘spatialized mythologies’ and the construction of temporal confusion and uncertainty for Ahl Al-Ard aim to achieve the ultimate goal of making Ahl Al-Ard lose hope and believe that the land is not theirs anymore and it will never be returned back. The ultimate goal of settler colonialism is to defeat the land’s inhabitants at the personal level and put an end to any historical, epistemological, philosophical, moral and political attachment or claim to the land. This goal synchronises spatial and temporal colonisation and ends settler colonialism; no one can see it (neither settler nor Ahl Al-Ard), and everyone believes in the same “creation story” (Donald 2009, Tuck and Gaztambide-Fernández 2013).

The everyday violence and oppression did not go unchallenged; rather, they engendered robust resistance. This is historically evident in the large scale revolutions or Intifada that we have had at 10 to 15 year intervals and the countless number of everyday confrontations that happen between Ahl Al-Ard and the settler colonisers (Chapter Three). Such rich history also means that every day in Palestine is also a memorial of a massacre or an act of resistance somewhere, at some time. What is clear is that there is no one single day in Palestine without a violent and nonviolent confrontation between Ahl Al-Ard and the settler frontiers. While the degree and scale of these confrontations may vary, it is nevertheless in a continuous occurrence. However, as I discussed in Chapter Three, resistance in Palestine is not understood as a reaction to the colonial act, resistance in everyday life in Palestine is rhizomatic, it has no beginning and no end (Deleuze & Guattari, 1988)

In chapters, Five, Six and Seven, I examined the various forms of everyday resistance in Palestine. Particularly, I focused on the Ahl Al-Ard’s relationship with their land and their hope for a different future as critical sites of resistance, both of which are crucial elements for understanding their perception of realities of living under settler colonialism. What is more, their perspectives provided me with an important source of knowledge and hope that would allow us to articulate a different understanding of settler colonialism in Palestine (Harding 1989, 1992). I analysed the individual and collective, as well as violent and nonviolent resistance. My intention was not to romanticise or theorise everyday resistance in Palestine, but to examine the presence of hope and how Ahl Al-Ard’s relationship with their land kept fuelling and sustaining the “spirit of resistance” alive, and thus, raising the possibility for alternative conceptualisation of settler colonialism as seen through the Ahl Al-Ard’s eyes.

Chapters Five, Six and Seven, which constituted the ethnographic section of the thesis, addressed everyday resistance in Jerusalem, the Gaza Strip, and Haifa. My findings revealed the rhizomatic character of everyday resistance that are manifested in the space, time and mind continuum (Deleuze and Guattari 1988). Most importantly, the empirical evidence gathered in this thesis demonstrated that the Palestine question is full of hope for a different future than that currently imagined and prescribed by settler colonialism's scholars.

### 8.2.1 Existence and beyond

By looking at the everyday life of the Ahl Al-Ard in the fortified and racially constructed city of Jerusalem in Chapter Five, I drew on Certeau's (1984) understanding of day to day spatial practices as acts of resistance, and Routledge's (1997) concept of 'spatiality of resistance' to examine the Ahl Al-Ard's individual and collective experiences and strategies of everyday resistance. I showed that the ongoing "war of cradles" in Jerusalem is full of tension and the settler colonial project and the city plans aim to Judaize both the demography and geography, with the intention to reduce Palestinians into a manageable unthreatening minority (i.e. below 30 per cent of the city's total population). The implications of such context and plans make violence an integral component of everyday life in Jerusalem. Similar to other settler colonial contexts, the mere existence of Palestinians in Jerusalem is an act of resistance, because Palestinian Jerusalemites literally and physically engage in thousands of legal and procedural battles and confront the colonial political agenda the aim of which is to carve the Palestinians out of the city. Moreover, I looked beyond the physical confrontations in the fortified city of Jerusalem and investigated how the individual and collective gatherings and spatial practices overcame the imposed confinements and help transform the city into myriad dynamic sites of resistance.

Following the imperatives of decolonial and standpoint theories, the analysis presented here shifts the analytical framework of life in Jerusalem from focusing on spaces of death as studied by the majority of settler colonialism scholarship, into understanding daily spatial practices of Ahl Al-Ard in Jerusalem as sites of political and cultural resistance, foregrounding the relationship between space and resistance at the level of everyday life. In doing so, active existence and spatialities of resistance emerge as key features that give people hope and upset the flow of the settler colonial project in Jerusalem. By considering the individual and collective spatial practices of Ahl Al-Ard in the city, we can gain insights into how these practices in Jerusalem affected different relationships to the space, how these supported the practice of resistance, and how they transformed the city into myriad sites of resistance. In doing so, we can better understand the rhizomatic character of

resistance, which takes diverse forms and moves through different dimensions, and how “places and resistance are mutually constitutive of one another” (Routledge, 1997). 70

Also I analysed Ahl Al-Ard religious practices such as Friday prayers and many of its rituals and practices performed in Jerusalem, such as individuals and groups walking to the Al-Aqsa mosque, organised group prayers on the streets next to road blocks and the settlers’ army, and megaphoning call to prayers. Among other social and political gatherings, and individual mundane movements across the land (walking in the city, shopping, etc.), these everyday practices present embodiments of the ‘spirit of resistance’ and create ‘spatialities of resistance’. These contest the violent and racist construction of the space in the city, shape the Ahl Al-Ard relation with their land and, most importantly, rupture the flow of the settler colonisers’ control of the space. Such practices not only challenge the spatialized mythologies of settler colonialism, but also hold out against the colonisation of Ahl Al-Ard time (i.e. in relation to the land). Thus, I would argue that Ahl Al-Ard Individual and collective movement and gatherings in Palestine are also a constant interruption of the settler colonisers’ attempts to reform Ahl Al-Ard time.

I also showed how the active existence and ‘spatialities of resistance’ emerged as key features that upset and block the flow of the settler colonial project in Jerusalem. I showed how day-to-day spatial practices of research participants in the city shaped and enforced their relation with the land and made (and gave higher) sense of their realities. In essence, I argued that the everyday spatial practices, and the daily encounter with the settler colonial project – whether it was direct or indirect, visible or invisible, violent or nonviolent, individual or collective – shaped the research participants’ understanding of their life under settler colonisation in Jerusalem and influenced their relation with the land. As a whole, these mundane movements and encounters with the settler colonial project coalesced into and sharpened the national awareness and sense of solidarity amongst the Ahl Al-Ard, which kept the spirit of resistance alive. Moreover, Chapter Five highlighted the importance of Ahl Al-Ard’s collective gatherings whether it was political, social, cultural or religious. Such gatherings create what Routledge calls “spatialities of resistance” where Ahl Al-Ard are temporarily “located at the centre of power, where certain power relations are confronted, while others are (re)inscribed” (1997: p.85). I argued that they give spaces different meaning and values, which I interpreted as a (strong) presence of hope. The importance of those sites of resistance comes from the traces they leave. Every incidence of resistance, as Routledge showed, regardless of its outcome, “leaves a trace in memory of those who lived and witnessed the drama of collective action” (1997: P85). By considering the individual and collective movements and practices of Ahl Al-Ard in the city, we gained insights on how everyday resistance in Jerusalem effected different relationships to the space and place

making, and how these relationships further enabled the practice of resistance, and how they reciprocally transformed the character of particular places. Consequently, we were able to better understand the rhizomatic characteristics of resistance, which took on diverse forms of and moved through different dimensions.

### 8.2.2 Survival and beyond

In Chapter Six, I examined the temporal dimension of the Palestinian resistance during the 51 days war in Gaza in 2014. Conceptually, I drew on Perkins's (2001) link between the reform of time as a colonial tool and the "faith in the future", and Whitehead's (2004) understanding of the poetics of violence. Thus, I shifted the analytical point-of-view from the trauma and victimhood lens that is often used to study the war on Gaza and instead, focused on how people managed and lived through the war "not [as] some kind of an ascent into the transcendent but a descent into everyday life" (Das 2007p.15).

I argued in Chapter Six that 'forgetting about the war' and learning and knowing more about it are essential adaptations and resistance tactics that the Gazans used to carry on and live an 'ordinary life' during the war. For the people who live in a context of prolonged conflict and violence, they learn and develop resilient skills to redefine and recreate an ordinary life. For instance, all the research participants that I talked to after the war had a sense of 'we made it [again] this time', 'we got used to it', and 'we will die only when Allah decides, and not 'Israel''. I also explained how the long history of recurring wars, Intifadas and revolutions blurred the lines between the times of war and peace in Palestine. In other words, violence becomes a part of the everyday and "expands to include the normal and the critical, the everyday and the event" (Das 2013p.800). All of the research participants commented on several occasions during and after the war that 'this [war] is neither the first nor the last, and the next war is just a matter of time'. I also looked beyond the immediate survival tactics and found how Ahl Al-Ard observed and learned about the drones in their sky: clearly distinguishing the different military and surveillance types, functions and capacity. I argued that this knowledge, the knowledge about the 'other', is a form of resistance.

Furthermore, I showed in Chapter Six how the violent resistance during the war reinforced the culture of resistance more broadly. The 2014 war was tough and heart breaking on all accounts be it physically, emotionally, and mentally for the research participants. While they expressed their anger and frustration about the unceasing massacres and destruction that became their daily routine, they never stopped praying and hoped for the end of the war. Moreover, many of them, even those who were directly under fire and affected by the heavy bombing at the time of the interview, expressed strong sentiments for and belief in the resistance and the need to face the challenge head-on and not give up. This attitude was

expressed both in dealing with the personal tragedy and in reactions to the Palestinian Resistance Groups' counteractions on the ground. During the war, people not only talked about the horror of casualties and the mass destruction, but also they often referred to Abu Obieda, 'Zero distance' and the 'behind the enemy line' resistance actions. They sang the popular song 'Udrub Tel Abib' and shared videos of Palestinian rockets in the sky of Tel Aviv and Haifa with the sounds of sirens in the background, bringing them moments of relief and pride. It is not my intention here to evaluate or celebrate the Palestinians' violent resistance during the war. Rather, the purpose is to reveal the cultural significance of this type of resistance. By analysing the generative cultural medium and expressions such as narratives, texts and images of violent resistance on the ground during the 2014 war, I demonstrated how armed resistance contributed to a greater awareness of resistance at the national level and enhanced people's hope for liberation (Whitehead 2004).

The Ahl Al-Ard's resistance in the Gaza Strip reciprocates a 'balance of fear' to the settler colonisers. The significance of the resistance in Gaza goes beyond the physical walls and military confinements and upholds a greater "psychological value" that all Palestinians in struggle can take refuge and relate to. In effect, the sense of security of millions of settlers was shattered by the locally manufactured rockets; regardless of the casualties those rockets might cause (Johannsen 2011). Violent resistance on the ground is often shunned and misunderstood, because it is "conceived in cultural forms related to local knowledge and historical memory that are poorly understood by Western researchers and reporters" (Whitehead and Abufarha 2008 p.395). The cultural and national representations of violent resistance during the war gave rise to deeper meanings from the tragic experiences and aspired the Ahl Al-Ard to greater values of hope and liberation. Moreover, the struggle and violent resistance in the Gaza Strip provided the people with a shared belief in resistance at the broadest level. Indeed, Gaza may be under military confinement from the sky, to land, and to water, but beyond the physical borders, the resistance (and the fighting) continues literally both above and under the ground, in private and public spaces, in violent and nonviolent forms, and behind the backs and face-to-face of the settler colonisers. These acts of resistance represent rich cultural themes that transcend boundaries, and renew, reunite and reassert the Palestinian rootedness, peoplehood and the sense of independence. Therefore, Ahl Al-Ard can find security (i.e. inner peace) in insecurity and also, it mimetically deflects the settler colonialist violence, and in return, asserts their hope for freedom and liberation. In this way, Chapter Six sought to expand the academic understanding of ordinary life under conditions of war and highlighted the cultural significance of violent resistance in Palestine.

### 8.2.3 Return to the self and beyond

Finally, by looking at the case of Al-Muwahhidun in Haifa, Chapter Seven examined Ahl Al-Ard resistance in its conscious dimension. I extended my exploration of everyday resistance in Palestine and moved on to examine how Ahl Al-Ard resist and refute the settler coloniser's "creation story" about the self and the other. As I showed, the settler colonial project plan for Al-Muwahhidun in Palestine is to uproot them of their Palestinian and Arab belonging by constructing a new 'Druze' identity, history, belonging, past, present and future, through Israelization and Druzisation policies including the mandatory army services imposed on Al-Muwahhidun. It was not my intention to historicise the colonial tools targeting Al-Muwahhidun in Palestine nor present a generalised account of their everyday resistance, rather my aim was to highlight the significance and importance of the larger Arab belonging as a source and means of resistance of the "cognitive war" launched at Ahl Al-Ard as it appeared in research participants' narratives and stories of returning to the self. In Chapter Seven, I identified resistive practices that 'Israel' cannot defeat and showed how the shared language, history and culture, represented significance sources for research participants to refute and resist the settler colonisers' creation story about the self and the other. For instance, the words and stories of Sultan Basha Al Atrash (1891-1982-date) - political, intellectual and revolutionist Arab figure - presented an important inspiration for research participants' journey to return to the self. As I showed, research participants' narratives and the refusers' campaign were premised on highlighting the resistive history of the Al-Muwahhidun in Palestine. Those resistive stories, are narrated, visualised and discussed to refute the settler colonial story which cast Al-Muwahhidun into the collaborators role.

The stories of Chapter Seven, are enduring examples of Ahl Al-Ard resistance to these two myths. Asked about his return to the self, Yamin told me that "at the personal level, I feel that I defeated Israel, since 1956 and even before, Israel spent millions and millions of Shekels to make me believe that I am Israeli Druze, and it failed. I am an Arab Palestinian with an Arabic first and last names, I am the grandson of Sultan Basha Al Atrash". His statement is an example of how the larger Arab sense of belonging enables Yamin and others to fight the cognitive war waged at them by 'Israel' and provides them with the tools and medium to not only challenge the settler colonial creation story but to refute it too. This also was evident in the publications of the campaigns and efforts of Al-Muwahhidun in resisting obligatory army service. I showed in Chapter Seven, that such publications returned to the resistive history and narratives of Al-Muwahhidun as an integral part not only of the Arab World, but also as part of the Arab world resistance to colonialism. In sum, what emerged from the fieldwork is a rich Palestinian narrative (both individual and groups) arising from different events and in places where the meaning of resistance against the colonisation is revealed in the temporal,



spatial and mind dimensions. These ethnographic data, as I argued, call for an analytical and political readiness to challenge the assumptions of settler colonialism. Therefore, by challenging these assumptions, I am also inviting other researchers to engage in decolonising research and theorisation of settler colonialism in Palestine by focusing on resistance and hope rather than elimination and despair.

### **8.3 Implications for future debates on knowledge decolonisation and settler colonialism in Palestine**

This thesis aims to contribute to three bodies of scholarship: everyday resistance and settler colonialism, Palestine studies, and knowledge decolonisation.

#### **Everyday Resistance and settler colonialism in Palestine**

As suggested in Chapters, Five, Six and Seven, everyday resistance is rhizomatic in the space, time and mind. This thesis has therefore contributed to the literature by demonstrating that resistance in Palestine happens within and outside domination spaces, challenges the flow of the settler colonial project in Palestine and presents different stories and narratives of the everyday in Palestine.

This thesis also aims to contribute to critical accounts of the “eliminationist paradigm” employed in the study of Palestine and other places. I showed in this thesis that this scholarship, does not only have analytical and mythological limitations in reading Palestine, it also has limitations in reading the historical and contextual differences of the settler colonial project in Palestine in comparison with older settler colonial projects. The historical and contextual perspectives of understanding the settler colonial situation in Palestine applied in this thesis challenges the recent ahistorical and decontextual literature on settler colonialism in Palestine.

#### **Palestine Studies and Sumud literature**

It contributes to the study of Palestine by using innovative approaches to understanding everyday life in Palestine. The positioning of ‘Israel’ as a return of an old/new settler colonisers can help in articulating a liberation research agenda by drawing on comparative studies with older settler colonial project in the Arab World such as the crusaders in the middle ages and French colonialism in Algeria. As Samir Amin argued, understanding the Zionist-Arab struggle, should be seen as part of the larger context and history of the conflict between the Arab World and Imperialism (Samir Amin & Kenz, 2005). This allows us to develop different understanding of settler of settler colonialism in Palestine based on more relevant history and context. Such understanding would allow us to expand our understanding of the settler colonial case in Palestine by drawing comparative studies

between the settler colonial projects in Palestine on the one hand and other cases such as French settler colonialism in Algeria, Spanish settler colonialism in Ceuta and Melilla, or British settler colonialism in Zimbabwe and Ireland.

This would expand our horizons and would help us to have a better understanding of the settler colonial presence in Palestine, which could feed into an articulation of a liberation agenda that relies on more relevant history and context.

The choice of a multisided ethnography of hope challenges the eliminationist historiography with respect to what has been generally assumed to be a hopeless case. It shows that there are different perceptions on different futures of Palestine premised on the belief that the only eternal is Allah and nothing stays as it is as I analysed in Chapters, Five, Six and Seven. Thus this contributes to the understanding of settler colonialism in Palestine as seen through Ahl Al-Ard eyes. Although my own background became 'useful' and part of the process of understanding the whole question of everyday resistance in Palestine, it also presented a number of challenges, which I have reflected upon at various points in this thesis. Even though I have tried to overcome and reflect on the various biases and ethical dilemmas posed by my own ethnic and socioeconomic identity, this thesis is inevitably a product of these same experiences, thoughts and dilemmas. It has been written from the perspective of a Palestinian woman from Jerusalem. In this sense, this thesis could be seen as an ethnography of everyday resistance and therefore as a contribution to the understanding of how people resist settler colonialism on a daily basis.

### **Knowledge decolonisation**

This thesis also contributes to knowledge decolonisation scholarship and contributes to the efforts for epistemological justice. In particular this thesis would contribute to the body of literature that aims to develop a land centred framework premised on alternative understandings for decolonisation "in relation to imagining alternative modes of being and relating, both to one another and to the land, beyond the settler state" (ref). Consistent with decolonial approach and standpoint epistemology in feminist scholarship, this thesis acknowledged the significance of Ahl Al-Ard ways of seeing and knowing their realities and attempts to account for how and why such perceptions may have developed. This study contributes to decolonising knowledge by bringing different questions and employing different lenses and tools into the discussion of settler colonialism in Palestine. Doing so would provide us with a different perception of settler colonialism that may theoretically and politically be more relevant than the current reading of settler colonial scholarship. In doing so, I aim to encounter the settler colonialism scholarship elimination narrative, as well as, I aim to contribute to decolonial knowledge scholarship by bringing a different understanding

of settler colonialism as seen through Ahl Al-Ard eyes to the discussion (Arvin, Tuck, & Morrill, 2013; Cornthassel, 2012; Eric Ritskes, 2017, p.2; Shihade, 2017; Sium & Ritskes, 2013; Tuck & Yang, 2012; Watts, 2013).

## Appendixes

### Appendix 1. List of formal and informal interviews

Interviewee	
1	Baha Al Bukhari, cartoonist.
2	Muhammed Sabaneh, cartoonist.
3	Wisam Rafidi, sociologists and activists
4	Sharif Kananneh, anthropologists.
5	Abdul Rahim Al Shaikh, academic
6	Farmers: one man and one woman from Al Walajeh, and two men from Qalqilia.
7	University students (two women, one man) from Ramallah and Nablus.
8	Youth activists from Hebron, Toulkarem and Bethlehem (one man, two women).

### Appendix 2. List of fieldwork events and activities

Chapter	Event/Activity	Location	Date	Description
3	Discussion on Zionist colonisation and olive farming in Palestine	Ramallah	4 Jan 2014	Participated with my research participants Organised by Suleiman Al Halabi
saa	Anthropology and colonisation	Ramallah	12 Jan 2014	Organised by Suleiman Al Halabi
	Psychoanalysis and the Zionist project in Palestine	Old city of Jerusalem	1 Feb 2014	Participated with my research participants Organised by Suleiman Al Halabi
	Screening of "Women beyond borders": Kefah Afifi, a Palestinian freedom fighter in Lebanon	Shekh Jarah, Jerusalem	6 Feb 2014	Watched and discussed with my research participants
	Farming day	Al Walajeh, Bethlehem	7 Feb 2014	Volunteered and participated with my research participants

	Public event: "Air wars in modern colonial wars"	Ramallah		15 Mar 2014	Observation and discussion with attendees
	Land Day Tour	Sakhnin, Arrabeh, Deir Hanna (towns)		26 Mar 2014	A guided village tour Walked and discussed with my research participants
	A one-day workshop: "Palestine and other liberation examples"	Nablus		29 Mar 2014	Discussion on Moroccan and Algerian colonial experiences Organised by Nadi Zedni
	Book review presentation and discussion on "The Strategy of Colonisation and Liberation" by Gamal Hamdan	Old city of Jerusalem		April 2014	I presented and led the discussion with the audience
4	Photo Exhibition: "Palestine: This is my story"	The Hebrew University of Jerusalem		24 Feb 2014	Discussed with my research participants Organised by Wattan Group
5	Anger day: "With your stone 'kick out' the settlers"	Various locations in Jerusalem		30 Sep 2013	Organised by Shabab Al Intifada
saa	Colonial education in Jerusalem: Zionist curriculum at Jerusalem schools	Old city of Jerusalem.		27 Oct 2013	Organised by Nadi Zedni
	"Room Number Four": An art exhibition on prisons	Jerusalem		October 2013	Observed and shared thoughts with attendees
	Day of Rage: Stop Prawer Plan	Different locations, Jerusalem & Naqab		Nov–Dec 2013	Organised by Stop Prawer Plan
	Colonising the mind: Education in Jerusalem	Old city of Jerusalem		28 Dec 2013	Participated with my research participants Organised by Nadi Zedni
	Support for the mothers of Shahid	Bab Al-Amoud, Jerusalem		11 Mar 2014	Participated with my research participants
	Reading chain surrounding the old city of Jerusalem from Bab al-Khalil (Jaffa Gate) to Bab al-Asbat (Lions' Gate)	Old city of Jerusalem		March 2014	saa Organised by Shabab al-Balad
	Land Day Demonstration	Jerusalem		28 Mar 2014	Participated with my research participants
	The Battles of 1948 Tour in	Al Qastal, Abu		April	saa

	Jerusalem	Goush, Sarees & Bab Al Wad, Jerusalem	2014	
	The Battles of 1948 Tour in Jerusalem	Al Qatamoun, Jerusalem	Feb 2014	saa
	Anger day: Support for the prisoners	Haifa	27 June 2014	saa
	A Palestinian teenager Mohammed Abu Khdair's Funeral	Jerusalem	July 2014	saa
	Nakba Day rally and demonstration	Jerusalem	15 May 2014	saa
	Naksa Day rally and demonstration	Bab Al-Amoud, Jerusalem	5 June 2014	saa
	Protest against 'Jerusalem unification day'	Bab Al-Amoud, Jerusalem	28 May 2014	saa
6	A public event: "Palestinian resistance in Gaza"	Ramallah	August 2014	
7	Talk and discussion with Wisam Rafidi: A personal resistant experience	Ramallah	30 Dec 2013	Participated with my research participants Organised by Suleiman Al Halabi Joined and participated with my research participants
saa	Protest against army service	Next to the Prison Number 6, Haifa	4 Jan 2014	Organised by Sahel Ma Bestahel Participated with my research participants Walked with my research participants
	Book review and discussion: "Torture and cognitive imperialism in Palestine"	Ramallah	5 Jan 2014	Organised by Baladna and Wattan group Participated with my research participants
	"We are returning to Haifa, our land": A guided tour following the route of the Battles of Haifa	Haifa	28 Feb 2014	Participated with my research participants
	Military service refusal announcement event	Nazareth	April 2014	Organised by Baladna and Wattan group Participated with my research participants
	Discussion on military service and education	Ramallah	May 2014	saa
	Samih Al Qasim's funeral	Al Rameh	August 2014	Attended and discussed with my research participants

Note: saa (same as above)

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