HERITAGE AND THE CULTURAL STRUGGLE FOR PALESTINE

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HERITAGE AND THE CULTURAL STRUGGLE FOR PALESTINE

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For Ada,
Angela, and Anna

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NOTE ON TRANSLITERATION

In transliterating Arabic words and names, I have used a simplified version of the *International Journal of Middle East Studies* (IJMES) system, excluding diacritical marks and long vowels. Common English forms of Arabic names that are often found in the scholarly literature are used, for example in the case of authors such as Tawfiq Canaan or Nazmi al-Jubeh, or the name of organizations such as Inash al-Usra. I have used a single opening quotation mark to transliterate the ʻayn (ʻ), and a single closing quotation mark for the hamza (ʼ). In several cases, the transliteration reflects the colloquial Levantine Arabic spoken in Palestine rather than the standard literary language: the transliteration of dialect therefore can deviate from the IJMES system.

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HERITAGE AND THE CULTURAL STRUGGLE FOR PALESTINE

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INTRODUCTION

THE STAKES OF HERITAGE AND THE POLITICS OF CULTURE

The Old City of Hebron is a good place to grasp the politics of heritage in Palestine. Life in this Palestinian town came to a standstill in the late 1970s when a handful of Israeli-Jewish settlers occupied some of the city's signature historic buildings, bringing with them several thousand soldiers. They came, many of them all the way from the United States, to redeem what they see as the Land of Israel and its Jewish heritage, beginning with the Tomb of the Patriarchs: while also sacred to Muslims, and actually a mosque for centuries, the site for the settlers is the very proof of their right to the land. The settlers' ongoing violent presence, militarization, and the progressive depopulation of Palestinian inhabitants all dramatically altered Hebron's physical and social landscape. Most Palestinian residents, those who could afford it, left to avoid being assaulted, harassed, arrested, killed, or imprisoned by closures and checkpoints. The settlers turned the city's once-bustling historic center into a segregated ghost town.

In the late 1980s a group of scholars and architects from Hebron's Polytechnic University conducted an architectural and social survey of an emptying-out, decaying Old City and began discussing a plan for its rehabilitation. Then, in the wake of the mass mobilization of the First Intifada (1987–1993), a stronger movement emerged to rescue the Old City, including Hebron's Graduate Students Union. This early mobilization, however, did not fully fledge into an organization until Yasser Arafat intervened directly in 1996 by creating the Hebron Rehabilitation Committee (HRC) to restore and regenerate the Old City.

Why would Arafat himself intervene to create a heritage organization? Israeli-Palestinian negotiations had been going on intermittently since the Madrid Conference of 1991. But what had been initially an open, participatory, and locally highly respected endeavor, with negotiators from the West Bank and Gaza regularly flying back to Palestine to report to and get feedback from their constituencies, had turned into secretive talks conducted by "Tunisians," that is, Palestine Liberation Organization exiles with much less local knowledge and legitimacy, and often no qualifications except for a militant pedigree.[1] Hebron was (and remains) an important site, especially from a religious and symbolic point of view; it is a microcosm of the conflict and a key battlefield in the war of position and complex maneuvering of Israeli-Palestinian negotiations. Urban legends have it that Arafat would make undercover visits to the Old City before the official handover; surely he took a keen personal and political interest in the cause. At the time, Arafat and the returnee cadre—the Fatah leadership coming back from exile—were making deliberate efforts to co-opt grassroots initiatives and groups into supporting the series of Oslo Accords, which had created the Palestinian Authority (PA) to temporarily administer the areas from which Israel had withdrawn.[2] When Hebron was excluded at the last minute from the 1995 Oslo II agreement because Israel was extremely reluctant to withdraw settlers from the very center of town,[3] Hebronites' dissatisfaction with the negotiations grew. Instead of the dismantling of the colonies, they got the Hebron Protocol, which divided the city into a Palestinian- and an Israeli-controlled area—with the HRC in the latter. Unable to liberate the city, Arafat shifted his tactical objective in Hebron to increasing the number of Palestinians in the area he was going to leave under Israeli control (including the Old City), to prevent Israelis from "easily swallowing" it through their facts-on-the-ground policies (e.g., settlers occupying empty buildings).[4] The Palestinians' (partial) success was in including a much larger Palestinian population as well as a newly established HRC in this area.

The rehabilitation of Hebron's Old City and Bethlehem (the PA's early flagship nation-branding project) are the only heritage schemes to have received full institutional and financial support from the Palestinian Authority in its first years. This is because the HRC was established as a function of the ongoing negotiations: Arafat opted to play the demographic card and create his own facts on the ground by repopulating the deserted Old City with Palestinians in order to stop the expansion of the settlements.

Arafat gave the HRC responsibility for the old town. The board of the new HRC included local political figures who were close to Arafat and Fatah, and the people from the polytechnic who had started the restoration works in the late 1980s became the HRC's engineering office, that is, its executive arm. To guarantee some form of Palestinian security presence in an area controlled by the Israeli army, Arafat encouraged old militants turned police and PA security personnel (returnees originally from Hebron and its vicinity but also from Gaza) to move into the Old City. This influx of security personnel did not continue for too long, but some of the oldest and most committed men who came back with Arafat still live in a small neighborhood known informally as *harat al-sulta* (neighborhood of the Palestinian Authority). The men of this "militant wave" and their families moved to the Old City for politico-ideological reasons—to defend it from the settlers and keep alive its Palestinian identity.

Khaled was one of these returnees, a charismatic old Fatah militant turned PA security man and Old City resident, a local leader much respected in the PA neighborhood as a former member of the presidential guard. He told me the following story about the origins of the HRC:

> When [Arafat] announced the establishment of the Rehabilitation Committee he was in Bethlehem, and a delegation from Hebron was with him, of which I was a member. [The people of the delegation] were very angry because of the Hebron agreement that gave the Israelis the right to chase Palestinians within five hundred meters inside H1 [the Palestinian-controlled part]: this was called the hot chase. They talked angrily and loudly, but when they were about to leave [Arafat] said: "Wait, don't leave!" and then he stood on a chair and said: "Listen, they will give us the hot chase, but we will give them the *cold chase* in the Old City of Hebron. In this moment I announce the establishment of the Rehabilitation Committee of Hebron." And that's how the committee was born.[5]

Khaled told me this story as we sat in his ample reception room under a large photo of him with Arafat. Right next to it, he had organized a small heritage museum: adorned with a vast number of folklore objects, from agricultural tools to embroidery, this space re-created a traditional Arab home. Deeply committed to both the national cause and the preservation of Palestinian heritage, Khaled did welcome the establishment of the HRC as the "cold chase," the way to maintain a Palestinian institutional presence and political

agency in the Old City under Israeli control—and ultimately the counterplan to wrestle control of the Old City from the settlers, even if gradually. Yet his words illuminate the ambivalent politics at play in Arafat's move: the leader set up the HRC in part to thwart internal opposition to the accords and to his negotiating approach, which for some Palestinians was similar to giving up on Israeli dictates. Indeed, according to one of my informants, a leftist activist and a journalist, there was another, cross-factional committee at the time, called the Hebron Defense Committee, that was critical of the negotiations and very active in organizing direct actions against the occupation, such as demonstrations, sit-ins, and strikes. When Arafat created the HRC—offering diplomacy and urban regeneration as alternatives to political struggle, Fatah members joined it and left the other resistance committee, effectively sealing its fate.[6]

The HRC started as a transitional committee with an informal political mandate to take responsibility for the occupied Old City. It was also, crucially, a tactical device to counter the expansion of the settlements while the negotiations were still ongoing. The idea was to secure a good negotiating position in preparation for the so-called final status negotiations, believed to be upcoming, which were to resolve the sticking points of the conflict and usher in a peace treaty. The HRC's work and its very reason for existing would cease with the creation of an independent Palestinian state (and the end of settlements), expected to happen at the turn of the millennium after a five-year interim period. But the failure of Israeli-Palestinian negotiations and the peace process as a whole and the continuation of occupation extended the mandate of the HRC indefinitely. As with other institutions created in the mid-1990s as transitional mechanisms, like the PA itself, the HRC lasted much longer than originally planned—and it would grow into something else.

The turn of the millennium was a crucial point in the HRC's history and in Palestinian perception more broadly. Yet in 2000, no Palestinian state was founded, crushing the expectations of most Palestinians, including those working at the committee; instead, the Second Intifada exploded. Instead of a new era of independent statehood, "interim" limited self-rule continued along with a patchwork sovereignty, all under a heightened regime of violence. Instead of handing over responsibility for the Old City to the municipality, or to another sovereign, elected political body, and with no end in sight to its task of protect-

ing the city from decay and settlers, the HRC's project simply went on under transformed circumstances and expectations.

Ever since, the HRC has been working to counter the settlers' project. It has restored most of Hebron's dilapidated and depopulated central quarters. But in order to sustain livelihoods in the Old City over the long term and in difficult conditions, it has shifted its work to local socioeconomic development; it has also partially detached from the Palestinian Authority and grown dependent instead on European donors, adopting the language and practices of international development. By providing employment on its restoration projects and promoting development in multiple ways among the impoverished local population, the HRC helps maintain the city's very "Palestinianness," including the historical character of its traditional Arab-Islamic urban fabric. Despite the fact that the so-called peace process did not bring an end to the Hebron colonies, the HRC has helped several thousand Palestinians return to live in the restored houses of the Old City, preventing the settlers' further takeover of abandoned areas.

A similar large-scale program of historic conservation and urban regeneration in the Old City of Jerusalem has allowed the local Palestinian population to stay put and enjoy better living conditions, thus blocking the growth of Israeli settlements in their midst.[7] Moreover, in villages and towns all over the West Bank, other nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) have restored many historic buildings, which now host new residential quarters as well as a variety of social and cultural activities, from local government offices to libraries and community centers and women's centers. This work has made heritagized central quarters into a visible and symbolically important part of West Bank cityscapes. This work of urban regeneration and heritage making is the subject of this book.

The story of the HRC encapsulates many facets of this book: the politics at play in Palestinian heritage making and its connection to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict; the relationship between Palestinian heritage, particularly urban regeneration, and laying material claims to sovereignty (i.e., resisting colonialism), but also instantiating provisional, improvised, and at times innovative forms of local government; the enmeshment of heritage with processes of fragmented state formation; the post-Oslo connection between heritage and development; the NGOization of Palestinian civil society; and the tensions between

the PA and cultural organizations. In the pages that follow, I explore the current proliferation of heritage initiatives in Palestine and the growing mobilization of heritage as a language to frame and advance Palestinian rights to the land and as an intervention into the landscape to counter colonization. In a way similar to the spread of human rights, "heritage" has proved central to the Palestinian struggle for freedom and self-determination and, crucially, to the Palestinians' struggle to create a state of their own. Palestinian heritage—as a specific assemblage of actors, ideas, modes and schemes of action, and material sites—is connected to local civil society and transnational networks and regimes of practices. Thanks to such transnational connectivity, it also constitutes an important technology of government (in the amplified, Foucauldian sense) in the lacerated space of the occupied territories.

PALESTINIAN HERITAGE POST-OSLO: FROM RESISTANCE TO DEVELOPMENT

Lara, an enthusiastic Palestinian architect in her late twenties, took me in the fall of 2004 to a small West Bank village threatened by a ring of Israeli settlements, where her Ramallah-based NGO was restoring an old mansion. Part of a magnificent, if run-down, Ottoman-period historic center, it would house a community center run by a local women's organization. Lara was not from the village—she held an international MA and was soon to move abroad on a PhD scholarship—but she worked closely with the engineer supervising the site, another enthusiastic young woman from a nearby town, as well as with the local contractor and the architect of the municipality. She regularly met with local women to discuss the restoration project. Some of these women were vocal advocates for their community, often with histories of political activism either themselves or in the family (i.e., a son or a husband in an Israeli jail); others were fully disillusioned with "politics" (*al-siyasa*) and the ways in which it had made their lives miserable. But all, together with Lara, looked forward to the development of the heritage project, into which they had put a lot of hope for the future. Funded by a European donor as part of a broader job creation scheme, the construction site already employed a number of the women's male relatives.

This kind of cultural heritage was quite unlike all that I had experienced in my previous work across a number of Middle Eastern and European countries

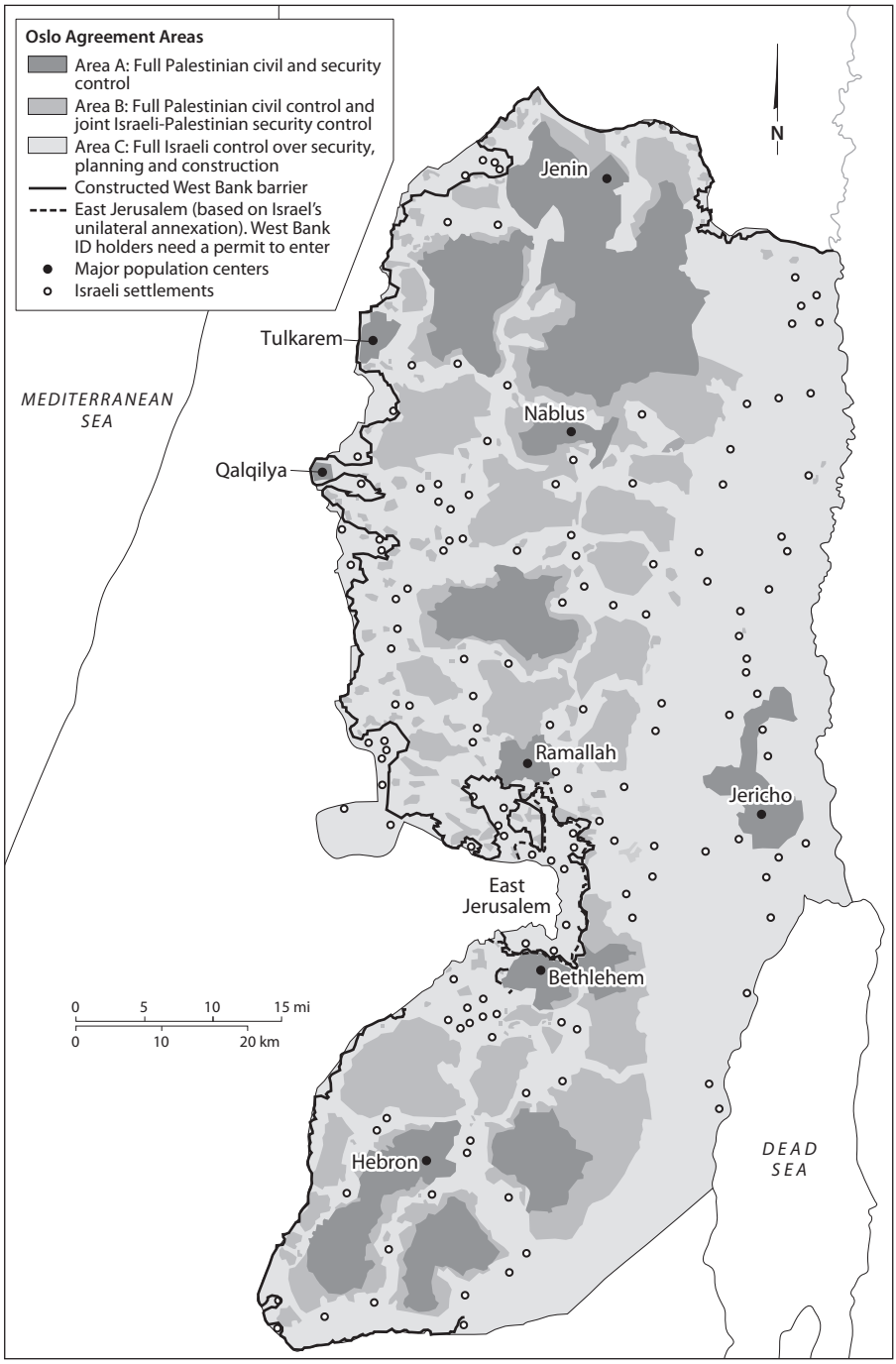
in a field historically monopolized by the state and (neo)colonial forces and an exclusive interest in monumental, pre-Islamic archaeology.[8] In Palestine, people's living environment, not ancient history and archaeology, takes center stage, and it is local civil society, not foreign and state actors, who is doing heritage. In Palestine, heritage actors were mostly young cosmopolitan architects, artists, and cultural producers. Many were women, frequently with a history of political activism and transnational life trajectories. Some were public intellectuals; all were full of passion. They understood heritage primarily in terms of a robust commitment to improve the environment and lives of local communities strangled by the Israeli occupation—to contribute to "solving current social problems and answering social needs"—and to change people's mentality toward a stronger "awareness" (*wa'i*) of heritage and the environment.[9] It seemed to me that these heritage practitioners had turned a colonial practice upside down, reformulating it for new objectives. Only later did I realize the full extent to which these civil society efforts participate in the process of state formation and of governing Palestine.

The Israeli occupation and ongoing colonization of Palestinian lands since 1967, in contravention of international law, has dramatically affected Palestinian heritage practices by destroying, directly or indirectly, hundreds of historic buildings and pouring an immense amount of concrete over the hills of the West Bank to house a growing population of now well over half a million settlers.[10] Palestinian practitioners work to prevent further destruction of historic buildings and towns and to restore and repopulate what has been ruined, but also to improve the well-being of the communities that live in these old houses. And yet if current Palestinian heritage practices respond to the Palestinian predicament of ongoing dispossession, occupation, and colonization, they also partake in transnational circuits of heritage expertise and aid money—in a global context where heritage has been reformulated as a means of socioeconomic development.

With the Oslo Accords, the coming of the PA and the beginning of self-rule in the Palestinian territories ushered in state formation and the construction of a national heritage.[11] Emerging polities often bring about a shift in the public narration of the past—political communities do not exist before their collective memories, but they come about (also) by working through them.[12] Pasts that matter to societies are not merely a reflection of political dynamics and

the object of political manipulations but one of the terrains on which politics plays out, where dominant discourses and identities are made and unmade.[13] As the shared past and shared culture of the nation, heritage is the source of the nation's distinctiveness.[14] As heritage materializes in a number of specific sites, it also ties a nation to its alleged ancestral territory. In this way, it provides the material evidence of a people's roots in and rightful ownership of that territory. It tells a nation's story by giving it a rooted past but also a set of values and a sense of continuity and futurity.[15] States have thus largely monopolized heritage and used it to promote national identification along with political legitimacy and territorial sovereignty.[16] But in Palestine the state has not yet (fully) materialized. The tremendous growth of the Israeli colonies and the failure of the negotiation process have disrupted the transition to Palestinian statehood inaugurated by the accords and indefinitely extended the duration of the PA as nonsovereign quasi-state—all while development money has continued to flow into the territories. In this context (in fact, a transformed colonial condition), Palestinian NGOs as well as other international and transnational actors like donors and aid agencies have stepped in, complementing a fragile and ever-transitional PA in a variety of domains, including heritage.

So-called Oslo II, the interim agreement of 1995, specified the powers of the PA, established a year earlier as a transitional governmental body.[17] Even though the PA "had many of the symbols and trappings of a state (such as passports, stamps, car number plates, . . . ministries, police and security forces, and other public institutions), in substance [it] was actually a limited self-government with very limited administrative, security and legislative powers over *limited* areas in the West Bank and Gaza Strip" (Map 1).[18] Oslo II gave the Palestinians control over both security and administrative affairs in the major population centers, which constituted only about 7 percent of the West Bank (known in the agreement as area A). Smaller towns and rural hamlets (area B), amounting to about 24 percent of the West Bank, were subject to shared control, with the Palestinians in charge of administrative affairs and the Israeli military in charge of security. Israel retained absolute control over approximately 69 percent of the West Bank (area C, including Jerusalem, all Israeli settlements, military installations, and border areas).[19] Percentages have slightly changed (in 2013, area C was about 61 percent of the West Bank, and area A, 18 percent[20]), but the fragmentation of the West Bank remained as these "interim" arrangements



MAP 1. Map of the West Bank, based on UN OCHA West Bank Access Restrictions as of January 2017. The Palestinian areas are in dark gray (areas A–B); area C, fully controlled by Israel, is in light gray with the settlements in white.
Source: UN OCHA, United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. Reprinted with permission.

were never superseded by a final agreement. The growth of the settlements, and of the network of Israeli-only bypass roads that connects them, has turned the West Bank into a series of enclaves that analysts have compared with South African Bantustans under apartheid.[21] Hebron can be seen as a condensed microcosm of the conditions that characterize the West Bank as a whole.

Under these conditions, how has heritage been rearticulated and institutionalized over time in relationship to changing Palestinian social forms and politics, as imbricated with an enduring occupation as well as transformations in global development? These questions are critical because heritage has increasingly played a central role in Palestinian sovereignty claims, as well as in cultural development schemes the world over. This book explores these questions in an ethnography of Palestinian heritage, focusing in particular on the current proliferation of urban regeneration initiatives and museums.

Similar to the spread of the human rights discourse, and thanks to its close association with development, cultural heritage has grown into an important prism through which Palestinians understand their relationship to their occupied land and, crucially, lay claim to it. In fact, for some activists, heritage claims might well have a better chance of success against the occupation than claims in the name of human rights,[22] which many Palestinians increasingly view as having no effects.[23] In Hebron, for example, the HRC has managed to contain the settlers, whose numbers have remained the same, unlike in the rest of the West Bank. In 2017 Palestinians put forward and won the nomination of the Old City of Hebron to UNESCO's World Heritage List, hoping that the achievement of international heritage status might guarantee the city urgent protection for its residents and the heritage they inhabit; Israel reacted furiously by withdrawing millions in funds to the United Nations and financing instead a Jewish heritage museum in the city.[24] A few years earlier, in 2015, Israel's High Court of Justice froze the army's plans to build the separation wall across the lands of the West Bank village of Battir, and the fact that this unique, living historic landscape was also a Palestinian site on the World Heritage List played a key role in this decision.[25] By invoking and preserving heritage, then, Palestinians assert their rights to the land on the ground and on the international stage; they also assert a sense of entitlement and a place of cultural worth within global taxonomies of value.[26]

All these activities have been conducted under the banner of heritage preservation, yet they go well beyond "heritage" as it is conventionally conceived.

Palestinian heritage organizations often perform diverse functions, ranging from producing all sorts of inventories (of historic properties but also other resources), surveys, and maps to preparing territorial master plans. Generally, they have acted as important conduits of development aid. In so doing, they have often stood proxy for absent or extremely weak governmental institutions. In Old Hebron, for example, the PA has almost no authority, because the Hebron Protocol placed it under Israeli military control, where it has remained ever since. In this context, over the years the HRC has expanded the scope of its activities and has come to run the administration of the Old City as if it were a municipality; today it is the major functioning Palestinian institution there, receiving several million dollars a year from European and Arab donors. On the ground, "civil society" organizations have achieved much greater results than their weak, underresourced "state" counterparts at the PA Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities and the Ministry of Culture. The fact that these organizations often play an important role in both local and national governance in various ways and embody a different vision of Palestinian politics and especially of what a Palestinian state should look like leads to frequent clashes with PA institutions.

These conflicts along with a fragmented, uneven legislative framework have produced an informal status quo in heritage governance, namely, an unofficial division of labor between the ministry and the NGOs. Essentially, the ministry has been in charge of archaeology (its mandate being long regulated by an old colonial law protecting exclusively this kind of heritage) while other Palestinian organizations have preserved the recent vernacular past and the historic built environment.[27] This informal institutional geography is the product of the old colonial law that regulated heritage until 2018, a law that protected antiquities dating before 1700 only and thus limited the mandate of the ministry: NGOs instead have taken care of the recent past that was out of legal purview.

The fact that the old colonial law remained in place after Oslo has to do with how the PA reinstated all pre-occupation laws in areas A and B under its jurisdiction (area C and places like the Old City of Hebron are instead under Israeli legislation or military orders). Then, as discussed in Chapter 3, the ministry was locked for many years in a battle with the NGOs over the new heritage law, in the context of a broader legislative stalemate ensuing from Islamist Hamas's victory in the 2006 Palestinian elections, Israel's arrest of most Hamas

members of Parliament, the near civil war between Hamas and a Western-backed Fatah, and the consequent split between Hamas-ruled Gaza and a PA-ruled West Bank that continues as this book goes to press. In this context, four major cultural heritage organizations have carried out vast urban regeneration projects: two NGOs, the Old City of Jerusalem Revitalization Program and Riwaq working across the West Bank, and two semigovernmental organizations that grew more and more independent of the PA, the HRC and the Bethlehem Center for Cultural Heritage Preservation.[28] They do "urban revitalization" (in Arabic, *ihya'*, from the root "to live") by way of programs of "restoration for public use" (*tarmim li-l-istikhdam al-'amm*) with a development-oriented approach.[29] The Swedish International Development Agency (along with other bilateral European donors) has funded many of these projects as part of what was essentially a humanitarian relief, employment generation (*tashghil*) scheme designed to ameliorate the dramatic post–Second Intifada social conditions.

In sum, this heritage by NGOs works as a countersettlement project, as a practice of resistance to the continuing Israeli occupation and colonization, but also as an instituting practice, a practice of institution building, and ultimately as a technique of government in the absence (and anticipation) of stable state structures. Heritage organizations and initiatives participate in informal processes of state making and forms of makeshift government and provide avenues for Palestinian agency in the precarious conditions of post–Second Intifada Palestine. Palestinian heritage organizations' multifaceted "governmental" role has to do on the one hand with the stunted nature of the PA, its fundamental nonsovereignty, and local histories of political mobilization, and on the other hand with transnational flows of money, expertise, and knowledge—with globally circulating policy ideas about heritage and development. In fact, it is the product of a specific trajectory unfolding across the past hundred years of Palestinian history.

Cultural heritage activism has deep roots in Palestine. It is embedded in a local social organizing tradition of alliance between heritage, cultural production, and liberation politics, as exemplified by the nationalist folklore movement of the 1970s–1980s (which I discuss in Chapter 1). At the same time, the new Palestinian heritage movement cannot be understood without reference to globalizing processes—namely, the shift from a top-down, state-centered development paradigm to one based on empowerment and participation[30]—as

they play out in the specific Palestinian context. The Palestinian NGOs' boom of the past two decades, which goes well beyond the field of heritage, has been boosted by the massive rise in foreign aid, particularly Western European aid in support of the negotiation process.[31] In this context, Palestinian heritage organizations have benefited from a new, global donors' emphasis on more locally tuned, culture-oriented, participatory models of sustainable development that reimagine heritage as an engine of tourism.[32] Beginning in the late 1990s, even major international agencies like the World Bank moved from viewing local heritage and culture as obstacles to development toward mobilizing them actively—the idea being that heritage is a key resource that poor countries can exploit to generate socioeconomic growth.[33] Since then, heritage projects have proliferated across the Middle East and elsewhere as part of development schemes funded by international donors, often taking the form of urban regeneration and/or museums. In Palestine, practitioners talk about heritage as the "oil" of the country, promising a future of economic prosperity.

Palestinian heritage practitioners appropriate and in turn contribute to shape a discourse of "heritage as development" or "heritage as development and participation" that emphasizes using heritage to improve people's socioeconomic conditions as opposed to preserving the allegedly intrinsic aesthetic and historic values of heritage that are traditionally foregrounded by older discourses of cultural heritage policy.[34] In the context of an intensified transnational circulation of policy ideas,[35] this discourse travels across the channels of the international aid apparatus but also through a set of overlapping networks of like-minded practitioners, experts, and activists; larger and smaller organizations of heritage and development; conventions and charters; and standard practices and set programs of action, such as those of the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). If in the course of Palestinian history heritage has often been allied with the resistance against colonization and uprooting, its language and practices have gradually changed, post-Oslo, through an increasing association with development in the context of an interrupted, "off-centered" process of state formation.[36] The pages that follow and this book as a whole reveal the different facets of this shift from heritage as resistance to heritage as development. But to begin, I must go back to the colonial condition that Palestinian heritage endeavors attempt to counteract.

COUNTERSETTLEMENT

On a number of visits to East Jerusalem's Rockefeller Museum throughout the years, I have been struck time and again by the yellowed cards in otherwise mostly empty cases, reading "Temporarily removed" or "On temporary exhibit at the Israel Museum." Under an everlasting occupation and in an everlasting state of exception, the signifier *temporarily* here truly refers to a suspended temporality that is far from short term. These objects were transferred long ago to West Jerusalem's Israel Museum, among other institutions. But the Rockefeller—which is none other than the old Palestine Archaeological Museum, created in the 1930s during the British colonial period and renamed after its first donor following the 1967 Israel occupation—is located in and holds objects from what are internationally recognized occupied Palestinian territories.[37] Not only is the Rockefeller now a division of the Israel Museum (in fact, it was for a long time the headquarters of the Israel Antiquities Authority); PA ministries and Palestinian organizations have no control over it whatsoever, and no way to access it except as private tourists (if provided with a Jerusalem ID or special permit to enter the city). At the Israel Museum, visitors can admire many objects from excavations located in Palestinian territory, as well as many unrecognized "permanent loans" from the Rockefeller, all reframed as Israeli heritage. Probably the most famous examples of what can be considered looted Palestinian cultural property from the Rockefeller are the Dead Sea Scrolls (namely, the oldest known Hebrew Bible manuscripts, unearthed at the West Bank site of Qumran), which are displayed in the symbolic core of the Israel Museum especially built for this purpose, the Shrine of the Book, one of the preferred settings for Israeli national ceremonies and state visits.[38]

The emptiness of the Rockefeller vitrines—the void produced by colonial appropriation—is my starting point, together with the rubble of former Palestinian villages in Israel. While focused squarely on Palestinian practices, this book starts from the fact that both Palestinians and Israelis have used and continue to use heritage to lay claim to the land that both consider their own and also that these two heritage projects are simultaneously inextricably interrelated and deeply asymmetric. Almost all villages and cities in Israel/Palestine are woven into competing memory narratives and heritage practices,[39] which are also (more or less successful) techniques of appropriation. The two heritage landscapes are practically incommensurable and yet intimately interlinked.[40]

Heritages and cultural memories emerge out of exchanges and negotiations: they are what scholars of memory call "multidirectional."[41] But multidirectionality in Palestine/Israel is deeply asymmetrical, not a conversation but rather a hard-fought confrontation.

The relationship between the two heritages is colonial: colonization destroys (or evacuates) Palestinian heritage while mobilizing another, powerful one in order to legitimize itself.[42] In turn, Palestinians reactivate those ruins to resist that very colonization, turning them into "a site of renewal that evinces the tenacity of those who refuse to relinquish their claims . . . [a site] where the lineaments of dissensus are forged."[43] Starting with Frantz Fanon and Edward Said, many scholars of Palestine and beyond have connected colonialism and heritage. In *The Wretched of the Earth*, for example, Fanon argues that "colonialism is not satisfied with snaring the people in its net" because, "with a kind of perverted logic, it turns its attention to the past of the colonized people and distorts it, disfigures it, and destroys it."[44] This is particularly the case with settler colonialism, which destroys or appropriates what it encounters to build a new society on the rubble of the native one, on an expropriated foundation.[45] In this context, the act of preserving a rooted indigenous culture becomes politically salient by "mak[ing] certain that colonialism and settler colonialism are never ultimately triumphant."[46] That explains why the reproduction of a collective memory is so important for Palestinians, and why especially since the 1990s a Palestinian memory boom has produced a vibrant popular culture of nationalistically inflected commemorations of the recent past.[47]

Heritage developed into a crucial terrain of struggle in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict long before the 1990s, essentially because of the cultural politics of nineteenth-century European colonialism in the Middle East and Zionism as a nationalist-colonialist movement.[48] Israeli archaeology and heritage have been indispensable to the nationalist-colonial project of the Israeli state, while Palestinian heritage has been systematically destroyed by Israel, as demonstrated by scholars such as Nadia Abu El-Haj.[49] Strictly aligned with the military, archaeology in Israel inherited a number of features of the older colonial science that had long searched for the remains of the Bible and the origins of Western civilization in Palestine. It performed a key service to the state by effacing the colonial dimension of Zionism, violently obliterating the Palestinian presence and historicity and producing facts—a body of material scientific evidence, such as

archaeological sites and artifacts, chronologies, and stratigraphies—validating the ancient Israelite nation. These substantiated the social imaginary of return and refashioned Palestine into the old-new Jewish homeland, into the Land of Israel (*Eretz Yisrael*).[50]

Israeli heritage and dominant public representations articulate the national past and Jewish history at large in a tripartite scheme.[51] In Zionist discourse, the Romans shattered the golden age of ancient Israel by destroying Jerusalem's Temple and dispersing the Jews. The negative experience of exile—and the fundamentally diminished Jewish life in the diaspora—culminated in the Holocaust and the extermination of the European Jewry at the hands of Nazi Germany. In Israeli collective memory, then, the Holocaust looms large as the negative founding event of the modern state; in turn, the renewal of Jewish life achieved with the "return," after two thousand years, to the biblical Land of Israel and the re-creation of the ancient homeland—marked by the 1948 independence—constitutes in the Zionist narrative the only possible redemption of the Holocaust and the only way to prevent its repetition. This scheme is evident, for example, in the official memorial landscape of what Israel declares as its "eternal and undivided" capital, Jerusalem, which is centered on three poles, namely, the Wailing Wall and Temple Mount, the Israel Museum, and the Holocaust memorial (Yad Vashem) right next to Mount Herzl's national cemetery of state and Zionist leaders. Promoting a strong sense of continuity and identification with antiquity and the repudiation of a negatively marked diasporic or exilic Judaism, Zionism's historical narrative has dramatically reconfigured the Palestinian landscape.

In Israel/Palestine, acts of memory are simultaneously acts of forgetting—and often of dispossession, too. Heritage indeed produces a peculiar narrative of place and time that overlays and silences, without fully obliterating, other memoryscapes. Yad Vashem's history museum is built in the shape of a tunnel, creating a clear historical teleology; exhibits in the central part of the tunnel lead from Jewish life in prewar Europe to the Holocaust, to a renewed life in Israel at the end of the tunnel, symbol of the future and the possibility of redemption. A terrace overlooks the apparently unmarked hilly landscape of Jerusalem, but this buries another memory of suffering, the history of the Nakba, or Palestinian catastrophe.[52] On the hill next to Yad Vashem, for example, lie the remains of the destroyed Palestinian village of Deir Yassin. This village was

the site of a massacre perpetrated by the Jewish militia Irgun, a massacre that played a crucial role in the war of 1948 and that figures prominently in current Palestinian memories of their catastrophe and defeat in that crucial year of the region's history.

The "invention of ancient Israel" has dispossessed Palestinians of their past and their land,[53] which Chapter 2 will show to continue happening in Hebron. For instance, the Israel Museum's Dead Sea Scrolls can technically be considered looted cultural property, as they come from an archaeological site located in Palestinian territory, Qumran.[54] (Qumran is only one of several West Bank archaeological sites under Israeli control for being deemed "Jewish heritage" by Israel.) An entire Palestinian neighborhood was demolished and its inhabitants evicted right after the 1967 occupation in order to make space for a ceremonial plaza in front of the Wailing Wall, the last remnant of the Roman-period enclosure of the biblical Second Temple, the central religious site for Judaism—the Muslim Haram al-Sharif with the al-Aqsa Mosque and the Dome of the Rock sitting right on top of it.[55] A recent case, extreme but paradigmatic, of such exclusionary, predatory use of the past to justify land grabbing is the biblical-themed archaeological-park-cum-colony—the so-called City of David—in the East Jerusalem district of Silwan, which the Israeli parks authority subcontracted to a settler organization that has evicted the local Palestinian population.[56] Another example is the Simon Wiesenthal Foundation's project to build a "Museum of Tolerance"—of all museums!—right on top of the ancient Muslim Mamilla Cemetery in West Jerusalem, a project that is ongoing despite having spawned uproar and criticism.[57]

It is, however, the war of narratives about 1948, a focal point in both nationalisms, that epitomizes the competing heritagescapes I have been discussing thus far: for the majority of Israelis, 1948 stands for independence and salvation, whereas for Palestinians it is the year of the Nakba or catastrophe. In Zionist discourse, 1948 is the year the independent state of Israel was established after the first Arab-Israeli war, after Jews had come back to Palestine in successive waves of migration from Europe from the late nineteenth century onward. The foundation of the state symbolically marks the return to the ancestral homeland and hence the only possibility of salvation from another Holocaust, perceived as always a possibility for Jews in the diaspora. Each year in May, (Jewish-)Israelis celebrate their independence, achieved with the end of

the British Mandate; but that same day Palestinians commemorate the Nakba, a direct consequence of the creation of the Israeli state.

To write about the Palestinian catastrophe, the Nakba, is straightforward and extremely difficult at the same time. On the one hand, there are the historical facts. Approximately 750,000 Palestinians—or half of the Arab population of Palestine at that time—were forced into exile, dispossessed of home and homeland, and dispersed as refugees with few rights in the multiple sites of the diaspora: the occupied territories, Jordan, Syria, Lebanon, but also the United States and United Kingdom.[58] At least 418 villages, located in the areas conquered by the Israeli army, were depopulated and/or destroyed to make space for new Jewish settlements or natural reserves.[59] The thriving coastal cities, the sites of Palestine's own early modernity, were almost completely emptied of their Arab inhabitants.[60] The State of Israel was founded on these ruins, following what some scholars have defined as ethnic cleansing,[61] perpetrated by the military forces of the Yishuv, Palestine's Jewish community of the time. The landscape was radically changed and Palestinian society was shattered, dismembered. Yet beyond these facts, discussing the Nakba means entering a field of multiple competing and contrasting narratives, stretched over the past sixty years, and the global space of the Palestinian (and Jewish) diaspora. The year 1948 marks the fundamental temporal break for Palestinians as well as the core foundational event of Palestinian national experience and identity,[62] performing a similar function to what the Holocaust stands for within Israeli collective memory. This date also signifies the watershed moment between the Palestinian past and the Palestinian present, between a lost and now-idealized lifeworld there and a never-ending, recurring loop here of displacement, dispossession, and oppression.[63]

All that was before and "all that remains" of 1948 became the affective content of the post-Oslo Palestinian heritage.[64] Significantly, most proposed new heritage laws identify the threshold of fifty years for buildings and sites to be classified as historic and thus subjected to legal protection. The material traces of the pre-Nakba past are the stuff of contemporary Palestinian heritage—and the Palestinian organizations that are the subject of this book all restore houses very much like those that no longer exist in Israel but to which refugees still hold the keys as proof of their inalienable rights. For a long time, the heritage that emerged out of the memories of 1948, the unifying element of Palestin-

ian identity, was the oral culture and the popular heritage of the peasantry, like embroidery (discussed in Chapter 1);[65] more recently, it is historic urban heritage that people rediscover and mobilize to produce a rooted national past and repopulate the landscape with signs of the Palestinian ancestral presence (discussed in Chapters 2 and 3). Heritage here serves as a weapon in that contested process of space making, of crafting of "flexible territories" that several scholars have come to see as central to the unfolding of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.[66] What is salient about this heritage is its materiality, or the ways in which it triggers memory by materializing and siting it, so as to make it matter, and not just as a witness of the pre-Nakba past.[67] The project to preserve and revitalize a pre-1948 Palestinian culture rooted in place reconnects Palestinians with and reclaims the land.

To sum up, while recognizing the deep relationality of the two narratives, this book is concerned with Palestinian agency and the ways in which doing heritage in the West Bank both allows for new avenues of agency, for new ways of thinking and enacting the Palestinian struggle for liberation, and simultaneously limits it, creating new dependencies, particularly vis-à-vis the international donors who found most heritage projects.[68] While heritage has historically helped dispossess Palestinians, the fact that they are now turning things around and "rewriting their history through the study of cultural heritage . . . a task previously dominated by external archaeological missions"[69] constitutes an act of narrative self-determination. But with such postcolonial emphasis on subaltern agency I do not mean to romanticize Palestinian heritage. Akin to what Aihwa Ong calls worlding practices, or those "ambitious practices that creatively imagine and shape alternative social visions and configurations—that is: worlds,"[70] I approach Palestinian heritage as a site of creativity, as a laboratory where globalizing knowledges are made and unmade, and not just applied or reproduced, and as a laboratory within which it is possible to experiment with new institutionalities.

CULTURAL GOVERNMENTALITY

The main argument of this book is that however fragmented and off-centered this process may be, Palestinian heritage organizations are building statelike institutions, making do with difficult circumstances in often resourceful, experimental,

creative ways. If sovereign statehood is not coming into existence—especially in the way Palestinians had envisioned it at the time of the Oslo Accords—many Palestinian cultural practitioners and NGO workers believe that they are laying the groundwork for a future state.[71] They are also establishing institutions in the here and now, which are hybrid, improvised, precarious, sometimes compromised and failing, but also, at other times, practical and astute. Arguably, working on the ground, entertaining strong ties with both local and global actors, these institutions contribute to running Palestine in a kind of radically disaggregated "state." Imbued with an aspirational quality, an orientation toward the future (state), the most promising of those are simultaneously institutions and counterinstitutions, because they are animated by an insurgent ethos and configured as alternatives to mainstream (cultural) institutions, but are forced to work as such in the context of the PA's failure to establish a state.

In many places, where it is part of an expanded state apparatus, heritage is fundamentally about government. State heritage policies are concerned with the inclusion of certain narratives and identities that fall within dominant public representations (and by default the exclusion of others), the production of spatialized cultural narratives unifying the political body of the nation. But these policies are also concerned with the very concrete management of people's lives through the reshaping of their living environments and the spatial regulation of their daily practices—and thus, ultimately, they create possibilities for certain modalities of subjectivity to emerge. States also govern by heritage.[72] Both states and the local communities they attempt to control mobilize the language of heritage, particularly the language of transnational heritage expertise, but for opposite purposes, as scholars such as John Collins, Michael Herzfeld, and Lynn Meskell have demonstrated in a number of powerful ethnographies from Bahia to Rome, Crete to South Africa.[73] What is distinctive about Palestine is the central role NGOs play in the institutionalization of a heritage field. These NGOs occupy an ambivalent position. In their work, they collapse the split between mobilizing heritage to defend vulnerable communities and to resist the encroachment of the (Israeli) state and using heritage to develop institutions and help build the future (Palestinian) state. They also criticize the current instantiation of the Palestinian state, the PA. In other words, practitioners in these NGOs inhabit and negotiate in their daily working lives a fundamental tension between heritage as resistance and heritage as development—between heritage and "counterheritage."[74]

That NGOs are a varied set of actors that run Palestine—fragments of a Palestinian (quasi)state in transformation—stems from the history of Palestinian civil and political society combined with the predicaments generated by the Oslo process. But it also represents an extreme version of current "disaggregated" modes of governance stretching across multiple scales that have spread well beyond so-called weak and postconflict states and locations of intensive international intervention.[75] The state has changed in the latest global age: it has been rearticulated across a broader terrain, also thanks to an intensified transnational circulation of policy ideas about "good governance."[76] Neoliberal or advanced liberal governmentality is characterized by the ways in which "mechanisms of ruling are not located in the state but circulate throughout the society, as well as across national borders."[77] Scholars of the Foucauldian-inspired governmentality approach talk about a "degovernmentalization of the State" and a "de-statization of government"[78] to make sense of the fact that state functions are increasingly outsourced to nonstate, often transnational entities.[79] NGOs are one such type of entity. The proliferation of this organizational form originated when social movements professionalized and became NGOs by taking on the objectives and paradigm of development across the globe, especially under the influence of international donors; in the process, some NGOs have been hijacked by neoliberal forces to become agents of new forms of flexible, transnational governmentality.[80] While most NGOs maintain a strong self-perception of being separate from and opposed to the state, anthropological research has shown that NGOs are deeply entangled with it.[81] Their role is shifting and ultimately ambivalent: they may be techniques of governmentality and countergovernmentality, spaces for experimentation with an alternative sociopolitics of "deep democracy," or instruments of new forms of control from afar.[82]

In Palestine, these shifting policy ideas and broader developments in practices of governance have had their material effects too, as they have played out in the context of a disrupted state formation process and of the particular history of Palestinian NGOs. In contrast to the older folklore movement of the 1970s and 1980s, which was directly connected to a mounting nationalist mobilization, the new post-Oslo Palestinian heritage organizations are made up of professionals and are more institutionalized. Many of their founders are former political activists and critical intellectuals whose orbit is the Palestinian left,

individuals who participated in the mass mobilization and grassroots organizing of the First Intifada (1987–1993). But these individuals are no longer active in formal politics, and most younger practitioners do not have much experience in this regard; rather, they consider themselves experts. This shift must be understood in the context of developments within Palestinian civil society at large. Marked by a disengagement from the ruling Israeli military infrastructure, and by alternative, deeply democratic forms of government from below,[83] the First Intifada gave birth to an oft-celebrated, vibrant Palestinian civil society. Following the establishment of the Palestinian Authority, and with the inflow of Western funding in support of the peace process, Palestinian grassroots organizations, quite like elsewhere, underwent a process of NGOization: simultaneous professionalization, depoliticization, and progressive detachment from their former popular constituencies.[84]

In the meantime, the Oslo Accords set in motion a paradoxical dynamic: they put in place a political entity, the PA, that looks like and aspires to become a state while simultaneously undermining the process of Palestinian state formation in multiple ways. For critics like Edward Said, the failure of the peace process and the PA was built into the Oslo framework.[85] The accords undermined the realization of a sovereign Palestinian state by directly and indirectly fueling the spread of sovereignty throughout a complex field inhabited by multiple power brokers. While the Israeli security-first approach that informed the agreements gave Israel the more or less formalized right to limit Palestinian rights, the open-ended character of the Oslo provisions and the deferment of the most difficult issues to final-status negotiations left the strongest party ample room to maneuver and to produce facts on the ground, like new settlements, without incurring sanctions. Simply put, counting on strong U.S. support, Israel does not lose from not coming to an agreement and maintaining the status quo (except for, of course, not achieving peace), while for Palestinians the opposite is the case; in this impasse, Israel's strategy is to manage the conflict instead of solving it.[86]

The agreements set in place what is essentially a client state to manage Palestinians and security in the territories in lieu of Israel.[87] But the PA was (and is) financially dependent not only on Israel, which collects taxes on its behalf, but also on the international community and supranational development agencies. The dominant U.S. and Israeli narratives impute the failure of the peace

process and the PA to Arafat and his corrupt, patronage-based way of handling power, as well as to the campaign of mostly Hamas suicide bombings that plagued the negotiation process. But for many pundits, the authoritarianism and patronage of the PA were fueled by international actors themselves to quell internal Palestinian dissensus and opposition to Oslo.[88] This mix of old and new sites of power was imposed on an active civil society that had developed governing aspirations and that was sometimes empowered, and sometimes disempowered, within the intricate post-Oslo constellation of forces. The post-Oslo period saw a complex reconfiguration of forms of governmentality in Palestine into a kind of "state-which-is-not-one," namely, a deeply uneven, multilayered field of power in which new forms of colonial rule coexist with proto- or quasi-state institutions and transnational forces (including the World Bank, major donor countries, and international development agencies), as well as infranational ones.[89] Joseph Massad has called this arrangement the "'post-colonial' colony."[90]

Along with the practical demise of the two-state solution, the failure of the negotiations and the Second Intifada shattered the dream of independent statehood by displacing its coming to a distant, nebulous, very uncertain future. An interim body extended indefinitely, the PA or State of Palestine, as it has called itself after being recognized as a "non-member observer state" by the United Nations in 2012, is effectively a nonsovereign, weak entity administering a series of disconnected areas akin to South African Bantustans: around these areas, colonization and settlement building proceed uninterrupted, and Israel retains control of external borders, airspace, and all movement in and out of the Palestinian enclaves (Map 1). Under these transformed colonial conditions, Palestinian NGOs, donors, and international and transnational agencies also play "governmental roles" as service providers and funders.[91] In recent years, the influence of neoliberal models of institution building has shaped the course of the State of Palestine but also deflected international monies away from it and into the NGOs,[92] seen more and more, as a EU report states, "not merely as partners in project and programme implementation, but as partners in policy making and management of public resources . . . in governance."[93] Heritage is an important part of this process.

After Oslo, former grassroots organizers have been transformed into what Sari Hanafi and Linda Tabar call the new "Palestinian globalized elite" through

their co-optation by the international aid industry.[94] This post-Oslo social bloc is made up of middle-class, highly educated, and English-speaking professionals working in the NGO sector, endowed with well-paid jobs (much better than those at the PA) and worldwide connections.[95] Heritage practitioners have professionalized too and tapped into transnational circuits of expertise and money. Their global connectivity and new alliances are restructuring local knowledge and practices.[96]

Palestinian practitioners employ a mixture of developmental and activist idioms to frame their activities. Buzzwords such as *outstanding value*, *World Heritage*, *UNESCO guidelines, management plan*, *impact assessment*, and *job creation* are all part of the vocabulary of Palestinian heritage. Palestinian heritage is part of a transnational infrastructure. Projects are funded by international donors, mainly European ones. Often trained in Western academia, Palestinian practitioners spend a considerable amount of time traveling the world, attending conferences, training programs, and meetings organized by international universities, research centers, and organizations such as the International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property (ICCROM) and UN-Habitat. International consultants and task forces often visit the West Bank to provide technical assistance. Palestinian experts are also part of transnational professional networks, such as the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS), and regional cultural partnership programs like Euromed Heritage. They also emphasize how Palestinian heritage is and should be "inclusive,"[97] "universal,"[98] and "multicultural"[99]—as opposed to the exclusions operated by Israeli archaeology and heritage. Supported by transnational networks and flows of monies, this new Palestinian national past is conceived by its makers in close-to-liberal terms as multicultural and cosmopolitan and is imagined as a project of rooted cosmopolitanism.[100]

Through these circuits, Palestinian practitioners participate in transnational cultural policy conversations framing heritage as an engine of socioeconomic development.[101] No longer mobilized only to shape identities and conduct, to uplift citizens, and to promote cultural nationalism and national cohesion, globally circulating policy discourses frame culture and cultural heritage as "assets," as "resources" that, if properly harnessed, can produce economic gains and stimulate local economies in the context of cultural capitalism, and even engage with all sorts of social problems.[102] In Palestine, however, urban regen-

eration takes up a form that is the product of the articulation of this globally circulating language with more local (yet themselves highly stratified) legacies and histories, marked by the intersection of heterogeneous ideas and cultural formations. Because of their capacity to articulate a discourse with multifaceted resonance, familiar to and contiguous with local speech and donors' lingo, Palestinian heritage practitioners have been effective in pulling in funds and international support and in dealing with a vast array of problems concerning the management of local populations. What they do blurs the boundaries between resistance and "government by cultural heritage."

The secret of these organizations' success, in other words, is their transnational connectivity, their capability for deep networking across local and global scales. The NGO Riwaq is a good example of a kind of creative, activist preservation that restores buildings along with the social fabric that accompanied them essentially by activating multiple relationships across scales. It is on the stage of the Venice Biennale that Riwaq launched its most important scheme thus far, the 50 Villages project, to rehabilitate the fifty most significant historic centers of the West Bank and Gaza; after the launch, the organization has continued to use art and architecture biennials as stages to promote it. Many village projects are based on the idea of opening spaces for "investigation and experimentation based on networking with local and international experts and institutions in different sectors" and a pragmatic, flexible "planning while doing" approach mobilizing municipalities, local associations, and citizens to build a sustainable heritage infrastructure.[103] Riwaq endeavors to regenerate neighborhoods by opening up "imagined moments of possibility" through the use of an innovative social design toolkit, including memory houses, eco-kitchens, and the like.[104] In the case of the rehabilitation of the village of Hajjeh, for example, Riwaq reactivated a traditional social solidarity system (*al-ʿoneh*/*al-ʿawna*) by which neighbors and relatives help each other and each participant takes care of the tasks that she or he is best at.[105]

In their interaction with local, national, and transnational actors, Palestinian heritage practitioners not only help reconfigure urban and rural spaces but also promote new formations of civic identity. By promoting "heritage awareness," they seek to make residents of the newly restored inner cities into heritage-minded citizens of the Palestinian state-to-come. Thus, in and through their practices, these organizations prefigure a kind of citizen-subject

and cultivate a set of dispositions based on taking care of the national public good; civility; active, participative citizenship; and cosmopolitanism—and no longer based on militancy and resistance like earlier Palestinian heritage projects (although these remain important). A key Palestinian heritage practitioner and activist talked to me about a key objective of his work being "tell[ing] the PEOPLE WHAT THEY CAN THEMSELVES DO,"[106] that is, creating "active" and "responsible" citizens. They try to "not only construct a . . . new city but, on that basis, also constitute it as a *polis* with a different order of citizenship."[107] Such prefigurations of citizenship look toward the future and yet clash with a present reality of occupied and aid-dependent subjects. The targets of heritage-led urban rehabilitation and residents of Palestinian inner cities are not citizens of a sovereign state but subjects of both military colonial violence and humanitarian interventions, and these heritage projects do not cut such dependency—(often) the contrary.

In governing culture, NGOs' interventions also regulate people's lives and reconfigure their public and private spaces. Animated by a "will to improve,"[108] they interpellate and attempt to produce citizens of the future state by involving them in remaking and "bettering" their living environments—as in the example of Hajjeh. These organizations do much more than manage heritage and historic properties; they manage populations as well, as shown by the case of Hebron. In this book, I look at this dynamic using the notion of cultural governmentality, which points to the ways in which cultural heritage participate in the government of territories and populations in the absence of stable state structures and under conditions of multisited, graduated authority.[109] Heritage works here as an unusual, often resourceful technique of governance.[110]

A PATCHWORK DISCOURSE

How are we to understand the Palestinian heritage culture, or any heritage culture that has local roots and a distinctively local flavor and simultaneously embraces global forms of knowledge?[111] Palestinian heritage culture appropriates the language of transnational heritage expertise and translates it into an idiom that is not local in the conventional sense but represents an amalgam of local legacies, deeply rooted ideas and practices, and globalizing discourses, with anticolonial politics as well as institution building clearly in mind. The re-

sult of this operation, which consists of acts of recuperation and of translation, is rather new. This contrasts with the view put forth by many critical heritage scholars that the globalization of heritage and the spread of the transnational heritage discourse represents a case of Western hegemony.[112]

Palestinian heritage practitioners understand the kind of work they do in terms of this transnational heritage discourse. "Heritage" constitutes a specific way of talking about and organizing the relationship between people and their environment-as-heritage, while also producing circulating dominant representations of the past.[113] Critical heritage studies call this the "authorized heritage discourse," the institutionalized way to deal with pasts that matter in the present—heritage sites—by placing them under the purview of experts and states.[114] This discourse is grounded in the idea that certain things and places, usually monumental ones, are endowed with educational and civilizational, edifying values, mostly on aesthetic or scientific historical grounds, and that the physical preservation of their "authentic" features as a public good should be a matter of concern for states (and, in some outstanding cases, of the international community too). Because of this, these heritage sites should be placed under the purview of state-authorized experts working within state agencies. But, as critical scholars have shown, sites, artifacts, and things are not heritage, do not possess inherent values; they become heritage through a process of valuation, or heritagization, which is always contentious and contested especially around the issue of what to preserve of the innumerable relics of the past and how.[115] This heritage discourse has a Eurocentric genealogy intertwined with the histories of the science of conservation, archaeology, and art history—allies if not handmaidens of the nationalist and the colonial project—and with the bureaucratic development of the nation-state since the nineteenth century.[116] While this is not the only discourse one could mobilize to make sense of and manage the presence of the past in the present, it has gone global.[117] As a traveling bundle of ideas and practices, this discourse is deeply shaped by an intensified, transnational cultural policy traffic that produces heterogeneous, often contradictory, and always contested localized manifestations.[118] This is why instead of *authorized*, I prefer to use the term *transnational* to emphasize the quality of this heritage discourse as shifting, border crossing, while keeping the reference to its inherent power dimension.[119] Akin to human rights, this discourse has expanded into a transnational regime of practices made up of a multitude of overlapping local assemblages—like Palestinian heritage.[120]

But is Palestinian cultural heritage (*al-turath al-thaqafi al-filastini*) a local translation or a "vernacularization" of this transnational heritage discourse?[121] The relationship between "local" and "global" knowledges is more complex than the way it has been conceptualized thus far within critical heritage studies. As Anna Tsing argues, "Concepts in translation . . . both refer to something in common and exceed that common reference."[122] Heritage and Palestinian *turath*—in spite of my translation as "Palestinian heritage"—are thus not exactly synonyms. Palestinian heritage is the product of multiple heterogeneous, intertwined cultural legacies that cannot be understood by reference to global knowledge alone. What are these diverse but intertwined legacies?

Palestinian heritage defines itself against two further understandings and practices of heritage, or heritage formations, which nevertheless constitute part of its legacy: the heritage revitalization project (*i'adat al-ihya' al-thaqafi*) of the new generation of Palestinian heritage organizations clashes with the notion of heritage as antiquities (*al-athar*) that survives in the name and practices of the PA's Department of Antiquities and Cultural Heritage. This formation has a colonial matrix, already apparent in the way the current PA heritage agency takes its name directly from its British Mandate counterpart. Long the exclusive object of archaeology, antiquities are the ruins and traces of ancient civilizations, chiefly imagined to be of classical Greece and Rome but also of other Mediterranean societies such as those that developed in Egypt and the Near East before the Middle Ages.[123] While including the Near East in its allegedly universalist narrative of human civilization, the discourse of antiquities is deeply Eurocentric, chiefly because it privileges the place of the classical in a narrative whose telos is Europe,[124] and because the search for the remnants of the "cradle of [Western] civilization" helped legitimize the colonial project of those who claim to be antiquities' true heirs.[125] Such heritage formations are not to be understood as temporal markers, in that while clearly predating the heritage practices that are the main subject of this book, they are still alive and well in the work of a number of contemporary organizations. As the history of the politics of archaeology in Egypt and Jordan shows,[126] Middle Eastern political elites have co-opted the ancient civilizational past into their cultural nationalism and have recoded it as a narrative of national liberation and aggrandizement; in this context, heritage bureaucracies still bear the imprint of the colonial legacy. The PA largely fits this pattern as well.

Distancing themselves from the discourse of antiquities, the new generation of Palestinian organizations has inherited the mission of the individuals and groups that turned heritage into a practice of resistance in the 1970s and 1980s, namely, the so-called West Bank folklore movement. These groups were interested in preserving the rural folklore (*al-fulklur*) or popular heritage (*al-turath al-sha'bi*)—embroidery, songs, and traditional craftsmanship. In the context of the rebirth of the national liberation movement in the occupied territories and as part of the related grassroots organizational buildup of the 1970s and 1980s, what was at stake then, as now, are the preservation of Palestinian identity in the face of occupation and the production of a new history from below, to counter hegemonic Zionist narratives of the "land without a people."

In addition to the transnational language of heritage expertise and the discourses of antiquities and *fulklur*, we can identify an additional, if less visible, legacy in the making of Palestinian heritage. The notion of *turath*—still translated as "heritage" but in a sense different from the meanings discussed earlier—has been important to intellectual debates in the Arab World since the nineteenth century. It became central to those debates after the 1967 Arab-Israeli war that marked the defeat of Arab nationalism and its modernization project, and the loss of the whole of historic Palestine. Concerns about *turath* are also concerns with the meaning of Arab modernity and with the relationship between the Arab World and the West. In response to colonialism and cultural imperialism, Arab thinkers became preoccupied with the twin questions of Arab "retardation" or "backwardness" (*takhalluf*) and "regression" (*nuqus*)—the alleged fact of the Arab World "lagging behind" the West—and with ways to "catch up" and achieve progress.[127] Understandings of the content of *turath* vary: for example, while for Islamist scholars such as the Egyptian Muhammad al-Ghazali it is about Islamic heritage and the Muslim tradition, for critical philosopher Muhammad 'Abid al-Jabiri *turath* stands for a wide array of intellectual and cultural activities but especially Arab rationalism.[128] Nevertheless, despite such ideological differences, Arab thinkers tend to share similar ideas about the necessity of achieving an authentic, truly Arab creative modernity through a critical revival or renewal of heritage (*tajdid*, interestingly a term also used by Palestinian heritage practitioners).[129]

The project of rethinking heritage in contemporary Arab thought is about decolonizing Arab modernity in a way that is often not devoid of orientalism or the legacy of cultural imperialism itself. The persisting role of orientalism and

colonial taxonomies in Arab intellectual production are evident in the ways Arab heritage discourse assumes a set of late nineteenth-century Eurocentric concepts such as civilization (*hadara*) and culture (*thaqafa*), as well as a colonial evolutionary teleology of progress (*taqaddum*) with the "West" as its peak (to which the Arab World has to catch up).[130] Heritage is that past of civilizational worth that can be revived as a solution to current decline—of course, this notion of decline and the Arab Islamic World as "degenerate" is an orientalist self-perception itself, which has been recently refueled by dominant global culturalist discourses centered on the idea of a clash of civilizations. For example, discussing the national heritage discourse of Oman, Amal Sachedina shows how this is based on the understanding that heritage provides the ground of a modern national culture that is unique to Oman yet responsive to and part of a universal narrative of civilizations.[131] In Palestine, the close association of preserving heritage and producing "modern" culture and art, as well as of memory, heritage, and cultural creativity, is also a feature of the work of many heritage organizations in the context of a vibrant Palestinian cultural scene. What is peculiar to Palestine is the fact that such practices are not state imposed but rather the outcome of a diffuse sensibility, emerging out of rooted civil society practices.

For Palestinian practitioners, then, heritage is not "Western" but fundamentally Palestinian in at least two different ways. First, heritage has mattered here well before Oslo and the latest phase of Palestinian history: contemporary organizations continue a rooted tradition of place making and resistance by heritage. Second, Palestinian practitioners believe that they take an active part in the making of the transnational heritage discourse. When Palestinian practitioners attend international conferences and meetings, take part in UNESCO workshops or initiatives, and write and share their work, they not only extend their global networks and connectivity but also inject into the latter new ideas about ways of doing heritage. In other words, "local" translations and remediations of the transnational heritage discourse shape it back in manifold ways.[132]

METHODOLOGY (AND POWER GEOGRAPHIES)

The facts of apartheid and occupation inevitably shaped the scope and units of my analysis, often in ways that I had not foreseen. Indeed, Palestine exempli-

fies what Wendy Brown and others have shown to be the paradox of neoliberal walls,[133] whereby the proliferation of walls and fences on the paths of some people goes along with the widening of global horizons for others. Settlement construction has made the creation of an independent, sovereign, viable Palestinian state side by side with Israel close to impossible; the current status quo, which does not look like it will change in the short term, is one of apartheid.[134] The process of sociospatial fragmentation within Palestinian society has reached its climax with the splintering of the territories since 2007 into an abject Hamas-controlled Gaza Strip and a Western-backed Fatah-controlled Palestinian Authority in the West Bank. The removal of a few checkpoints and increased mobility in the West Bank went along with the tightening closure of Gaza, possibly the closest contemporary embodiment of Giorgio Agamben's camp paradigm, a place subject to siege and continuing incursions as well as outright bombing campaigns every couple of years.

Such apartheid geography has of course had an impact on NGOs' work as well as my research practices—on the local geographical imagination and everyday lives. West Bank NGOs cannot work in Israel (and have great difficulty doing work in Gaza) and are often wary of collaborating with Palestinian organizations there because of fears of repercussions. In recent years, Palestinians have been trying to undo the effects of Bantustanization and dismemberment, for example by fostering links with Palestinian organizations active in Israel—but they have had limited success.[135] Apartheid also has research implications, including the fact that my work was limited to the West Bank and East Jerusalem: not having a yellow-plated Israeli car, I found that crossing into Israel was difficult and time consuming, and even East Jerusalem was often difficult to reach during my fieldwork. Entering Gaza was nearly impossible for somebody not working for an international organization or the press, requiring a long permit-seeking process with the Israeli army (which I admit I never tried).

The sociospatial fragmentation of Palestine also divides Palestinians from Palestinians and exacerbates already-existing gender, religion, and class cleavages within Palestinian society. My informants came from across the whole spectrum of Palestinian society in ways that I sometimes found difficult to navigate. While I had the major privilege of a European passport, I felt that I had much in common with my informants in the Ramallah NGOs I worked with: architects, heritage practitioners, artists, cultural producers, and archaeologists,

mostly secular, often with transnational life trajectories such as an MA or PhD from abroad. At first, like all busy professionals, they had no time for me; gradually, however, many turned into friends and colleagues, people with whom I shared experiences, work, and networks—and ultimately the same language of heritage and cultural production.[136] The engineers and administrative staff of the HRC, however, belonged to a different social group: all locals, they were largely practicing Muslims, were socially more conservative, and had slightly less international trajectories outside the Arab World (interestingly, several of the older engineers had studied in the Soviet Union when ties with the PLO were strong).

But the people with whom I immediately connected, in spite of our many differences, were my neighbors in Hebron; they welcomed me in their community and made me (and my Bethlehemite cat, whom they came to love) feel at home in the courtyards and alleys of the Old City. The measure of the cleft between them and my Ramallah friends and colleagues—as well as of some of the tensions that I negotiated during my fieldwork—became clear to me one day when moving back and forth between the two towns, which at times seemed worlds apart. I had decided to wear a veil in Hebron—not a full, close-fitting *hijab* but a loose scarf covering my head. I had come to this decision for various reasons: to stand out less in my forays into the Old City, to signal my respect and my will to integrate, and to downplay my being different. I had thought about it for some time, but what eventually made me decide was the encounter with a Palestinian man on the street who asked whether I was an Israeli settler; while he had been surprisingly very kind while asking, I definitely wanted to avoid such a situation again. Actually, my female friends in the *hara* (quarter) appreciated my gesture and my playing with the colors and patterns of my scarf, which was clearly no *hijab* but my own elaboration and adaptation. My problem, curious as it may seem, then became where exactly to take it out in my frequent journeys from Hebron to Ramallah: obviously the collective taxi (*service*) was no good place to do so, but neither were the streets of Ramallah and Hebron. In Hebron I felt uncomfortable without my scarf; in Ramallah I felt uncomfortable with it. But one day something happened that materialized that shifting boundary between different Palestinian worlds, the border between Hebron and Ramallah, and revealed its social substance. I had gone to a small town on the outskirts of Hebron for the inauguration of a school recently

restored by a Ramallah NGO I was very close to—an important event, bringing together the mayor of the city, teachers, and some pupils with most of the NGO staff and the Swedish consul. The moment I arrived at the school, which was all festively decorated for the occasion, I ran into the head of the NGO, an older woman, a secularist writer and public intellectual, whom I admire tremendously and consider a friend. When she saw me in my scarf, she glared at me with deep contempt, even scorn: "Are you sick by any means?" she asked angrily. I wanted to disappear.

After 2004, I conducted the largest chunk of my fieldwork in the West Bank between September 2005 and December 2006, mostly divided between Ramallah and Hebron. I went back for shorter research trips in 2007, 2011, and 2013, as well as for short visits later on, and remained in touch with Palestinian friends and colleagues throughout the years. Palestine as a diasporic nation extends well beyond its historical confines, which means that I have carried out fieldwork in surprising places—for example, at the 2009 Venice art biennial on the occasion of the first Palestinian quasi-pavilion there. During my year in Ramallah, I volunteered for Palestinian heritage-related NGOs such as the Palestinian Association for Cultural Exchange (PACE) and the local UNESCO office—a position that gave me much-needed mobility in the difficult conditions that reigned in the mid-2000s during the Second Intifada and that allowed me, among others, access to closed-doors meetings with donors and Palestinian heritage stakeholders. While I have never technically volunteered for Riwaq, I have spent many hours at Riwaq's office in Ramallah and elsewhere in the company of its enthusiastic staff, many of whom are now more friends than informants. However, the bulk of my research stems from the time when I lived and worked—thanks to the help of many wonderful friends and colleagues—in the Old City of Hebron. There I volunteered for the local Defense for Children International (DCI) office as well as for the HRC, even though my plan to carry out a survey of the Old City with them did not go through eventually.

OUTLINE OF THE BOOK

This book traces a shift, however incomplete and contradictory, in the meanings and aims of Palestinian heritage, from resistance to resistance coupled with development and state building; it also charts a transition from an emphasis on

folklore to urban regeneration and museums. Chapter 1 examines the history of heritage preservation (*hifz al-turath*) in Palestine, beginning with the work of Palestinian orientalists and ethnographers under the British Mandate in the 1920s and 1930s, and then focusing on the folklore movement of the 1970s and 1980s and its relationship to the national liberation movement and the women's movement, and its practice of anticolonial resistance and activist preservation in the occupied territories. Focusing on the project of historic conservation and urban revitalization in the Old City of Hebron, Chapter 2 explores informal governmentalities through heritage and how heritage organizations come to function as hybrid institutions of local government. Chapter 3 examines the state-building role of heritage NGOs and the complex, shifting relationship between these organizations and the heritage body of the PA. It argues that the Palestinian heritage movement or "heritage by NGOs" helps create and sustain not only icons and rituals of cultural nationalism but also a national infrastructure of heritage preservation and a set of national institutions alternative to those of the PA, like inventories, heritage units, master plans, and laws. Placing heritage initiatives in the context of a broader cultural revival and "culture of cultural production" in the West Bank, Chapter 4 discusses the curious history of post-Oslo museums; while the PA itself has failed in its projects to create a major national museum—as a key institution of national representation—Palestinian artists and cultural producers have experimented instead with different museum formats, creating virtual museums and nomadic museums in exile, thus producing creative national institutions in transnational spaces. But these alternative museums struggle to balance the fundamental tension between a push to establish authority (as institutionality, as rules and regulations, an authoritative museum voice) and a push to challenge such authority, to promote radical, democratic practices.

This shift toward heritage as development does not imply the disappearance of heritage as resistance; nor is it one without tensions. These tensions constitute important themes throughout the book. Palestinian heritage practices both reconfigure and are shaped by the transnational heritage discourse, particularly in the version promoted by UNESCO. Another tension concerns the clash between politicizing and depoliticizing logics in a context where the logic of UNESCO tends to produce a depoliticizing technical discourse of best practices and objective science. This relates to a further crucial tension, that

of the subjects and specific figures of citizenship that are being interpellated through such proliferating discourse. The militant is indeed no longer the subject of heritage, because the kinds of ethical dispositions and civic attributes these heritage projects envision and promote are those of heritage-concerned and public-good-minding national citizens who "do things by themselves" instead of waiting for the (weak, absent) state to intervene. These, however, are "not-yet citizens" or "citizens-to-be"—the making of future dispositions—since at present "heritage stakeholders," as heritage jargon labels them, are wrapped up in the web of dependencies produced by development and humanitarian aid and in new interdependencies woven by Palestinian NGOs. Such tensions unfold throughout the following chapters, together with the main themes of the book, namely heritage as a shifting and expanding transnational framework of practices and meanings, its role in the anticolonial struggle and in the process of state formation in Palestine, the place of NGOs as central actors, and the ambivalence of cultural governmentalities.

CHAPTER 1

A POLITICAL HISTORY OF PALESTINIAN HERITAGE

The Old Bethlehem Home, founded in 1972, is one of the oldest Palestinian museums. This folklore museum presents a traditional Palestinian home, centered on a multipurpose living room with embroidered cushions, folded mattresses, and the typical wooden trousseau chest, whose contents a bride and her female relatives would have embroidered over the years. There is a kitchen with a host of old cooking utensils; another room showcases embroidered traditional costumes and jewelry. Interrupting this aura of oriental authenticity, and quite unlike other Palestinian folklore museums, the bedroom displays early twentieth-century Western-style furniture and family photographs, which give us a glimpse into a bourgeois urban interior from the time of the British Mandate. But peasant material culture and especially embroidery, a key symbol of Palestinian identity, are predominant in the exhibit, and visitors can purchase all kinds of embroidered items—dresses, pillow covers, bags small and large—newly produced by the sewing workshop attached to the museum.

The Mandate's Western-style furniture comes from the abode of the late museum's founder and longtime director Julia Dabdoub. A prominent Bethlehemite and a former president of the Bethlehem's Arab Women's Union charitable society, Julia recounted the story of the establishment of the museum as follows:

> After the 1967 Arab-Israeli War, the Arab Women's Union . . . started its Embroidery Centre. *The purpose was to provide jobs for the needy women. Jobs are*

> *better than charity; they provide the woman with an income as well as self-respect.* Embroidery is an area which most women are proficient in as most of the Palestinian women's traditional clothes are embroidered, and there are a number of villages and Bedouin women who still wear traditional dresses. The project was successful; we sold our products at local exhibitions and the more we sold, the more job opportunities were created. Then we realized that it was necessary to purchase traditional Bethlehem clothes and copy the designs. This was the start of our collection.[1]
>
> Originally, the Arab Women's Union did not really want a museum. *We started an exhibition to preserve old things for our children and grandchildren in order to show them our culture and identity.* We called it our old Bethlehem home. When people started to call it a museum, we took over the name.[2]

Dabdoub links the creation of the museum to the urge to preserve a Palestinian culture and identity increasingly under threat after the 1967 occupation but also, most strikingly, to the project of giving disadvantaged women an "income as well as self-respect." Her narrative makes this instance of heritagization—the creation of the museum—appear to be an unintended consequence of two interlinked projects, of cultural survival and women's emancipation. Serving both aims, embroidery workshops such as the one attached to the Old Bethlehem Home mushroomed in the occupied Palestinian territories and across the camps of the diaspora between the 1970s and the 1980s in the context of the grassroots organizational momentum of the Palestinian folklore movement. During the demonstrations of the First Intifada, women wore embroidered dresses with old and new political motifs like Palestinian flags as they confronted the soldiers.

The whole gamut of folk culture, a vocabulary of interconnected images and things—embroidery and stone architecture but also the *kufiyya*, or traditional male headdress—has nourished the figurative language of Palestinian nationalism in a myriad of settings beyond this museum, from the intimate space of domestic living rooms to bureaucrats' offices, from political cartoons and banners to contemporary art. While European colonialists and Zionists shared a nearly exclusive preoccupation with biblical archaeology, which remains a site of high ideological intensity in Israeli society, for Palestinians it is peasant lore and the vernacular built heritage that have historically figured prominently in

the national imagination. But when and how did peasant lore and the vernacular culture of the recent past—once seen as ordinary and even backward—turn into cherished national heritage, the stuff of museums? To trace the making of Palestinian heritage is to examine the historical trajectory and manifold agencies that transformed a set of items used daily by peasants into unifying symbols of the nation and made their curation an important platform of political mobilization.

This process of heritagization did not follow a linear trajectory or a gradual development but accelerated during two specific periods, which are also times of heightened anticolonial, nationalist activism. The first was the British Mandate in the 1920s and 1930s, and the second was the rebirth of the nationalist movement in the 1970s and the 1980s, particularly in the territories, after the major defeat of the Nakba. Colonial science had put a spotlight on peasant lore as remnants of an ancestral culture going back to the Bible, but nationalist intellectuals and, later, activists gave it new meaning by rearticulating orientalist discourse. This chapter brings the story of the two successive waves of heritagization of peasant material culture into the broader story of the Palestinian national liberation movement by showing how, over the course of the twentieth century, two groups of Palestinian ethnographers turned a colonial sensibility for heritage, along with its attendant practices, into cultural-political resistance.

A brief outline of twentieth-century Palestinian history provides context for the story of Palestinian heritage that follows. World War I, in which Palestine was an important battleground, catalyzed major political and socioeconomic processes that had been at work since the second half of the nineteenth century: colonialism; the integration of Palestine into the capitalist world economy; the dispossession and displacement of Palestinian peasants, or *fallahin* (sing. *fallah*); and the growth of Zionism and Palestinian nationalism.[3] On a political level, the war gave colonial powers, such as Great Britain and France, the opportunity to realize their long-standing plans for the Middle East; they divided the spoils of Ottoman defeat among themselves. But during the war, the British had made conflicting promises in order to get maximum backing against the Ottomans: they had promised Sharif Hussein of Mecca an independent Arab country that would cover most of the Arab Middle East while also promising support to the Zionist movement for the creation of a Jewish national home in Palestine.

A mandate of the League of Nations (1920, formally ratified in 1922–1923) legitimated the British rule of these former Ottoman territories. Mandates were essentially colonial structures that were grounded in the idea, akin to the *mission civilisatrice*, that certain "peoples [are] not yet able to stand by themselves," and therefore, the "tutelage of such peoples should be entrusted to advanced nations" (Article 22 of the Covenant of the League of Nations).[4] But unlike earlier colonial forms, mandates were predicated on the notion of a nation-state to come, one to be facilitated by the mandatory power.[5] The British Mandate for Palestine was even more ambiguous and contradictory in its professed defense of the interests of the native population because its charter included the Balfour Declaration of 1917, namely, the British "declaration of sympathy with Jewish Zionist aspirations" and the promise to facilitate "the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people."[6] This was the goal of the Zionist movement, inspired by nationalism and driven by anti-Semitism and Jewish persecution and pogroms in Europe (which later culminated in the Holocaust, with the extermination of European Jews by the Nazis). Around the time of the Balfour Declaration, however, Jews represented only around 10 percent of the local population of Palestine;[7] moreover, many of them, the so-called Arab Jews, were relatively integrated into the local society. That the notion of both an Arab and a Jewish nation-state was embedded in the Mandate's logic as a real scenario, even if only a future one, as well as the competition between Arab and Jewish nationalism on the same soil played a crucial role in the early emergence of a concept of Palestinian heritage.

During the Mandate period (and with the mandatory power's support), Zionism and the growth of Jewish immigration from Europe had a dramatic impact on the life of what was at that time the vast majority of Palestine's population, the Palestinian peasantry. The steady increase in the purchase of land by (European) Jews and world Jewish organizations, coupled with the tightening of the ideological policy of Hebrew labor, according to which Jews employed only Jews, meant that economic life became progressively segregated and that many Palestinian peasants were evicted from the lands they had farmed communally for centuries.[8] Dispossessed because of Zionist purchases and expansion of capitalized agriculture, the Palestinian peasantry underwent processes of impoverishment and urbanization that deeply affected their traditional lifeworlds.[9] The waves of evictions triggered the first confrontations between

natives and the Zionist movement; heightened conflict then fueled the development of a Palestinian nationalist movement, which would explode in the Great Arab Revolt of 1936–1939. These early dispossessions and the confrontation with colonialism—the beginning of a pattern of loss of land and rooted culture—made Palestinians begin to look at their eroding lifeworld as something precious, as valuable—in other words, as heritage. A group of Palestinian orientalists played a major role in this shift.

The dispossession of the Palestinian peasantry culminated in the Nakba, or "Catastrophe," the core foundational event of Palestinian national experience, identity, and historical narrative. Historical Palestine was swept away by the 1948 Arab-Israeli War and the creation of the State of Israel, which forced an estimated 750,000 Palestinians out of their homes and destroyed their villages and society.[10] Exiled Palestinians dispersed across the many sites of the diaspora, and peasants in particular were confined, with few rights, in refugee camps located in Jordan, Lebanon, and Syria, as well as in Gaza and the West Bank (then under Egyptian and Jordanian administration, respectively). Palestinian society and pre-Nakba culture disintegrated, and with it, the national movement.

In the 1967 Arab-Israeli War, Israel occupied the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, among other Arab territories, initiating a military occupation and colonization that continue to this day. For Palestinians, the Naksa commemorates their displacement and the loss of land in that war. The dramatic defeat of the Arab states sealed the end of the influence of pan-Arabism and Egyptian president Gamal Abdel Nasser over the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), created by the Arab League in 1964. This ushered in a revitalized, autonomous national movement lead by the secular-nationalist Fatah faction; Yasser Arafat took charge of the PLO's leadership in 1969. While armed struggle represented the most visible activity of the PLO, its main political achievement was the revival of Palestinian nationalism and the creation of a quasi-state in exile that harbored myriad national institutions.[11] Providing an institutional framework for the production of a body of knowledge and a shared collective memory, the establishment of research institutions in Lebanon, such as the Palestine Research Center, facilitated the emergence of a corpus of historical works that began to delineate a coherent Palestinian national narrative.[12] Written against the dominant moral-heroic Israeli version of the history of 1948 as glorious Is-

raeli independence, this body of scholarship substantiated the basic Palestinian claim that ethnic and spatial cleansing had taken place.[13]

Nationalist intellectuals and scholars who wrote about 1948 saw in the Nakba the pivotal event of Palestinian history, with the figure of the peasant as its main historical subject.[14] After 1967, Palestinians from all walks of life, even those who had nothing to do with peasant life, began to identify with peasant culture in its (dis)connection to the land, that is, in the ways it was both intimately connected to the homeland and violently, traumatically uprooted from it. People began to identify with the narrative coming out of the PLO's proto-institutional network framing the Nakba as the erasure of an older, agricultural and pastoral Palestine wiped out by the forces of colonial modernity. (That is not the only possible interpretation of the events of 1948; another reading, for instance, views these same events through the lens of the loss of the cosmopolitan coastal cities and the erasure of Palestinian urban modernity, but this narrative has emerged timidly only in recent years.[15]) This knowledge production helped engender a unifying reformulation of Palestinian identity in relation to the experience of the loss of homes and homeland, and particularly to the experience of the refugee—that is, the former peasant—who also constituted the base of the national liberation movement at that time.[16]

Meanwhile, in the newly occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip, large-scale political, economic, and social changes were under way, in particular the shift of large sectors of the Palestinian labor force away from peasantry, or the final demise of rural Palestine.[17] This was a consequence of land expropriations and of the integration of the Palestinian economy into the Israeli one, which meant that up until the 1990s, nearly half of the Palestinian labor force was employed in construction or agricultural work in Israel. As in the 1920s and 1930s, momentous historical events triggered a process of accelerated change that further transformed the Palestinian landscape and social fabric and dispossessed its inhabitants, again, of homes and livelihoods while generating new forms of attachment to the land and new practices of *sumud*, or "steadfastness," the chief value of Palestinian nationalism. Heritage, then, emerged as a key practice thanks to its adoption by the women's movement active in the resurgent national struggle.

By producing embroidery, symbols of the nation *and* commodities, Palestinian women were doing the work of cultural reproduction of the nation while

both repeating and subverting traditional gender roles. Scholars of nationalism such as Richard Handler have shown how, in nationalist logic, heritage provides the essence of a nation, that very substance without which a nation ceases to exist: a nation is a nation because it possesses a distinctive culture rooted in its territory.[18] No longer mere cultural signifiers of the nation, Palestinian women in the 1970s and 1980s took an active, prominent role as makers of heritage and cultural transmitters; in so doing, they remade themselves. The act of embroidering, of giving form and continuity to the nation, created capacity, self-confidence, strength, and a new political consciousness. What Foucault calls "subjectification" is an active trajectory of self-formation that a person achieves through historically specific techniques that lead to a new self-understanding:[19] Palestinian women in the 1970s and 1980s turned themselves into nationalist agents of resistance also by way of heritage.

With the Israeli invasion of Lebanon in 1982 and the subsequent expulsion of the PLO, the center of gravity of Palestinian resistance eventually moved to the occupied territories. There, a folklore movement to preserve a threatened Palestinian culture developed out of a national mass mobilization. A thick network of committees sustained the protracted campaigns of civil disobedience and the peculiar process of disengagement from the infrastructure of Israeli rule that marked the First Intifada (1987–1992)—a process in which the leftist factions of the PLO played a major role.[20] The folklore movement participated in the making of this alternative infrastructure, this emerging "state from below," which would feature prominently in Palestinian internal politics and pursue an uneasy relationship with the structures created by the returning PLO after the Oslo Accords. But the roots of the folklore movement were already taking hold in the years of the Mandate.

TAWFIQ CANAAN'S ORIENTALISM AND EARLY PALESTINIAN ETHNOGRAPHIES

The birth of the idea of a national Palestinian heritage goes back to the 1920s, when a group of native intellectuals, working from within colonial institutions of knowledge production, researched the folk culture of the Palestinian peasants, the *fallahin*, turning previously unmarked objects and practices into deeply valued heritage. European ethnographers and orientalists studied the

customs and traditions of the Palestinian villages because they saw them as relics of and clues to biblical ways of life, the center of their scientific interest. While making it their own, the so-called nativist orientalists or nativist ethnographers reworked this colonial discourse about the Palestinian peasantry, with several important differences, in the spirit of a nascent Palestinian nationalism. Their ethnographic writings, discussed shortly, contained in embryonic form some of the tropes that characterized the imaginary of the national liberation movement of the latter part of the twentieth century: most significantly, the idea of the peasants as the authentic soul of the nation—in their immemorial connection with the land—and of the folkways of the Palestinian peasantry as national heritage.[21]

The "nativist orientalists," as Salim Tamari calls them in an apparent oxymoron, entertained an ambivalent relation with what they, like their European counterparts, saw as a timeless indigenous culture.[22] They also occupied an ambivalent, liminal position between the Palestinian peasants and colonial society, at once close to and removed from both of them. They were Palestinian elites engaging in oriental studies; unlike most European orientalists, however, they had a keen interest in native culture in and of itself, and not only as a pale reflection of biblical times. Considered the father of Palestinian ethnography and folklore studies, Tawfiq Canaan was the most important and most prolific of these intellectuals, who came to be known as Canaan's circle. Other key figures of this circle were the nationalist activist and lawyer Omar Saleh al-Barghuthi and the Harvard-educated pedagogue and historian Khalil Totah—together they wrote *The History of Palestine* (1920)—and the archaeologist and curator of the Palestine Museum Stephan Hanna Stephan.[23]

Canaan's biography and social life are paradigmatic of the milieu out of which this sense of Palestinian heritage emerged. He was a renowned physician who trained at the American University of Beirut as well as in Germany, and an ethnographer by passion—the author of around sixty medical and thirty-five ethnographic articles, as well as a number of political pamphlets (three of his book manuscripts were lost in 1948 together with his Jerusalem mansion).[24] He was a prominent member of the Mandate's cosmopolitan elite through his work as a doctor and his multiple affiliations with hallmark societies and clubs, many professional associations, and his German-speaking-only Lutheran congregation.[25] In short, Canaan and the other nativist orientalists were part of the

Palestinian urban elite—which also included the new professional bourgeoisie, merchants, absentee landlords, old notables, and the intelligentsia—who championed modernism and nationalism in the years of the Mandate. They were deeply tied to colonial society and its institutions, and yet, as the Mandate and its contradictions unfolded, they became increasingly antagonistic to it.

At that time, Jerusalem was a "town of conferences" and a key site of orientalist knowledge production, particularly in the field of biblical archaeology.[26] A powerful colonial narrative, the Christian imaginary of the Holy Land was refashioning Palestine while vesting itself with the mantle of science and objectivity.[27] This imaginary of the Holy Land dated to the nineteenth century, when scholars had begun exploring, surveying, mapping, and excavating the Palestinian landscape in search for traces of the Bible, thereby materializing and reinforcing the imaginary together with the colonial project.[28] But in the first part of the twentieth century, modern biblical scholars were busy rewriting this narrative in scientific terms while sticking to their discipline's chief objective of proving the historicity of the Bible: a militant science serving religion and colonial politics.[29] British, French, German, and American archaeological explorations in the Middle East as well as biblical and ancient Near Eastern archaeology were the handmaidens of colonialism.[30] Through their work, archaeologists and biblical scholars made real the (Judeo-)Christian Holy Land and the cradle of (Western) civilization in the Middle East. Known in other colonial contexts, too,[31] this imbroglio of science, politics, and religion left an indelible mark on the landscape and heritage of Palestine, as well as on the writings of the nativist orientalists.[32]

Archaeology and cartography were not the only disciplines through which orientalists and colonizers refashioned Palestine into the biblical Land of Israel; ethnography played an important role as well.[33] Facilitated by the discipline's then-characteristic "allochronism" or "denial of coevalness"—the discursive relegation of subjects to a previous stage of an allegedly singular line of human evolution and ultimately another, ahistorical time[34]—ethnographers contributed to a dominant representation of native peasants as relics and exemplars of ancient belief systems and practices, a "living Bible" of sorts.[35] For example, for William Foxwell Albright, arguably the twentieth century's most influential biblical archaeologist and longtime director of Jerusalem's American School of Oriental Research, the study of folklore was a "matter of imperative necessity,"

highly relevant "for understanding the mind of the Palestinian peasant, in so many respects no doubt, like his Israelite and Canaanite predecessors."[36]

The American School was one of several colonial research institutions (British, French, and German) devoted to the study of the Bible and ancient Palestine that multiplied during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, providing a solid infrastructure for these ideas and this phase of increased colonial knowledge production. European powers had mapped their rivalries onto the socioinstitutional geography of Palestine, and especially Jerusalem, with research centers but also other institutions divided by nationality, religion, and allegiances, like the French École Biblique and the German Protestant Institute of Archaeology. Because of his Lutheranism, and his German wife, Canaan was very active in German institutions.[37] But the world of scholarship crossed religious and ethnonational lines. For example, the Palestine Oriental Society's membership embraced the who's who of the colonial elite and archaeology, including biblical scholars, but also missionaries, ministers, high-ranking army officers, and Zionist scientists,[38] all people with a clear stake in a scientific endeavor geared to confirm the accuracy of the Bible and the biblical rendition of the region's history. Albright called Canaan an "old friend" and supported Canaan's circle,[39] for they shared a scientific paradigm and a set of assumptions about the antiquity and timelessness of native culture.

But the orientalist discourse entailed a number of contradictions that offered Palestinian ethnographers the opportunity to redefine orientalist ideas into a kind of proto-nationalism. First, this discourse was sustained by a process of institution building that was specific to the heritage domain while articulating the more general, contradictory logic of the Mandate, informed by a colonial/national dualism. The first director of the Department of Antiquities of the new Mandate government, archaeologist John Garstang, described this process of institution building in his inaugural address in this way:

> Now a new spirit charged the atmosphere, and in rapid succession the Department [of Antiquities] was organized, an Archaeological Advisory Board was constituted and an Antiquities Ordinance was promulgated. These three steps were momentous. A Department of Antiquities as an independent feature of Government is almost without precedent. His Excellency [the High Commissioner] had recognized that the situation here was not an ordinary one. The

> universal interest in the Holy Land led not only to that step but to the natural corollary of an Advisory Board in which the interests of the different communities and the societies of foreign countries engaged in archaeological pursuits in this country are represented.[40]

Describing the lawmaking process as well as other key measures of the new department, including steps to create an archaeology museum and an inventory of significant sites, Garstang exposes the fundamental contradiction of the Mandate as a philosophy and structure of government, predicated simultaneously on colonial power and a future nation-state. He pays heed to the interests of the foreign countries and powers involved while reinstating the overriding principle a Mandate administrator is supposed to abide by:

> The monuments and antiquities of Palestine belong to Palestine and to Palestinians. The interests of this country are maintained and will be maintained as the first duty of the Administration and without regard at all to the claims of privileged powers or of political influence.[41]

The Mandate government did not work in the interests of the majority of Palestine's population. But against the backdrop of such institutional buildup, the powerful twin ideas of the "monuments and antiquities of Palestine" and an ancestral peasant culture inspired the studies of peasant folklore produced by Canaan's circle in the 1920s and 1930s.

The key Palestinian ethnographies were published in the *Journal of the Palestine Oriental Society* (*JPOS*), issued between 1920 and 1948, a journal that had the "cultivation and publication of researches on the ancient Orient" as its stated objective.[42] The Palestinian ethnographers played an important role in this society (Canaan was its president for a short while), but they were more interested in peasant beliefs and the practices attached to them, from popular medicine to religion and demonology. After Canaan's first book on popular medicine was published in German,[43] he published a series of English articles in *JPOS*, discussing topics such as haunted springs and water demons (1921), fear cups (1923) and magic bowls (1936), the *maqam* or shrine of popular syncretic religiosity (1924–1927), and the architecture and folklore of the so-called Palestinian Arab House (Canaan 1932–1933).[44] The other Palestinian scholars published on folktales and folk songs, blood revenge and political parties, tra-

ditional guesthouses, and educational methods, among other topics. These ethnographers wrote in an objectivist, scientific style, carefully specifying the conditions of their research and the methodology used, reflecting, for example, on the use of "informants" and the "accuracy of the translation."[45] Canaan himself emphasized, in a typically anthropological fashion, the importance of being well acquainted with the communities one studies—of having the "closest familiarity with the language and the customs, the thoughts and emotions of the people"—for the success of the scientific enterprise.[46]

Canaan's writings rest on the basic tenet of the timelessness and continuity of the peasant world, yet this tenet is contradicted by many of his detailed, sensitive empirical investigations that point to the profound transformations affecting the same world he professes to be timeless. Arguably the single most important work in the loose corpus of early Palestinian ethnographies is a book collecting Canaan's articles on popular shrines published in 1927 and titled *Mohammedan Saints and Sanctuaries in Palestine*. The book's introduction offers a summary of the tenets of this scholarship:

> *The primitive features of Palestine are disappearing so quickly that before long most of them will be forgotten.* Thus it has become the duty of every student of Palestine and the Near East, of Archaeology and of the Bible, to lose no time in collecting as fully and accurately as possible all available material concerning the folklore, customs and superstitions current in the Holy Land. Such material is, as we have begun to learn, of the greatest importance for the study of ancient oriental civilization and for the study of primitive religion. *I, as son of the country, have felt it my special duty to help in this scientific work. . . .*
>
> This change in local conditions is due to the great influences which the West is exerting upon the East, owing to the introduction of European methods of education, the migration of Europeans to Palestine, of Palestinians to Europe and especially to America, and, above all, to the influence of the Mandatory Power. *The simple, crude, but uncontaminated patriarchal Palestinian atmosphere is fading away and European civilization, more sophisticated but more unnatural, is taking its place. . . .*
>
> What is still more interesting, is [the study of the daily life and customs of the inhabitants of Palestine which] makes possible a comparison with customs, practices and rites of primitive times. It is remarkable how many ideas have

> remained virtually unchanged for thousands of years; and the study of many current beliefs may disclose the clue to much.[47]

Canaan's book champions the idea that peasant heritage in the syncretic multiplicity of its cultural forms was a continuous tradition going back ("virtually unchanged") to biblical times and to an ancient Semitic civilization shared by Muslims, Christians, and Jews.[48] But according to Salim Tamari, Canaan does comprehend the ways in which "the apparent 'purity' of peasant culture was the product of the impurity of its layered cultural traditions."[49] Canaan also sees how the influence of the mandatory power—and of the "civilization" it spread—is a double-edged sword. As an orientalist and an elite, he had bought into "European civilization" and himself had a stake in the Mandate, but he could clearly see how colonial policies were endangering what he had begun to understand as native Palestinian (and not Arab or Muslim) culture.

Far from immovable, though, the world of the Palestinian peasantry was crumbling, brought down by evictions (a result of rising Zionist land purchases and the tightening policy of Hebrew labor) and capitalist integration. This made Canaan very anxious about the disappearance of "the primitive features of Palestine." Engaging in a sort of salvage anthropology, the native ethnographers all shared the fear that "native customs will disappear before the advance of European culture"[50]—a structure of feeling deeply entwined with an emerging nationalism *and* sense of heritage. Indeed, one of the key features of heritage as a modern sensibility and set of dispositions is a perception of deep vulnerability and immediate threat, and the urgency attached to the preservation mission as the last bastion against an accelerated and irrevocable forward movement—the quintessentially modern, linear temporality of fast change.[51] The first paragraphs of Canaan's book tell of this making of a heritage sensibility.

The idea that preserving Palestine's folklore is a "special duty" of every "son of the country" is a point Canaan repeats across the prefaces of his key ethnographies.[52] He specifies how this heritage is of the greatest importance not just for scholars but also, and even more so, for Palestinians who feel both emotionally connected to and responsible for what was bequeathed to them by an illustrious and time-honored history. The early years of the Mandate, when Canaan wrote his most significant pieces, were crucial to the formation of a modern Palestinian national identity and Palestinian nationalism.[53] Momentous events

during and at the end of World War I—the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, the administrative unification of Palestine under British rule, and the failure of the broader Syrian nationalist option—elicited a process whereby the multiple layers of identity of the local population (including a sense of belonging to the Holy Land but also pan-Arab, pan-Islamic, and local attachments) coalesced to engender a lived sense of a Palestinian community and a new awareness of a common Palestinian history and destiny.[54] During the Mandate, narratives of a Palestinian national self proliferated through the press and an expanded school system, against the backdrop of a growing political culture of resistance to Jewish immigration and especially land takeovers; this nurtured the nationalist movement that would later explode during the Great Revolt of 1936–1939.[55] While some of the Palestinian ethnographers were activists, Canaan himself was a nationalist, but he never joined a political party. It was actually only with the revolt that he became more explicitly politicized and radical in his new writings in support of the Palestinian "fight for existence," finally turning against the Mandate and its pro-Zionist policies.[56]

Inspired by this nascent anticolonial nationalism, the ethnographers of Canaan's circle thought of both themselves and their informants as Palestinians, and of the practices they studied as part of a long-standing, rooted "Palestinian culture," that is, a national heritage they ought to, as "son[s] of the country," prevent from disappearing. What is conspicuous in this self-interpellation is not only the gendered representation of the homeland as nurturing mother—a trope that continues to haunt the Palestinian national imagination—but also the emphasis on a filial relationship and a kinshiplike attachment as constituting the link between the nation and its members, which is of course a feature of nationalism elsewhere as well.[57] Heritage is a key site for the production of such affective attachment.[58] Though nativist ethnographers situate Palestinian folklore as part of a broader Arab folklore, it nonetheless remains the primary target of their study, preservation, and collection efforts.

Canaan's self-identification as a son of Palestine, a nationalist, frames his most accomplished scholarly works, namely, his major contributions to colonial science. By forcefully affirming and reflecting on his own subject position vis-à-vis his scholarship at the beginning of his books, Canaan offers a self-reflective, postmodern ethnography *ante litteram*. In so doing, Canaan positions himself both inside and outside "Palestinian culture." (Note, this was

a peasant Palestinian culture that Canaan's own urban middle class had visibly "left behind" and that was threatened by the European civilization he had embraced.) But simultaneously Canaan positions himself as both inside and outside colonial science. He and his peers embody that ambivalent, deeply unstable form of difference that Homi Bhabha has referred to as colonial "mimicry" ("almost the same, but not quite") to address the dynamics of subjectivity of that class of indigenous civil servants the British Empire trained in "European" behavior and culture.[59] This unstable form of difference, this way of critically inhabiting and making colonial discourse one's own—*as a son of the country*—is full of important consequences for the articulation of Palestinian cultural nationalism. Mimicry turns colonial discourse against itself.

The nativist orientalists made a series of shifts within colonial science while negotiating its contradictions and their own subtle discomfort with it. Raymond Williams's concept of "structure of feeling" is helpful here to grasp the move they made, initially without much fanfare. This concept, coined to address the formation of new discourses from older ones, defines a way of thinking, or, better, a set of experiences and values—"thought as felt and feeling as thought"[60]—shared by a class or group of people. Crucially, though, this set of experiences is still inchoate, not fully articulated, struggling to emerge out of the gaps, tensions, and contradictions within dominant discourses and between them and their multiple contestations and appropriations. Such tensions are palpable, between the lines, in a 1921 text by Palestinian ethnographer Stephen Haddad:

> The customs of this country are transmitted orally, from father to son, and not through the medium of writing. In the past few decades European civilization has entered the country, and though, for the sake of the progress of my native land, I am one of its admirers and supporters, I cannot but be filled with regret at the disappearance of the customs which bring so close to us the spirit and the meaning of the Bible. The peasant of today still preserves a great number of primitive customs, just as the plough of today is nearly like the plough employed by the Israelites. *Every visitor to Palestine regards it as a hot-bed of party strife and fanaticism. But it is, in large part, political rather than religious.* While there was religious prejudice between the different communities, as in Europe, even the hostility between Muslims and Christians was basically political, under

> the veil of religion. The Turkish government saw a danger in its Christian subjects, because it knew that they looked for protection to the Christian nations of Europe. The Turkish authorities therefore welcomed and fostered religious fanaticism on the one hand, and party strife on the other, in order to prevent the union of the Arabs, whom they feared, because they were in the majority in Syria.[61]

In this, as in other passages of this ethnographic corpus, we read the writer's unease with orientalist representations and his critique of the stereotype of a deep-seated, irrational Palestinian religious fanaticism so typical of orientalist scholarship. Haddad makes a double move here. First, he historicizes the Palestinian *fallahin* by inserting them into history and contemporary political games with his explanation of peasants' religious fanaticism as the result of Ottoman policies to counter European penetration in the Levant.[62] Second, he nationalizes local culture as that of his own "native land," as one whose survival he is deeply committed to for reasons quite unlike, at least in part, those that moved the European orientalists. He institutes a sharp cleavage between this culture and European civilization, oblivious to the fact that his own "reformed" colonial subjectivity negates this dichotomy. Throughout, he continues to uphold the orientalist assumption of a tradition going back to the Bible. But he looks at native culture in its own right and with an eye for its ongoing transformations. In this way, the nativist ethnographers reworked the orientalist idea of a local ancestral culture, giving an entirely new meaning to the assertion of the depth and timelessness of Palestinian roots vis-à-vis colonial policies that were forcing Palestinians from their ancestral land and a specific colonial discourse that questioned their connection to it (as illustrated by the Zionist idea of the "land without a people for a people without a land"). In so doing, these scholars give form and matter to a new structure of feeling—thought imbued with affect—namely, an emerging Palestinian cultural nationalism with its attendant symbols.

This simultaneous adoption and displacement of the orientalist discourse itself has a political motivation. The nativist ethnographers write in English for a largely European audience (also) to make a case for Palestinian roots. They worked from within colonial science and biblical studies to substantiate a specifically Palestinian connection to the land and the historicity of the Palestinian

people, their belonging to the past, the present, and the future of Palestine. In these writings, the "plough of today" slowly emerges as a unifying symbol of that attachment to the land and the people that identify with it. Out of colonial discourse and deep class cleavages, these scholars helped craft a unifying narrative of the national self, providing Palestinians with a past and a distinctive culture complete with an imaginary and a set of powerful folkloric symbols. In the process, they articulated a modernist notion of heritage with its attendant signature practices: documenting, inventorying, classifying, interpreting, salvaging, and collecting valued tangible and intangible aspects of the world that a political community inherits from its past and deems worthy of preservation for the future. They forged this nationalized heritage to assert a collective identity—the right to exist as a people with a future on the soil of Palestine—and came to indelibly shape the Palestinian national imagination. Shards of this discourse indeed survived the dramatic changes of the middle of the twentieth century, surfacing again from the 1960s onward with a reorganized national liberation movement. That time, however, it was female activists and embroiderers who produced the new national heritage. Palestinian women wove the twisted threads of this discourse into dresses that would come to symbolize the First Intifada.

INTERMEZZO: EMBROIDERED LIVES

I owe much of my understanding of the work of Palestinian folklore and embroidery (*tatriz*)—the kind of heritage that the nativist orientalists had been rediscovering—to one person. I carried out a long interview with Widad Kawar in early 2015 after several visits to Tiraz, the wonderful textile museum she had just opened in Amman. An upper-class Palestinian Jordanian, Widad Kawar owns the largest collection of embroidered Palestinian costumes in the world, the product of a life devoted to collecting dresses and the stories of the women who made them. This collection is housed in what "Auntie Widad"—as Tiraz's curators typically address her, mobilizing the deferential language of kinship and domesticity—calls a "home for the Arab dress" rather than a museum. It is located right next to her house—full of Arab heritage itself—because she says she could never part from her collection.

When Widad shows me some of the most precious pieces stored in her own wardrobe, I am struck by the aesthetics of the embroidery, their beauty resid-

ing in what she taught me to recognize as a peculiar mixture of inherited patterns and individual creativity (Figures 1–3). The floor-length traditional *thawb* dress is richly and colorfully embroidered—most often in mesmerizing shades of red over a black or white background—as are the various accessories, such as shawls, belts, and headdresses, that go with it. Stitches and patterns vary, indicating regional provenance and historical period. For example, Bethlehem's dresses were famous for the couching stitch (Figure 1), while the cross-stitch (Figure 2) was common all over Palestine but excelled in places like Ramallah. Patterns were both geometric and figurative, including flowers and animals, and subject to continuous reinvention; while after World War I, figures such as guns proliferated on Palestinian dresses, the years of the revolution in the 1970s and 1980s saw flags and maps of Palestine but also other nationalist militant motifs appear on many costumes.

But what struck me even more than the magnificent beauty of these dresses was their deep entanglement with the lives and identities of the women who made or collected them. Palestinian embroidered costumes are Palestinian lives, as signaled by the continuity between museum and wardrobe in Widad

FIGURE 1. Embroidered patterns: cord couching typical of the Bethlehem area. *Source:* Padres Hana. Couching stitch with gold cord from Beit Jala, 2011. CC BY-SA 3.0. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Beit_Jala#/media/File:Tahriri_work.jpg.

FIGURE 2. Embroidered patterns: cross stitch from Surif.
Source: Padres Hana. Cross stitch from Surif, 2011. Top half of picture is the reverse side.
CC BY-SA 3.0. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cross-stitch#/media/File:Surif_cross-stitch.jpg.

Kawar's home. This is also why she is interested in both the socialized aesthetics of the dresses and the stories and trajectories of the women who made them—in other words, in what Daniel Miller would call that "integral phenomenon which [i]s the clothing/person."[63] Indeed, Kawar's collection catalog is largely a collection of stories, including her own, that come together into a larger narrative that is the social history of this iconic item of Palestinian national folklore—even if written from a specific, classed point of view.[64]

Epitomizing Palestinian history from the Mandate years onward, the tale of one embroiderer, Fatma Musa, opens a window into the subjective experience of a peasant woman going through the upheavals of the mid-twentieth century and the ways in which embroidering—producing heritage—enabled her agency. In the late 1960s and 1970s Widad Kawar conducted several interviews with Fatma, a refugee originally from the now-destroyed village of Al-Qubayba, close to Hebron, when Fatma was working with an embroidery center. Her story begins in pre-1948 Palestine:

> I never went to school. Instead, I helped my mother with whatever she was doing. When I was 10, she taught me how to embroider, and I was always anxious to finish my household tasks in order to sit and embroider. By the time I was 12,

FIGURE 3. Woman wearing a *thawb*, 1973.
Source: Courtesy of the Palestinian Museum. From the archive of Inash al-Mukhayyam, photographs 1972–1973.

I was making my own pieces. I started with my everyday dresses, then a big red *jellayeh*, then a good *ghudfeh* (head shawl). My mother and sisters helped me and also worked on their own costumes.

At the Faluja market [where Fatma and her mother would trade eggs for spools of silk thread and sometimes for cloth], my mother would point out the many different types of costumes worn by women from other villages. We laughed at the big Faluja patterns and at how many colors were used in the Gaza dresses. Ours [Al-Qubayba's] were the best, she always said. I also went with my parents to the Hebron and Bethlehem markets. In both places, costumes and accessories were sold ready-made. But people from our village never bought

ready-made dresses. It had to be "the work of the soul for the soul," i.e., handmade for yourself.

. . .

[Then Fatma's father decides to marry her to a much older man, a landowner and chief of the town.] Back home, we got busy preparing my *jehaz* (trousseau). Being the eldest, I had the advantage that all my sisters and aunts helped me. . . .

One day my family went with my fiancé's family to the Faluja market to do the *kisweh* (wedding shopping). My fiancé bought presents of cloth for all my aunts and uncles, fabric for my bridal costumes, as well as jewelry, henna, rosewater, cloves and a variety of sweets.

Our village sheikh would not preside over the marriage contract because I was underage. So we had to go to Hebron and lie about my age. Four months after signing the contract, the wedding took place. I wore the red *jellayeh* which I had embroidered, and on my head I wore a headdress encircled with a ring of 40 Maria Theresa coins, and over it a white embroidered shawl.

. . .

We lived happily for five years until 1948 when Jewish militias came and attacked our village while we were sleeping. [Then they escape and move from village to village for some time, during which two of Fatma's kids die.] . . . After [several moves], our situation worsened, as there was no work available. We decided to move to the refugee camp known as Fawwar, near Bethlehem.

We were given a tent and a card with a number. My husband, who had been the head of his village, was reduced to being a refugee identified by a number. He had to look for work and found a job harvesting in Yatta village. His hope of returning to our own village began to wane, and his whole personality changed. He just could not adapt to all these changes, and his spirits were very low. . . .

While living in Fawwar, I had a baby boy and girl, so we become a larger family. I had to sell some of my old embroidered dresses and cushions, and I began doing paid embroidery work for women's organizations. We hardly felt that we had settled down when the 1967 war started and there was a new stream of refugees. We decided not to leave, but the napalm bombing pushed us towards Jericho. There we found the Aqabat Jaber camp emptied by the Israeli attacks, and we joined the thousands fleeing across the border to Jordan.

In Amman, we rented a room in Jabal Nazif. We were registered as refugees to get rations, and I also registered at a welfare organization to do embroidery

> work. In order to help my family survive, I sold my silver jewelry and more costumes. During all this upheaval, my husband got sick and died, leaving me to manage alone with the children. I took my eldest son out of school so he could work. Every day I prepared *turmos* (lupines) for him to sell on the street. The main staple of our diet was the flour ration I got from UNRWA. . . . Our life was difficult but my children were bright and helpful. *We survived by my son's work and my embroidery*.[65]

When Widad Kawar last met Fatma Musa in the early 2000s, Fatma proudly told her that she had taught embroidery, and particularly the traditional patterns of Al-Qubayba, to all her daughters, daughters-in-law, and granddaughters. In other words, she had made sure to preserve her own village heritage—and her connection to Palestine with it—and pass it on to the next generations, even if in exile.

Before 1948, embroidered dresses, made and worn by village women, were an item of peasant attire and a marker of regional and village identity (as well as social status). Upper-middle-class urban women wore Western-style clothes. For example, the founder of an important embroidery organization and a classmate of Widad Kawar, Malak Husseini Abdulrahim, recalls how her upper-class mother in pre-1948 Jerusalem used to embroider in the Italian style, while her domestic workers of peasant origin donned the traditional Palestinian embroidered dress.[66] It is most likely that the wives of the members of Canaan's circle themselves dressed and embroidered in Western styles and even adopted a classed, condescending attitude toward the traditions of the domestic workers in their house—despite their husbands' keen interest in them. But their disposition began to change "when the Israelis came and took over the country . . . [for] we got attached to [Palestinian] embroidery since we had nothing left [of Palestine]."[67] After that, embroidery brought women together.

While the Nakba brought village lifeworlds and the tradition of embroidery to an abrupt halt, a major shift in the social history of this folk practice began to unfold in the refugee camps when women like Fatma Musa started making embroidery for sale in order to survive. Embroidery was commoditized—that is, made for exchange and sold in bulk—in a process that accelerated after the 1967 occupation, virtually at the same time that it began to be studied and collected. Embroidery as a use value, and a hallmark

practice of the peasantry, had nearly disappeared together with its bearers, when it returned as sign and exchange value, undergoing simultaneous nationalization and commodification.[68] Embroidery fully became national heritage when women started producing items for sale—as opposed to making them as "the work of the soul for the soul," for themselves, as they did before 1948. (Here Julia Dabdoub and Fatma Musa offer two different, classed points of view on these intertwined processes, one from the top, and the other from the bottom, in the women's organizations). In circulation, embroidery ties producers and consumers into a shared commitment to the homeland, as the woven patterns themselves preserve the memories of specific regions and villages that were lost in 1948.

FOLKLORE AND THE WOMEN'S MOVEMENT IN THE 1970S AND THE 1980S

In the 1970s and 1980s, embroidery workshops and training programs proliferated across the occupied territories and the camps of the diaspora. These initiatives constituted just one of the multiple manifestations of what has been called the folklore movement (*al-Haraka al-Fulkluriyya*), which consolidated the notion of Palestinian national heritage that had already emerged in the British colonial period. A veritable folklore fever marked a broader cultural renaissance that accompanied the renewed political struggle. Heritage research and heritage-themed cultural productions of various kinds thrived especially in the territories: folklore museums like the Old Bethlehem Home and temporary exhibits, and also popular arts festivals, folkloric dance troupes, and music and theater groups. Folkloric motifs and other symbols from the traditional lifeworld of the peasantry—the *kufiyya*, embroidery, old stone architecture, and the olive tree—became ubiquitous features of an insurgent Palestinian expressive culture, particularly in the visual arts and in poetry (Figure 4). In short, in the 1970s and 1980s, people extended resistance and the political struggle to culture and other nonpolitical domains, like the domestic sphere, that were less exposed to immediate Israeli repression: this culture of resistance was imbued with folklore.

The Naksa had dealt the final blow to the old *fallahi* world, and a process of further depeasantization and a move away from the traditional peasant

FIGURE 4. Sliman Mansour, *The Village Awakens*, oil on canvas, 1988. This is a key painting in the history of modern Palestinian art pointing at the link between heritage, the arts, and the politics of national liberation. The motherland is dressed in an embroidered *thawb* against the backdrop of traditional village architecture.
Source: Collection of George M. Al-Ama. Courtesy of the artist and George M. Al-Ama.

economy was ongoing. This folkloric peasant imaginary then came to stand for the lost homeland—and an idealized lost rurality—and enduring commitment to it, the promise of return. If Zionism negates Palestinians' existence as a people and their connection to the land that Zionists see as the Land of Israel,

then nationalist discourse mobilizes the figure of the (disappearing) peasant "to constitute a unified people-nation" and endow it with roots and an authentic culture while also masking major class and gender hierarchies in the national movement.[69] That is, when the *fallah* and the *fallaha* cease to exist as a lived experience, as real people, they return as figures of a common past and a projected common future as well as model political subjectivities of steadfastness and endurance.

The folklore movement emerged in the context of the PLO-driven rebirth of the national liberation movement and a momentous buildup of grassroots Palestinian organizations in the now-occupied territories. According to one of its leaders, Birzeit University anthropologist Sharif Kanaana, the folklore movement has been "an integral part of the Palestinian National Movement . . . an integral part of the overall Palestinian national struggle."[70] A strong correlation between nationalism and folklore and the pivotal role of the peasant in the nationalist imaginary is not unique to Palestine; in fact, it is a feature of cultural nationalisms worldwide, and particularly of post–World War II Arab national movements.[71] But while independence promoted such cultural nationalism into the dominant state ideology in other Arab countries, in the Palestinian case, statelessness and continuing oppression, be it under occupation or in exile, transformed folklore into a practice of cultural survival and a powerful tool of political mobilization and emancipation with a gender twist. As in the case of Native American folklore, producing heritage becomes a folk art serving as a tool of resistance and as commodity.[72]

The history of the folklore movement is deeply entwined with that of the Palestinian women's movement, which was itself part of the national liberation movement. It is impossible to understand the rediscovery of folklore without tracing its ties to Palestinian women's mobilization in the 1970s. Yet these overlapping movements must be placed squarely within the overarching framework of the national struggle. The rediscovery of folklore is connected to a shift in women's organizations from the charitable to the political, from providing services to empowering and politicizing women. Notably, in the territories, politicized organizing developed within older civil society forms, such as charitable societies (*jama'iyyat*, sing. *jama'iyya*), traditionally the domain of women.[73] In those years, long-standing charitable societies like Julia Dabdoub's Bethlehem Women's Union and newly created political organizations with ties to the PLO

set up embroidery and other traditional handicraft workshops and distribution networks to give women a job and raise their self-awareness. The Ramallah-based charity Inash al-Usra took over a lead role in the West Bank. Samed—the economic arm of the PLO—established workshops in the camps in Lebanon and Syria. In Beirut, another society called Inash al-Mokhayyam al-Filastini (Revival of the Palestinian Camp), set up by a group of upper-class women, including Malak Husseini Abdulrahim, became famous for its innovative, exquisite art. Soon, smaller, more cooperative structures appeared across the territories and the diaspora.

Between the 1960s and the 1980s, charitable organizations became politicized or lost importance while being supplanted by new political organizations exemplified by the establishment in 1978 of the Women's Work Committee, a new "women's vanguard" within the Palestinian national movement.[74] Applying Simona Sharoni's insights into the Palestinian women's movement to embroidery organizations, which she surveyed extensively, Rachel Dedman sees charitable organizations as laying the groundwork for new frameworks of action that criticize them.[75] New forms of political mobilization and women's activism developed out of traditional, gendered activities and forms of social organizing. In this context, peasant things suddenly acquired new meanings, new values, new social lives;[76] embroidery became a key symbol of Palestinian heritage and, more broadly, of a unified and militant Palestinian nation reconnecting to the land and its past.

Founded in 1965, Inash al-Usra (Revitalization or Rehabilitation of the Family, or IU), which became one of the largest such organizations in the territories and a center of the folklore movement, kick-started this transition from the charitable to the political. IU focused on distributing embroidery materials to village women, but unlike older charitable societies, it was very politicized. It was founded by a key leader of the folklore movement, Samiha Khalil, also called Um Khalil (1923–1999) (see Figure 5, in which Khalil is wearing her signature embroidered *thawb*).[77] A social worker and political activist, Khalil devoted her entire life to the national struggle, and particularly to women's organizing and community and heritage work. A 1948 refugee, she returned to the West Bank to become the president of the General Union of Palestinian Women, the PLO's umbrella women's organization that aimed to mobilize women into the national movement, and envisioned a much more active and

equal role for them in Palestinian politics and society. A longtime member of the Palestine National Council, the legislative organ of the PLO, she was tied to one of its leftist factions, the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (al-Jabha al-Dimuqratiyya, DFLP). Her social work frequently spilled over into politics, and she was arrested multiple times by the Israeli army.[78] The army also repeatedly shut down most of the IU's village offices.

"We do not want our people to be beggars," Um Khalil used to say; she and her associates harnessed heritage to this goal.[79] The dual mandate of Inash was women's empowerment and heritage preservation. These were combined in

FIGURE 5. Samiha Khalil, portrait by Sliman Mansour. Khalil wears the traditional Palestinian embroidered dress.
Source: Courtesy of the artist and Inash al-Usra.

one of the hallmark programs of the society, namely, organizing the production and marketing of embroidery that thousands of women made at home. This is how Khalil's biographer and close friend describes it:

> Inash ran an orphanage for the children of those killed by the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) on the West Bank, along with a bakery, a beautician training program, a dental clinic, a library, a folklore museum, a textile shop, and a food-processing plant. Her society offered literacy classes for women and a university scholarship program for 300 girls, and employed around 4,800 women in the production of Palestinian embroidery material, which they sewed in their own homes. The society employed a permanent staff of 152 full-time workers, offered vocational training to 200 women, recruited local financial sponsors for 1,500 needy families, and operated a special program for the assistance of families of political prisoners. Much of her budget came from marketing the products of her charitable society and from local donations, having resisted offers by various non-Palestinian donors who offered to help, such as American aid agencies, public and private.[80]

Among a variety of social development activities, heritage preservation was primary—this multitasking and community orientation would remain a feature of Palestinian heritage organizations in later years as well. Grounded in the novel concept of self-help, the embroidery and other programs were meant to help women become wage earners, independent of the Israeli economic sector, and thus active participants in the social development of their communities and in the national struggle at large.[81] By mixing social work with profit making, IU's pioneering philosophy affected the work of a whole generation of women's organizations.

Umm Khalil and Julia Dabdoub were among those who believed in the primacy of the national struggle and in the absolute requirement of nationalist cohesion; not an end in itself, women's empowerment was rather a means to support communities in their steadfastness, and as such, it was not to come in the way of social unity. Families should be kept together and not disrupted. Given such views, it is not surprising that Palestinian feminists have criticized organizations like IU for subordinating women's rights to the nationalist agenda.[82] Indeed, the mission of IU and Khalil remained committed to a rather conservative brand of feminism, promoting not only traditional activities that women could carry out within the house but, more broadly, a traditional role

for women as mothers and supporters of their families and communities.[83] The tension between nationalism and feminism is well known from other nationalist movements, as is the demand that feminists remain loyal to the movement and wait until after national liberation to push for women's rights.[84] But for many Palestinian activists, like other third-world feminists (and today's intersectional theorists),[85] the two commitments, nationalist and feminist, were not incommensurable; to the contrary, they did not conceive women's oppression as something detached from other forms of (national, class) oppression but saw all of them as interlinked and mutually constituted so that one could not tackle the one issue without the other.[86] And they were very suspicious of "single-issue," bourgeois Western liberal feminism for being a handmaiden of colonialism and cultural imperialism, for example by the French in Algeria.[87] As a result, there was no fully autonomous women's movement in Palestine, and women's organizations remained part of the national movement, but a vibrant debate has ensued over the years over the best ways to understand and act upon Palestinian women's many-faceted oppression.[88]

Leftists and feminist activists have also criticized charitable organizations for their built-in social inequalities reproducing the status quo and specifically the hierarchy between the working-class women who made the embroidery and the elites who ran the organizations, such as the likes of Fatma Musa and Julia Dabdoub.[89] Radical feminists saw this hierarchy as interlinked with the ideology of charitable giving typical of these organizations and ultimately with their very goal, which was to provide relief to women in need, to support and uplift them, not to politicize and mobilize them. Hence, these more radical feminists left charitable societies and organizations like IU to build new organizations with the express goal of setting up a political self-help apparatus to raise women's consciousness and transform housewives into political agents ready to fight for their own and national liberation. Nonetheless, embroidery programs remained a key element of the new women's committees (called *lijan*, sing. *lajna*). This is because many activists believed in a "step-by-step" process of mobilization,[90] which mimicked the older charities' techniques to first make women work and thus contribute to society as a prerequisite for joining organized political activity.

The schemes of actions, techniques, and methods used by the new political committees were strikingly similar to those of the charitable organizations: embroidery workshops and cooperatives, nurseries, literacy courses, and vo-

cational training programs.[91] But the political context was changing. In the late 1970s, with the strengthening of the PLO, mass organizing intensified in the territories: relatively decentralized (in part to reduce the risk of arrest), sector-based (e.g., women, students, workers), and factionalized. The largest and most successful women's organization in the territories was tied to the leftist PLO faction to which Samiha Khalil herself belonged, the DFLP.[92] Originally a Marxist formation, the DFLP was strongly indebted to Lenin's idea of the vanguard party and its role in fostering a revolutionary consciousness; as such, it was a "socializing movement" strongly committed to a kind of grassroots mobilization that could simultaneously "modernize" the Palestinian working class and its social values.[93] According to Frances Hasso, who volunteered for and wrote a major book on the DFLP's women's committee, this focus on the grassroots (as opposed to military mobilization) helped the party reach many more women than other PLO factions, which is why it earned the nickname "Women's Front" (*jabhat al-niswan*).[94] For Hasso, what also made this movement attractive to working-class women was that it worked with local conditions and family structures, starting from women's primary environment and needs. Seemingly against the party's commitment to modernization, this was in fact a tactic to achieve it more effectively. When activists went into villages to mobilize local cadres of women, their first move was to "help them help themselves" by setting up training courses and income-generating schemes. As a step on the way to get working-class women to join rallies, support the political cause, and join the party, activists encouraged their independence and self-reliance by giving them cloth and yarn and organizing bazaars where these housewives and peasants turned artisans could sell their own products:

> We used to learn from the people and we would move from the point of the people. . . . I was discussing [the DFLP's women's committee's] program in a way that people could understand what I was saying. I did not mobilize them with ideology like other members . . . were mobilized, the leadership was mobilized. . . . No. I used to say to them: "Who of you embroiders? Who of you knits?"[95]

To take women "out of the house" and "into the committees," activists had to start in the house;[96] rather than pushing women to leave domesticity behind, activists decided to expand and politicize it.[97] Women could participate in the resistance by embroidering and producing heritage at home. This is an example

of what Judith Butler calls "subversion," which she sees as a key opening for social change: the repetition of gender identity but with a twist, a displacement.[98] In this way, activists worked from within the traditional gendered division of labor and operated a tactical shift from within patriarchal structures, simultaneously reproducing and resignifying them—just as the nativist orientalists had subversively resignified colonial discourse. Turning patriarchy against itself spawned new possibilities for agency and transformation.

Unlike the women running charitable organizations, the women in charge of these new organizations hailed from a much larger social circle—still mostly educated, but no longer just elite—and they had a strong political consciousness and clear political goals.[99] The committees and cooperatives they created were of the masses and more democratic. But the legacy of charitable giving continued to haunt them and made their work vulnerable to critiques that they reproduced relations of inequality between the new middle-class leadership and the base, thereby preempting real social change. Notwithstanding such gender conservatism, folklore revivalism and the organizations involved in it provided a key space for women to emerge as subjects of the national experience and as active participants in the national struggle, not only as symbols but also as agents of the nation. They did so by turning domesticity inside out. It was with the birth of a folklore-inspired visual culture, then, that women were first represented and took center stage in the national imaginary—and its myriad forms of vibrant, expressive culture—even if as representatives of a timeless connection to the land.[100] Most important, Palestinian women previously excluded from the political realm then "made" heritage *and* politics through it. They also forged a Palestinian national heritage out of this vibrant nationalist mobilization that spilled over into multiple cultural and social domains as well as a feminism deeply loyal to the nationalist movement.

HERITAGE STUDIES AND GRASSROOTS MOBILIZATION

There is no heritage without knowledge production, without a scientific discourse about how to study, classify, and preserve the ruins of history and how to curate them into cherished objects.[101] The knowledge production that accompanied the reinvention of folklore in the years of the Palestinian resistance comprises the work of scholars, activists, and everyday people who took over

the legacy of Canaan's circle in an explicitly political way. What distinguishes these new ethnographies is their participatory quality—the involvement of many nonexperts in the scientific endeavor—and their direct connection to the process of grassroots mobilization I have just examined.

This body of texts includes studies of rural folklore as well as oral histories and maps of the villages that were depopulated and destroyed in 1948 in what became Israel. Their authors were sometimes professional ethnographers, but they were also often activists or members of the communities themselves, drawn from the large group of people who became involved in the collective mission to rescue an authentic, rooted Palestinian culture perceived to be on the verge of vanishing under occupation. Unlike Canaan's circle, this new generation of ethnographers, experts or not, was no longer interested in biblical antiquities (*al-athar*) and their vestiges in the ethnographic present—"the plough of today [as] nearly like the plough employed by the Israelites"—even though this idea of an immemorial culture persists. Rather, they cared about folklore (*al-fulklur*), also called popular heritage (*al-turath al-sha'bi*) or popular arts (*al-fann al-sha'bi*), namely, "the plough of today" as Palestinian heritage and a means of anticolonial resistance.

As with the national liberation movement, the folklore movement and folklore studies' chief objective was "not to be wiped out," tellingly the title of the work of Palestinian folklorist Hassan Obeid Mousa.[102] A central figure in these folklore studies, Nimr Sirhan, wrote about the personal-political triggers of his drive to work with heritage by situating himself and the national struggle right in the introduction to his important *Encyclopedia of Palestinian Folklore*:

> The author of this encyclopedia was born in the thirties of the last century in a village along the Palestinian coast and lived the bitterness of defeat (in 1948, 1956 and 1967). He was humiliated waiting for the ration and walked tens of kilometres fleeing from the Israeli military vehicles with his family and with tens of thousands of other families and still carries the name of refugee and displaced. Through his book and texts, he would like to express the affections and the passions of the Palestinian people.
>
> . . .
>
> *This encyclopedia was written to strengthen the relation between the Palestinian man and his land considering that the revival of the people's heritage is*

> *equivalent to the conservation of the national personality* . . . and supports the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people to live on their own land peacefully and away from coercion and oppression.[103]

At stake, then, in this nationalist project to salvage the heritage of the Palestinian *fallahin* turned refugees was the preservation of Palestinian culture and identity, and, crucially, the reforging of a strong, affective connection with the land by objectifying it in a distinctive material culture—a mission Nimr Sirhan describes elsewhere as "creat[ing] a moral relation between the dispersed Palestinians and their occupied land."[104]

The rediscovery and celebration of a deep-rooted culture offers what Stuart Hall, speaking of the Black diaspora, has called "resources of resistance and identity" with which to confront a broken, traumatic experience by imagining an older "fullness or plenitude" together with threads of continuity and a determination to restore it.[105] This body of Palestinian scholarship has been criticized as "pickled ethnography" for its essentializing tendencies and emphasis on the timelessness of the peasant turned national character, a feature this scholarship has inherited from Canaan's circle and magnified at a time when peasant culture was dramatically changing.[106] But Sirhan himself explains the importance of this holding on to a primordial identity: to counter uprooting and dispossession, "it is necessary for the culture of Palestine to be written down and studied by Palestinian scholars" because "a people that displays such a wealth of arts, crafts, beliefs, and practices cannot be a people of refugees but is a people who lived centuries on its land."[107] Sirhan's move—and more broadly the denial of transformations by this ethnographic body, its fixing of Palestinian peasants into an essentialized and glorified past—can be seen as a kind of Spivakian "strategic essentialism" mobilized to counter the hegemonic Zionist narrative that denies the truth of Palestinian roots in the interests of unity and the struggle.[108] This rediscovery of cultural heritage and identity tactically conceals the production of a new identity out of the shards of the past.[109] This project of remembering against dismemberment, then, functions to produce not only a distinctive, unified community but, crucially, a specific kind of new subject along with it. To deliver ethnographies under a stateless condition, outside a functioning infrastructure of knowledge production, Palestinian

scholars and activists had to work "from below," that is, to mobilize people, nonexperts, to do it.

While research was carried out in the camps of the diaspora as well, this form of knowledge production was based in the West Bank, around the newly founded Birzeit University, but especially women's organizations like Inash al-Usra.[110] IU indeed provided a crucial platform for this research, particularly through its journal *Heritage and Society* (*al-Turath wa-l-Mujtama'*), which published most of the work of the new Palestinian ethnographers.[111] This journal was one element of a broader IU program to inventory, study, and collect heritage (of which the museum was also part). Initially, the women of the organization as well as enthusiasts and supporters carried out the inventory and collection of folkloric items. But during the 1970s the society institutionalized after the creation of the Committee of Social Research on the Palestinian Popular Heritage (Lajnat al-Abhath al-Ijtima'iyya wa-l-Turath al-Sha'bi al-Filastini), which in 1973 published its first ethnographic monograph, a book on the village of Turmus'ayya,[112] as well as the journal starting in 1974. At the same time, many more grassroots committees to preserve folklore proliferated across the territories.

The journal reprinted in Arabic older articles by Canaan's circle scholars that had appeared before only in English, a clear sign that they recognized the scholars of the 1920s and 1930s as precursors to the kind of work they were doing.[113] The journal also included theoretical essays detailing, for example, the relationship between folklore and nationalism, and between Palestinian and European folklore studies; other essays explored methodological questions.[114] But most contributions surveyed popular culture, with an emphasis on popular literature and oral tradition (*al-adab al-sha'bi*), meaning folktales, proverbs, poems, and songs, as well as traditions and rituals such as weddings. Much attention was placed already on what we would call in today's jargon "intangible heritage," or elements of expressive culture that, as opposed to tangible material culture, became a target of the global heritage discourse only much later. Samiha Khalil herself published on women's storytelling, or *hikaye*,[115] which together with embroidery is the centerpiece of the Palestinian heritage imaginary. The traditional Palestinian house (*al-dar*) and village structure was also an important, if occasional, theme, especially to young architects.[116] Material

culture, strictly speaking, was less prominent in the early years of the folklore movement, but the journal did issue studies of traditional handicrafts and especially rural technologies, such as pottery making, that were being revitalized in women's self-help workshops.

The story of the beginnings of the journal and of folklore research in the West Bank illustrates the peculiar relationship between this knowledge production and the empowerment of political subjects. According to Samiha Khalil herself in the opening article of the first issue of *Heritage and Society:*

> The revitalization of the Palestinian popular heritage (or folklore) and its protection from deterioration, change, and loss have been the primary objectives of the society Inash al-Usra since its foundation in 1965. *Our popular oral tradition addresses fundamental themes such as our intense struggle* over the past long years during which our fathers and grandfathers have transmitted this tradition generation after generation.
>
> *Were it not for this oral tradition much of our history would be lost*, and many of the events that we have experienced would have disappeared—these events that our oral tradition represented in an excellent way, the story of our life turned into a narrative that depicts our stance and our heroism in every detail and with the greatest of ease.[117]

In these first lines of her opening article, Khalil articulates the intimate relationship between heritage, identity, and nationalism. As in the work of the scholars of Canaan's circle, the task of rescuing heritage from impending loss remains an urgent one; however, Khalil and her contemporaries foreground the national struggle. Also, Khalil spells out the idea that the popular oral tradition most authentically and intensively narrates the "story of our [Palestinian] life." This heritage not only embodies the soul of the nation but also preserves and communicates its untold and silenced history in powerful, material forms, a history of struggle that continues to the present day. Projecting "heroism in every detail and with the greatest of ease," heritage captures and enables that struggle.[118]

A major difference between the old and the new Palestinian ethnographies is that the new work collapses the split between bearers and scholars of heritage, at least discursively. According to Samiha Khalil, many volunteers, including villagers, got passionately involved in inventorying and collecting folklore

to prevent this looming loss of culture and identity. She describes how, after a few years of unsuccessful attempts to organize a heritage campaign,

> in the middle of 1969 the society Inash al-Usra decided to carry out data collection (*jama' al-bayanat*), irrespective of the means, even though the methods of collection were not satisfactory in terms of the requirements of scientific research. This was because this society does not believe in the theory of "either everything or nothing." Therefore, *the society decided that some of its* [*female*] *members who lived in the countryside were to carry out data collection, coordination, and classification in the villages where they were living.*
>
> Members responded to this resolution and their response took the form of a collection of samples and the distribution of special questionnaires. Our members entered the houses of workers and farmers, merchants and employees, dignitaries and mayors. This survey included data about health conditions, geography, population and households, and—this was the largest amount of information—about social life, tradition, and customs, such as our popular heritage of songs, proverbs, stories, and lamentations, among others.[119]

Without specifying why, Khalil recalls that this survey did not bring the desired results. Hence, Inash al-Usra, encouraged by popular interest, launched a series of broader campaigns:

> Members discussed this matter [how to go about a heritage preservation campaign] in all its aspects and decided to issue a *call for all interested and competent citizens* (*muwatinin*). They presented the project to citizens so as to involve them in the research process. *The most important objective of our society, in particular, is attracting the largest amount possible of positive, latent energies, removing the thin crust that covers them, and unifying them into a cohesive force, linking them, facilitating the path ahead* as well as providing these energies and forces, the brilliant minds of this country and nation, with an avenue and a possibility to work. . . . On July 15, 1972[,] a large number of specialists responded to the call.[120]

This is an important passage, illuminating how these scholar-activists brought together the study of heritage and political mobilization. Once earlier piecemeal efforts had failed, IU decided that the path ahead was to involve "all interested and competent citizens"—as many as possible—in a mass, grassroots survey that had the added benefits of bringing villagers together and

giving them work. Here, the nationalist duty of heritage preservation, which had taken shape in the writings of Canaan's circle, is no longer the reserve of a selected and enlightened few but is grafted onto a much broader project of consciousness raising and mobilization, or the awakening of society's "latent energies." Khalil's language is eminently political, very close to the language used by activists to describe their work to politicize women and involve them in the national movement.

Doing heritage work, inventorying rural customs and folklore items, channels latent energies into a "cohesive force" and harnesses them to pursue one unified goal: collective political agency. Heritage helps transform, in other words, the revolutionary potential of oppressed subjects into political consciousness *and* action. Responding to Inash al-Usra's call for participation, Khalil's "citizens" (*muwatinin*) established a research committee. Its first major achievement was the publication of an ethnographic monograph on the village of Turmusʿayya, to great effect, according to Khalil:

> People interacted with it in an enthusiastic, beautiful way, both inside the country and outside it [in the diaspora]. So you would see from the child to the young man to the woman to the man, educated and non-educated, all of them competing to read the book and *feel* its meanings and form their opinions about everything that was featured in it. People engaged with the book in a lively, passionate way [literally, in living moving ways]; and we rejoiced for this, since *the book lifted the people from of a state of noncaring* (*halat al-lamubala*), which they were used to in recent years. They used to not care for any incident, no matter how great, and did not mind any issue no matter how intense it was or how dangerous, and instead engaged every change with negativity and a lack of interest. So *the publication of this book was a positive agent in waking people up* and pushing them forward [*intilaq*]. This enthusiasm [*hamas*] extended to the rest of the region and people invited each other to work together and collaborate and undertake similar studies in cities and villages.[121]

Again both the language and process described are political: with more and more people studying and collecting heritage, the committee succeeded in stirring up an eminently political emotion, enthusiasm, or *hamas*, a term commonly used in conjunction with the national cause. The Palestinian feminists and folklorists of the 1970s and 1980s, in other words, mobilized

heritage as a technique to raise consciousness in the Marxist sense of "waking up" or "lifting" people. Of the Arabic verbs Khalil uses to describe this movement, *kharaja* (lift) implies an ascending movement, and *intilaq* (push forward) means to "take off" like a bullet or a plane; for her, reading the book lifted people from a "state of noncaring" or false consciousness and subjection into an active condition, a condition of agency. This was an explicit goal of her heritage work, together with the "mobilization of our good citizens' opinions, opening doors for them so that they can participate and write and treat the problems of their country and critique constructively."[122] Hence, reading the book and doing ethnography makes people care and act upon their new awareness by collaborating to undertake further studies in other cities and villages. The immediate result is the establishment of a host of committees for the collection and preservation of Palestinian folklore, one in almost "every town and village,"[123] all working "earnestly and actively to gather this heritage."[124]

Other heritage scholars might have perceived the act of involving villagers as a threat to their work and authority. But the Palestinian ethnographers did not view the emancipatory potential of this form of knowledge production as hampering scientific quality; to the contrary, they understood citizen involvement as the essential condition for the success of heritage preservation in Palestine. To this end, *Heritage and Society* published multiple articles explaining how to do fieldwork and illustrating questionnaires and survey forms;[125] these methodological pieces were meant to teach ordinary people how to collect folklore by themselves in a scientific manner in order to contribute to the collective endeavor. ʿAbd al-Latif al-Barghuthi explained his purpose in publishing model questionnaires for the collection of data on oral literature:

> To create an organized, mature and beneficial collection of popular literature, I will suggest a set of questions for each aspect of this literature to be adopted by those who are willing to do such a job as basis for a scientific approach. . . .
>
> I believe that if an adequate number of people are interested in our popular literature and if they agree to use the proposed [scientific] approach to collect the different forms of that literature, the road will be paved to start a comprehensive survey of the Palestinian Arab popular literature and consequently to conduct systematic scientific studies on the collected material from all aspects. . . . *The*

> *wider the prospects of these studies become, the more we explore new prospects about ourselves, our life, and our country.*[126]

Studying folklore brought about new concepts of the Palestinian self. The kind of Palestinian identity produced in and through this participatory knowledge practices was a "struggle identity,"[127] whereby the peasant stands in for the whole Palestinian people, an army at the ready. This was a time when "young camp women and activists begin to describe themselves and other women with a whole new vocabulary, a repertoire of intensely active, political, and nationalistic terms and categories—activists (*nashitat*), politicized (*musayyasat*), fighters (*fida'iyyat*), workers (*'amilat*), strugglers (*munadilat*), and martyrs (*shahidat*)."[128] In Khalil's writing and work, the emphasis on nationalist feelings, on *hamas* or patriotic zeal, and on people's sincerity and devotion to the cause, stimulated by being part of the project of salvaging Palestinian heritage—"feeling as thought and thought as feeling"—signals that this work produces new political, militant subjects, the coming together of science and political subjectification.

In this way, as Khalil explicitly does, a participatory heritage turns subjugated individuals like working-class women and housewives under occupation into "citizens" (*muwatinin*), in the double sense of actively resisting subjects (the agents of national liberation) and citizens of the future Palestinian state (citizens because they are already busy laying the groundwork for this state through heritage). The intellectuals studying folklore and publishing in *Heritage and Society* were largely secular leftist nationalists with strong ties to the national liberation movement, if not activists themselves, as in the case of Samiha Khalil. These organic intellectuals were strongly influenced by Marxism, like other third-world liberation movements, but with a Gramscian bent. This is implicit in their practice of emancipatory cultural politics and their conception of power as a "power that is forged before independence and towards independence."[129] Together with producing knowledge and breeding citizens, they also engaged in grassroots institution building. With the constitution of folklore committees "in every town or village," the folklore movement participated in the making of that extended, comprehensive network of popular organizations that helped prepare the way for the First Intifada.

THE INTIFADA DRESS

In the late 1980s, and especially during the First Intifada, women wore the Intifada "flag dress" in Palestinian demonstrations against the occupation. These Intifada dresses used traditional embroidery to communicate an explicit message of resistance (Figure 6); in addition to older patterns, they displayed various political symbols—Palestinian flags, maps of Palestine, the Dome of the Rock, and inscriptions like "We shall return"—embroidered in the red, green, and black of the Palestinian flag.[130] Defying the Israeli ban of any public display of the Palestinian national colors, women of different ages and classes donned these dresses; they actively participated in the uprising and the popular committees that sustained it.[131]

Both a political and a social revolution, even if incomplete,[132] the First Intifada visibly brought many more women, especially women from the vil-

FIGURE 6. Intifada dress next to a traditional *thawb*. The Intifada dress is embroidered with Palestinian flags. The bottom of the chest panel is decorated with maps of Palestine and the letters *PLO*.
Source: Courtesy of the Palestinian Museum. From the collection of Tiraz: Widad Kawar Home for Arab Dress. Photo on the left: Kayané Antreassian. Photo on the right: Tanya Traboulsi.

lages and refugee camps, into the traditionally male public space of politics. This was the result of the work carried out in the decade before by organized women's groups to produce a female "consciousness that was both feminist and political-national."[133] To do so, activists had first to get women to work—to involve them in the national movement, they had to empower them first. A hallmark component of their training programs, embroidery courses revived a village practice that had suffered a major setback with the 1948 Catastrophe but had been continued by some charitable organizations. Embroideries and other village traditions had already begun to be coded as national heritage by the 1920s–1930s ethnographers of Canaan's circle. But the training programs and women's self-help organizing of the 1970s and 1980s brought this process of heritagization full circle by reinventing a dying tradition and giving it renewed political meaning in the service of anticolonial resistance. Maryam Malakha Abu Laban, a key figure among Palestinian embroidery organizations in Amman, states: "I am unable to fight with a rifle so I will fight with a needle."[134] The embodiment of a defiant spirit, of a will to resist, the Intifada dress and heritage more broadly become both icons and means of women's political mobilization turned (incomplete) emancipation.

The Intifada dress signals a new phase in the social history of peasant material culture, or the completion of what Arjun Appadurai would have called a *détournement* of value.[135] Initiated by the nativist orientalists, the work of scientific classification reassembled the old peasant things, otherwise doomed to disappear, into a distinctive class of objects signifying the nation and its deep ties to the homeland. After 1967, the consolidation of a folklore-inspired national heritage goes hand in hand with the creation of exchange value, which in turn enables producers' agency. It is remarkable that the same hands that transform this old stuff into national Palestinian heritage—the inalienable property of the nation as embodiment of its very soul—simultaneously make it alienable as a commodity. And here, as Elizabeth Ferry has argued with regard to heritage politics in Mexico,[136] we spot the paradox of the simultaneous alienability and inalienability of heritage, an "inalienable commodity" under whose regime multiple schemes of value—exchange, sign, and science—or better forms of valuation intersect and bolster each other.

This dialectics of alienability and inalienability—these mutually reinforcing processes of valuation—produce a new object, heritage, which in turn enables

new political, empowered, militant subjects. In the occupied territories in the late 1970s and 1980s, women started making—both studying and producing—heritage, and in the process they remade themselves into nationalist actors. A "struggle identity," in other words, emerges in these years also as a result of a set of specific heritage performances. A large number of the embroiderers recently interviewed as part of a major survey of the Palestinian Museum connected their work with resistance and a sense of empowerment tied to having an income and partaking in the national endeavor.[137] If Maryam Malakha Abu Laban "fight[s] with a needle," then the product of her labor, of her needlework, like the Intifada dress, is not simply a sign, a banner, the outward expression of a preconstituted interiority, a way for women to visually communicate their Palestinian identity and commitment—as it used to communicate regional identity and status in the past. It is the stuff, the very material, the vehicle of their agency. In the years of the revolution, women turned peasant material culture from a sign of the past, of backwardness, into a projection of the future, the promise of a nation-state to come.[138] This practice of heritage as resistance had a lasting if not unchanging impact in the years to come, especially because the Oslo Accords did not bring about the realization of that promise and the end of dispossession.

CHAPTER 2

GOVERNMENT THROUGH HERITAGE IN OLD HEBRON

Hebron is the West Bank's second most populous town and home to its largest industrial area, yet the numerous vineyards, olive groves, and terraced plots dotting the landscape lend themselves to familiar descriptions of a city that is not quite urban, a "rural city," dominated by a "peasant [*fallahi*] way of life." This is a city many Palestinians consider extremely conservative (*muhafiz*) and backward.[1] But what makes Hebron truly stand out is its marvelous Old City (*al-balad al-qadima*), as well as the peculiar form of settler colonialism that has nested in the midst of it. Known synecdochically as the old Suq or *qasaba*, this richly historical area grew organically around the Haram, which is the Ibrahimi Mosque or Tomb of the Patriarchs of the Abrahamic faiths that made the city famous. The Suq is Hebron's most beautiful quarter, with its winding, vaulted alleys (*qanater*), tiny thoroughfares, and irregular clusters of tall houses that grew up over the centuries around labyrinthine, narrow courtyards (*hawsh*, pl. *ahwash*) dating back to the Mamluk period (1250–1516), the city's golden age when Hebron was a pilgrimage destination and an important Sufi center (Figure 7).[2] Hebron's compact urban fabric reflects a strong interrelationship between spatial organization and social structures. It has been historically divided into a number of densely crowded neighborhoods, or *harat* (sing. *hara*), which are organized along kinship, ethnic, religious, and professional lines. Its distinctive, meandering *ahwash* system is quite unlike the typical central courtyard pattern common in Palestine and elsewhere in the Arab world.[3] This latter plan is found in Hebron mostly in

FIGURE 7. Hebron Old City's roofs, 2006.
Source: Author.

the late Ottoman houses around the Mamluk quarters.[4] Once bustling with life, the Suq and the Old City as a whole today are an uncanny place: Israeli settlers' colonization has long displaced most of its former Palestinian residents. Often silent and empty, the streets are ethnically segregated in a way that the ancient quarters, with their shifting, fluid boundaries, had never been.

The noise of building construction rings out; Palestinian laborers, engineers, and architects are refurbishing run-down, empty houses, turning open spaces full of garbage into public gardens and playgrounds, renovating or building new infrastructure, and lighting the streets. They work for the Hebron Rehabilitation Committee (Lajnat Aʿmar al-Khalil, HRC), a local Palestinian organization that aims to restore the Old City into a livable urban space, as discussed in the Introduction.[5] Located in a refurbished Ottoman palace close to the Haram, the HRC's main offices always see a steady but diverse stream of visitors: local employees and laborers, development experts and Palestinian Authority (PA) officials, foreign consuls, and even activist groups looking for the latest updates on Israeli settlements and human rights violations in the city.

Local residents also visit the HRC offices. One frequent visitor was Su'ad, a woman whose story I will tell later in this chapter. Like many impoverished Old City residents, Su'ad was a tenant of the HRC. When Israeli settlers smashed her windows, she came to the HRC not just to organize their repair but also to report the violation and seek legal advice. On another occasion she came because she needed a residency certificate.

This host of diverse visitors points to the HRC's many tasks beyond heritage: opposing settlement policies, social housing, and local government. Adherence to international technical standards and so-called best practices in heritage conservation is crucial to the organization and to the self-perception of many of its employees. While these international best practices and, more broadly, the globalized, technocratic heritage discourse assume "cultural heritage" to be a well-demarcated domain, clearly separated from politics, in reality no such neat separation is possible, especially for the HRC's professionals: their daily experience is that heritage and politics—here referring both to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and to the more trivial, daily work of managing the Old City—are profoundly enmeshed, even "two sides of the same coin." Restoring houses is a chief means of resisting the settlers' colonization and standing one's ground. But how did the meaning of the HRC's work change over time?

Over the years this initiative, which had emerged out of the mass political mobilization and the negotiation process of the late 1980s and early 1990s, transformed into an unplanned or semiplanned mode of governing the local Palestinian landscape and society that is deeply connected to transnational regimes of heritage, development, and humanitarianism. In contrast to developments observed in other urban contexts around the world, where centrally located historic neighborhoods marked as "heritage" gentrify quickly and see a displacement of an older, poorer resident population that is replaced by a new middle class,[6] in Hebron the opposite has been the case. The combined effects of colonization and heritagization have created a "slum" inhabited by a "new class" of "beneficiaries"—my informants' words—dependent on international aid in place of the desired heritage-aware citizens of the state-to-come.

As the older activists of the folklore movement and other Palestinian heritage nongovernmental organizations, the HRC's engineers still understand heritage preservation as one of the duties of the citizens of the future Palestinian state, a duty made even more pressing by the fact that heritage is at the heart

of the conflict in the city. Yet this state is no longer a reality in the making, something soon to come, as these engineers and the PA and many Palestinians had imagined in the 1990s; instead, it is a nebulous scenario far in the future. They nonetheless continue to see heritage awareness as a signifier of modern democratic citizenship, as a component of the duty to defend and take care of a public good that includes the national past, as well as the right to benefit from it. They want to make local residents take responsibility for and defend their living, historic environment. And yet the ongoing occupation and living conditions in the Old City make upholding the rights and duties of citizenship an impossible endeavor.

People in Hebron call the HRC *al-lajna* (the committee), a name that points to the political dynamics at play during the Oslo negotiations when Arafat founded the organization. The term *lajna* (pl. *lijan*) defines the myriad politicized grassroots organizations, like those examined in the previous chapter, that prepared for and then sustained the First Intifada, all born out of the PLO-driven popular mobilization of the late 1970s and 1980s. The function of committees, the primary organizational device of the Intifada, was double: to mobilize and channel collective action and to serve as a substitute for absent institutions, as well as the ones of the Israeli occupation, in preparation for the future state.[7] During the Oslo Accords, many technically oriented *lijan* were being established to lay the groundwork for the new ministries and policy-making infrastructure of the PA. With negotiations ongoing over the future of Hebron, one of these committees, the HRC, brought together important local political figures (mostly close to Arafat and his Fatah party) to counter Israeli maneuvers toward annexation and to guide the transition to independence in the Old City. This committee was a continuation of older organizational forms and resistance practices; at the same time, it responded to a wider political strategy by Arafat to co-opt local initiatives and silence groups critical of the accords, thus shoring up consensus around his negotiating approach.

The roots of the HRC reach back to the late 1970s, when the newly elected nationalist municipal council set out to repair the old buildings of the historic center and to provide basic services to residents such as water and electricity.[8] As in other West Bank towns, and contrary to the occupation authorities' expectations of collaborative leadership, the 1976 municipal elections brought to power a popular council led by Fahed al-Qawasme, whose policies were much

closer to the nationalist positions of the PLO than to those of the older Jordanian elite that had been co-opted by the Israelis. But when the council tried to stop the expansion of the colonies, the Israelis dismissed the councilors and sent them into exile, replacing the elected council with an Israeli-appointed municipal body.[9] Meanwhile, the newly installed Israeli right-wing government officially authorized the Israeli settlement of the Old City, and in 1984 the settlers published a master plan for Hebron explicitly targeting the gradual removal of Palestinian residents from the old part of town.[10] Newly vacated buildings became easy prey for the settlers. Local architects and researchers, reacting to this threat, began plans for a rehabilitation project in the late 1980s, and those discussions and activities in and around the Old City intensified with the mobilization of the First Intifada. Arafat created the organization in 1996 when he realized that he could not negotiate full Israeli withdrawal from Hebron. He decided instead to plant seeds of resistance in the area he was forced to leave behind under Israeli control. We saw in the Introduction how this played out.

Arafat established the HRC by presidential decree partly to dodge internal opposition to his diplomatic approach, which for some was too compliant and left Israelis the upper hand. At the time, according to one of my informants, a leftist activist and journalist, there was another local committee, called the Hebron Defense Committee (HDC), which brought together activists from different Palestinian factions and was critical of the way negotiations were handled; this committee was very active in organizing direct actions against the occupation, like sit-ins, demonstrations, and strikes.[11] When Arafat set up the HRC, the Fatah members of the other committee followed him and left the HDC, effectively sealing its fate, insurrectional politics being substituted with urban regeneration and the creation of facts on the ground. Arafat then gave the HRC "[civil] responsibility for the old town." Today a mosaic portrait of the late PLO leader welcomes you at the entrance of the HRC's main office.

Initially conceived of as a transitional committee, the HRC was made responsible for the occupied Old City. It was devised to counter the expansion of Hebron's colonies while Arafat continued negotiating. He wanted to gain leverage—more Palestinians living in the Old City—ahead of the final status negotiations that were planned for the end of the interim period at the turn of the millennium. The HRC's mission was to be completed by then: the creation

of an independent Palestinian state through the peace process would bring about the demise of settlements, or so Palestinians believed. But the peace treaty and the state did not happen; the failure of Israeli-Palestinian negotiations and the continuation of occupation extended the duration of the HRC indefinitely. A former HRC director explained to me in 2006 the peculiar temporality of the organization:

> All our renting agreements are only for five years because we thought in five years we will be finished. And now we have almost ten years [of work] and it is still . . . you know . . . you cannot believe that this happened. . . . We did not think that our work will prolong as it is now for ten years, we thought everything was going to last for five years, and later on we will have our state and we could normally think about what to do.[12]

Arafat and the people who created the HRC envisaged it as a temporary mechanism before the establishment of full state institutions, the coming of "normal" administration. But as with other interim bodies created in the mid-1990s, the HRC lasted far beyond the end of the millennium and even grew into something else. Instead of handing the "responsibility for the Old City" to the municipality or to another sovereign, elected political body, and with no end in sight to its task of protecting the city from both decay and settlers, the HRC simply continued working under shifting circumstances and expectations.

HRC's original mission was to restore endangered historic buildings and a precious urban heritage, as well as to halt the expansion of Israeli settlements in the middle of the Old City by repopulating it with Palestinians. The committee was established "to preserve Hebron as a historical Arab Palestinian town, in order to safeguard its cultural and architectural heritage against the threat of a takeover by extremist Israeli settlers," according to the organization's old mission statement. Its objective was twofold: "*to preserve the city's cultural heritage* in an extensive sense, by safeguarding the constitutive elements of its old buildings and ultimately save its entire architectural and social identity," and "*to revive the Old City*, by consolidating its bond with its inhabitants, reclaiming abandoned buildings, rehabilitating the infrastructure, providing social services to the population and connecting it to other city neighbourhoods."[13]

More recent programmatic statements indicate an expansion of the horizons of the committee. In the late 2000s, the HRC's director listed a set

of newer, broader objectives, such as "improving civilian living conditions through the provision of health and technical services, and creating work opportunities through launching development projects; and . . . stimulating and triggering commercial and tourist activity and encouraging people to return to live and work in the old city."[14] Today, as this book goes to press, the organization's website notes that its mission includes "boosting trade and the economy, while promoting local and foreign tourism."[15] These objectives foreground the HRC's new work of promoting socioeconomic development, a goal it increasingly shares with other Palestinian heritage organizations. The website also calls attention to yet another new dimension of the organization's work: monitoring and documenting Israeli human rights violations in the Old City. In short, the contours of this rehabilitation initiative have shifted from a countersettlement project to one promoting development and human rights.

The multiplicity and diversity of tasks referred to by the HRC's director points to something that is not written in any mission statement of the organization but is often murmured by employees and locals alike: the HRC is "like a government" in Hebron.[16] Indeed, in addition to restoring the old houses, over the years the HRC came to effectively run the more mundane administration of the Old City on behalf of or in place of the PA, whose operations are severely limited by the full Israeli military control of the area. This arrangement is the local response to the broader politics of the post-Oslo years, and it reveals some qualities of the newer, makeshift forms of governance that are widespread in the West Bank.

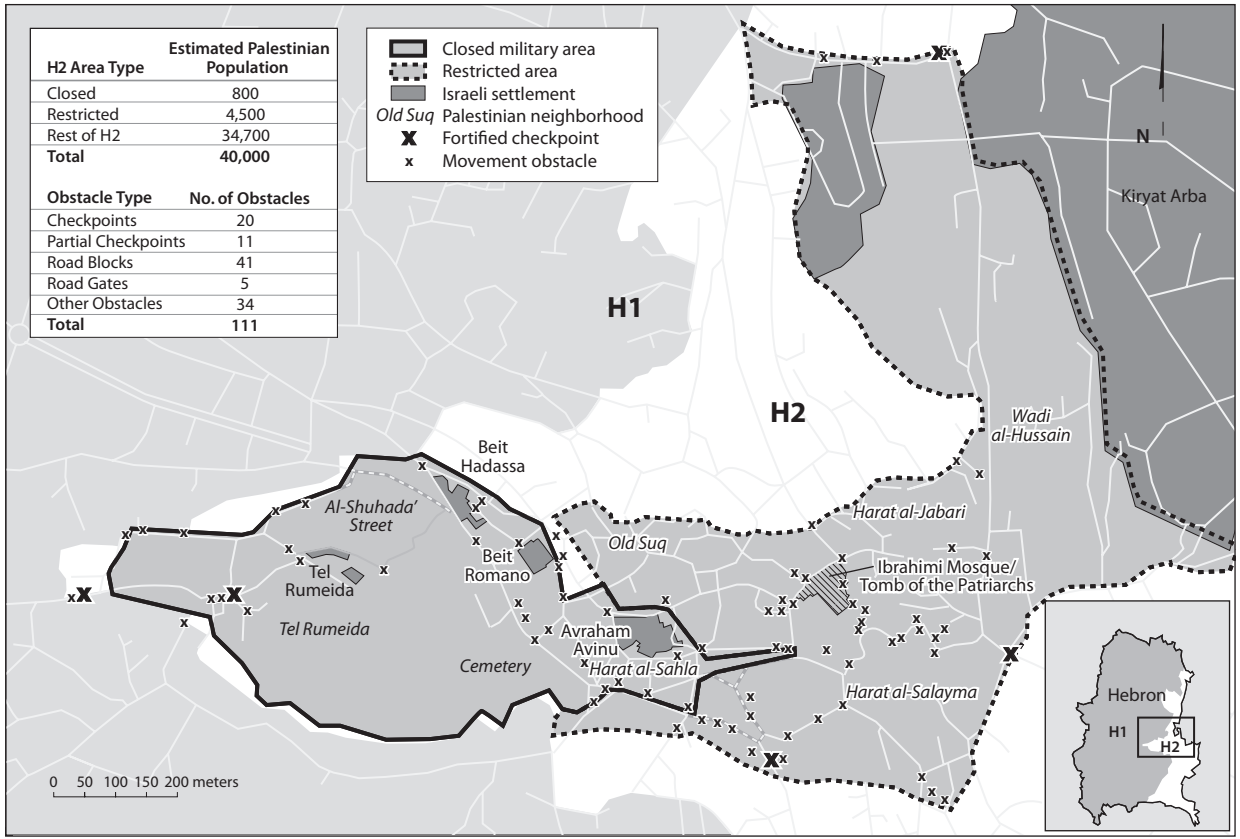
This chapter traces this broadening of functions across the past twenty years of the HRC, focusing on the growing import of humanitarian and development logics and the paradoxical subjectification process set in motion by HRC's negotiations of a disrupted state trajectory and a fragmented, dismembered geography. The HRC wanted to populate the city with Palestinian citizens, but this proved a difficult task.

COLONIZATION BY HERITAGE

Legitimated in their view by heritage, by the presence of the alleged burial place of the patriarchs of the Jewish nation, settlers have destroyed and "petrified life" in the Palestinian Old City, engendering an ongoing process of sociospa-

tial ruination that the HRC was established to counter.[17] Hebron's most important monument is both the symbol of conflicting claims of city ownership and a strategic terrain where these claims literally play out, negotiated square meter by square meter. As with other "shared" shrines of the Holy Land,[18] the Haram (known to Jews and Christians as the Cave of Machpela or Tomb of the Patriarchs) looks today more like a military base than a shrine. Second only to Jerusalem in religious importance, it is holy to Jews and Muslims as the purported location of the cave tombs of the biblical and Qur'anic prophets Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob and their wives. The architecture itself reveals this complex, multilayered, and multireligious history. Originally a cultic precinct surrounding a series of cenotaphs, the massive stone enclosure was built by Herod the Great in the first century BC. During the Byzantine period, it was turned into a basilica, then a mosque following the Arab conquest in the seventh century. Except for the Crusader period when it was briefly a church, the Haram remained a mosque until February 1994, when an American Jewish settler, Baruch Goldstein, shot dead twenty-nine Palestinian worshippers and wounded many more who were praying inside in a massacre that has deeply marked Hebron's recent history.[19] Since then, this heritage site has been transformed into a highly segregated and militarized space, divided between the old Muslim prayer hall and a newly established synagogue, access to which is barred to non-Jews.

Because of its religious significance,[20] Hebron was one of the outposts of the post-1967 Israeli colonization of the West Bank,[21] which unfolded in contravention of international law that bars an occupying state from transferring its population into occupied territory.[22] The religious nationalist settler movement, the Bloc of the Faithful, or Gush Emunim, pushed forward this colonization with full cooperation from the State of Israel.[23] Over the years, Hebron became the stronghold not only of Gush Emunim but also of other fundamentalist Zionist organizations that were semi-underground, if not outright terrorist in their orientation, such as Kach. Hebron's settlers are highly ideological, motivated by their strong sense of being on a sacred, messianic mission.[24] Settlers (but also the Israeli government) call the West Bank by the biblical names of "Judea and Samaria," and for religious Zionists, the commandment to settle (or redeem) what they believe to be the biblical Land of Israel that God promised their ancestors is paramount to all other values, including human laws and human



MAP 2. Map of Hebron city center, based on UN OCHA Settlement-Affected Area in Hebron as of February 2018. The border between Palestinian and Israeli-controlled areas (called H1 and H2) roughly corresponds to the division between the New City and the Old City. The dark gray areas indicate the Israeli settlements. In the light gray areas around them, Palestinian movement is heavily restricted.

Source: UN OCHA, United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. Reprinted with permission.

rights; but to achieve this divine goal, settlement, which will herald the coming of the Messiah, they do not shun playing with the mundane instruments of politics.[25] The presence of the Tomb of the Patriarchs and the religious symbolism of the city accounts for the similarities of the Hebron settlements to those in East Jerusalem, in contrast to the rest of the West Bank, where they are more likely built around rather than inside Arab towns. In Hebron (and East Jerusalem), settlers have occupied areas within the Palestinian urban fabric (Map 2). In addition to the biblical legacy, settlers claim to represent the old Jewish community of Hebron, evacuated from the city in the 1930s after sixty-seven Jews were killed in 1929 during widespread Arab-Jewish riots.[26]

For settlers, the Tomb of the Patriarchs is the strongest evidence of their God-given, primordial right to the city. As David Wilder, spokesperson for the new Jewish community of Hebron, originally from Brooklyn, New York, said in a recent interview: "People [settlers] who live here [in Old Hebron] of course live here for ideological reasons. We are here because we know that if we didn't live here, who would live here? Keep in mind that the Tomb of the Patriarchs down the street is the second holiest site for the Jewish people in all the world. *So*, this is all Jewish land. When I came back here, I did not come back here to conquer and occupy foreign land. I came home. I came back to where Jews had lived."[27] For settlers, archaeology and what they perceive as the material Jewish heritage of Hebron justify the righteousness of their presence in the city.

One of the founders of Gush Emunim, Rabbi Moshe Levinger, initiated the first settlement in Hebron in 1968. According to the reconstruction of the most comprehensive study of the settlements to date, there was some agonizing, lots of discussions, and ambivalence within the Israeli executive branch at the time, but soon a ministerial committee decided to establish a permanent settlement called Kiryat Arba on the outskirts of the Palestinian town.[28] Ten years later, in 1979, the wife of the rabbi, Miriam Levinger, led a group of women and children to the Old City, where they occupied a building that became the first of seven Jewish settlements there, all of which are located along a strip that leads from the archaeological site of Tel Rumeida to the Tomb of the Patriarchs and to Kiryat Arba. According to the same study, the pattern of the relationship among settlers, Palestinians, and the army was set from the beginning: "First, the settlers inserted themselves into the heart of an Arab locale. As the town's inhabitants, whose ancestors had lived there since ancient

times, did not look kindly on the Jews' penetration of their hometown and tried to repel the unwanted intruders, clashes broke out. Large military forces were required to protect the handful of settlers; to ensure this protection, veteran Palestinian Hebronites were evicted from their homes and their places of business."[29] Since the 1980s, the settlers' leadership, supported by political figures such as Ariel Sharon, has been working on plans for the creation of a Jewish quarter in Hebron by expanding and connecting the Old City settlements and significantly reducing the Palestinian population.[30] Archaeology, which here means settlement under the mantle of heritage, has played a key role in this project: the entire Ibrahimi Mosque or Tomb of the Patriarchs was included in the Israeli government's list of "national heritage" sites to be restored as part of a large-scale Israeli National Heritage Plan launched by Benjamin Netanyahu to "strengthe[n] the connection with land of our forefathers."[31] Also, there is a new settler-initiated but government-supported plan to create an archaeological park in the area of Tel Rumeida, an initiative that will lend even more legitimation to Hebron's colonizers and their expropriation of Palestinian lands.

In the context of the Oslo process, the Ibrahimi Mosque massacre of 1994 might have triggered the evacuation of the Hebron settlers (and Israeli prime minister Yitzhak Rabin apparently briefly considered this option),[32] but things eventually went another way. The settlers remained in the Old City, and their presence justified the enduring Israeli control of that part of town (Figure 8). Instead of giving the whole of Hebron back to the Palestinians, as happened with other West Bank towns, the Oslo Accords intensified the ethnonational segregation of the city under the terms of a 1997 protocol, which partitioned Hebron into two districts: the New City (approximately 80 percent of Hebron) under Palestinian administration, and the Old City with the settlements under Israeli military control (the so-called H1 and H2 areas).[33] The Hebron Protocol established a dual legal regime in the Old City: settlers are subject to Israeli civil law, whereas Palestinians are subject to both Israeli military law and PA civil law (at least in theory, as I discuss shortly). Voted on by the Israeli Knesset, and receiving a vastly larger parliamentary majority than the other Oslo Accords, the Hebron Protocol has been strongly criticized by many Palestinians, who see it as providing what Edward Said termed a "Palestinian seal of approval" to the presence of the settlers in the Old City.[34]

FIGURE 8. The settlement of Beit Romano being built in the middle of Old Hebron, 2005.
Source: Michael Jacobson. Hebron Beit Romano. CC BY-SA 3.0. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Yeshivat-shavey-hebron.JPG#/media/File:Yeshivat-shavey-hebron.JPG.

FIGURE 9. A military base amid Old Hebron's houses, 2006.
Source: Author.

With several thousand soldiers stationed to protect approximately five hundred Israeli settlers,[35] the urban space of Old Hebron has been militarized and segregated (Figure 9); checkpoints, barriers, fences, no-go areas, and curfews have proliferated. This amounts to a form of collective imprisonment and enduring violence perpetrated against the Palestinian population, victims of a condition of structural fear and humiliation. According to a report issued by the Israeli human rights organization B'Tselem,[36] the Israel army has been implementing a policy of separation or ethnic segregation in Old Hebron, which the need to ensure the safety of the settlers allegedly justifies; Israeli security forces heavily restrict Palestinian movement, systematically fail to enforce laws against violent settlers attacking Palestinians, and routinely abuse the native population, particularly young boys and men.[37] Because of these policies, most former residents have fled. In the late 1960s the Old City had 7,500 inhabitants; by 1996, this number had severely dwindled, with a mere 400 people living close to the Haram.[38] Not coincidentally, 1996 was the year that the HRC was founded.

LIFE IN THE OLD CITY

To trace the trajectory of the HRC and how it changed the lives of people in the Old City, I begin with the stories of two women who live and work there—two stories intersecting in the tense spaces of this historic and religious center.[39] The first is Nuha, a woman in her late thirties. In spite of the differences between us, Nuha and I felt a sense of affinity and a strong bond right from the moment of our first encounter. I met her when I was looking for rental accommodation in the Old City. Nuha was working as a secretary at the HRC, a hundred meters from the old house where she had been living her entire life. In the end I did not move into her house, but through her I sublet the top floor of the Ottoman-era house belonging to her neighbors (who were also her distant relatives), and we continued to visit each other, often via the roof that connected our apartments. Nuha quickly became my best friend and guide through the alleys of the Old City.

Our neighborhood was right next to the Ibrahimi Mosque but relatively far from the Israeli settlements, which meant that there was less danger of settlers' attacks and relatively fewer soldiers' patrols and house searches. The quarter (*hara*) had retained its long-standing sociospatial structure, still largely popu-

lated by the members of a big Hebronite family with a long lineage traditionally based in the quarter's *ahwash* (courtyards) and homes. (This familial continuity was not the case for other quarters of the Old City, as we will see.) The quarter takes its name, Harat Al-Muhtasibin, from the family of the descendants of the suq's old supervisors.

Nuha quickly socialized me into her family and friends in the *hara*, and their living rooms and courtyards became the places where I spent most of my free time during my stay in Hebron. Many people in the *hara* have low levels of education (few attend and finish high school), and they tend to work at precarious odd jobs in the new Suq or in the factories and workshops of the New or Upper City, the modern development controlled by the PA. Business closures and skyrocketing unemployment following the Second Intifada, and economic globalization took a heavy toll on residents. The people with whom I lived, my landlords, had fared a little better, being part of a middle-class family of educated professionals and shop owners, but they were the elderly and the youngest or poorest members. When everyone else in the family had left, they stayed behind to hold on to the old family compound.

The Second Intifada had taken a heavy toll on Nuha and her family as well. Her youngest brother was a *shahid* (martyr) killed by a stray Israeli bullet in the early 2000s, when simply walking around in the Old City was risking one's life. During my fieldwork Nuha was unemployed; the HRC had hired her on a temporary project basis, as was increasingly the case under the committee's new structure. Nuha was desperately looking for work. Meanwhile, she also had to take care of her elderly mother. Her remaining brother was trying to save up to get married, although without much success. Not many "respectable" (*muhtaram*) women from the New City up the hill—the kind of women his mother was looking for—seemed willing to move to the Old City to join him, and he had no money to build a new house elsewhere. When I went back to Hebron in 2011, Nuha's brother had managed to marry and to bring his young spouse to the old family house in the Old City, where the newlyweds occupied one of the rooms opening onto the central hall; unfortunately, however, relationships between Nuha's mother and her daughter-in-law were getting quite strained. Then, for Nuha this traditional sociospatial arrangement was no longer right.

For the unmarried Nuha, work was about supporting her family, and thus a necessity, but also a way to get out of the sometimes claustrophobic

environment of the Old City, a way to meet and interact with people, to grow and be active and have a full life of her own—something she had studied hard for, earning a distance-learning degree in administration while she was working. Work was chiefly about encounters and mobility, and also about dignity, which is what the Israeli occupation often denies to the Palestinian women of the Old City. After the violence and the closures, women and young girls were under pressure and felt haunted by the question: "Why do you study? For what? In order to die?" Yet some, like Nuha, refused to renounce the desire to live differently and continued to leave their homes.

The occupation, especially as it developed in the aftermath of the Oslo Accords, dramatically narrowed Nuha's horizons. A lively historic center turned into a violent and militarized space, a dead space, in her own words. A familiar landscape evacuated—former schools and familiar shops shut down, friends and family departed for a better life elsewhere. It was probably only thanks to the HRC—which had renovated her house, provided services to her neighborhood, and given her a job, at least for a while—that Nuha and her family were still able to live next to the Haram in their ancestral home. This was also true of the entire *hara*. The HRC continued to be a crucial institutional presence in the Old City; in fact, it was the only Palestinian institution there, apart from a derelict police station staffed by unarmed officers. (More recently, some ministerial and other PA offices have opened in the Old City, but this was done upon the HRC's suggestion so as to increase the traffic of people coming from the New City.) Residents referred to the HRC for all matters: when the street in front of their house needed repair, when services were down, for rubbish collection, but also for their health insurance and residency certificates. Yet many criticized the HRC, which in their view was not doing enough in responding to people's needs, was not living up to its promises. For some, people with personal or political (Fatah) connections (*wasta*) in the organization fared better. Rumors of corruption also circulated: what were they doing with the millions they got from the Europeans?

Residents frequently felt alone on the front line of the national conflict, and that front line was nothing less than their own homes, easy prey for settlers if left uninhabited. It is indeed a sense of protection, a duty to protect, that Old City residents like Nuha feel toward their old mansions. "We do not leave more than a couple of days because we want to hold on to here, if we leave for more our house will be lost . . . because it is a *valuable* place," Nuha explained to me

once. While her English was not very strong, she used the English word *valuable* in the middle of our chat in Arabic, emphasizing it. This is a keyword of the contemporary heritage discourse, referring to historic properties significant enough to be deemed worthy of preservation. In spite of the frequent complaints, then, the HRC is shaping not only the built environment of the Old City but also the ways in which Hebronites perceive it.

An acquaintance of Nuha's and a personality of Hebron, Su'ad was an unconventional, strong-willed woman in her early forties. A former English teacher, she ran a kindergarten for Old City children and provided guidance and logistical support to foreign journalists, political activists, and volunteers during their stays in Hebron. She was also very proud of patrolling the streets and taking children to school who were at risk of being attacked by the settlers. "I am the one responsible for reopening the Ibrahimi School next to the Haram," she proudly told me on several occasions. During our first encounter she made a point of telling me that she walked alone at night in the Suq, emphasizing that she was not scared because she had been born and lived all her life in the Old City. She consistently refused to let the occupation alienate her from her beloved city. Su'ad had a strong sense of her right to live in dignity and freedom in the city of her birth, but she was also convinced that, at least under the present circumstances, this right had to be fought for by practicing everyday resistance.

Su'ad's sense of home and belonging was inseparable from an acute sense of citizenship (as the consciousness of a specific constellation of rights and duties governing her relationship to the city, a social responsibility) and a struggle identity, both of them amplified by the city's venerable heritage. She lived on the front line of Hebron's ethnonational struggle, right by the famous Shara' al-Shuhada', or Shuhada Street, once a thriving commercial artery, but taken over by the settlers and almost emptied of its former life. Her smashed windows and broken balcony railings, and frequent visits of soldiers' and settlers' patrols, were the most obvious signs of life on the battlefield. She had turned her roof into a garden for her kids to play in, reviving the old tradition of using rooftops for social purposes while also keeping the children off the street. But during another of my visits, the settlers were celebrating a religious festival in the streets, and soldiers took over her rooftop, ostensibly to protect the celebrants. Although this was dangerous, Su'ad insisted that we challenge the soldiers by

going onto the roof; she related the action to a deep sense of "commitment to the Old City and its people." This commitment stemmed from her lifelong attachment to the Old City, and it was a form of reciprocity: she sought to "return the favor" the Old City had done her—allowing her to live close to the Haram—by looking after its children and practicing resistance on a daily basis.

The HRC had deeply affected Su'ad's life too, particularly the contours of her physical and social environment, the fabric of her local community. The few people from her childhood who had stayed, and those who had arrived since the start of the rehabilitation project in the mid-1990s, were predominantly low-income families from the villages around Hebron. If for NGO professionals the predicament of the Old City is its social homogeneity—the "issue of having only one class moving there"—for Su'ad and other longtime residents, as well as several HRC employees, the problem was one of cultural heterogeneity and lack of social integration and "social cohesion," in their words, between old and new residents. Most people tended to frame this as the "problem of the newcomers." Although Su'ad was ambivalent toward the HRC, her ideas concerning the newcomers (*al-sukkan al-judud*) were very clear indeed:

> I am very glad for the rehabilitation of old buildings, so that they do not collapse, but I am sad for the Old City itself, for the people and history that have been changed by bringing in new people . . . who do not fit here. . . . They [the HRC] are mixing up the population, the fabric of the Old City, which used to be one big family because we consider ourselves all related by intermarriage. I am against the change in the structure of the society living here, and the abandonment of the family structure [she is referring to the traditional kinship-based pattern of residential arrangement divided in quarters]. . . . Now everybody is from a different village, from a different point of view, and we are becoming like the Jews, the Israelis who are from many different cultures and social backgrounds. . . . Sometimes I am a stranger in the Old City, and I do not fit. . . . With the original residents [*al-sukkan al-asliyyin*] I have many things in common, especially the old memories [*dhikrayat*]. . . . But when I talk to somebody from Yatta[40] . . . I mean, they are not from here. They [the newcomers] are from a village, we are from the city. We are not from the same place. . . . They corrupt this place because they are strangers. . . . They keep complaining about the Old City, and I tell them: "no, you shouldn't, it is beautiful here." They do not know nor care about the Old City.[41]

A long-standing class divide between urban and rural populations resurfaces in Su'ad's narrative of social dismemberment. Motivating such classed contempt, the newcomers lack in Su'ad's perception the qualities of "caring" for the urban environment and for the city she views as a mother that one should be grateful to, the very basis of nationalist citizenship. By renovating their homes and providing services and other forms of support, the HRC has allowed people like Su'ad to stay in the Old City, thereby fostering their sense of duty to defend and hold on to it. The HRC, however, has also contributed to a substantial change in the composition of the "community" that inhabits Hebron's core, though not in an intentional or planned way. Of course, colonization and the power asymmetry between Israelis and Palestinians plays a major role in the social dynamics of this divided town. But the combined effects of opposing, uneven forces—colonization or dismemberment versus restoration or re-membering, or settlement and countersettlement—render the Old City a tense and fragmented field marked by a suspended temporality.

THE MAKING OF A SLUM

In the early years, the HRC refurbished dilapidated buildings, installed new infrastructure such as street lighting, and provided basic services to residents. The committee focused these initial restoration efforts on areas it designated, with military language, as the "first circle": areas immediately adjacent to the Israeli settlements, in the *qasaba* right by the Haram, which the HRC sought to repopulate quickly. To carry out this repopulation plan, the HRC worked as a social housing program.

This program was made possible by a peculiar legal arrangement, a double-lease system between the HRC and the Old City's property owners. In this, the HRC contracts with the owners to lease their building for free for five years (this was originally calculated so that the lease would end when the HRC's work was planned to end, at the creation of the Palestinian state). One of the major challenges the HRC faces on the ground is the multiple ownership of the old houses in need of restoration, as they often belong to extended families.[42] A house could have more than fifty owners, most of whom live outside the Old City and many of whom are likely not in Palestine/Israel at all. During the lease, the HRC renovates the property; once the renovation is complete, unless

the original owners intend to return (which they often do not), the HRC then lets the various apartments for free or close to free for another five years. When those five years are up, the tenant is entitled to stay in the apartment after signing a rent-controlled contract with the owners. These new tenants will have previously applied for housing through the HRC, which checks that they do not own another house elsewhere, are married, and have no criminal record (verified by the security services). This unusual arrangement is facilitated by the strong political will backing the committee and the legitimacy it enjoyed and continues to enjoy locally. (It also has the collateral effect of strengthening the relationship between the HRC and the Fatah-controlled security services.)

Thanks to its political backing, the HRC can reward those who serve the Palestinian cause by living on the front line of struggle—by championing *sumud*, or the determination to stay put in the face of daily, close encounters with the most violent face of the occupation. Old City residents have access to extremely favorable rents and other subsidies. They have access to multiple free or low-cost services (electricity, water, and health insurance) and to various tax reductions. Moreover, since the Second Intifada, families living in the Old City have been entitled to monthly food packages from the International Committee of the Red Cross, which are intended to alleviate the worsening socioeconomic conditions and skyrocketing unemployment. In this way the HRC has brought several thousand people back to live in the Old City.[43] Attracted by such favorable conditions, they come primarily from the lowest income groups, a demographic trend in the Old City that began well before the start of HRC's work.

In the last formal population survey, conducted in 1999, between 60 and 75 percent of Old City residents were living below the poverty line; only two households reported an income higher than US$1,000 a month.[44] According to the same survey, more than half of Old City residents (58 percent) owned their home, and 42 percent rented from absentee landlords; the percentages appear to be similar at the time of writing.[45] In 1999 most tenants either originated in Hebron or had immediate family there; there were also a substantial number of returnees, that is, former militants and PLO personnel who had moved back to Palestine to work with the PA. A post-2000 trend, in contrast, has been the arrival from the villages around Hebron of families whose main breadwinner has lost his job in Israel because of the closures. In other words, post-2000 immigrants tend to be people who have no previous relationship either to the

political struggle and formal political structures or to the Old City itself.[46] Thus, while urban regeneration around the world is often part and parcel of gentrification processes in which poor, working-class, and migrant populations are displaced and then replaced by new middle-class residents and/or tourists,[47] in Hebron population flows occur in the opposite direction.

The shift from a segmented city of cohesive neighborhoods based on social solidarity, such as kinship or religion, to the emergence of class-specific neighborhoods, with the upper and the middle classes leaving the old quarters, is a process several Middle Eastern towns have undergone in the twentieth century, as is the development of a kind of "urban ruralism" produced by the influx of former peasants from the countryside.[48] But colonization put its own spin on this process, generating a form of hypersegregated urbanism that has fragmented the city along multiple lines. This is a trend the HRC has not been able to stop, despite all its efforts in this direction. At the time of my main fieldwork in the mid-2000s, Palestinians from the NGO world used the English word *slum* to describe urban conditions in Hebron's Old City, particularly as it had developed throughout the post-Oslo years. They seldom made this judgment without simultaneously expressing appreciation for the work of the HRC, which had effectively stopped the settlements and preserved a heritage that otherwise would have surely been lost to expropriation, decay, or demolition by residents themselves. But the term *slum* conveyed a keen preoccupation with a process of spatial and social dismemberment that they saw ongoing in the Old City. This fracture between the New City and the Old City—roughly corresponding to the H1 and H2 areas established by the Hebron Protocol—between the upper and middle classes and the poor, is refracted into many other fractures, like a broken mirror, for ethno-national separation has produced many other borders.[49] A common theme in Hebronites' narratives, Hebron has splintered into multiple cities and classes of residents, each inhabiting different sociolegal regimes.

NARRATIVES OF SOCIAL DISMEMBERMENT AND THE RESURGENCE OF TRIBALISM

When I asked him about the major social changes that had taken place in Hebron throughout his life, Basil, a sixty-something engineer and shop owner

whose longtime family store in the Old City had been closed since the Second Intifada, answered:

> *In the First Intifada we were all together, all Palestinian brothers, and this entire city was one, Hebron was united* . . . we were united and helped each other, and if I didn't have food my neighbors would help me. I could leave my house open knowing it would be safe. Now that we have ministers and leaders, we began fighting among ourselves, Fatah, Hamas, and whatnot, and we became targets for the Israelis. If you are a Palestinian, civilian or not, you can be killed. . . . In the past we didn't have police, and we didn't need it, there was security and safety, problems or disputes were solved peacefully, our only enemy was the Israeli occupation. Now that we have police we do not feel safe, not in our homes or at work.[50]

This narrative of social dismemberment, and the idea that there has been a steady decline in social cohesion (and hence the resistance ethos) among Palestinians as a consequence of Oslo is widespread: it is a narrative people mobilize to make sense of the distance between a broken, disillusioned, and "cynical" present, and the ideals of the First Intifada, its missed desires and aspirations up to the promise of statehood.[51] Basil delineates a process of change along three entangled dimensions: the spatial, the social, and the temporal. He contrasts the post-Oslo condition with the period of the First Intifada, always celebrated in Palestinian social memory as a time of national unity, and, as such, of collective political agency, strength and fortitude. He also links mass political mobilization—represented by the First Intifada—with strong feelings of social solidarity and, most interesting, of security and safety, as well as social well-being. Demobilization coupled with the apartheid that characterizes the post-Oslo condition dealt a major blow to this bond of solidarity, in his view, and generated a heightened sense of sociophysical vulnerability as a result.

In Old Hebron this social dismemberment is (perceived as) strongly related to spatial fragmentation. Following the Hebron Protocol, Palestinians living in H1 have been subject to the (embryonic, precarious) rule of law of the PA, whereas residents of H2 (i.e., Old City) fall under the law(lessness) of the continuing occupation.[52] The letter of the protocol makes the few Palestinian institutions allowed in H2 largely ineffective. According to Article 14.a, for example, only fifty "plainclothes unarmed municipal inspectors" or plainclothes police-

men can operate in H2, but they cannot do much against Palestinian criminals, let alone against the violence of settlers and soldiers who frequently prevent them from doing their work. These circumstances have turned the Old City into what many Palestinians see as a safe haven for outlaws like thieves, weapons smugglers, and drug dealers.

Slumification and lawlessness contribute to the stigmatization (*wasma*) of the Old City. "Aren't you scared of going through the Suq?" my landlady asked me one day. Her surprise at my visits to the Suq was matched only by my own surprise at hearing that she had not gone to the old Suq in years, although it was barely a two-minute walk from her home. And her surprise was muted compared to that of my middle-class friends and acquaintances from (New) Hebron and elsewhere when I moved to the Old City. Fear (*al-khawf*), and often a barely concealed, classed contempt for "backwardness" (*takhalluf*) and misery, define Palestinian attitudes toward the Old City. These stigmatizing attitudes are both cause and product of the pervasive, structural severing of the relationships between H2 and the rest of Palestine, so that traditional modes of social integration like family visits (*ziyarat*) and marriage no longer take place, and nearly all residents of the New City with whom I interacted told me that they had not been in the *balad al-qadima* in years, even though most of them were born and still owned a house there.

This stigma has an epidemiological quality attached to it, as in the case of the children and women of the Old City who are thought to transmit their bad "street manners" to those who interact with them. Because of this stigma, few women from outside the Old City would marry a man from there, because people do not want to move downtown, as a wife would have to do according to the (increasingly classed) custom of patrilocality. Hebronites do have very good, real reasons for not wanting to move downtown, fearing harassment by settlers and soldiers and the difficulties of mobility that plague the Old City much more than other areas. But there is also a powerful dimension of fantasy in the ongoing stigmatization of the Old City that envelops it in a ghostlike, dreadful fog. Women's mobility has become more and more restricted because of this stigma, together with street closures and checkpoints. During my fieldwork in Hebron, I spent long evenings with women friends going through a massive amount of pictures of past trips to Jericho or even Tel Aviv—trips that are now impossible to undertake and much longed for (the permit system to

gain entry to Israel has paralyzed most residents of the West Bank post-Oslo). To put it simply, many of the women I know there rarely leave the house.

The different forms of segregation affecting lives in the Old City were a recurring theme in my conversations with residents. The poorest among them especially lamented the hardening of class barriers and the loss of national cohesion and solidarity that had left resistance and the front line of the struggle exclusively to them. Basma, a resident of the Suq, voiced her sorrow and her feelings of grief for a bygone time and place in terms that are far from uncommon in the Old City:

> Things are going from bad to worse. The Old City is now actually under occupation. Years ago the *hesbeh* [vegetable market] was open and alive, and when there was a curfew it was in the whole city; now H1 would be living its normal life while the Old City is under curfew. In the First Intifada the entire city lived under the same conditions, but after the division into H1 and H2 things changed and the Old City fell under very hard conditions.[53]

People at the front line of the struggle expressed feeling left alone. Not only Basma but also activists I spoke with link these amplified social divisions with a movement "away from politics and the revolution," which translates into the waning of popular resistance against the occupation. Hebron activist Nur, for example, painted in vivid terms the shift from unity and mobilization to disillusion that had taken place in Hebron and elsewhere with the Second Intifada:

> The Second Intifada has failed, not only because it was armed but also because people were disillusioned; in the past people were united against the occupation and acted together, but now a person gets arrested and he is forgotten on the negotiating table. People do not trust their leaders anymore, and some of them say: why do I have to pay with my life or with my freedom? For somebody to buy a new car or a new villa! There are people [former PLO, now PA bureaucrats] who used to enjoy the respect and trust of the people who knew about them from afar, but when these people got to know them [the leaders] closely, they were disappointed and found that leaders do not deserve their trust. All these things combined have destroyed the spirit of resistance in the majority of the population, and the struggle became limited to a small group of people carrying rifles or launching primitive rockets.[54]

In Hebronites' narratives, this sense of being part of a collapsing social fabric is associated with a strong perception of the widespread corruption of formal and informal authorities (including the HRC) and the general moral laxity of society (with politicians and women imagined as the main carriers of this decadence). While, at least in the case of the HRC, these perceptions have rarely been substantiated by concrete evidence, they have taken on a life of their own, repeated in conversations all over the city from local coffee shops to living rooms, such that all authorities are an object of contempt.

At the time of my fieldwork, many Hebronites from various walks of life voiced this perception of failing institutions and the dissolution of "state" authority—an authority somehow assumed to have existed in the recent past, as if there were a state before. Many articulated these fears by mobilizing a long-standing discourse of tribalism, which is frequently associated in Palestine with political disorder. My informants talked at length about the return to the power of the family (*dar*)—particularly large and strong families like those known to Hebron—and about the return of customary law:

> Many problems and disputes are solved according to the clan system, especially in the Old City, where the PA and the police cannot interfere. Before the Second Intifada, the clan system was on its way to ending, but with the deterioration of security citizens began to seek protection and find it in the clan or family. If the police cannot protect a person, his family can. Until 1999, issues were solved by the law, which the Authority could implement, and after that, it would be crowned by clan reconciliation, which was just a formality to keep up the tradition and preserve the prestige of the families. Now, if I have a problem with someone, the police cannot do anything for me, so I go to my family, who protects me and gets me my rights.[55]

At the time of this interview, a Hebronite story was all over the news, exemplifying the renewed public visibility of and frequent discourse around tribalism. A member of the powerful Jabari family had been killed by the police while he was escaping in a stolen car. In retaliation, and to learn who had actually fired the fatal shot, a gang of Jabari family members besieged Hebron's police station, burned cars, and took policemen hostage, apparently killing two of them. In the end, the family won, even receiving the traditional compensation (*diyya*) from the culprit's family. Hebronites discussed these events intensely,

emphasizing the weakness of the PA and the widespread conviction that the Israeli police were conveniently closing their eyes and encouraging the circulation of weapons and spread of crime in the Old City. Some of my neighbors talked about the general situation using the religiously loaded notion of *fitna*, or sedition, dissension, which powerfully conveys this sense of a collapsing sociomoral fabric.

An Old City policeman, one of the few plainclothes ones that the Protocol allowed into H2, explained to me in 2006 how society was turning back to traditionalism and customary law:

> According to the Hebron Protocol, Palestinian policemen stationed in the Old City have to be unarmed. . . . [Therefore] I do not have equipment, like weapons and cars. I have nothing to enforce the law. Because of this, *I cannot use the modern way, I have to use the tribal way if I want to be effective in my operations.* I cannot use the force of the modern state, and therefore I have to refer to customary law. I have to use the power of the tribe (*quwwat al-ʿashira*) to solve problems. . . . I have a good reputation, my family is from the Old City, I am the head (*mukhtar*) of my family, and because of this I can be effective in what I do. If it needs be, all my family can come down here, and this is why I am successful, and the police gets to be respected. . . . I am respected also because I was in the *tanzim*, that is, in the Fatah organization. . . . Here we have policemen from the Abu Sneina, Salaimeh, and Batch families, and we can be successful because these are strong families. . . . This is rational (*ʿaqlani*) work, we work with the power of the family but with all rationality. . . . If I want to work according to the law (*qanun*) I will not succeed.[56]

While the unarmed policeman is a symptom of the nonsovereign state, the figure of the *mukhtar*-policeman with deep ties to the strongest Palestinian political faction signals something else altogether. Here we see the deep entanglement of multiple logics of social and political organization, different but not at all incommensurable: kinship and the rule of state law. This *mukhtar*-policeman describes the mobilization of tribal politics in the lawless context of H2 using a distinctive term, *ʿaqlani*, or "rational," usually reserved for the work of modern bureaucracy. His lucid analysis is devoid of the derogatory attitude toward tribalism and kinship politics that is common to Western social science and several Palestinian intellectuals,[57] even if he still connects the

tribal logic of rule with social fragmentation. The disdain of tribalism as not modern or as antimodern has a colonial genealogy, going back to the long-standing orientalist tenets of Eastern despotism and political backwardness; but the *mukhtar*-policeman seems to be turning this idea on its head by connecting tribalism with rationality and the state too.[58] In fact, his analysis paints the act of resorting to tribal politics and reinvention of tradition as a tactic of the modern state, as a handy resource and practical solution to deploy when the state either cannot intervene or is defeated in some places. An effect of the spatialized politics of the occupation and the new forms of resistance that the latter has engendered, the return to tradition and focus on heritage are tools for governing the Old City.

DEVELOPMENT AND HUMAN RIGHTS: THE NEW APPROACH OF THE HRC

The HRC website today looks more like that of a human rights organization than that of an institution devoted to heritage conservation. News flashes in both Arabic and English dominate the site; frequently updated, the website monitors and reports Israeli violations in texts and photos, and several reports offer detailed witness to the many breaches of international law in the city and its surroundings.[59] The website also signals how the HRC changed post-2000. With the Second Intifada, the committee faced multiple crises on several fronts. Its major source of support, the PA, began experiencing a chronic funding shortage, and European donors came to play an increasingly important role, gradually shaping the committee's work and organization. Meanwhile, many of those residents who had just moved to the Old City quickly left to escape the extended closures and curfews and the worsening violence. To stem the tide, the HRC developed a broader "humanitarian" approach to support what employees called the "sustainability of life" in the Old City: a vast range of socioeconomic and legal interventions. The committee was forced to work to defend basic rights and try to improve the conditions of the community it had itself had a hand in creating—its rationale shifting from resistance to development by heritage.

With accelerating slumification, the crucial problem the HRC confronted in the Old City was the emergence of "a new class . . . that can barely take care

of itself," as an international solidarity activist who had been coming to Hebron since the 1980s put it.[60] A vivid symbol of this class and its dependency were the Red Cross food parcels—the *kartunat* containing rice, flour, and other basic foodstuffs—that were regularly distributed to Old City residents for over ten years during the violence. In other words, in the aftermath of the Second Intifada, the HRC found itself in charge of a community that was not economically viable, as it was plagued with unemployment and largely dependent on aid; in a sense, it was not even a community, as it was very different from the tight-knit group of militants and committed residents that the organization had originally envisioned. HRC worked hard to counter this by restoring social ties both within the Old City and between the Old and New City.

To make life "sustainable," or livable in the Old City, and to support residents, the HRC set up a number of new departments—a social center, a legal department, and a research unit—and a diverse program of social development activities. The organization had already prepared a conservation master plan for the Old City, proposing measures for social and economic revitalization and future tourist development, such as rehabilitating important sites in the city (not only the Haram but also others, such as a recently reopened small archaeological museum in an old hammam), establishing tourist facilities like restaurants and guesthouses, and printing maps and publications.[61] Other early initiatives in this direction included emergency job creation schemes, vocational training courses for women and unemployed youth, children's entertainment, and outreach activities such as lectures and seminars about heritage and social integration.

The job creation schemes implemented by the HRC in the early 2000s failed to produce long-lasting effects: as emergency relief measures, though, they were probably never supposed to do so. Hence, with improved political conditions in the West Bank under the Western-supported premiership of Salam Fayyad, the HRC tried to do "development" proper to revive the economy of the Old City. The symbol of this new approach was the *'Amar ya baladi* (Long you live, oh my country!) campaign. The campaign was launched in 2010 with a major ceremony in memory of the Ibrahimi Mosque massacre; its objective was to get Hebronites and other Palestinians from outside to come to the Old City and shop there as a form of nationalist consumption to support the steadfastness of Old City residents. To bring both shopkeepers and

consumers back, the HRC summoned many institutions, from the PA to the local chamber of commerce, to improve security in the Old City and also, most importantly, to guarantee subsidized low prices in its shops. When I visited in September 2011, there were banners depicting a stylized Old City hanging on walls all over Hebron: the HRC publicized the campaign, the discounts available in the shops, and a major lottery open to local consumers. Beginning with a sale of Ramadan sweets, soon the *'Amar ya baladi* campaign turned the Old City into a kind of duty-free area. The HRC renovated shops for free, and the PA pledged to pay incentives of US$200 per open shop every six months and to open governmental offices in the Old City in order to increase traffic. Tourism was also encouraged. Festivals, political events, seminars, workshops, lectures, and children's entertainment were all part of this nationalist campaign to change the negative perception of the Old City, raise people's awareness of its heritage and national value, and encourage them to go there.

Yet the HRC was forced to negotiate its own vision of development with the donors, who welcomed this approach but at times disagreed with the organization. At the HRC, as architect Hanan explained,

> by development we mean economic and social development . . . [it means] having the shops here open again and people back . . . [it also means] to raise the awareness on three themes: cultural heritage, environmental awareness . . . and social integration between the original residents and the newcomers.[62]

Many Hebronites who had criticized the HRC's earlier focus on heritage and emergency relief welcomed the replacing of the Red Cross food parcels with concrete actions to make the Old City a self-sustaining community, such as opening shops and promoting heritage tourism. Some people, particularly activists, criticized the campaign for favoring a number of big Palestinian companies by allowing them to obtain the lowest prices and thus monopoly-like conditions in town, but overall, Hebronites welcomed the campaign, whose economic revitalization approach was something that many sides had called for locally. But European donors did not fully back this economic revitalization initiative, largely because they do not sponsor work on private properties like shops; moreover, these donors are attached to the idea of emergency relief, and especially the imperative to quickly create jobs.

Whether approaches like development or human rights promotion can succeed under occupation is a much-debated question.[63] Even more so than in other contexts where it has been applied, the promise of development for improving people's lives seems bound to fail in Hebron. "Development" may well be a practical impossibility, a horizon of expectations the HRC cannot ever reach. Moreover, development can be seen as perpetuating the dependency it was supposed to solve, by enmeshing the Old City more tightly into the aid system. Might this approach produce more dependency rather than self-sustaining communities, as seems to be the case with other heritage projects motivated by similar principles?[64] While its promises might be unkept, the HRC has expanded to become a deeply meaningful institutional presence in the daily lives of Old City residents—much more relevant than any other PA institution.

HUMANITARIAN GOVERNMENT THROUGH HERITAGE

A recent surge of activism against the occupation in the Old City revealed a fracture between the politicized grassroots and the HRC, between resistance and development, and ultimately between resistance and government. Marking the anniversary of the Ibrahimi Mosque massacre, on Friday, February 24, 2012, the newly created Hebron Defense Committee organized a demonstration in the Old City to force the Israeli government to reopen the key Hebron artery of Shuhada Street, a symbol of the occupation.[65] Once a bustling commercial road, Shuhada Street has been completely emptied of its Palestinian inhabitants: only settlers and soldiers can freely walk there. The 1997 Hebron Protocol had promised the reopening of this key artery to Palestinians, but this has never happened. The February 24 rally was part of a transnational campaign launched in 2010 by an alliance of new Hebronite popular committees, including Youth Against Settlements, campaigning for Palestinians' freedom of movement in Hebron. Inspired by the nonviolent popular struggle of West Bank villages like Bil'in, and by the Arab revolutions of 2011, the Hebron movement made the anniversary of the massacre into an international day of action against Israeli colonization and has organized protest initiatives ever since. This new Hebron Defense Committee (HDC) has had an ambiguous relationship with the HRC, echoing tensions in the 1990s between an earlier Hebron Defense Committee, which had opposed Arafat's diplomatic approach, and the

HRC. Part of the current HRC welcomed the new version of the HDC and the wave of resistance initiatives, but the HRC's administrators seemed much more ambivalent.

This cleavage has to do with the peculiar work of governance that an expanded HRC has come to perform in the Old City. The preparation of a master plan, for example, is a function of local government; in Old Hebron's case, however, that function is carried out, with international funding, by a semigovernmental organization for heritage conservation. The HRC fulfills a whole raft of local governmental functions in areas of legibility (surveying, mapping, statistics), control (planning, surveillance, granting residency certificates), public infrastructure (schools, clinics), service provision (street cleaning, lighting), and welfare (social housing, health insurance, vocational training, counseling and legal advice). Yet it has been able to do all this, paradoxically, because it has increasingly come to resemble a heritage NGO.

While taking on governmental functions, the HRC did become more like an NGO as it grew more independent of the PA throughout the 2000s. The HRC's funding infrastructure, originally based mainly on PA and Arab donations, has become considerably more diverse, as the committee's good reputation for being "scientific" (or working according to international heritage standards) and the fact of being the only Palestinian institution in the Old City has progressively attracted more and more contributions from European donors (especially more culture-oriented ones like the Swedish, Spanish, Norwegian, and also German development agencies). Since 2000, PA sponsorship has drastically decreased.[66] Adila Laïdi-Hanieh has pointed out that Palestinian cultural institutions morph into NGOs to attract better funding,[67] gaining in this way not just greater flexibility but also—paradoxically—greater continuity of operations. After the failure of negotiations and the emergence of the Second Intifada, Palestinian NGOs have indeed enjoyed a steadier influx of funding, even while Western donors have regularly withdrawn their support to mold the political course of a PA already weakened by Israel's repeated blockage of agreed-on tax revenues. The PA's predicament became apparent during the 2006 public-sector strike, which originated in the Western aid embargo and paralyzed the then newly elected Hamas government, severely hampering the HRC's operations too.[68]

With the growing role of a number of European donors, all sponsoring short- to medium-term schemes, the HRC's employment contracts became

short-term and tied to specific projects. (At the beginning, Arafat's political backing had translated into considerable financial support in the form, among others, of a hiring system through PA ministries, so that HRC employees were detached civil servants.) Nuha was one such short-term employee of the HRC and deeply affected by these new forms of job insecurity. The organization has grown to the point of almost doubling its staff—as of the early 2010s, about seventy people (not including construction workers)—but most of these employees are hired on a project basis, and the civil servants are becoming fewer and fewer. Hence, the HRC is both governmental and nongovernmental; it is able to govern, to manage affairs, and to implement measures efficiently in Old Hebron precisely by virtue of being detached from the PA.

The HRC's director described the organization as better than a government in a 2011 interview:

> We are working like a government here. . . . Slowly, we have become responsible for many issues, for residential issues, infrastructure, education. Everything in the Old City goes through us and now this is increasing. The local community here is getting used to us, they have us as a point of reference, even when we say "go to the municipality," they are not satisfied [with it]. For example, if they want health insurance, they go to see the director of health [in the municipality or the local ministerial office] and cannot meet him. But here they come and see us. There is a *face to face relationship*. We have an open door strategy and policy, and it is hard to close this door. . . . *We know people here better than the municipality*, [because] we go to their homes. Even the municipality comes to us [for all matters related to the Old City].[69]

The HRC's meaningful agency in the Old City relies on local knowledge from face-to-face, personal relationships between the committee and the residents. I remember vividly how I was confronted with this form of knowledge and its effectiveness when a child stole my phone in the alleys of the Suq: within less than one hour the phone was back on my desk, thanks to the intervention of a couple of the HRC's senior engineers. (When I asked, they reassured me that they had only scolded the child to make sure he wouldn't do it another time.) So the HRC knows residents by name and by heart—and apprehends them as humans, responding to their pain, as opposed to the detachment and indifference of Weberian state bureaucracies. The HRC has "practical knowledge" of

the Old City in the sense of James Scott's idea of an acquired intelligence that comes from the capacity to understand and to respond promptly to a changing environment, essentially from a position of closeness, familiarity, and confidence.[70] But at the same time the HRC combines this form of knowledge with the classic instruments of state taxonomies (surveys, inventories, registers, and maps), producing the kind of standardized, schematic, abridged knowledge that is essential for the working of the modern state. The HRC relates to Old City residents through these instruments of the state and through informal networks. This combination of different techniques of governing the social has been criticized by several sociologists and political scientists as "neopatrimonialism," as it brings together bureaucratic rule with informal, personal patron-client relationships while also reinforcing structural inequalities.[71] Some anthropologists have looked instead, less normatively, at the ways in which the "family ethos" can open up some "avenues of participation" for the poor and enlarge their space of negotiation with the state.[72] In Old Hebron, a third logic plays a role, that of humanitarianism: together this awkward mix of governmentalities allows for some form of "tenuous" government to subsist, even if precariously, under military occupation.[73]

Elements of both familial ethos and modern state bureaucracy, then, combine here with what Didier Fassin calls "humanitarian reason."[74] This insight dawned on me during a conversation with Ahmad, a key HRC administrator: "I do not care only about buildings and infrastructures. I also have to care about the humanitarian aspects, about the human beings!"[75] While emphasizing the HRC's dual mission of protecting and supporting heritage and the people who live in it, Ahmad inadvertently exposed the conception of the "human being" that is implicit in how the HRC works. The women and men of the Old City whose lives the HRC wants to improve—heritage subjects—are viewed through a humanitarian frame. "People here are very needy, they need many things, and there is nobody taking care of that. So what we have done is to help these people," the HRC's director repeated several times to me during an interview to explain why the organization had to take up a governmental role in the Old City.[76] To find such an understanding here is perhaps unsurprising since this idea of the human being is embedded most certainly in humanitarian relief and development programs the world over. Indeed, this localized configuration of government in Hebron has a lot in common with how contemporary refugee

camps are run: informality and precarity, a transitional temporality that has been made to endure, its democracy deficit, and its grounding in a particular conception of the human person as victim and beneficiary of aid.[77]

It might be that the HRC has been so successful, as many Palestinians describe it, precisely by way of articulating apparently competing logics, by balancing both politicizing and depoliticizing ones—heritage and humanitarianism, the modern state and the familial ethos—and by tactically mobilizing different rationalities of government at different times (humanitarianism was stronger, of course, in the early 2000s during the Second Intifada). Unlike governmental bodies, NGOs are "flexible socio-technologies" that are highly capable of mediating different forms of local and global knowledge and thus allow for agility and multiple and shifting uses.[78] Heritage implemented as urban regeneration and as a project to improve people's living environment allows for such multiple uses too.

CITIZENS VERSUS SUBJECTS

The idea of Old City residents as people in need coexists in the discourse of the HRC with an emphasis on heritage as active citizenship. This emphasis, however, conceals how "being citizens" is a distant prospect for residents, especially because today heritage is disconnected from political mobilization and attached instead to a humanitarian logic.

The engineers and architects of the HRC are juggling multiple things at once: preserving the national heritage, fighting the expansion of the settlements, assisting a "needy" population, and ultimately managing and developing the Old City. Bringing together the care for heritage and for people, for the "human beings," the committee provides for a makeshift infrastructure, even if informal and precarious, and for some form of positive regulation of Palestinian life in Hebron's Old City. This was not meant to be at the time of the organization's establishment in the mid-1990s; the HRC has transformed into a hybrid sociopolitical formation. It has shifted from a short-term initiative to counter colonization and maintain a foothold in Old Hebron while negotiations were ongoing to a kind of "humanitarian government,"[79] mobilizing a diverse set of techniques and logics, particularly the discourse and practices of heritage-led development. In this process, the HRC did stop the expansion

of the settlements: settlers' numbers have remained more or less the same in Old Hebron while more than doubling overall in the West Bank since the mid-1990s. By 2015, the HRC had renovated about 1,000 homes, 120 shops, and 10 schools.[80] But it has also helped create new sociopolitical conditions in the Old City, that is, a full new class and new political subjects whose agency is severely limited.

To say that the HRC "governs" Old Hebron is to highlight how the committee not only carries out a broad range of local government functions, from mapping to service provision, but is also fundamentally concerned with people's welfare—with human lives and their improvement—and with shaping their mentality and behavior. "Rehabilitating houses is rehabilitating social life," one of the HRC's engineers once told me,[81] and his directly linking of care for buildings to care for people left me pondering for quite a while: in mobilizing a technology that intervenes in the relationship between people and their environment, he was concerned with reforming lives and habits in the Old City as well. The committee has been partly successful at that. Not unlike other residents, Nuha repeatedly voiced a steadfast attitude ("I will never leave my old house") and feelings of strong attachment for her newly renovated home ("These walls are strong and *valuable*," the latter adjective, a keyword of the technical heritage discourse of organizations such as UNESCO, being uttered in English) and appreciation for the work of the HRC. This widespread attitude of *sumud*, and the fact that there are Palestinians in the Old City, which has not been lost to the settlers, can be counted among the committee's successes.

Yet inspiring people with this sense of the value of heritage, instilling in them this "commitment to the Old City," as my informant Su'ad would call it, is not an easy task. One of the chief obstacles HRC employees encounter in their daily work is what they call the "lack of awareness" (*wa'i*) of many residents, both natives and newcomers. Employees frequently lament this state of affairs:

> We are trying very hard. We keep high standards. We give them [Old City's residents] beautiful apartments. . . . And what do we have from them? *They keep complaining, they are never satisfied and do not take care of their houses.* . . . We have a problem with awareness. They do not appreciate and we work so hard.[82]

Unlike the heritage activists and organizers of the 1980s, who understood "awareness" largely in political terms, the HRC's engineers understand it in a

heritage sense: they lament residents' alleged failure to appreciate their own past and the historic environment as a value in itself and as a form of public good. At times with contempt, they lament the Old City residents' "love for the new" and for modern things like new furniture and new houses; they lament residents' building of concrete additions to their old houses, and their trying to change and reconfigure traditional spaces to fit new, modern needs. HRC employees' frustration at residents' lack of heritage awareness and care combines with a deep dissatisfaction with their passivity and continuing dependence on the HRC's support. In their eyes, residents are very "demanding" and keep on relying on the committee instead of taking things more into their own hands.[83]

Residents turn these critiques on their head, accusing the organization of nepotism, favoritism, corruption, and lack of transparency. They take the HRC to task for its unmet promises of improvement and amelioration, for failing to bring development and social cohesion to the city. I have heard many complain about the HRC, especially those living in the old Suq and the areas most exposed to settler violence. Often residents perceived the committee as unresponsive and indifferent to their calls for help (and repairs after settlers' incursions), or as working with recommendations (*wasta*) and according to personal connections—thus turning on the family ethos. This is a common narrative:

> At the beginning they [HRC] were very good to us, but *we had demands that they didn't respond to for a very long time*; for example, the settlers smashed our kitchen's window and the committee didn't fix it until after two years. . . . They don't care if the houses need repair. We asked them to put barriers or iron to protect us from the soldiers and the settlers, but they didn't respond. *All the same we have to raise our children on loving the place, and enhance their national sense of belonging.*[84]

I take these frictions to be a symptom of a fundamental disjuncture between the aims and overdetermined effects of the HRC's work, and also of a particular, split subjectification process centered on the distinction between caring, heritage-aware citizens on the one hand and subjects of humanitarian aid on the other. The HRC calls on residents to stand their ground to settlers and soldiers and to participate in the safeguard of the national heritage; that is, they are hailed as active political agents, working toward the future state. But the HRC project of citizen education and its idea to "change people's mentality"

runs against the conditions of structural poverty and dependency that have been exacerbated by post-Oslo developments.[85] The combined effects of colonization, slumification, and lack of political participation make Old City's residents into vulnerable, suffering subjects deprived of political agency, the needy victims of unending human rights abuses and endemic unemployment who are necessarily dependent on external aid and assistance, ranging from food provisions to home repairs.[86] All the while, the memories of earlier times of political mobilization are fading away.

A good example of how the HRC envisions and calls to arms the Old City's residents is one of the hallmark schemes of its more recent developmental approach, the Spanish Academy (named after its donor). The academy offers vocational training in heritage (from masonry and traditional crafts to heritage documentation) not only to "improve the living conditions for both sexes of young needy people" but also to "[empower] the city's youth to take an active role in the preservation of the city's heritage" and turn them into "builders of the [future] state."[87] This idea of a tight connection between heritage and citizenship goes back to the practices of the folklore movement of the 1970s and 1980s. Like many in the Palestinian civil society, the HRC upholds a processual understanding of citizenship as a project in the making, a future goal to be worked at in the present, also through heritage. The HRC's engineers want to change people's "passive" mentality and behavior and move them to "take care of heritage [and the public good] by themselves" along the familiar lines of development discourses of empowerment and participation, as I heard so many times during my fieldwork. Yet there are important differences between the HRC's heritage practices and the work of the heritage organizers and activists of the 1970s and 1980s. For activists like Samiha Khalil, "citizenship"—not a matter of formal, passive membership in a political community—meant active contribution to one's community and especially participation in the national struggle,[88] and the goal was to involve people in doing precisely that. The HRC, to the contrary, does not mobilize Old City residents but rather provides services and assists them from a relief optics—a bit like the old charitable organizations used to do.[89]

Basma, a resident of the Suq who once considered herself a fighter but is now struggling to make a living with a sick husband and several children, told me this tale of political fatigue and personal transformation:

> In 1996 I was arrested by the Israeli army because I was taking part in a demonstration. There was a settler called Anat; she was a vicious person, she attacked me and pulled me by the hair, and I defended myself and hit her. When President Arafat heard about this story, he asked about me, but I couldn't go to see him. At that time people had more solidarity and unity; we used to defend our city together, but now it is different, now I fear the soldiers and do not confront them. A journalist told me that I have changed. Once, long ago, I was taking my son to school and the soldiers ordered me to go back, but I confronted them and continued my way; now I cannot do that. *The city now is empty of the brave young mes*; some have been killed, others are either in Israeli prisons or handicapped from injuries, and the remaining few have left. I had pictures and newspapers of these incidents, but the soldiers took them together with my other things. Because of all this the resistance movement has declined and so have the patriotic feelings.[90]

Basma's testimony points to a shift in the predominant forms of political subjectification available to Palestinians that became acutely visible with the Second Intifada: from activists to rights-bearing, suffering subjects.[91] By switching repeatedly between "I" and "we," she shows how the transformation of the self is deeply enmeshed in a broader social transformation, in a collective movement. In place of the many "brave young me" who resisted settlers and soldiers, the subjects inhabiting the front line of the struggle in Hebron now perceive themselves primarily in terms of their vulnerabilities and the different injuries the occupation has inflicted on them. What deeply moved me in our conversations was that for Basma—from whom soldiers took everything, even the photographs testifying to her former militant self—her sense of autonomous selfhood seemed to be left behind precisely in that relationship of abuse. She often emphasized her status as a victim of human rights violations that she could denounce to the HRC's legal unit. At the same time Basma was a "demanding" subject, insisting, like her neighbors, on claiming what she saw as her right to aid and support from the HRC and an international community perceived as the authority ultimately in charge and responsible for their predicament and suffering.[92]

This compassionate care for human beings provides a clue that can help unravel the chain of dependencies and the types of relations that sustain He-

bron's informal government by heritage. Humanitarianism works by mobilizing empathy and distributing services instead of allocating due rights; like the familial ethos and the ideology of charities, it is constituted by a fundamental tension between inequality and solidarity and between relations of domination and relations of assistance.[93] Therefore, there is little space for democratic participation within such configurations of government, because victims and beneficiaries of aid are not involved except as receivers of aid, counseling, or compassion. Relations of dependence, of course, do not stop at Hebron's confines, since the committee itself is not self-sufficient but is fully dependent on international donors. As an international development expert working with a major European sponsor of the HRC lucidly explained to me, a change in parties in power in Europe could mean a sudden funding cutoff for the organization, which could cause it to halt its work. As for residents of the Old City, they are neither politically mobilized nor actively participating in the rehabilitation project or in decisions about the future form of the city they inhabit. For them, relocation has often meant a "move backward," so it is not too surprising that they do not appreciate "their own" past.

A number of people, like the renowned Abu-Haikal family of Tel Rumeida or my informant Su'ad, do not accept the settlers' takeover of their homes and homeland and continue to demonstrate, protest, and work to stop the occupation; yet many residents are tired and have lost faith in the resistance and the national cause. Often without work and living on the Red Cross donations, they find it hard to "raise our children on loving the place and enhance their national sense of belonging." Indeed, how can a "class that can barely take care of itself" also take care of the national heritage at the same time?

CHAPTER 3

HERITAGE, NGOS, AND STATE MAKING

Across the late 2000s and early 2010s, I witnessed the sections of Palestinian old cities that were being restored expand significantly, not only in Hebron, but also in Jerusalem, Bethlehem, Ramallah, Nablus, and several West Bank villages, all by non- or semigovernmental organizations. One place that saw a complete makeover is Birzeit, a small university town next to Ramallah. In the mid-2000s, Birzeit's old city was in a derelict state, the grounds ruined, full of garbage and almost abandoned; a few years later, after extensive restoration and work on infrastructure, it had turned into a place people go to, with two restaurants, a gallery, a famous falafel kiosk, two guesthouses, the offices of a number of local organizations, and student housing under construction. Intellectuals, students, professionals from Ramallah, and international visitors were the typical restaurant patrons, while residents (still not very many) were mostly low-income families who benefited from subsidized rents. My last visit was during the Palestinian art and architecture biennial in 2016, when an international crowd flowed into Birzeit's old town to view the exhibition the NGO Riwaq had organized in the historic Hosh al-'Etem, which hosts artist residencies. The streets resounded with live Arabic music, and "jamming" was a staple of one of the new restaurants, along with local beer and traditional Palestinian food (the hosts were very proud to be serving this food, unlike what they saw as the trend in Ramallah of restaurants serving mostly Western food).

A rural development organization long active in local matters of heritage preservation had initiated the Birzeit rehabilitation project, which was then executed by Riwaq in collaboration with the municipality of Birzeit, all with Swedish funding. At the end of the scheme, which Riwaq hailed as truly participatory, the organization had also set up a heritage unit within the municipality, as it always tries to do when it works with local governments. For Riwaq, Birzeit has been something of a flagship, a testing ground in its experimentation with various forms of institution building and community involvement.[1]

Instead, the archaeological sites run by the PA's Department of Antiquities and Cultural Heritage (DACH), part of the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities (MOTA), offered visitors a rather different experience: they looked unkempt, abandoned, with few people around, and were often even closed during times they were supposed to have been open. A reminder, an image stuck in my head that I take as a metaphor of Palestinian "state" heritage: the pompous signage leading to nowhere that MOTA installed in Jericho at the end of a major, internationally funded project to promote heritage and tourism in the area. The project did not go very far in terms of rehabilitating sites or getting many people to visit, but the signs remained as a feeble performance of attempted sovereignty (some of the sites pointed to were and still are in areas controlled by the Israeli military) and, arguably, statehood. Since its creation in 1994, the DACH has faced enormous challenges that stem first and foremost from the patchwork, extremely fragile nature of PA sovereignty: not only limited territorial control and dependency on international donors but also a lack of capacity, experience, and adequate funding; a lack of maps and inventories, which are fundamental instruments of ruling; as well as an antiquated legal framework that it has been long unable and at times unwilling to change. But NGOs and all kinds of organizations have stepped in, in the wake of this absence or failure. "We are on the ground, in the field," while the PA is absent or obstructive, several Palestinian heritage practitioners told me on different occasions.

The Oslo process has set in place a quasi-state infrastructure, even if precarious and partly informal, in the West Bank, but this includes donors and Palestinian NGOs. Not only the broader Israeli-Palestinian conflict but also multiple smaller-scale conflicts and frictions, among different Palestinian bodies and between Palestinians and donors, pervade and regulate this domain

of activities. Since Oslo, the proto-state, that is, the Department of Antiquities, and heritage NGOs have produced two different draft laws and compiled competing inventories of significant heritage sites, in practice establishing two alternative heritage apparatuses. In this chapter, I examine the contentious and profoundly ambiguous relationship between DACH and the heritage NGOs, especially Riwaq, beginning with the tense negotiations over the two laws and the different visions of heritage management that they express. I also look at the two most important inventories, which in many ways mirror these laws and the bodies that produced them, and that protect different kinds of heritage, both archaeological sites of biblical importance and vernacular architecture. Finally, I return to the sites themselves, where these inventories translate into concrete actions and materialize (or not) in changes on the ground. These stories throw into stark relief how this newly heritagized Palestinian landscape has been produced through the activities of a group of deeply committed people working in a number of nonstate institutions that perform statelike functions—they are the main agents of this book.

The post-Oslo period produced at least two new classes with varied and changing access to the consistent resources (Western donors' funding) mobilized by the Oslo Accords: namely, a bureaucratic cadre working within the PA and a professional middle class inhabiting civil society with strong political ambitions.[2] The logic of Palestinian state building post-Oslo was shaped by the fact that the agreements put into power an outsider elite (the exiled PLO, the so-called returnees) who was disconnected from both the local elites and the masses;[3] the returnees displaced the political cadre and politicized middle class that had emerged during the First Intifada while sustaining that grassroots process of nation building through radically democratic institutional forms that some have called "devolved authority."[4] Post-Oslo, most of these former activists created NGOs or went to work for a burgeoning Palestinian NGO sector, in a process that saw professional organizations connected to transnational flows of aid and expertise take the place of the older political committees.[5] If the trajectory of Palestinian state formation over the years has superseded and made irrelevant the outside-inside split,[6] it has exacerbated the conflict between the PA and the NGOs.[7] The balance of power between them has changed over time and continues to change: in broad strokes, the stronger PA of the 1990s was severely weakened in the 2000s by a series of momentous events and processes

after the failure of the so-called peace process, including the devastating Israeli reoccupation of Palestinian cities during the Second Intifada, the death of Arafat, Israel's repeated withholding of the tax revenues it collects on behalf of the PA, and the carrot-and-stick approach of key donors who at times stop or redirect funding toward the NGOs to force a dependent PA's hand. The PA, though, has since gotten stronger again and has launched a diplomatic campaign for statehood. Overall, the post-Oslo years were a protracted struggle over diverging visions of the state that these various elites were to then implement in the territories.[8] Heritage and heritage practitioners play an important part in this struggle.

Riwaq is the oldest, and in several ways the most important, of a wave of Palestinian heritage organizations established around the time of the Oslo Accords that also marked the beginning of the PA and DACH. After the First Intifada, the folklore movement lost its momentum: post-Oslo, this new generation of heritage organizations took over the movement's legacy and changed it. Unlike the older committees and charitable societies of the 1980s, the newer organizations are more professional and resemble NGOs. They hardly speak the language of militant politics, for they are deeply enmeshed in development and state building as they struggle against their PA counterparts. Most new organizations, including several city-based urban rehabilitation initiatives such as the HRC, are devoted primarily to the preservation of the historic built heritage—the fabric of historic cities and villages like Birzeit that go back to the Ottoman and even the Mamluk period (Figure 10)—but also promote multiple other cultural and development activities. Moving from folklore to urban regeneration, these organizations have actively participated in the flowering of cultural activities that has characterized the West Bank since the late 2000s.[9] Palestinian NGO workers and volunteers have a strong sense of themselves as belonging to an active, even militant, civil society and of a strong divide between the Palestinian government and civil society. Both NGO workers and DACH civil servants, for example, refer to DACH as the "ministry" (*al-wizara*) or the "government" (*al-hukuma*) in everyday parlance. (In what follows I use terms such as *department of antiquities*, *ministry*, and *DACH* interchangeably, even if the latter acronym is much less used by Palestinians.) NGOs criticize the "authoritarianism" and obsession with bureaucracy of the "government" all the time. Yet heritage politics are a complex and shifting terrain for state making:

FIGURE 10. Historic Abwein, 2017.
Source: Courtesy of the Riwaq Photo Archive. Photo: Mia Grondahl.

multiple actors do and undo the "state" in their actions and imaginative investments, as their roles and tasks are blurred and constantly renegotiated.

ALTERNATIVE PASTS

The NGO Riwaq (or Centre for Architectural Conservation) is the Palestinian shadow ministry of culture and cultural heritage; its deep, multiscalar connectivity spans the national, transnational, and local levels. Based in Ramallah, the NGO was founded in 1991, three years before the PA, by prominent leftist intellectuals involved in peace politics. Under the imperative of "working closely with the community," the people of Riwaq—a tight-knit, enthusiastic group consisting of a few dozen young, cosmopolitan architects, urban planners, archaeologists, artists, designers, and cultural managers—embarked on their "mission" to rescue the historic built environment of Palestine. By the mid-2010s, Riwaq had restored approximately one hundred buildings and groups of structures around the West Bank, mostly for public use as social or cultural centers, including houses and palaces from the Ottoman and Mamluk periods;

it had also implemented larger preservation schemes in over fifteen villages and towns. This organization has played and continues to play a "governmental" role in Palestinian heritage and culture, as exemplified by the fact that it has drafted new heritage legislation (later blocked by the ministry) as well as the bylaws that have protected historic heritage in Palestine in recent years.

Most important for our purposes, Riwaq has compiled the most accurate, detailed national survey of historic properties, the Registry of Historic Buildings in Palestine (what Riwaq's members call the "national registry").[10] Mobilizing hundreds of architects and students between 1994 and 2007, this was a major effort, its scope surpassing all other surveys by the ministry. Mainly funded by the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA), this is a three-volume, well-documented inventory, including architectural and historical information, photos, and maps of the approximately fifty thousand buildings and sites that predate 1945 in the West Bank, Jerusalem, and Gaza. Inventories of sites are a good example of what James Scott calls "projects of legibility and simplification," state attempts to produce systematic, standardized, and schematic knowledge to make territories and resources legible and thus amenable to control and management.[11] Yet in post-Oslo, and especially post-2000, Palestine, many such projects of legibility are carried out by "non-governmental" organizations and in ways and forms quite unlike the cold, dull, uninspired style of bureaucracy.

A poem titled "The Beauty of the Ordinary" opens Riwaq's national registry:

> Cultural Heritage is no longer about protecting a single monument or a single dwelling; it is much more than that.
>
> Cultural heritage is about nature and man-made places, about a place that is never the same, about human creativity and about human destruction.
>
> Locations: places never remain the same. They change with the passage of time, their shades and shadows are animated echoing the change in light.
>
> Human effort, creativity and craftsmanship: the decorated wooden doors, the beautiful details of an iron door handle, a carved capital of a column, a simple flower, a primitive lion, a cross or *al-mulku lillah* (God owns all) on a door lintel.
>
> The intuitive peasants' recycling: a can of Nido milk into a flower pot, a plastic blue barrel into a lemon tree container, a metal bed into a yard gate and metal corrugated sheets into door lintels.

. . .

Six layers of colorful paints on a wall of a house: these layers span a few decades.

They are stories of those who lived within the walls. They can tell us stories of birth, love, feasts and deceit.

It is about a key to the house that has been demolished.[12]

This national inventory is unusual in many respects other than its poetic opening, which contrasts to the more common style of bureaucratic writing. The poem affords a central place to the idea of change and creativity, and, crucially, to politics and justice, to sociopolitical change. It is at odds with the mainstream, technical discourse of heritage conservation. Juxtaposing references to the most valued, distinctive features of the Palestinian landscape—national heritage—with the image of a can of Nido milk, a symbol not simply of modernity but of globalized modernity, as well as other banal, everyday items, the poem communicates a vivid sense of a living heritage, open to and nourished by what the previous generation of heritage and folklore practitioners would have perceived as outsider influence, even contamination. Older folklore had grafted heritage onto an essentialist understanding of a timeless Palestinian culture, seeking to distill original Palestinian elements of popular culture from foreign influences and accretions. The poem's framing of a living heritage also markedly differs from the discourse of "antiquities" informing traditional archaeological practice in the Middle East, obsessed since its nineteenth-century beginnings with the ancient, the monumental, and the sensational. For Riwaq and other similar heritage initiatives, the objects of preservation and care are the vernacular, built vestiges of the recent, pre-Nakba past.

The "key to the house that has been demolished" brings the politics of the Israeli Palestinian conflict straight into the heart of heritage. *The house that has been demolished* stands for the thousands of Palestinian houses that Israel destroyed or emptied of inhabitants in 1948; it is the open wound and unresolved historical injustice at the core of the ongoing conflict. But it also stands for the many Palestinian homes still being demolished by the occupation authorities or squatted in by Israeli settlers: destruction continues. According to the Israeli Committee Against House Demolition, in 2017 alone the Israeli army destroyed 351 structures, displacing 528 people; the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs estimates that 48,743 structures have been

destroyed in the occupied territories since 1967.[13] In protests all over the diaspora, Palestinian refugees wave the keys to their former homes as evidence of this ongoing injustice, the tangible, material proof of their relationship to the lost homeland and rightful claim to it—their heritage. Developing Palestinian heritage means sustaining this relationship and deep attachment. The struggle to preserve historical Palestine is part of the struggle to keep the West Bank Palestinian, as this plays out culturally and spatially.

The paradox is that until 2018 no Palestinian heritage law formally protected this crucial part of the national heritage. The work of preserving it has been and continues to be carried out by a variety of individuals and organizations, ranging from non- and semigovernmental bodies to regional and even private actors, while the PA's Department of Antiquities essentially deals with archaeology. All these organizations depend on funding from international donors, particularly European and supranational development agencies. Thus, Palestinian cultural heritage management extends far outside the boundaries of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, well beyond the control of the PA. This largely nongovernmental institutional arrangement differs remarkably from heritage management in the region and elsewhere, where it has traditionally been controlled by the state's bureaucratic apparatuses of archaeological services and national museums as a crucial site of nation building. In Palestine, a group of committed people, architects, engineers, artists, and cultural operators sustains this arrangement.

THE AGENTS OF PALESTINIAN HERITAGE

I interview Rema on a sunny November afternoon in 2006 in her new office.[14] I am moved by the intensity of both her dedication to the national cause and her current frustration. Long ago, she used to work in UK museums, but she came back to Palestine in the 1990s with a lot of "enthusiasm" to work in the PA museums unit, to help build Palestinian museums. She had studied in the West Bank and wanted to return there. I can feel how badly she wanted to take part in the project of building a Palestinian nation-state on Palestinian soil, which was once "like a dream" for her. Once she "believed" in and wanted to work with the PA. Now she is disillusioned. She stresses that "we still have to protect heritage, we are still not even building our own heritage, we are doing a survival heritage," which she frames as a "national problem."

Many practitioners frame Palestinian heritage as a national problem and a matter of national survival, so significant that it arouses many "passions" and a sense of intense political commitment to participate in a larger crucial "mission." As in other cultural nationalisms, they experience "building our own heritage" as a sociopolitical project of change deeply entwined with nation building, producing temporal continuity and horizontal comradeship through spatialized narratives of dignified pasts. Scholars of nationalism such as Richard Handler have shown how, in the nationalist logic, heritage provides the essence of a nation, that very substance without which a nation ceases to exist: "We are a nation because we have a culture."[15] But here heritage makers also seek to produce new social landscapes and especially new institutional topographies. People involved in Palestinian heritage are fundamentally concerned with the broader project of building the Palestinian nation-*state* and its institutions. Rema was invested in establishing museums, that was what she had prepared for and why she went to work for the PA.

Like their folklorist predecessors, the participants in this new heritage movement of Palestinian organizations see their urgent task as rescuing an endangered cultural heritage—"extinguishing the fire" that threatens to destroy the fragile remains of their precious past. These practitioners all participate in the mission to preserve the remaining fragments of what Palestinian writer Raja Shehadeh calls a "vanishing landscape," one whose physical, demographic, and social features have been radically altered by the Israeli colonization project.[16] Highly professional, often internationally trained, most of them belong to secular civil society and critical intelligentsia. The founders and top cadre of directors and board members often (but not always) come from prominent families; the HRC, for example, is dominated by members of the al-Qawasme family, close to the nationalist late mayor of the city. The younger generation of practitioners, who did not live through the First Intifada, have less political experiences and tend to be more focused on their professional careers and goals—but all belong to the vastly enlarged professional middle class who work in the burgeoning NGO sector.[17]

When Rema came back to Palestine right after Oslo, she first worked for the PA. A Marxist intellectual by her own definition, she shares with other Palestinian heritage practitioners a leftist commitment to sociopolitical change, as well as considerable experience with local West Bank grassroots organizing as

a student and later teacher at a local university in the 1970s and 1980s; she also spent a few years in an Israeli jail for her political activism. She herself is of middle-class urban background, and she was perfectly fluent in English after years working at the British Museum. During our conversation, she recalled how passionately she wanted to work for the PA as a matter of "belief" in the possibility of a collective dream coming true. The more committed her original intentions, the more bitter, the more "painful" her disillusionment at what she perceived as the utter failure of the Palestinian state project, at both the macropolitical and the micropolitical, personal level of her own experience in the PA's Department of Antiquities.[18] She explained this failure to me by resorting to an evolutionary narrative or, more precisely, to the idea that Palestine went through a profound disruption of what should otherwise be the "normal" evolution of political systems: in her view, personalized and kinship-based premodern mentalities are still winning out over modern institution building. She critiqued "Arafatism," that is, Arafat-style personalized rule, and blamed personal egos, "one-man shows," and verticalism, as opposed to a rational, horizontal institutionalizing mentality, for the malaise common to both PA departments and NGOs: "We are still working with individuals, not institutions."

Rema left the PA to work in the nongovernmental sector; other former activists established their own cultural organizations after stints at the PA in the 1990s, when, like Rema, they also left disillusioned. Today they are directors of important NGOs. Most spent periods abroad and hold PhDs in architecture, archaeology, or history from British, Russian (thanks to the former ties between the PLO and the Soviet government), American, or German universities. Often but by no means exclusively from middle- and upper-middle-class backgrounds, these cultural players share both local roots and political experience in the West Bank and a history of leftist engagement in the national liberation movement. Most of them consider themselves heritage practitioners, but the work they do is cultural in a broader sense. They have a strong sense of political mission—holding dear the idea of a Palestinian state as the "project of our life"—as they participate in all sorts of international professional networks and activities across the circuits of knowledge and expertise of the transnational heritage regime.

Probably the most important figure in post-Oslo Palestinian heritage is Suad Amiry, cofounder and (until recently) codirector of Riwaq; she is well

known outside Palestine primarily as a writer and spokesperson for the Palestinian cause. Positioned at the intersection of cultural production and formal politics, she was a member of the Palestinian delegation to the 1991 Madrid Middle East Peace Conference and the subsequent bilateral negotiations in Washington, DC, and engaged in some major peace initiatives between Palestinian and Israeli women. After years of work at Riwaq, founded in 1991, she became famous worldwide for a series of books, written in the form of diaries, that tell with graceful irony the impossible story of daily life under occupation. Amiry's work and writings show that the drive to produce a locally rooted but cosmopolitan culture is intertwined with resistance and also with the production of normality. Her books tell of the struggle to live a normal life in an absurd situation, which makes the practice of normality, the act of carrying out everyday family or work routines, into a crucial site of resistance and hope. "The occupation stops us [from] living normally, and we seek normality by surrounding ourselves with art, music, and cultural heritage. It's also extremely important for resisting the stereotyping of Palestinians—we're showing a version of Palestine that many people don't expect," Amiry told journalists during an event at the third Palestinian art biennial organized by Riwaq in 2009. Palestinians articulate this basic aspiration to normality, this socialized affect, in a number of different forms and idioms, from what Lori Allen calls "getting by" the occupation—practices by which people cope, and adapt to routinized violence—to the burgeoning cultural production of which Riwaq itself is an expression.[19] Thus culture and cultural production, while usually overlooked in narrow theories of politics, reconfigure power relations in this war-torn context—in complex forms and through complex dynamics that the label of "resistance culture" cannot fully capture.

A CONTESTED HERITAGE LAW

The drafting and legislative trajectory of a new heritage law has been a crucial terrain where the conflict between DACH and major Palestinian NGOs has played out, and it provides a good example of the kinds of struggles that shape the field of heritage in Palestine. Between 1994 and 2018, the old Jordanian Law of Antiquities provided the legal framework for cultural heritage protection in the West Bank areas controlled by the PA. (When it was established, the PA

immediately reinstated all laws that existed prior to the 1967 Israeli occupation, making former Jordanian and Egyptian legislation again applicable to the West Bank and Gaza.) The old Jordanian law reproduces, with small amendments, the colonial Ordinance on Antiquities issued in 1929 during the British Mandate.[20] The way the law frames and defines its object of regulation, that is, as "antiquities," signals its origins in a colonial context. This law is obviously outdated in many respects, with its most evident drawback being its limited scope of protection: it declares and protects only movable and immovable remains that date to before AD 1700 and fails to mention any other cultural assets. Moreover, as dictated by the language of antiquities, the old Jordanian law does not contemplate approaches to the material past other than archaeological excavation and museum display.[21]

In response to the perpetuation of the 1966 law, heritage organizations drafted new heritage legislation that widens the scope of protection and includes different actors; crucially, this new draft law extended protection to the historical heritage of Palestine and the vernacular built environment. It was an offshoot of the Bethlehem 2000 project, a flagship PA scheme of the 1990s and a massive, multidonor development effort to prepare the city for the millennium celebrations. Riwaq played a central role, but the drafting team included Birzeit University's Institute of Law and the semigovernmental Bethlehem Center for Cultural Heritage Preservation; the drafting parties formally worked under the auspices of the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities and were aided by various international experts.[22] Several other heritage practitioners were part of the multiple discussion sessions and meetings that produced the final draft. Transnational governmentality intersected with a local culture of grassroots heritage and pluralistic involvement; drafters hailed the law as a truly participatory process.

Yet this heritage law was never ratified by the Palestinian Legislative Council (PLC), because of the latter's paralysis in the context of the Hamas-Fatah split and also, crucially, because of DACH's opposition.[23] DACH saw it as an NGO law and mounted tough opposition to it, such that it presented its own extensively amended version—a paradoxical "counterlaw" produced by the state itself. Meanwhile, working through the Ministry of Local Government, in 2006 NGOs had gotten the Higher Planning Council to approve a set of bylaws of the Planning Law that prohibit the destruction of historic buildings more

than fifty years old.[24] The conflict between Riwaq and DACH and the legislative stalemate that ensued produced an informal status quo: an unofficial division of labor between the ministry and the NGOs. The ministry has been in charge of archaeology (its protection being mandated by the old colonial law long in place) and has done mostly salvage excavations, while the NGOs have been in charge of other heritages, particularly the recent past and the historic built environment.[25] Impasses and frictions, in other words, produced a makeshift, patchwork geography of heritage government.[26]

The original text drafted by the NGOs was the result of the study of many heritage laws, including the ones currently in force in various Arab countries, in the former colonial empires of the United Kingdom and France, and in Italy—the latter a leader in cultural heritage preservation.[27] Its key features were the extended protection granted to buildings and sites that are at least fifty years old; a more "comprehensive" and "integrated" approach to the past conceived as heritage rather than antiquities and to heritage sites as "spaces" rather than "objects"; an emphasis on the link between heritage and sustainable development; and, most importantly for my discussion, a decentralized management and partnership (*sharaka*) in preservation involving local government and civil society at large.[28]

The topic of heritage remained the object of behind-the-scenes negotiations and struggle.[29] These continued to pit the NGOs against DACH, most fiercely for control of NGOs' activities and funding, and over the centralization of heritage management. The question of centralization versus decentralization (*al-markaziyya* versus *al-lamarkaziyya*), and the law's vision of a management structure no longer concentrated in the Department of Antiquities, was a major point of contention. Critics of the PA accused DACH of obstructionism, pointing at DACH's insistence that heritage NGOs register with the Ministry of Antiquities (i.e., with itself) rather than with the Ministry of Interior, as is the case for other types of organizations according to the law. DACH insisted on this to keep NGOs under control and to have NGOs' funding channeled through the Ministry of Antiquities rather than flowing directly from donors to organizations.

The heritage NGOs involved in the drafting process responded to DACH's moves by lobbying the Cabinet of Ministers to approve a text that "opens up the field" against centralization and the focus on antiquities of the old colonial

legislation.[30] Riwaq in particular made a strong case for a vision of heritage based on partnership and decentralized management. Its argument, laid out in an article by Riwaq's cofounder and former codirector Nazmi al-Jubeh, is that decentralized heritage management can be more efficient, involving society in place of "the [state] Cultural Heritage Department [which requires] an army of employees,"[31] and more democratic:

> In a world shifting toward democracy, governments throughout the world concede their monopolies for the benefit of the private sector or to empower civil society organizations (*mu'assasat al-mujtama' al-madani*). The distribution of tasks among partners does not undermine the importance and role of the state in its capacity as the ultimate sovereignty on its land and what is above and underneath it. If the state approves the decentralization principle (*al-lamarkaziyya*) in managing cultural properties (*al-mumtalakat al-thaqafiya*), it must maintain the right to monitor and supervise, and to issue secondary legislation regulating the [partners'] work. Decentralization does not only mean empowerment of the civil society but also empowerment of governmental or semi-governmental organizations such as the municipalities. . . . The law not only has to change social attitudes toward cultural heritage in all its components but also to shoulder the society and the NGOs a great responsibility.[32]

This article has several interesting dimensions. In particular, al-Jubeh's argument assumes the PA to be a state like many others that are moving toward cultural decentralization and "devolution," in what is a global trend. The exceptional nature of the PA as a nonsovereign, quasi-state body is concealed in this statement painting the PA and the Department of Antiquities as a "state" (*al-dawla*), a sovereign body with an effective agency, capable of making and implementing decisions about the management of territory and deployment of resources.

In the 1990s, the massive flow of Western "political aid" went largely to the PA and Arafat in support of the peace process, as Chapter 2 shows.[33] But in the mid-2000s, at the time al-Jubeh wrote this article, the PA was in full disarray, perhaps at its lowest, as a consequence of the 2002 Israeli reoccupation of West Bank cities and the ensuing politicide,[34] that is, the large-scale destruction of PA institutional infrastructures, coupled with the "reform agenda" and drastic cuts in Western funding that donors enacted to punish the PA for its alleged

role in the Second Intifada. Arguably, the Second Intifada and donors' carrot-and-stick approach toward the PA made the latter's performance of statehood weaker and weaker, reducing it to a minimum.

Al-Jubeh makes a case for the involvement of civil society and the private sector to make the "state" function better. He was writing for a Palestinian audience of experts and especially bureaucrats, delivering his words at the first conference that brought together the most important heritage actors in Palestine, including donors and the ministry; his aim was to convince audience members that they should do all in their power to get the new draft heritage law approved, and this in the service of the state. It is important to go back to his language:

> Most world countries tend to mitigate the political intervention [of the state] in cultural heritage management, not because of lack of confidence in the state and its apparatuses but to keep away heritage from political interests and blackmailing existing even in democracies. Also, this trend keeps heritage away from state monopoly and makes it an inheritance of the entire society. *The society has a right to self-determination as far as heritage and dealing with it is concerned. . . .* Monopoly was acceptable in the past under the central state. But now, under the democratization of the state and its apparatuses, and under the rapid or gradual giving up of the oriented economy by the state, it is preferable that the law provides the private sector with potentials to invest in cultural heritage. This is because whatever capabilities the state has, it will not be able to cover the high costs of this sector. The experience might be gradual and ascending, and not about shifting from an oriented to a *privatized heritage. The latter is not what we mean. What we mean is the state's non-monopoly of investment in cultural heritage.*[35]

Note the syncretism of this discourse. Combining the language of resistance and self-determination of the "people" with neoliberal motives, such as a marketized narrative of good governance, this powerful defense of a new vision of heritage also combines more space for private actors with an empowered civil society, such that civil society is equated to society at large. Yet it simultaneously refuses a "privatized heritage" in favor of a past that is imbued with justice, in the sense of people's "right to self-determination" and the achievement of a "social balance" and fewer inequalities.[36] Coming from the Palestinian left like

Rema, al-Jubeh had previously worked for the PA and had become highly critical of its conservatism and bureaucracy. Like other Palestinian heritage NGOs, he sees NGOs as grassroots groups clearly separated from the state and pressuring that state from below for change and reform, an idea akin to Jim Ferguson's "vertical topography of power."[37] Palestinian heritage NGOs tend to see themselves as working toward a positive, democratic division of labor between themselves and the government, which should maintain a role from "above" of supervision, policy making, and rule setting. The PA, though, is neither above society nor doing its job; it is both obstructive and absent ("NGOs are alone on the ground"), or fluctuating between absence and authoritarian intervention.[38]

This spatial imaginary of autonomy and demarcation is arguably misleading. The discourse mobilized by al-Jubeh is ultimately ambivalent in the ways it represents an ideal-typical "state" in Palestine and the latter's relationship to other social bodies, and particularly a "society" and a "civil society" whose boundaries are blurred. While battling the "state," Palestinian NGOs are in fact deeply implicated in the process of the state's construction. Palestinian NGOs understand themselves as a righteous "civil society" in opposition to an authoritarian "state," but neither society nor state is autonomous and fully formed.[39] The boundaries are being negotiated on the ground and fought over in multiple arenas, including, and prominently so, the drafting of legislation. A Foucauldian optics of the state conceives of this as a messy ensemble of practices and processes extending well beyond the formal boundaries of the state and whose effects are never obtained solely through the work of state institutions—it is "an emergent, partial, and unstable system that is interdependent with other systems in a complex social order."[40] This ensemble of political practices and processes requires social imagination in order to be conceived as a unitary, agentive entity.[41] With this lens, one can begin to see how Palestinian NGOs both offer a pathway to the future state and constitute an essential component of a fragmented, disassembled government in the present.[42] They call into being and work to craft the institutions of the Palestinian state in the making.

OF FENCES AND STATEHOOD

Tales of unending, acrimonious confrontations between heritage NGOs and DACH, and all kinds of stories about the bad temper of DACH's longtime

director, were the stuff of everyday heritage talk at the time of my fieldwork in the mid-2000s. This conflict saturated the Palestinian heritage discourse, from formal meetings to small talk in the corridors. Typically, contenders more or less openly accused each other of contributing to the destruction of the national heritage: DACH accused the NGOs of "privatizing" the national heritage while submitting to donors' priorities and agendas, and the NGOs blamed the ministry for its authoritarianism—or attempt to "monopolize" the field of heritage—and for its inefficiency. Similar confrontational narratives are commonly mobilized to make sense of state–civil society relations elsewhere; what is noteworthy about Palestine is that such a narrative is mobilized in the absence of a fully fledged state.

There are some main tropes of this confrontational narrative. The widely shared view in NGOs is that the ministry puts "obstacles" in the way of legitimate and much-needed work:

> Some people [referring to the ministry] want to draw every single stone. But we have no time. Otherwise important historical buildings will be destroyed. I prefer to rescue from decay and outright destruction rather than draw every single stone and wait for a license. To do nothing is equivalent to destroying heritage, leaving it for owners to demolish and build anew.[43]

Told with a mixture of sarcasm and sadness, the typical circulating story ridicules ministerial employees for stopping their own work because of an alleged lack of permits (which they themselves issue) and for sending the ministry—that is, themselves—official letters to ask for those same permits. A version of this story I have heard many times while working in Jericho, for instance, tells of the head of one of the ministry's departments writing himself a formal letter asking for permission to display a one-square-meter stone model of the architecture of the site he was working at.

Local municipalities, and local government in general, are said to be allied in many cases with the NGOs against MOTA. One rumor of this alliance that different heritage practitioners told me concerns the mayor of a small village threatening to shoot the employees of MOTA when they tried to stop an NGO from doing restoration works at one of the village's historic sites because of the discovery of archaeological layers (in the end, he kicked out the archaeologists of the ministry who wanted to document the layers, or so the rumors go).

There are other such similar circulating stories, but one way or another, all of them scorn MOTA's alleged fixation with official permits and stamped documents, with documentation and archival material. NGOs, then, perceive the ministry as paralyzed by a compulsive, illogical attachment to rules and procedures that are virtual in many instances, an imagined Weberian bureaucracy not always prescribed even by the laws actually in place: a performance of rules beyond reason, the seeming meaninglessness and circularity of bureaucratic practice for bureaucracy's own sake. The bureaucrats' point of view is that they are being very reasonable in trying to establish a system and to create a set of rules by which all abide. For them, the NGOs contribute to the "lack of law and order" and the informality they themselves lament that is so damaging for Palestinian heritage.

During my fieldwork, NGO workers tended to explain this conflict between themselves and DACH as a question of incompatible personalities and a clash of egos. They saw it ultimately as the product of personal as opposed to structural factors, especially the intractable, dictatorial temper and bureaucratic obsession of the longtime head of DACH, an archaeologist who was in charge from the beginning of the PA in 1994 until 2015. Some, like Rema, also blame "Arafatism," a deeply anti-institutional, personalistic, and ultimately authoritarian attitude considered endemic to PA organizing. This alleged madness, however, resonates with broader postcolonial modes of bureaucratic authority in Palestine and elsewhere that work through tireless repetition of acts and the accumulation of files and material documents.[44] Looking at 1950s and 1960s Gaza, Ilana Feldman has identified this circular repetition of banal bureaucracy as a kind of last-resort "rule by practice" that alone grants a minimum of continuity and consistency to a very "tenuous," fragile government.[45] This idea of bureaucratic compulsion providing a semblance of government endures in the culture of the PA; just as enduring are the ways in which such insistence on formal procedures is the object of ridicule or of critiques of it being Kafkaesque, meaningless, and also obscurantist and antidemocratic. By such proceduralism and rule-following behavior, the PA desperately tries to look and act like a state.[46] But the ministry's attempts at creating a system are consistently perceived as illogical and as a failure from the start, as sabotaging projects "that attempt to do something in an emergency situation." Such emergency logic often is grounds for heritage NGOs' claims to legitimacy.

But the struggle is also about what one heritage practitioner once forcefully stated to me in these straightforward terms: "The problem of heritage [in Palestine] today is one of law and jurisdiction over archaeological sites and historical buildings." The fundamental issue, in other words, is the control of territory and resources, as well as who decides what kind of heritage is to be preserved and how. The struggle for "who owns the past" in Palestine, then, fuels not only the conflict between the Israeli occupation and the Palestinians but also the internal Palestinian conflict between the PA and NGOs over "who gets to build the state," in a context where the balance of forces is shifting.

The fact of control over heritage sites being a key issue is highlighted by how DACH and NGOs often quarrel over fencing and licenses. NGOs erect fences around sites (to protect them from looting) and work without ministerial licenses; in response, DACH files lawsuits and sends police in to stop the work. But various NGOs complained to me that DACH was delaying or blocking permits altogether: "We [the NGOs] are trapped in the middle. We need permits but when we ask they [the PA] do not respond or say no," said Mahmud. So they had to work long illegally for the sake of protecting endangered heritage sites. More broadly, he said:

> The department of antiquity is an obstacle sometimes. . . . This could be said of the entire PA as well, which is corrupt and inefficient. The PA allows people to destroy, and landowners are a major factor in destroying [archaeological] sites—of course together with Israel. Now there is an emergency situation. The PNA brought us to court for a fence that we placed around an archaeological site in 'Atara. And the Israelis send the police sometimes to kick out workers—this happened for example in Shuqba.[47]

Mahmud is more vocal than other professionals about NGOs' problematic relationship with DACH, but his opinion is widely shared by other practitioners. The head of DACH, on the other hand, tends to criticize NGOs' approach as "privatizing heritage,"[48] as signaled by the act of enclosing sites, which ultimately denies access to their primary owner, namely, the ministry itself. DACH archaeologists see two other NGO practices as potentially destructive: converting heritage for everyday use and prioritizing the rescue and reuse of buildings and sites at the expense of research and documentation. According to the NGOs, "drawing every single stone" is laudable but should not be prioritized

over immediate rescue: this is because heritage in Palestine is perceived as being "under fire," endangered by very pressing changes to the landscape.[49] Disciplinary differences come to the fore, here. For archaeologists, who populate the ministry, "destruction" includes intervention without proper and extensive documentation and research to produce a substantial archive (e.g., drawings, forms, files, photos).[50] But for architects, "drawing every single stone" can be an obstacle to rescuing a threatened heritage.

Another story I was told a few times illuminates these struggles over who owns the past: the head of DACH once rang the director of a major heritage NGO that specialized in historic conservation, threatening to stop its work and sue it for lack of compliance with PA regulations. The NGO's director answered sarcastically: "By which law [do you want to sue me]? The one that we [the NGOs] did?" The heritage legislation in force at the time of this exchange was essentially the old colonial law, which protects only antiquities and thus restricts DACH's mandate to that type of heritage. The irony the NGO's director refers to, then, is that DACH has sabotaged itself by working against the draft law prepared by the NGOs expanding protection to cover vernacular historic heritage. Without passage of that law, DACH has no such jurisdiction over historic heritage. These legal gaps, coupled with the long-term legislative stalemate and various implementation difficulties, have meant that the NGOs have been relatively free from the control of the ministry in such areas.

While Palestinian heritage practitioners indignantly recall DACH bringing them to court, in many cases they nonetheless continued working without a ministerial license. The governmental heritage agency could not establish its authority and legitimacy, but neither could NGOs effectively reject the PA's claims to regulate their activities. Heritage NGOs all over the world lament their respective public administrations as both authoritarian and deficient, as doing too much and "not doing enough," but what is remarkable in Palestine is that the power balance between the "state" and "civil society" is not at all obvious, as it is constantly renegotiated on the ground, subject to the ebb and flow of donor aid and the politics of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict.[51]

The discourse of conflict constitutes DACH as the "government" (*al-hukuma*)—totally inefficient, yes, but incumbent, authoritarian, burdensome—and the NGOs as the grassroots. But on closer inspection, "the government" is not as governmental and the NGOs not as nongovernmental as

this narrative of confrontation would make us believe. Both the effectiveness and the qualities of their operations point to the fact that the relationship between the two is much more complex, as well as symmetric rather than asymmetric.

COMPETING LISTS

In 2002, Israel reoccupied the Palestinian Territories in an operation of "politicide" against Palestinian proto-state institutions; among many arguably more important targets, Operation Defensive Shield destroyed cultural heritage on a large scale. Intense media coverage showed shocking pictures of Bethlehem's Church of the Nativity, what Christians hold as the birthplace of Christianity, under sniper fire. These, along with images of the devastation of the Old City of Nablus, convinced UNESCO and particularly its heritage body, the World Heritage Committee (WHC), that something needed to be done, quite urgently, to save the heritage of the Palestinian Holy Land.[52] As Palestinian heritage includes some of the most important sacred places of the three monotheistic world religions, it certainly possesses "outstanding universal value"—the quality that makes heritage of worldwide significance worthy of UNESCO protection. But in 2002 there were no Palestinian listings yet on the World Heritage List (except for the Old City of Jerusalem, nominated by Jordan in the 1980s), which meant that Palestinian heritage lacked official international recognition and protection: Palestine, as a nonstate, could not be a member of UNESCO and was thus not in a position to ratify the World Heritage Convention or nominate properties to the list. The WHC first accepted Palestinian nominations to the list only after UNESCO's general conference recognized Palestine in a landmark vote on October 31, 2011.[53] But well before that, DACH and UNESCO Ramallah had prepared a "tentative list" in UNESCO jargon, the inventory of key heritage sites from which such nominations are drawn.

This list, published in 2005 as a fifty-page brochure including information about each property,[54] was something like a road map of top-priority areas requiring intervention in the coming years. For the PA, it was also a symbolic step, a performance of sovereignty and nation-statehood. There was controversy over what to call the Palestinian tentative list, given Israel's sensitivity on the issue (technically only officially recognized states can submit tentative lists), and this is itself a barometer of how UN jargon can invest actors with

the mantle of statehood. But the reality of the Palestinian nonstate was already embedded in the incredibly long title eventually given to this list in place of its usual name: the Inventory of Cultural and Natural Heritage Sites of Outstanding Universal Value in Palestine. This is a prime example of the inventive solutions bureaucrats concoct to make legal sense of Palestinian political liminality without incurring Israeli sanctions.

For the PA, achieving World Heritage status was important in many respects. Most immediately, UNESCO recognition was a powerful, if indirect, way to reaffirm sovereignty over and contest the Israeli occupation of many Palestinian heritage sites (and the villages and cities nearby), and even to defend them from the erection of the separation wall.[55] (The connection between World Heritage status and enactment of Palestinian sovereignty was emphasized by Israel's furious reactions to the inscription of Hebron on the World Heritage List in July 2017, with Netanyahu slashing Israel's UN budget to finance a Jewish heritage museum in the city.[56]) Also, having sites on the World Heritage List is a symbol of nation-statehood, and politicians and governments consider it a factor of international prestige. According to Lynn Meskell,[57] the inscription process functions as a connectivity- and value-enhancing device by turning heritage sites into highly valuable assets with both a sign value and an exchange value that can be mobilized in all sorts of transactions, a global currency that can earn a wide range of gains to the state: international recognition, capital investments, commercial contracts, political leverage, and territorial gains, among others. World Heritage status promises states participation in the circuit and revenues of global tourism, boosting the value of what, in the rhetoric of politicians and (some) practitioners, is the "oil" of Palestine, potentially able to unleash future economic prosperity (in the transnational language of neoliberal cultural policy making worldwide, heritage can be a "resource" and "asset" for countries with otherwise scarce natural and other resources).[58] If large-scale tourism development remains a distant prospect, tapping into the World Heritage network means building transnational alliances, and funding and empowerment.[59] And having sites on the list wins states some points in global taxonomies of national value and cultural worth. In short, World Heritage status makes the PA "look" more like a state, and a prestigious one at that.

So in the early 2000s, the WHC began the process of including major Palestinian cultural and natural properties on the World Heritage List. While the

Palestinian tentative list was being compiled, UNESCO's presence in Ramallah was strengthened, thanks to the addition of a new cultural desk and a program specialist for culture and cultural heritage. But this specialist was given limited authority. Indeed, the Israeli government—generally suspicious of UNESCO and unwilling to recognize any role for the international community or to give up jurisdiction of any type over annexed Jerusalem—did not accept UNESCO Ramallah's authority over the holy city.[60] The result was an unstable compromise in which the new cultural officer had a mandate for the West Bank and Gaza but not East Jerusalem, where the heart of Palestinian heritage is located. The battle over control and sovereignty over the Holy Land was waged on the terrain of heritage.

Between 2002 and 2005, DACH undertook the research to compile the Palestinian tentative list, in cooperation with the newly established cultural desk of UNESCO Ramallah. This work included what is called in development jargon a substantial "capacity building" component, that is, several workshops and international expert missions to familiarize Palestinian bureaucrats and heritage professionals at the ministry with the language and guidelines of the World Heritage Convention. In 2002, DACH had compiled and published a survey of cultural resources, responding to the lack of proper inventories and of standardized, substantial, and updated data about heritage sites in Palestine. But many saw this effort as meager and incomplete, the product of the dramatic times in which it was produced and of the limited expertise of an archaeology-centered department—barely a first step in addressing the PA's fundamentally tenuous, poor institutional knowledge of the land.[61] The new tentative list was meant to partly redress this problem of a lack of proper heritage inventories.

Drafting the new tentative list cemented the alliance between UNESCO and DACH and expanded both bodies' presence and institutional weight, particularly in the West Bank. Palestinian civil society heritage practitioners used a kinship metaphor to describe this alliance: a "marriage" that they blessed in only a limited way, for it tends to exclude them and to result in stricter regulation of their activities. They made this joke a few times, for example, during a sector-building conference on heritage conservation in Palestine that brought together many actors involved in the field—the Department of Antiquities, heritage NGOs, UNESCO, and several key donors. UNESCO's reply to the

marriage joke was always the same: "My hands are tied . . . UNESCO is an intergovernmental organization. I cannot marry you [heritage organizations], even though I would prefer to marry you rather than the Department of Antiquities."[62] In other words, UNESCO must work with state institutions because of the way it is structured and also because it views this as beneficial to strengthening local institutions.

The tentative list itself is striking for several reasons, and especially for the image of Palestine it conveys. First, it assesses the Palestinian landscape essentially through the imaginary of the (Christian) Holy Land and the Bible. Among the first ten properties listed, nine have a biblical connection and five Christian significance, while two figure prominently in the history of ancient Near Eastern archaeology. These are Tell al-Sultan, better known as biblical Jericho, which beyond its religious resonance is relevant to scientists for marking the beginning of urbanization, and Wadi Natuf, a preagricultural site of one of the earliest cultures in southwest Asia, dating to the end of the Paleolithic. The fourth and fifth properties, Mount Gerizim and Qumran, are considered "Jewish heritage" by settlers and the Israeli state, and they are in areas under full Israeli control; Qumran is directly managed by the Israeli Nature and Parks Authority. Palestinians cannot access these sites.

Apart from Bethlehem's Church of the Nativity and Hebron's Ibrahimi Mosque, the sites on the tentative list do not have much meaning for ordinary Palestinians. In other words, this heritage does not have much affective or local social value. While educated and uneducated, middle- and working-class, Muslim and Christian, religious and secular Palestinians would most probably disagree among themselves about which heritage and which values to save first, few would include many of the properties cited on the official inventory on their own lists. This points to a disjuncture between experts' understandings of and attitudes toward heritage and those of neighborhood and mosque committees and local community-based organizations, which are often more explicitly political and/or religious.[63] But it also emphasizes the specific representational strategy chosen by the PA and the imaginary embedded in the World Heritage version of the past. Bethlehem and Jericho are key to the image, with strong Christian overtones, that a pro-Western PA wants to project internationally.[64] Yet this Holy Land resonates with the long-standing imaginary of the (Western) "cradle of civilization," without much mention of Islam. The imaginary

embedded in the list is, in other words, a rather orientalist imaginary of the past with a pronounced colonial genealogy.

DACH and UNESCO have concentrated their attention on Bethlehem and Jericho. Both cities have received the greatest share of Western funding for heritage, while there has been no funding for East Jerusalem until the late 2000s, as a result of technicalities contained in the Oslo Accords and of Israel's obstruction. More accessible than most other Palestinian cities, Bethlehem and Jericho are listed first and second, respectively, on the tentative list, and since the beginning of the PA they have been the sites of flagship, "statist" projects of national representation and self-aggrandizement.[65] Bethlehem's Church of the Nativity was the first site to be nominated and inscribed on the World Heritage List in 2012 following the vote that made Palestine a state member of UNESCO. Interestingly, however, this decision was not uncontroversial. Local organizations had preferred the early candidacy of other Palestinian heritage sites, those under intense pressure from the occupation and needing urgent protection, such as the Old City of Hebron (nominated only later); also, the second Palestinian site on the list, Battir, near Bethlehem, has been the object of tensions and frictions between the PA privileging both "outstanding universal" and representational values, and local actors prioritizing political urgency.[66]

The second striking aspect of the Palestinian tentative list is that the national heritage it envisions has failed to fully materialize; it has not been implemented by way of follow-up projects of restoration, conservation, and display carried through to completion. If the Palestinian state project initiated by the Oslo Accords has proven very fragile, so does its representative heritage. Most importantly, rehabilitation projects in these locations so far have not achieved the stated objectives of the PA or UNESCO, or they have been left unfinished or delayed for years amid major political setbacks of the peace process, donors' withdrawal of funding, internal conflicts, and even institutional inertia. An exception is the rehabilitation of parts of the old cities of Bethlehem and Hebron, but these projects have been carried out by semigovernmental organizations, the Centre for Cultural Heritage Preservation (CCHP) and the HRC respectively, acting independently of DACH.[67]

We can begin with the first five sites on the list. Four of the five are either owned by entities other than the state or occupied by Israel. Religious properties belong to churches and religious endowments (*waqf*), which are reluctant

to accept PA control and even its heritage guidelines. Already on the World Heritage List since 1981, following a nomination by Jordan, Jerusalem's Haram al-Sharif is run by the Jordanian-controlled Waqf Administration. The Hebron shrine, Mount Gerizim, Qumran, and parts of Bethlehem are controlled by Israel and considered Jewish properties, even though these claims have no basis in international law. Mount Gerizim is occupied by settlers and an army base. Of special significance for Jews as the place of the discovery of the earliest Hebrew Bible manuscripts, Qumran is managed by Israel's national parks authority despite the fact that the site is fully within internationally recognized Palestinian territory. When I visited the archaeological park in 2006, the information desk had a wide range of brochures about the site in all kinds of languages, including Chinese, but none in Arabic. In 2010, despite UNESCO's protestations, a number of these West Bank sites significant for Jews were formally placed on the list of Israeli national heritage properties by Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu; PA's officials, and Palestinians in general, cannot even enter them.

The following are a few examples of unfinished and delayed projects. Needed restoration of the Church of the Nativity has been long delayed, ostensibly because of resistance by one of the owners, the Greek Orthodox Church.[68] The realization of various museums as well as the completion of the Bethlehem conservation master plan have been consistently delayed since Bethlehem 2000, a project that failed due to the explosion of the Second Intifada. In Jericho, large-scale, multimillion-dollar archaeological parks were planned but then blocked or postponed for years. The Tell al-Sultan archaeological park was to be implemented as the cornerstone of a large-scale Japanese-funded scheme for development in the Jordan River valley. The park was never completed, although in 2011 the few Tell al-Sultan tourists could sit in a hyper-air-conditioned, shining white room, an "interpretation center" with only a screen and chairs, to watch an informative movie made by the ministry and the Japanese donors. When I suggested to two Palestinian friends of mine, an older school principal and a young architect and UNESCO employee, that they should see Tell al-Sultan if they ever visited Jericho, each responded with the same question: "What is there to see?" "The children will get bored, there is nothing to see at the site," added the school principal.

This split, this disjuncture between expert and popular heritages, between scientific pasts and affective ones, is not unique to Palestine.[69] People are

alienated from archaeology in Palestine, seeing it as foreign and also as a long-standing vehicle of oppression and colonial dispossession. But my friends' reactions more simply point to the fact that these heritage sites are not developed at all, despite the aid monies being spent since the 1990s, the visits of innumerable international missions and specialized task forces, several management plan proposals, and many international workshops devoted exclusively to the development of the sites.

As one can see in comparing the tentative list with the heritage projects that have actually been carried out and completed, what gets conserved, restored, and revitalized is, for the most part, another past, the recent vernacular past, which has not been protected by law until 2018, despite its central place in Palestinian cultural nationalism. That is, what does matter and materialize, shaping the Palestinian memoryscape today, are the traces and remnants of pre-Nakba Palestine that populate the narrative and iconography of Palestinian everyday nationalism and popular, affective memory, from films to poems and paintings and other forms of cultural production. Call it a form of counterheritage, a "counterlist." This work of heritage preservation is but one layer of a multifaceted memoryscape that affords the connective tissue of the Palestinian nation. It is part of a much larger project of narration, of salvage and reinvention though creative reference to the past, which takes place across multiple media (e.g., film, texts, the internet) and across the transnational social field of the Palestinian diaspora.[70] This work of preservation constitutes a kind of counterheritage because it produces *sumud*, or steadfastness, the chief Palestinian nationalist value; it is a way of reclaiming the Palestinianness of the land and opposing, materially and symbolically, the encroachment of colonization. Moreover, it produces a rather different, alternative configuration of sites of memory opposed to the PA antiquities project. The work of Riwaq epitomizes such counterheritage.

RIWAQ AND THE 50 VILLAGES PROJECT

"It's not just about restoring the stones!" say Riwaq and other Palestinian heritage practitioners.[71] They understand heritage, and Palestinian heritage in particular, as a field imbued with sociopolitics. Since all other Palestinian heritage organizations focus on cities, Riwaq quickly moved to the villages, where its

task is chiefly socioeconomic development. Encroached upon by expanding settlements, encircled by military checkpoints, and suffocated by the Israeli policy of closure (before which many villagers were employed in low-skilled jobs in Israel), Palestinian villages are going through a process of spatial and social dismemberment.[72] Nazmi al-Jubeh explained to me the philosophy that informs Riwaq's interventions there in the following way: "At Riwaq, we do not understand heritage as something beautiful only or [of value for our] national identity or its historic importance. These values are very dear to us but . . . our philosophy is developing cultural heritage for the sake of socioeconomic development . . . [even though] we know that this approach is very problematic."[73] The last remark refers to the growing popularity of heritage-led development and urban regeneration models—which have gained wide, globalized currency in the context of a deeply intensified, transnational policy traffic that is typical of neoliberalism[74]—and the fact that this approach is now sponsored not only by cultural agencies such as UNESCO but also by aid institutions, including the World Bank,[75] which Palestinians tend to regard with suspicion.

Yet while several development approaches appear neocolonialist to many Palestinians (e.g., democracy building), heritage is not seen as a "dictated issue." Riwaq and other heritage practitioners often told me how they have had to "play around" and "be creative" with donors to obtain funding for heritage, as it is certainly not considered a priority in Palestine by the international community.[76] But after 2000 donors stepped up their job-creation programs because of the dramatic humanitarian crisis and conditions under the Second Intifada. Unexpectedly, this renewed emphasis on job creation has benefited several heritage organizations, including Riwaq, partly due to the lobbying of Palestinian organizations but also because labor-intensive restoration tends to generate more employment than more conventional job stimulus.[77] Moreover, with the collapse of the peace process and donors' pushes to "reform" the PA, they began to channel considerable amounts of aid through Palestinian NGOs.[78] Funding for heritage projects, however, was never part of a comprehensive, targeted strategy (at the time of my fieldwork, donors frequently did not even classify such projects as heritage).[79]

In this context, most of Riwaq's projects have been financed under the Job Creation Through Conservation scheme, supported by SIDA.[80] This scheme sealed another "marriage" that has been particularly fertile for Palestinian

heritage in the absence of a specific legal framework protecting historic heritage and given the gaps in the existing legislation. Once SIDA realized its own substantive, though initially fully unintentional, involvement in the preservation of Palestinian architectural heritage—the agency also supported Hebron's HRC and similar urban rehabilitation initiatives in Bethlehem (CCHP) and East Jerusalem (the Welfare Association)—it gradually developed not only specific policy guidelines but also a unified management infrastructure to bring the various projects together. Tellingly, this infrastructure was coordinated by Riwaq, at least initially, and not by the ministry, as it happens in other fields.[81] For a few years, SIDA has allocated core funding (as opposed to short- and medium-term funding) to a selected few cultural organizations, including Riwaq, as core funding is seen as the key condition for supporting a more "effective engagement of civil society organizations in governance."[82]

Locally, Riwaq understands its mission as one of building "social coalitions," "interdependencies" that will have a positive effect on village social life by involving different local actors. The idea is that restored buildings must benefit the whole community, particularly marginalized groups such as women, children, and the elderly:

> We approach the towns and villages and tell them we are interested in restoring the buildings in their historic center . . . for the benefit of the public. Then Riwaq is engaged in establishing a social coalition between different social partners in the locality itself in order to create a partner for Riwaq, in order to secure the sustainability of the project. . . . Then we discuss the proper use of the building with them in accordance with the social needs of the community and then we begin the actual physical restoration. So [there is] a lot of preparation work in *developing the social partner* before we get to restore the stones. Therefore, you can see that . . . in most projects *we restore the relationships between the partners themselves, the potential users of the building*. So a lot of community-outreach programs have to be conducted, a lot of politics is involved in it. . . . We hope that in the coming few years we will reach as many communities as possible, not [only] with lectures, publications, pamphlets, brochures, etc., but also with actual tangible projects which will also affect the social life of the towns and villages.[83]

Riwaq's main local partners are village municipalities, which must either own the premises or lease it. Civil society groups like local women's associations are

also involved; they are considered the main beneficiaries of the project and, ideally, are the ones who propose it. Examples include reusing buildings as public libraries, cultural centers, women's training centers, computer labs, and kindergartens. In short, these projects aim to create public space and community not simply as an aftereffect of rehabilitation but also during the restoration process itself (Figures 11 and 12).

The organization's main task, however, is to "spread the message" and "raise the awareness that heritage matters" so as to "make people take care of it on their own."[84] Riwaq members, along with many other Palestinian practitioners, emphasize their efforts to "make people care and appreciate [heritage]" so as to "make people do the rehabilitation themselves."[85] With outreach and awareness campaigns and public lectures, brochures, and workshops, they encourage local communities to "participate" in the protection of their cultural heritage.[86] There is a strong sense among the largely middle-class, secular, and left-leaning Palestinian NGO practitioners that heritage care is among the responsibilities of the democratic citizens (*muwatinin*) of the state in the making. Concern

FIGURE 11. Riwaq workers restoring an old building in Kafr Aqab, 2017.
Source: Courtesy of the Riwaq Photo Archive.

FIGURE 12. Students drawing an old building in Rantis restored by Riwaq, 2017. *Source:* Courtesy of the Riwaq Photo Archive.

for heritage is an aspect of a general democratic disposition toward the public good, a disposition that is nationalist but also embraces cosmopolitan horizons. Regardless of their success in promoting this (govern)mentality, organizations such as Riwaq work to restore the social fabric as well as the physical one: they aim to create a new consciousness for the citizens of the state-to-come while they produce public spaces in emergency conditions. Unlike the ministry, then, and thanks to continuing donors' support (and the fact that heritage creates local jobs), Riwaq has been able to materialize its vision of Palestinian heritage. The national registry generated another ambitious scheme of "statist" scope: the 50 Villages project, launched in 2007.[87] Riwaq selected the fifty most significant historic centers from the properties on the national registry, prioritizing its interventions over the years. By 2018, it had implemented preservation programs in more than fifteen West Bank villages and towns from the 50 Villages list. It has also started a new "cluster approach," according to which preservation programs no longer target individual villages and towns but rather interdependent clusters of villages that are connected through joint projects and trails.

Whether or not these projects will all be completed, what is striking about Riwaq is its national, "statist" vocation. The organization's capillary-like, mean-

ingful presence across the Palestinian landscape and its comprehensive scope are usually attributed to the phenomenology of the state. Riwaq encompasses various social actors and forces according to a uniform, coherent, underlying logic; also statelike is the force of the moral model of citizenship, of the models of behavior and thought it proposes. In Palestine, then, it is an NGO that devises, coordinates, and implements such a comprehensive national plan of heritage conservation. In this, Riwaq is aided by its marked multiscalar connectivity, the fact that the organization can rely on extensive networks from the local (e.g., associations, municipalities) to the national and transnational (e.g., heritage, art, and activist networks; donors; international agencies). On the ground, Riwaq works "with trust and conversations, [not by] parachuting projects," but by building networks of "personal relationships" that allow, or so members view it, local communities to "believe" in Riwaq because Riwaq sees them or rather "does not see [them] through documents" like a distant PA does.[88] It has also strong personal relationships with a broad and diversified transnational network of heritage and development experts, artists, and cultural operators. Thanks to such multiscalar connectivity, the organization is able to operate at a broader, more "stately" scale than its "state" counterpart: compiling national surveys, drafting legislation, setting policy models (many organizations have replicated Riwaq's practice), and providing a sectoral umbrella framework, arguably creating the very field of historic heritage in Palestine. Riwaq resembles in several ways the alternative state infrastructure set in place by the American Popular Revolutionary Alliance (APRA) political party that was oppressed by the Peruvian government in the mid-twentieth century; according to David Nugent, APRA provided a "subaltern governmentality" more effective than the state both in generating local knowledge and in impacting people's everyday lives.[89]

Despite its nongovernmental label, Riwaq "sees like a state" (by performing key statelike operations of legibility); it also acts like one (as the 50 Villages project shows).[90] Yet Riwaq mobilizes techniques like national surveys not to control and manage territories and populations, as states usually do, but to exercise and rework sovereignty anew—to restore broken social relationships and use the built environment as a "medium of togetherness" and a way to rethink "notions of autonomy and notions of society."[91] The NGO's strategy, especially in the past decade, has been to work from the bottom up "to empower the local

government,"[92] but Riwaq participates in building new institutions at multiple levels. It has lobbied the Ministry of Local Government to create a cultural-heritage protection department. Most interestingly, in conjunction with the preparation of a series of village protection plans, the organization has worked on local institution building by creating rehabilitation units within each municipality, as in Birzeit; it has also stimulated local organizations to be more engaged. This is not just a matter of ambiguous distinction between "state" and "civil society." According to Rema Hammami, a central feature of Palestinian civil society organizations is their being "embodiments of an absent state," that is, their "being non-governmental but symbolizing an absent but desired for government."[93] I asked one of Riwaq's directors about the most peculiar feature of Palestinian heritage, that is, that it is largely run by NGOs: "Each Palestinian feels that she has a national role to play."[94] Thus, the cultural operators and heritage practitioners involved in Riwaq participate in a daily, minute, laborious work of statecraft, working toward the common good in experimental, creative, participatory ways (see Figure 13).[95]

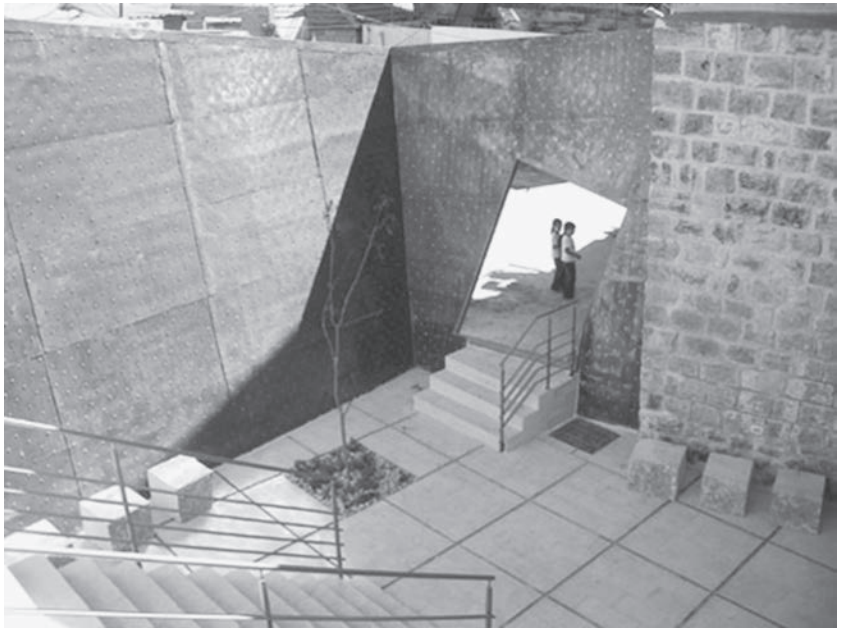


FIGURE 13. Al-Kamandjati music center in Ramallah restored by Riwaq, 2007.
Source: Author.

THEATERS OF THE STATE

To understand how the ministry works, it is useful to look at a very important Palestinian heritage site: Jericho. This city has been the theater of several heritage projects, involving a multiplicity of national and transnational stakeholders; but unlike other sites, here the ministry of tourism and antiquities is a key, if not the main, actor. Together with Bethlehem—woven into the same biblical imaginary—Jericho is symbolically quite important for the PA, with its Intercontinental Hotel, the casino (now closed), and several planned archaeological parks embodying 1990s expectations of secular statehood and a viable, even vibrant, tourism economy. It is still the place that West Bank Palestinians visit for leisure.

Located in the stunning setting of the Jordan Valley, a green oasis surrounded by reddish ochre mountains dotted with early Christian monasteries and shrines, Jericho played a central role in the colonial history of Near Eastern archaeology, thanks to a series of "firsts" marking the city's place in the narrative of the cradle of civilization. That is, in the discourse of colonial archaeology, Jericho sits at the beginning of the "civilizational path" that has the "West" as its telos. One of the first agricultural settlements, Jericho is hailed as the oldest city in the world on the basis of evidence of fortifications unearthed at the archaeological site of Tell al-Sultan (or biblical Jericho), associated with the story of Joshua and the tumbling walls. Interestingly, the city was also the first (with Gaza) to come under PA jurisdiction in 1994. With its many firsts and its glorious pasts, and a terrain dotted with their material remains, Jericho has been a showcase for the PA, a platform for its shaky stately performances. Biblical Jericho, for example, has been the object of a number of PA projects, including plans for the creation of an archaeological park that, as noted earlier, was never completed.

Together with Tell al-Sultan, the other focus of MOTA's strategy in Jericho has been another key archaeological site: the Omayyad palace at Khirbat al-Mafjar, also called the Palace of Hisham. In the 2000s the PA and UNESCO initiated a plan to create a Guggenheim-style cultural development. In this model, epitomized by the famous Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao, Spain, erected in the 1990s, cultural institutions, museums, and art centers built by prestigious architects are to play a crucial role in reversing the fate of depressed areas by generating local development and stimulating the local economy, in addition

to affording a considerable sign value to the urban settings they rebrand. But the Palace of Hisham became a contested, troubled site in its embodiment of the promises, contradictions, predicaments, and pitfalls of the large-scale, "big is better," statist approach of the PA and of its American funders, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) (and of UNESCO too, to a certain extent). These multiple stakeholders invested both imaginative and financial resources (millions of dollars) to feed different expectations, understandings, and logics into this project. All this produced negative friction,[96] putting too many obstacles in the way of its realization.

The palace is mostly known for its exceptional bath complex, where its builder was said to swim in wine, surrounded by rich sculptural decorations of, among other images, female busts—a sculptural decoration now displayed in East Jerusalem's Rockefeller Museum and essentially out of Palestinian reach (see Chapter 4). One of the most beautiful early Islamic fortresses in the Levant, the palace has a complex history of restoration, which intertwines with some of the most significant historical events of the past century. A Jordanian restoration project in the 1960s was left unfinished at the onset of the June 1967 war; the steel supports of the half-built pilasters of the palace's bath hall standing out against the sky symbolize the scars of 1967 and the broken promises of heritage development. In the 1990s, an Italian-funded project to restore the palace's rich mosaics triggered a conflict between DACH and the involved Palestinian NGOs, which ended only when the latter left.

According to the American development expert who told me the beginning of this story,[97] this monumental project was sparked by Laura Bush's visit to Jericho in May 2005 during a six-day trip to the Middle East. The then US first lady spent a day in Jerusalem and the West Bank; she visited the most important religious sites (like the Wailing Wall, Dome of the Rock, Abu Gosh, and the Holy Sepulcher and Bethlehem) as well as Yad Vashem and the Palace of Hisham, where she made a speech to the press. She mobilized the usual peace rhetoric but added strong emotional language:

> As you can tell from our day here, this is a *place of emotion*, everywhere we went, from the Western Wall to the Dome of the Rock to here. This is such a crucial point in our world and has been for forever, really, for—actually they say that Jericho is one of the oldest—or the oldest city in the world. And so we are here

> at a place of old—the start of three religions, and also, really, *the cradle of . . . religious thought*.
>
> And so I'm really glad to be here, but I also know that especially the American press who are here with me see *what an emotional place this is* as we go from each one of these very, very holy spots to the next. And it's—we're reminded again of what we all want, what every one of us pray for [peace].[98]

Seeing the places she had visited through the colonial frame of the imaginary of the cradle of civilization and the Holy Land, Laura Bush combined a number of different heritages under the umbrella of the sacred. The heritage of the Palace of Hisham is actually of little, if any, religious value—as it was rather a place of sin. Nonetheless, hers was a productive confusion, resulting in millions of dollars pouring into the palace. The result, however, is a matter of contention.

The story goes that Laura Bush then went to USAID, part of the State Department, to get it to fund a conservation project at the site; not trusting local agencies, USAID approached an organization called American Near East Refugee Aid (ANERA) for help in implementing the project. ANERA is a U.S.-based nonprofit NGO providing emergency relief and development aid to Palestinian refugees across the Levant.[99] As in many similar cases of heritage projects, donors did not fund heritage per se. But while the sponsors of the project (USAID, or, in the words of ANERA's personnel, the State Department), wanted to further the American view of peace, for ANERA this project had different meanings. For ANERA, not too used to cultural initiatives, the palace project was essentially a means to create jobs, quantifiable by an amount of workdays that could compare favorably with results achieved in other sectors. For the Palestinians in MOTA and for UNESCO, building an iconic, monumental shelter over the palace's bath hall was about protecting heritage but also state representation, about creating the first Palestinian archaeological park and erecting a highly symbolic monument of Palestinian statehood—once more asserting, with a powerful, material visual symbol, Palestinian sovereignty.

At the time of my fieldwork in 2006, DACH and UNESCO were busy with this park scheme, which was to include as its centerpiece a modern shelter covering the 800-square-meter bath hall to protect its elaborate floor mosaic. To build the shelter, they organized a competition that saw many Palestinian architectural studios making proposals to an international jury headed by the

famous architect Peter Zumthor, who had designed several museums around the world and had been hired as UNESCO's consultant. The winning project, by architect Nadia Habash, was chosen because of its lightness and the ways it creatively respected the nature of the place, as opposed to other, maybe more inventive but also more invasive plans. For UNESCO Ramallah, this was an important initiative in terms of scale and significance; it was the one that UNESCO's cultural specialist at the time was most proud of, a project he loved because of "[its] ideas and courage."[100] It did indeed take a leap of the imagination to think of a Guggenheim-style plan in the Jordan Valley, which is largely fully occupied by Israel as part of area C.

The final project by Zumthor and Habash turned into something widely perceived as all but light and unintrusive: a huge cube made of a series of superimposed sheetlike layers, a too-strong and imposing statement viewed as postmodern arrogance out of place in Jericho's desert oasis environment. With its highly future-oriented symbolism, it was an expression of the exigencies of national representation and the PA. Yet many Palestinians and especially people at the ministry did not like the design; on top of this, financing and other donor problems plagued the project. The archaeologists hated the "heavy" design by Zumthor and Habash, but the larger problem was that it was going to cost an estimated $12 million to complete. Following the elections of 2006, the coming of Hamas, and the paralysis of the PA, the project entered into a "coma" for several years.[101] The block was lifted when Salam Fayyad set up a new, Western-backed moderate government in the West Bank, but when this happened, there was only one year left to finish the project, and it had long been left behind.

At the time of the writing of this book, the shelter was not yet built, and there were no signs that it will happen anytime soon. A small maquette of Zumthor's grandiose project was displayed in a corner of the archaeological site, but that is all. MOTA asked USAID to redesign the project, then used the funding to build an access road and fix the parking lot. The on-site museum was closed when I visited in 2011, and the site did not look terribly different from how it did in 2006. The bath hall's mosaic floor is still buried, and for now there is no money for such a massive, cathedral-in-the-desert endeavor.

Large-scale projects with statist scales, temporalities, and budgets are not completed in Palestine, except for in the gradual, informal, tactical mode ad-

opted by organizations such as Riwaq in its 50 Villages project. The Guggenheim model of aggrandizement and local development through gigantic icons of a transnational aesthetics does not work, for now, along the shores of the Jordan. The Palestinian nonstate not only fails in the attempt to represent itself as "stately" through a spectacularized heritage in Jericho but also looks increasingly like an NGO—in its way of working; in its broken, short-term temporality; and in its geographical confinement to the area of Ramallah, Bethlehem, and Jericho.

CONCLUSION

An international development expert who was involved in one of the multimillion-dollar heritage tourism development projects in Jericho once confessed to me that she had been quite frustrated: working with MOTA, she had long tried to "build a system" or a "mechanism" for heritage but never succeeded.[102] Only after a while did she come to understand something the minister had emphasized: "The value of small but tangible, material things . . . something visible all can grasp" like producing brochures, or informative films for tourists, and especially signage. In this perspective, she was quite proud of the large signs the project had erected at major traffic junctions throughout Jericho, indicating the way to important archaeological sites.

I had noticed this new signage during my 2011 visit to Jericho shortly before our conversation and had wondered about its meaning—after all, the signs pointed to deserted and undeveloped sites like Tulul Abu al-ʿAlaiq, located in fully occupied area C. At the time, I had taken them as an attempted performance of sovereignty. I found out later that the head of MOTA, the minister, had called my informant and the Palestinian team, then a bit desperate about the scarcity of output; the minister had said: "Just get the signs done!" While my development expert informant was arguing for the benefits and achievements of such "small steps," I could not but wonder whether the first person she was trying to convince was herself. I began to read this story as the parable of a performance of statehood that does not fully persuade its participants either.

Looking at the different inventories produced since Oslo and how they have been translated into specific visions and completed projects, it becomes clear that the heritage that actually materializes in Palestine is not the heritage on the

official list, that is, the heritage of the "state." Instead, the heritage that is currently being protected and restored in Palestine is that inscribed in Riwaq's alternative inventory, namely, the vernacular past of historic neighborhoods and traditional buildings. A comparison of the two heritage approaches shows that if the most tangible result of the PA's heritage work in its hallmark site Jericho is signage leading to nowhere, Riwaq has instead kick-started heritage preservation in the most important historic centers of the West Bank. Riwaq has laid the foundations for a "management" infrastructure that is now developing fast by combining conservation with job creation—by tapping into the rhetoric and circuits of heritage-as-development and engaging its ambiguities.

Heritage highlights trends that are similar to those of other domains. The tireless insistence on reproducing the imaginary of two autonomous and clearly demarcated social bodies, the "state" and "civil society," and the determination on the side of sundry actors beyond the PA to participate in a collective, if negotiated, performance of statehood conceal how Palestinian "civil society" clashes with but also works for, toward the state, or rather *at it* from without. They insist on their autonomy from the current "state" while working toward a better one for the future. The PA was born in opposition to an oppressive colonial state but now shares its space of government with a multiplicity of other actors—of course with starkly varying degrees of power—ranging from the Israeli military and the Israeli state to Palestinian NGOs and the donors and multilateral, international, and transnational agencies.[103] This multiplicity of actors and technologies of government produce frictions well beyond the most visible conflict between Palestinians and the Israeli military. If a nation-state has so far failed to materialize in Palestine, at least in the Weberian form, what has emerged in its place is a set of informal arrangements that are constantly renegotiated by shifting alliances of actors and forces. In the field of heritage, civil society organizations take care of the recent past, the focal point of the nation's heritage, while the PA ministry regulates an archaeology of colonial lineage. This division of heritage labor is the product not of official governmental acts or formal lawmaking or even any form of coordination but of the long absence of a comprehensive legal framework that is filled in by a set of makeshift arrangements, ad hoc alliances, and the agency of NGOs. The result is that a rather uncoordinated network of organizations and projects dealing with the historic environment are consolidating into (proto-)institutions.

When both the state and NGOs are transnational, that is, deeply embedded in border-crossing flows of monies, people, and ideas, the differences and boundaries between the two are shifting, mediated through highly conflicted practices. These conflicts have produced an unlikely "state effect" in Palestine. Narratives of confrontations, in other words, lend a semblance of unity to a disassembled set of institutions, practices, and processes. The PA becomes an agent through public performances and representations, but also narratives and fantasies mobilized by bureaucrats and NGOs alike.[104] Through these processes, the PA is made into an entity "above," as though it vertically encompasses all other social bodies and sites of power within the Palestinian territories. This effect, however, is not, or not only, the product of the PA's fragile performances of statehood, of the materialities it attempts (and often fails) to generate, or of the obsessive proceduralism of its bureaucrats—it is the co-performance of Palestinian NGOs, which are deeply invested even if they keep critiquing and ridiculing the "state."[105] While restoring Palestine's historic built environment, NGOs are busy rethinking a Palestinian state under construction that they actively contribute to by way of a creative, experimental institutionalism, and by creating and trying out alternative institutions like the museums explored in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 4

PALESTINIAN NATIONAL MUSEUMS POST-OSLO

Liana Badr, then a director of arts at the Ministry of Culture (MoC) and deeply committed to the project of creating Palestinian museums, told me of how in 2002 she stood in the middle of her office at the ministry, now completely destroyed, looking at the piles of smashed computers, desks, files, and documents, but also films, photographs, and even paintings.[1] This destruction reminded her of Beirut in 1982, when invading Israeli soldiers devastated the Palestine Research Center. This time, too, the soldiers literally shit on Palestinian culture: feces were smeared on walls, floors, and even a copy machine, and a room full of children's paintings was vandalized. This happened at the height of the Second Intifada during Operation Defensive Shields, that is, Ariel Sharon's reoccupation of Palestinian cities, the largest Israeli military operation in the West Bank since 1967. (The ministry of culture was attacked between seven and nine times between the end of February and the end of May 2002.) Soldiers' shit, then, symbolizes Sharon's "politicide," or the attempted elimination of the "Palestinian people's existence as a legitimate social, political, and economic entity" through, among other means, the physical destruction of public institutions and infrastructure.[2] Badr would also add the elimination of Palestinian culture and heritage.

Palestinian museums were a victim of this military operation, one of the many material consequences of the army's devastation and the new violence in the territories. A film collection intended to constitute the core of a film archive

and museum was destroyed during the ministry's invasion in 2002. The MoC's contemporary art museum project also foundered because of this violence: the chosen Bethlehem building happened to be close to a checkpoint and the newly built separation wall, so the area turned into a dangerous place plagued by frequent shootings. While the Israeli army might not have been the culprit in this case, MoC's collection of Palestinian art, including precious works from the older PLO collection, disappeared after the invasion, reproducing a notable pattern of loss of Palestinian art collections, and even entire exhibitions, that has been ongoing since the 1970s; this is a result of the vagaries of a stateless nation made unable to protect its treasures and heritage.[3] For Badr, then, 2002 represents a crucial year: "Before that we were sure that all the museums will work, not that they would stop and freeze."

A writer, filmmaker, and cultural operator, Badr has worked since her youth to build a Palestinian national future through culture;[4] as for many other Palestinian cultural producers, serving the PA in the 1990s was for her the way to achieve such a goal. But in the early 2000s, she was tired and disillusioned.[5] The realization of her dream looked ever further away. With the failure of negotiations and the onset of the Second Intifada, the prospect of a Palestinian state changed from being something people believed to be about to materialize—certainly within the horizon of the upcoming negotiations planned for over a few years—into a distant, unlikely future. Many disenchanted intellectuals saw NGO work outside the formal boundaries of the PA as a better and more effective option for continuing to work toward a new world.

This chapter traces the history of museums in the West Bank after the Oslo Accords, reading it along the grain of the disrupted, fragmented process of Palestinian state formation.[6] Similar to post-1994 South Africa and to other nascent polities' marking of a radical break with the past,[7] in Palestine there was a broad sense in the 1990s that a new heritage was to accompany the new state in the making; all sorts of memorial narratives proliferated in a newly created public sphere, especially on the occasion of the fiftieth Nakba anniversary in 1998.[8] Several major museum projects, including exhibitions focused on history and art, were initiated. But of the many museums initiated by the PA ministries, most can be said to have failed. The "State of Palestine" has not yet created a major national museum—a key institution of national representation. Several new institutions that look like a national museum—the Yasser Arafat

Museum, the Mahmoud Darwish Museum, and the Palestinian Museum—are either civil society initiatives or semi-independent foundations officially attached to the PLO, not to a ministry. State attempts to create a national museum have thus far proved fraught with difficulties, a symptom of both the PA's failure to complete its project of state building under an enduring occupation and its fundamental problem of (political and aesthetic) representation. An important note on terminology: when speaking of museum failures, I understand failure along the lines of recent theorizing in queer studies, that is, as the effect of structural conditions, rather than of wrongdoing and individual responsibility; most importantly, I see failure as a productive condition, one that can trigger inventive solutions—a "launching pad for alternatives"—and prompt the questioning of established models.[9]

Yet alternative projects have mushroomed: there is talk of a Palestinian "museum fever" that is gripping the West Bank in particular.[10] According to the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistic, in 2013 thirteen museums were operating in Palestine, nine in the West Bank and four in Gaza, visited by 81,000 visitors.[11] In 2017 the number of museums had risen to thirty-two, twenty-seven in the West Bank and five in Gaza, with 358,000 museum visitors, mostly Palestinians but also an increasing number of international visitors (18 percent).[12] Many of these museums and exhibition spaces, like older, pre-1993 ones, display collections of folklore objects, but contemporary art initiatives are gaining increasing visibility. These are mostly run by Palestinian artists and cultural producers, not bureaucrats. Several of these Palestinian cultural operators worked for the PA in the 1990s. But with the collapse of the peace process and the shattering of the promise the PA embodied—viable and democratic statehood—they set aside the project of creating large-scale national institutions, at least from within the PA. Instead, they have variously experimented with the format of the national museum—creating virtual museums, museums in exile, nomadic museums, or art installations staging national museums.

Over the years, their scattered initiatives have dovetailed into an emerging, unplanned infrastructure of museums, cultural centers, exhibition and art spaces, biennials, and artist residency programs. Based in the West Bank, this infrastructure extends transnationally, along the routes of a growing Palestinian cultural network encompassing the globe. This emerging infrastructure is virtual in the sense of something "imagined" (a quality like that of works of art)

and something "in essence, potentiality, or effect, although not in form or actuality,"[13] imbued with Latin *potentia* or (imaginative) power, containing the seeds of possible futures within itself. Or rather it is both potentiality, a projected future, and a partial form in the here and now. By creating alternative, critical national institutions, Palestinian cultural producers effectively participate in a form of "experimental statecraft" from without,[14] at the threshold of the state.

Historically, Palestinian cultural production has been deeply intertwined with heritage and memory making.[15] Artists actively participated in the reinvention of folklore in the 1970s and 1980s by foregrounding and reframing peasant lore into the powerful symbol of a renewed cultural nationalism. Post-Oslo, folklore is no longer so prominent a subject of Palestinian art, and museum paradigms have shifted from folklore to contemporary visual arts. One can still find ethnographic displays in cities and villages, organized by local associations and committed private individuals as in the 1970s and 1980s (see Chapter 1), but new kinds of contemporary visual arts, video, and installation exhibits have grown popular, especially among the globalized professional and intellectual middle classes in Ramallah, Jerusalem, and Bethlehem.[16] Issues of memory and heritage, however, remain key to these mediums of cultural production.

Such initiatives are the hallmark of an ongoing Palestinian cultural mobilization that is deeply transnational in character; it is based in Ramallah, the de facto Palestinian capital, and yet it stretches across some of the key international hubs of both the Palestinian diaspora and the contemporary art world. Art and these proliferating museums then are part and parcel of a thriving cultural scene—a practice of cultural resistance against colonization—that has grown more and more important over the years not in economic but in symbolic terms and as a critical counterpublic sphere (counter to Israel and the PA simultaneously). The people who make up this "scene," as they call it, have been accused—at times by their own peers—of elitism and detachment from the realities of the incarcerated Palestinian experience, of suffering from a "Ramallah syndrome."[17] But it is undeniable that contemporary art has become an important site of cultural production, with its own small but vocal public, providing a platform for a kind of critical consciousness of the state formation process for artists, intellectuals, and cultural producers. For Reema Salha Fadda, "the visual arts, plastic arts, literature and heritage sites . . . provide a platform to articulate and perform the stateless nation."[18]

Chapter 3 sketched the informal, makeshift arrangement that has given shape to the Palestinian heritage field, an arrangement that sees heritage NGOs not only as "challengers pressing up against the state from below but as horizontal contemporaries of the organs of the state . . . operating on the same level and in the same global space,"[19] namely, as part of a transnational, if deeply uneven, apparatus of governmentality. In the Palestinian museum field, the boundaries between the "state" and NGOs are similarly unstable: various NGOs and the PA share many objectives and a similar horizon of possibilities and expectations. Palestinian artists and intellectuals implicated in "civil society" projects are themselves fundamentally ambivalent toward the "state." On the one hand they critique its current instantiation, the PA, and often the project of creating a Palestinian state in the framework of a two-state solution, which many of them judge as failing (among Palestinian intellectuals, support for the one-state solution to the conflict is growing). On the other hand, most museum projects rest on the geopolitical imaginary of the two-state solution inscribed in the Oslo Accords (i.e., they cover the West Bank and Gaza) and even the much-restricted Bantustan-like territoriality of today—despite trying to reach out to diaspora communities. Moreover, a number of these civil society projects that were driven by a critical, counterinstitutional ethos have gradually come to resemble state ones. They have gone through a process of institutionalization (both monumentalization and "governmentalization") and appear to be metamorphosing (back) into institutions that look quite like a traditional monumental national museum, as in the case of the Welfare Association Palestinian Museum.[20]

National museums in Palestine are a "practical impossibility," as Jack Persekian, a key Palestinian curator, has argued.[21] Museums seem unfeasible and unmanageable under a military occupation and require a broad-based museum-visiting public, which is difficult to find in a conflict zone. Crucially, in Palestine there are hardly any objects to display and no national collection, as objects have been looted and relocated elsewhere. This impossibility, in other words, rests on a fundamental material loss, a lack of being. The majority of movable Palestinian cultural property is in Jerusalem or in Israel, which means out of reach for most Palestinians, or in the collections of international, colonial institutions such as the British Museum. Also, the location of such a museum is in question. As the quintessential sign of the nation, such a museum

can be located only in Jerusalem, the Palestinian center of gravity and symbolic capital. However, Israel opposes any kind of Palestinian institutional presence in the city that it has administered since 1967 as its own "eternal and undivided" capital, despite the fact that Jerusalem's annexation is against international law and various UN resolutions. To sidestep this obstacle, the PA unveiled plans to build a vast museum site in Abu Dis, on the outskirts of Jerusalem, but after many Palestinians harshly criticized this proposal, seeing it as an indirect recognition of Israeli sovereignty over the city, the project was shelved. Finally, a national museum is hugely expensive. It cannot survive without regular core funding and a kind of long-term institutional continuity that is extremely difficult, if not impossible, to combine with dependence on short-term aid.

And yet, as Beshara Doumani has argued, the dispersion and fragmentation of the Palestinian population make the establishment of national museums even more important as an "arena for the performance and reproduction of . . . peoplehood by Palestinians."[22] Palestinian civil society museum projects closely mirror the deterritorialized, diasporic condition of the Palestinian nation and the current suspension of Palestinian statehood, even as they are conceived as a corrective to that condition. They offer themselves as transnational platforms for a critical, cosmopolitan cultural nationalism aiming to reproduce the nation and stimulate institution building.

The stories of the many "national museums" told in this chapter point to a similar trajectory of Palestinian civil society museums growing from more informal, temporary, grassroots projects to fully fledged institutions that are to stay. These museums and initiatives illuminate a double movement, a dialectics of solidifying civil society institutions on the one hand and of failing or NGOizing PA ones on the other. Out of impossible circumstances, Palestinian cultural producers and independent curators have turned the traditional Eurocentric model of the national museum (a monumental building with a collection of treasures and a monolithic overarching narrative) upside down to build it back up in innovative ways. In this model, museums are sites where the official heritage is produced: for Althusser, they are one of the ideological state apparatuses.[23] They have functioned historically as temples of the middle and upper classes who, according to Bourdieu,[24] go to museums to refine their taste, rehearse their own distinction, and acquire cultural capital. Museums are also temples of the colonial worldview.[25] They are a product of the colonial age,

of specific colonial practices (displaying colonial loot) and colonial logics that still saturate contemporary institutions. Museums were built to represent the cultural taxonomies and hierarchies that legitimized colonialism as a "civilizing mission"—typically by counterposing the climax of modern European art to the so-called primitive arts or crafts of the colonized people, who were imagined to inhabit a lower level of civilization and as such to be in need of climbing the civilizational ladder. Given this colonial genealogy, how do Palestinians rework the museum institution to counter colonialism?

Impossibility and failures produce interesting experiments, if not without contradictions. I argue that these creative Palestinian ventures and experimentations with the format of the national museum open up spaces for representing and negotiating the Palestinian state and its attendant institutions; in so doing, they function as productive imaginings of the state-to-come as well as institutions for the here and now. I draw on archaeology, ethnography, history, memory, and art museums to explore PA projects as well as civil society initiatives such as the Ramallah Archaeology Museum, the Birzeit Art and Ethnography Museum, the Welfare Association Palestinian Museum, the Contemporary Art Museum Palestine, Picasso in Palestine, and, briefly, Qalandiya International.

MUSEUMS WITHOUT OBJECTS FOR A PEOPLE WITHOUT A STATE: THE ROCKEFELLER MUSEUM AND THE RAMALLAH ARCHAEOLOGICAL MUSEUM

Unsurprisingly, the oldest Palestinian national museum is located in East Jerusalem. It has long served as headquarters for the Israeli Antiquities Authority. The Palestine Archaeological Museum was founded in the 1930s during the British Mandate and renamed the Rockefeller Museum after its original donor by the Israelis following the 1967 occupation. While the very first museum of antiquities in Jerusalem was created by the Ottomans,[26] the Palestine Archaeological Museum, together with the Department of Antiquities and the 1929 Antiquities Ordinance, were the building blocks of the heritage management infrastructure set up in Palestine by the British during the colonial period. Post-1967, the Israel Museum, the largest Israeli institution of this kind located in West Jerusalem, incorporated the Palestine Archaeological Museum/Rockefeller Museum as one of its divisions (Figure 14). Many of the objects of the

FIGURE 14. The entrance of the Rockefeller Museum flying the Israeli flag and the flag of the Israel Antiquities Authority, 2013.
Source: Claudine Taudin Chabot. Reprinted with permission.

Rockefeller collection (coming from sites in Palestinian territory) have been transferred as essentially permanent loans to the Israel Museum (Figures 15 and 16), reframed as Israeli/Jewish heritage. Most prominently, Israel has claimed (and effectively exercises) ownership over Qumran's Dead Sea Scrolls, a collection of biblical manuscripts of immense value, which are displayed in the Shrine of the Book, the symbolic core of the Israel Museum, especially built for this purpose.[27] The Israel Museum is Israel's chief national museum, housing a large collection of archaeology and art, the cherished remains of ancient Israelite and Jewish history, and as such it is a focal point of Israeli national heritage and the Zionist narrative of Jerusalem (the other focal point being Yad Vashem, which commemorates the Holocaust). The site of many official visits and national ceremonies—lately, for example, of Barack Obama's 2011 temporary rapprochement with Netanyahu—the Israel Museum is the inverse of the Palestine Archaeological Museum.[28] PA ministries and Palestinian organizations have no control whatsoever over, nor even a way to access, the Rockefeller Museum or Israel Museum except as private tourists (if provided with a Jerusalem ID or special permit to enter the city).

The Rockefeller building is magnificent, designed by Mandate administration architect Austen St. Barbe Harrison to "blend . . . western and local eastern architectural tradition," according to the museum's brochure.[29] It is a modernist fortress with the air of an old Arab castle and arts-and-crafts-like decorations. The collection includes invaluable artifacts from some of the most famous archaeological excavations carried out in Palestine in the colonial period and up until the early 1960s.[30] In spite of such magnificence, it is apparent that the Israel Museum is not willing to invest much in this museum, to the point that the Rockefeller's rather basic website advises visitors to "wear warm clothing in the winter because the Museum is not heated."[31] Dusty and dilapidated, the Rockefeller's vitrines have never been renovated, offering plenty of material for an archaeology of museographic trends of the early twentieth century (Figures 15 and 16). Constitutive of the colonial worldview, an evolutionary paradigm organizes the display: at the Rockefeller visitors are guided from the first stone tools and burials to the invention of agriculture, cities, and art along the evolutionary lines of the grand narrative of humanity's progress toward "civilization."

To understand the making of this narrative, it is important to revisit the history of how the Rockefeller Museum came to be a public "national" in-

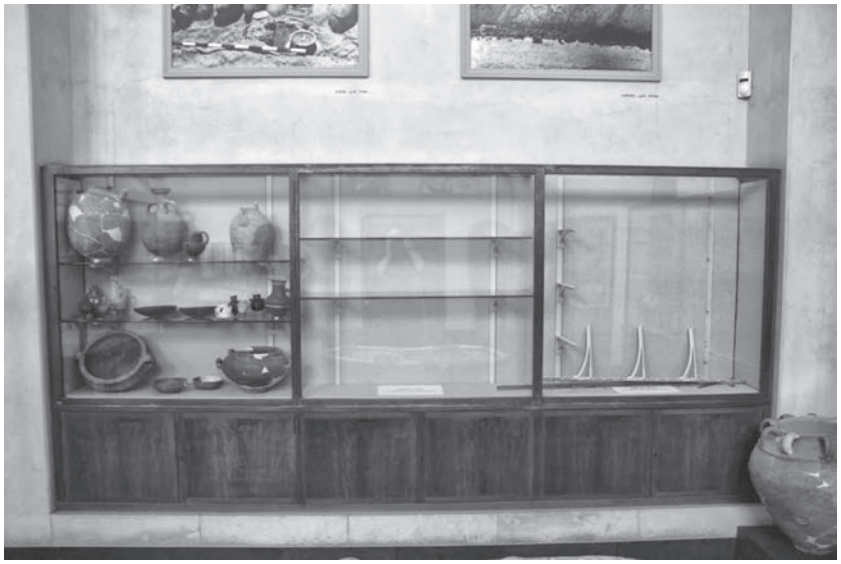


FIGURE 15. Empty vitrines at the Rockefeller Museum, 2013.
Source: Claudine Taudin Chabot. Reprinted with permission.

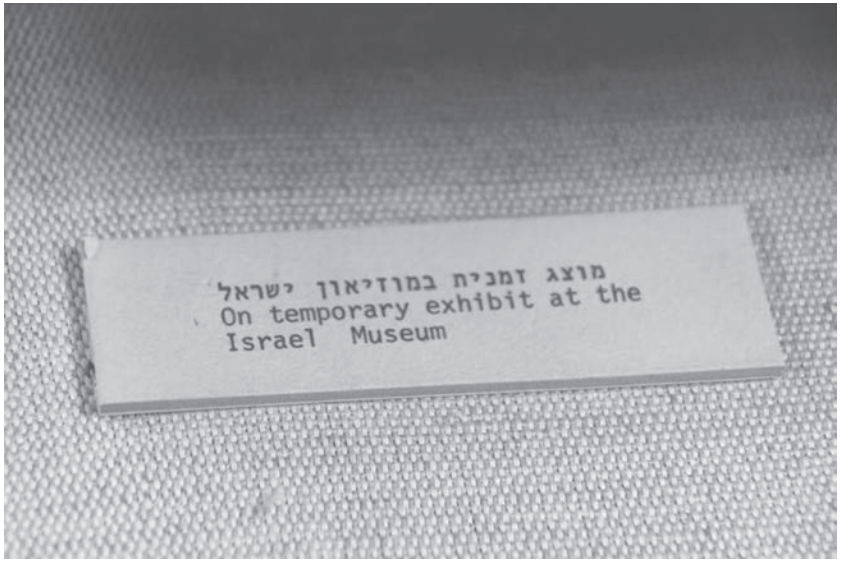


FIGURE 16. Label in an empty vitrine at the Rockefeller Museum, 2013.
Source: Claudine Taudin Chabot. Reprinted with permission.

stitution. The first Mandate museum, inaugurated in 1921, consisted of a few rooms attached to the Department of Antiquities and the British School of Archaeology housed in an old East Jerusalem building.[32] But these rooms were too small to store all the finds of the booming archaeological industry of 1920s Palestine. Then, the interests of the British authorities in creating national institutions, ostensibly to benefit the natives, intersected with the civilizational mission of a key figure in the history of Near Eastern archaeology, James Breasted, who also founded the famed University of Chicago's Oriental Institute with the aid of John D. Rockefeller. Breasted's mission was driven by the vision of the ancient Orient as the cradle of a superior Western civilization, which the oriental natives were allegedly too ignorant to preserve.[33] For him, human development went "from primitive savagery to a highly refined culture [the ancient Orient] expressing itself in marvelous monuments and works of art through a magnificent culmination to a decline which eventually resulted in European supremacy, and after the Sixth Century B.C. in European leadership of civilization."[34]

After securing Rockefeller's funding, Breasted first attempted to create a large-scale national museum in Egypt in the mid-1920s. But the Egyptian prime minister rejected Breasted's proposal because he perceived it as a capitulation of Egypt's sovereignty, chiefly because it involved placing the national heritage in the hands of a small group of European and American scholars on the museum's board.[35] When Breasted and Rockefeller shortly thereafter made a similar museum proposal to the British mandatory authorities in Palestine, they instead "agreed . . . wholeheartedly."[36] After some delays due to the explosion of the Great Arab Revolt, the institution opened in 1938. Colonialism was inscribed into every inch of the museum building and display.

Dispossessed of objects and entire museums, without access to Jerusalem and the Rockefeller, the PA set up its rather pale proxy in a Ramallah square. Of the many museum projects that DACH had been working on in 2005–2006, at the time of my main fieldwork season, the Ramallah antiquities museum was one of the two or three open ones when I visited again in 2011.[37] And yet this was not apparent from the outside: the museum looked closed and rather uninviting, with a few ancient grindstones scattered in a small courtyard to welcome visitors. I had to ring the bell to be let in, and when I signed the guest book, I noticed that the last visitor had been there five days before, even though

it was the end of August, high tourist season in Ramallah. The director, an employee of the Department of Antiquities, welcomed me very warmly.

Being the only visitor, I was toured around and had a long chat with the director. He kept on referring to his institution, DACH, and MOTA as the "ministry" (*wizara*) or alternatively the "government" (*hukuma*), usage I had become accustomed to from Palestinian heritage practitioners. He was a nice young man from a village close to Ramallah who had studied for his BA at Birzeit University's famous archaeology department in the 1990s and had been working for the ministry since 1998. Like many of his colleagues at the ministry, he had no training in museology but only in archaeology—also a function of the academic history and current offer of degree programs in the West Bank. At the time of my visit, he was eagerly waiting to earn his master's degree abroad with the help of an international scholarship; he was also hoping to learn English. What gave him hope was that other people in the ministry were then undergoing specialized training in Italy thanks to DACH's partnering with the Near Eastern archaeologists of Rome University. This collaboration, which had produced a number of joint excavations in Jericho in the late 1990s, had been interrupted by the explosion of the Second Intifada to be reactivated later on. I knew that the head of the Department of Antiquities, himself an archaeologist, had worked hard to put together such joint excavation projects and was very proud of international collaborations that he considered to be models of postcolonial archaeology.[38]

The museum was in poor shape—small, unkept, and rather empty, and this despite the richness of the archaeology of the region. Indeed, one of the persistent problems of PA museums is the lack of artifacts to put on show. As the story of the Rockefeller demonstrates, movable cultural property originating from Palestine is in Jerusalem or in Israel, or in the collections of international, "universal" museums. Most finds at the Ramallah museum date to the Byzantine period and come from the ministry's salvage excavations; a few come from looted sites and were given to the museum by the police. Also, the objects were displayed without labels; a chronological table hanging on the wall was the only explanatory aid. This table made no use of ethnonational markers such as *Palestinian* or *Jew*, and only the (historical) place name *Palestine* was mentioned—in a seeming effort to offer an objective view of the region's cultural history, it was a presentation devoid of presentist bias. While archaeologists

always mobilize contemporary social categories and draw analogies with the present to make sense of the past, this chronology was very basic and thin, reduced to a minimum of information, devoid of (potentially political) references to people today. This way of presenting Palestinian (pre)history is in line with the mission of Palestinian heritage practitioners, who pride themselves on promoting a "multilateral," pluralist heritage model different from the ethnicized past mobilized by the Israeli state.[39]

With the director I discussed the various museum projects of the ministry, which I knew had been struggling to see the light of day for many years. MOTA projects are mostly small museums bringing together archaeology and ethnography: some have opened for a short time only to then close again; all are staffed with one employee at best, like the Ramallah museum. At least one of the three planned Gaza museums was apparently completed in 2011, but the Ramallah museum director did not know who was running it; it must have been somebody from Hamas, as he told me, "It's not us." (Hamas had been ousted from all public positions in the West Bank in 2007, and the inverse had taken place in Gaza.[40]) In Bethlehem, the ethnographic museum of olive oil production could be counted as one of the (perhaps meager) successes of the PA's museum policy. But the story of the flagship PA-UNESCO project in Bethlehem—the museum of narratives, or Riwaya museum—to celebrate Palestine's intangible heritage (like the city, already on the World Heritage List as *hikaye* or women's storytelling) was one of excruciating conflicts and delays, including an inauguration that foundered because there were no objects to display.[41]

We also discussed the predicaments confronting his underresourced and understaffed ministry. He said that if they had more money he could have IT equipment, computers, and so on, and thus a better display apparatus. Museums have no operating budgets, he pointed out. In addition to the PA's chronic underfunding, heritage is not on the PA's national agenda or one of its development priorities; the PA itself does not have a budget for heritage—besides paying ministerial salaries. Thus, as with its other heritage projects, DACH's museums have been financed by directed, short-term donations from specific donors, thus forcing the PA heritage body to work like an NGO and its museums to lack long-term sustainability. For example, the museum attached to the Palace of Hisham in Jericho has been paid for in a piecemeal fashion through

various grants and schemes, ranging from an Italian conservation scheme in the 1990s to a Japanese-sponsored project in the 2000s; it was closed when I visited in 2011, officially for renovations.

In his 2008 MA thesis on how to reform Palestinian museums, Atiyeh Khateeb, a former employee of the museum department of the MoC and later director of planning at MOTA, states:

> There were more than 35 attempts to establish a museum in the Palestinian territories, most of them failed, most of these projects vanished, and some of them [are] still struggling in very bad conditions. Just 6 museums in the West Bank and 2 in Jerusalem are working, . . . but not as museums, if we depend on the museums definitions around the world, *these museums are . . . a sort of storage hall*.[42]

For Khateeb,[43] the main reasons for such failures are the rise of the Second Intifada and the ministerial restructuring of the early 2000s that allegedly reformed the PA following both local grassroots and American pressure. In the wake of this broader "reform" and bureaucratic "simplification," the MoC Directorate of Cultural Heritage, including its museum section, closed down. Its competences and some staff like Khateeb were transferred to (and officially merged with) the refounded DACH at MOTA, ending a previous bifurcation of cultural heritage management across the two ministries. Museums had been a priority for the earlier heritage department at the MoC, but this was no longer the case for DACH, largely staffed by archaeologists concerned with excavations and heritage preservation rather than display and public education.

Khateeb also emphasizes the need for a Palestinian museum policy targeting what he calls "audience development" according to museological conventions. He points at the PA museum projects' difficulty in developing key constitutional elements of the museum assemblage, collections but also a public. A public makes for the major difference between a storage place for art and artifacts and a museum. But DACH employees themselves seem not to be terribly interested in making the museum accessible to a broad public. Here, the legacy of the old colonial Department of Antiquities—and a colonial notion of heritage that centers on science, study, and preservation, clearly not involving the local indigenous public except for the upper Westernized classes—has certainly influenced such lack of publicness. With no outreach activities, the

Ramallah museum is very different from, for example, the Mahmoud Darwish Museum, a highly manicured memorial landscape that includes not only a museum and a monument but also a garden, an outdoor theater for five hundred people, and a hall for festivals and celebrations. Does the difference have to do with the popular dislike of archaeology, widely perceived as a historical marker and means of colonization and cultural imperialism, or with structural bureaucratic failure attached to a particular policy culture under occupation?

My reading of these institutions brings into focus a wider constellation of actors and forces. In other words, I argue that there is a connection between, on the one hand, the sovereignty deficit, the powerlessness, and the failure of political representation built into the foundations of the PA—which does not represent diaspora Palestinian refugees, or 1948 Palestinians living in Israel—and, on the other hand, its failure to produce aesthetic representations of the nation and itself, such as museums. The PA fails to create such spaces where Palestinians can come together and recognize themselves as part of the imagined community of the nation and where the PA can aesthetically reproduce itself as this community's legitimate representative.

For Khateeb, another main problem with PA museums is not only missing expertise but also written policies regulating, for example, the accessioning and deaccessioning of collection objects. He laments the lack of what we might call microtechniques that sustain museums' internal governmentality and make the museum legible to itself and to others. These failed institutions are thus invisible and illegible to themselves and to others. Indeed, "maybe" was the typical answer to my questions about whether MOTA museums were open and I could visit them. Nobody knows about them, or whether they are truly open.

With their long-standing mission to educate the public, museums have historically produced civilized, nationalized, and ultimately governable subjects—civil societies[44]—along with class distinctions and cultural capital.[45] In their lack of publicness—having both a public and public visibility—PA museums fail precisely at education in taste and culture, in consciousness, ultimately at the production of a Palestinian "civil society" distinct from itself, from the "state," as a public. Talking about a major project of the MoC museum department, the creation of a contemporary art museum in Bethlehem, Khateeb remarks, "The dream of [an] art museum . . . vanished, because nobody cares about art museums."[46] The PA museums set up by the ministry are spaces with

few objects (otherwise located in Israel) and empty of people; they are storage halls without much to store and preserve. They are simultaneously expressions of and platforms for the dialectics of loss, desire, and destruction that drives what Jacques Derrida has called "archive fever."[47] Originating in the archetypal loss, in the void of a stolen heritage grounding the Palestinian experience, Palestinian museums respond to this with an obsessive desire, a compulsion to make museums, to make up for such loss through them, to fill the void and to reconstruct the missing archive, however, without being able to stop the "properly infinite movement of radical destruction without which no archive desire or fever would happen."[48]

ETHNOGRAPHIC MUSEUMS AND SHIFTING PARADIGMS: THE KHALIL SAKAKINI CULTURAL CENTER AND THE BIRZEIT UNIVERSITY MUSEUM

The histories of the West Bank's museums tell of a dialectics between governmentality and countergovernmentality. The dilapidated Ramallah museum stands as a symptom of the failure of the PA to advance its project of state building, of its attempt to achieve sovereignty and produce state power. But other "national museums" have been made possible thanks to the creative practices of Palestinian artists and cultural operators. Museums as aesthetic representations—and early instantiations—of the Palestinian state-to-come are produced by NGOs that provide an alternative path toward the promise of statehood. Representations can also be anticipatory of their referent.

Most of the existing Palestinian museums and exhibition spaces house and display folklore collections.[49] These tend to be small institutions run by charitable societies, local associations, and private individuals. Many of these exhibits were in place well before the establishment of the PA, going back to the folklore movement of the 1970s and 1980s. Most prominent are the ethnographic museums attached to charitable societies such as Inash al-Usra in Ramallah and the Arab Women's Union in Bethlehem (Baituna al-Talhami Museum). As discussed in Chapter 1, these organizations championed an older form of heritage activism at a time when the revitalization of peasant folklore like embroidery, folk songs, and dances coalesced into a movement with strong links to political mobilization and nationalist resistance. These projects combined the idea

of preserving a rooted Palestinian culture and identity with social welfare and women empowerment—women got jobs sewing national flags and resistance motifs into embroidery patterns—and, in this way, reconfigured Palestinian heritage and triggered the proliferation of many small folklore museums in towns and villages.

Some of the folklore exhibits have been recently refurbished. One of the oldest Palestinian collections has been reorganized in a new display: the Dar al-Tifl Palestinian Heritage Museum, which at the time of writing constituted the only open Palestinian museum in Jerusalem. Attached to the famous Dar al-Tifl orphanage and school, the museum goes back to a colonial-period collection and an initiative of the school's founder, the renowned Palestinian philanthropist Hind Husseini, and was first inaugurated in 1978 in one of her noble family's mansions, to which it has been brought back after the building was restored. Significantly, this museum displays its magnificent embroideries and other folklore items next to a room devoted to the Deir Yassin massacre and the villages destroyed in the 1948 Nakba, thus foregrounding the trauma of the loss of this heritage and the urgency of its preservation—because it reproduces the connection to the pre-Nakba world. While the Dar al-Tifl exhibition follows the latest museological trends, it goes back, in what it displays and how, to a long-standing Palestinian museum format, which was examined in Chapter 1. Other Palestinian projects have attempted to rethink the older format—in fact, a problem for folklore museums all over the globe[50]—and specifically to rethink the idea of the preservation of patrimony (*al-hifaz ʿala al-turath*) as identity preservation with its conservative, nationalist undertones.[51]

Post-Oslo, new kinds of exhibits have grown popular, at least among the professional and intellectual middle classes: exhibits of contemporary art, visual art, and conceptual and performance art. In particular, this new Palestinian art scene has been influenced by art's "social turn" in an increasingly globalized art world, that is, the rise of a "social practice art" that aims to create social situations and spaces of encounters, if not outright new institutions, as opposed to beautiful paintings and sculptures.[52] It has also been influenced by so-called artivism and the spread of artist-run institutions across the globe and of forms of creative institutionalism critiquing, from within and without, traditional cultural institutions.[53] Ramallah and Jerusalem have a number of art galleries now. There are only a handful of art collectors in Palestine, and

galleries are mostly noncommercial, functioning rather as cultural centers that host small exhibitions, artist residencies, workshops, and various outreach programs. The most important cultural platforms are the Qattan Foundation and the Khalil Sakakini Cultural Center. Set up and run by one of the richest Palestinian families, the Qattan Foundation promotes development in general but also includes a major cultural and arts program. The foundation hosts a contest every two years to select the best young Palestinian artist; it is a showcase of emerging trends and a major event on the Palestinian cultural calendar. In 2019, the Qattan Foundation inaugurated its $21 million art center with galleries, artist studios, a library, a theater, and public gardens in Ramallah.[54]

Also in Ramallah, the Sakakini Cultural Center is located in a beautiful early twentieth-century mansion restored by Riwaq. Dedicated to the memory of an important national figure, the intellectual and educator Khalil Sakakini (1878–1953), this was originally a PA institution, created by the MoC in the mid-1990s to provide a platform for Palestinian culture and the arts. Because of the chronic budget problem of the PA, the center was soon transformed into an NGO to guarantee its survival by taking advantage of wider fund-raising options.[55] The Sakakini was among the first organizations to function as an art gallery and meeting space for the emerging Palestinian contemporary art scene, producing exhibitions by young as well as more established Palestinian artists. Since its creation it has offered a broad program of film screenings, classical and contemporary concerts, literary events and readings, performances, and lectures. It has also carried out important memory work, for example by organizing a number of commemorative events for the fiftieth anniversary of the Nakba—including setting up the first web platform dedicated to it, which has since been followed by many more—and two important memorial exhibitions to remember the *shuhada'*, or martyrs of the Second Intifada, which traveled to many other West Bank and world locations.[56]

The Sakakini was among the first to start an outreach program; it targeted West Bank schools, with the aim of building a wide, diverse audience beyond the usual suspects. Sakakini's then director, Rula Khoury, emphasized to me in an interview in 2013 that the organization was making an explicit effort to break through the small circle of Ramallah culturegoers by "reaching out to the community,"[57] mixing "high art and culture" with more *sha'bi* (popular) initiatives. They were busy organizing diverse events, including the exhibit of

a popular cartoonist and prisoner who had made his experience in an Israeli prison into a main theme of his work, and a concert of classical Arabic music that was to be attended by over five hundred people. Folklore is a *sha'bi* kind of exhibition, whereas contemporary conceptual art is not. Whether or not the Sakakini has broadened its public beyond a certain cultural and class profile, there is no doubt that it has managed to create such a public, unlike the PA museums. In recent years, when international donors stopped funding the center in the context of a general decrease in aid, and especially cultural funding, for Palestine, the Sakakini reconstituted itself as a participatory platform involving other Palestinian institutions, which work with it on joint projects or simply rent its space, and also Palestinian audiences via crowdfunding; in this way, "audiences" are "turned into producers."[58]

While distinguishing these two museum paradigms, namely, folklore or *al-turath al-sha'bi* versus contemporary art, it is important to illuminate their simultaneous connection to the specific genealogy of the visual arts in Palestine. It is not only that folklore has long offered Palestinian artists a powerful figurative vocabulary and set of affective iconographies to work with and reinterpret. Key Palestinian artists have been active in the folklore movement and in heritage preservation at large, as the example of Ismail Shammout and Tamam al-Akhal, among many others, shows. Working in the Arts and Heritage Directorate—note that arts and heritage go together—of the PLO's Information and Culture Department, this artist couple wrote about popular heritage and organized dozens of Arab and international exhibitions on the subject starting in the 1960s. Heritage organizations themselves have long been important cultural centers. For example, Ali Qleibo, a Jerusalemite anthropologist, artist, and intellectual, remembered Julia Dabdoub's Arab Women's Union in this way:

> Under the guidance of Julia, "Juju" as we all used to call her, the Bethlehem Women's Union became a cultural community center. At a time of great void, . . . decades before the Bethlehem Peace Centre, all book launchings, art shows (I mounted two art shows there), innumerable cultural activities, music recitals and bazaars were hosted there.[59]

This entanglement of art and heritage remained distinctive in the Palestinian context for years to come.[60] It is no coincidence that the main art museum that the MoC tried to establish in the 1990s was a museum of art and ethnography

combined, which the ministry was developing together with the Arab Women's Union.[61] While this project failed, another did work out.

Birzeit University's (BZU) Ethnographic and Art Museum is an institution that well represents the historical cross-fertilization of folklore, heritage, and the arts in the Palestinian public sphere; it is an example of how ethnographic museums can work as podiums for contemporary art and cultural production. The BZU museum bridges the two museum paradigms sketched earlier: originally an ethnographic collection donated to the university, it has become an important site for experimenting with exhibition formats and, more generally, cultural production. Tellingly, the director of the BZU museum in 2013, Inas Yassin, herself a Palestinian artist of the younger generation, was hesitant to call it a museum, despite the official name of the institution. She explained to me that she was calling it a "museum" so as "to make people understand what this is"—to make it visible and legible to her public—but she preferred to think of it as a "space for experimentation."[62] Reflecting on the changing role of folklore in Palestinian culture, the museum has produced a number of exhibitions thematizing this criticality, for example, on embroidery. Reflecting on its own stratified history, the BZU museum has solidified into an important institution and is becoming more and more institutionalized: in 2013 it was one of the few Palestinian museums that had codified policies and bylaws. This distinctive aspect—the mobilization of a spectrum of tools of internal governmentality—made a difference in the history of the museum.

The BZU museum started in the mid-1990s, when Vera Tamari, a prominent Palestinian artist and a university instructor in Islamic art at the time, organized a small display in the library to showcase Tawfiq Canaan's amulet collection. The ethnographer's family had just donated his collection to the university. For Tamari, the new museum was championing a new approach as the first "professional, real exhibition with proper lighting, a publication . . . labeling was important, the theme was important"; in short, they had "an educational approach . . . different from before" and quite unlike the projects of organizations such as Inash al-Usra.[63] Following this philosophy, in addition to the ethnographic display, the museum created a virtual gallery, that is, an online searchable catalog of Palestinian visual art, with images of key works and information about artists. In 2005, it opened in a new bigger space in Birzeit—including two large rooms for temporary exhibitions and a studio for students

of art courses—which is still a lively node in the Palestinian art and cultural scene. It has a clear educational mission targeting Birzeit's students. The museum director understands the student community as her primary "constituency" and herself as "serving the university";[64] however, the museum's most devoted public is artists and intellectuals themselves, and also the growing Ramallah middle class—namely, the public of the art and cultural events of the Sakakini and the Qattan.

For this group of people, reinterpreting the Palestinian "adoration of folklore" signals a new cosmopolitan sensibility,[65] which visitors train and consolidate by attending art exhibitions.[66] The Birzeit museum has embodied this critical, creative reinterpretation of folklore, as it has shifted its focus from the ethnographic collection and the virtual gallery to contemporary art. In the late 2000s, the museum decided to "go out into the public sphere" and pursue a less conventional curatorial practice, beyond display cases and indoor exhibits. A case in point is the series of Cities Exhibition, simultaneously a public art program and research project carried out each year in a different Palestinian city (so far in Jerusalem, Ramallah, Nablus, Jericho, Gaza, and Lydda). Intervention and local involvement are key here. For Vera Tamari and Yazid Anani, the curators of the third edition of the Cities Exhibition in Nablus, the project brings together contemporary visual culture and memory but is very much against "stereotypical representations of nostalgia and folklore": "Art is not considered in this exhibition as the reproduction of existing folkloric or contemporary aesthetics as much as an intervention in the city's sociopolitical domains. It is the challenge of bringing back the collectivity of experience to public space."[67]

MEMORY MUSEUMS: TENSIONS BETWEEN MONUMENTALITY AND MULTISITEDNESS

The memory of the Nakba has prompted some of the most important post-Oslo museum projects whose histories foreground the predicament and promise of combining anticolonial memory and the critique of traditional institutions with institution building.[68] The largest PA museum project ever, initiated in the 1990s by the old museum unit of the MoC, was the Palestinian Memory (Dhakira) Museum, which was to thematize the national founding event. This was a project the ministry was heavily invested in, a museum that was sup-

posed to be about memory rather than history, about the pain and suffering of the Palestinian people but also their struggle and "bravery."[69] The ministry had already started clearing up the debris in the old mansion that had been chosen as the museum location; it had once belonged to the Palestinian hero of 1948, Abd al-Qadir al-Husayni, and was in a village close to Ramallah.

However, the MoC was not the only institution planning a Nakba museum; around the same time, a major Palestinian NGO was working on a parallel project. The Welfare Association (WA), the largest Palestinian NGO financed with expatriate Palestinian capital and with some of the most prominent Palestinian intellectuals on its board—a development and humanitarian organization but with an interest in culture—was holding workshops to delineate its alternative vision of a national Nakba memory museum.[70] A number of key Palestinian intellectuals, such as the late Ibrahim Abu-Lughod, were involved in this NGO project, which generated an internal debate about what kind of memorial museum was best for Palestine—a debate that unfolded in the context of a national memory boom ignited by the anniversary in 1998 of the Nakba, which people could finally commemorate in the open. According to Atiyeh Khateeb, who was then working at the ministry, "The two parties [the ministry and the WA] had almost the same goals but the problem was the location of the museum."[71] While the MoC wanted to build the first branch near Ramallah and was planning other branches in Gaza, Nazareth, and Jerusalem, the WA board was uncompromising about the need to build a monumental museum in Jerusalem.

Both projects were shelved with the onset of the Second Intifada, also because of their similarly monumental costs, but while the ministry's project would never be resurrected, the noted Berkeley historian Beshara Doumani was appointed director of the Welfare Association Palestinian Museum in 2008 and tasked with producing a new concept after previous failures. He tells the story of the museum:

> The early iterations of this project conceived of it as a traditional national museum. That is, a major commemorative structure built around a single chronological narrative from ancient times to the present. I conceptualize it, instead, as a *mobilizing and interactive cultural project* that can stitch together the fragmented Palestinian body politic by presenting a wide variety of narratives about the relationships of Palestinians to the land, to each other and to the wider world.[72]

Major challenges arise when an NGO, even a large one, steps in to substitute for an absent but desired state. There are problems related to the scale and magnitudes involved (a major museum's costs range into the dozens if not hundreds of millions of dollars, namely, fully beyond an NGO budget). Rarely self-sustainable, museums are expensive to maintain and require long-term institutional support. Their operational time frames—or institutional temporality—are not those of a typical NGO, which works with a limited budget and short-term, project-based timetables. Also, in the Palestinian case there is a fundamental problem of representation: Who has the right to represent the diversity of Palestinian voices, especially in the diaspora? How can one NGO represent all Palestinians? The WA museum initiative and its defunct PA counterpart had fully exposed the many predicaments of building a nineteenth-century-style national museum outside the infrastructure of a sovereign state. Then, together with members of the board, such as filmmaker Omar al-Qattan, Doumani sought a way out by coming up with an alternative museum model, one more suited to the task.

Doumani and the board proposed a transnational museum: in Doumani's words, "not a museum-state as much as a museum-nation" made up of a network of transnational centers or "rings" as nodes of knowledge production and social mobilization.[73] For Omar al-Qattan, this museum model was to update the older, heritage-based concept, which was criticized as "conservative . . . and also very nationalist and patrician."[74] It would depart from a more traditional vision of a monolithic site of memory to envision a much more agile, cross-border institution made up of a "hub" and many "satellites"—a model similar to what scholars of memory have recently theorized as based on *noeuds de mémoire*, or "knots of memory."[75] These satellites were to coincide with the major sites of the Palestinian diaspora (for example, the first exhibition of the Palestinian Museum was held in Beirut). By the same networking logic, the Palestinian Museum tried to reach out to all the other Palestinian museums, to connect and encompass them, trying to "be inclusive without being centralizing" by following the "decentralized model of a mother ship."[76] Also, the Nakba was no longer to be the main and only subject of the museum, which was reconfigured to mirror and celebrate the diversity of Palestine and the many scattered experiences of Palestinianness, to celebrate Palestinian culture, as a "home of [many] voices" where none is "left unheard."[77] In short, such a new museum

was to be a true "embodiment of the Palestinian body-politic" in its multiplicity but also, crucially, to act as an inclusive and unifying platform on which to produce interconnectivity among the dispersed Palestinian communities and a new Palestinian identity.

The second director of the museum, Jack Persekian, began to work on an exhibition without objects, making loss and dispossession, so central to the Palestinian experience, into the driving idea of the museum—as opposed to thinking of the missing collection as something the museum had to hastily make up for or conceal. Indeed, the idea of a museum of emptiness was and is still promoted by several Palestinian intellectuals as the only possible way to adequately represent the (ongoing) Nakba and the absence of an independent Palestinian nation-state. For the opening of the museum's main hub in the West Bank, to coincide with the Nakba anniversary in May, Persekian, a prominent art curator and cultural organizer in Palestine and the broader Middle East, had conceived a participatory inaugural exhibition called *Never Part* (*Abadan Lan Ufariq*). Persekian had tested the concept before with artists, but this time, via an open call, Palestinians from all walks of life were invited to participate in the exhibition.[78] They were to send the museum the story of an object they felt a special connection to and with which they would never part. In this way, Palestinians themselves would contribute to the making of the collection and help the museum piece together a collective, plural, and truly popular history.

FIGURE 17. The Palestinian Museum in Birzeit, 2017.
Source: Courtesy of the Palestinian Museum. Photo: Iwan Baan.

Through such participative methodologies, the Palestinian Museum had set in motion the process of building a national public well before its official inauguration, working both unlike and toward a state institution.

The impossible national museum appeared possible in the late 2000s in the shape of a network and many knots of memory, and by way of a participatory history. But things have since changed, and the WA museum project metamorphosed into something much closer to the earlier 1990s monumental conception. A large museum building has been built next to Birzeit University, towering over a landscaped, terraced garden of 40,000 square meters. Made of stone and glass to form an irregular prism, the first phase of the museum, with a built area of 3,500 square meters, was completed in 2016 at a cost of $25 million, and it is planned to grow to 10,000 square meters within ten years (see Figure 17). The Dublin-based architectural firm designing the museum is also building the new Grand Egyptian Museum by the pyramids (apparently, the largest-ever archaeological museum), as well as a number of national cultural institutions across the world in what looks like a grand style of the nation-state in globalized times. Jack Persekian and his team resigned and/or were fired after disagreements with the board of the museum, and *Never Part* was never completed or exhibited; some Palestinians have criticized the museum as too close to corporate philanthropy, and also for mismanagement.[79] The empty museum building was inaugurated in 2016.[80] As this book goes to press, the museum's trajectory after the inauguration shows both an institutionalizing push and an ongoing experimentation, a dialectics of institution building and institutional critique.[81]

THE IMPOSSIBLE INSTITUTION, OR A HISTORY OF "GREAT MEN"

Another experimental museum in the region, Orhan Pamuk's award-winning Museum of Innocence in Istanbul, offers a blueprint for future museums. In the concept of its founder, it provides for a radical alternative, a countermodel to the large-scale, state-sponsored monumental institutions of the past like the British Museum or the Louvre. While the aim of the latter is essentially to narrate the glorious story of the nation and represent a powerful state, for Pamuk new museums should "explore and uncover the universe and humanity of the new and modern man emerging from . . . non-Western nations,"[82] that is,

focus on individuals, everyday objects, and the apparently banal stories these embody.

After years of failures, the PA did manage to establish two national, monumental museums, but only by way of a peculiar representational device that conflated the story of the nation with the one of (extraordinary) individuals—and by way of a peculiar institutional arrangement placing these museums at arm's length. (It is striking that something similar has happened with the project to create European museums within the European Union: despite multiple efforts to create "museums of Europe," as a kind of equivalent to older national museums, the few functioning ones were long devoted to the founding fathers of the Union. It is as if transnational museums can sustain the weight of their internal contradictions and the tension between national and transnational dimensions chiefly by resorting to narratives of individual "great men.")[83]

The Mahmoud Darwish Museum and the Yasser Arafat Museum opened in Ramallah in 2013 and 2016, respectively. They are similar in many ways, especially in their strong ties to a political power that blurs the boundaries between the PA and the PLO. Established by presidential decree, both museums operate as independent foundations that are, however, funded by the PA and run by boards of directors and trustees heavily staffed with PA politicians, ones who belong to Fatah but also to other factions and parties.[84] These ostensibly independent institutions have been criticized for being too close to the PA[85]—even as they claim a much broader, national scope. (Such ties and these institutions' dependency on the West Bank's political power became apparent when Abu Mazen, PA president and head of the PLO central committee, fired former minister Yasser Abed Rabbo from the Mahmoud Darwish Museum's board, following a falling out between the two men.[86]) The Yasser Arafat Foundation is headed by Arafat's nephew, Nasser al-Qudwa.

Moreover, both museums translate such closeness to political power into a monumental architecture and a specific aesthetics. Designed by the same architect, Jafar Touqan, the scion of a prominent family of artists and poets and a national icon himself, the two museum buildings revisit and modernize the heritagized aesthetics of the most quintessential Palestinian landscape, that is, old stone structures scattered across a terraced hilly terrain—an aesthetics that returns in the architecture of the Palestinian Museum. Both museums connect three different functions: museum, mausoleum, and cultural center. But they

are primarily memorial landscapes, built around the graves of the political and cultural symbol of Palestinian nationalism, respectively.

If their graves are places of mournful reverence and heartfelt commemoration, the museums are sites of learning that mobilize the emotional, affective power of material objects to communicate—appealing to the senses—what is simultaneously an individual and a collective story. One of the quotes painted on the walls of the Yasser Arafat Museum, significantly by Mahmoud Darwish, spells out the relationship between the two: "I don't decide to represent anything but myself, but that self is full of collective memory." If the Museum of Innocence uses real objects to illustrate a fictional, ordinary love story (namely, the one between the protagonists of Pamuk's eponymous novel) and to re-create the material culture and the embodied *Weltanschauung*, or the spirit of a certain period and a certain class, the two Palestinian museums take the emblematic belongings of two extraordinary figures to unify and tell the history of all Palestinians, of the Palestinian nation. Both museums make an effort to bring the nation together and to embrace (political) diversity as much as possible.[87] Powerful objects on display include Arafat's *kufiyyas* and bedroom, and Mahmoud Darwish's desk at the Sakakini and his handwritten manuscripts. The possessions, the material traces of these men in the spaces they inhabited, exude collective memory—the boundaries between the individual and the national story blurring to the point of indistinction. This intimacy, this bond between extraordinary and ordinary individuals, peaks in the display of Arafat's humble bedroom as he left it when under Israeli siege in Ramallah's Muqata'a compound, and the belongings of Arafat's bodyguards (an open newspaper on the floor, a jacket hanging on a chair) who remained next to him during the siege.

Particularly in the case of the Yasser Arafat Museum, this bond between hero and nation, through his guards, and the hero's martyrdom are made to function as the foundation of political power in its current form, the museum building connecting Arafat's mausoleum via ramps to the core of the exhibit inside the Muqata'a, namely, Arafat's besieged room, which is located right below the rebuilt PA headquarters. In fact, the "stately" architecture of both museums incorporates an ascending movement, suggesting a teleology, the temporality of a state (soon) to come and coinciding with the PA.

According to Lara Khaldi,[88] these museums contribute to state building (furthering the authority and legitimacy of the PA) in ways that are wide open to criticism especially because they bury the revolution while "museumifying" it: they turn the anticolonial struggle into a dead past that can be exhibited in the vitrines of a museum as the foundation of political power—and at a time when reactivating the revolution is needed more than ever. This same dilemma has been debated with regard to the Abu Jihad Museum for the Prisoners Movement. Located inside al-Quds University, this museum is the result of the efforts of two political personalities belonging or close to the PLO; devoted to a key Fatah figure central to the history of the PLO, it thematizes the experience of a crucial Palestinian political subjectivity, that is, Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails, represented as a *pars pro toto* speaking to a general Palestinian condition of incarceration and apartheid.[89] And yet what is the meaning and effects of museumifying the Palestinian struggle?

CREATIVE INSTITUTIONALISMS: KHALIL RABAH'S PALESTINIAN MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY AND HUMANKIND AND THE CONTEMPORARY ART MUSEUM PALESTINE

In the context of suspended, uncertain statehood, with its troubled institutions, a number of different projects, mostly by artists and cultural producers, have tried to give shape to Palestinian national museums through art performance and the form of the network. These projects share a number of characteristics: criticality, transnational mobility—often re-creating the nation on an international stage or activating international connections—as well as a "meta" quality; they are meta-museums or meta-exhibitions, exhibitions about the meanings of exhibitions in Palestine today. Like Pamuk's museum, they blur reality and fiction in a way that contributes to the building, as performance, of "real" institutions. Blurring repetition and mocking of its standard form, these projects radically dislocate the "national museum" by making it portable, nomadic, transnational. At the same time, they take it very seriously; in fact, they have produced the first instances of a Palestinian national museum and, more broadly, of a national art infrastructure. By mocking the museum format, they have sown the seeds of future national institutions: animated by

promise, they deploy a tactic that I have elsewhere described as "anticipatory representation."[90]

In a way, the first post-Oslo Palestinian national museum was a work of art developed through a number of international exhibitions and local shows, or "initiatives," of the museum. First exhibited at the 2005 Istanbul Biennial, artist Khalil Rabah's museum prompted visitors to ask themselves, "But is it real?"[91] The same must have happened the year after, when the museum was installed in the shadow of the New Acropolis Museum in Athens—a significant location indeed—as if to "absorb" institutional legitimacy by way of association with one of the quintessential European museums that is also a symbol of colonial loot (the Elgin Marbles) and ongoing claims for the repatriation of cultural property to its states of origin. Although it changes according to the context of each exhibition, Rabah's installation usually consists of a museumlike display of artifacts organized thematically in a set of cabinets. The visitors' movement across the installation space is also organized as if in a museum, framed by an entrance marked by a ticket desk and a café at the exit. This museum clearly mocks the traditional form of the so-called universal museum, those vast collections ranging from natural history to archaeology and art that constituted the core of the first national museums in metropolitan centers, often born of colonial plunder.[92] On display here are fossils, bones, and meteorites. But upon closer inspection, one discovers that these are not natural specimens but artifacts, carefully crafted by Rabah out of wood from the olive tree, a key symbol of Palestine and Palestinian nationalism. Playing with the nature-culture dichotomy and its confusion, this critical device reveals a key convention of colonial displays, and indeed their enduring legacy in postcolonial national institutions. According to critic Cay Sophie Rabinowitz, Rabah's museum "mimics and problematizes institutional displays of native culture" and "recalls 19th Century World Fair exhibitions where African and Native American indigenous people were put into 'authentically' staged settings to perform tasks presumed to be typical of their culture."[93] The museum mocks both the ways in which native people have been historically represented in the museum space as closer to nature, and hence as primitive, and the fact that museums have claimed to offer truths that are instead often cultural constructs.

But Rabah's objective is not simply to critique the museum form and its entanglement with the colonial project and the oppression of native peoples.

His project is not only one of critical representation—of mimesis—but also of poiesis, in the ancient Greek sense of creation and making. For example, the Museum of Natural History and Humankind has featured the exhibition *Palestine Before Palestine* (an exhibition within an exhibition within an exhibition), whose content Rabah claims to have come from the permanent collection of the museum, drawing attention to the meta implications of the move:

> Here this Museum presents an exhibition, "Palestine before Palestine" from the permanent collection of the museum, which tells people that there is a museum with an established, permanent collection, and yet it only exists as an institution within an institution, in the transient event of the biennale.[94]

This museum also manifests itself in a number of museumlike operations, (mock) rituals of the art and cultural world. For example, in 2004 it organized one of the first "art" auctions on Palestinian ground, the Third Annual Wall Zone Sale at Ramallah's Khalil Sakakini Cultural Center. Here, Rabah auctioned off objects collected around the Separation Wall in an ironic act of political protest at the devastations wrought by the eight-meter-high barrier that today imprisons West Bank Palestinians in a number of enclaves. Another initiative, hosted by the London Brunei Gallery, involved the reading of the over fifty thousand names of the owners of the old buildings inscribed on Riwaq's first Palestinian national inventory of historic properties—a counterpoint to the nearby display of ancient oriental archaeology from Gaza of the colonial Petrie Collection.[95]

Rabah's Palestinian Museum of Natural History and Humankind exemplifies how much contemporary Palestinian art builds on the constitutive Palestinian experience of dispossession and loss to turn it into a motor of creative memory—in Freudian terms, an act of mourning and reelaboration as opposed to one of compulsive repetition of the traumatic past.[96] But the museum also prizes the tools of documentation, interpretation, and presentation from the hands of the colonizer and stages them in the present. Although it is a traveling entity, Rabah's museum is a physical and a social space: it has exhibits and an audience, and it produces publications and organizes auctions, thereby blurring the boundaries between fiction and reality, between artwork and real museum. This is both an artwork and an institution; using Rabah's words, it is "an artwork representing an institution," made possible by its being housed within

another institution, "an institution within an institution."[97] Hence, this installation does not just represent a museum; it performs one, even if fleetingly. It does not simply enact a desire for independent statehood with its attendant institutions while at the same time questioning it; in fact, it works toward building such institutions by anticipating them—by sowing their seeds.

The preposition *before* in *Palestine Before Palestine* points to a crucial temporal dimension that is common to most of the museum initiatives discussed here. What I would call a temporality of the promise is typical of national museums, particularly historical ones, but it is amplified in these initiatives. Donald Preziosi has argued that museums work by manufacturing belief in the prior existence and independent agency of that which their objects are taken to represent, often the very spirit of a nation.[98] Moreover, they are marked by a sense of time that governs the relationship between museum representations and that which is represented. What Preziosi calls the mythological "uncanny space-time of museology" refers to

> a certain sense of time as *aspect*: time as a syntactical relation between events connected in a causal relation of *incompletion* and *fulfillment*. In this regard, the "past" of the artifact/relic is not uncommonly staged as an incomplete manifestation or a prologue to what has now come to pass in the present place of observation. Every artifact is thus the relic of an absence: of an absent past that at the same time *pre-figures* our present, which in turn fulfills, completes, or "proves" what we imagine the past imagines to be its future.[99]

Similarly, Rabah's museum is a device that produces a sense of incompleteness and anticipation (Palestine before Palestine) and calls for a future fulfillment. It is a promise of permanence, of the museum itself (it is, after all, a museum with a permanent collection!) and the entity evoked by its artifacts. This is not just a museum, though; it is an artwork representing a particular museum, the Palestinian National Museum, which does not yet exist. Rather than a critical representation of such an institution, it acquires the semblance of an anticipatory one because it projects an institutional future and creates an expectation and sense of necessity, manufacturing belief in the upcoming reality of that which it represents.

This temporality of projection, promise, and anticipation is further apparent in another Palestinian national museum initiative, the Contemporary

Art Museum Palestine (CAMP). The long-term goal of CAMP is to create a national Palestinian museum of the arts in Jerusalem, on Palestinian ground. Though the collection itself does not yet really exist—at present it is largely a promise, a series of artists' agreements on paper—CAMP is a more "real" museum than Khalil Rabah's art installation.

CAMP is an ongoing project that has changed over the years, the product of curator Jack Persekian's long-term involvement in cultural organizing in East Jerusalem. In the early 1990s, amid optimism and prospects for economic growth of the first years of the peace process, Persekian founded a private art gallery, Anadiel, in the Old City of Jerusalem. Although the gallery failed as a commercial enterprise and closed a few years afterward, it was reestablished as a thriving cultural center, exhibiting works by local (Palestinian and Israeli) and international artists and organizing various kinds of cultural activities.[100] In the late 1990s, then, together with a number of artists like Khalil Rabah, Persekian created the Al-Ma'mal Foundation for Contemporary Art, which has since become one of the focal points of a steadily growing Palestinian experimental art scene, setting up residencies, exhibitions, film screenings, and all kinds of educational and cultural initiatives.[101] The foundation continues to provide a meeting ground for international and Palestinian artists, including well-known figures like Mona Hatoum, thus sustaining the local art scene. Making this scene visible to the outside world, Al-Ma'mal has displayed the fruits of this burgeoning artistic production in the first yearly and later biennial Jerusalem Show, an art event that the foundation has organized since 2007 in the alleys of the Old City, in another act of reappropriating threatened space.

Such productivity also means that the foundation became responsible for a number of artworks—actual installations or, more commonly, deeds signed by their creators donated over the years by Palestinian and international artists. But professional know-how, funding, and institutional support were absent; Persekian's founding of CAMP was a response to such troubles and difficulties. In this context, a "surrogate home" had to be found for the collection to be conserved, but the search for one transformed the project's diasporic nature from a deficiency into a "lever for new opportunities and dynamic multicultural productivity."[102] Its function is not only to "tell the history of a place through the artists' work" but also to connect Palestine with other cultural realities,

providing a "nomadic site where dialogue, growth, and resourceful experimentation are encouraged."[103] In this way, a flexible, nomadic national museum was created with one foot in a Jerusalem NGO and connections all across the globe.

Written agreements to donate artworks to CAMP, signed by over thirty-five artists, are stored in a folder in Al-Ma'mal's Jerusalem's headquarters, and a small selection of these works are "guests" of the Van Abbemuseum in Eindhoven, one of the foremost modern and contemporary art institutions of the Netherlands. This small mobile collection is "in exile" because of the lack of a proper home in Jerusalem and the impossibility of a Palestinian national collection residing in the city. In the Netherlands, CAMP was exhibited both as a collection of artworks and as an art project in itself: the concept of a national museum in exile and at the same time the promise of a national institution to come. The installation, including an interview with Persekian, was part of a show on the politics of collecting at the Van Abbemuseum, thus emphasizing the explicitly political dimension of this imaginative cultural operation. In the interview, Persekian narrates the history and the purpose of the museum, which he describes as a "practical solution to several questions."

Under the current political circumstances, the "return" of the collection to the city—as the curator calls it—is deferred, mirroring the stalemate concerning the right of Palestinian refugees to return to their original homeland as well as the predicament of Palestinian Jerusalemites being targeted by escalating Israeli discriminatory policies and increasingly forced into exile themselves.[104] The project is structured around the "practical impossibility" of a national Palestinian museum being established nowadays in Jerusalem. It stems from the simultaneous need for such a museum to house a growing art collection, and for it to serve as a connective space of knowledge and cultural production, both an identity and an institutional laboratory. It also stems from a set of concrete questions and dilemmas. For example, how is a Palestinian institution to exhibit, circulate, and preserve the fruits of the growing artistic productivity and the current cultural mobilization in the territories under the present circumstances?

In the course of its development, CAMP's philosophy has shifted from the idea of a nomadic collection, traveling from host museum to host museum, to the project of a museum in exile.[105] For some time, it was based in one place, the Van Abbemuseum. This reflects the fact that CAMP cannot keep moving if it is

to build its own system of registration, cataloging, maintenance, conservation, and so on, rather than adapt to each host museum's methods and organization. Moreover, a museum in exile speaks directly to the contemporary Palestinian condition. For Persekian, having a host museum on Palestinian grounds under the current political circumstances would be the equivalent of "falling into a trap . . . betraying the idea of refugees." In his view, a national art museum "represents the national identity, it embodies the nation and its aspirations . . . [and therefore a Palestinian museum] cannot be but a museum in exile, a diasporic museum." A museum in exile responds to the problem of the "absence of representation" for the Palestinian diaspora, and indeed to the crucial dilemma of representation for the PA itself, a truncated institution that is hardly representative even of West Bankers and also fundamentally vulnerable to Israeli diktats. Ultimately, CAMP is a critique of the fragility of Palestinian national representation in its symbolic and political connotations—as well as a proposal for the future.

In the Van Abbemuseum, CAMP was exhibited as an art installation featuring six pieces from its collection. This is not a representation of a museum in a mimetic sense, but a projection, the prefiguration of a future museum: it is the anticipation of an impending institution rather than the representation of a preexisting one. This is a performance of a national museum in the sense of a performative statement, calling into being the very entity it describes. It is an action that invokes art to conjure into being an impossible institution.

PICASSO IN PALESTINE

In the Dutch Van Abbemuseum, visitors can also admire a painting by Pablo Picasso known as the "Picasso that visited Palestine." On June 24, 2011, one of modernism's key icons, the *Buste de Femme* (1943) was put on public display in Ramallah for several thousand Palestinians, Israelis, and international visitors who came to a room of the International Art Academy Palestine especially prepared for this extraordinary show. This widely covered event included a speech by then Palestinian prime minister Salam Fayyad as well as folkloric dances and performances, the object of pride but also derision by inhabitants of the Palestinian cultural capital ("Is there a wedding today?" was the circulating joke).[106] Picasso's 1943 portrait of his lover had been loaned to the academy by

the Van Abbemuseum and had arrived in Palestine at the end of an "epochal logistical challenge" in the words of its initiator, Khaled Hourani, artist and then academy director, and a long trip from Eindhoven to Ramallah, via a number of checkpoints, which itself received a lot of media attention. The transnational circulation of works of art for public display is standard museum practice, yet this "attempt to realize the ordinary" in museum business clashed against conditions on the ground and especially the exceptional and legally uncertain status of Palestine.[107] It produced an extraordinary journey that marked the social life of the painting and revealed something important about the nature of institutions and institution building in Palestine.

The point of this exhibit, called *Picasso in Palestine*, was to stage a Palestinian modern art museum—even if a temporary, transient, and miniature one. A story about the beginning of this project, which took at least two years to be realized, indicates both its predicaments and its promise. Reacting to the Van Abbemuseum director's proposal to lend the painting to Palestine, the museum's director of collections in the Netherlands is reported to have gone mad and to have shouted, "You can't do that! There isn't a museum [in Palestine], there aren't the conditions, there isn't insurance. It's ridiculous."[108] But the lack of a proper museum venue was not the only obstacle. As a nonstate, or not-yet-a-state, Palestine had not signed any of the international agreements and conventions that allow paintings, among other things, to cross international borders and to circulate.[109] Following two years of complex negotiations and inventive solutions, however, Khaled Hourani saw the project come to fruition. Despite the lack of official papers and permits, the van transporting the Picasso arrived in the gray area and nonplace (from the point of view of international cultural property treaties) that is Ramallah.

While revealing a fundamental lack, a legal and institutional void, the initiative was precisely about creating a semblance of such institutionality, evoking and prefiguring a set of institutions to come. For Khaled Hourani, what was needed to dramatically expose and confront the Palestinian institutional lack was a Picasso, as synecdochical representation of modern art and the modern museum institution in itself. When I interviewed him, he emphasized how *Picasso in Palestine* was first and foremost "about institution building . . . [about] creating a space and capacity for it [to host the Picasso]" in a place lacking a museum infrastructure, but it was also, simultaneously, about "questioning

these institutions, [about] revisiting them."[110] In other words, the initiative reproduced a modern art museum–like assemblage of objects, sites, and people, and in so doing, it proposed an exercise in imagining what a Palestinian museum could and should be like.[111]

Setting in place a temporary "national museum," *Picasso in Palestine* was a performative ritual of nation-statehood. At that time, rumors circulated that the initiative was actually a celebration for Prime Minister Fayyad, who had opened the exhibit with a speech about the successes of the PA in taking care and providing security for the painting.[112] Yet this particular ritual, this "ritual symbolization of nationhood and state power," differs from the classic ones discussed by Raymond Williams and Jim McGuigan.[113] First, as I have argued before, this ritual is an anticipatory one, in that the state that is the object of representation and celebration is not fully in place yet; it is a work in progress—state power, in this case, has to be produced rather than reproduced. Also, and this is crucial for the argument I have been exploring in this book, the agents of such representation are not state actors but a nongovernmental organization, an international institution and, crucially, artists and cultural producers. Despite Fayyad's symbolic presence, the PA did not have much to do with *Picasso in Palestine*. The project was almost entirely run from the Palestinian side by the Art Academy Palestine, then a (Norwegian-funded) Palestinian NGO. Hourani, another key figure in the Palestinian cultural scene, had previously worked for the PA ministry of culture, and has himself a long family history of militancy within Fatah, but *Picasso in Palestine* was clearly not a PA project. Or is it so? Hourani's life trajectory should be familiar to the readers of this book in that it is similar to those of other Palestinian cultural producers: after a long political militancy mostly in the leftist factions of the PLO, many ended up establishing, post-Oslo, their own NGOs and cultural institutions—often after an unsuccessful stint as bureaucrats of the PA, what some call the "project of our life" that deeply deluded them. Begun as an art project and a pedagogical experiment, the Art Academy has developed over the years into a fully fledged institution—in fact, the only institution of higher art education in Palestine—soon to be merged as its own faculty with Birzeit University. If the story of the Art Academy tells of the ongoing tensions between criticality and creative experimentation, and institutionalization, as with the Palestinian Museum, the *Picasso in Palestine* project stands as a symbol and telling tale of the intertwined though distinct, at times clashing, at times competing, at

times colluding processes of institutionalization and disaggregated state making in today's Palestine, one by the PA and one by a transnational, deeply globalized, Palestinian "civil society." And yet, as a friend and informant once asked me rhetorically: "Did we [NGOs] catch them [PA]? Or did they catch us?"

CONCLUSION

The establishment of a Palestinian national museum is still, essentially, an impossibility given the current political circumstances as well as the impossibility of producing and sustaining a coherent image of the nation under enduring conditions of fragmentation, apartheid, and thwarted statehood. What kind of nation-state could and should such a museum represent? This is an impossible and yet much-needed, much-desired institution. There is a rampant museum fever—and many attempts to set up national museums by Palestinian artists and critical cultural producers. All these projects share a mobile, transnational vocation as well as artistic qualities and an imaginative, resourceful criticality, by which I mean that they are less about critique per se and more about a certain way of "inhabiting a problem" while analyzing it.[114] In so doing, these projects have produced a number of institutional experiments that appear to be enduring and that contribute to a kind of experimental, creative statecraft. By instantiating statelike institutions and representing the Palestinian nation-state before it (fully) comes to be—by inhabiting a temporality of aspiration and promise—these institutional experiments help build the state in its current plural, fragmented, embryonic forms.

In a long interview with Palestinian curator Lara Khaldi and artist Yazan Khalili, Jack Persekian has laid out some of the dilemmas involved in his positionality, navigating the tensions of a critical institution-building project. In the guise of a conclusion, it is worth quoting at length from this interview.[115] The focus of the interview was Qalandiya International. This art biennial began in 2012 as the result of a new collaboration between several Palestinian cultural organizations that had been organizing similar events before but individually—the Riwaq biennial and al-Ma'mal's Jerusalem Show being the two most important ones.[116] Khaldi said:

> Let's consider Qalandiya International . . . as the coming together of autonomous cultural institutions [previously] associated with the ministry of culture in

> the 1990s. Now they are almost mature institutions that can work together and produce alternative politics. But don't you see a tension between those autonomous institutions and the PA? . . . 6 museums are being built, why this museum and archive fever now? . . . Aren't those autonomous institutions and the PA working on the same project: producing a State, or rather the image of a state?

Persekian's response is clear:

> The raison d'être of the PA and of political parties' existence is to create the state! What those other parallel structures [the NGOs] are trying to fulfill is the community that the state will exist for . . . they are going on parallel tracks, not opposed nor conflicting [with the PA], sometimes maybe disagreeing on the policies or administration of the resources of the country and its eventual benefit. These parallel tracks need to align. What we are opposing now is not the structure itself, but the way it's being administered.

At the end of the interview, Yazan Khalili asks Persekian whether Qalandiya International and the networking and institution-building work of many cultural NGOs is not "in a way serving the project of the PA." For Persekian, these projects are "critiques" of the PA and yet "in alignment with it." And he adds, "I really don't know if I can see myself as stepping out and proposing a completely different line of thought," which is not a nation-state project. Hence, Persekian oscillates between a familiar understanding of civil society (and his own work) as a reform project from below or at least from a clear outside and an understanding that blurs the boundaries between state and civil society to the point that the two "align."

More than a year after this interview, Persekian curated a (meta-)exhibition on Palestinian museums as part of Qalandiya International 2014; then, the Palestinian museum fever was fully revealed for the first time.[117] The idea was to bring all Palestinian museums together to coordinate activities—yet another example of the recent tendency of Palestinian civil society organizations to network and create joint infrastructures. Several Palestinian museums, however, refused to participate and strongly contested this exhibition, with one museum director loudly protesting the way in which Persekian's Palestinian Museum was "objectifying" all others by putting them on display. Other cultural producers mentioned to me how the Palestinian Museum was "devouring" all others.

It was thus not only the museum's project to produce a new hegemonic meaning of Palestinian identity that antagonized other institutions; it was also its attempt to "encompass" them and to pull them under its umbrella, in other words, to act like a state institution. Persekian had himself said in the earlier interview that he understood his role in terms similar to those of a minister of culture, somebody "who shapes this economy of cultural practice," somebody doing cultural policy.

"Civil society" museums like the Palestinian Museum are becoming more institutionalized—housed in larger buildings, endowed with larger and more formalized administrations and governance structures, coordinating with similar bodies, and so on—while other sites experiment with exhibition formats as well as models of expertise and participation. They struggle to balance a fundamental tension between a push to establish authority (as institutionality, as authoritative museum voice) and a push to challenge such authority, and to promote radical, democratic practices. The paradox of these NGO initiatives is that the more they succeed and solidify, the more they turn statelike, producing the image (or for some critics just the illusion) of a state-to-come. This tension animates heated debates and triggers changes of directors, the firing of museum boards, and similar internal conflicts. Some cultural operators fear that this creative institutionalism will very soon lose steam and develop into a "stultifying bureaucracy."[118] Ultimately, these preoccupations, debates, and outright conflicts speak to the very meanings of the museum institution in Palestine today, which in turn speaks to global dilemmas: What does it mean to museumify something that is not past, not dead, even, at times, not yet existing? If museums were created to celebrate authority, is it possible to recode them to challenge and reimagine such authority? Or, to use Audre Lorde's famous formulation, can Palestinians use the "master's tool" (museums as colonial institutions) to demolish the colonial "master house"?

CONCLUSION

CULTURAL GOVERNMENTALITY AND ACTIVIST STATEHOOD

When I asked one of my chief informants, a West Bank architect and heritage practitioner, to help me identify interlocutors who might give me a sense of Hamas's heritage policies, his initial response was full of disdain. "For them, heritage is an air-conditioned mosque!" he replied. This idea of Islamist practices of culture and heritage was common among transnational experts. One story in circulation told of Balkan mosques being restored with Saudi funding and turned into something completely "new." My informant used these anecdotes to underscore the proper relationship between heritage and modernity, and how the rules of the heritage game as he understood it differed profoundly from Islamist organizations. In his view, Islamist heritage combines a consumerist materialism with religious conservatism, utterly disregarding the past as it actually was. Mecca presents a good example of such disregard: its historical sites and cultural landmarks as well as the local places and livelihoods that surround the Grand Mosque have been destroyed to make way for a major, multibillion-dollar overhaul of the city's physical, cultural, social, and economic landscape, to align it with new visions of the Saudi modern.[1]

During my fieldwork, I had already noticed similar tensions among differing ideas of heritage. I had seen professional heritage practitioners clash with local groups over how to restore mosques. In particular, these conflicts focused on whether to expose ancient "original" architectonic elements (this is what experts recommended) or to repaint walls and build entirely new features—a

matter of aesthetics but also of maintaining buildings' religious function. Also, the professional heritage practitioners with whom I worked in the West Bank did not share the approach of the architects, restorers, and artisans working on the restoration of the Haram al-Sharif. These latter professionals make up a committee employed by the Jordanian Awqaf (religious endowments) department that runs the entire site. The Haram's restorers "replace" missing or damaged parts of the old architectural fabric; to them, in avoiding modern reconstruction, heritage NGOs deal with Islamic heritage in a "foreign" way.[2] One mode of heritage practice is concerned with preserving religious and social uses; another privileges physical authenticity and historical value in a manner more aligned with the transnational expert heritage discourse. Yet I also witnessed how proponents of these two differing modes of conservation could be allies. For example, in Nablus both the mayor, who had close ties to Hamas, and UNESCO had long tried to evict a chicken seller from the *khan* they were jointly renovating as a tourist hub, on the grounds that the shop was not "heritage" enough. In the end, despite this alliance against him, the smart chicken seller turned himself into a heritagized subject, the bearer of a traditional trade, and eventually even came to symbolize the renovation project.

My informant's attitude changed from disdain to respect, however, when he mentioned the heritage work of a religious organization called the al-Aqsa Foundation, which restores the remains of Palestinian cultural property, and especially Palestinian sacred places, all over what is today Israel. I had long searched unsuccessfully in Israel—what Palestinians call "1948 Palestine" or the "inside" (*dakhil*)—for partner organizations similar to those I was working with in the West Bank. Most of my West Bank informants had always held that there was nobody on the other side doing similar kinds of heritage work, at least to their knowledge—thus highlighting the success of Israeli policies in separating neighboring communities located just a few kilometers apart from each other on either side of the Green Line.[3] Clearly, my expert informant perceived the al-Aqsa Foundation as very different from his own organization. He was very careful when talking about the foundation; while admiringly recounting its quasi-heroic heritage endeavors—particularly those of Shaykh Raed Salah, its charismatic leader—my informant made a point of specifying that he knew nobody at the foundation and he did not want his name to be associated with it.[4]

Despite the vast ideological and professional differences separating them, my informant nevertheless admired the work of the foundation for the way it created "facts on the ground" through heritage. In mobilizing people to defend Palestinian lands and sites, it helped prevent further encroachment on them by Israeli authorities. My informant recalled how the shaykh, among other famous actions, brought a thousand people to restore the stalls of the Aqsa Mosque in 1998–1999 when they were threatened by Israeli works. As the story goes, the restoration was completed in two days. The shaykh is still popular among Palestinians and commands great respect and popularity well beyond religious people as a champion of *sumud* and steadfast defender of Muslim holy places in Jerusalem and in Israel. Under the campaign slogan "al-Aqsa is in danger," he has been at the forefront of the resistance to what Palestinians see as relentless attacks by settlers and the religious-nationalist Israeli right, backed by the government. He has opposed Israeli attempts to gain greater access to the Haram al-Sharif, which is for Jews the Temple Mount and the site of the ancient Jewish temple that religious extremists want to rebuild. At the time of my fieldwork in 2011, the shaykh was celebrated for bringing people to Hebron every Saturday to defend the shrine, and the Palestinian presence there, from the settlers' encroachment. The Israeli government has charged him with inciting violence and racism, and considers him a threat to national security, fearing that his popular Islamic movement might turn into a mass social movement.[5]

In this book I have traced a shift in heritage practices in the West Bank from folklore to urban regeneration and museums, and from resistance to resistance-and-development. Earlier organizations mobilizing heritage to preserve Palestinian identity and to produce militant subjects have been supplanted by newer ones adopting a mixed language and practices to help develop the Palestinian state-to-come and produce civilized, empowered citizens. In Israel, where any kind of Palestinian institution building is thwarted, the shaykh and his Islamic organization have reactivated the older resistance heritage model. The al-Aqsa Foundation and its heritage work became the symbol of the Northern Movement, formed in 1996 when the Islamic Movement split over the question of taking part in Israeli elections. The northern wing or branch of the movement, led by Shaykh Raed Salah, opposed participation. When it separated from the southern wing, it took control of a number of Islamic relief institutions and other associations: the al-Aqsa, institutions for the care of the

elderly and the youth, others supporting Islamic literature and poetry and Islamic media, and even the university-like College of Islamic Sciences.

Founded by the shaykh in 2001 to replace an older organization that had sided with the Southern Movement, the foundation has as its main goal the protection of the Muslim holy places in Jerusalem and other *awqaf* properties, particularly mosques and cemeteries, across Israel. These are located in the so-called mixed cities like Ramla and Lod but mostly in the *qura al-muhajjara*, the hundreds of Palestinian villages depopulated in 1948. Now called Mu'assasat al-Aqsa li-l-Waqf wa-l-Turath (Aqsa Foundation for Waqf Properties and Heritage), it has been the target of a number of court cases, which have even forced it to change its name.

The ruins of these depopulated Palestinian villages, now adjoined by newer kibbutzim or Israeli-Jewish villages, are easy prey for different forms of appropriation. Per Israeli law, the Islamic Waqf Administration has "left" the country, so its lands are administered as absentee property by the state, that is, by the Israeli Land Authority (ILA). In these *waqf* lands, the foundation does ongoing maintenance work, cleaning, repainting, restoring, and rebuilding the many old, decaying Palestinian mosques and cemeteries. In addition, it has a number of major conservation projects at some of the most important mosques of the country. The foundation has its own small staff—a handful of engineers, lawyers, journalists, and administrators—but its force is made up of the many volunteers who devote quite a lot of their time to its mission. For example in 2011, over two hundred volunteers worked with the foundation in Ramla to restore the Umayyad mosque, the Masjid al-Kabir.

The foundation uses two other tactics of resistance to preserve Palestinian *awqaf* in Israel. One is surveying and mapping, and carrying out historical research, in other words, documenting what it firmly believes to be Palestinian cultural properties. By combining restoration and documentation of Palestinian cultural properties to stop expropriation, the al-Aqsa Foundation markedly articulates a practice of heritage as claim of ownership and performance of territorial control in a way similar to the work of the HRC in Hebron. Also like the HRC, the foundation advances lawsuits in Israeli courts to stop construction projects that target the lands of Muslim (and Christian) cemeteries; despite its overall disengagement from Israeli policy and institutions, the foundation tries to use Israeli law to stop what it sees as *intihak* (or violation), for example by

resorting to the Israeli antiquities law or the Islamic law that does not allow for building on cemeteries.[6]

Although the al-Aqsa is a religious organization tied to the Islamic Movement, the engineer I interviewed emphasized that they also restore churches—just as Shaykh Raed Salah himself does in his writings. In the al-Aqsa engineer's view, Palestinian Christians do not have "representatives" in Israel, and therefore it is the foundation's duty to take care of their properties too, in addition to those of Muslims.[7] He framed what he called his "mission" in the terms of a cultural nationalism shared by colleagues across the Green Line. He stated several times that the mission of the al-Aqsa is to "save Palestinian and Arab heritage," which is the heritage of a "people," both Christian and Muslims; this is to show that "there is a [Palestinian] history and civilization" in Israel and to "say to the world that there were people, Muslims and Christians . . . Palestinian people who lived here." He further stressed to me that the al-Aqsa work is scientific and professional, but it also has a key political dimension: the struggle against the destruction and expropriation of Palestinian lands and properties in Israel and more broadly against the set of policies enacted by the Israeli state to "Judaize" the country.[8] Preserving the national Palestinian heritage is a crucial political project because, through this work, the foundation contributes to the strategic objective of the Islamic Movement, namely, preserving Palestinian identity in Israel.

According to the ideology of the Northern Movement and the shaykh, the reason for running these different organizations, including the Aqsa, is to build an integrated "self-reliant society" independent of and thus free from pressure by the Israeli state.[9] The shaykh calls this project *al-Mujtama' al-Islami*, or the Islamic community, and his idea is to create this community by rediscovering traditional Islamic institutions such as the *waqf* (endowment) and *zakat* (charity).[10] The movement does not accept non-Muslim donations because it believes that foreign money does not come "without a negative price," and that accepting it involves submitting oneself to a foreign agenda and thus a loss of independence.[11] In other words, the al-Aqsa Foundation is part of a project of disengagement from the Israeli state apparatus that seeks to create an independent community with its own alternative, parallel institutions, in a way similar to what happened in the territories during the First Intifada. And as in the First Intifada, enthusiastic volunteers make up the workforce and carry out the mission of the foundation.

The work of the Palestinian NGOs discussed in this book is related to and yet quite different from the al-Aqsa heritage. For Islamists and professionals alike, "heritage" is chiefly historic buildings and folklore, which materialize and preserve the legacy of the world lost in 1948 with the creation of the State of Israel on the ruins of Palestinian communities and the Nakba. They target the same material remains, the built heritage of historic Palestine. But West Bank NGOs operate under mixed, transforming conditions, namely, in a context where a Palestinian quasi-state and the whole apparatus of development supporting it subsist while colonization continues unabated. NGOs tap into transnational expert languages and networks of development and "UNESCOized" heritage and into transnational money flows.[12] West Bank civil society organizations are not religious but secular-nationalist and professionalized, and they mobilize a heritage based on developmentalist expertise rather than militancy, although this latter legacy is still deeply felt. They have developed the Palestinian tradition of activist preservation in novel ways because they engage simultaneously with opposing colonialism and building statelike institutions.

In addition to preserving Palestinian identity and reclaiming Palestinian lands, West Bank organizations want to ameliorate the living conditions of historic districts' residents and villagers, and so intervene in the spaces and habits of everyday life. In so doing—and in the context of the PA's structural weakness—they experiment with a range of modes of institution building and governance, from a kind of resourceful "humanitarian government,"[13] as in Hebron, to what I have called creative institutionalism and statecraft, as in the case of Riwaq or some museum projects. They resemble what Jim Ferguson has called "left arts of government."[14] These NGOs understand their mission as part of a larger nation- and state-building process to which they actively contribute, even though this understanding leads them to butt heads with both the parallel project of the PA and the reality of ongoing colonization. They strive to diffuse a new citizen awareness that has concern for the public good and the commons as a chief value. Heritage here serves an emancipatory project of anticolonial nation-state building (the "state" element of that term is key as well), advancing claims to the ownership and control of lands (to national sovereignty therein) and to nation-statehood, by activating transnational connectivities. Reaching out to transnational networks and frameworks of meaning is, for West Bank

organizations, a way to put Palestine on the global map of nation-states and to position it within global taxonomies of cultural value (e.g., the World Heritage List).

Palestinian heritage NGOs "govern" in at least two different ways. First, by standing in for fragile or even absent PA institutions, and by taking care of a crucial part of the national heritage that was not, until recently, protected by national legislation, NGOs and semigovernmental organizations have articulated an informal, unofficial infrastructure of heritage preservation and cultural management in the West Bank. This includes national and local management levels, with officers, documents, charters, manuals, guidelines, inventories, and so on. Good examples of this are the heritage units that Riwaq established in local government and municipalities, as well as Riwaq's comprehensive historic heritage inventory for Palestine. This unofficial infrastructure is undergoing a process of institutional consolidation, though it remains separate from the PA, also under donors' pressure: this has happened by way of organizations networking, coordinating, and partnering with each other, such as with the Palestinian biennial, Qalandiya International.

Second, since Oslo some heritage organizations have gradually developed into institutions of local government, even informal municipalities, especially in cities where the PA has limited or no territorial control, such as Jerusalem and Hebron. In such cases, they fulfill a multiplicity of tasks under the banner of heritage. As they inform people's identification and physical and affective bonds with place, by remaking urban spaces into heritage, these NGOs have a lot to do with servicing and managing populations, with the day-to-day regulation of their lives. By deploying an "accented" version of the transnational heritage discourse,[15] Palestinian organizations turn Palestinian cities into heritage landscapes, inscribed in a narrative of vernacular cosmopolitanism and civility; they turn them into sites that are also much "tidier," more governable than what was there before. And yet this regulation proceeds along contradictory lines and logics, at once globalizing and localizing, politicizing and depoliticizing, empowering and disempowering.

Palestine is a powerful name for, a claim to, what is a very complex, multilayered, field of governance spanning multiple national and geopolitical borders, and multiple scales. If the theory that Israel/Palestine is essentially one (apartheid) state has much truth to it,[16] it is also true that this one state contains

many more shifting "states" within it. The Palestinian areas in other words are being governed by "a state-which-is-not-one" of multiple projects and forces working toward (or against) statehood. Stories like those of Riwaq and the HRC show how foreign-funded NGOs do not simply carry out traditional state functions in heritage but even build up dedicated apparatuses that are at times complementary but also alternative to and even competitors of the PA ones. At the same time, the "state" agencies of a nonsovereign PA work and "think" like an NGO, that is, operate according to NGO logics, because this guarantees Palestinian institutions minimum viability; the NGO logic is forced on them by the very predicament of a temporary mandate, as the case of the Department of Antiquities highlights.

Palestinian NGOs have developed a novel practice of heritage by articulating globally circulating policy ideas of heritage as development with an older Palestinian tradition of activist, grassroots heritage. Coupled with the interrupted trajectory of Palestinian statehood through the PA and its fundamental power deficit, the heritage mission "to take care of the human beings and not just of heritage," to "improve livelihoods" and to guarantee people's well-being, translates into a set of institutional experiments concerned with far more than historic buildings. In regulating and governing cultural heritage, these organizations end up governing by it, or governing by culture. The idea of cultural governmentality emphasizes the new salience of cultural heritage within new modes of urban government, as well as its promises and predicaments.

I was confronted with the hopes and desires people invest in heritage at the Palestinian art biennial, Qalandiya International, in 2016. Riwaq, among the event's organizers, set up a panel to discuss its own work in the villages of the West Bank, especially what its members call "the problem of sustainability." Many restored buildings end up not being used by the local communities they were restored for and given to in the first place. The discussion was well attended, with participants introducing themselves as bureaucrats, architects, and engineers, many working in a PA ministry or Palestinian municipality. While a few participants in the long and lively discussion suggested that more businesses and a businesslike logic be brought to the rehabilitation process, nearly everyone insisted on more participation and local involvement.

I had heard similar comments before, but much of the discussion bewildered me. These calls for local involvement came from people working in min-

istries and municipalities, that is, in the institutions that themselves should hear the voice of the majority and translate it to policy—and they were critiquing an NGO. Moreover, these experts and bureaucrats had what I found unrealistically grand expectations of heritage projects: that heritage could cure all the localized ills of Palestinian society and be a kind of panacea, an all-powerful remedy. Ultimately, many of those in attendance seemed to expect NGO-driven heritage to engender democracy under occupation. I felt that these were misplaced expectations, even if powerful, pressing, important ones—and I was reminded of how Basma and Nura in the Old City of Hebron had, through heritage, claimed their right to the city, that is, claimed access to the means and some power to shape their living environment.[17]

The Palestinian example is a distinctive and peculiar one; nonetheless, studying its unusual actors, fields, and modes of government illuminates an anthropology of governance. Its multiplicity of power brokers; its disassembled, disaggregated quality; and its reliance on extensive networks of transnational knowledge, money, and people all complicate the binary of Israeli rule and Palestinian resistance. To call such forms of government an apparatus would give them a consistency, a coherence, a stability, the idea of a system—which is not what they are or how they link up. Rather, relationships between actors are deeply asymmetric, shifting, and informal, stretching across a transnational field.

Ilana Feldman has illuminated how Palestinian bureaucrats enacted a "tactical" style of government, "focusing more on coping with current conditions than with long-term planning," that provided for a "tenuous" form of rule to subsist in the absence of stable state structure in Gaza in the 1950s and 1960s.[18] Today an analogous logic is at play but in a much larger field. Multiple state-like performances unfold across multiple scales to create partial state effects.[19] The state-which-is-not-one happens informally. "Coordination" happens haphazardly, often initiated by a key NGO or an important donor; the result of short-term planning and ad hoc, makeshift arrangements, it remains essentially unofficial and often temporary. I saw a number of heritage projects end overnight when donors withdrew funding.[20] Frictions and failures are also part of a project's life and often trigger critical rethinking and further activity. If projects can easily collapse, (most) organizations stay, and a certain institutionalization is ongoing. Resourcefulness is making do with difficult circum-

stances. A good example of this is the recent participatory move of the Khalil Sakakini Cultural Center, which was about to close its doors when donors drastically diminished funding for Palestinian arts and culture (because of the economic crisis and redirected aid to other Middle Eastern countries). The Sakakini decided to transform, reestablishing itself as a platform that connects several other institutions and is funded through crowdfunding, thus turning its audiences into producers. But tensions arise between "breeding the revolution" and building institutional stability, rules, and regulations.[21] Meanwhile, NGOs try to keep their peculiar form of creative, experimental institutionalism alive and avoid turning into stultified bureaucracies.[22] (Un)doing institutions is a complex task.

Out of the fold of colonialism and graduated sovereignties, Palestinian organizations reconfigure institutions on the ground by prefiguring new ones. Prefiguration is a concept from radical politics that is key to the workings of what Davina Cooper first called "counter-states,"[23] and then later conceptualized as "activist statehood."[24] By these she refers to diverse experimental institutional simulations with a utopian character that produce democratic, politically transformative formations that straddle and engage, even as they also oppose, formal institutions of the state. (Cooper's main example of activist statehood is 1980s British radical municipalism.) Palestinian counterinstitutional practice shares many of the features of these experiments, especially tactics of mimicry and parody of state institutions (like Khalil Rabah's museum and the Riwaq biennial), and an anticipatory temporality, being oriented toward a better future, an "aspirational state" to come.[25] At the same time, given the failure of the (PA) state, Palestinian counterinstitutional practice must produce institutions for the here and now—hybrid ones—resourcefulness out of necessity. It is, then, out of a dialectics between the drive toward the aspirational future state and the utter necessities of the present—the paradox of making utopia work in the present—that Palestinian experimental institutionalism emerges. Palestinian practitioners and NGO workers do not know the kind of political framework or kind of state that there will eventually be between the Jordan River and the Mediterranean;[26] they do not know what precisely they are working toward, but they carry on establishing institutions, even as they disagree among themselves about forms, means, and ends. Some of these institutions have come to play an important role in the lives of Palestinians. This work, then, has produced

a fragmented institutional geography, one that is arguably a kind of disaggregated, makeshift state.

Beyond the anthropology of governance, the case of Palestine points at global heritage dynamics and the relevance of new forms of cultural governmentality. Urban regeneration and museum projects are proliferating across the globe as means to reimagine and remake neighborhoods, cities, and entire nations (think of the Gulf mega-museums or the High Line in New York). Cultural governmentalities depend on who enacts them and how: both states and those activists and local communities that resist state encroachment (but also capital and international actors) mobilize culture and heritage. Further, they hinge on a dialectics of governmentality and countergovernmentality, the push and pull of government and resistance, which plays out in an expanded, transnational field.

Palestinian civil society is the site of a two-sided dialectic; an emerging governmentalization of Palestine and local empowerment are interlocked.[27] It brings together transnational governmentality with the "countergovernmentality" or "governmentality from below" that are typical for third-world activist groups that carry the promise of "deep democracy."[28] But the intersection of cultural heritage and socioeconomic development is a remarkable, if ambivalent, process imbued with politics well beyond Palestine. Palestine arguably is an extreme case study for investigating changes in the cultural heritage field following the neoliberal rearticulation or disassembly of the state and the outsourcing of some of its traditional functions to nongovernmental sub-, supra-, and transnational entities.[29] Civil societies, grassroots groups, and private actors across the world are taking over more and more space and agency in the cultural field, eroding what used to be in many cases the domain of the state. The polyvalence and ambiguity of the idea of civil society allows for its cooptation, with neoliberals who advocate the rollback of the state embracing the NGO concept as a cost-effective means to channel monies and solve development "problems," and their opponents celebrating the same organizations as loci for a truly democratic politics.[30]

More broadly, the story of Palestinian heritage organizations foregrounds the expanding, if multifarious, role of culture and particularly cultural heritage in policy making and politics at large. The paradox is that cultural policy acquires a larger governmental role, being mobilized for a variety of different

ends, precisely as it gets "degovernmentalized" or better "regovernmentalized" beyond state-centered models. This study of Palestinian heritage suggests that we pay more attention to culture—particularly to the space of negotiation between cultural policies (of the state) and cultural politics (of civil society actors)—as we investigate contemporary forms of governmentality.[31]

This is a very relevant issue. The European Union has sponsored many initiatives to promote a common European heritage and now wants to mainstream culture and particularly cultural heritage in all policy areas. It has done so to thicken EU citizens' rather weak European identity and to tackle its legitimacy crisis as well its democratic deficit (the idea being that heritage involves citizens in a political project and that a common heritage and identity is needed to succeed as a political community).[32] The EU also believes that heritage is good for the economy; many of the union's structural programs targeting "underdeveloped" areas in Europe are based on models of heritage-led development, often involving NGOs. After terrorist attacks in Paris, Italy's prime minister reacted by creating a "culture card" giving young people free access to museums and cultural events, an initiative much praised by EU policy makers, as cultured subjects are (thought to be) good citizens.

Under globalized cultural capitalism, policy makers are reformulating culture as resource and asset.[33] Culture, in other words, provides them and other actors with a flexible means of intervention into diverse social contexts. Culture and particularly cultural heritage constitute not simply "industries" or resources to be capitalized on but rather conduits or techniques of government by multifarious actors that are not restricted to the state. Heritage initiatives proliferate transnationally as development because heritage turns people's living environments and their cultural lives into both a valuable resource and a "problem" that must be placed under the careful management of experts who are not its habitual owners.[34] But it also provides grassroots groups with a rooted and yet transnationally recognizable language for articulating their claims to land and sovereignty. Heritage plays a crucial role in these new forms of cultural governmentality, of government and resistance by culture.

I want to conclude by returning to embroidery and the *thawb*, the Intifada dress: by stitching them in the 1980s, women reinvented Palestinian heritage as activist preservation and popular mobilization, and themselves as resistant subjects, agents at the forefront of the demonstrations of the First Intifada.

Later, post-Oslo heritage organizations transformed activist preservation into a mode of planning and activist statehood, summoning up (but with great difficulty) committed citizens from occupied subjects. In a context where both (Fatah's) diplomacy and (Hamas's) armed struggle have failed to deliver peace and security to Palestinians, where the two-state solution is not coming to pass, many envision a renewed mass mobilization and nonviolent resistance of the First Intifada kind as the only way to force Israel's hand. Some intellectuals and artists have called for a return to folklore,[35] to a committed heritage that breeds the revolution: "a backward glance that enacts a future vision."[36] Will this be the new Palestinian heritage?

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NOTES

INTRODUCTION

1. This is how a Hebron journalist and longtime communist party activist described to me his experience of the negotiations in the early 1990s (interview with author, Hebron, December 12, 2006). He was one of a large crowd of people belonging to different Palestinian factions that used to gather at Hebron's municipal office to hear and discuss the negotiators' reports. The nickname "Tunisians" comes from the fact that at the time the Palestinian Liberation Organization was based in Tunis after having been kicked out of Lebanon following the 1982 Israeli invasion.

2. See Hammami 2006.

3. The Palestinians pointed to the clause in the Oslo Declaration of Principles stipulating that Israelis should redeploy from populated Palestinian areas, arguing that it followed that the Old City settlers should go. But the Israelis insisted that Hebron fell under the highly contested so-called final status issues (settlements among them) to be discussed and finalized at a later stage toward the end of the envisioned five-year transitional period.

4. *Swallow* is the term used on several occasions, in English, by the former HRC director, who was present at the time, to describe these developments (interview with author, Hebron, November 11, 2006).

5. Khaled, interview with author, Hebron, November 29, 2006.

6. Jamil, interview with author, Hebron, December 12, 2006.

7. This is the Old City of Jerusalem Rehabilitation Program, see OCJRP 2004; see also Dumper 2002, 2014.

8. Bahrani 1998; Bernbeck and Pollock 2004; Daher and Maffi 2014; for Palestine, see esp. Glock 1994, 1995; Fox 2001.

9. These specific words come from my notes of an interview with Yazan, held in Ramallah in April 2006, but several other Palestinian heritage practitioners have voiced similar understandings of their work in interviews and conversations with the author.

10. The Palestinian territories have been the object of a large-scale settlement project since their invasion by the state of Israel in 1967. This project violates international law, and particularly article 49 of the Fourth Geneva Convention, ratified by Israel in 1951, which bars an occupying state from transferring population into occupied territory; it also goes against the grain of, among others, UN Resolution 242. The Oslo Accords did not bring an end to Israeli settlement. On the contrary, settler numbers have more than doubled since the early 1990s, today standing at approximately 590,000 (see http://www.btselem.org/settlements/statistics and http://www.fmep.org/settlement_info/; accessed July 3, 2018). These colonies are widely regarded as among the major obstacles to the resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

11. See, for example, Hammami 2004.

12. A good example of the central role of the past in the context of emerging polities is Nelson Mandela's work as first president of democratic South Africa and his vision of turning the country into a "rainbow nation," also by way of a vast project of revisiting the past and remaking the na-

tional heritage, of which the Truth and Reconciliation Commission is probably the most famous element (Coombes 2003; Meskell 2012).

13. See, for example, Hall 1999.

14. "What is a nation without a culture?" asks Richard Handler (1985), and I would rephrase his question as follows: What is a nation without its cultural heritage?

15. Rowlands 2002.

16. Anderson 1983; Hobsbawm and Ranger 1983.

17. For the full text of the agreement, see the special document file titled "The Peace Process," in the *Journal of Palestine Studies* 25, no. 2 (Winter 1996): 123–140.

18. Khan 2004: 1–2, emphasis in original.

19. As with Oslo I, the vagueness of Oslo II allowed for diverging interpretations. While Israeli redeployments from area C were never implemented (because, according to Israeli interpretation, they were linked to the permanent status negotiations), their withdrawal from other areas of the West Bank either was never put into practice or was delayed until the subsequent 1997 Hebron Agreement, the 1998 Wye River Agreement, or the coming of the Barak government in 1999.

20. See, for example, the information and statistics provided by the Israeli human rights organization B'Tselem, https://www.btselem.org/planning_and_building (accessed July 3, 2018).

21. Halper 2000; Yiftachel and Yacobi 2005; Hilal 2007; see also Azoulay and Ophir 2012.

22. http://www.forensic-architecture.org/investigations/the-landscape-of-battir-vs-the-state-of-israel-2/ (accessed March 11, 2014).

23. See Allen 2013.

24. Beaumont 2017.

25. See https://www.forensic-architecture.org/battir-wins-case-wall/ (accessed July 3, 2018). Israel has built the separation wall ostensibly to separate Israelis from Palestinians. In reality, however, it runs for the most part deep into the West Bank and has thus been the object of worldwide criticism as, among other things, a disguised form of de facto territorial annexation. The fact that the wall is not being built along the Green Line, the internationally recognized border between Israel and the West Bank, constituted the main reason it was deemed illegal under international law, according to the advisory opinion given in 2004 by the International Court of Justice, the principal judicial organ of the UN (see http://www.btselem.org/topic/separation_barrier; accessed July 10, 2018).

26. Compare Herzfeld 2004, 2005.

27. For an overview of Palestinian archaeology and heritage organizations up to 2010, see al-Houdalieh 2010; Taha 2010; Yahya 2010; for the ways in which rapid urbanization in the territories has an impact on cultural heritage, see al-Houdalieh and Saunders 2009.

28. In the following chapters, I devote special attention to the Hebron Rehabilitation Committee (HRC 2015) and Riwaq (Bshara 2011); for the Old City of Jerusalem's urban rehabilitation program, see Dumper 2002; OCJRP 2004; for the work of the Bethlehem Center for Cultural Heritage Preservation, see CCHP 2005, 2011. For the complexities and politics of restoring the Old City of Nablus, see Amad 2005; Arafat and Willemsen 2005; Fontana Antonelli 2005.

29. See esp. CCHP 2011; Bshara and Amiry 2015.

30. Mosse 2013.

31. All Western aid disbursed to Palestine since Oslo has been fundamentally "political aid" (Brynen 1996)—that is, its chief aim is to promote the peace process and other political goals rather than development and state building per se, moreover within parameters determined by Israel and the United States. Sustaining one of the highest levels of multilateral per-capita foreign aid in the world, donors have pursued "development"—in fact, largely humanitarian relief, employment-generation programs, and budget support—as a means to strengthen the way to peace rather than as an end in itself (see Keating, Le More, and Lowe 2006; Le More 2008). The European Union and its member states and the Arab League states are the biggest donors. However, they have failed to bring both peace and development to Palestine; instead, they have arguably fueled Palestinian "de-development" by subsidizing the absence of progress in the diplomatic process. According to Anne Le More (2008: 173), "Aid has performed a critical emergency relief function and temporar-

ily acted as a social and political safety valve. But by sustaining such high levels of funds over such a long period, donors also bankrolled a poorly run and increasingly disliked Palestinian regime, subsidized Israeli military occupation, and indirectly encouraged the continuing colonization and fragmentation of the [occupied territories], as well as the broader process of Palestinian dispossession." For many critics indeed there is no possibility of "development" under an ongoing military occupation (see, e.g., Nakhleh 2004; Tabar and Salamanca 2015).

32. Silberman 2012; Labadi and Gould 2015; Lafrenz Samuels and Lilley 2015.

33. World Bank 2001.

34. See De Cesari 2019.

35. Peck and Theodore 2015.

36. For similar developments in the Palestinian memory discourse in Lebanon, see Khalili 2007. For the notion of off-centered states, see Krupa and Nugent 2015.

37. See, for example, UNGA, *Resolution 67/19. Status of Palestine in the United Nations* (Doc. No. A/RES/67/19), November 29, 2012 (accessed July 10, 2018). For Israeli policies in Jerusalem, see B'Tselem 2006.

38. For Israel's policies toward Palestinian cultural properties in the occupied territories, and especially Qumran's collection, see Oyediran 1997: 60–61.

39. As, for example, Susan Slyomovics (1998) has marvelously shown for the village of Ein Hod/Ein Houd.

40. It is striking in this regard, as a recognition of these parallel memoryscapes and their political effects, that in the 2000 Camp David negotiations, Bill Clinton proposed a vertical split of sovereignty over Jerusalem's core, the Haram al-Sharif/Temple Mount—giving Palestinians control over the top of the hill with its key mosques and the Israelis sovereignty over the underground below the Haram, which was the biblical location of the Jewish Second Temple (see Weizman 2007: 54–55). In turn, the failure of such a proposal for a neat separation and layered sovereignty, which of course runs contrary to common understandings of horizontal, Westphalian, nation-state-centered sovereignty, emphasizes the deep entanglements of the two memoryscapes.

41. Rothberg 2009; see also Erll 2014. Disentangling memory and heritage tends to be a fruitless endeavor (Wilson 2009: 378), for much more can be extrapolated from their productive intersections. However, for the sake of clarity, I usually distinguish heritage as a specific, materially mediated, rather institutionalized and hegemonic form of memory.

42. See Ann Laura Stoler's notion of colonial ruination (Stoler 2008). See also Esmeir 2007.

43. Stoler 2018: 47. Palestinian heritage resonates with Foucault's idea of "countermemory . . . transform[ing] history into a totally different form of time" (Foucault 1984: 93).

44. Fanon 2004 (1963): 149; see also Said 1979.

45. Wolfe 2006.

46. Veracini 2011: 4. See also Peteet 2005.

47. This memory culture has been the object of an important body of scholarship; see Hammami 2004; Khalili 2004, 2007; Sa'di and Abu-Lughod 2007; Davis 2010; Saloul 2012. For general theories of collective memory, see, e.g., Nora 1989; Halbwachs 1992; Rigney 2002; for the globalization of memory, see Huyssen 2000; De Cesari and Rigney 2014; for the so-called politics of regret and the role of the Holocaust memory paradigm and memories of sufferings, see Olick 2007; Rothberg 2009.

48. For the ways in which connected processes of destruction of heritage and memory function against Israel's internal other, that is, the Mizrahim or Arab Jews, and for the cultural dimensions of the relationship between them and Ashkenazi Jews, see Shohat 2006.

49. Abu El-Haj 2001. Because of her award-winning book on Israeli heritage politics, Nadia Abu El-Haj was the victim of an ultimately unsuccessful but long and virulent defamation campaign to get Barnard College to deny her tenure on grounds of her alleged anti-Semitism (see Kramer 2008). For the crucial difference between anti-Semitism and critiques of Zionism, see Judith Butler's (2013) key discussion of the ways in which some Zionists effectively use defamatory accusations of anti-Semitism to defy rightful criticism of Israeli policies.

50. Several scholars have examined the crucial nation-state-building function of archaeology in Israel (Elon 1983; Silberman 1989, 1998; Zerubavel 1995; Whitelam 1996; Benvenisti 2000; Ben-Yehuda 2002; Masalha 2007). Some archaeologists have argued that Israeli archaeology has since moved from a nationalist to a commodified and commercialized phase of its history, and that nowadays it is a profit enterprise, with market logic and no longer nation-state building as the driving force behind it (see, e.g., Killebrew 2010). However, I do not see the incommensurability of the two logics, which coexist and seem to reinforce each other in several of Israel's more recent heritage projects, such as the Tower of David Museum in the Old City of Jerusalem (Abu El-Haj 1998; Hawari 2010) and the City of David Archaeological Park (De Cesari 2016).

51. For example, Zerubavel 1995, 2002.

52. For a critical discussion of the ways in which the Israeli state has used the memory of the Holocaust to legitimize its agenda and policies, see especially Segev 1993; Finkelstein 2000; Zertal 2005.

53. As Keith Whitelam (1996) has argued in regard to biblical scholarship; see also Benvenisti 2002.

54. See Oyediran 1997.

55. See Abu El-Haj 1998; Ricca 2007; see also Hawari 2010.

56. Pullan and Gwiazda 2009; Dumper and Larkin 2012; De Cesari 2016.

57. Makdisi 2010.

58. For figures, see Khalidi 2001: 12–13. A new generation of Israeli historians with access to declassified state documents rewrote the history of 1948 starting in the late 1980s, challenging older myths and the Zionist consensus about the war along lines closer to the Palestinian narrative (see, e.g., Morris 1987; Pappé 1988; Shlaim 1988, 1995). While the so-called new historians did not recode mainstream understandings of 1948 in Israel and beyond, there is essential agreement about at least some of the facts among Zionist and post-Zionist scholars: the main point of contention concerns not so much the extent of Palestinian dispossession but whether this dispossession was "born of war, not by design" (Morris 1991: 114) or the result of a planned policy of "ethnic cleansing" (Pappé 2006; see also Beinin 2005; Masalha 2012). For a discussion of the new historians in the context of the debate on post-Zionism, see Silberstein 1999; Nimni 2003; Ram 2005.

59. Khalidi 1992.

60. Tamari 2003.

61. Pappé 2006.

62. For example, Khalidi 2001. The collective memory of the Nakba, the importance of place in it, and the question of loss have emerged as key elements in Palestinian culture and cultural politics (Abu-Lughod and Sa'di 2007; Nashif 2012).

63. Note that "1948" stands for a narrative of place, too, since this is a common Palestinian way of referring to what is today Israel and especially to its Palestinian population, namely, the descendants of those who managed to stay in or close to their homes after 1948.

64. A phrase obviously beholden to Walid Khalidi's (1992) study of the destroyed 1948 villages; see also Muhammad 2002.

65. Swedenburg 1990; Tamari 1992.

66. Especially Weizman 2007; see also Slyomovics 1998; Abu El-Haj 2001.

67. For the role of materiality and specifically architecture and urban planning in the colonization of the West Bank and Gaza, see Weizman 2007.

68. For the relationship of heritage, archaeology, and dependency, see Hodder 2012.

69. These are the words of the first director of the PA heritage agency; see Taha 2004: 31; see also Taha 2005.

70. Ong 2011: 12.

71. See also N. Brown 2003.

72. Critical heritage and museum scholars have applied governmentality theory to investigate the articulation of heritage and museums with government in the framework of stable nation-states, and particularly in Euro-American and Australian contexts. Tony Bennett (e.g., 1995) first

discussed museums as the locations of an "exhibitionary complex," geared to inculcate a set of values and modalities of comportment and ultimately to educate visitor-citizens. Laurajane Smith (2004) argued instead that in postcolonial settler societies such as the United States and Australia, archaeology has functioned as a technology of government through the state's mobilization of it as cultural resource management. It helps the state govern indigenous identities by mobilizing the positivist, depoliticizing knowledge of processual or scientific archaeology. For the relationship between heritage and state making in the Middle East, especially in its violent dimensions, see De Cesari 2015; Bsheer 2017.

73. Herzfeld 1991, 2009, 2016; Collins 2008, 2015; Meskell 2012, 2018.

74. Compare Harrison 2010; Byrne 2014; see also Foucault 1984.

75. For a "disaggregated" view of the state, see Gupta 2012, especially 71–72. A good example of "improvised" governance enrolling multiple actors across scales and prominently NGOs and donors is Bosnia and Herzegovina (Jeffrey 2013); for "adhocracy" as a mode of governance in Georgia, see Dunn 2012.

76. Peck and Theodore 2015; see also Jessop 2014.

77. Wacquant 2012: 70; see, for example, Trouillot 2001; Gupta and Sharma 2006; Hoffman, DeHart, and Collier 2006; Hilgers 2011. The other key feature of neoliberal governmentality is the expansion of the logic of the market into every dimension of human and public life (see, e.g., W. Brown 2003, 2006).

78. Miller and Rose 2008: 212; see also Rose 1996; Rose, O'Malley, and Valverde 2006. For the original text by Michel Foucault on governmentality, see Foucault 1991; see also Foucault 2003.

79. Ferguson and Gupta 2002; Ferguson 2004.

80. Sharma 2006; for the Middle East, see, for example, Elyachar 2002, 2005.

81. See Fisher 1997; Ferguson and Gupta 2002; Bernal and Grewal 2014; Lashaw, Vannier, and Sampson 2017; see also Mitchell 1991.

82. Comaroff and Comaroff 1999: esp. 33; see also Fisher 1997; Appadurai 2000, 2002.

83. Hiltermann 1991; Robinson 1997.

84. Hammami 1995, 2006; for a general discussion of Palestinian civil society, see Hammami, Hilal, and Tamari 2001; Challand 2009.

85. Said 1993; Shlaim 2013; see also Waage 2005; Sayigh and Erekat 2015.

86. For example, Baconi 2018.

87. For example, Khan 2004.

88. Hilal and Khan 2004; see also Le More 2008. For Hamas, see Baconi 2018.

89. The restructuring of Israeli colonial rule over Palestine—for Jeff Halper (2000) a "matrix of control" enveloping the territories—has generated what many observers see as the geography of one (apartheid) state (Yiftachel 2012) implementing a differential rule over populations of differing status (Azoulay and Ophir 2012).

90. Massad 2006.

91. For the proliferation and key role of NGOs post-Oslo, see Challand 2009; Hammami et al. 2001; Hammami 2006; Jamal 2007.

92. Khalidi and Samour 2011; Tabar and Salamanca 2015.

93. Costantini, Salameh, and Issa 2015: e.g., 11. All along, (some) NGOs have been criticized for adopting donor-driven agendas and even for corruption, as in the case of the PA; see especially Hammami 2006; Allen 2013.

94. Hanafi and Tabar 2005.

95. According to Rema Hammami, this class has the following features: "It is common knowledge that NGOs' pay scales are higher than professional and semi-professional salaries in the mid-to-lower-level PNA bureaucracy or in the public sector in general. . . . NGOs are among the few workplaces perceived to operate according to professionalism. They have thus become desirable workplaces for a new generation of middle-class professionals who view NGO employment as a career path to more lucrative salaries and prestigious jobs in international organizations. Speaking English, dressing well and maintaining a nice office are all parts of this new culture. The entrance of

waves of young professionals into the NGO sector has further de-politicized it, resulting in an even greater divorce from a popular social base. The new professionals tend to treat the 'grassroots' in a patronizing and condescending manner, perceiving them as social groups in need of instruction, rather than as constituencies from which they take their direction and legitimacy" (Hammami 2000: 27).

96. See Hanafi and Tabar 2005: 24.

97. Yahya 2004.

98. Abu Aita 2004.

99. Taha 2002.

100. See Appiah 2005.

101. O'Brien 2014.

102. Yudice 2003; Meskell 2012.

103. Issa 2015: 115, 119.

104. Sharif 2015: 33.

105. Safi 2015.

106. Email communication with the author, March 2009, emphasis in original.

107. Holston 2008: 313.

108. Li 2007.

109. Ong 2006.

110. In her historical ethnography of Gaza bureaucracies, Ilana Feldman (2008) identified a number of techniques that allow for a tenuous government to subsist in the absence of stable state structures, including what she calls tactical government and abeyance of legitimacy. While sharing Feldman's Foucauldian approach and interest in how seemingly ungovernable places are managed, I focus on contemporary Palestine, "nongovernmental" actors, and unconventional fields of government. Feldman's notion of "layered government"—that is, government distributed across actors and layers (e.g., 2008: 160)—is similar to what I call Palestine's "state-which-is-not-one."

111. This is a core issue in contemporary heritage scholarship, and, more broadly, it is also at the core of debates about the nature and mechanisms of cultural globalization, seen as a movement from afar and simultaneously from below, as a homogenizing drive and simultaneously a localizing one. For the globalization of heritage, see Al-Sayyad 2001; De Cesari 2010a; Labadi and Logan 2010.

112. For example, Byrne 1991; Meskell 2002; Smith 2006. In part, this kind of argument reproduces the logic of accusations of globalization being fundamentally about cultural imperialism, but as several anthropologists have noted—in fact, this is the thrust of key anthropologies of globalization (see Inda and Rosaldo 2008)—things are not as simple. Globalization is not a one-way movement, and global forms are always localized and appropriated in culturally and historically specific ways. Scholars have given different names to this encounter of the local and the global or "glocal," in the effort to overcome simplistic dichotomies and to highlight complex processes of back-translation. For instance, while Jonathan Xavier Inda and Renato Rosaldo (2008) discuss local "customization" of the global, Sally Merry (2006) coined the term "vernacularization" while debating human rights and the way a universalist discourse percolates and comes to constitute the local. Tom Boellstorff (2003) thinks instead in terms of "dubbing," by comparing the process of translation and reframing of globalizing cultures and subjectivities to the dubbing of movies. In this book, I build on Anna Tsing's (2005) notions of frictions and cosmopolitan specificities, which go further in overcoming the local-global binary and in decentering the West as the subject, always-already, of the global.

113. See also Harrison 2013.

114. Smith 2006.

115. Thompson 1979; Hall 1999; for the idea of heritage dissonance, see Tunbridge and Ashworth 1996.

116. For example, Byrne 1991; Bal 1996; Choay 2001.

117. Of course, heritage has always implied a global dimension, being born in the time of colonialism and imperialism in the context of the West's appropriation and accumulation of colonial loot and relics from the around the world (see, e.g., Colla 2007; but also Trigger 1984). Yet the cur-

rent globalization of heritage is qualitatively different from earlier forms, and it is definitively an ambivalent one.

118. For a discussion of transnational policyscapes marked by relentless traffic and the resilience of neoliberal ideas, see Peck and Theodore 2015.

119. A transnational approach emphasizes all kinds of "sustained, cross-borders relationships spanning nation-states" (Vertovec 2009: 1) and, at a more fundamentally methodological level, problematizes "container thinking" as such (Beck 2000; Khagram and Levitt 2008; Amelina et al. 2012; see also Gupta and Ferguson 1997). This means that such an approach makes it possible to think of global connections not in terms of seamless horizons but rather by "mov[ing] to the centre of analysis the material presence of borders in the 'flows' of globalized memories [which] may be nonhierarchical and deeply democratic in appearance, but may well themselves be the sites of hegemonic and governmental processes in ways that both reproduce and alter those of older national memory forms" (De Cesari and Rigney 2014: 4).

120. For this idea of assemblage, see Collier 2006; for museum assemblages, see Levitt 2015.

121. Merry 2006.

122. Tsing 2009: 41.

123. "Antiquity," *Oxford English Dictionary Online*, December 2018. http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/8833?redirectedFrom=antiquity (accessed December 30, 2018).

124. Colla 2007: esp. 103.

125. See also Silberman 1982; Abu El-Haj 2001.

126. Colla 2007; Maffi 2009.

127. Abu Rabi' 2004: esp. 258–265; Massad 2007: 16–29.

128. Al-Jabiri 1991; Abu Rabi' 2004: 242ff.

129. Within the intellectual heritage debate the past provides both the problem and the solution to the predicament envisaged by Arab thinkers. While civilizational *turath* seems to open up a way out of the perceived decline, the past as tradition and customs (as *'adat wa-taqalid*) is seen as a main obstacle, for example in the thought of Muhammad al-Ghazali (Abu Rabi' 2004: 248–255; for a discussion of *'ada* in Arabic, see Abaza 2009; Tsing 2009: 48). I have encountered similar ideas discussing heritage matters with several practitioners as well as lay Palestinians, who tend to code *turath* (usually discussed as national or religious, as "Palestinian heritage" or "Islamic heritage") positively, and tradition (as customary law and tribal ways, as the power of the tribe or *quwwat al-'ashira*) negatively as one of the malaises affecting Palestinian society.

130. Massad 2007.

131. Sachedina 2013.

132. See also Schmitt 2008; Harrison 2013.

133. Brown 2010; see also Dumper 2014.

134. For example, Yiftachel 2012; see also Ophir, Givoni, and Hanafi 2009.

135. For example, joint activities and initiatives across the Green Line are being initiated.

136. For anthropologists speaking the same language of their informants, see Riles 2000.

CHAPTER 1

1. Dabdoub 1994.

2. Dabdoub 1997, emphasis added.

3. This historical narrative is largely based on C. Smith 2004: 55ff. as well as Gelvin 2005; Pappé 2004.

4. For the full text of the covenant, see League of Nations, *Covenant of the League of Nations*, April 28, 1919, http://www.refworld.org/docid/3dd8b9854.html (accessed December 14, 2018).

5. Feldman 2008: esp. 6.

6. For the full text, see Laqueur and Rubin 2008: 16; https://www.nytimes.com/2017/11/02/world/middleeast/balfour-declaration-israel.html (accessed December 14, 2018).

7. See Herbert Samuel's *An Interim Report on the Civil Administration of Palestine* during the period July 1, 1920, to June 30, 1921, https://unispal.un.org/DPA/DPR/unispal.nsf/0

/349B02280A930813052565E90048ED1C (accessed December 14, 2018); for the demographic development of Palestine in earlier periods, see Scholch 1985.

8. See Shafir 1989; Ram 1999; Lockman 2012.

9. See Abu Farha 2009: 25ff. Nasser Abu Farha prefers to translate the word *fallahin* with the English "farmer" because he considers "peasant" a Eurocentric term that downplays *fallahin*'s connection to the land. I decided to stick to the more common translation of "peasant" in line with the tradition of peasant studies focusing on agrarian power relations, which is precisely my preoccupation here.

10. See, for example, Khalidi 1992.

11. Cobban 1984; Gresh 1985; Sayigh 1997.

12. Hammami 2004: 235; see also Zurayk 1956; Khalidi 1959, 1971; al-Dabbagh 1965; Yasin 1975; 'Allush 1978; al-Hut 1981.

13. Masalha 1992; Pappé 2006.

14. Swedenburg 1990; Tamari 1992.

15. See Tamari 2003, 2008: esp. chapter 2.

16. Such bucolic reimaging of the lost homeland was powerfully reinforced by the expressive force and symbolic richness of the new Palestinian poetry that flourished among the remaining Palestinian communities in Israel and gained worldwide recognition especially in the figure of the late Mahmoud Darwish. This poetry's imagery and vocabulary continue to provide a remarkable narrative consistency to the myriad testimonies, memoirs, and memorial books about the Nakba that have proliferated in the past decades; see Davis 2010; Sa'di and Abu-Lughod 2007.

17. Tamari 1981.

18. Handler 1985.

19. Foucault 1982. For Foucault, there are different modes of "objectification of the subject" that can, however, co-occur and complement each other. Of relevance for my argument are Foucault's first and third mode, namely, scientific classification, which singles out classes of subjects and objects, and "subjectification" proper, which concerns the ways a human being turns herself or himself into a subject (Foucault 1982). Leading to a new self-understanding, this self-formation is often "mediated by an external authority figure" (Rabinow 1984: 11), like the Palestinian activists who organized village and camp women; see also, for a material studies perspective, Miller 2005.

20. For the First Intifada, see, for example, Lockman and Beinin 1989; Nassar and Heacock 1990.

21. Swedenburg 1990; Tamari 1992.

22. Tamari 2004.

23. Most of these authors were Christians, but al-Barghuthi was "a young Muslim gentleman, son of one of the most prominent sheikhs of southern Palestine," in the words of key orientalist scholar William F. Albright, who knew them all (see al-Barghuthi 1922: 34, n. 1); for his history, see Tamari 2008: 133ff.

24. This was according to his obituary, see Lapp and Albright 1964.

25. See esp. Bourmaud 2012.

26. Bourmaud 2012: 110.

27. See Obenzinger 1999.

28. Abu El-Haj 2001: esp. 25ff.

29. See Silberman 1982.

30. See Silberman 1982; Bahrani 1998; Meskell 1998; Bernbeck and Pollock 2004.

31. For India, see Chadha 2002.

32. In her analysis of European and Israeli archaeological practices, Nadia Abu El-Haj stresses how these practices "proved indispensable to . . . both the colonizing project and the imperial imagination" (2001: 24) and helped shape an old-new Palestine that no longer belonged to its inhabitants. The impressive cartographic project of the Survey of Western Palestine, carried out by the British Royal Engineers in the 1870s (Conder and Kitchner 1881), produced territorial knowledge for conquest and government, as well as the essential skeleton on which scholars and others

could map a landscape of biblical sites to be excavated by scholars, missionaries, army officers, and colonial agents.

33. Abu El-Haj 2001: 35ff.

34. Fabian 1983.

35. Interestingly, orientalists considered the native population as mixed-race rather than Arab, but all talked about its "antiquity"; see Besant 1895: 128, quoted in Abu El-Haj 2001: 36.

36. Albright 1921: 4, quoted in Silberman 1993: 10.

37. He worked as director of internal medicine at the German Hospital and, for a long period, at the Moravian Leper Home in Jerusalem, a job that made him into an authority on leprosy and other skin diseases; see esp. Nashef 2002. Among the European orientalists, he was very close to biblical scholar Gustav Dalman, who was the provost of his church but also the director of the German Protestant Institute of Archaeology at the time and the author of the encyclopedic ethnography *Work and Custom in Palestine* (*Arbeit und Sitte in Palaestina*, 1937).

38. These included linguist Eliezer Ben-Yehuda, the key person behind the nationalist revival of the Hebrew language. A glimpse into the society's varied membership (as well as the role of both religious and military people) can be gained from the list of people present at the preliminary meeting of the society in January 1920, see "Introductory Notice" 1921: 1–2. The society was initially placed under the patronage of the then military governor of Jerusalem, Colonel Ronald Storrs, a member himself, as well as Field Marshal Edmund Allenby, the World War I commander of the British army in the Middle East, and Herbert Samuel, the first British High Commissioner for Palestine.

39. Lapp and Albright 1964: 3.

40. Garstang 1921: 146.

41. Garstang 1921: 147.

42. "Constitution" 1921: 3.

43. Canaan 1914.

44. Canaan's medical profession and engagement with popular medicine stimulated his interest in amulets as antidotes to diseases. He gathered a large collection of over 1,400 popular talismans, amulets, and fear cups and classified and documented them, the first collection of its kind. This collection is the core of one of the first post-1994 West Bank museums, the Ethnographic and Art Museum at Birzeit University (al-Jubeh 2005). According to one of his biographers and the curator of the collection at Birzeit, Khaled Nashef (2002: 18), "it was through the polyclinic [of the Jerusalem Municipality] and his visits to outlying villages and hamlets, on horseback, carrying a bag full of medicines, that he noticed many women and men wearing amulets [to protect themselves from diseases and the evil eye]. After treating them, he would discuss with the patients what protection these amulets offered. . . . He often bought the amulets, or took them in lieu of payment for his treatment." He continued to collect these items throughout his life. Through these conversations and his long-term familiarity with the people using the amulets, Canaan was able to include a lot of information about their properties in the documentation attached to the collection.

45. For example, Haddad 1921a: 103.

46. Canaan 1914: viii, my translation. The original German text (inclusive of the broader context) says: "Ein wirklicher Einblick in Volksmedizin and Aberglauben setzt aber weiter innigste Vertrautheit mit der sprache und Sitte, dem Denken und Fuehlen des Volkes heraus."

47. Canaan 1927: v–vi, emphasis added.

48. For Canaan, for example, popular demons or *jinn*—the inhabitants of the earth, springs, trees, and high places, and the triggers of many human diseases and misfortunes—which he so carefully describes, were essentially "survivals" of ancient Semitic religion and of "old deities [that] continue to haunt the same springs, although ages have passed by" (Canaan 1921: 165).

49. Tamari 2008: 2.

50. Haddad 1921a: 103.

51. See, for example, Harrison 2013: esp. 13ff.; see also Lowenthal 1985; Huyssen 2000.

52. On *Popular Medicine* and *Saints and Sanctuaries* (Canaan 1914, 1927).

53. Khalidi 1997; see also Muslih 1988. The notion of Palestine/Filastin as an entity was already present in the late Ottoman period. This was the product of a long-standing attachment to the Holy Land that was shared by the various religious communities—an attachment the communities rekindled in pilgrimages, festivals, and frequent visits to the many, often shared holy sites and shrines of the area (Canaan 1927; Scholch 1993). But according to Rashid Khalidi (1997: esp. 145ff.), the inhabitants of historical Palestine had multiple, if interconnected, forms of identification.

54. Khalidi 1997; see also Porath 1973; Muslih 1988.

55. For a view into the social experience and memory of the revolt, see Swedenburg 1995.

56. Canaan 1936: 21, quoted in Nashef 2002: 22. In 1936 Canaan published two political pamphlets in English (*The Palestine Arab Cause* and *Conflict in the Land of Peace*) in which he addressed public opinion in support of the Palestinian struggle, denouncing the support of Jewish immigration and the pro-Zionist policies of the Mandate authorities that were forcing Palestinians from their land; he was also among the signatories of a petition in support of a general strike and of Palestinian self-determination, that is, in support of the end of the Mandate (Bourmaud 2012: 118). Around this time he appears to have severed his relationship with a number of orientalists, including Albright, who in his eulogy (Lapp and Albright 1964: 3) declared that he had not seen this "old friend" since 1935. Such political positioning spoiled his relationship with the Mandate authorities, who imprisoned him without charges for several months at the outbreak of World War II. According to Philippe Bourmaud (2012: 120–121), Canaan "advocated a form of binational state, which he thought possible if the ratio between the Arab and Jewish communities stopped changing—that is to say, if Jewish immigration were frozen. He opposed the partition of Palestine along the lines of the Peel plan, since a small Jewish state, he argued, would have been a primary and easy target for states with an anti-Semitic policy."

57. For example, Yuval-Davis 1997.

58. See Handler 1985; Rowlands 2002.

59. Bhabha 1994: esp. 87.

60. Williams 1977: 132.

61. Haddad 1921b: 209, emphasis added.

62. See also Haddad 1921a.

63. Miller 2005: 32.

64. Kawar 2011.

65. Kawar 2011: 114–121.

66. This story comes from the film *Malak Husseini Abdulrahim: The Art of Embroidery*, http://www.palmuseum.org/exhibitions/exhibitions#ad-image-thumb-2041 (accessed July 17, 2016); see n. 75.

67. See *Malak Husseini Abdulrahim: The Art of Embroidery*, minute 0:40.

68. Building on the work of Brian Spooner (1986), Rachel Dedman (2016) interprets Palestinian embroideries as "imperfect commodities."

69. Swedenburg 1990: 19. The centrality of the Palestinian peasant to the nationalist imaginary may appear paradoxical in light of the traditional deep divide between villages and cities (Tamari 1992), or else it can point to the kind of ideological work performed by this nationalist discourse. Not unlike many other national movements, for Swedenburg (1990: 25), "aesthetic representation or depiction (*darstellung*) works to dissimulate political representation (*verstellung*)," meaning that the representational centrality of the peasant in Palestinian nationalism masks real peasants' substantial marginalization as political agents in the consolidation of the middle-class leadership of the PLO.

70. Kanaana 2005: 112.

71. Rabi' 1974; Tamari 1992; see also Davis 2005: esp. 148ff.

72. See, for example, Phillips and Steiner 1999.

73. See Hammami, Hilal, and Tamari 2001.

74. For example, Jad 1999.

75. Dedman 2016: esp. 93, elaborating on Sharoni 1995: 64. Rachel Dedman was the head of the team that compiled an inventory of Palestinian embroidery organizations, listing about one

hundred such groups founded between 1925 and 2015. Together with an extensive program of interviews, this inventory was part of the preparatory work for the very first exhibition of the Palestinian Museum, tellingly on embroidery; see http://www.palmuseum.org/exhibitions/exhibitions#ad-image-thumb-2041 (accessed May 3, 2017). Curated by Dedman, the exhibition *At the Seam: A Political History of Palestinian Embroidery* took place in Beirut (Dar el-Nimer, May 25–July 30, 2016) and not in Palestine itself because of the political situation and the troubled beginnings of the Palestinian Museum, as well as the latter's ambition to cover the broader Palestinian diaspora. This exhibition was then displayed in the Birzeit hub of the museum as *Labour of Love: New Approaches to Palestinian Embroidery* between March 18 and August 25, 2018.

76. Compare Thompson's (1979) notion of how what was formerly conceived as "rubbish" can become valuable again through complex sociopolitical processes.

77. Umm Khalil later became famous worldwide for running against Arafat in the 1996 presidential elections of the PA; despite losing, Khalil received over 11.5 percent of the vote.

78. Talhami 2013: 201.

79. Hiltermann 1991: 131.

80. Talhami 2013: 200.

81. These tasks are at the core of IU's mission to these days, as stated on the organization's website (http://www.inash.org/about/goals.html [accessed August 30, 2008]):

1. To empower women by helping them acquire skills and capabilities to become wage earners, active participants, and decision makers within their community.
2. To provide high quality care and education for children.
3. To lend support to victims of war, occupation, and social circumstances.
4. To study and preserve Palestinian Folklore and to develop rural handicrafts and industries.

82. For example, Hiltermann 1991: 128; Jad 1999: 255.

83. Ghada Talhami recalls about Khalil: "If you were to call her a feminist, she probably would have fixed you with one of her loving stares and reminded you that 'woman-ness' was not about gender but about service to your community" (Talhami 2013: xii); see also Hiltermann 1991: 131. Also, Rosemary Sayigh (1981: 12) reports that she was "no feminist," for she was very much concerned with women's overt independence stirring counterreactions in the family; social cohesion, in other words, was always Khalil's overriding concern.

84. For example, Yuval-Davis 1997. For the ways in which the entanglement and tension between feminism and nationalism played out similarly in the early Palestinian women's movement during the Mandate, see Fleischmann 2000. For Ellen Fleischmann, speaking of the 1930s, "the gender consciousness of the movement's founders was muted, often inconsistent, and subtly subversive rather than explicitly 'feminist' in the contemporary sense of the term, its gender critique often hidden within a manipulation of traditional gender norms" (2000: 19); see also, for later developments, Emmet 2003.

85. Hancock 2016; Hill Collins and Bilge 2016.

86. Al-Khalili 1977; Sayigh 1983.

87. Peteet 1991: 172.

88. For example, Peteet 1991; Hammami and Johnson 1999.

89. See Dedman 2016.

90. Peteet 1991: 105.

91. Jad 1999: esp. 258.

92. This was called the Federation of Palestinian Women's Action Committee (FPWAC).

93. Hasso 1998: 444.

94. Esp. Hasso 1998, but see also Hasso 2005.

95. Lutfiyeh Sharif, interviewed by Frances Hasso in 1995 and quoted in Hasso 1998: 447.

96. For Iris Jean-Klein (2003), in the First Intifada, the committee and the house are deeply intertwined and there is a substantial continuity in forms and aesthetics between kinship and organized political activity.

97. See also Peteet 1991: esp. 175ff.

98. Butler 1990.

99. Jad 1999: 258.

100. Hammami 2004.

101. I intend *ruins* here in the sociomaterial sense developed by Ann Laura Stoler (2008) as the products of a process of social ruination that is the aftereffect of colonialism.

102. The full title of this study is *Palestinian Folklore: Not to Be Wiped Out*.

103. Sirhan 1989 (1977–1981): 5–6, emphasis added. I thank Nawwal Khalili for helping me translate this passage.

104. Sirhan 1989 (1977–1981): 125. Interestingly, for this he refers back to the work of Tawfiq Canaan.

105. Hall 1994: 225.

106. See Tamari 2004: 40; see also Muhammad 2002.

107. Sirhan 1989 (1977–1981): 5–6.

108. Postcolonial studies scholar Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak first advanced her notion of strategic essentialism as a subaltern tactic in her famous 1988 essay "Can the Subaltern Speak?," but later declared it problematic (Spivak 1993).

109. It resembles Frantz Fanon's passionate research, or "this passion and this rage [that] are nurtured or at least guided by the secret hope of discovering beyond the present wretchedness [the internalized, continuing legacy of colonialism], beyond this self-hatred, this abdication and denial, some magnificent and shining era that redeems us in our own eyes and those of others" (Fanon 2004 [1963]: 148).

110. An important offshoot of the folklore movement, entangled with and yet distinct from the folklore studies I discuss here, continues to provide a fertile terrain for a kind of memory work as community survival and grassroots knowledge production in the absence of major, official archives. These are the oral histories and memorial books of over four hundred villages destroyed or depopulated in 1948 in what is today's Israel (Davis 2010). This textual production, starting in the mid-1980s, can be roughly divided into two groups: academic oral histories published as part of the first pioneering Birzeit University's Destroyed Palestinian Villages book series—an endeavor initiated by a key figure of the folklore movement, Birzeit anthropologist Sharif Kanaana—and popular memorial books written by refugees themselves. Like the ethnographies described in this chapter, these memorial books are often written with a collaborative, scientific methodology. They generally describe the villages and the lives and customs of their old inhabitants, including not only all kinds of folklore but also family genealogies, poems, maps, photographs, and reproductions of Ottoman and British Mandate–era documents, as well as the history of what happened to villagers in 1948 and the fate of the present community. With the first generation of refugees who experienced the Nakba dying out, these books produce postmemory—the second and third generation remembering the event as if they had lived through it, and with a strong emotional intensity (Hirsch 2008)—and reproduce community identity. They are not only sites of intra-Palestinian knowledge transfer about a world that has been stolen from them but also documentary mappings, "dossiers of evidence . . . showing the villagers' relationship to . . . the village and thus . . . proving their existence on the land, and therefore their history, even though they are no longer there and the village no longer exists" (Davis 2010: 29).

111. Also the folklorists and ethnographers of the other center of the folklore movement in the territories, namely, the Sociology and Anthropology Department at Birzeit University, not only worked closely with Inash al-Usra but published most of their work in *Heritage and Society*. The department came to incorporate a folklore center, appointing as its director 'Abd al-Latif al-Barghuthi, a student of Palestinian oral literature and colloquial dialect (see al-Barghuthi 1979). Other Palestinian folklorists worked in Jordan and in Israel, where they published in Haifa's *Al-Jadid*, and—up until its destruction by the Israeli army in 1982—in the Palestine Research Center in Beirut. For a schematic though comprehensive review of Palestinian folklorists and their work, see Sirhan 1989 (1977–1981): 116–132.

112. Rabi' et al. 1973.

113. Although *Heritage and Society*'s research scope later expanded to include all the humanities and social sciences, in the early years its focus was exclusively on folklore.

114. See, for example, Alqam 1974; al-Jawhari 1974, 1980; Rabi' 1974; Muslah 1980.

115. Khalil published several traditional folktales in the first issues of *Heritage and Society*, see, for example, Khalil 1974b; see also Muhawi and Kanaana 1989. Significantly, the *hikaye* storytelling tradition was nominated as the first Palestinian cultural property on UNESCO's Representative List of the Intangible Heritage of Humanity in 2005.

116. Amiry and Tamari 1989; Amiry 2017 (1987).

117. Khalil 1974a: 4, my translation, emphasis added.

118. This same close connection between the study of folklore and nationalism was theorized and explicitly advocated with reference to the European history of nationalism in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries and the specific development of Arab nationalism, especially post-independence, by another important Palestinian folklorist, Walid Rabi' (1974), also in the pages of *Heritage and Society.*

119. Khalil 1974a: 4–5, my translation, emphasis added.

120. Khalil 1974a: 6, my translation, emphasis added.

121. Khalil 1974a: 7, my translation, emphasis added.

122. Khalil 1974a: 7, my translation.

123. Kanaana 2005: 132.

124. Khalil used the term *jada*, meaning "sincerely with heart and intentions"; see Khalil 1974a: 7, my translation.

125. See, for example, al-Barghuthi 1977; al-Jawhari 1980.

126. Al-Barghuthi 1977: 8, 13, my translation, emphasis added.

127. Sayigh 1979.

128. Peteet 1991: 99, referring to Palestinian women in Lebanon's camps and the Resistance around this same time.

129. Hammami, Hilal, and Tamari 2001: 197.

130. See Kawar 2011: 429ff.

131. See also Sherwell 1996.

132. For example, Robinson 1997.

133. See al-Labadi 1993: 52–53, quoted in Hasso 1998: 445.

134. See minute 14:20 of *The Embroiderers*, Maeve Brennan's film bringing together footage from the interviews carried out with embroiderers by the Palestinian Museum's curators, see n. 75; http://www.palmuseum.org/exhibitions/exhibitions#ad-image-thumb-2010 (accessed July 17, 2016).

135. Appadurai 1986: 34.

136. See Ferry 2002, 2005.

137. See n. 75. When interviewed by the Palestinian Museum's researchers, for example, Suhair Odeh, who runs a small organization in Bethlehem's Dheisheh camp, stated: "Embroidery brings income, and income, of course, is resistance in my life, in Palestinian life. This is our heritage." See the film *The Embroiderers* by Maeve Brennan, starting at minute 18:33 (http://www.palmuseum.org/ehxibitions/exhibitions#ad-image-thumb-2010 [accessed July 17, 2016]).

138. For post-Intifada representations of embroidered dresses as signs of a modern Palestinian femininity, see Moors 2000.

CHAPTER 2

Portions of this chapter are drawn from Chiara De Cesari, "Hebron, or Heritage as Technology of Life," *Jerusalem Quarterly* 41 (Spring 2010).

1. See, for example, the discussion of different urban forms in the West Bank in Taraki and Giacaman 2006 (e.g., 41). There, the peasant way of life in Hebron is explained as the product of the city's century-old symmetrical (as opposed to asymmetrical) ties to the countryside. In their survey, Lisa Taraki and Rita Giacaman echo the public imagination by describing Hebron as at the extreme "least modern" end of a continuum. This continuum stretches from central, modern, cosmopolitan, and globalized cities such as Ramallah to the peripheral, homogeneous, "traditional/

conservative," and "inward-looking" towns that are characterized by their exclusion from globalization and by a fundamental continuity with the past. This continuity is evident in the composition of their population and local elites, as well as in other domains such as economic and cultural life.

2. Al-Jubeh 1991.

3. Al-Jubeh 1991, 2009.

4. Old Hebron's free-standing, two-story constructions display the characteristic Levantine Late-Ottoman central hall plan and structured, elaborated street facades with large windows (see Khasawneh 2001). These features distinguish them from the older courtyard houses in the way they have replaced the *hawsh* with a covered central room of regular plan, in Palestine called *liwan*, a room that opens up onto and provides access to the rest of the house (see also CCHP 2005). Once housing the Ottoman upper classes, these residential spaces signal what scholars of Arab Islamic architecture refer to as the modernization of urban and especially private space that began in the mid-nineteenth century (Weber 2007: 206ff.).

5. This chapter is based on my extended fieldwork in Hebron in 2006 as well as subsequent shorter visits in 2011 and 2013.

6. For example, De Cesari and Herzfeld 2015; see also Smith 2002; Herzfeld 2009, 2010.

7. See especially Jean-Klein 2003: 557.

8. This narrative of the history of the HRC is based on my extensive interviews during 2006 with the HRC's then director and some of its longest-serving engineers. For information about the political history of the city I thank journalist Hisham Sharabati for three very long and wonderfully informative conversations stretched over several days in December 2006 and September 2011.

9. Sent into exile in 1980, Mayor Fahed al-Qawasme was murdered in Amman in 1984 under mysterious circumstances while serving on the PLO Executive Committee. While some accuse the Mossad, it is likely that the order to assassinate him came from within the PLO because of his role in uncovering episodes of corruption or because of his pro-negotiations political stance. He is quoted as saying in 1981: "If a newly born Palestinian state has a chance to emerge in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, we must think about . . . power, water, schools, hospitals, roads. The first duty of any elected official should be to develop his country, not to develop his arsenal" (quoted in Rubin 1994: 82). The first input to restore and develop the Old City of Hebron as a step toward building a Palestinian state came from him and his council. It is also telling that his son, Khaled al-Qawasme, played a driving role in the HRC as the head of its engineering office from the establishment of the organization until the late 2000s, when he became minister of local government in various Fatah administrations; as this book goes to press, Khaled al-Qawasme was elected a member of Hebron's municipal council.

10. Sellick 1994: 74–75.

11. Jamil, interview with author, Hebron, December 12, 2006. The board of the new HRC in 1996 comprised local political figures who were close to Arafat and Fatah while the people from the polytechnic who had started the restoration works in the late 1980s became the HRC's engineering office, that is, its executive arm. In the early 2010s, the latest period for which I have available data, the HRC's board counted fifteen members, including key local figures and institutions: the mayor of Hebron and the governor of the district, several ministers from the city, and representatives of the local civil society such as the president of the chamber of commerce.

12. HRC director, interview with author, Hebron, November 11, 2006.

13. This list of objectives appeared on several HRC leaflets as well as on the organization's website (http://www.hebronrc.org) at the time of my main fieldwork in Hebron between September and December 2006; as this book goes to press, different objectives are listed on the new HRC website.

14. Hamdan 2008.

15. http://www.hebronrc.ps/index.php/en/about-hrc/mission-and-objectives (accessed July 3, 2018).

16. This same expression ("[HRC is] like a government here") came up in several interviews I carried out in the Old City, including with the organization's director and with a prominent local activist, conducted on September 25 and 26, 2011, respectively.

17. See Ann Laura Stoler's (2008: esp. 194) engagement of Walter Benjamin to develop her idea of "ruination" to address the ongoing social devastation produced by colonialism as well as productive, agentive engagements with it.

18. A very good example of a shrine once shared by the three monotheistic religions and recently turned into a quasi-military base is Rachel's Tomb in Bethlehem. A historical example is the Church of the Nativity, which merges the structures of a church and a fortress. For shared shrines, see Bowman 1993.

19. See, for example, B'Tselem 1994.

20. According to the Bible, Hebron is relevant not only for Abraham's tradition and the location of the tombs of several patriarchs and matriarchs (Genesis 23:9–19, 25:9) but also as the first capital of King David (2 Samuel 5:3–5).

21. The Palestinian occupied territories have been the object of a large-scale settlement project since their invasion by the State of Israel in 1967—in violation of international law and against the grain of UN Resolution 242. The Oslo Agreements did not bring an end to Israeli settlement. On the contrary, settler numbers have more than doubled since the early 1990s, today standing at approximately 590,000 (see http://www.btselem.org/settlements/statistics and http://www.fmep.org/settlement_info/ [accessed December 15, 2018]). Under the Oslo "interim" arrangements—which in practice were never superseded, because a final agreement failed to take place—the settlements are under Israeli jurisdiction, and Israel controls movement within, into, and out of the territories. These colonies are widely regarded as a major obstacle to the resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The growth of the settlements, and of the network of Israeli-only bypass roads that connects them, has turned the West Bank into a series of enclaves that some analysts have compared with South African Bantustans under apartheid (Yiftachel and Yacobi 2005). Many commentators are skeptical that such disconnected enclaves can ever become a viable sovereign polity (e.g., Halper 2000; Hilal 2007). In this context, Hebron can be seen as a condensed microcosm of the conditions that characterize the West Bank as a whole.

22. See Article 49 of the Fourth Geneva Convention, ratified by Israel in 1951.

23. See Weizman 2007: esp. 87ff. The relationship between political and religious Zionism—whether one of continuity or discontinuity—is a matter of debate: while both settlers and anti-Zionists argue for continuity, see Taub 2010 (esp. loc. 81–87), others distinguish a good "Zionism as the liberation of people," the Zionism of the pre-state pioneers, from an illiberal, religious "Zionism as redemption of the land." Israeli governments of all colors, however, have supported, more or less openly, the settlers movement, for example by authorizing outposts and the expansion of existing settlements as well as subsidizing them, and this well before the recent rightward turn of the Israeli electorate and the deepening hold of religious Zionism and settlers on all dimensions of Israeli politics. According to Idith Zertal and Akiva Eldar (2007: xvii), "The expansion of the settlements would not have been possible without massive aid from various state institutions, without legal sanction, and without the expedient and affective ties woven between the settlers and the military. The settlements flourished not only with the authorities' seal of approval but also with official encouragement and at the government's initiative." According to the same study, an "unfathomable amount" of state funding, intentionally concealed from public view, has gone into the settlements "through innumerable tracks" (Zertal and Eldar 2007: xxi).

24. Muller 2004: 13ff. While no proper statistics are available, and there are discordant accounts, in the case of the West Bank as a whole most settlers seem to move in essentially out of economic rather than ideological reasons, that is, to take advantage of cheap, subsidized housing and economic incentives provided by the state (Taub 2010: loc. 317, n. 13). Yet the ideological core of the settler movement has always led and shaped the overall effort.

25. See Taub 2010: esp. chaps. 2 and 3.

26. C. Smith 2004: 126. Members and descendants of the old Jewish community of Hebron have all, apart from one person, dissociated themselves from and called for the evacuation of the settlers (see Muller 2004: 11). For Zertal and Eldar (2007: esp. 248ff.), the eradication of what settlers perceive as the ancient shame of Jews massacred in Hebron plays a major role in fueling a culture of death, or rather of revenge and renewal in a calculated play with death.

27. Interview with David Wilder; see https://www.ilfattoquotidiano.it/2011/08/30/hebron-lo-stato-di-palestina-si-ma-in-texas/154243/ (accessed December 15, 2018), emphasis added.

28. For the beginning of Hebron's settlement, see Zertal and Eldar 2007: 16–29. A few influential Labor voices within the executive, such as then deputy prime minister Yigal Allon, proved crucial by supporting the settlers in manifold ways. But David Ben-Gurion himself is quoted as saying right after the 1967 occupation: "We now control Jerusalem, and this is one of the greatest of events—one of the first things that must be done is build neighborhoods . . . to immediately settle the Jewish Quarter. If there are empty Arab houses, we'll put Jews into them as well. The same is true for Hebron. . . . I am sure that with the current mood, the people will go" (Barzilai 2002, quoted in Zertal and Eldar 2007: 17, emphasis added).

29. Zertal and Eldar 2007: 21.

30. See "The Master Plan," Committee for the Renewal of Jewish Settlement in the City of the Patriarchs, 1984, cited in Sellick 1994: 75; see also Muller 2004: 45–46.

31. Levinson and Haaretz Service 2010.

32. See Zertal and Eldar 2007: 85.

33. For the full text of the Hebron Protocol, see http://www.tiph.org/en/About_TIPH/Protocol_concerning_the_redeployment_in_Hebron/ (accessed December 18, 2018); see also "The Hebron Protocol," *Journal of Palestine Studies* 26, no. 3 (1997): 131–145.

34. Said 1997: 31.

35. There are no recent published statistics for the Hebron settlements, but this is the figure most UN organizations rely on; for general settlements' statistics, see http://www.btselem.org/settlements/statistics.

36. B'Tselem 2007.

37. OCHA, the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs in the occupied Palestinian territories, estimated that during the Second Intifada the Israeli Defense Force imposed 584 days of curfew in the Old City of Hebron (see Ma'an Development Center 2008: 18). The same organization counted 101 army checkpoints and various blocks there in August 2005 (OCHA, *Hebron Old City—Status of Closures*, August 2005, https://www.ochaopt.org/content/hebron-oldcity-h2-oct-2005, accessed December 28, 2018) and between 76 and 89 movement restrictions, including observation towers and walls, in 2008 (Ma'an Development Center 2008: 17). For a description of the routine of abuse, harassment, thefts, and attacks to Palestinians, both people and property, in Hebron, see http://www.btselem.org/topic/hebron with related reports; see also the human rights reports and news flashes on the HRC's website at http://www.hebronrc.ps/index.php/en/.

38. These data are based on the PCBS (Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics) 1996 demographic survey of Hebron and were given to me by HRC's staff during my fieldwork in 2006.

39. The ethnographic material and all quotes in this section come from interviews I carried out with residents in the Old City of Hebron during my main fieldwork there between September and December 2006. All names are pseudonyms.

40. Yatta is a large village to the south of Hebron. Many of the newcomer families who have moved to the Old City in recent years as a result of the HRC's work come from this or other villages in the Hebron district.

41. Su'ad, interview with author, Hebron, November 16, 2006.

42. Most of the Old City is historically *waqf* property, that is, inalienable endowments. Many buildings are religious endowments, but many others are so-called *waqf dhurri,* namely, "a type of *waqf* collectively owned by a particular family or clan and dedicated to that family's use in perpetuity: entitlement to revenue is shared among the eligible beneficiaries" (Sellick 1994: 72). As mentioned earlier, the wealthy members of Hebron's clans have moved out, leaving only their poorest relatives to stay behind in the Old City in the old family property.

43. According to HRC's surveys, in 2000 there were 7,044 residents in the Old City, while in 2014 this number had risen to 11,954 (HRC 2015: esp. 62).

44. See Tamari 2001: 3. Another salient feature of life in the Old City is the low degree of mobility out of the area. According to the 1999 survey, 42 percent of residents said that they rarely

see relatives who live outside the Old City, and they reported a strong feeling of confinement and isolation.

45. According to recent HRC data, the percentages are still similar.

46. Having completed the restoration of the so-called first circle as the Second Intifada began, in the early 2000s the HRC began work on the "second circle" (and the "third circle"), that is, in areas like the neighborhoods of Qeitun and Harat al-Shaykh that lie farther from the shrine and the Israeli settlements but function as bridges connecting the Old and New Cities, H1 and H2. The Jaber neighborhood in particular was strategically important and has been the target of intense colonization and restoration activities because it is located between the Haram or Tomb of the Patriarchs and the settlement of Kiryat Arba to the east.

47. See Mitchell 2002; Meskell 2005.

48. See esp. Tamari 2008: chap. 3.

49. Compare Michael Dumper's (2014) analysis of Jerusalem as a *many-bordered* city, that is, as a site of many shifting and intersecting borders.

50. Basil, interview with author, Hebron, November 10, 2006.

51. See Allen 2013.

52. With the Second Intifada and the targeted destruction of Palestinian institutions by Israel—what Baruch Kimmerling (2003) has called "politicide"—lawlessness became a major issue also in the areas under PA jurisdiction, that is, also in H1. With an extremely weakened PA, this was the case in 2006, at the time of my longest fieldwork period in Hebron. More recently, things have improved in this regard, chiefly because the then boycotted Hamas government has been replaced by a Western-backed Fatah one. Yet lawlessness remains a major problem, especially in areas such as H2.

53. Basma, interview with author, Hebron, November 25, 2006.

54. Nur, interview with author, Hebron, December 4, 2006.

55. Mahmud, interview with author, Hebron, December 4, 2006.

56. Hassan, conversation with author, Hebron, November 20, 2006.

57. See Jean-Klein 2003: esp. 568.

58. For a classic approach to state-society relations in the third world emphasizing a struggle between the state and other social organizations and social organizing logics, see Migdal 1988.

59. To protect the rights of Palestinian civilians in the Old City, the HRC's legal unit has worked mainly in two directions: documenting Israeli violations in the Old City and helping citizens lodge complaints with the Israeli police and the Israeli judiciary over the many cases of property appropriations and demolition and of violence. For example, the HRC successfully appealed to the Israeli Supreme Court in 2011 to limit the number of historic buildings (from twenty-two down to nine) to be demolished for the construction of a (settlers-only) road connecting the Haram/Tomb of the Patriarchs with the nearby settlement of Kiryat Arba. Whether this can be considered a victory is a matter of debate, however, for going to Israeli courts and relying on the occupier's judiciary can also be considered close to a Palestinian sanctioning of the occupation (Allen 2009).

60. All quotes in this paragraph come from my interview with this same international activist that took place in Hebron on November 29, 2006.

61. HRC and Riwaq 2002; HRC 2015.

62. Hanan, interview with author, Hebron, September 25, 2011.

63. E.g., Tabar and Salamanca 2015.

64. See Hodder 2012.

65. See http://www.alternativenews.org/english/index.php/component/content/article/2-hebron/4145-open-shuhada-street (accessed December 15, 2018); see also the website of Youth Against Settlements, one of the recently formed groups of Hebron activists who have been active in the Open Shuhada Street campaign, http://www.youthagainstsettlements.org.

66. In the early years, the PA was the most important donor of the HRC. Also, Saudi and Arab League funding (through the Islamic Development Bank and the Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development) played a major role. The latter donors still contribute a large share of the

HRC's budget, because they are keen on maintaining the Arab-Islamic identity of Hebron, which is considered the fourth holiest city in Islam after Mecca, Medina, and Jerusalem. However, as of the early 2010s, the major sponsor of the Hebronite organization was the Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation, which strongly focuses on peace building; other European donors with a more culture-oriented development approach like the Swedish International Development Agency in particular have also played an important role in supporting the rehabilitation of Old Hebron. The PA has repeatedly pledged renewed support for the HRC in various forms, such as much needed funding for maintenance works directly through its ministry of finance, but it is often unable to keep its promises. This information comes from several interviews I carried out with HRC employees and development agency representatives in Hebron in November 2006 and September 2011; see also the HRC's annual reports at http://www.hebronrc.ps/index.php/en/about-hrc/annual-reports.

67. Laïdi-Hanieh 2006.

68. In the early 2010s, an ever-cash-strapped PA has not been able to keep its promise of continuing support for the Old City, and it has discontinued, among others, the program of incentives for shop owners that it had pledged as part of the *'Amar ya baladi* campaign.

69. HRC's director, interview with author, Hebron, September 25, 2011.

70. James Scott calls this practical knowledge *metis*, see Scott 1998: esp. 313ff.

71. See Bank and Richter 2010; Hinnebusch 2015.

72. Singerman 1995; see also, for example, Bayat 2010.

73. Feldman 2008.

74. Fassin 2012.

75. HRC administrator Ahmad, conversation with author, Hebron, May 24, 2006.

76. HRC's director, interview with author, Hebron, September 25, 2011.

77. See Agier 2010, 2011.

78. Elyachar 2015: 856; see also Elyachar 2002.

79. Agier 2010.

80. Sherwood 2015.

81. Hani, conversation with author, Hebron, May 18, 2006.

82. HRC employee Nawwal, interview with author, November 10, 2006.

83. Recently the HRC has attempted to strengthen residents' participation in the maintenance of their historic buildings: while the HRC provides materials and engineer supervisors, the residents carry out the actual maintenance work by themselves (HRC 2017: 40).

84. Randa, interview with author, Hebron, December 8, 2006.

85. Compare Ananya Roy's discussion of how "regimes of civic governmentality" in Beirut and Mumbai produce subjects that are "simultaneously empowered and self-disciplined, civil and mobilized, displaced and compensated" (Roy 2009: 161).

86. For the production of Palestinian subjects as victims by the humanitarian discourse, see Fassin 2008; see also Feldman 2007. Diane Enns but also Sari Hanafi, Achille Mbembe (2003), and Alessandro Petti (2007) have borrowed Giorgio Agamben's terminology to explain the subjectivities inhabiting the isolated Palestinian Bantustans as akin to the *Muselmann*, the inhabitant of the camp reduced to bare, naked life—an occupied body stripped of rights, living a life that has the quality of death; see Enns 2004. Mbembe and Petti emphasize the spatial framing of this subjectification process.

87. Also for the immediately following quotes, see http://www.hebronrc.ps/index.php/en/about-us (accessed December 18, 2018).

88. For this particular Palestinian understanding of "citizenship" as activism and political participation as opposed to passive, formal membership in a political community, see Hammami and Johnson 1999.

89. The legacy of the ideology of charitable giving is much more pronounced in Fatah committees and organizations than in leftist ones.

90. Basma, interview with author, Hebron, November 25, 2006.

91. See esp. Allen 2009; Fassin 2008.

92. For a similar process and similar claims made by Palestinian refugees to UNRWA, see Feldman 2007; Gabiam 2012.

93. Fassin 2012.

CHAPTER 3

Portions of this chapter are drawn from Chiara De Cesari, "Creative Heritage: Palestinian Heritage NGOs and Defiant Arts of Government," *American Anthropologist* 112, no. 4 (December 2010).

1. Compare the UK experience with participation and involvement under Blairite Labor in the 1990s, see Waterton 2010; Waterton and Smith 2010.

2. The participation in the 2004 presidential elections of a chief protagonist of the NGO movement such as Mustafa Barghouthi—and his ability to capture approximately 20 percent of the vote—attests to the governing aspirations of Palestinian civil society; see also Barghouthi 2007. As this book goes to press, no elections, presidential or national, had taken place since 2005, when Hamas won; the 2005 elections precipitated a conflict between Hamas and Fatah and later a split between Islamist-run Gaza and a Fatah-controlled West Bank and a long-lasting political and legislative impasse.

3. Shikaki 2002. For other pundits, this view of a strong opposition between the returnees and the local political cadre is too simplistic, see Hilal 2002; Tamari 2002.

4. Robinson 1997.

5. For example, Hammami 2000; Nakhleh 2004: esp. 202; Hanafi and Tabar 2005.

6. See Jamil Hilal's 2002 discussion of elite formation in Palestine.

7. Especially Hammami 2000; see also Jamal 2007; Challand 2009; Allen 2013.

8. N. Brown 2003.

9. See Fadda 2014.

10. Riwaq 2006.

11. Scott 1998: 9–83.

12. From the introduction to *Riwaq's Registry of Historic Buildings in Palestine*, vol. 3: Photographs, 2007.

13. https://icahd.org (accessed July 3, 2018); for the meaning of house demolitions, see Azoulay 2013.

14. If not otherwise noted, the quotes in this section come from my interview with Rema, Ramallah, November 8, 2006.

15. Handler 1985: 210.

16. Shehadeh 2007.

17. E.g., Hanafi and Tabar 2005; Hammami 2006.

18. For an in-depth analysis of this sense of political disillusionment and the ingrained cynicism in Palestinian politics post-2000, see Allen 2013.

19. Allen 2008.

20. Ordinance No. 51/1929, see Maniscalco 2005. In Jordan, the 1966 law was actually amended in 1976 (Hamdan 2005: 19). The discontinuous and fragmented nature of legal regimes in the occupied Palestinian territories is striking (Kersel 2015). In the case of regulations for the protection of cultural heritage, four laws apply: the 1966 Jordanian Law of Antiquities and now the new heritage law in areas A and B of the West Bank; the same Jordanian law but with amendments by Israeli military orders in area C; Egyptian law based on a 1937 British law in the Gaza Strip; and in annexed East Jerusalem the Israeli Law of Antiquities of 1978 applies de facto.

21. Other drawbacks of the amended law of 1966 include its provision for the alienation of cultural property at the discretion of the director of the Department of Antiquities, who has large powers, and the vagueness of its framework for the protection of movable heritage (Kersel 2008, 2015).

22. Birzeit University Institute of Law 2005. If not otherwise noted, my discussion of this draft law draws on the draft text itself as well as on my interviews with the director of Birzeit's Institute

of Law and several Riwaq employees who participated in the drafting and lobbying process. All interviews were conducted in October–November 2005 and April–May 2006 as well as in September 2011 in Ramallah and Birzeit.

23. Legislative activity has been at a standstill since 2007 in the context of the power struggle between democratically elected Hamas and Fatah, the arrest of several Palestinian members of Parliament by Israel, and the division between Gaza and the West Bank. Since the split, the PLC has not convened, with Palestinian president Mahmoud Abbas ruling through presidential decrees. But the broader political context is not the only factor in the postponement of the heritage law.

24. Resolution of the Higher Planning Council in its session number (2006/4) on March 2006 under Resolution 54: approval of general provisions for the protection of historic areas and individual historic buildings. These provisions are part of the Building and Planning System for Certified Local Authorities, Resolution 30 of the Higher Planning Council, dated August 24, 1996.

25. For the colonial legacy of the Department of Antiquities, see Taha 2010; Yahya 2010; Bshara 2013; for similar developments in Jordan, see Maffi 2009; Daher and Maffi 2014.

26. For how informality constitutes a key technology of colonial, cryptocolonial, and postcolonial governance, see Gupta 2013; see also Hull 2012.

27. While the law was originally intended to cover both natural and cultural heritage, this proposal was dropped because of conflicts of competence between various ministries and governmental agencies, and especially between the Ministry of Agriculture, the Ministry of Culture, and MOTA.

28. Birzeit University Institute of Law 2005: esp. 29–33; see also al-Jubeh 2006.

29. In June 2018 Mahmoud Abbas signed into force Decree Law No. 11/2018 on tangible cultural heritage. This law protects historic buildings and sites dating to before World War I, but for several of my informants among Palestinian NGO practitioners, it centralizes too many tasks in the Department of Antiquities without empowering it with the resources necessary to undertake them. The effects this law will have on the ground remain to be seen. See http://www.unesco.org/new/en/ramallah/about-this-office/single-view/news/joint_statement_the_palestinian_ministry_of_tourism_and_anti/ (accessed June 30, 2018).

30. Riwaq member Hanan, interview with author, Ramallah, April 27, 2006.

31. al-Jubeh 2006: 7.

32. al-Jubeh 2006: 5–6, my translation.

33. For the ways aid to the Palestinian was political, see Brynen 1996; Le More 2008. For a discussion of the conflicts between the PA and the NGOs in the 1990s, at a time when the PA definitively had the upper hand, see Hammami 2000; Jamal 2007. Jamal's discussion, however, is to be taken with a grain of salt, as it arguably overemphasizes the authoritarian character of the PA, treating it as a sovereign state free of both foreign occupation and heavy donors' conditionalities (see Hilal 2007). According to several scholars, such authoritarianism was largely built into the Oslo framework and its prioritizing of Israeli security, which forced Arafat to silence strong internal dissensus (Hilal and Khan 2004).

34. For the notion of politicide, see Kimmerling 2003.

35. al-Jubeh 2006: 10, my translation, emphasis added.

36. See also the text of the new draft law: Birzeit University Institute of Law 2005: 30. This blend of heritage, social justice, and neoliberalism is not a feature unique to Palestinian heritage NGOs. These NGOs are at the forefront of a new globally circulating discourse organized around the idea of a heritage by and for the people overcoming the old state monopoly model, a discourse that has driven heated debates in different national contexts (see De Cesari 2019). For example, in 2000 the German Green Party proposed a restructuring of the German heritage management away from "authoritarian state models" to create a dialogue between heritage's different stakeholders: the proposal called for a consistent withdrawal of the state (in German, *Entstaatlichung*, literally "destatization") as the way to democratize the past (Holtorf 2007).

37. Ferguson 2004: 384.

38. The idea that "NGOs are alone on the ground" while the PA is absent is common among NGO practitioners in Palestine.

39. See Mitchell 1991 for the blurred boundaries between the state and civil society.

40. Jessop 2008: 128; see also Jessop 2016. For a Foucauldian anthropology of the state, see Ferguson and Gupta 2002; Aretxaga 2003; Gupta and Sharma 2006.

41. For example, Abrams 1988; Mbembe 1992; Aretxaga 2003; Navaro-Yashin 2012.

42. For a "disaggregated" view of the state, see Gupta 2012: esp. 71–72.

43. Yasser, interview with author, Ramallah, May 4, 2006.

44. See for India, Gupta 2012; for Pakistan, Hull 2012.

45. Feldman 2008: esp. 27.

46. Compare Wedeen 2003.

47. Mahmud, conversation with author, Ramallah, September 2, 2004.

48. Former civil servant in MOTA, interview with author, Ramallah, November 8, 2006.

49. Nura, interview with author, Ramallah, October 27, 2005.

50. The following critical statement by an old rather conservative archaeologist highlights the different understandings of "destruction" and "reuse" of heritage: "They [urban rehabilitation-focused NGOs] destroy when they reuse. The result of their work is dead, ugly buildings. This is no way to do things, there is no research. Old houses are not for people to live in, otherwise they are destroyed. Then, you need research before, also in order to return it to how it was before. Like they do it in Italy, they use past materials and not new materials. Sometimes [after a building is restored] you will not believe it is our building." Yasser, interview with author, Ramallah, May 4, 2006.

51. For the politics of the international aid to Palestine, see, e.g., Le More 2008.

52. For the logic and history of World Heritage, see Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 2006; Meskell 2016, 2018.

53. On October 31, 2011, UNESCO's general conference voted to admit Palestine as a member state by a large majority; 107 countries voted in favor, 14 voted against (including the United States, Israel, Germany, Canada, and Australia), and 52 abstained. Soon afterward, the United States and Israel, who had strongly opposed this move, announced their retaliation against UNESCO and Palestine. The United States immediately halted its UNESCO contributions, throwing the organization into chaos and forcing a revision of its overall budget (the United States had just contributed about 22 percent of UNESCO's budget). Israel not only withheld its UNESCO contribution but also immediately punished the PA, announcing the construction of two thousand more housing units in its West Bank and East Jerusalem settlements, as well as halting the transfer of the tax revenues it collects for the PA.

54. DACH 2005.

55. De Cesari 2010b, 2014.

56. Beaumont 2017.

57. For example, Meskell 2016, 2018.

58. See De Cesari 2019.

59. While UNESCO usually does not fund projects directly, in Palestine it funded some conservation projects and mobilized other monies for the sites included in the tentative list, together with supporting a range of capacity-building activities. For DACH, the collaboration with UNESCO meant, if not much enhanced operational capacity, at least a certain heritagization of the language of its employees, previously dominated by the old antiquities-and-archaeology idiom.

60. For an analysis of the structural limitations of UNESCO's initiatives in East Jerusalem and its dependency on Israel's goodwill, see Dumper and Larkin 2012.

61. In 1994, the only inventory of archaeological sites available to the Palestinian authorities was a list compiled during the British Mandate, last updated in 1944 and therefore containing only sites dating from before AD 1700. Israel's refusal to share more information with the Palestinian authorities has continued, despite instructions in the Oslo Accords compelling the occupying power to hand over the results of more recent archaeological surveys as well as maps (Negotiation Support Unit representative, interview with author, Ramallah, October 22, 2004). In response to this stalemate, between 1999 and 2000, a large-scale survey of cultural resources was carried out by the Department of Antiquities and the Ministry of Culture under the supervision of the Palestinian

Economic Council for Development and Reconstruction (PECDAR), with funding from the World Bank (PECDAR 2002). PECDAR is an institution founded by the PLO in 1993 for the purpose of coordinating donors' aid and drafting economic policy, as well as providing technical assistance (see http://www.pecdar.ps). The involvement of both the chief Palestinian development planning institution and the World Bank shows how heritage is understood as functional to long-term economic growth through tourism development. At the time the survey was started, that is, before the explosion of the Second Intifada in 2000, tourism was still seen by several agencies as a feasible development strategy in Palestine. While from 2000 until very recently, such development-centered approaches have been sidelined in favor of humanitarian relief because of the emergency circumstances, tourism is now back on both donors' and Palestinian agendas for the West Bank.

62. My notes from the third day of the Conference on Cultural Heritage in Palestine, Jericho, February 22, 2006. This is a rather heteronormative pun on the fact that the long-term UNESCO cultural specialist, a man who remained, exceptionally, in his Palestinian job for nearly ten years, would have much preferred to marry the (female) NGO director and author of the UNESCO-DACH marriage metaphor rather than the (male) head of DACH.

63. Feras Hammami (2016) has discussed the conflicts over the restoration of a number of heritage sites in Nablus—such as the local community covering the Christian architectural elements that heritage professionals had uncovered in a mosque—in terms of the internal Palestinian conflict between the so-called returnees (those, especially PLO militants, who were in exile and returned to Palestine with the establishment of the PA in 1994) and the *samidin*, or steadfast (those who had stayed in Palestine). In such clashes, I instead see a conflict between expert and nonexpert notions of heritage, much less one articulated along the local-global divide, which obscures more than it reveals in these cases (because the nonexpert past of community-based organizations such as neighborhood and mosque committees is transnationalized in complex ways too).

64. The fact that this domesticated east has strong Christian overtones is partly due to a larger process of commodification of the past for tourism development that has curiously affected Israeli biblical archaeology as well (see Scham 2009). In Israel, this is partly motivated by the need to appeal to and mobilize funding from the vast and fertile reservoir of American evangelical Christians.

65. While the Bethlehem 2000 project essentially failed because of the explosion of the Second Intifada and the fact that the millions of expected tourists never arrived to celebrate the birth of Jesus and the new era of Palestinian statehood, it generated quite a number of lasting heritage initiatives, including the heritage law.

66. After long delays, the PA submitted Battir's nomination under an emergency procedure right before the closing deadline in January 2014. The PA was reluctant and had earlier stopped Battir's nomination procedure because of informal agreements with the United States and Israel in an attempt to get a seat back at the negotiating table. But the site was important politically for locals and activists. Battir is a West Bank village with a unique living historic landscape and an irrigated-farming system dating back to the Roman period. This cultural landscape and the village's inhabitants were threatened by the construction of the so-called separation wall, which would have caused grave damage to the heritage of Battir and would have meant the loss of large tracts of land for Palestinian villagers, who appealed to the Israeli High Court of Justice to stop its construction. In January 2015 the court froze the state plan to build the wall in Battir, and the fact that the site was officially recognized as heritage of universal value played a key role in the decision; see https://www.forensic-architecture.org/battir-wins-case-wall/ (accessed July 3, 2018).

67. See CCHP 2005, 2011; HRC 2015.

68. To get things going, the PA created in 2009 the Presidential Committee for the Restoration of the Nativity Church, which has been overseeing a long-term effort of study and conservation funded by more than twenty donors—local, Arab, and European—but things have proceeded at a very slow pace.

69. See, for example, Holtorf 2007.

70. Sa'di and Abu-Lughod 2007.

71. Nazmi al-Jubeh, conversation with author, Salfit (West Bank), October 20, 2007.

72. See Hanafi 2009.

73. Field notes, tour of Riwaq's projects, Northern West Bank, October 20, 2007.

74. Peck and Theodore 2015.

75. See, for example, World Bank 2001.

76. For example, Nura, interview with author, Ramallah, April 27, 2006. Several Palestinian heritage practitioners stressed this point in a number of conversations and interviews with me over the years.

77. SIDA representative Maria, interview with author, Jerusalem, March 20, 2006.

78. Donors' funding has not always been beneficial and tends to be seen by Palestinians as a corrupting influence. Critics have accused some Palestinian NGOs of being *dakakin* (literally "shops" in Arabic), meaning essentially businesses siphoning off development funding for private enrichment and sustaining patronage networks (see Challand 2009; Allen 2013). However, heritage NGOs have maintained a high reputation among Palestinians, unlike some NGOs in other fields such as human rights that are seen as more prone to donors' agendas and more thoroughly shaped by them (esp. Allen 2013).

79. While the global average for heritage preservation is usually around less than 1 percent of a single donor's total disbursement, some agencies in Palestine, such as SIDA and the Islamic Development Bank, have at times devoted up to 10–15 percent of their yearly budgets (beside humanitarian assistance) to projects in this field; others, like the Spanish and Italian cooperation agencies, have devoted between 2 percent and 5 percent of their budgets to it (these data come from the interviews I conducted with several donor agencies' representatives in Ramallah and Jerusalem between January and June 2006 as well as in 2011). This is striking, as is the clear disjuncture between Palestinian organizations' stated objectives to preserve cultural heritage and the objectives of their international donors. To put it bluntly, from the donors' perspective, the main objective for funding heritage projects is not heritage preservation but a variety of other goals, most often employment generation. Despite these relatively large disbursements for heritage, the latter does not even figure in the policy guidelines of many donors.

80. For an overview of Riwaq's job creation scheme, see Bshara 2011. In the approximately one hundred buildings restored as of December 2013, Riwaq employed an average of fifteen workers for five months per site, with a total budget of US$6.5 million; see http://www.riwaq.org/job-creation (accessed February 16, 2017).

81. SIDA representative Julia, interview with author, Jerusalem, September 21, 2011. SIDA has been a key donor to heritage in Palestine, and it is the only development agency that has articulated clear objectives and policy guidelines for Palestine that are concerned with the management of cultural resources—but this happened only belatedly when the agency became aware of its own extensive involvement in the field through job creation; see SIDA 2004, 2005a, 2005b. However, according to some Palestinian practitioners, it is likely that this agency will withdraw from its involvement in Palestinian heritage in the near future because of shifting priorities.

82. Costantini, Salameh, and Issa 2015: 92.

83. Nazmi al-Jubeh, conversation with author, Northern West Bank, October 20, 2007.

84. Suad Amiry, interview with author, Ramallah, April 27, 2006.

85. Suad Amiry, interview with author, Ramallah, April 27, 2006.

86. Riwaq has a specific unit dedicated to community outreach; other units of Riwaq are conservation, rehabilitation and development, registry, and research.

87. Bshara and Amiry 2015.

88. Reema, interview with author, Ramallah, October 10, 2018.

89. Nugent 2004.

90. Scott 1998; see also Wedeen 2003.

91. https://www.qalandiyainternational.org/riwaq2018 (accessed July 3, 2018).

92. Jamal, interview with author, Ramallah, November 21, 2006.

93. Hammami, Hilal, and Tamari 2001: 215.

94. Interview, Ramallah, April 27, 2006.

95. For the Riwaq's art and architecture biennials as creative institution building, see Bshara 2017.

96. In contrast to Tsing 2005.

97. American development expert Tom, interview with author, Jerusalem, March 2006.

98. Official White House transcript, emphasis added; see https://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2005/05/20050522-4.html (accessed December 12, 2018).

99. The target of widespread critiques in Palestine for its top-down, managerial, deeply politicized, and outright neoliberal approach, USAID often uses international intermediaries such as US for-profit development companies, to implement its schemes; see Challand 2009: esp. 81; also Le More 2008.

100. UNESCO cultural specialist Leo, conversation with author, Bolgheri (Italy), December 28, 2011.

101. DACH director, interview with author, September 22, 2011.

102. International development expert Susan, interview with author, Ramallah, September 27, 2011.

103. For a discussion of how "vibrant" civil societies can develop under "weak" or "authoritarian" states in the Arab world, see Wedeen 2003.

104. See Aretxaga 2003: esp. 395; Allen 2013; Krupa and Nugent 2015.

105. For a powerful discussion of the ways in which civil society actors both ridicule and reproduce the state in Turkey, see Navaro-Yashin 2002.

CHAPTER 4

Portions of this chapter are drawn from Chiara De Cesari, "Anticipatory Representation: Building the Palestinian Nation(-State) through Artistic Performance," *Studies in Ethnicity and Nationalism* 12, no. 1 (2012).

1. This scene has been captured in a number of documentaries, including John Pilger's *Palestine Is Still the Issue* (2002). Liana Badr told me this story in an email exchange over the summer of 2014. If not otherwise noted, quotes in this section come from this conversation.

2. Kimmerling 2003: 3.

3. Jack Persekian (2015) counted seventeen lost art exhibitions and started research to recover them.

4. Badr's story tells of the ways in which art and politics are often woven together in Palestinians' lives. She comes from a family made refugees in 1967, and much of her literary writings are devoted to women's contribution to nationalist resistance, including an oral history of the women who survived the 1976 massacre in Lebanon's Tell al-Za'atar refugee camp. She also married into politics. Her husband is Yasser Abed Rabbo, a prominent center-left Palestinian politician.

5. As she explains in her interview with Ahdaf Soueif, see Soueif 2004.

6. Compare Ann Laura Stoler's 2010 reading "along the grain" of the colonial archive as instrument of governance.

7. Coombes 2003; Meskell 2012.

8. For example, Hammami 2004; Sa'di and Abu-Lughod 2007.

9. Halberstam 2011: esp. 7.

10. See Khaldi 2015.

11. Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics 2014.

12. Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics 2018; see also "Introduction to the Palestinian Museums" 2014; Hassouna 2018.

13. "Virtual," *Oxford English Dictionary Online*, 3rd ed., December 2013. http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/223829?redirectedFrom=virtual#eid (accessed December 15, 2018).

14. Compare Peck and Theodore 2015.

15. See, for example, Boullata 2009.

16. For these new urban classes and the kind of urban experience they produce, see Taraki 2008a, 2008b.

17. See De Cesari 2010a.

18. Fadda 2014, 2016; see also Rayyan 2016.

19. Ferguson 2004: 392; see also Ferguson and Gupta 2002.

20. According to the latest definition of ICOM (2007), the International Council of Museums, a museum is "a non-profit, permanent institution in the service of society . . . which acquires, conserves, researches, communicates and exhibits the tangible and intangible heritage of humanity . . . for the purposes of education, study and enjoyment"; see http://icom.museum/the-vision/museum-definition/ (accessed October 3, 2014). National museums are usually large-scale institutions holding collections of national significance that are sponsored and often directly run by ministries, especially in the European model. A permanent national collection is a key marker of a national museum. National museums represent and reproduce the nation by displaying its heritage and its most cherished, hegemonic values (e.g., Levitt 2015).

21. For example, Pelgrom 2007: 3.

22. Doumani 2010.

23. Althusser 1971.

24. Bourdieu 1984.

25. See, for example, Bennett 1995; Bal 1996; Shaw 2003.

26. St. Laurent and Taşkömür 2014. For museums and archaeology in the Ottoman empire, see Shaw 2003; Bahrani, Çelik, and Eldem 2011.

27. Bedouins and archaeologists from the late 1940s onward have unearthed the oldest known Hebrew Bible manuscripts in the archaeological site of Qumran, now run as an Israeli national park despite being located in the West Bank in internationally recognized Palestinian territory. For Israel's policies toward Palestinian cultural properties in the occupied territory, and especially Qumran's collection, see Oyediran 1997: 60–61.

28. The poststructuralist concept of the "constitutive outside" (Butler 1993; Derrida 1984) refers to a relational understanding of identity as presupposing alterity: identities are constituted through their relation to what they are not, but this otherness is excluded and repressed to preserve the illusion of pure, self-sufficient identitarian entities (Biesta 2003: 147–148). The Israel Museum is predicated upon the suppressed, misrecognized existence of the Palestine Archaeological Museum and its collection.

29. Ibrahim 2006: 4.

30. Apart from the Dead Sea Scrolls, which have been moved to the Israel Museum, the most significant pieces of the Rockefeller's collection are the stucco decoration of the Early Islamic Palace of Qasr Hisham in Jericho; decorated wooden panels from the Haram al-Sharif; and a statue from Neolithic Jericho. There is no catalog of the museum, and its brochure, published by the Israel Museum, concentrates on the building and includes only vague mentions of the collection itself (see Ibrahim 2006).

31. See http://www.english.imjnet.org.il/page_1684 (accessed October 9, 2014).

32. St. Laurent and Taşkömür 2014.

33. See Abt 2011.

34. Breasted, quoted in Abt 1996: 557.

35. Abt 1996. In his memoirs, David Rockefeller (2002: 48) qualifies the Egyptian rejection as "inexplicabl[e]" and records that his father believed that this museum proposal had "foundered on the rocks of international politics," namely, as a result of British pressure to avoid further American involvement in Egypt.

36. Rockefeller 2002: 48.

37. To my knowledge, the other MOTA museum that was open in 2011 was a small ethnographic exhibit in Bethlehem displaying the history of olive oil production.

38. Ramallah Museum director, interview with author, Ramallah, September 22, 2011; head of the Department of Antiquities, interview with the author, Ramallah, September 24, 2011.

39. For example, head of the Department of Antiquities, interview with the author, Ramallah, September 24, 2011; see also Taha 2002; Yahya 2004.

40. Gaza City's Arts and Crafts Village, run by the municipality, was targeted and heavily damaged by Israeli air strikes in July 2018. The other main Gaza museum is a private initiative. This is a collection of archaeology called al-Mathaf (The Museum) displayed in a space attached to a hotel with the same name, which receives quite a few visitors. The collector and hotel owner, Jawdat Al-Khoudary, is a businessman who also runs a construction company, and many of the displayed antiquities have been found on his construction sites (the objects uncovered in the Israeli digs carried out in Gaza during the occupation are conserved at the Israel Museum, see Bronner 2008). Al-Khoudary hopes for the museum to be recognized as the Gaza national museum in the future, and he has been a point of reference for archaeological projects in Gaza involving major international collaborations (Abdel-Shafi 2008). Like similar museums in the West Bank, the al-Mathaf exhibit is organized around the narrative of Palestine as a crossroads of civilization (see also Shuttleworth 2014).

41. At the time of writing, the narrative museum was still officially in progress.

42. Khateeb 2008: 60, emphasis added.

43. Khateeb 2008: esp. 65.

44. See Bennett 1995.

45. See Bourdieu 1984, 1993.

46. Khateeb 2008: 81.

47. Derrida 1996.

48. Derrida 1996: 94.

49. See "Introduction to the Palestinian Museums" 2014.

50. See Harris and O'Hanlon 2013; Mazé, Poulard, and Ventura 2015; see also Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 1998.

51. See al-Qattan 2015.

52. Bourriaud 2002; Bishop 2006, 2012; Kester 2011; for the Middle East, see Downey 2016.

53. Groys 2014; Weibel 2015. There are debates as to how new this intersection of art and politics is, given that the early twentieth-century avant-garde and the so-called institutional critique from the 1960s onward were also aspiring to produce social change; for institutional critique, see Alberro and Stimson 2009.

54. Wainwright 2018.

55. Laïdi-Hanieh 2006, 2014.

56. Laïdi-Hanieh 2014.

57. Rula Khoury, interview with author, Birzeit, November 16, 2013.

58. Sakakini director Yazan Khalili, conversation with author, Ramallah, October 13, 2016.

59. Qleibo 2009.

60. For a comparison with the Egyptian art world, see Winegar 2006.

61. With the help of Palestinian collector George Al-Ama, the project has been taken up more recently by a Christian organization as an explicitly Christian endeavor, to highlight the "Palestinian Christians' national experience," signaling a departure from the nonsectarian tradition of Palestinian cultural nationalism; see http://www.hcef.org/programs/museum (accessed October 16, 2014).

62. Inas Yassin, interview with author, Birzeit, November 14, 2013. If not otherwise noted, quotes in this section come from this interview.

63. Vera Tamari, interview with author, Birzeit, November 14, 2013.

64. Inas Yassin, interview with author, Birzeit, November 14, 2013.

65. Muhammad 2002: 43.

66. See Taraki 2008a.

67. Tamari and Anani 2011.

68. Toukan 2014.

69. Khateeb 2008: 49.

70. Welfare Association 2000.

71. Khateeb 2008: 50.

72. Doumani 2010, emphasis added.

73. Doumani 2010; Beshara Doumani, interview with author, October 18, 2011, conducted on Skype.

74. al-Qattan 2015.

75. For the notion of sites of memory, see Nora 1989; for "knots of memory," see Rothberg 2010.

76. See al-Qattan 2015. The result of this project of encompassment was a survey, an exhibition, and a seminar on the state of museums in Palestine, which took place as part of the 2014 Palestinian biennial, see "Introduction to the Palestinian Museums" 2014.

77. This quote comes from a promotional video published on the museum website; see http://www.palmuseum.org/about/the-museum- (accessed October 20, 2014).

78. Information about *Never Part* is no longer on the Palestinian Museum website, but the video of the open call for people to participate in this exhibition is still available on YouTube; see https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_SZPePKIq98 (accessed 28 December 2018).

79. Toukan 2018.

80. All the headlines about the Palestinian Museum's inauguration focused on the fact that the museum opened without an exhibition; see, for example, Glanz and Nazzal 2016; "New Palestinian Museum" 2016. However, for critic Lara Khaldi (2016) there were indeed a number of exhibitions even if small (for example, about the construction process of the museum) but they went unseen by the press and many visitors, who were looking for a major show.

81. The first "satellite" exhibition of the Palestinian Museum, on embroidery, took place in Beirut; see Chapter 1, esp. n. 75. The inaugural exhibition in Birzeit, titled *Jerusalem Lives*, opened in August 2017 and ran until January 2018, see Leech 2017.

82. Pamuk 2012: 54.

83. See De Cesari 2017.

84. In the case of the Mahmoud Darwish Museum, employees are salaried directly by the PA.

85. See Sbeih 2017.

86. Once close to Arafat and a key figure of the Palestinian left, Yasser Abed Rabbo has more recently veered toward the center; he was first in the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP, or al-Jabha al-Dimuqratiyya) and later in the Palestine Democratic Union, or FIDA, which split from the DFLP over the key issue of negotiations with Israel and the two-state solution. Post-Oslo, he has been the minister of culture in a number of PA governments, and he is famous outside Palestine for his unofficial peace initiatives, such as the 2003 Geneva Accord.

87. This was a point on which both museums' directors insisted during my interviews with them; my Skype interview with Mohammad Halayka, director of the Yasser Arafat Museum, took place on March 13, 2017, while my Skype interview with Sameh Khader, director of the Mahmoud Darwish Museum, took place on March 2, 2017.

88. Khaldi 2015, 2016, building on Groys 2014.

89. See Nusseibeh 2007: 409ff; Mende, Jubeh, and Jubeh 2016.

90. De Cesari 2012a.

91. Paynter 2006.

92. See Bennett et al. 2017.

93. Rabinowitz 2006.

94. This quote appears in "Displacement and Re-placement," http://www.culturebase.net/artist.php?164 (accessed April 10, 2017).

95. See O'Reilly n.d.

96. See also Said 2000; for a discussion of contemporary Palestinian art and the role of memory in it, see Boullata 2009. For the classic Freudian theory of repetition versus mourning as alternative relationship to a traumatic past, see Freud 1917.

97. This quote by Rabah refers to his contribution to the Venice Biennial 2009 Palestinian pavilion, but can equally apply to the museum.

98. Preziosi 2010.

99. Preziosi 2010: 58, emphasis in original.

100. While in the 1990s there was no art-buying public and almost no collectors in the territories, and a for-profit gallery like Anadiel had to close, things have since changed, with commercial galleries and art auctions beginning to pick up in the Ramallah and Bethlehem area.

101. Al-Ma'mal is a small but clearly structured art workshop, with a board of directors including Palestinian artists, architects, and intellectuals, and a young and cosmopolitan staff of about ten people. Its center, which includes an exhibition space, is located in the heart of the Old City of Jerusalem. Staff oversee three main programs: the artist-in-residence, a workshops initiative to get local communities and youth to engage with art and creative self-expression, and an exhibition program. At the foundation, local and international artists live and work in Jerusalem for a few weeks, take part in workshops in the West Bank and Gaza, and participate in young people's programs with Palestinian schools, organizations, and universities.

102. Unless otherwise noted, all following quotes by Jack Persekian come from his video interview, which is part of the first installation of CAMP at the Van Abbemuseum (Eindhoven, the Netherlands), shown as part of the exhibition *The Politics of Collecting—The Collecting of Politics* (September 25, 2010–February 6, 2011). I thank Jack Persekian for providing me with a copy of the taped interview.

103. See also Balaram 2005; Rayyan 2005.

104. See Pelgrom 2007.

105. Unless otherwise noted, information and quotes in this paragraph are taken from my interview with Jack Persekian that took place in Jerusalem on September 9, 2011.

106. The presence of a "traditional" performance typical of weddings in such a setting was part of the aesthetic-political tactics of the organizers; introducing a traditional performance was a way to question, from within, a certain model of art making that is perceived as always already "Western" by contaminating it, so to speak, with folklore—a symbol of localism and local artistic traditions.

107. Issue 22 of *A Prior Magazine* is almost entirely dedicated to the *Picasso in Palestine* show; see http://aprior.org/issue/picasso_in_palestine (accessed October 20, 2014).

108. Baers 2012.

109. Since 2012 Palestine has been a nonmember observer state at the UN, which means that it can sign the organization's conventions.

110. Khaled Hourani, interview with author, Ramallah, September 29, 2011.

111. Interestingly, *Picasso in Palestine* has been—even if subtly—criticized for reproducing the old bourgeois, colonial model of exhibitions, the exhibitionary complex (Bennett 1995), by putting on display an icon of European modernism for the education of the natives in a way that excludes the majority from the community of taste that can appreciate such leisure activities. However, on several occasions during our interview, Hourani claimed to have subverted this bourgeois model with the choice of including traditional Palestinian folk music and musicians from a pop wedding band as a key part of the Picasso ceremony.

112. It is indicative in this respect that, of the many possible alternatives, the image of the project that still stands as its iconic remainder and circulating trademark is the one with the painting flanked by two PA armed guards in the middle of a white-cube-like room.

113. McGuigan 2004: esp. 62.

114. For this notion of criticality as opposed to critical distance, see Rogoff 2003, 2006.

115. All the quotes in this coda come from the transcript of an interview carried out in English by Lara Khaldi and Yazan Khalili with Jack Persekian in Ramallah in April 2013; excerpts from this interview have been published in Arabic in the 2014 exhibition catalog "Introduction to the Palestinian Museums." I am very grateful to the interviewers for sharing the transcript with me.

116. For the Riwaq biennial, see De Cesari 2010a, 2012.

117. See "Introduction to the Palestinian Museums" 2014.

118. Al-Qattan 2015.

CONCLUSION

1. Bsheer 2015.

2. I carried out a series of interviews with the heads and members of the Aqsa restoration committee, the Islamic Museum, and the departments of tourism and antiquities of the *awqaf* of the Haram al-Sharif on September 21, 2011.

3. The memory activism of joint Jewish-Palestinian initiatives in Israel such as Zochrot, promoting the memory of the Nakba in Hebrew (and the idea that Israel is accountable for its ongoing injustice), has been the object of a number of studies, see, e.g., Gutman 2017. Zochrot makes use of tactics such as (counter)mapping, political tours, and artistic activism like Riwaq and other West Bank's Palestinian organizations, but it does not restore buildings and is based on the legal model of transitional justice.

4. Around the time of my interview with a member of the foundation in September 2011, Shaykh Raed Salah was detained in London on charges of terrorism and anti-Semitism—he was later cleared—and had previously been jailed several times in Israel on similar accusations. Whether or not Israeli authorities were persecuting him on political grounds or attempting to silence the resistance of the state's Palestinian minority, as Palestinians in Israel claim, my West Bank informants did not want to be associated with the shaykh in any way.

5. For example, Cook 2014.

6. The al-Aqsa lost a famous court case over Jerusalem's Mamilla cemetery, where the Museum of Tolerance of the Simon Wiesenthal Foundation was erected; this museum has been the object of heated debates and controversies with global resonance (see, e.g., Makdisi 2010).

7. Mahmoud, interview with author, Umm al-Fahm, September 29, 2011.

8. Yiftachel 2006; see also Benvenisti 2002.

9. See Salah 2007.

10. See Ghanem and Mustafa 2014: 343. Funding has come from *zakat* from rich Palestinians from Palestine and the diaspora, and from the revival of the Islamic *waqf* concept encouraging people to leave legacies in their wills so that nobody has to apply to the Israeli state for core financing (Badwan 2014).

11. See Ghanem and Mustafa 2014: 344.

12. Berliner 2012.

13. Agier 2010.

14. Ferguson 2010.

15. For the notion of accented cultural production, see Naficy 2001.

16. Azoulay and Ophir 2012; see also Abunimah 2006; Hilal 2007.

17. For the "right to the city," see Harvey 2008.

18. Feldman 2008: 18.

19. See also Lori Allen's (2013: esp. 186) idea of state performances in Palestine being negotiated across scale; for a similar set of statelike performances and practices of stateness in a different community denied legally recognized statehood, see McConnell 2016; see also Painter 2006.

20. For similar developments in the Balkans and Caucasus, see Dunn 2012; Jeffrey 2013.

21. Khaldi 2016.

22. Omar al-Qattan, interview with author, March 22, 2017.

23. Cooper 2016; see also Cooper 2014.

24. Cooper 2017.

25. McConnell 2016: 5ff.; for an interesting comparison of nonstates aspiring to be states (like the Tibetan government in exile) mimicking state practice in diplomacy, see McConnell, Moreau, and Dittmer 2012.

26. I thank Joel Beinin for drawing my attention to this important aspect of practitioners not knowing how the conflict will be resolved, and to the political significance of such not knowing and not being able to predict the future in a context like Palestine.

27. Compare Fisher 1997; also Foucault 1978: 100–102.

28. Appadurai 2002; Ferguson and Gupta 2002.
29. De Cesari 2019.
30. For example, Elyachar 2005.
31. See also Bennett 2002.
32. De Cesari 2017.
33. Yudice 2003.
34. Collins 2015.
35. See, for example, the work of artist Jumana Emil Abboud and her collaboration with curator Lara Khaldi for the 2016 Qalandiya International's "Haunted Palestine" section.
36. Muñoz 2009: 4.

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Chiara De Cesari is Senior Lecturer of European Studies and Cultural Studies at the University of Amsterdam.

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