

PARC

PALESTINIAN AMERICAN RESEARCH CENTER

PROMOTING PALESTINIAN STUDIES AND SCHOLARLY EXCHANGE ON PALESTINIAN ISSUES

Letter From the Chair

I was very pleased to see some 80 people in attendance at our annual business meeting, held this past November in conjunction with the MESA 2001 meeting in San Francisco. At the PARC meeting, Ann Lesch, our U.S. director, gave an update on PARC's 2001 activities, including the successful transition of PARC's office to Villanova, the establishment of our Palestine office, the dramatic upgrade to our Web presence, and the tremendous support we continue to receive from individual scholars and their institutions.



Philip Mattar

She also provided information about PARC's third annual fellowship competition and encouraged the attendees to apply and spread the word to others about this opportunity to further scholarly activity around the globe.

I introduced Mouin Rabbani, our Palestine director, at the meeting. Mouin briefed the audience on PARC's activities in Palestine, including the establishment of the advisory committee there to assist PARC in building support locally and throughout the region. On the committee are Salah Abd al-Shafi, Suad Amiri, Jamil Hilal, Hiba Husayni, Bashar Masri, Nadim Rouhana, Jacqueline Sfeir, Raji Sourani, and Lisa Taraki, with Dr. Ibrahim Dakkak as chair. The make-up of this committee is sure to benefit our efforts to gain recognition and support in Palestine and beyond. Mouin also addressed the current conditions in Palestine that, while difficult, have not prevented PARC's fellowship recipients from pursuing their research. All of PARC's fellows traveling to Palestine for research have been able to do so, and we will continue to grant fellowship support to scholars for that purpose.

Also at MESA 2001, PARC hosted a well-attended roundtable discussion on contemporary social science research on Palestine with a panel of four scholars including Glenn Robinson, Judith Tucker, Julie Petect, and PARC's Palestine director, Mouin Rabbani. The discussion was chaired by PARC's U.S. director, Ann Lesch. A synopsis of the discussion can be found inside this newsletter.

As you may know, PARC's creation was based on the model of existing centers organized under the Council of American Overseas Research Centers (CAORC). PARC has recently been granted membership in CAORC, which provides guidance and support to the centers under its rubric. CAORC, housed within the Smithsonian Institution, is recognized throughout the world for its support of international scholarly cooperation and exchange. It is funded in part by the U.S. Congress and represents some 500 U.S. universities, colleges, and museums abroad. We believe that our membership in this prestigious

organization of American overseas research centers will enable PARC's continuing growth, make possible an even greater exchange of ideas, and provide opportunities for possible future joint projects with other member centers.

I am particularly pleased to report that, over the past two years, PARC has given approximately \$100,000 to support 15 research fellowships. The scholars we have supported include American, Canadian, Palestinian, and Israeli men and women working in fields as diverse as ethnomusicology, museum studies, hydrology, epidemiology, political science, and anthropology.

We are currently in the process of vetting applications for the third round of fellowships, the results of which we will report in our fall newsletter. The fellowship program continues to grow in the caliber of research it funds, and we hope our members will continue to spread the word about it to eligible scholars. Information about the fellowship program and profiles of all our fellowship recipients can be found on our Web site at www.parccenter.org. We continue to work on making our Web presence a major source of scholarly information on Palestinian studies and welcome your suggestions for improvements.

A major reason PARC is able to provide grant support for research is the generous support that we have received from the Rockefeller and Ford foundations. Each of these foundations has granted PARC an additional \$50,000 for research grants over the next two years.

PARC has also enlisted support for an endowment that will guarantee the organization's on-going stability and eventually generate sufficient monies to support researchers. Thus far, we have raised and invested more than \$22,000 toward the endowment, thanks to generous gifts from Ann Lesch in memory of her mother, Ruth, as well as from Alfred and Dina Khoury of Washington, D.C., and Mona Hajj of Baltimore, Md. We welcome gifts of all amounts toward the endowment and ask that as you renew your membership to PARC you consider an additional gift toward our endowment goals.

PARC has been fortunate to attract solid membership support for its mission. In 2001, we had 110 individual and student members, and 14 institutional members. Your membership contributions enable us to keep our doors open, run our existing programs, and put new programs in place. We ask you to encourage your departments, universities, and businesses to join PARC so that we can grow in ways that give support to scholars interested in furthering research and scholarly exchange on Palestinian studies.

Your on-going support is deeply appreciated, and we hope you will feel free to contact us with any comments or suggestions you may have.

—Philip Mattar, Chair, PARC Steering Committee

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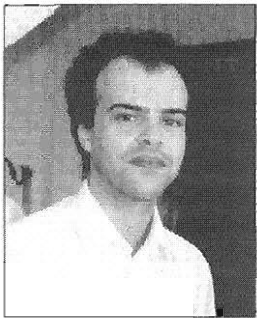
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From the Palestine Office

Interest in Palestinian studies has visibly grown during the past year. In addition to the specific academic interests and various forms of commitment which have continued to draw Palestinian and foreign researchers from a very wide range of disciplines towards the field, major developments in the region and beyond have spurred the quest for knowledge of things Palestinian among both specialists and newcomers.



Mouin Rabbani

The escalating conflict between Israel and the Palestinians, and the numerous issues related to its resolution and the associated development of Palestinian statehood and society, has been the most obvious factor in this regard. At the same time, the renewed focus on the Middle East and Islamic world as a whole in the aftermath of September 11, approaching levels comparable to that in the wake of the 1973 oil crisis, has also been felt in these parts.

For precisely the same reasons, conducting research within Palestine has become an increasingly challenging task. Most foreign governments currently retain permanent travel advisories for those of their citizens seeking to visit Israel and the occupied Palestinian territories. This stated, direct exposure to physical violence can as a rule be avoided by exercising a reasonable degree of care and caution. Indeed, researchers sponsored by PARC and many others have found the various limitations and restrictions on movement imposed by the Israeli authorities—both between and within the various territories concerned—to be a much more cumbersome obstacle, and found it necessary to compensate for this by maintaining a sufficient margin of flexibility in planning research agendas. Whereas in years past a researcher based in Jerusalem with a tangential interest in Gaza or Jenin would visit the latter only towards the conclusion of their enterprise, the same researcher would today be advised to conduct such visits at the first available opportunity lest circumstances during the last week of their stay prevent them from doing so altogether. It is a perhaps significant compensation that compared to many other countries in the region, there are for all intents and purposes no restrictions imposed upon academic researchers by the Palestinian Authority; no prior permissions or clearances are required by Palestinian officialdom, and the decision on whether or not to cooperate with visiting scholars rests with the Palestinian counterpart alone. Outright refusals to do so or other forms of official obstruction where genuine scholarship is at issue are virtually unheard of.

Thus, although PARC continues to advise researchers intending to visit Palestine that they should be aware of the potential risks and difficulties involved and make their decisions accordingly, PARC fellows of various nationalities have elected to continue visiting the region and without exception left it with scholarly satisfaction. It must also be noted that the difficulties encountered by foreign researchers are an unattainable luxury for their Palestinian colleagues; the unprecedentedly severe application of Israel's pass laws, augmented by many dozens of military checkpoints throughout the West Bank and Gaza Strip restricting movement within these territories, has amounted to virtual town arrest for the entire Palestinian civilian population. Under such circumstances, it attests to the commitment and determination of Palestinian researchers that any scholarship is being produced at all.

In the meantime, PARC continues to expand its presence in the field. Most notably, the organisation has established an Advisory Board in Palestine consisting of a number of distinguished academics and practitioners. And as the organisation continues to facilitate the work both of foreign researchers visiting the region and Palestinian academics conducting research abroad, its expanding contacts with the Palestinian academic community have led to larger numbers of local specialists seeking to join the ranks of PARC fellows and furtherance of PARC's mission of promoting Palestinian studies and fostering exchange within the field among those involved.

—Mouin Rabbani, *Palestine Director*

Contemporary Social Science Research on Palestine: A MESA 2001 Roundtable Review*

In an effort to explore current challenges faced by researchers working in Palestine studies, PARC hosted a roundtable discussion entitled "Contemporary Social Science Research on Palestine" at the November 2001 MESA conference. The discussion, chaired by Dr. Ann Lesch, attracted a standing-room only crowd of more than 50 people who heard perspectives from four scholars.

"Our goal in presenting the roundtable was to go beyond past problems and focus on the critical issues scholars currently face in conducting research in Palestine," says Ann Lesch, PARC's U.S. director. "In addition, we hope to encourage scholars to pursue research in Palestine and present them with information to guide them in maximizing opportunities for their research."

Dr. Glenn Robinson from the Naval Postgraduate School presented informal survey results indicating that only a few articles on Palestine had been published in major political science journals over the past five years. In addition, he found that published articles generally fell into three groups: state building, identity (including gender) and political economy. Within these categories Robinson found that most articles related more toward application than theory making. Robinson concluded that, while there is value in theory application, scholars need to be "more self-consciously theoretical, particularly [in] theory building" if they wish to get published in major political science journals.

Dr. Julie Peteet of the University of Louisville reflected on how simultaneous exploration of theory and application may be particularly well suited to areas such as Palestinian women's studies, with its relevance to understanding issues of Palestinian nationalism, society and identity. Peteet's view is that Palestinian women's studies has been traditionally undervalued and neglected despite its relationship to these major themes in social science. While she recognizes that researchers are constrained by the de-valuation of certain disciplines, other issues, including the on-going violence in the region and lack of funding, also affect the type and quality of research that is currently being done.

Georgetown University professor, Dr. Judith Tucker, presented an analysis of 280 books in the Georgetown University library. She found that the vast majority of these books related to two national narratives — the triumphal story of Jewish nationalism, and the Palestinian experience of disaster and loss. A clear third focused on Western involvement in Palestine and its status as an unresolved "problem". The remaining books focused on the Arab-Israeli conflict, issues of memory, including tangible photos and recollections, and histories that reach back into the 18th and 19th centuries. Of the 280 books, Dr. Tucker found only 23 titles relating to the social-cultural history of Palestine. Her analysis is indicative of the limited resources on Palestine available to scholars today.

Mouin Rabbani, PARC's Palestine director identified weaknesses in the current institutional infrastructure in Palestine as it relates to social science research, such as limitations placed on role of the universities there, the leading



Ann Lesch leads off the roundtable discussion with panelists (from left to right) Julie Peteet, Judith Tucker, Ann Lesch, Glenn Robinson, Mouin Rabbani

role of NGO's and how that colors the existing research, and the physical restrictions imposed by the current political situation that severely hamper researchers' abilities to conduct their research. Rabbani believes that opportunities exist and should continue to be developed for social science research conducted by Palestinians and others despite present roadblocks.

Audience response included discussion of new historical approaches that include examinations of ecology and environmental issues, as well as legal developments and sexuality. Several important studies in the discipline of geography and the relationship between space, socio-economic power and politics were mentioned, and interest was expressed in examining the social welfare roles of religious communities outside of viewing them as simply "problems".

Participants also pointed out that, while scholars travel to the Middle East to collect data, most theory making occurs in the United States by American scholars. This situation creates a hierarchical imbalance in the scholarship that supports the need for more collaborative research and more research by Palestinians.

Another theme involved the lack of scholarship that portrays the complexity of the Israeli and Palestinian stories, their interrelationship, and why one continues to be a more powerful voice than the other.

From the standpoint of PARC's on-going mission to promote Palestinian studies, the roundtable provided a valuable forum for scholars to discuss ways to fill the gaps in Palestinian studies. It is clear that there is a continuing need to bring scholars together to discuss issues that they face and provide suitable avenues for their research interests.

*Copies of the presenters' papers will be made available on our Web site at www.parcenr.org

Halabi Looks at Transforming Local Worship to Political Forum at the Prophet Moses Shrine

Awad Eddie Halabi is writing his dissertation on how the Prophet Moses festival and shrine were transformed from religious to political vehicles in the late Ottoman and the Mandate periods. Halabi is approaching the festival and shrine as a “microcosm of major changes in [Palestinian] society,” and seeks through his research to illuminate the dynamics that existed between different groups, such as the political leaders and elite families responsible for the shrine and festival, the colonial government, and the pilgrims and villagers attending the festival.



Awad Eddie Halabi

Halabi, who was born in Jerusalem and immigrated to Canada with his family in 1971, has a natural interest in the region's history and culture. Halabi became more deeply interested in the political events in the region in the late 1980s, when world attention was being focused on the tensions between Israel and the occupied territories as a result of the first Intifada. His interest led him to pursue a M.A. in Islamic studies at McGill University, and eventually to his current doctoral program at the University of Toronto, where he is researching the role of religious institutions in Palestinian society.

Halabi's fieldwork included a review of records from the Islamic court of Jerusalem during the Ottoman period (under the reign of Sultan Abdulhamid II) at the University of Jordan, as well as documents found in the Records of the Council of Jerusalem's Religious Endowments and the Records of the Jerusalem Administrative Council established under Ottoman rule. His findings demonstrate how the shrine and its festival were used by prevailing political forces. For example, under the reign of Sultan Abdulhamid II, financially supporting the shrine and associating himself with it was a way to elevate his stature within a community that was beginning to express nascent nationalist ideas.

According to Halabi, the developing Arab identity expressed itself during Sultan Abdulhamid II's time as a drive for more local government control. At this time, says Halabi, “the trend throughout the empire was to acquire more local control over government affairs, although many people, especially Muslim-Arab communities in the Levant, wanted to maintain formal political links with the Ottomans and felt strong attachment to them because they were Muslim rulers.” These changes were compounded by European conquests of previously Ottoman territories and increasing financial debts to European countries. “Throughout the Middle East,” Halabi asserts, “Muslims were questioning their relationship with Europe and wondering how Islam could be used to confront issues of military weakness and economic deprivation, and

so Sultan Abdulhamid II established stronger and more prominent Islamic images and ceremonies in order to undermine criticism.”

Under British rule, the colonial government controlled the festival's content and strictly prohibited anti-British rhetoric. The appointment of the most prominent nationalist and Islamic leader of the time to oversee the shrine, Al-Hajj Muhammad Amin Husayni, effectively transformed the festival into a nationalist, anti-Zionist event.

“The British participated in the Festival at the highest level in order to be seen as respecting Islamic tradition and culture and therefore respectful of the Arab-Palestinian concerns about Zionism,” says Halabi, who adds that “the participation of Arab Christians was also formally seen as a sign of national solidarity against the Zionists.” As a result, the festival portrayed a unified anti-Zionist voice that joined the Palestinian political leadership with the British colonial rulers.

“The festival was ostensibly anti-Zionist,” Halabi points out, “but there were other sentiments being protested, other objectives. These were difficult to be pronounced because of the control certain groups had over the festival.” For example, there were internal conflicts within the Arab nationalist political leadership, who used the festival to compete amongst themselves and with opposition groups. There were also tensions between the villagers and their political leaders. “The villagers, frustrated economically and seeing their situation worsening, expected the political leaders to help them through their patronage, but found that these ties of patronage no longer existed. Yet the festival maintained the fiction of patron-client relations and allowed the prominent wealthy people of the village to participate and appear to be responsible leaders and true Muslim participants and followers.”

In addition to his archival research, Halabi interviewed a number of people who participated in the Prophet Moses festival during the 1930s and 1940s. Their recollections, he believes, were altered by current national exigencies. This unexpected finding has led him to an interest in the impact of memory for historians who use oral history in their work. Halabi anticipates completion and defense of his dissertation sometime this year.

(Awad Eddie Halabi can be reached by e-mail at ehalabi@chass.utoronto.ca)

Web site LINK updates

PARC's Web site provides links to various Web sites relevant to Palestinian studies. In order to expand the information available on our site, we will be adding annotations to our “Links” page and providing similar information through our Newsletter. As the list of sites is long, we will be printing the information over the next several issues of our Newsletter. We will also update the list as we discover new sites or changes to ones already listed on our Web page.

Khaled Furani Pursues Ethnography of Arabic Poetry

Poetry has been historically considered the Arabs' national art, and naturally Palestinians have employed this literary form more than any other," asserts Khaled Furani, a doctoral candidate in cultural anthropology at the Graduate Center of the City University of New York. As such, Furani believes contemporary Arabic poetry presents "an additional and unique space from which to understand the struggles in contemporary Arab-Muslim societies and the modern world they inhabit. From that perspective, he seeks to develop an ethnography of the Arabic poetic tradition in order to account for aspects of its transformation into modernity. A central question in Furani's research is how and why Arabic poetry, as in the case of Palestinian poetry, has become more difficult, more mythical and more visual as it has sought to become modern.

A Palestinian born and educated in Haifa, Israel, Furani grew up listening and reading Palestinian poets. His early admiration for "the genius of the Arabic language" and his love of poetry developed through the study of Arabic poetry in his primary and secondary school years and became the roots from which his current interests grew.

When Furani first conceived his research, his goal was to analyze the ways in which Palestinian poetry articulates conceptions of power using techniques derived from anthropology, history, philosophy, linguistics, and literary criticism. However, as is common in ethnographic fieldwork, his research is being reshaped as poets have shifted his attention more toward the conception of poetry itself and the ongoing debate among its various forms.

His research into the cultural significance of poetry is derived in part from wanting to study something other than religion and gender, however significant these fields of study are. His primary aim is to analyze the aspects of poetic form and content of the poets who comment on their society. Furani believes that "poetry is capable of commenting and critiquing not only academic discourse on the East, but also academic discourse, period." His research rests on the assumption that articulating truth is as central to poetry as it is to other fields of knowledge. As Furani points out, the Arabic word for poetry—*sh'ir*—"invokes association with 'knowledge' and 'knowing.'"



Khaled Furani

Furani's analysis of contemporary urban "literary" poetry also assumes that "the transformation in poetry is not merely a technical-artistic one, but also thoroughly social. By this I mean that it is a transformation that involves a shift in practices of writing and speaking, and in conceptions of language, creativity, society, history, tradition, and the individual, among other things." Among the areas he will address are poetic form and content, why these may have changed, and how their transformation reflects changes in contemporary Palestinian

society and perhaps modern society. Furani also hopes to understand the current neglect of sound in poetry, and the current attraction of poets to "mythical, metaphysical and obscure language." Poets, he points out, traditionally have a special relationship with language, which gives them unique insights into its history and meaning. Thus, he argues, poetic language lends special insight into the society within which it is written. For Furani, the changes he has witnessed in language, rhyme and meter represent a transformative shift in the use of language, which therefore reflects changes within the society as a whole.

"What I hope will be made clear is that tensions or struggles in Palestinian poetry have to do not only with things going on in Palestine or the Arab world, but with the entire world." The changing nature of poetic audiences may also account for shifts within the poetic forms. For example, Furani suggests that "[t]he old poetry seems to presume a listening audience; the new one presumes a reading individual," which places different emphasis on the sound and structure of the works.

Furani's fieldwork includes interviews with peripheral and central Palestinian poets throughout Palestine and Israel. He has attended numerous readings and festivals where poets gathered to read their works, which allows him simultaneously to stay abreast of emerging poets and their works and interview audience members.

Furani received his master's degree in cultural anthropology from Wayne State and is using his PARC fellowship to conduct dissertation fieldwork. He is dividing his time between Haifa, Ramallah and Nazareth, and recently attended the 34th Cairo International Book Fair, where he met with poets from various parts of the Arab world.

(Khaled Furani can be reached by e-mail at furanikh@pilot.msu.edu)

Web site LINK updates (cont. from page 4)

Addameer (www.addameer.org) Addameer is a Palestinian NGO organization fighting for the right of Palestinians. Their programs include a prisoner support system and various lobbying campaigns.

Al Haq (www.alhaq.org) This human rights organization based in Ramallah has updated press releases in French and English. Information on internship programs, publications, and updated press releases is available.

Al Jana Arab Resource Center for Popular Arts (www.oneworld.org/al-jana) Based in Lebanon, Al Jana Resource Center for the Popular Arts is dedicated to

helping Palestinian refugees. Palestinian youth are given a chance to learn about the arts in a safe learning environment. Al Jana offers a library that contains written and video records of the oral culture and history of Palestine.

ARIJ: Applied Research Institute of Jerusalem (www.arij.org/) Applied Research Institute of Jerusalem (ARIJ) is a non-profit organization that promotes sustainable development within Palestine by working toward greater Palestinian self-reliance and control over their natural resources. Facts, statistics, maps, etc., on Palestine environment issues.

Many Thanks to Our Members!

PARC would like to recognize the following institutions and individuals that have contributed membership support in 2001 and 2002. Your membership dollars enable us to operate offices in the U.S. and Palestine, maintain a vibrant Web presence, continue our fundraising efforts, and produce our semi-annual newsletter that brings current research right to your door. Our financial needs continue to grow as our organization grows toward becoming a leader in promoting Palestinian studies. We encourage you to encourage your colleagues, departments, and universities to join PARC so we can continue to serve the needs of scholars around the world interested in Palestinian studies.

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Manal Jamal Researching Effects of Foreign Aid in Palestine and El Salvador

Working part-time as a journalist in Palestine didn't satisfy Manal Jamal's need to get to the heart of the issues she was covering. "I wasn't content with not being able to scratch beneath the surface," says Jamal, a Ph.D. candidate at McGill University in Canada. Born in California, Jamal spent her high school years in Palestine, returning there following completion of her undergraduate studies in 1996. Her disaffection with her work and her desire to thoroughly understand her home of many years drove



Manal Jamal

her back to the university and ultimately to her current pursuit of a doctorate in political science and her research into the effects of foreign aid on societies undergoing a "war-to-peace" transition.

Jamal contests the theoretical literature that states that marginalization of some groups is necessary during a war-to-peace transition. "I'm saying, if you look at cases where grassroots organizations are marginalized, [marginalizing these grassroots groups] ultimately comes back to undermine the process." For example, the feelings of abandonment and betrayal by the marginalized groups can limit their cooperation with those that become more influential. This effect is exacerbated by other factors, such as conflicting organizational structures between various groups.

She also argues that previous research on social movements has looked exclusively at internal domestic factors. Jamal's focus on the role of the international community reflects her belief that these outside, international donor organizations have tremendous influence in determining the players and directing the reconstitution of civil society. By deciding who receives funding based on their own geo-strategic considerations, these international donors dictate who succeeds and who becomes marginalized, thereby influencing the demobilization of social movements within the country. This is particularly true, she says, when there is opposition to a peace plan. Donors in this instance can virtually dictate which groups survive and dominate. The effect, she asserts, is that, "[o]rganizers from the popular sectors feel betrayed since elite interests predominate, and they find themselves with few choices."

As part of her PARC-funded research, Jamal conducted more than 80 interviews at donor agencies in Palestine, including European funding agencies,

multilateral agencies, and USAID), as well as interviewing workers at numerous NGO's, democracy, human rights and women's groups. In the course of her probing, Jamal found more than she expected as grassroots activism in Palestine shifts with the changing political situation. "There is the issue of fatigue. People are exhausted, burnt out and disillusioned. What they have reaped so far in the transition has had little to do with their political involvement." For example, those people appointed to political offices were not necessarily the most active, and nepotism is rampant. Jamal quickly points out, however, that these consequences are not all deliberate and may be unanticipated consequences of the changes post-Oslo.

Jamal also recognizes that the demands of the NGOs and other organizations proscribe who can be involved in them — western educated, English-speaking, affluent members of the community. "This automatically creates a rift between the organization and the grassroots they are supposed to serve," she says. Jamal sees the current Intifada as an example of how this has played out, suggesting that it is different in nature than the previous one, and notably more militarized. The absence of grassroots involvement is evident, and, according to her, it is militarized political figures who are involved. What limited grassroots support exists is incomparable to the last Intifada.

Jamal's research will ultimately provide a comparative review of the transitions in Palestine and El Salvador. Jamal points out that the transition experiences of these countries have been very different. "Because of geo-strategic considerations in Palestine, donor assistance was focused on civil society. There is a heavy emphasis on civil society creation and supporting NGOs focusing on human rights, democracy advocates, and service providers." In El Salvador, however, the focus has been more on infrastructure and economic development.

Just as there are differences in the issues affecting these two nations, Jamal will face different challenges in conducting research in El Salvador than she did in Palestine. In Palestine she was hampered by mobility restrictions that limited her access to Gaza and the West Bank. In El Salvador, she faces high crime and homicide rates that make foreign travel perilous. Jamal, who completed her field research in Palestine, plans to conduct research in El Salvador this spring.

(Manal Jamal can be reached by e-mail at jmanal1@po-box.mcgill.edu)

Web site LINK updates (cont. from page 5)

Badil (www.badil.org) Badil is the "resource center for Palestinian residency and refugee rights" based in Beit Jala. English and Arabic speakers can find information on protection, international law, and other topics related to Palestine.

B'Tselem-The Israeli Center for Human Rights in the Occupied Territories (www.btselem.org) B'Tselem is an Israeli human rights center that tries to influence Israeli policy toward the occupied territories. Hebrew, English and Arabic speaking individuals can read information on public actions, publications, press releases, and get information on how to help.

Hanthala (hanthala.virtualave.net) Hanthala is "dedicated to international law and human rights." News and poetry also can be found on this site.

Health Development Information and Policy Institute (www.hdip.org/) The institute is dedicated to the health care concerns of the Palestinian community. Information on other NGO initiatives in rural and urban areas is also featured. The latest casualty numbers in the Palestinian community are frequently updated.

Allen Researches Role of Suffering in Nationalism and State-Building

"See how we suffer," was a refrain that echoed repeatedly throughout Lori Allen's initial visit to Palestine in 1992, shortly after the first Intifada and prior to the Oslo accords. A doctoral candidate in anthropology at the University of Chicago, Allen's early experience has developed into an abiding scholarly interest in the multiple dimensions of pain and suffering within Palestinian society. She returned to Palestine in November 2000 to conduct research for her dissertation. Her PARC fellowship helps to support this fieldwork.

In her current research, Allen looks beyond the individual experiences of those directly affected by imprisonment, violence, and death to understand how these experiences affect Palestinian nationalism and politics more generally. The effects she has found are multiple and ever changing. For example, in her current fieldwork she has noted the unifying and mobilizing impact of the Intifada, although the process is incomplete. Moreover, she has seen a degree of de-sensitization or, as she puts it, "different sensitization" of affect, where boredom and apathy have resulted from the level of daily violence. "People here comment on this very frequently," she observes. "The sheer numbers of martyrs and injured, the houses destroyed, the economic disintegration, all of this has left people, on some level, exhausted." Nonetheless, she says, "this stoicism and sacrifice [are] also viewed as a necessary, even if temporary modus operandi for continuing the struggle."

Allen believes that the images of women's role in the struggle have shifted since the first Intifada in the late 1980s. "Whereas a common trope or image from the first Intifada was that of the mother going out into the street, a pot in one hand and a rock in the other, boldly trying to keep her son from being taken by the Israeli soldiers, women weeping over the flag-wrapped bodies of their martyred sons is a much more common image these days." According to Allen, this symbolic shift reflects some aspects of the changing nature of Palestinian resistance, such as a higher level of militarization in the current struggle, and the reduced level of active women's participation. Cultural, gender and religious norms also play a role in defining images of Palestinian suffering. "There are slogans chanted during funeral processions which tell mothers to trill with joy at their child's martyrdom, and people are encouraged to appear, if not actually happy, then at least accepting and stoic in the face of death. Obviously," she adds, "people still feel and express sadness and grief, but emotional stoicism is certainly emphasized and valorized." Through analysis of these displays, Allen hopes to understand how this "nationalization" of emotion happens and evaluate its cultural and political impact.



Lori Allen

Suffering has been a motivating force for many in Palestine. "What has been so interesting to discover," says Allen, "is just how wide-spread and deep the notion of pain and suffering really is in the society. For example, people describe their personal political trajectories in terms of pain and suffering and how it motivated them to take up different activities." Her research has found that imprisonment as a child for activities such as throwing stones, for instance, led many people to become nationally educated and politically active. The cultural elaboration of suffering also provides a common cause around which Palestinians rally, politically and socially. Thus, the suffering may be transmuted from individual pain into national honor. One goal of her project is to investigate how suffering is always already social, and to describe the effects the individual experience of suffering by different sectors of society has on the socio-political realm.

The relationships between the various manifestations of "pain and suffering" are complex, and Allen plans to investigate them through individual interviews, institutional participant-observation, as well as more formal political expressions and activities. The role of the media has also piqued Allen's curiosity. "There has been a great deal of discussion around the way the local media has represented violent and gruesome deaths," Allen says, pointing out that journalists feel it is their duty to keep the pain and suffering alive in the minds and memories of Palestinians and the world. Being perpetually surrounded as they are by violence, Allen feels that "something other than just remembering is going on here," compelling her to examine more closely the ways in which representation, memory and memorialization function with the socio-political context.

As part of her research, Allen is conducting interviews and surveys at human rights NGOs as well as prisoner rehabilitation programs and martyr family support societies. She is also interviewing government officials, former political prisoners, and families of those injured and martyred.

While Allen conducted preliminary fieldwork in Palestine nine years ago, she concedes that "I did not expect to confront such extreme levels of violence, grief, and generalized disruption within the society I was coming to study." Like the Palestinians living through the Intifada, she has learned to adapt to the violence and suffering, something which has suggested another issue to investigate. She asks how adaptation to violence and suffering is achieved, and what role that plays in sustaining the struggle. With current conditions making life in the territories so difficult, Allen believes "the topic of 'social suffering' has perhaps never been more salient."

(Lori Allen can be reached by e-mail at laa@hotmail.com)

Web site LINK updates (cont. from page 7)

House of Poetry, Ramallah (www.pal-poetry.org) This is a Palestinian on-line poetry gallery in English and Arabic. A bibliography of the poets is featured on this site.

Human Rights Project, Birzeit University (www.birzeit.edu/hrap) The Human Rights Project has information on recent detentions and the human rights record. Cases of students being detained, contact information and links can be found on the site.

Israel/Palestine Center for Research & Information (IPCRI) (www.ipcri.org) The Israel/Palestine Center for Research & Information is a joint Israeli/Palestinian public policy think tank looking for practical and peaceful solutions to the Israeli/Palestinian conflict. It offers various publications for downloading.

Khalil Sakakini Cultural Center, Ramallah (www.sakakini.org) This center promotes a renaissance of Palestinian arts culture.

Mapping the Marsh: Malaria and the Sharing of Medical Knowledge in Mandatory Palestine

By Dr. Sandy Sufian

Editor's note: The following text is excerpted from a paper given at the PARC-sponsored panel discussion on "Rule by Records: The Impact and Legacy of British Rule in Palestine" at the 2000 Middle East Studies Association Conference. Any opinions expressed herein are those of the author and not necessarily those of PARC.



Sandy Sufian, Ph.D., MPH is a post-doctoral fellow at the Rutgers Univ. Center for Historical Analysis.

In the early years of the Mandate period of Palestine (1920-1947), the Department of Health of the British Mandatory government suffered drastic budget reductions.¹ Given the seriousness of the health situation due to malaria — the most prevalent infectious disease in Palestine at the beginning of the Mandate period — financial sources and scientific expertise from abroad were accepted by the government as a way to aid anti-malaria efforts without exceeding its already scant health budget.² Indeed anti-malaria surveys and British health records clearly show that involvement in and cooperation between

Zionist, British and American agencies in malaria control served simultaneously to promote the political and economic interests of the Zionists and British, respectively, by creating more land for Zionist settlement while also providing sources of capital investment for the Mandatory government.

The two main agencies involved in providing financial and scientific aid to combat malaria in Palestine were American: the Malaria Research Unit (MRU), sponsored by the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (JDC), and the Malaria Survey Section (MSS), financed by the Rockefeller Foundation. The Rockefeller Foundation's work in Palestine was an extension of its public health work in other parts of the colonial world. The JDC engaged in relief efforts for Jewish communities around the world during World War I. The malaria problem in Palestine became one of their post-World War I projects that helped the British Mandatory Government reconstruct Palestine while it also aided Jewish settlement. Although the MRU was not officially a Zionist agency, it acted in direct ways to promote Zionist agendas in Palestine. I therefore treat the MRU, in this paper and elsewhere, as a *de facto* Zionist agency.

The Mandate period was not the only time that public health work activities were conducted by scientific agencies in Palestine. The Ottoman government recruited European scientists to study malaria in the Holy Land and draw up plans to eradicate it.³ The American Zionist Medical Unit also funded an initiative in 1919 to conduct a malaria survey of Palestine. The uniqueness of the Mandate period lay in the integration of the MSS and the MRU into the British Mandatory government's Department of Health; that is, these agencies were considered official public health agencies that supplemented the work of British anti-malaria sub-inspectors and medical officers. Such integration of scientific organizations into the governmental structure shows that British rule in public health matters was, as in other affairs, tempered by the interests, finances, and organizational presence of non-governmental but similarly colonial agencies.

Given the emerging political struggle over Palestine during this period, the MRU's status as a part of the government was a unique position for a Jewish agency. In fact, it may have been the only one of its kind. In contrast to the MRU, there was no separate Arab malaria research agency during this time.

The MRU's distinctive position was consistent with the policy of Herbert Samuel, the High Commissioner of Palestine (1920-1925), who promoted and

relied upon outside investment for Palestine's general development.⁴ Writing about the importance of funding malaria work in Palestine, for instance, Samuel wrote to Victor Heiser, the director of activities in the East of Rockefeller's International Board of Health: "I am convinced that the diminution and, if possible, the extirpation, of malaria is one of the first conditions of the progress and prosperity of this country. The Government will not fail to devote its energies to this end, and would deeply appreciate American cooperation."⁵

The MRU was founded in September 1922. It surveyed Jewish lands and prepared them for amelioration works. Prominent Zionist medical figures like Dr. Israel Kligler, a well-respected malariologist in Palestine and in the colonial world at this time, directed and managed the agency. The MRU's malaria survey work chiefly dealt with the sanitation of Jewish settlements and "Arab vicinities" that threatened Jewish health. The Department of Health's Annual Report noted that the MRU's function was to carry out "research and experimental work on malaria both in the laboratory and [in] the field with a view to determining the most efficient and economical methods for Palestine to conduct anti-malarial operations in the Jewish and neighboring settlements and to gather exact data regarding malaria in Palestine."⁶

In contrast to the MRU, the Malaria Survey Section of the Rockefeller Foundation measured malarial incidence rates and prepared eradication schemes for Palestine's population at large. In the beginning years, the staff of the MSS worked with the government entomologist to produce scientific surveys of the country, but did not undertake swamp drainage.⁷ Later they advised and assisted the local health department in its routine anti-malaria projects.⁸ Besides cooperating with the Palestine government, the MSS and the MRU corresponded, shared information and conducted joint surveys.⁹ Their collaboration continued until 1928 when a government Assistant Sanitary Engineer, trained in malaria work in the United States at the expense of the Rockefeller Foundation, took over the MSS work.¹⁰

Mapping the Marsh

Conducting experiments on the land and on the mosquito served as a scientific way of colonizing the land. These experiments were, as Bernard Cohn has argued for colonial India, part of a conquest of knowledge that had significant ramifications for the topographical transformation of Palestine. Surveying any particular area in Palestine by the MSS or the MRU for information on malaria endemicity, epidemics, and for strategies of eradication included taking blood samples from inhabitants and performing spleen exams; studying soil conditions, discharges of rivers, springs, and flooding trends; taking evaporation measurements; determining species type and mosquito behavior; dissecting mosquitoes and counting mosquito larvae; measuring the flight distance of the mosquitoes; and experimenting with larvicides, fish, and mosquito repellants. Oral histories were rarely taken because they were thought to be "unreliable", especially from Muslims suffering from malaria. As a result, the gathering of scientific knowledge made the subject invisible; the patient was replaced by objective measures such as spleen indices and blood films.

Numerous maps constructed by anti-malaria agencies showed how channels could be built, pipes could be installed, and drainage could take place to solve the problem. Given the limited funds available for extensive drainage, mapping the marsh allowed these agencies to assess the eventual cost of malaria control without having to actually drain the marsh. In 1922, for instance, a map of all the watercourses and swamps in the Beisan area was constructed. The map made available "definite geographic and topographic information... so that in the final report on Beisan, accurate estimates of the cost of control work [could] be

MAPPING THE MARSH —continued from page 9

made.”¹¹ Commenting on the utility of such data, the Palestine Government praised the MRU’s work in 1923, noting that it had been of the “greatest value” by providing “invaluable information as to the best and cheapest methods of controlling malaria under varying conditions, and the knowledge acquired of the various Palestine anopheles, of their seasonal prevalence, distance of flight and relative importance as carriers of malaria.” According to the director of the Department of Health, such work provided “a scientific basis for anti-mosquito measures.”¹²

As Michael Gilson has noted in his work on the Akkar region of Lebanon, the act of mapping, recording scientific details and writing reports establishes a new ordering of the landscape.¹³ For Palestine, mapping and surveying the land effected substantial topographical change by identifying what sections of rivers were to be rechanneled, straightened, or diverted to create flowing rather than stagnant water.¹⁴ Indeed, malaria maps gave textual form to scientific knowledge and to the cognitive and practical reshaping of Palestine from an imagined wasteland to one envisioned as a productive, modern land that resulted from European scientific endeavors.

Summaries of anti-malaria survey work, including prevalence and incidence rates and medical maps, were communicated by the MSS and the MRU to the government and then reported in the anti-malarial service section of the Department of Health annual reports. The content of British health records were not, therefore, reflected of British works alone, but reflected a fusion of information from different agencies and various malaria projects in Palestine.

For their part, Zionist land purchasing agencies used this scientific information to evaluate new locales for Jewish settlement. Dr. Kligler, director of the MRU and chief Zionist malariologist in Palestine, insisted upon surveying the land before settlement. This provision reflected his belief, shared by others, that scientific analysis of the land was the only way to rationally and responsibly transform it.

Malaria and the Discourse of Development

Using malaria surveys done by the MRU and other subsequent Jewish malaria institutes as evidence, the Zionist political leadership made a general political claim that they were the most effective agents in the development of Palestine. They argued that these measures had directly “benefited all Arabs in the neighborhood.” The political use of scientific information, particularly during times of political tension, illustrates the ways that the Zionist leadership tried to manage British limitations upon their endeavor and reveals the use of malaria work as a political justification for increasing immigration and settlement. A memorandum submitted to the government by the Jewish Agency to the Royal Commission in 1936, for instance, stated that Jewish colonization was carried out in areas infested with malaria “where cultivable areas had become waste marsh land due to centuries of neglect,” and that the process of reclamation had favored Arab as well as Jewish lands. . . .” The memorandum noted that Jewish malaria agencies expended more money than government or Arab parties in the eradication of malaria.¹⁵

The Palestine government challenged the claims of the Jewish Agency, stating that it had omitted mention of Arab participation in the MRU’s works. For instance, the Jewish Agency memorandum stated:

It is evident from this map [map not given] that, with few exceptions. . . Jewish effort has been chiefly responsible for rendering large sections of uncultivable, malaria-infested regions healthy and habitable.

The Government refuted:

In referring to the useful work accomplished by the Malaria Research Unit under Government direction it is regrettable that the Jewish Agency thought it fit to conceal the fact that successful cooperation had been obtained between Arab villagers or land owners and the Jewish settlers in work which was to the mutual benefit of both communities.¹⁶

Like the Department of Health, Dr. Fawfiq Canaan, president of the Palestine Arab Medical Association in the 1940’s, challenged the Zionist assertion that they

had improved health conditions for the Arab population and that they were the chief actors in the development of Palestine. In a report called the Hygienic and Sanitary Conditions of the Arabs of Palestine, Canaan stressed that Palestinian Arabs promoted the development of the country through their participation in swamp-drainage efforts. He said:

The Jewish organizations have also drained some swamps, especially those in their colonies. But it must be said on the basis of the above-mentioned data and figures [referring to statistics on number of labor days offered by Arab community from 1931-1939 for anti-malaria efforts] that the Arabs have done, under the leadership of the Public Health Department, their share in this sanitary work.¹⁷

As such, scientific knowledge became key for presenting various parties’ respective political positions.

Conclusion

The practice of sharing information about malaria was integrated into an official structure by making the MRU and the MSS official parts of the Palestine government. Such integration substantiates the claim that the British actively promoted the Zionist endeavor in Palestine and the colonial agenda of development.

Scientific information shared among the Zionists, Americans and the British was used to “correct” Palestine’s status as a wasteland. Swamp drainage projects based on scientific studies radically transformed the topography of Palestine into a land that is, today, devoid of marshes. Mapping the marsh led to its extinction.

Health records about malaria activities and about these scientific agencies reflect larger British policy in Palestine and provide us with a better understanding of the nature and organization of British rule. These documents suggest the malaria project cannot be divorced from the settlement initiatives that it facilitated and, as such, cannot be separated from the political and demographic transformation of Palestine. (Sandy Sufian can be reached by e-mail at sufians@rci.rutgers.edu)

Notes

- 1 Letter from Carley and Mieldazis to Heiser, July 19, 1922. Rockefeller Archives. RG5 148/1964.
- 2 Department of Health *Annual Report* 1922, p. 50; *Annual Report* 1923, 24.
- 3 S. Sufian, “Healing the Land and the Nation: Malaria and the Zionist project in Mandatory Palestine, 1920-1947” (Ph.D. Diss., New York University, 1999) 179. Examples of Dr. Cropper (England), Dr. Muhlens (Germany), Dr. Brunn (German Zionist) and Dr. Masterman (England).
- 4 Barbara Smith, *The Roots of Separatism in Palestine: British Economic Policy, 1920-1929*. (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1993) 13, 20.
- 5 Letter from Samuel to Heiser, December 13, 1920. Rockefeller Archives. RG 5 RF 825/103/1429; Letter from Florence Read to Col. Heron, May 4, 1922. Rockefeller Archives RG 5 148/1963.
- 6 Department of Health *Annual Report* 1922, 50.
- 7 Department of Health *Annual Report* 1922, 50; Department of Health *Annual Report* 1924, 2-3.
- 8 *Annual Report* 1927, 75.
- 9 For example, they cooperatively prepared a survey of Wadi Musrara in 1926. *Annual Report* 1926, 92.
- 10 Department of Health *Annual Report* 1928, 31.
- 11 Letter from Carley and Mieldazis to Heiser, July 19, 1922. P.1. Rockefeller Archives. 148/1964.
- 12 Department of Health *Annual Report* 1923, 26.
- 13 Gilson, Michael. *Lords of the Lebanese Marches* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996) p. 94.
- 14 Department of Health *Annual Report* 1927, 76, 82.
- 15 Antimalaria and Drainage Work by Jewish Bodies, 1. CZA Library.
- 16 Palestine Health Department. Comments on Memorandum submitted by JA to Royal Commission. 1937, 5. PRO Co 733/345/10.
- 17 PAMA. Hygiene and Sanitary Conditions of the Arabs of Palestine, 6.

Research Recap: Findings of PARC Fellows

PARC fellowships are granted each year to encourage and promote research in Palestine studies. It is our pleasure to bring you the outcomes of these research efforts, and we will continue to do so in upcoming issues of our Newsletter. The following are summaries of research recently completed by our fellows:

Dr. Rabab Abdulhadi (2000), "The Oslo Accords and the Fate of Palestinian Refugees."

Visits to refugee camps in Lebanon and numerous interviews with residents informed Abdulhadi's research into the manner in which memory affects identity and its role in social change. Over a period of 18 months, Abdulhadi interviewed refugees to determine the level of identification they felt with the Palestinian leadership in the post-Oslo period. Among her findings was that prior to the signing of the Oslo accords, there was "trust in the leadership; now, the leadership was being put on probation." The Aksa Intifada has softened views toward Arafat and the Palestinian authority and simultaneously increased resolve on refugees' right of return. (E-mail: rabab.abdulhadi@nyu.edu)

Lori A. Allen (2001), "The Uncertain State of Palestine: Pain and Suffering in Nationalism and State-Building."

Allen's research focused on the way that people deal with political violence and how it affects Palestinians living in the West Bank, Gaza Strip and occupied East Jerusalem. In her fieldwork she observed that the early emotional fervor surrounding funerals and protests had lessened in intensity, with a sense that these activities became "routine and obligatory." In her interviews with ex-political prisoners, Allen found that the experience resulted in a disaffection and loss of commitment to political action for many. Allen, who was in Ramallah during the September 11th attacks on the World Trade Center and Pentagon, published an article entitled "The Aftermath from Ramallah" in *CounterPunch* magazine (September 15-30, 2001), comparing the American experience of those events to the Palestinian experience of violence under occupation. (E-mail: laa@hotmail.com)

Awad Eddie Halabi (2001), "The Transformation of the Prophet Moses Festival and Shrine at Jericho: From Local Worship to Nationalist Identity."

Halabi's review of late Ottoman and Mandate period records in Jordan, Palestine and Israel garnered detailed information on the administrative and financial affairs of the shrine and its activities, which have led him to further investigate the way in which elite influences over local affairs were affected by 19th century reforms. Halabi also conducted interviews with members of elite families who were involved with the festival and shrine during the Mandate period. His awareness of existing conflicts at that time led him to question whether the present "national imperatives of the present struggle" may have affected the memories of those he interviewed, who "erased the memory of those disputes, downplaying [their] significance" at that time. (E-mail: ehalabi@chass.utoronto.ca)

Abdullatif S. Hussein (2001), "Lipid Profile of Adult Palestinians in Rural and Urban Areas."

Last summer, Hussein performed analysis at the WHO Collaborating Center for Diabetes Research and Training at the University of Pittsburgh, Pa., on data collected in door-to-door surveys in two Palestinian communities. His findings established "mean concentrations and standard deviations of different blood lipids including total cholesterol, LDL, HDL and triglycerides... in both urban and rural communities," adding vital information on type II diabetes in Palestine. In addition, Hussein contributed materials to the Supercourse, an Internet technology that provides access to epidemiological information from experts around the world. He has a number of joint journal and Internet articles

in pre-publication stemming from his work at the WHO center, including an article on the role of the Internet in the prevention of disease in the Islamic world. (E-mail: abed66@hotmail.com)

Manal Jamal (2001), "After the 'Peace Processes': Foreign Aid and the Political Economy of Marginalization."

In her fieldwork, Jamal found initial support in Palestine for her hypothesis that donors play a significant role in determining who dominates and who is marginalized in a war-to-peace transition. Jamal believes that donors not only impact the society, but also affect "future state-society interactions" at the level of who decides what causes are lobbied for and financially supported. Her research included some 80 interviews with political activists, women active in women's committees, donors to various gender and democracy program directors, and program officers of democracy and human rights NGOs in Palestine. Over the next several months she plans to conduct similar fieldwork in El Salvador for comparative purposes. (E-mail: jmanal1@po-box.mcgill.ca)

Dr. Fred Lawson (2000), "Palestinian Arab Nationalism Following World War I."

Lawson's research seeks to investigate alternative expressions of Palestinian nationalism following the First World War. Using his PARC funds to perform preliminary archival research in London and Cairo, Lawson spent the first half of 2001 pouring over English- and Arabic-language periodicals and public records from the post-war period. His research attempts to break away from the common themes in investigating the emergence of Palestinian nationalism to focus on non-elite political movements that immediately followed the war. He plans to continue his research on this topic in Palestine, and is currently working on a short article on British trade with Palestine in 1918-1919.

Dr. Carol Malt (2001), "Museums and Women in Palestine."

Current realities in the occupied territories frustrated some of Dr. Malt's visits to museums in Palestine. Many were closed for a variety of reasons, including damage from shelling, the inability of workers to get to them, a lack of visitors, and government-imposed closures. Nevertheless, Malt was able to perform numerous interviews and acquire documentary evidence shedding light on the relationship between women and museums. In her investigation into the women who work and support museums, she found that women's interests in preserving their history and culture, and their determination not to lose their art and antiquities to military occupation was their primary inspiration. Despite obstacles, women and men working in museums believed that museum work was an honorable and fulfilling profession for women. Of particular interest was her discovery of the existence of a Turkish archeological museum early in the 20th century. (E-mail: c.malt@juno.com)

Dr. Hafez Shaheen (2001), "Analysis of the Surface and Subsurface Flow in the West Bank Mountainous Watersheds."

Dr. Shaheen spent two and a half months applying the Geomorphic Instantaneous Unit Hydrograph (GIUH) model and other modeling programs to data collected on the Soreq watershed. From his analysis, two journal articles were written and submitted for publication: "Storm Water Drainage in Arid and Semiarid Regions, West Bank as a Case Study," and "Unit Hydrograph and Drainage in Arid and Semiarid Regions, West Bank as a Case Study." Shaheen's research found a wide range in the ratio of rainfall to runoff in the West Bank, with the arid and semiarid watersheds behaving mostly as variable sources. His research also indicated that the catchment in the Soreq watershed may partially contribute to the runoff. (E-mail: shaheen@ug-maalem.com)




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