

PARC

Spring 2007 | Volume Nine, Issue One

*Promoting Palestinian Studies and
Scholarly Exchange on Palestinian Issues*

PALESTINIAN AMERICAN RESEARCH CENTER

PENELOPE MITCHELL | Letter from the U.S. Director

PARC has received a surge in membership and donations over the last year. Your generosity is deeply appreciated and will allow PARC to continue supporting fellowships for Palestinian scholars working in the West Bank and Gaza. A donor recognition list gratefully acknowledging your contributions over the past year is published in the center of this newsletter.

What's New

Two New Grants to PARC

An exciting new grant from the **Getty Foundation through the Council of American Overseas Research Centers (CAORC)** will provide Palestinian researchers in cultural heritage an opportunity to interact with and learn from other researchers in the Middle East and Mediterranean Basin. The grant enables two Palestinian scholars to participate in an October 2007 seminar in Istanbul, Turkey to kick off the program. Over the following three years, Palestinian scholars will be able to spend one to two months researching at one of the nine American Overseas Research Centers in the region.

Yet another new activity, the **Jerusalem Archives** project, is about to get underway. This project is part of the **Digital Library for International Research (DLIR)**, which also falls under CAORC's rubric. DLIR is an Internet-based mechanism for the standardization and electronic delivery of important bibliographic and full-text primary and secondary source information from the 19 CAORC member centers around the world. It will include research collections in print and in other media. Under the DLIR program, PARC will survey holdings in Jerusalem and index available resources. The end product will be placed on the PARC website and will provide links to these resources thus making available an invaluable research tool for scholars.

Palestine and U.S. Office Staff

PARC welcomes Abeer Nashashibi and Ghada al Madbouh to our PARC Palestine office. Abeer is our office administrator, and Ghada—a current PARC fellow—is taking the lead on a number of PARC activities over the next several months. If you are in Ramallah, please stop by the office for a visit. PARC's address and

contact information are listed in this newsletter.

Thanks go to Hiba Husseini, a prominent lawyer in Ramallah, for continuing to provide office space, support, and guidance for PARC's activities in Palestine.

PARC also welcomes Liz Gouldman, whose invaluable administrative support helps to keep the U.S. office running smoothly.

Looking Back

MESA

At the Middle East Studies Association's November conference, PARC held its annual board of directors' meeting and general membership meeting, and co-sponsored a memorial gathering for our beloved board member **Misty Gerner**. PARC is grateful for **Rhoda Kanaaneh and Isis Nusair's** work organizing PARC's double session panel on "Palestinians in Israel Revisited." Their recap of the event is highlighted in this newsletter. Ultimately, the panelists and other Palestinian scholars hope to bring their papers on this topic together in a published anthology.

Alumni/ae News

Please be sure to read about former PARC fellows and their recent activities; they have some fascinating publications coming out as a result of their research. PARC would like to do more to connect fellows with each other, to highlight former fellows' achievements, and to maintain a continuing relationship with all former fellows. I welcome your ideas on different ways to pursue these goals.

PARC's grant from the **Ford Foundation** ended in February 2007. PARC is profoundly grateful to Ford for its support of Palestinian and international fellowships.



PARC Board members (l-r) Charles Smith, Charles Butterworth, Laurie Brand, Michael Suleiman, Ellen Fleishchmann, Penelope Mitchell, Najwa al Qattan, and Ann Lesch gather at fall's MESA event.

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What's Coming Up

Board Elections

PARC's Board of Directors has two vacancies for representatives from the general membership. Thanks to our newsletter editor, Donna Geisler, PARC will be saving trees and postage and moving into the electronic age with Internet balloting. On the last pages of the newsletter you will find bios of the six exceptional candidates standing for office and information about the elections. All PARC members are encouraged to cast their ballots. If your membership has lapsed, please renew today so that you may join in the election process.

PARC Fellowships

PARC's review panels in the United States and Palestine are hard at work assessing a host of excellent applications for the 2007-8 research fellowships. The awards should be made by June, and our fall 2007 newsletter will begin to profile these new PARC fellows. Most of the current 2006-7 fellows are still engaged in their research. As everyone knows, the ever worsening conditions in Palestine have made scholars' work difficult. Not a single fellow, however, has abandoned his/her research. All persevere with determination and commitment.



Misty Gerner Award

PARC is delighted to announce the annual Misty Gerner Award to commemorate our much loved and respected colleague and PARC board member, Deborah J. "Misty" Gerner who passed away in 2006.

Misty spent more than 25 years studying, visiting, and living in the Middle East and specialized in the Arab-Israeli conflict as well as Palestinian affairs. She won awards for her excellence in teaching as well as her commitment to peace and justice. A professor at the University of Kansas since 1988, Misty also taught at Birzeit University in Palestine. She and her husband Philip Schrodt made a journey of reconnection to Palestine not long before Misty's death. An article in PARC's fall 2006 newsletter highlights some of Misty's many achievements and contributions.

To carry on Misty's legacy in Palestine, PARC will designate a Palestinian university each year to confer the Misty Gerner Award to one of its students studying in international studies, political science, or related fields. The \$500 award will be given for overall excellence. To contribute to the Misty Gerner Award fund, please send a check, payable to PARC with "Gerner Award" in the memo line, to: PARC c/o Penelope Mitchell, 6520 E. Halbert Rd., Bethesda, MD 20817-5414

Keep the PARC Newsletter Coming!

Due to increased costs of printing and mailing the newsletter, it will not be possible to continue sending complimentary copies to non-members. PARC values its membership support and wants to keep you as an active member. If you are not currently a member of PARC, please fill out the renewal form on the back page and send it in with your PARC dues to keep the PARC newsletter coming to you. (Please note: all current members are listed on the "Recognizing Your Support" page of this newsletter.)

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MESA 2006 – Palestinians in Israel Revisited

by Isis Nusair and Rhoda Kanaaneh

PARC's multidisciplinary, double-session panel entitled "Palestinians in Israel Revisited" was attended by over 75 people and included former PARC fellows Rhoda Kanaaneh and Shira Robinson on the panel. Panelists focused on Palestinians living inside Israel, a group relatively under-researched in Middle Eastern Studies compared to Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza. Nine scholars brought a rich array of perspectives to their analyses of the social, cultural, and political dimensions of Palestinian life in Israel. They analyzed and contextualized Palestinian attitudes, perspectives, and strategies in a variety of sites including the contestation of Israeli policies through Rap and Hip-Hop music, the crossing of newly established borders, the formation of political movements and the reconnection to displaced villagers, new tactics of work among Birweh women, emigration to Western countries among educated Palestinians, and acquiescence through military service in unrecognized villages.

Panel papers were grounded in a dynamic historical awareness, which gave the impact of political, economic and social transformations—the uprooting of particular populations, the shifting of state borders, the end of military administration or the change in economic opportunities—their due weight. Oral history and narrative were particularly important for several of the papers as part of a reconstruction of alternative histories beyond or against official archives. Several panelists focused on the early years following the creation of the state of Israel and the ways in which certain state policies—including military administration, emptying of villages, creation of folklore policies, relocation of populations, persecution of "infiltrators," designation of special minorities, etc.—controlled, excluded, and positioned Palestinians as second class citizens. Panel papers demonstrated that this era, although often overlooked, is key to contextualizing later changes in Palestinian life in Israel.

The papers included gender as a central focus: women's work roles and emigration patterns, men's military service, and the notion of gendered politics of location. They insisted on a contextualization of Palestinians as gendered subjects with personal and collective histories, opportunities, and strategies that are shaped by notions of femininity and masculinity. Together, the panelists contributed to a rethinking of the meaning of statelessness, location, border, and collaboration, as well as alternative readings of state exhibits, state archives, and resistance music. Undergirding their analysis was a nuanced understanding of Palestinians as agents, restricted as they may be, rather than mere victims of historical events.



Isis Nusair presents her paper at PARC's panel at MESA. Looking on are (l-r) Lisa _____, Ibtisam Ibrahim, Amal Equeiq, Rhoda Kanaaneh, and Rebecca _____

List of Participants:

- Samera Esmeir:** Abandoned by whom? A Palestinian Story of Return
- Hunaida Ghanem:** Crossing the Border: Confrontation Strategies
- Lena Meari:** The Roles of Palestinian Peasant Women 1930-1960: Al-Birweh Village as a Model
- Isis Nusair:** Gendered Politics of Location of Three Generations of Palestinian Women in Israel, 1948-1998
- Leena Dallasheh:** *Al-'Ard*, a Pan-Arab Nationalist Movement in Israel, from 1959 until 1965
- Shira Robinson:** Guns, Coffee, and Tractors: The Making of "Non-Jewish Folklore" in 1958 Israel
- Rhoda Kanaaneh:** A Good Arab in a Bad House? Unrecognized Villagers in the Israeli Military
- Amal Equeiq:** Louder than the Blue I.D.: Palestinian Hip-Hop in Israel
- Ibtisam Ibrahim:** Immigration Patterns among Arab Palestinians in Israel

In preparation for a planned publication of an anthology of these papers, a summer 2007 workshop, potentially funded in part by the Palestinian American Research Center and Columbia University, will reunite all the contributors and bring other scholars to the discussion as well. The workshop is intended to encourage contributors to develop their work in communication with one another, so the end product will explore multiple themes but in a clearly integrated fashion.

TAYSER ABU MOURAD | Demand for Primary Health Care in the Gaza Strip



On-going research indicates that health and disease are not equally distributed and may be affected by social as well as environmental factors. In his doctoral research, Tayser Abu Mourad will investigate these factors and their impact on primary care in rural, urban, and refugee camp populations in the Gaza Strip. Among the things that affect health and health care in Gaza is the damaged commercial and social infrastructure that limits access to food, water, and proper sanitation.

Lifestyle factors, the physical and social environment, economic status, and access to health care can all affect health, says Abu Mourad. “Evidence of the inverse relationship between socioeconomic indices and environmental risk factors is documented,” he claims. However, research shows that there are also subjective determinants to health care and health care consumption: “Those patients who feel more ill or more vulnerable to the threats of bad health have a lower locus of control concerning those threats and tend to generate higher health care consumption.”

The situation in the Gaza Strip—with its damaged commercial and social infrastructure and vulnerable supply of even the most basic needs, such as food and water—has seriously exacerbated public health issues. Abu Mourad believes that his research into the connections between these factors and health will be useful in creating policies that will affect the overall health of the population.

In order to establish the correlation between the many variables at play, Abu Mourad’s study will sample 1067 visitors to 15 general health care centers serving rural, urban, and refugee camp residents in the Gaza Strip over a four-month period. The population sample will be distributed among the five governorates, based on their populations. Exit interviews with patients will be conducted on randomly selected, consenting patients. Through his research he hopes to:

Discuss to what extent the primary health care objectives, adopted by the national strategic health plan 1999-2003, have been achieved, with a focus on the areas where improvement is still needed;

- Investigate both why people seek out primary health care and the outcome/diagnosis from those visits;

- Evaluate the demographics of those seeking primary health care (demographic, social, economic and environmental conditions); and
- Determine the patients’ utilization of general practice in primary health care settings.

Another important aspect of his study will be to measure the patients’ general opinions and level of satisfaction with their general practitioners/healthcare providers. “In most developing countries, it is rarely taken into account how local people explain illness, seek advice, or use traditional healing methods. The emphasis has been on hospitals and curative care rather than on trying to address local health needs equitably and effectively.” For that reason, asking the opinion of those receiving services is becoming more important to determining how and how well health care services are being provided. Additionally, Abu Mourad believes focusing public health research exclusively on issues of technology may not adequately address the needs of certain populations, leaving a gap that his research hopes to fill. Ultimately, he feels his research could redirect the delivery of health care toward an evidence-based practice that takes into consideration the health status of people living under extremely difficult circumstances, such as those in the Gaza Strip.

Abu Mourad is a doctoral candidate in public health at the Department of Social Medicine at the University of Crete. He received his M.P.H. from the School of Public Health at Al-Quds University. In addition, Abu Mourad has been a consultant for the Environmental Health Education Awareness Program of the Palestine Save the Children Foundation since 2001, and the head of the Information Department of Health Survey at the Ministry of Health since 2004.

Tayser Abu Mourad can be reached by e-mail at tayserm@hotmail.com or ayserm@gmail.com.

NADIA LATIF | Home in a Palestinian Refugee Camp

Four generations of Palestinians have lived in Lebanese refugee camps. Many of the younger generations know Palestine only through the memories of others and what they learn through the media. Most are unable to return to a ‘homeland’ which they have never known, and are similarly unable to assimilate into Lebanese society. For researcher Nadia Latif, a Ph.D. candidate in sociocultural anthropology at Columbia University, this raises the question, “What constitutes home?” “The Palestinian refugee camps in Lebanon are some of the world’s oldest refugee camps. [They are] inhabited by four generations.” Only the first generation knows Palestine from direct experience. The three generations following “know Palestine only through the memories of their elders, and more recently, the globalized media,” asserts Latif.

“What then is a home?” she asks. “A physical structure? A territory? A set of habits? A network of relationships? An economic and political order? Is home known only after it has been lost or left behind?” These are just some of the questions Latif’s research seeks to answer as she completes the second half of her dissertation research in the Bourj el-Barajneh camp in Beirut. There her research will explore existing notions of home, including definitions tied to what migrants and refugees leave behind and long for, as well as how they attempt to recreate familiarity through food, clothing, language, and other cultural patterns. Defining home only according to these factors may be limited, Latif believes, in that they “assume the ‘original’ home is the sole point of reference” understood only in contrast to their displacement. Latif believes that this concept of home “fails to examine the degree to which refugees or migrants feel ‘at home’ in the new ‘home’ they attempt to create.”

Drawing on the work of anthropologist Julie Peteet (a former PARC fellow), Latif plans to investigate the ways in which everyday practices, such as cooking, cleaning, and visiting, construct a Palestinian “home” within Bourj el-Barajneh. “This means of examining the ways in which the camp has been constructed by its inhabitants as a meaning-imbued space will facilitate an understanding of what notions of ‘home’ and of feeling ‘at home’ meant to the four generations of refugees living in it,” Latif says. Her approach stands in contrast to existing research that she believes, “reduces social relationships and everyday practices—the means by which place is created—to sites of commemoration where the workings of (national) memory can be observed. The national home(land) is taken to be the sole point of reference and everyday practices and social relationships tend to be examined solely in terms of their adherence to (and hence commemoration of) the (national place of origin).”

Latif’s research also investigates the way in which the refugee camps become disciplinary spaces managed and interpreted according to political entities—the Lebanese state, international humanitarian organizations and NGOs, and political factions within the Palestinian population. These entities further marginalize camp residents and reduce them to mere symbols of the nationalist struggle.

Latif intends to employ a variety of methods in conducting her research, including participant observation as she lives in the camp, and analysis of ritual and commemorative events (weddings, births, funerals, etc.). Latif believes that, “Since these events bring together immediate and extended family, they provide a means of observing social relationships in practice in both domestic and public spaces.” She will also incorporate unstructured interviews with UNRWA and NGO personnel, construct a history of the camp, and analyze the spatial organization of the camp internally and in relationship to the surrounding communities. In addition, Latif plans to collect life histories and perform additional archival research to contextualize her research historically.

Latif believes that her research will complement existing studies on the relationship between memory, emplacement, and national identity through developing a deeper understanding of how life lived in a space that “despite having acquired a physical permanence and a symbolic reality, continues to remain politically and legally precarious in terms of its relationship to the Lebanese state and society.”

Nadia Latif can be reached by e-mail at nl2021@columbia.edu.



NORA LESTER MURAD | The Effects of Dependence on International Aid on Palestinian Civil Society



Nora Lester Murad believes that the way international agencies currently deliver aid to Palestinian civil society creates donor-driven agendas and organizational insecurity that undermines their declared goals of sustainable development.

Between 1967 and the creation of the Palestinian National Authority (PNA), Murad reports that the mostly volunteer-run civil society organizations (CSOs) provided stability and structure that helped Palestinians survive under the

military occupation. Their services included, among other things, healthcare, education, business assistance, and human rights advocacy. Murad believes that the creation of the PNA and the Oslo Accords changed the roles of these once dominant organizations by redirecting funding and technical assistance to the new government and the private sector, citing as one example that only 8% of international aid went to NGOs in the period preceding the second Intifada. The nature of the funding to these organizations has also shifted away from development to more humanitarian projects, which, she asserts, is “pushing NGOs toward service delivery and away from longer term development.”

“The consequence of civil society dependence on international funding is that civil society actors, especially NGOs, have become primarily accountable to their patrons, not to the Palestinian community they intend to serve,” Murad argues. Murad points to a wide range of negative consequences of Palestinians’ dependence on international aid under the given model. Among the most egregious are:

- Donor-driven agendas,
- Destructive competition for funding among organizations,
- Increased layers of bureaucracy imposed by intermediary organizations,
- The imposition of offensive conditions,
- Rules that require funding to be used to support donor economies, and
- Various forms of questionable practice.

Murad contends that the current system creates anger and frustration over what Palestinians view as international interference in their internal affairs, and it diverts attention

from the international community’s more important obligation—helping to implement a just political solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Murad hopes that her scholarly work will provide advocacy tools for developing new policies on international funding. She believes that a more complete understanding of the processes and players involved can provide a foundation for developing new strategies that will enable Palestinians to play a leadership role in creating sustainable development opportunities for themselves.

In order to achieve her goals, Murad is conducting interviews, focus groups, and surveys to build on existing literature. Her subjects include donors, representatives from government agencies, and agents of a variety of NGOs and CSOs. Murad will create a map of the relationships between the various stakeholders in order to identify where in the process aid decisions are made. Her interviews also extend to the accountants and financial overseers of these organizations, with an eye toward understanding how changes to donor policies and procedures affect them. Murad’s efforts will include analysis that illustrates the “micro-impacts” that occur in order to rank those areas that are perceived as most problematic. Lastly, Murad’s interviews with donor representatives and decision-makers outside Palestine will form the basis for case studies that illustrate both how decisions are made and their impact on the recipient organizations.

Murad’s work has already made a difference. Her research has helped give direction to a new Palestinian community foundation called Dalia Association (www.dalia.ps). Dalia hopes to mobilize the abundant resources of the worldwide Palestinian community—steadfastness, traditions, creativity, faith, expertise, and money, in order to direct them to the best Palestinian-led social change and sustainable development initiatives using community-based decision-making processes. Dalia hopes to sustain these activities by building a permanent endowment to produce income, thus reducing vulnerability to the negative effects of dependence on international aid. An endowed community foundation will provide a long-term, independent, sustainable source of funds with transparent and accountable mechanisms for local control and a vibrant organization in which local Palestinians can themselves be donors and implementers of their own social change and sustainable development agendas.

YASER AHMED SHAHEEN | The Perceived Usefulness of Information for Investment Decisions: Evidence from Palestinian Securities Exchange (PSE)

Financial markets play an important role in the economies of countries large and small. They are an integral component in a company's valuation, provide companies with cash resources, and make available capital for long-term investments in other areas of the national economy. Yaser Shaheen, a Ph.D. candidate at the Arab Academy for Banking and Financial Sciences in Jordan, is researching how investment decisions are made by conducting a survey of stakeholders that include individual and institutional investors, banks and financial institutions, financial analysts, stockbrokers, and academics. He believes this study will enhance local investors' ability to make informed investment decisions as well as help regulators increase transparency, improve reporting procedures, and strengthen their own authority, thereby improving the market confidence and efficiency.

Shaheen points out that since the Palestinian Stock Exchange (PSE) was established in 1995 to serve "as an efficient modern and well-regulated stock exchange to facilitate and maximize the flow of long-term investment capital into the Palestinian economy" few studies on the subject have been carried out. Operating under the supervision of the Ministry of Finance, the PSE plays a critical role in the country's economic development, especially considering the dispersal of the population and concentration of wealth abroad. "Palestine has a special and urgent need for an effective intermediary to facilitate and maximize the repatriation of long-term investment capital to the economy. Due to the inability of Palestinian expatriates and foreign investors to actively manage or monitor their potential equity investments, they require a vehicle for passive investments, namely the public shareholding company, perhaps more than any other economy."

In 1997, the PSE began trading with only eight companies listed. Today it has grown to 32 companies covering a range of industries with a total capitalization of almost \$1.8 billion and 34,000 open stock accounts. Shaheen reports, however, that despite the growth and importance of the exchange to the economy, "financial disclosure procedures are weak, and there is little public awareness about securities." These factors, he adds, "have weakened the liquidity, volume of trading, and limited the role of the PSE to mobilize financial resources and direct them toward productive investment."

According to Shaheen, the efficient organization of the PSE and laws that regulate what corporate information must be provided are essential to the ability of individual and group investors, foreign and domestic, to make informed investment decisions. "Disclosure and transparency induce corporations to better protect investors

and thereby enhance investor confidence in capital markets," he says. "Corporate disclosure has evolved from being solely focused on financial information excerpted predominantly from a firm's financial statements. Today, corporate disclosure is utilized as a strategic tool in risk assessment and in the value creation process."

Shaheen's research objective is to assess the precise role that information plays in the investment decision-making process. Using a comprehensive questionnaire, he plans to collect information from various stakeholders that may shed light on the relevance of financial and non-financial information in assessing investment risk. His study may also unveil how investors weigh the usefulness of available information as adequate and relevant, the extent to which PSE-listed companies comply with minimum disclosure requirements, and whether individual and group investors use different criteria when evaluating investments.

Understanding the connection between the quantity and quality of information needed for sound investment decisions is particularly relevant to the country's ability to attract investment in the region. "The Palestinian economy needs to encourage the formation of [publicly traded companies] in order to broaden their ownership base and make them truly public in line with global practices, [because] in the politically charged environment, the value of the regulatory changes may be as much or more in the perceptions of investors as in their market behavior."

Yaser Shaheen can be reached by e-mail at y.shaheen@yahoo.com.



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Two Board Positions Up For Election

Current members please take note: Here is your opportunity to cast your vote to fill two vacancies representing PARC's membership on the PARC board of directors. Voting will be conducted online by e-mail invitation only to all CURRENT MEMBERS. If you are a current member, please be sure that your correct e-mail address is on file by e-mailing us.parc@gmail.com.

If you are not a member and would like to participate, become a member today! Please send in the membership application on the back page of this newsletter along with your membership dues prior to May 20. Your name will then be added to the ballot distribution list.

There are two vacancies, so voters will be asked to choose two of the following candidates. The two candidates who receive the most cumulative votes will assume the board positions. Members of PARC's current board of directors are listed on page 2 of the newsletter. The board meets twice a year: at MESA each fall and in Washington, DC each May.

Candidates

Thomas Abowd has a Ph.D. from Columbia University and has conducted research in Palestine since the mid-1990s. He has been involved in a number of scholarly and activist projects related to the Palestine-Israel conflict and is finishing a manuscript addressing the politics of space in contemporary Jerusalem. He has authored several articles including "National Boundaries, Colonized Spaces" (forthcoming in *Anthropological Quarterly*) and the "Poetics of Place in Contemporary Jerusalem" in the book *Cities of Collision*. Two of his previous research projects were funded by PARC.

Martin Bunton received his Ph.D. from the University of Oxford and is an assistant professor in the department of history at the University of Victoria. Previously, he taught at Simon Fraser University, Burnaby, and was a visiting fellow at Harvard University. His research focuses on the transformation of property rights regimes under colonial administrations. He authored *Colonial Land Policies in Palestine, 1917-1936*, published by Oxford University Press. He is currently working on a comparison of land policies in Palestine, Egypt, Transjordan, and Iraq.

Rochelle Davis has a Ph.D. from the University of Michigan in Anthropology and Near Eastern Studies and is an assistant professor at the Center for Contemporary Arab Studies at Georgetown University. Her recent research is on the village memorial books written by Palestinian refugees about their villages that were destroyed in 1948. In addition to several journal articles, she was a contributor to the books *Nakba: Palestine, 1948, and the Claims of Memory* (Columbia University Press, 2007), and *Jerusalem 1948: The Arab Neighborhoods, and Their Fate in the War* (Institute of Jerusalem Studies and Badil Resource Center, 2002).

Rhoda Kanaaneh had a Ph.D. in Anthropology from Columbia University and is a visiting scholar at New York University's Department of Social and Cultural Analysis. She has been an assistant professor at American University and New York University's Center for the Study of Gender and Sexuality. She is the author of *Birthing the Nation* (UC Press, 2002) and her forthcoming book *On the Edge of Security: Palestinian Soldiers in the Israeli Military* was supported in part by a PARC fellowship.

Kimberly Katz is an assistant professor of Middle Eastern History at Towson University in Maryland with a Ph.D. in History and Middle Eastern Studies from New York University. She authored *Jordanian Jerusalem: Holy Places and National Spaces*, published by the University Press of Florida, 2005, and has published articles in several journals: *The Muslim World*, *Comparative Studies in South Asia, Africa, The Middle East*, and *The Jerusalem Quarterly File*. Her PARC fellowship research was titled: "Preserving History, Preserving Family through the Diary of Sami 'Amr."

Shira Robinson is a fellow at the Davis Center for Historical Studies at Princeton University with a Ph.D. in History from Stanford University. Previously, she taught modern Middle East history at the University of Iowa and will join the History Department at George Washington University in September 2007. She is finishing a book on citizenship in Israel from 1948 through 1966 and the state's imposition of military rule on the Palestinians within its borders drawing in part on oral histories conducted with a PARC fellowship.

Alumni/ae News

Rhoda Kanaaneh (2004) is currently a visiting scholar at the New York University Department of Social and Cultural Analysis. Publications resulting from her PARC sponsored research include a book manuscript titled "On the Edge of Security: Palestinian Soldiers in the Israeli Military" currently under review, and several articles:

"Tracking Bedouin Soldiers" in Ahlam Shibli, *Trackers*, (Adam Szymczak, ed., Cologne, Germany: Verlag der Buchhandlung Walther Koenig and Kunsthalle Basel Press. Forthcoming, 2007); "Boys or Men? Duped or 'Made'?: Palestinian Soldiers in the Israeli

LAILA ABED RABHO | The Plight of Palestinian Muslim Women Seeking Financial Support in Shar'ia Courts



Laila Abed Rabho, a Ph.D. candidate at the Hebrew University, is examining the cases of Palestinian women who turn to the Shar'ia courts in Jerusalem and Taybe in order to demand alimony and child support from their husbands. Her focus is on the variety of circumstances—familial, social and economic—that lead women to sue their husbands in these courts.

Abed Rabho uses a comparative approach in her study by focusing on two courts in very different locations. “From a gendered perspective, the Arab population of Jerusalem is different from that of Taybe: the level of education of women is higher than that of women in Taybe as is the number of women who work outside the home,” Abed Rabho asserts. “I will examine if and how these differences between the two towns influence the women’s approaches to the courts.” In this way, Abed Rabho may also determine how socioeconomic factors, such as education and age at marriage, influence both women’s willingness to turn to the courts and their actions within the courts. From interviews with women who use the Shar'ia courts in Jerusalem and Taybe she hopes to “relate each story as a subjective truth, a personal and private experience of the interview, without trying to unearth the objective truth behind each story.”

According to Abed Rabho, a woman’s decision to seek support through the courts is dependent upon her knowledge of religious law and her rights within the framework of marriage, separation, and divorce. Through her interviews she intends to “evaluate what Palestinian women know about their rights within Shar'ia law and how they learn about them,” she says. “By looking at women’s knowledge of their rights and the legal process, this work will shed light on the degree to which women operate independently within the legal system, or whether they are objects operated by their family members and even by members of the court.”

Social custom often discourages women from taking legal steps and instead encourages them to solve problems within the family. Therefore, among the questions she hopes to answer are the following: “Do they prefer to ask for financial support within the framework of marriage or while separated from the husband, despite the price attached? How do they address

issues related to their children: the worry for economic stability and the wish to continue to live with them? To what degree does the legal claim serve as a means for the woman to apply pressure on her husband in order to obtain her demands?” She is also investigating how these women perceive the role of family in the process and what degree of support (or lack thereof) they receive from them.

Abed Rabho has found that shame is a major reason why women do not demand divorce. In her review of literature on the subject of Muslim women who turn to the courts for alimony and child custody, the primary reasons expressed for these claims were personal damage (*darar*), followed by lack of economic support during the marriage. Other potential motivating factors she is investigating include the husband’s absence from home due to work, domestic violence, women’s growing economic independence, and a woman’s desire for further education.

Another area of interest in these cases is the extent to which courts, judges and social workers understand and can handle the cases of women who seek support. Abed Rabho adds that she “will also examine the roles that the social institutions, women’s organizations, and non-governmental voluntary organizations fulfill in helping women turn to the courts and what kind of roles these representatives assume in the process.”

For her study, Abed Rabho selected a Shar'ia court in West Jerusalem, as women seem to prefer it to the court in East Jerusalem because: 1) Israel does not recognize legal judgments of the eastern institution, and 2) The eastern court gives women a smaller *nafada* sum than Israel allots, thereby appearing to the Arab community “as an instrument of the Israeli occupation.” This perception, says Abed Rabho, “is problematic and suggests that the socio-economic situation overcomes even political considerations.”

Through this study, Abed Rabho aims to gain a better understanding of the complexity of these women’s lives by “shedding light on important issues, such as violence in the family and highlighting the importance of economic and political factors that lead to crisis between couples.”

Laila Abed Rabho can be reached by e-mail at labeledrabho@gmail.com.

KARAM DANA | Palestine's Political Landscape in the 1920s and 1930s

Karam Dana, a candidate in an interdisciplinary Ph.D. program at the University of Washington, believes in the importance of multi-disciplinary education and learning. Dana is exploring the political and social structure of Palestine in the 1920s and 1930s. While Dana's current research focuses on Palestinian state-building efforts during the period of the British mandate, he has long been interested in the socio-economic history of Palestine throughout the 20th century.

Scholarly literature on Palestinian political history during the 1920s and 1930s is limited. Dana's study is essential to help fill the current information gap. Some key questions Dana hopes to answer through his research include:

- Who were the Palestinian elite during this time period and to what extent were they involved in creating state-like institutions?
- Why were Palestinians unable to establish state-like institutions during the British Mandate period?
- What role did British mandate authorities have on the failure of Palestinian state building?

To answer the first question, Dana investigates the social and political affiliations of Palestine's elite, whether they were tribal, religious, academic, or political. "My central sources will be private collections of key Palestinian elite members in the time period I am researching." These private collections include correspondence from prominent Palestinian families.

It is also important to analyze the Zionist movement and the elite's interaction with the Jewish community, the Yishuv. Through interviews with historians and local leaders in the West Bank, sources in the Central Zionist Archives in Jerusalem and a variety of newspapers, Dana is examining the economic and business interactions between the two communities. Dana elaborates, "We know very little about how the elite of Palestine during this period

perceived various forms of interaction with the Yishuv regarding the state-building process or how the elite communicated with each other about Zionism." Dana's inquiries should also help shed light on the nature of the interactions, whether contentious or cooperative, between the Palestinian elite and the Yishuv as well as between Palestine's own secular and religious elite groups.

As part of his fieldwork, Dana is conducting research in Ottoman archives in Istanbul. Dana is using his findings to examine the role the Ottomans had in creating the Palestinian elite during the Mandate period. "I will have better information about key players in the late Ottoman period, who in addition to their followers, took part in the politics of the 1920s and later," Dana explains.

For his dissertation, Dana hopes to provide a comprehensive account of state-building successes and failures. He explains, "I hope, with the help of this fellowship, to be able to contribute to state-building scholarly literature and to provide an in-depth analysis of Palestinian politics in the 1920s and 1930s, a time period whose decision makers have been under-researched." After completing his dissertation, Dana plans to write a book about the political landscape of Palestine during the 1920s and 1930s. Additionally, he aspires to become a professor and to continue his research on the political and social history of the Middle East.

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THE EFFECTS OF DEPENDENCE ON INTERNATIONAL AID ON PALESTINIAN CIVIL SOCIETY CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6

Murad was invited to present her PARC-funded research at a conference in Hiroshima in March 2007 called, "Indigenous Initiatives for Peacebuilding: Importance of Local Viewpoints and Expected Roles of Development Assistance." She has also been invited to publish her findings in a chapter for a book to be published by Cambridge University Press later in the year.

Murad holds a Ph.D. in human and organizational systems and

an M.A. in human services from Fielding Graduate Institute in Santa Barbara, California, as well as an M.A. in intercultural relations from Lesley College Graduate School in Cambridge, Massachusetts. She lives in Beit Hanina, East Jerusalem.

Nora Lester Murad can be reached by e-mail at noralestermurad@gmail.com.

NAJWA ODEH RIZKALLAH | Equality in Healthcare: The Relationship between Reproduction and Coronary Heart Disease Risk Factors in Palestinian Women



To date, most epidemiological studies that have examined the relationship between high birth rate and risk factors for coronary heart disease (CHD) have been conducted in Europe and the United States. Najwa Odeh Rizkallah, a Ph.D. candidate from the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, is performing the first study that focuses on these risk factors among Palestinian women and its relationship to parity. As part of her trial, she is measuring risk factors for CHD, such as

blood pressure, serum lipids, occurrence of diabetes, body fat, and body height and weight, and correlating this relationship with the reproductive history. Through this study, Rizkallah hopes to evaluate the long-term effect of reproduction on women's health and promote appropriate prevention efforts.

Rizkallah believes that a study among Palestinian women is ideal for obtaining an accurate assessment of the relationship between high parity, or multiple births, and risk factors for CHD. She believes this is because Palestinian women have a greater exposure to high parity, longer gravidity, and earlier first births than populations where this relationship has previously been studied. "However, in those settings [in Europe and the United States] few women would give birth to five or more children, which may make it difficult to detect any association," Rizkallah explains. Palestine's Ministry of Health (MOH) reports the current birth rate at 4.19 for Palestinian women; the birth rate in the United Kingdom is 1.8 according to the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF). "In addition, it is unclear whether one can extrapolate findings from the developed to the developing world, where women have different life styles, diets, and different exposure to reproductive and environmental factors."

Rizkallah's findings suggest that improvements in sanitation, nutrition, mortality rates, and life expectancy have contributed to a growing adult and elderly population in Palestine, and subsequently, an increasing incidence of chronic disease. CHD becomes a growing risk as women live longer past menopause. It is mainly after menopause that CHD becomes a significant risk for women,

Rizkallah elaborates. She says studies indicate there is a high prevalence of CHD and other chronic diseases, including diabetes, hypertension, and obesity in all areas of Palestine.

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), CHD is the most common cause of death in many developed and developing countries. Unfortunately, most trials in Europe and the United States have focused on CHD in men, because on average, they develop CHD earlier than women. New research, however, devotes more attention to women. This new research indicates more women die from circulatory diseases than from all forms of cancer, including breast, ovarian, and cervical cancers. "Epidemiological studies have indicated that women in the West shared major CHD risk factors with men," according to Rizkallah. These include elevated serum cholesterol levels, hypertension, and cigarette smoking. Yet many women may have risks unique to their gender, including exposure to endogenous and exogenous hormones through menstruation, pregnancy, menopause, oral contraceptives, and hormone replacement therapy." Rizkallah attributes these hormonal changes, or biological pathways, to changes in body fat, blood sugar, and lipid levels during pregnancy and during and after menopause.

Rizkallah claims that, like the West, Palestine has also focused more on men when assessing risk factors for chronic disease. She says, "Chronic diseases, in particular CHD, are the leading cause of mortality and morbidity among Palestinian women as well as its associated risk factors, [including] obesity, hypertension, and diabetes."

Rizkallah acknowledges that there is a lack of awareness, prevention, and treatment programs for women with and at risk for CHD and other chronic diseases in Palestine. She says that because the Palestinian authorities have taken responsibility over the healthcare system, they are susceptible to international donor priority-setting. For example, the international reproductive health agenda in the Middle East promotes research and services for sexually transmitted diseases and family planning. The limited data on family planning that exists suggests services in this area are inadequate. Contrary to Palestine's current healthcare system, Rizkallah relates that anecdotal data and statistics from MOH suggest chronic diseases in women are common.

Through her research, Rizkallah plans to clarify the relationship between reproduction and CHD and its risk factors in hopes of

OSAMAH KHALIL | At the Crossroads of Empire: The Origins of U.S. Foreign Policy toward the Arab-Israeli Conflict, 1917-1967

Prior to 1967 the U.S. was a major player in the conflict over Palestine, yet insufficient scholarship has been devoted to its role. Osamah Khalil, a Ph.D. candidate in history at the University of California at Berkeley, plans to add to the existing works using American, British, Egyptian, French, Israeli, and Palestinian archival sources. His intent is to analyze the activities of major U.S. policy-making institutions in relationship to the Middle East and Palestine in particular.

Additionally, Khalil will analyze Anglo-American coordination in the Middle East, and its impact on the development of policies toward the Palestinians before and after 1948. He also plans to deconstruct the “U.S.-Israel special relationship.” Questions he hopes to answer over the course of his research include:

- What are the origins of U.S. policy toward Palestine and the Palestinians?
- What role did the U.S. Congress and the executive branch play in creating these policies?
- Did the various agencies and government branches play an equal role in policy making, or were some more influential than others?
- What were the main drivers and influences on policy formulation? Was it oil? Sympathy for the Zionist movement? Support for the state of Israel?
- How did the Cold War affect policies related to Palestine and the Arab-Israeli conflict?

Following a review of existing literature, Khalil believes that the U.S. role in regional policy has been insufficiently studied by scholars, who have focused more on Truman-era activities related to the recognition of the state of Israel. “Perhaps most glaring is the absence of the Palestinians from most works on U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East before 1967,” says Khalil. For that reason he believes that, “a study that returns Palestine and the Palestinians to the heart of the Arab-Israeli conflict and U.S. policies in the Middle East is particularly important.”

Through that lens Khalil will evaluate the impact of the Cold War

on U.S. and British policies toward the Middle East and how these allies may have coordinated their approaches to the region following WWII. Of particular interest to Khalil is the development of U.S. government agencies formed in the post-World War II era (e.g., the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), the State Department’s Policy Planning Staff (PPS), and the National Security Council (NSC) and their role in Middle East policy development.

Khalil has determined that “there is a dearth of scholarship on the origins of U.S. foreign policy toward the Arab-Israeli conflict before 1967. This gap in the historiography exists even though U.S. archival documents from the early Cold War period have been available since the late 1970s, while those from the post-1967 era are only partially declassified.” He adds that, “Conventional history of the Cold War has generally avoided discussion of the Middle East and Palestine.” When it has been addressed, he says, “The analysis has typically focused on the major crisis moments—recognition of Israel in 1948, the 1956 Suez War, and the June 1967 War—without offering a broad overview of U.S. policy in the Middle East. Perhaps most glaring is that with a few exceptions, the Arab perspective is absent from these narratives or is overly generalized.”

Khalil also hopes to uncover the interaction of various governmental agencies and branches of government in the United States, and what influences may have had an impact on American foreign policy. Among the current works written on the Middle East since 1948, Khalil points out that few have utilized Arabic sources. His intention is to provide a more comprehensive analysis of U.S. foreign policy toward the Arab-Israeli conflict using archival sources that have only recently been declassified or made available, while simultaneously returning the Palestinian voice to the discussion.

Osamah Khalil can be reached by e-mail at okhalil@berkeley.edu.



EQUALITY IN HEALTHCARE CONTINUED FROM PAGE 12

providing data to support the MOH. Her other purpose is to promote the awareness and prevention of CHD and other chronic diseases in Palestinian women and to provide one more medical

rationale for reducing high birth rates.

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LIVIA WICK | Transnational Palestinian Families



Palestine's lack of jurisdiction over borders and domestic structures create intense pressures, particularly for women, when families emigrate across borders and checkpoints. The pressures of migration include dealing with discriminatory practices in the countries of emigration as well as new legal, social, and family structures. Recent ethnographic studies conclude that these cross-border moves are a source of anxiety among family members who migrate and among those who are left behind.

Livia Wick, assistant professor of anthropology at the American University of Beirut, is focusing her post-doctoral research on the emotional effects of migration. In this phase of the research project, she is focusing on the changing dynamics of gender relations among Palestinian women who have migrated across borders to live with their new husbands, by exploring these women's experiences with marriage and migration. "Most of these [prior studies] focus on men's migration and its effect on women who remained in their communities of origin," Wick relates. "Migrating women are invisible in cultural representations of migrations, such as [in] novels and films as well as the social science literature. My project is an attempt at making them visible."

Cross-border moves engender life-altering changes for these women. "This is an intense moment in women's lives, as they proceed to make sense of the roles of new family members as well

as the new roles of the family of origin," Wick says. These moves impose new expectations on family life and potentially impose demands on nation-states. "It appears to be a moment where maintaining ties to her family of origin in a faraway place is essential," Wick adds.

Wick describes this developing, multifaceted process: Transnational Palestinian families are getting smaller (nuclearization) and the extended families are held together through new spatial, national, technical, and communication networks. Wick explains, "I will explore the process by which members of the family emigrate and remain part of the family and the ways in which the transnational family is held together through phone calls, e-mails, letters, visits, and returns."

Some of the women she studied in her previous research made comparisons between post-emigration and postpartum periods of their lives, both of which pose significant challenges. Pregnant women often have special difficulty crossing checkpoints and are denied proper medical care. As a result, these women "feel enclosed and isolated by Israeli restrictions on mobility which may separate them from their families and places of origin, as well as by family restrictions within their homes."

What is new for these families is not only dislocation but the emergence of a specific transnational identity and the circulation of new-found emotions. Wick plans to examine trajectories of movement across different borders and the structures of feelings of migrants in transnational families. Wick is collecting oral histories of family migrations in Ramallah, Jerusalem, Amman, and Beirut.

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Military" in *American Ethnologist*, Vol. 32, No. 2, (May 2005); "In the Name of Insecurity: Arab Soldiers in the Israeli Military" in *Adalah's Review: The Journal of the Legal Center for Arab Minority Rights in Israel*, Vol. 4 (Spring 2004).

Moain Sadeq (2004) was selected as chair of the administrative board of the newly formed Palestinian Fulbright Alumni Association (PFAA). Currently the general director of the Department of Antiquities and Tourism, Sadeq has been instrumental in organizing a comprehensive archaeological exhibit, "Gaza at the Crossroad of Civilization," through the Musée d'Art et d'Histoire, Geneva. The exhibit will be held in three French cities and in Geneva, Switzerland from April 26 through October 7, 2007.

Anthony Wanis-St. John (2005), assistant professor in the International Peace and Conflict Resolution program at the School of International Service, American University and research associate at the Center for International Conflict Resolution at Columbia University, published an article entitled "In Theory, Back-Channel Negotiation: International Bargaining in the Shadows," in the April 2006 edition of the *Negotiation Journal*, a peer-reviewed journal.

Falestin Naili (2006) has completed two yet-to-be published articles. "Les Jardins du Paradis Perdu: Le Village d'Artas Vu d'Amman (The Gardens of a Lost Paradise: The Village of Artas as Seen from Amman)" is expected to be published as part of a collective research project entitled "Nationalisme en Mutation et Espaces en Devenir: le Cas

THOMAS P. ABOWD | Communities of Struggle and Solidarity: Home Demolitions in the West Bank and Gaza Strip

In his post-doctoral research project, Thomas P. Abowd examines the cultural and political implications of the demolition of Palestinian homes in the West Bank and Gaza Strip under Israeli rule since 1967 and how these spaces have been central sites of national conflict. Abowd sheds light on the impact these demolitions have on Palestinian families, potential Israeli designs for appropriating land and resources, and resistance from both Palestinians and Israeli human rights organizations who oppose the demolitions.

Abowd asserts that Israeli and Palestinian human rights organizations estimate that a minimum of 50,000 Palestinians have been directly affected by these measures. “Those I have interviewed who have dealt with this Israeli policy firsthand relate that it has engendered a generalized, low-intensity terror in households and communities across Palestine’s political landscape,” Abowd relates in his preliminary research. “Once Israeli authorities serve a demolition order to a Palestinian homeowner, the occupants never know when their home might be destroyed. Bulldozers could arrive early in the morning or in the middle of the day, once many of the men in the neighborhood have left for work.”

Although these demolitions have been condemned as illegal by the international community, Israel justifies them on the grounds that the homes were built without official permits. Abowd inquires whether these families sought legal building permits and why and how they built despite being denied permits. Abowd plans to interview 20 to 25 Palestinian adults whose homes have either been demolished or slated for demolition. “These queries will provide valuable information into what the experiences of fighting for one’s own residential space, one’s family, and one’s community has been like under military occupation,” Abowd explains.

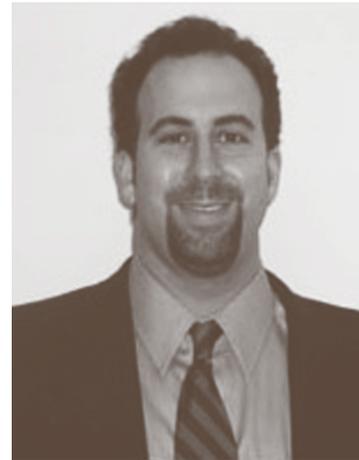
According to Abowd’s preliminary findings, there is an apparent and significant pattern of land theft and appropriation. Through his research, he discovers how Israeli military rule actively counters international laws and norms that define these actions as illegal and in violation of human rights conventions. “Many Israeli and

Palestinian human rights activists I have interviewed in the past years have suggested that where Israel seeks to permanently annex land, it has engaged in razing homes with consistent force.” He also adds these “house demolitions are ways of regulating territories that the Israeli state wishes to control indefinitely.” Abowd cites the Separation Wall, settler roads, and expansion settlements as reasons for Israeli appropriation of these territories.

Abowd also explores acts of resistance that usually follow widespread demolitions. Despite these violations of human rights, activists in both Palestinian and Israeli territories have together orchestrated resistance built on intercommunal understanding and solidarity. Abowd chronicles the work of the Israeli Committee Against House Demolitions (ICAHD), Rabbis for Human Rights, and Rebuilding Homes as well as many Palestinian groups that have devised campaigns to end these practices. His purpose in this investigation is to recount how these groups have worked together to stop demolitions, rebuild homes, and establish cross-cultural solidarity by interviewing Israeli and Palestinian activists, city planners, and civil libertarians.

Abowd has spent more than 28 months conducting fieldwork in Palestine. He has recently completed a manuscript about the spatial construction of identity and difference in contemporary Jerusalem. An assistant professor at Wayne State University, he has also contributed articles to *News From Within* in Jerusalem, and has made many important contacts with Israeli and Palestinian activists and scholars.

Visit Dr. Abowd at www.thomasabowd.com or e-mail him at thomasabowd@yahoo.com.



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Palestinien” (Changing Nationalism and Forming Spaces: The Palestinian Case) in early 2008. Her second article is entitled “Clorinda Minor et Ses Disciples à Artas: Un Observatoire des Débuts du Sionisme Chrétien en Palestine?” (American Millenarist Settlers in Artas: A Prelude of Christian Zionism in Nineteenth-Century Palestine?).

Former PARC fellows **Yamila Hussein, Sherene Seikaly, Shira Robinson, Rhoda Kanaaneh** and **Thomas Abowd** received PARC stipends funded through a U.S. Department of Education grant to present papers at the annual Middle East Studies Association conference in Boston in November 2006.

PARC

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much needed research fellowships in Palestine. Effective this year, all memberships will run from June to the following June to ensure receipt of two newsletters that profile one year of PARC fellows. PARC is grateful for your continuing support.



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