THE PALESTINIAN ARCHIPELAGO AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF PALESTINIAN
IDENTITY AFTER SIXTY-FIVE YEARS OF DIASPORA: THE REBIRTH
OF THE NATION

Basima Shaheen, B.A., M. A.

Dissertation Prepared for the Degree of
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

UNIVERSITY OF NORTH TEXAS
May 2015

APPROVED:
Masood Ashraf Raja, Major Professor
Laila Amine, Committee Member
Walton Muyumba, Committee Member
Jack Peter, Interim Chair of the Department of
English
Costas Tsatsoulis, Interim Dean of the
Toulouse Graduate School

This dissertation conceptualizes a Palestinian archipelago based on Mikhail Bakhtin’s theory of the chronotope, and uses the archipelago model to illustrate the situation and development of Palestinian consciousness in diaspora. To gain insight into the personal lives of Palestinians in diaspora, this project highlights several islands of Palestinian identities as represented in the novels: *Dancing Arabs, A Compass for the Sunflower,* and *The Inheritance.* The identities of the characters in these works are organized according to the archipelago model, which illustrates how the characters rediscover, repress, or change their identities in order to accommodate life in diaspora. Analysis reveals that a major goal of Palestinian existence in diaspora is the maintenance of an authentic Palestinian identity. Therefore, my description of the characters’ identities and locations in the archipelago model are informed by various scholars and theories of nationalism. Moreover, this dissertation illustrates how different Palestinian identities coalesce into a single national consciousness that has been created and sustained by a collective experience of suffering and thirst for sense of belonging and community among Palestinians. Foremost in the memories of all Palestinians is the memory of the land of Palestine and the dream of national restoration; these are the main uniting factors between Palestinians revealed in my analysis. Furthermore, this project presents an argument that developing a Palestinian exceptionalism as both a response and a solution to the problems Palestine faced in the 20th century has already occurred among diasporic Palestinians as well as those settled in the West Bank. In addition, a significant finding of this dissertation is the generation clash in regarding to the methods of modernization of the West Bank society between the settled
Palestinian and those returning from diaspora. Nevertheless, a Palestinian homecoming will require a renegotiation of Palestinian identities in which generation gaps and other disagreements will be resolved and transcended in favor of nation-state building.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I cannot express how grateful I am to Dr. Masood Raja for suggesting this dissertation topic. This dissertation would not have been possible without his help, guidance and belief in my ability to complete this dissertation. My thanks, also, to Dr. Laila Amine who offered me an endless amount of encouragements.

I own an enormous of thanks to very special people: my parents, Kamel and Wedad, and my siblings, who though being far away, called me frequently to soothe my fears and anxiety— their unlimited support and patience were the forces that sustained my enthusiasm to complete this dissertation.
TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS ........................................................................................................... iii

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION .................................................................................................... 1

CHAPTER 2 THE ‘REAL’ EXPERIENCE OF BEING TRAPPED INSIDE AND OUTSIDE OF PALESTINE AND ISRAELI CONSCIOUSNESSES IN SAYED KASHUA’S DANCING ARABS ........................................................................................................................ 33

CHAPTER 3 ARE THEY PALESTINIAN-JORDANIAN OR JORDANIAN-PALESTINIAN? DOUBLE-CONSCIOUSNESS AND LOYALTY INFORM PALESTINIAN-JORDANIAN CO-EXISTENCE IN LIANA BADR’S A COMPASS FOR THE SUNFLOWER ....................... 76

CHAPTER 4 A PANORAMIC VIEW OF THE WEST BANK AS THE EQUILIBRIUM OF PALESTINIAN ARCHIPELAGO: THE MODERN PALESTINIAN CONSCIOUSNESS IN SAHAR KHALIFEH’S THE INHERITANCE .......................................................... 145

CHAPTER 5 CONCLUSION ..................................................................................................... 198

ENDNOTES ............................................................................................................................... 216

WORKS CITED ......................................................................................................................... 220
CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

What’s the worth of a man Without a homeland, Without a flag, Without an address?
What is the worth of such a man?

Mahmoud Darwish

In this project, I discuss the articulation of Palestinian national identity through a material and symbolic cartography of the Palestinian nation as an archipelago. Using the varied imaginative and literary texts about Palestine, I derive my archipelago model from combining theories of nationalism and national identity with Mikhail Bakhtin’s concept of the chronotope, and using this perspective to analyze literature. Through analysis of Palestinian literary works and by tracking their orientation in space and time, I provide a rough map of the concept I call the Palestinian archipelago. By showing how Palestine has endured as a nation through several tragedies separated by time and geography, I invert the established narrative about Palestine in the West and transform the story of Palestine into the story of an exceptional nation and people who have preserved their nation in exile and who are preparing for a homecoming event. The hardships shared by Palestinians have formed them into a cohesive unit with a national consciousness, and the result of this adaptation to existing in diaspora has manifested, in a literary form, as novels that build upon the emerging theme of Palestinian exceptionalism.

The main question I am attempting to answer is simply this: How is it that despite the loss of their native homeland and despite their dispersal across the world as a stateless nation, the Palestinians can still maintain and sustain a national identity?

As David Noble writes in reference to the removal of Native Americans from the United States in *Death of a Nation: American Culture and the end of Exceptionalism*, “when the exodus of a people with history, history as progress, has culminated in modern nations as a particular
state of nature, then the great problem for bourgeois historians became that of explaining change away” (xliii). The question Noble is discussing is one of accuracy in memory: after a people have departed their homeland and their conquerors have claimed it for their own, how will the descendants of these conquerors justify the change in the nation-state to themselves in their own history? Noble goes on to discuss the evolution of American exceptionalism – how the removal of the Native and the enslavement of the African were presented and preserved in American memory as positive events – as historical progress and the inevitable advancement of civilization. In my discussion of Palestinian nationalism, the parallels between the Native American experience with American exceptionalism and the Palestinian experience with Israeli exceptionalism are significant because Palestinians face a similar form of erasure presented as progress; the antithesis is a narrative of Palestinian exceptionalism, which I have taken efforts to develop. The loss of land and dispossession that Palestinians have endured since 1948 are obstacles that few other nations have been able to overcome; however, Palestinians have outlasted multiple efforts directed at displacing them, silencing them, and causing them to assimilate into the Arab world or other societies. The nation of Palestine is exceptional, otherwise, because it is self-preserving. Palestine has adapted but not submitted to its circumstances, by becoming a nation that transcends borders, languages, and governments. Finally, Palestinian exceptionalism is demonstrated by the high degree of political awareness that has developed among Palestinians who, after exhausting military possibilities for the defense of their nation, have turned to rhetorical, economic, political, social and international strategies for sustaining, promoting, and even defending Palestine. I am certain that Palestine's current suffering will one day be presented in Palestinian history as the events that shaped a distinctive and enduring nation comprised of a people who stood against all odds without a need for
borders, or even a nation-state and its machinery to protect them. In my discussion, I employ the views of a diverse group of scholars on nationalism, cosmopolitanism, and decolonization to describe the parameters of the Palestinian nation and the forces that sustain it.

The nation of Palestine, though it is currently under occupation and in diaspora, is recognized by a majority of the world’s nations and international bodies; 135 out of 193 member states of the United Nations have recognized the State of Palestine by 30 October, 2014. However, due to Palestine’s distress, a map or geographic conception of Palestine cannot depend on conventional geography if it is to portray the existence and dispersion of the Palestinian people accurately. I wish to begin this endeavor from a literary perspective because Palestinian literature is symbolic and symptomatic of Palestinian existence; a review of literature will provide a review of Palestinian experiences. My analysis of this literature shows that, indeed, the range of Palestinian habitation and life experiences extend far beyond the range of maps of Gaza and the West Bank. Therefore, literature is treated as symbolic cartography in my analysis. Furthermore, literature is the primary artifact of Palestinian experience that can lead to further and deeper efforts to map the Palestinian experience in diaspora. What it is about literature that interests and guides me in my formation of the Palestinian archipelago are the life experiences portrayed by characters in these novels, and how the characters maintain their Palestinian identities, discover their identities, or even run from their identities. These characters are situated in historical settings along the Palestinian chronotope, and by observing their actions in literature, I am able to see a reflection of actual Palestinian lives and experiences. The literature under consideration in this study is pseudo-history – it is the stories told about and by the forgotten people whose struggles have either yet to be told, or whose lifetimes were spent without recording their history in a conventional manner. It is for this reason that literature may
be one of the most significant artifacts available to Palestinians who are interested in knowing what it is like to be, or to have been, a Palestinian experiencing different struggles in foreign environments, or one whose efforts were consumed in sustaining and creating the nation. As items of memory, these novels and stories of Palestinian characters will endure to help determine the shape of Palestinian exceptionalism; these are stories of adventure, endurance, and the continuation of the nation.

My contention is that no matter where they live, Palestinians tend to remain in touch with their imagined homeland, and that this connection can be represented through various means, all of which are modes of preserving memory. This project focuses on literature, but other elements of Palestinian memory may also point toward the existence of the Palestinian archipelago in the chronotope; these would be things such as customs, habits, dress, and other Palestinian cultural norms that have been passed down through generations. Literally speaking, the formation of the archipelago occurred during 1948, when the Palestinians were driven from their homes by invading Israeli forces; this disaster was called al-Nakba (“The Catastrophe” in English), and was the event that marked the initial dispossession and scattering of Palestinians into diasporic groups. That a common tragedy is the basic element of memory that unites modern Palestinians shows why the symbolic cartography that is behind the conception of the archipelago is significant; Palestinian origins are both located in time and space, and within a real geographical territory, but Palestinian origins also depend upon a solidarity that is the side-effect of shared trauma. These dual origins for Palestinian identity explain how the identity endures after loss of territory and the loss of a national government; only one side of Palestinian existence is being suppressed – the other side is created by this same suppression, and it is this resistance to elimination that defines the Palestinian experience and national character as exceptional. Since
not all Palestinians live in diaspora, one might also wonder how the contemporary situation in Palestine fits into the archipelago model. At the time of this writing, Israel continues to build settlements in the West Bank, and has invaded Gaza in 2008, 2012, and most recently, in 2014. To answer briefly, the Palestinians living in Palestinian territory are included as the equilibrium of the archipelago, its main island; those Palestinians living within Palestine and Israel occupy the land, but they are not considered residents of the hot-spot in this theory. The hot-spot is the event in time called al-Nakba, not any particular geographic location. The memory of al-Nakba shapes and is shaped by the actions and reactions of Palestinians to its existence. Therefore, Palestinians who continue living in their homeland do so as participants in new classifications of identities that shape their consciousnesses: some are “Israeli-Arab” and live within Israel as second-class citizens; they were engulfed by al-Nakba. Others are “Palestinian refugees” in Gaza, the West Bank, Jordan, Syria and Lebanon, who were dispossessed and dislocated after al-Nakba. Thus, what some would see as the main island in the archipelago is actually several groups, or islands in the archipelago, that are each separated by geography, borders, fences, checkpoints, walls, immigration status, self-perception, and even the perception of others. The goal of all Palestinians in the post-al-Nakba era is the unification of the archipelago. This would be achieved spatially and temporally after the re-establishment of a Palestinian nation-state in the land of Palestine, by extending a “right of return” policy to Palestinians, or if growth in Palestinian demographics transformed Palestine into a state for the two nations (the Palestinian and the Jewish). Thus, the archipelago theory is adaptable because as long as Palestinians remain in diaspora, the theory describes and attempts to encapsulate people and ideas in motion.

The testimony of Palestinian literary production also identifies al-Nakba and its aftermath as the central narrative of Palestinians, just as I have described in my discussion of the formation
of the archipelago model. Scholarship on Palestinian affairs has also identified *al-Nakba* as centrally significant to the contemporary Palestinian narrative and as being an “artifact that commemorates the Palestinians’ loss of their homeland in the past, and articulates the ‘deep narratives’ of their ongoing exile” (Saloul 5). In this context, Ihab Saloul argues that the concept of “deep narratives” refers to “those narratives that are inherently grounded in the past *al-Nakba*, yet continuously resurfacing in reconstructions and retelling […] the story of that catastrophe in present exile” (6). This writing of these “deep narratives” takes place in a certain place and time, reflecting or speaking about that particular point in space and time. This perspective on literature is Mikhail Bakhtin's concept of the chronotope, which is defined as being as the “intrinsic connectedness of temporal and spatial relationships that are artistically expressed in literature” (Bhaktin, 84). Bhaktin wrote that he would not “deal with the chronotope in other areas of culture,” but due to the intersection of artistic representation in the construction of nationalism (84), as can be inferred from Benedict Anderson’s discussion of how print-capitalism is a component of nation-building, I intend to extend the chronotope in a manner that will encapsulate the literary contributions Palestinians have made to the abstract and mental construction of their nation. In reference to the chronotopic placement of the Palestinian narrative, the situation is very complex because Palestinian literature is being produced unevenly. Different experiences with diaspora provide diverse opportunities to write as much as they provide a variety of stories to tell. All of them are essentially Palestinian narratives, however, and this is the phenomenon that is explained by the archipelago model. All these stories are anchored in one point in space-time, and that point is *al-Nakba*. From this point of departure, different interpretations and reactions to *al-Nakba* have created variations of political, cultural, and even national consciousness in the Palestinian community. These reactions, when
viewed as a whole, are easily conceptualized as islands in an archipelago.

Merriam-Webster's dictionary defines an archipelago as a series of islands or “a group or scattering of similar things”; however, I conceptualize the Palestinian archipelago using the geographic term as a metaphor to emphasize the different Palestinian communities throughout the world and how they have emerged from a singular event, but have taken their own courses through the chronotope since being united at that original point. Additionally, Julien Bousac, illustrator at *Le Monde Diplomatique*, has imagined the West Bank, by itself, as an archipelago in order to bring attention to the fracturing of the community caused by the occupation. Similarly, I imagine the Palestinian archipelago as different islands of scattered, but shared Palestinian experiences (and sometimes shared residence in a geographic area), anchored in the sea of time and space. Though this model does not describe Palestinian history fully as I have conceived it, the model is viable and should be used in such an attempt. A complete map of the Palestinian diaspora, imagined as an archipelago that spans the chronotope, would necessarily include events such as resistance to the British Mandate, Palestine's existence within the Ottoman Empire, but my model is based on more current events. Depicting islands in the archipelago formed in contemporary history shows Palestinians' efforts to preserve, recover, and even re-enact the memories my model excludes. However, they are present by implication.

In my model, *al-Nakba* could be considered the hot-spot that formed the modern archipelago; however, as each island was formed by one single tragedy, every island encounters its own tragic transformational incidents. Ernest Renan considers values tragedies, suffering, and one’s concept of ancestral heritage as the cultural assets that constitute a nation. Palestine is a wonderful example of how memories of tragedy serve to unite nations by organizing human consciousness around a central point in history, or any other narrative of space and time. The
Palestinian historian Walid Khalidi’s collection of historical photographs, maps, and journalistic evidence, chronicle the details of Palestinian life prior to the diaspora using personal testimonies and artifacts that represent the shared reality of historic Palestine and al-Nakba, providing material evidence of both shared tragedy and endurance in the Palestinian community.

According to Renan, as long as memories remain, the nation remains – and if the memories are written and pass the test of time, the nation shall live forever, or until its memory of itself fails. Palestinian memory embodies the definition of memory as “a dialectical relation between the past and the present and its connection to the individual’s and the group standpoint in the present” (Kassem 6). This is to say not only that “social memory [emerges] as a source of knowledge” – but also as a source of personal memory (Fentress & Wickham 26). Assmann and Czaplicka distinguish between two types of memories: the first as “communicative memories” characterized by being verbal, experienced, and passed between social communities over their lifespan (126-7). These memories are spontaneous, informal, and thrive for a short time. The second type of memory, “cultural memory,” is more structured and formal. It is archived, printed and documented via media, architecture, and geographic landmarks (Assmann & Czaplicka 128). Therefore, this kind of memory is more sustainable and lives in society for much longer.

The tragedy-and-ancestry based theory of nationalism implies that a collective forgetfulness of self is the enemy of the national consciousness. Time, while its passage can be beneficial by preserving memories, can be another enemy. Narratives are at risk in the Palestinian memory, for if they fade away, the bridges between the old and young generation dissolve, and forgetfulness takes a firm grasp on the past, taking the nation’s oral history with it. The threat to the narratives of non-diasporic nations is the same, but forgetfulness is more intimidating to a people in diaspora, and becomes more intimidating when they are without
official national museums and historical institutions. In order to confront this threat, Palestinian memory has become the social and cultural glue that cements bonds between Palestinians in diaspora, for the act of *carrying* the narrative forward proves one’s Palestinian identity. Incorporating the history of *al-Nakba* into personal memory and making it a prerequisite of Palestinian identity ensure that the future of the nation’s consciousness is protected within the minds and bodies of every Palestinian.

Individual and personal stories become the real agents of preserving this memory in the fields of communication/media and literature. Thus, the Palestinian narrative is far more complex than a simple story of invasion and loss: it is the story of unique tragedies occurring within individual lives. Thanks to the longevity of memory and narrative, the Palestinian archipelago is prepared to expand and adapt, although it desires to reach a central point. However, the islands of Palestinians in diaspora throughout the world are involved with their host nations’ and surrounding societies’ temporal and spatial development as much as they are involved in their own self-definition and self-preservation. This is to say that immigrant Palestinians effect the demographics and politics of the nations in which their circumstances force them to establish their communities, and these communities likewise affect Palestinians as time passes.

Palestinians live in two or more worlds. In the global context, cultural exchange is inevitable. Thus, I expect to find further variation in the Palestinian narrative developing over time, independent of the activities of the state of Israel and the continuing conflict in Palestine – yet, the consequences of *al-Nakba* remain central to the identities of these communities in diaspora. Before describing the whole of the Palestinian archipelago as it can be seen today, let us move further into the past to justify Palestine's existence according to another theory of nationalism: primordialism.
The Palestinian claim to sovereignty and nationhood can be traced into the past, which lends their claims to the land of Palestine the legitimacy enjoyed by European nations that have, through primordialist theories of nationhood, established their own nations as being inextricably related to geographic locations and to each other in a time-honored system of inter-cultural exchange. Indeed, prior to 1948, Palestine can be found on the maps of the Ottomans and many other nations. The primordialist position on nationalism is described by Clifford Geertz, in “Primordial and Civic Ties,” who writes that

congruities of blood, speech, custom, and so on are seen to have an ineffable, and at times overpowering, coerciveness in and of themselves. One is bound to one’s kinsman, one’s neighbor, one’s fellow believer, […] by virtue of some unaccountable import attributed to the very tie itself. (31)

Additionally, Anthony D. Smith describes a nation in primordialist terms as “a named human population sharing an historical territory, common myths and memories, a mass, public culture, a single economy, and common rights and duties for all members” (“The Nation,” 37).

Consider the agreement between these definitions, and consider a portrait of Palestine from the perspective of Western history and within the context of the primordial nationalism. Palestine’s name has its origin in the Latin Palestina, the name for the province under the rule of the Roman Empire. As far as objective criteria for nationhood are concerned, the Palestinian people have a place even in Western history that confers to them all of qualities of nationhood used by European nations to describe themselves and justify their existences and the retention of their borders. The modern Palestinian cultural legacy, as of 1948, is one of an agrarian existence oriented around village life; the pre-1948 era represents the idealized past Palestine to which Palestinians in diaspora strive to return. Memories of this time are the stories that grandparents have communicated to their grand-and great-grand children.

At first appearance, the nation of Palestine is no different from others that have faced
exile and dispersion during a time of war, as well as the Jewish. However, it has been the re-
emergence of Palestinian national consciousness in the 20th century that has defined Western
perceptions of Palestinians and continues to influence this perception to this date. This same
spirit of endurance is what I see, also, as the cornerstone of a developing sense of Palestinian
exceptionalism. Those who suffered in the past have been memorialized as heroes and martyrs,
and the participants in modern and future conflicts with the state of Israel will not be treated
differently. Therefore, the “inconvenient” Palestinians of today who have gained status as a UN
observer nation have, again, demonstrated their own existence; they are the founders of the
future Palestine.

At this point, however, primordialist claims for Palestine break down, for they continue
to be denied by Palestine's opponents – yet, Palestinian primordialism can nevertheless be
justified along the same terms that European nations have used for self-definition. Edward Said
and other Palestinian scholars acknowledge the importance of primordialism as a strategy used to
establish Palestine among the nations of the world without criticizing Israel or its British
enablers. This act is significant because it demonstrates that Palestinian national consciousness
did not form in opposition to Zionism or in opposition to the British mandate, but enjoyed a
previous existence that was equivalent to the British experience and in keeping with British ideas
of national existence; the two nations imagine themselves using the same human reasoning. In
fact, the term *al-Nakba* presupposes an existing nation upon which the tragedy of *al-Nakba* had
an immediate impact. *al-Nakba* could only become the moment of Palestinian loss if the
Palestinians had a coherent, primordial narrative of nationhood. As Rashid Khalidi writes in
*Palestinian Identity*,

the sense of political and national identification of most politically conscious, literate, and
urban Palestinians underwent a major transformation. The end result was a strong and
growing national identification with Palestine, as the Arab residents of the country increasingly came to “imagine” themselves as part of a single community. (150)

A Palestinian national imagination, while its resurgence in the 20th century was provoked before and after WWI, is the result of “a similar general idea of the country as a unit, and as being special and holy” held by Palestinians, and with much historical precedent (Khalidi 150). However, the Zionist narrative denies, as a rhetorical strategy, the indigenous status of Palestinians in order to advance their own claims as natives to the land, and the Palestinian narrative has evolved to respond to this sophistry. Thus, the history of the Palestinian revolution is defined by at least two phases: Palestinian resistance to the British Mandate in the 1930s, and the later rise of Yasir Arafat, Khalil al-Wazir, Salah Khalaf, George Habash, and Palestinian nationalist organizations. Current Palestinian self-awareness is more strongly linked to the memory of the revolutionaries of the 1960s than to those of the 1930s.

One explanation for the phenomenon of self-definition based on an era beginning in the 1960s is how Yasir Arafat and the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO's) activities after al-Nakba did so much to define the Palestinian cause as one defined by an opposition to Israel in the eyes of people consuming Western media. However, it is my contention that Arafat’s activities were a manifestation of popular will on the part of the Palestinian people to restore and reorganize a system of self-governance, or, the first iteration of the Palestinian government in exile. This is not an unusual activity and is to be expected within a primordialist framework: the people will not consent to be driven out by invaders, or those who have no ancestral attachment to the land.

Still, it is true that the PLO galvanized and reoriented the political desires of the Palestinian people and that Arafat's efforts attracted international attention, but the appearance of Arafat on the international scene does not mark the creation of Palestine from nothing, or from
the mind of one man. Clarifying this misperception about Palestinian national origins in the lens of Western history is a major point of this dissertation since much of the rhetoric surrounding Palestine in the Western and Israeli media is laboriously constructed to perpetuate notions that Palestinians have established a political consciousness in reaction to the establishment of the state of Israel and that these considerations and their solutions mark the beginning and the end of the “question of Palestine.”

Edward Said writes that to speak of the Palestinian condition as a “question” of existence is to “suggest that the status of the thing referred to in the phrase is uncertain, questionable, unstable,” and so it is to imply further that the fate of Palestine is, ultimately, out of the ability of Palestinians to control and that their dispossession is not to be redressed under their own power, but by others empowered not to answer, but to ask and to define the terms of Palestine’s existence as a question (The Question of Palestine, 4). Said is not the only scholar who has identified the strong influence of propaganda in the language used to discuss Palestinian issues, thus, in this dissertation, the description of Palestinian history must necessarily focus on the 20th century in order to rebut claims of Palestinian non-existence within the context of its denial. So, by no means should my omission of material involving Palestinian resistance to the British Mandate be considered as an acquiescence to the Zionist narrative. The goal of developing the archipelago model is to illustrate the long-standing historical existence of Palestine and provide evidence of its veracity from history, literature, material culture, folk memory, and etc. The description must be able to synchronize the past, present, and future in such a way that a full representation of Palestine as it is known to Palestinians will emerge. Thus, primordialist theories of nationhood still matter for Palestine; they legitimize the basic collective Palestinian memory of the nation’s shared past.
Another theory of nationalism that is relevant to the activities of the PLO and the Palestinian consciousness of the 1960s and 1970s is the theory of imagined communities as articulated by Benedict Anderson. He finds that “nation, nationality, nationalism – all have proved notoriously difficult to define, let alone to analyze,” because his work examined how it was possible that “‘old nations’ once thought fully consolidated, find themselves challenged by ‘sub’-nationalism within their borders” in the post-WWII era (Imagined Communities, 3).

Anderson was wrestling with the ambiguities posed to the “first world” by the rise of the “third world” during the beginning of the post-colonial era. During this time, transcontinental empires fell apart and long-oppressed indigenous nations claimed authority over the land of their ancestors and expelled colonial power, whether by election or revolution.

Revolutionary sentiment informed the national consciousness of Palestinians during this postcolonial era, as well. However, to return to discussing the rise of Yasir Arafat and the PLO, the 1960s mark a point in the Palestinian space-time where the nation has been forcibly unmoored from the land, and to a significant degree. The emergence of the PLO and revolutionary figureheads therefore indicates that the primordialist justification for Palestine’s existence has failed to convince or has not been heard by the West, so, the Palestinian national consciousness adapts by defining itself as an “imagined political community […] both inherently limited and sovereign” (Imagined Communities, 6).

The postcolonial era saw the coupling, in the media and in the political activities of Palestinians, of the “Question of Palestine” and the “Question of Israel” in a publicly antagonistic dynamic. Whereas the Palestinians were previously said to not exist, the activities of the PLO thrust them into existence in which they were acknowledged, but as enemies of Israel. The continual characterization of Palestinians as terrorists and anti-Semites prompted continual
re-imaginings of the Palestinian community, and, as with al-Nakba, the incidents of history served to create more Palestinians living in diaspora, and, thus, more islands of shared experience and identity within the virtual archipelago.

An important question to consider at this stage in Palestinian development is why the same spirit of revolution had not emerged previously, when Palestinians would have had a chance to organize against the British Mandate and the organization of the state of Israel. However, to ask such a question is to be caught up in the political ambiguities of the postcolonial era – during the 1930s, as I have mentioned, the Palestinians did rebel against the British, but suffered devastating losses. Awareness of the Zionist project and opposition to it was present in Palestine as early as 1917, when Winston Churchill in 1922 “carved Transjordan out of Palestine and established Hussein’s son, Abdullah, as its ruler” to accommodate Palestinians’ national aspirations while the Zionist project advanced into Palestine from Britain (Schneer 374).

During the Mandate, the British continually adjusted their policies toward Palestine, and eventually denied Palestinian indigenous status before moving to replace Palestine with the state of Israel. When the relocation and dispossession of Palestinians began in earnest after WWI, opposition to Zionism became the main focus of Palestinian political identity and their right to the land, and it has remained the core issue for Palestinians ever since this time. Thus, we see that opposition to Zionism was not solely a product of the postcolonial era, but an attempt at regaining independence inspired by the revolutions occurring in Africa, Asia, and elsewhere during that time. Therefore, the “imagined community” of Palestine existing after WWII is not an instantly-conceived device designed to delegitimize the state of Israel, as propaganda claimed, but an organic structure that remained true to its national aspirations as described by a primordialist conception of Palestine. The imagined community takes primordialism as a core
principal of its existence, but adds to it in a political manner as the demands of existing in diaspora require.

Rahshid Khalidi, James L. Gelvin and Edward Said, all point out that nationalism as phenomena has evolved and expanded in Europe in reaction to and in opposition to other nations or cultures. Gelvin argues that even if we endorse the negative narrative about Palestinian national consciousness derived from Israeli propaganda, this would not undermine or delegitimize the validity of Palestinian nationalism as a reaction to Israeli colonialism.

Another consideration to make regarding imagined communities is how Palestine is influenced by the greater community of nations. During the reign of the Ottoman Empire, all Islamic lands were considered to be united in the Umma, an entity that transcends ethnic and tribal relations; these are the super-national roots of the Palestinian people that differentiate them from other members of the Umma. Nasserism rose during the postcolonial period alongside many other revolutionary and political movements, and Palestinians participated in the Pan-Arabism that was the focus of the Nasserist movement. However, these gestures served to obscure Palestinian nationhood in the Western imagination by implying that Arabs are united as a people throughout various nation-states, a point that the Zionists seized upon to rationalize the expulsion of Palestinians as Arab “immigrants” to Israel. However, the 1967 war marked the failure of Pan-Arabism and saw the Palestinians embark on a new venture in which they felt the need to unite themselves further under the PLO. The disappointing failure of Pan-Arabism effected Palestinians by strengthening their nationalist ambitions and solidifying the fact in the minds of the Palestinian public that Arab nation-states were a new and lasting presence in reality.

Through this process of loss and dispersion after 1967, Palestinian society became the internationally situated community that it is today. Thus, the Palestinian narrative confronted
hopelessness and absorbed it, now defining the nation based on all it had lost. Moreover, the chronicles of individual stories blurred into the collective one, and the collective experience became the individual’s. The loss of Palestine after 1967 was shared by the urban and the rural, the literate and the illiterate, the fellaheen and the landlords, women and men, and etc., all in different places, such as in the neighboring Arab states, or further abroad. Like *al-Nakba* before it, the 1967 war impacted all Palestinians. Paradoxically, the exchange and comparison of personal and collective suffering are items that constitute the foundation of the Palestinians’ collective consciousness and maintain it in the present time.

Therefore, it is no exaggeration to assume that most Palestinians after *al-Nakba* and 1967 endured the experience of being refugees. Neighboring Arab states were merely hosts to the Palestinians in diaspora and were, at times, suspicious of the arriving refugees and anxious about the developments in their political and national struggle. No Arab nation-state wanted to host a Palestinian revolution or a Palestinian state in exile. Therefore, Palestinian refugees came to imagine themselves as a nation because of their similar experiences of loss, suffering, and the rejection of their neighbors. Ernest Renan underscores the “spiritual principle” in which “the past” and the “present” are the main factors that constitute “this soul, this principle” that is national identity (17). Naturally, the shared trials of the Palestinian refugees should prompt recognition between individuals based on shared historical experiences. At this stage, Palestinian consciousness centers upon an idea of a near, shared past in which the “possession in common of a rich legacy” is still fresh in the refugees’ memory, reproducing and preserving “the actual consent, the desire to live together, the will to continue to value the heritage which all hold in common” (Renan 17).

Further changes in the Palestinian national consciousness after the 1967 war were
initiated in 1970-1971, during the Jordanian-Palestinian War. The event was known as Black September, and it was characterized by clashes between the army of King Hussein of Jordan and the Palestinian Fedayeen militias. Black September marked a low point in the relationship between the Jordanians and Palestinians and another point of departure from the central island in the archipelago model. While the Palestinian militias attempted to regroup in Jordan after the 1967 war, their recruitment drives and patrols were seen as interfering with the Jordanian sovereignty and usurping their authority. Jordanian hostility to the Fedayeen presence ultimately led to further tragedy and dislocation when the Jordanian government decided to pacify and regulate the Palestinian militias who were accused of forming a “state within a state” in Jordan. The Fedayeen resisted, and thousands more Palestinians were either dislocated or lost their lives during the ensuing battles.

Palestinian-Jordanian is an island in the archipelago, but there is no singular vision of what constitutes a Palestinian-Jordanian, or a Jordanian-Palestinian. Some of those who migrated to Jordan during the 1967 war were deported after the defeat of the Fedayeen, but other Palestinians continued to hold on to their Jordanian citizenship and acquiesced to live as second-class citizens within Jordan, forbidden from forming Palestinian organizations and likewise forbidden from full participation in Jordanian society – or, alternatively, Palestinians found themselves constrained and defined by the complex relationships between national bureaucracies. Residents of the West Bank were given Jordanian citizenship because of the Jordanian annexation of the West Bank in the 1950, but some continued to live in Palestine, which had now fallen under Israel's occupation. Palestinians who migrated into Jordan during the years that Jordan was the administrator of the West Bank were considered as migrating from one side of the country to the other of their own accord, a domestic or internal migration, and were
not afforded any of the assistance provided to other refugees of war. The ambiguity regarding the status of the West Bank is ongoing: Israel declares the land conquered and the property of their state, while Palestinians in the West Bank continue to struggle to make their voices heard and to go about their daily lives.

The West Bank, as a geographical location, constitutes another island in the archipelago. The possibility of travel expands the range of identities available to Palestinians, and the passage of time and historic events within this area provide even more opportunities for self-definition and re-definition. Due to the pattern of immigration previously described, West Bankers are not Palestinians-Jordanian after 1988, when King Hussein ceded Jordan claims to the West Bank, but they may have relatives who were living deeper within Jordan who remained Palestinian-Jordanian. Thus, these islands overlap in space-time, but the deprivation and poverty experienced every day in the West Bank is nevertheless a world away from the comparatively prosperous world of some bourgeoisie Palestinian-Jordanian who have assimilated into Jordanian society as much as necessary to survive, and as much as the Jordanian government will allow.

Both Homi Bhabha’s and Benedict Anderson’s theories of national consciousness are needed to analyze the Palestinian-Jordanian identity. Bhabha uses the figure of the “Janus-Faced” Roman god (a doorway figure who, Roman legend says, can see into the past with one side of his face and into the future with the other) as a metaphor for the linguistic and epistemological complications at play in the articulation of exactly what constitutes a Palestinian-Jordanian. According to Bhabha, national identities “may be partial because they are in medias res; and history may be half-made because it is in the process of being made; and the image of cultural authority may be ambivalent because it is caught, uncertainly, in the act of ‘composing’ its powerful image” (Nation and Narration, 3). Certainly, the ambiguity
surrounding Palestinian-Jordanian status finds those participating in the ambiguity looking both to the past and to the future for the meanings of their identities.

Bhabha’s emphasis on the performativity of language and its productive capacity is helpful in comprehending how the Palestinian-Jordanian maintains and performs Palestinian cultural identity in Jordan. Palestinians-Jordanian actively practices their identities. Objects of Palestinian material culture and ritual establish a self-proclaimed “antagonistic” Palestinian presence in Jordan, one that holds firm to its identity through daily action. Thus, an instance of “distance nationalism” emerges as Benedict Anderson theorized when he wrote of how the “modern official documents of personal identity: [are] the birth certificate and the passport” (Exodus, 322). The primary objective of the birth certificate is “identifying each baby’s father and place of birth” as it is enforced in Jordan for the inclusion in or exclusion from certain governmental and citizenship privileges (Exodus 323). Therefore, the distinguishing papers that mark one as a second-class Jordanian citizen are the same papers that remind one of a Palestinian identity and the need for its adoption.

Though Anderson argues that in the era of capitalism and globalization, birth certificates have lost their quality and market value in favor to the passport, within the Palestinian-Jordanian context, birth certificates remain reliable indicators of national origin. Birthplaces are traced back two generations in order to establish a Palestinian identity and legal status within Jordan. These certificates are different from passports. A Jordanian passport is meant to facilitate the Palestinian-Jordanian’s daily activities and to aid them in travel, but it does not entitle them to a full Jordanian citizenship.

However, travel throughout the Arab world continued to expose Palestinians to the idea of pan-Arabism and to the realities of developing Arab states as Black September faded into the
past. After the Camp David meeting in 1979 in which Sinai was ceded back to Egypt as a condition of a new treaty between Egypt and Israel, Palestinians began to conceive of the West Bank and Gaza as “their country,” or as the site of a future Palestinian state. Pan-Arabist sentiment and the acts of witnessing the success of other Arab nations continued to inspire Palestinians to attempt to retake Palestine by military means. Yet, the 1982 Israeli invasion of Lebanon scattered the Palestinians living as refugees in that country; subsequently, the PLO was forbidden from operating in Lebanon and relocated to Tunisia. Enduring one loss after another from 1967 to 1987 produced bitterness in the Palestinians, for not only would their neighbors refuse them the opportunity to temporarily reorganize their nation within the borders of another, they would bar and betray the Palestinians altogether due to fear of provoking further wars with Israel and its allies. For a time, it seemed that to offer aid to the PLO was to invite invasion or civil war, so, as 1987 approached, Palestinian refugees were left to face Israel alone and suffered the Shatila and Sabra massacres. Feelings of despair and desperation increased until the first Intifada 1987, a revolution that ended only after the Madrid Peace Conference in 1991 erupted in the West Bank and Gaza.

The Intifada would seem to rejoin the Palestinians to the land from one perspective, but despite the PLO being pushed back into the territory of Palestine, the causes of diaspora had not disappeared. The Gulf War of 1990 found the Palestinians living in Kuwait, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and other Gulf states in the middle of a conflict that was not their own. Palestinians found themselves expelled from Kuwait and other Gulf States due to the Kuwaiti reaction to the PLO’s support for resolving the conflict between Kuwait and Iraq within the context of the Arab world and without the U.S.’s intervention. Palestinians who had re-established themselves in Kuwait were dispossessed in a manner similar to how they had been after the establishment of Israel.
Homes, material wealth and careers were left behind as Kuwait exiled the Palestinians.

Despite the Oslo accord of 1993, the events of the late 20th century firmly established a diasporic existence for Palestine. Identities resulting from the events previously recounted are informed, therefore, by feelings of betrayal, experiences of repeated relocation, the multiplication of Palestinian political positions, and an incredible variety. No longer is the PLO the sole voice of the Palestinians; two parties, Fatah and Hamas, struggle against each other to convince Palestinians to follow their ideologies and strategies for reclaiming Palestine and opposing the question of who is representing the Palestinians now. Meanwhile, Palestinian settlements in the Arab world and elsewhere pursue existences that are no longer centered on the idea of temporarily re-establishing Palestine within another nation. Those who claim a contemporary Palestinian identity are burdened by the task of interpreting the past and planning for the future while living in diaspora. Although those living on the islands in the Palestinian archipelago do look back to Palestine as their origin and rightful homeland, the ambiguities of human experience have divided and multiplied many of the islands within themselves, and along political lines. It would be especially telling to compare the life of a resident of Gaza to the life of a resident of Paris, which is the specific form of analysis that I shall apply to the identities of Palestinians as represented in selected Palestinian literature.

The maintenance of identities in progress now characterizes the Palestinian identity; therefore, I draw upon many theories of nationalism in order to represent the historical concerns, present situation, and future ambition of the nation of Palestine. Scholars such as Homi K. Bhabha, Benedict Anderson, Stuart Hall, Frantz Fanon, Edward Said, Ernest Gellner, Anthony Smith, Clifford Geertz, and Ernest Renan have all described various aspects of Palestinian national identity and notions of Palestinian nationalism in their work, even when the nationalism
under consideration was not Palestinian. In the approach I have devised to combine the works of these scholars for the purpose of analyzing Palestinian literature, I have innovated the archipelago model to contain and resolve any apparent contradictions regarding theory; tension and ambiguity have come to define the Palestinian identity to a large degree, and in a state of diaspora, ideas that would conflict in a settled nation can synthesize. This synthesis is the source from which the identities of Palestinians living in diaspora emerge.

Additionally, Mikhail Bakhtin’s concept of the chronotope informs the critical approach I have taken not only to the literature under consideration, but to the theories of the aforementioned scholars of nationalism. The diasporic condition of the Palestinian nation necessitates a creative approach to the formation of identity due to the variety of experiences that the diasporic condition forces upon Palestinians. These identities are formed, initially, by reaction to the same historical circumstances that create a chronotopic landscape within novels in literary theory. The fact that Palestinian identities have been continually recreated beginning from the historical experiences of disparate groups of Palestinians marks the re-creation of Palestinian identity after diaspora as both a historic and literary endeavor. Palestinian identity is performative because it must be so in order to continue existing outside the borders of a nation-state and without land in which to be situated. Certainly, Palestinians must reinvent their identities again after the restoration of Palestine, so I anticipate further development in Palestinian history that can be characterized as literary re-imagination of a Palestinian identity. Therefore, the literary production that is Palestinian history is in motion and more interactions and developments along the chronotope should be anticipated, likewise. At the time of this writing, the Arab world is experiencing political chaos. The Palestinians are caught in the middle of conflicts ranging from Civil War in Syria and Egypt to sectarianism conflict in Lebanon and
Tunisia. In Syria, the Palestinian in the Yarmouk Refugee Camp has been under attack for more than two years, and the refugees there have been unable to relocate to Jordan or to Iraq. Lebanon has also rejected them, so, they may find refuge in Turkey. A relocation to Turkey would mark another departure from the Palestinian experience and the beginning of a new segment of Palestinian history in Turkey, so, the near future may see the creation of a new island in the archipelago.

Within the ongoing debates of the bloody consequences of the idea of nationalism throughout history, particularly after the two World Wars and other racial wars all over the world, identity has been a topic of passionate research in the field of Postcolonial literature, as Frantz Fanon's works suggest. Another scholar, Umut Ozkirimli separates the concept of national identity from other concepts of “kindred” such as ethnicity, ethnic group, and race (58). Current political struggles and the continuing expansion of the postcolonial era into the 21st century contributes to difficulties in understanding the concept of national identity in our postmodern vocabulary. Yet, scholars have identified two groups of distinguishing criteria: the objective and the subjective. The objective criteria describes nationhood by means of referencing individual or collective identities and their objective orientations, whether they are based on class, geographic region, gender roles, race, language, or religious belief. Some scholars continue to argue that nationhood distinguishes itself and transcends these orientations. The debate surrounding these objective criteria is ongoing, but they have doubtlessly contributed to the formation of the character of nations and have often served as central principles upon which a nation is “founded,” or is perceived to be oriented toward by the historians it produces. As for the subjective criteria that constitute nationhood, they are simply self-awareness and solidarity.

Analysis of the criteria that produce nationhood is still controversial and scholars have
not yet resolved the debate as to what, yet, the prevailing middle view in today’s scholarship suggests that a combination of objective and subjective criteria are capable of generating feelings of nationhood and, therefore, the seeds of political nationalism.

Nationalism in its most basic form is a political ideology attached to feelings of national identity that promotes the ideas of maintaining the nation. When considering subjective criteria and their influence on nationalism, we come to Breuilly’s interpretation, which suggests that nationalism “can refer to ideas, to sentiment and to actions” as well as objective criteria (404). Breuilly’s definition could encompass an inventive and dynamic approach to national identity wherein some nations could be comprehended as ideas, writing, speeches, and other products of the intellect whereas another nation might be comprehended as sentiment focused on a shared language, shared customs, myths, symbols, and rituals as the main components of national culture. This approach is very compatible with the concept of a diasporic archipelago of Palestinian existence. Theorists also acknowledge that a national feeling and nationalism may sometimes collapse into one another during instances where a nation must be defined by action, whether that is mutual struggle, mutual resistance, or other forms of collective problem solving. This concept, too, unites people struggling against oppression in revolutionary solidarity and shows much potential for being an engine that creates national identities as well as nationalist sentiments.

Thus, it is understood that nationhood is not defined by action, objective criteria, or subjective criteria alone, but a confluence of all three factors. According to Kellas, nationalism “is both an ‘idea’ and a ‘form of behaviour;’” (3) it is a “doctrine,” to Kedourie (1); “an ideological movement,” to Smith (National Identity, 51); a “political principle,” to Gellner (1) and a “discursive formation” to Calhoun (3). And last, but not least, “[a] nation is a soul, a
spiritual principle” to Renan (17). Adding to all of these definitions, Umut Ozkirimli agrees with and promotes Halliday’s definition as being comprehensive due to Halliday’s combination of the aforementioned definitions into his own. Halliday’s argument is that “nationalism [is] a political doctrine or ideology” that is constituted by “a set of political principles that movements and individuals espouse” (443) with a very long past that could be traced to the eighteenth century, mainly during the German Romantic Era and the Enlightenment (Ozkirimli 13). A thoughtful reading of the periods during which the notion of nationalism was articulated implies that there are two vectors in play; the former would be the development of internal/individual’s perception of himself and his position both spatial and temporal; while the latter is the external and phenomenal, a definition tied to the external world, the world beyond one’s authority and knowledge – the arena of social, political, and cultural contexts and challenges. And this would move the debate of the perception of the individual subjectivity to W.E. B. DuBois’ notion of “double consciousness,” the divided soul and self that always stressed by “this sense of always looking at one’s self through the eyes of others, of measuring one’s soul by the tape of a world that looks on in amused contempt and pity” (9).

Thus, the Palestinian notion of national identity draws upon all of these aforementioned theories to create and recreate itself as the nation moves forward in time and encounters different challenges. However, the Palestinian identity is segmented and progressive; it encounters its own history as a whole, but it encounters diasporic history in separate parts. Though these parts are based on individual experiences, the groupings of individuals and their collective treatment by Israel and other nations group Palestinians into mini-collectives that each confront history on their own terms. As time moves forward, groups of Palestinians in diaspora overlap, reunite, and sometimes split apart once again. However, the motion of the nation as a whole is toward
reintegration and internal cohesion. Thus, the Palestinian identity must be performative because its existence requires personal cultivation and maintenance from the individuals who possess it. Though all members of all nations must cultivate nationality in order to express it as part of their identities, I argue that this act is of paramount importance in diasporic communities because it is the central idea of shared nationality that defines and encapsulates the concept of the nation.

In “Cultural Identity and Diaspora” Stuart Hall emphasizes a similar idea that disturbs notions of identity based on the analysis of objective and subjective criteria. Hall is skeptical about the relation between triangle elements of enunciation: the speaker, the utterance and the experience that s/he aims to enunciate. He argues that

recent theories of enunciation suggest is that, though we speak, so to say ‘in our own name,’ of ourselves and from our own experience, nevertheless who speaks, and the subject who is spoken of, are never identical, never exactly in the same place. (392)

This claim agrees partially with scholarship in subaltern studies, mainly with Gayatri Spivak’s polemic article “Can the Subaltern Speak?” in which she rebuts the assumption that the subaltern can speak or, moreover, recover their voices. Spivak is wary about the Western/French theories of subjectivity as they are demonstrated by Western scholars, Deleuze and Foucault, because both assume the transparency of the relationship between the signifier and the signified, as well as the pointlessness of a mediator in the process of representation in the modern time.

Spivak adopts two main forms of representation: political and re-presentation (figurative). As for the first in the political context, Spivak would argue that, as woman, I must have a woman representative because she understands my problems, needs and even desires. As for the latter, she emphasizes that the re-presentation is as in art, or the utilization of the aesthetic and philosophy, to reveal an actual subject to represent, thus to transform the function and the subject under consideration. As for distinct persons, individuals can be represented via the
intellectual because s/he is the one who has access to the master’s discourse and could speak the language of the master. So, one is either represented by a physical approximation of the body, an approximation of the mind, or an approximation of superficiality that reflects more of what is in the heart of the beholder than in the mind or flesh of the observed. Spivak suspends inquiry at this point because one who is represented, by her definition, cannot be fully or legitimately represented in a manner that corresponds to reality.

Stuart’s thesis, in the context of Spivak's article, is a refutation of the classical assumption of identity as an “already accomplish[ed] fact, which the new cultural practices then represent” (392). On the contrary, identity should be comprehended as “a ‘production’ which is never complete, always in process, and always constituted within, not outside, representation” (Hall 392). On the other side, Hall agrees with Bhabha who as aforementioned emphasizes the performativity of the language, and the ambivalent of the cultural identity to the fact that it is always in an incomplete formation and always in progression. Thus, both scholars’ claims with Spivak’s two Marxist avenues of representation are all applicable in articulating and representing cultural identity, and Palestinians use social identity construction, finding themselves in others, while others actively produce their own identities as necessary.

Stuart Hall puts the finishing touch on my description of the Palestinian national identity in writing: “there are also critical points of deep and significant difference which constitute ‘what we really are’; or rather – since history has intervened – ‘what we have become’” (394). Hall reconciles the tension between imposed identities and self-cultivated ones in his description of a progressive but internally evaluated identity. Palestinians, as Hall has described, must find who they really are after witnessing and enduring the intervention of histories that they did not write and did not invite into their story. Nevertheless, these interventions exist, and if no representation
is possible according to Spivak, the Palestinians will nevertheless maintain a voice, even if it is an internal one. That voice cannot be silenced by the weight of the Israeli narrative, but continually reacts and reconfigures itself in response to it. Thus, a core principle of Palestinian identity is not merely a national identity, but the adaptability required to maintain that identity in a diasporic condition.

The archipelago theory I have developed has originated not from a desire to impose an interpretive rubric upon the Palestinian experience, but to reach out into the world of scholars and philosophers in order to describe the experience of being Palestinian, a qualitative experience that, for my part, I understand through firsthand involvement, being a Palestinian - Jordanian.

Through analyzing the works of different Palestinian writers, I hope to reveal the variety and scope of the Palestinian experience, and, to that end, I choose to deal with writers who have experienced or have been forced to experience dual citizenship in four “islands” in the Palestinian archipelago: Israel, Jordan, the United States and the West Bank. Living in diaspora can be similar to living under colonial occupation, and, therefore, Frantz Fanon’s development of the subjectivity of the colonized subject and intellectual as described in *The Wretched of the Earth* and *Black Skin, White Masks* is used to describe the intellectual development of the characters in these novels as their development relates to the de-colonization of their minds and their reintegration with their people. Moreover, I found William M. Newman’s social theory in American “melting pot,” assimilation, amalgamation and pluralism corresponding to Fanon’s theory. Alternatively, characters can fail to meet the requirements posited in Fanon’s work and can suffer as a consequence. The first writer is Sayed Kashua, a Palestinian-Israeli citizen, born in Tira, in the Triangle region of historical Palestine, in 1975. Kashua speaks and writes in both
Arabic and Hebrew. His novel *Dancing Arabs* (2004), an autobiography, perhaps even a *Bildungsroman* about the writer himself, uncovers the contradictions of experiencing life in two different worlds.

Chapter 2: “The ‘Real’ Experience of being Trapped Inside and Outside of Palestinian and Israeli Consciousnesses in Sayed Kashua’s *Dancing Arabs*.” Here, I address questions of one nations’ attitude of superiority toward the other and mutual hatred between Israelis and Palestinians. The hero and his family experience in Fanon’s terms a mental disturbance. As much as the Palestinians who live inside the “green line,” inside Israel hate the Israelis who are their oppressors, they saw their son’s earning a Hebrew school scholarship as a chance to introduce their son to the superior culture of Israel and the West. All these contribute to the estrangement of the hero, who never fits into either society or culture and lives a life of alienation and isolation. A long history of fighting, killing, imprisonment and discrimination juxtaposes itself with the present ‘artificial’ attempts to project a modern democratic, peaceful coexistence between the two nations inside Israel. However, the traditional expectations of this son, (to gain an education in a Hebrew University that would improve his family’s social status and give him the tools to help his oppressed community) are seen to fail. The son returns home impotent and deprived from any national pride or consciousness. However, he has changed. He has become an expert in faking identities, traveling between cultures and languages. This novel represents a testimony of the personal and national dilemma of the Arab Palestinian who lives in Israel and is perceived as a citizen (though second-class citizen) while spiritually, they still believe that they are part of an Arab Muslim/Christian minority who struggles to resist assimilation into Israeli culture and society.
Chapter 3: “Are They Palestinian-Jordanian or Jordanian-Palestinian? Double-consciousness and loyalty inform the Palestinian co-existence with the Jordanians in Liana Badr’s *A Compass for the Sunflower,*” which concerns the female protagonist’s experience with moving from Palestine to Jordan, and from there, to Lebanon. The path of this character in the chronotope is identical to the paths taken by Palestinian refugees into Jordan and Lebanon, during the formation of the Palestinian Fedayeen in Jordan and the events of Black September in 1970-1971. An analysis of this novel will follow the character as she moves through time with other Palestinians, and I describe their orientation in the chronotope as it is relevant to describing this island in the archipelago. Many Palestinians are likely to have relatives or friends living in Jordan, Syria, Egypt, and Lebanon, and all of these countries are seen as bridges to Palestine. Connections are maintained between Palestinians in these areas in hopes of one day opening the way for all Palestinians to return home. Historically, Palestinians-Jordanians have been the most active of diasporic groups in advocating for the return of the nation of Palestine, so it is no surprise that so soon after al-Nakba, that an independent Palestinian military within Jordan would seek to re-establish a Palestinian state in Palestine. These soldiers were called the Fedayeen, the protectors of the Palestinian people, and their struggle resulted in Black September in 1970-1971, the formative tragedy in the Palestinian-Jordanian experience that is secondary to al-Nakba.

Chapter 4: “A Panoramic View of the West Bank as the Equilibrium of Palestinian Archipelago: The Modern Palestinian National Consciousness in Sahar Khalifeh’s *The Inheritance.*” The third novel moves us far away from Palestine in the virtual archipelago to an island that represents the Palestinian diaspora in the United States. In this chapter, I focus on Palestinians in the United States and in the West Bank, and the interactions between the
characters in the novel as they travel between these two places. In *The Inheritance*, a dismantled Palestinian family with members living in the West Bank, the United States and Germany struggles to reunite in the West Bank and to recover their identities. The protagonist, Zayna, travels between the two worlds her family occupies. Born to a conservative and traditional father in the United States, she becomes acculturated to contemporary American culture and moves to live with her grandmother, only to change her mind and move to the West Bank when she matures. Zayna’s departure from and, later search for her father symbolizes the Palestinian quest for identity when living in the West. In this novel, the West Bank is seen to be the center of Palestinian cultural and political life. There, on the land, the political struggles continue and life is not as easy as it is in the United States. However, some living there feel that they have a duty to remain, and these are the Palestinians who form the core of the Palestinian identity and continue to create the nation from memories and continued resistance. Zayna decides to join them in order to reconnect with and reestablish her identity, and so the West Bank is described as the equilibrium of the Palestinian experience. The West Bank and Gaza are where the physical struggle continues, and so, there, memories are the strongest and family ties are preserved.

Thus, the question of Palestinian national consciousness moves beyond the traditional confines of the debate in these novels. Here, we see a part of the Palestinian archipelago that, while being inside Palestine, is very far away from the cultural norms of Palestine’s peasant past. Even in the fatherland, Palestine is experiencing the ups and downs of building national consciousness while other dialectical forces are at work. These novels reiterate the point that Palestinian national consciousness cannot be described as an isolated, sterile, and immobile thing – it is very much alive, vibrant, and changing.
Modern Palestinian literature depicts the deterioration and transformation of Palestinian society during the 20th century, with the most salient topics relating to the catastrophic loss of Palestinian land and homes in 1948, known as The Catastrophe, or al-Nakba. Afterwards, Palestine transformed into a “nation of refugees and exiles” that is now scattered throughout the world. The archipelago of communities in diaspora share cultural characteristics and nostalgia for Palestine, and the people distinguish themselves from the cultures of their host nations by holding on to memories of Palestine’s tragic past. As a stateless nation, Palestine embodies Ernest Renan’s concept of the shared tragedies and suffering of a people being the essential components of a nation, and by the same token, the powerful generative force behind collective imagination of the nation.

The story of al-Nakba and its aftermath are the dominant literary narratives in the Palestinian archipelago; moreover, al-Nakba has become the “artifact that commemorates the Palestinians’ loss of their homeland in the past, and articulates the ‘deep narratives’ of their denial of home ongoing exile” (Saloul 5). In this context, Ihab Saloul argues that the concept “deep narratives” refers to “those narratives that are inherently grounded in the past al-Nakba, yet continuously (re)surface in reconstructions and retelling of the story of that catastrophe in present exile” (6). The “deep narratives” also correspond to M. M. Bakhtin’s concept of the chronotope, as mentioned in the introduction; the deep narratives portray the temporal and spatial relationships in which the development in the Palestinian narrative and the articulation of
Palestinian national identity have occurred since *al-Nakba*. More than a half-century has passed since this defining tragedy. Simultaneously, the Palestinian story has been coated with flesh and is artistically and materially visible in the current time. Due to the value of the memory of *al-Nakba*, memories themselves constitute the heritage of the nation in the absence of fixtures that other nations possess, such as national media. All narratives take on an elevated, historical context; if they portray ordinary people, they nevertheless portray their genuine reactions to historic events. As Renan writes, “…to have suffered, worked, hoped together; that is worth more than common taxes and frontiers conforming to ideas of strategy; that is what one really understands despite differences in race or language” when it comes to uniting a nation (17). For the purpose of uniting Palestinians in particular, Renan is correct that, “…indeed, common suffering is greater than happiness. In fact, national sorrows are more significant than triumphs because they impose obligations and demand a common effort” (17). A significant item of common suffering combined with common experience is the ordeal that historical Palestinians went through to maintain the nation without the benefit of government offices, government services, and many other services provided by nation-states, and to do all this in the face of repression and surveillance. The Palestinians whose solidarity held the nation together after *al-Nakba* had to live within other territories and pay taxes there to ensure that they could use whatever services were offered to them; however, the common Palestinian experience and shared tragedy resulted in strangers helping one another and other community activity that had, in the past, substituted for the presence of a state.

Palestinian memory is unique because it is organic; it is rooted in the experience of all Palestinian people and not the experience of an elite class. Thus, memory plays a crucial role in articulating their spiritual solidarity and national identity. Palestinian spirituality informs national
identity, and vice versa, while neither require land or a government to exist. Renan values tragedies, suffering and one’s ancestors’ heritage as the cultural assets that constitute the nation. In this respect, Palestine is a wonderful example of how memories of tragedy serve to unite nations. As long as Palestinian memories remain, the nation remains—and if the memories be written and pass the test of time, the nation shall live forever. Fulfilling this promise is another purpose that Palestinian literature serves. Thus, Palestinian narratives and memory both define “a dialectical relation between the past and the present and its connection to the individual’s and the group standpoint in the present” (Kassem 6). In Palestinian context, in particular, not only does “social memory [emerge] as a source of knowledge”- but personal memory does, as well. All the literary narratives I have examined are set in this personal level of experience, or draw upon memories of these experiences; these are pasts in which the protagonists participate in gathering knowledge (Fentress and Wickhan 26). Assmann and Czaplicka distinguish two types of memories: the first as a “communicative memories’, characterized by being verbal, experienced and passed between social communities over their lifespan” (126-7). These memories are spontaneous, informal, and thrive for a short time. Alternatively, “cultural memory” is more structured and formal (Assmann and Czaplicka 128). It is archived, printed and documented via media, architecture, and geographic landmarks. These physical reminders help collective memories to endure in societies for much longer than they are typically able to do when memories are only oral histories. Palestine is an exception to this rule; however, there is much risk in sustaining a society on memory alone.

Temporality is double faced. On one hand, time can preserve. On the other, it can destroy. Narratives and memories are at risk in the Palestinian memory, for if they fade away over time and the bridges between the old and young generation dissolve, future generations will
experience cultural amnesia. This threat exists in settled nations, and even in nations using highly
developed archival systems, but the danger time presents is greater to a people existing in
diaspora. Thus, Palestinian memory has become the social and cultural glue that cement bonds
between Palestinians in diaspora, for the act of ‘carrying’ the narrative forward proves one’s
Palestinian identity, and maintaining memories and oral histories is a duty; without this
mentality, the nation could lose the will to exist.

Thanks to the longevity of memory and narrative, the Palestinian archipelago is prepared
to expand as far as temporality and space will allow. However, the islands of Palestinians in
diaspora throughout the world are involved with their host nations’ and surrounding societies’
temporal and spatial development. When they immigrate to an area, Palestinians affect the
demographics and politics of the nations in which they establish their communities, and these
communities likewise influence Palestinians. This intersection of cultural axes and fusion are
indicators of how Palestinian authors describe the content of art on Palestinian chronotope; these
are works in which Palestine and the Palestinians’ image and national consciousness have been
constructed and reconstructed in various times and places. As it is presented in three of the
novels under analysis, Kashua’s *Dancing Arabs* (2004), Liana Badr’s *A Compass for the
Sunflower* (1989), and Shahar Khalifeh’s *The Inheritance* (2005), the experiences of the
characters in the triangle of time, space and memory cause them to find themselves in the
crucible that forms Palestinian national consciousness. Due to the shared memories of loss, an
element of modern Palestinian identity has been the experience of disenfranchisement. Three
generations have emerged during the sixty-five years of diaspora and dislocation, and they carry
various experiences portrayed in literature in their memories. Writing about the scattering of
Palestinians into an archipelago is to synthesize a heritage of memories of the lost motherland
and the “loved but dead past and a living but agonized present” (Saloul 5). Therefore, distances between times and places, physically and emotionally, from the homeland remain a major raw material for Palestinian literary production. These facts, taken together, indicate that much of Palestinian literature follows a pattern of, first, al-Nakba, and secondarily, many diverse experiences of travel, living abroad, and other temporary living conditions before the characters are tasked with coming to terms with their Palestinian identity.

Being Palestinian can be difficult to accept because Palestinians’ experience of colonialism is different from the dominant experience of colonialism, and this difference impacts identity greatly. Typically, colonial powers seek to exploit both the natives of a land and, then, the land itself, while the Zionists’ strategy in Palestine is to uproot the indigenous Palestinian from their homeland in order to validate their scheme of Palestine as “a land without a people.” This thought repudiates the very existence of Palestinians, yet the Israelis excel in prescribing regulations and policies that facilitate the confiscation of Palestinian lands, thus enabling the continuation of the perception of Palestinians as non-entities.

Edward Said writes that the Palestinian experience of nationalism has been “extra-territorial” a nation-stateless experience that tries to substitute miniature geographical spots for their motherland and to aggregate the scattered Palestinian nation by maintaining a close distance to home (QOP xxviii). Said alludes to the bloody history of the Palestinian Liberation Organization's (PLO) presence in Jordan and Lebanon as formative events in shaping current national aspirations.

Palestinians in diaspora are influenced by the conditions of the majority of Palestinian refugees in these two countries and the impact of the Catastrophe (al-Nakba) in 1948 and/or the Setback, (an-Naksa) in 1967. However, Palestinian refugees in Jordan, Lebanon and Syria do
constitute major centers of Palestinian existence. Palestinians traveled to these places after the same events, but went in different directions for various reasons; after al-Nakba, most Palestinian refugees were under the impression that Arab armies would soon arrive to free them from the Zionists. Moreover, they have always believed that their status as refugees is temporary, and continue to contemplate the idea of keeping a close distance to the homeland, for “the return is very close.” Despite these beliefs, the 20th century saw these temporary living situations develop, devastatingly, into a permanent condition. Therefore, the “extra-territorial nation” constructs its national identity “at a border, an airport, a checkpoint…What happens to Palestinians at these crossing points brings home to them how much they share in common as people” (read: nation) (Rashid Khalidi 1).

It goes without saying that the Palestinians have not experienced a sense of national independence in their homeland for several generations. Palestinian experiences in Jordan and Lebanon were devastating examples of Palestinians attempting to construct what Khalidi termed as “state within a state,” after Palestinians awoke to the fact that they would have no home in the Arab world or elsewhere unless they can reclaim Palestine (10). Moreover, Palestinians would not be part of the new reality of Arab nationalism unless they possessed their own regional form of nationalism. Thus, the present portrayal of the Palestinian nation and the quest for national identity and the introducing of the Palestinian exceptionalism to the world have all become the main occupation and subject matter to Palestinian poets, historian, writers, as well as individuals who seek to preserve their identity.

The Palestinian quest for identity does not conform to a linear chronological pattern. The construction of Palestinian nationalism took different courses through time due to events that occurred after the original dispersion. The islands in diaspora accommodate different layers of
Palestinian generations, some that naturally share some characteristics but differ in others. By the
time of this writing, two generations of Palestinians could have been born outside of Palestine
while other members of these same two generations are currently living in Gaza and the West
Bank. It is from this diversity that Palestinian identity emerges. Kafkaesque elements might be
adequate to use in depicting the conditions of these generations in this archipelago, mainly, their
shared sense of disorientation, frustration and helplessness.

Ernest Renan’s insightful definition of nation as ‘a soul, a spiritual principle’ dramatizes the
Palestinians’ story (17). Renan emphasizes that

A nation is grand solidarity constituted by the sentiment of sacrifices which one has made
and those that one is disposed to make again. It supposes a past, it renews itself especially
in the present by a tangible deed: the approval, the desire, clearly expressed to continue
the communal life. The existence of a nation (pardon the metaphor!) is an everyday
plebiscite; it is, like the very existence of the individual, a perpetual affirmation of life.

(17)

Who more than the Palestinian people embody this model and show the interaction
between its variables: ongoing suffering and sacrifices, past memories of a tranquil life, and
pleasant visions of the homeland set against a challenging present? Three generations of
Palestinians have experienced these living conditions and, ironically, they have excelled in
bringing them into the heart of their national consciousness. It is this destiny to travel into the
unknown and adapt accordingly that transforms the formerly agrarian Palestinian society into
cosmopolitan modern nation.

It follows that remembering an entire nation's experience of other times and places must
also be a key feature of Palestinian literature. Meanwhile, this oeuvre signals the instability of
the Palestinian identity both in art and life; however, the writers of these works are
contemplating the Palestinian quest for, and formation of national identity and so they must exist
within this ambiguity.
This chapter explores how Sayed Kashua’s *Dancing Arabs* relishes in telling the story of a nameless protagonist’s desperate pursuit for a sense of belonging and identity in a shapeless, indefinite, and meaningless world. Kashua’s protagonist is on an endless quest for a sense of belonging to a place and people in a place that is immune to any defined political, social, cultural, or geographical category; in other words, he finds himself in a place and time that “create[s] the illusion of belonging, without really including these people as part of society” and desires to escape to authenticity (Shimony 152). Kashua’s protagonist is a Palestinian with Israeli citizenship who lives within the state of Israel. For most of the novel, he attempts to deny his Palestinian identity and embrace Israeli culture. Thus, the protagonist is living the contradictions and the complexities of Palestinians’ daily reality when living in the state of Israel. Kashua’s semiautobiographical novel seeks to portray the complexity in the lives of those who know they are Palestinians by default, but are Israeli citizens by law. It is worth mentioning that discussing these Palestinians is very problematic and highly politicized: while they are known in Israel and to the world as “Israeli-Arabs,” most of Arab patriots and nationalists would have preferred to call them *Palestinians* or *Palestinian-Arabs* dropping off any reference to Israel. Terminologies are very problematic in Palestinian and Israeli rhetorics, for, after scrutinizing the language, one must understand that, by accepting or rejecting certain lexicons, one's political feelings can be revealed. A person's vocabulary is a political litmus test in discussions about the tension between Palestinians and the state of Israel. How a Palestinian living in Israel chooses to label themselves is not an exception to this rule.

Batya Shimony argues that the process of hyphenation that characterizes hybrid societies and contemporary multicultural society is not applicable in the “Arab-Israeli” society, in which the “clash between these two identities does not create a new, fertile, and fluid space for
identities, but rather intensifies and validates the social and political stands that created the
tension between the two [Palestinians and Israelis] in the first place” (158). To summarize, the
relationship between the two nations co-existing inside Israel’s borders underscores the
polarization between Palestine and Israel. Shimony posits that the hegemonic discourse of
Zionism creates the Israeli-Arab category “to neutralize the inherent threat… [the Arabs] pose”
(152). Azmi Bishara adds to this, eloquently stating that two functions are desired by the state of
Israel in creating this category. The first is that of neutralizing “the Palestinian element in the
identity of the Arabs in Israel, and thus to sever their bonds with the place” (qtd. in Shimony
152). The secondary purpose is “to create the illusion of belonging, without really including
these people as part of society” (Shimony 152). However, new voices have emerged to question
these categories and to dress them with new meaning and function, to dig-out their essence and
bring them to Homi Bhabha’s hybridity and in-between, making space for them to flourish.

The conflicts between legal, cultural, and political realities contribute to the complicated
process of the construction of Palestinian identity. Whereas the nation is cultivated elsewhere in
the archipelago, Palestinians in Israel remain in the nation’s birthplace and embody both the
locality and its loss. Will Kymlicka’s notion of “national minorities” might be useful in this
discussion to point the Israeli-Arab’s position in the spectrum of Palestinian consciousness (6).
He claims that these national minorities exist as reminders of previous regional societies now
existing in a larger different nation-state struggling to reclaim their “authentic” selves, and the
potential of self-determination (Kymlicka 14). However, Palestinians in Israel are targeted for
absorption in a manner similar to the indigenous residents of other nations such as the Native
Hawaiians. However, in Israel, it is not considered lamentable that Palestine was stolen from
Palestinian generations ago—to the Zionist, Palestine never existed, and Israel’s myth of the
Israel’s “rightfully owned land” was temporarily occupied by nomadic Arab tribes. These attitudes give a new shape to Kymlicka’s theory when we consider the Palestinians because they face a higher degree of adversity due to being under erasure in their own homeland. Whereas a great portion of postcolonial theory deals with minorities in the metropolises, as is true with much of Kymlicka’s work, another scholar, Ella Shohat, asks in “Notes on the Postcolonial” how Palestine and the Palestinians can be described in the “postcolonial” era: are they colonized, post-colonial or pre-postcolonial? Even categorizing the Palestinians as pre-postcolonial is problematic due to their unique experience of colonization. Palestinians living in the state of Israel are living in a multination and polyethnic state. Kymlicka posits that states are divided into two patterns that adequately represent cultural diversity in postcolonial era: the multination states and the polyethnic states (11). However, Palestine synthesizes and transcends these categories.

The status of Palestinians in Israel, supposedly, is an example of the first pattern, that of the multinational state. However, the arguments about the intentions of Israel have always been disputable both on the local and international levels, giving some reasons to characterize Israel as a polyethnic society. Scholars are skeptical of the evolving Israeli narrative and are endlessly questioning the assumption about the kind of democracy that Israel represents. The fundamental questions are: is Israel a Jewish state? If so, how can its religio-ethnic character reconcile itself with current Israel’s narrative of accepting and granting equal rights to all of its citizens?

Palestinians are exempt from Israel’s tolerance and acknowledgment of the citizenry’s diverse ethnic and religious backgrounds, as they are said to not exist. Modern Israel represents itself as a diverse and pluralistic Jewish state; however, a state that is inhabited by more than one nation is “not a nation-state” and must be ”a multination state” (Kymlicka 11). Despite the fact that in liberal multinational states, the citizens perceive themselves as a single people or entity,
for example the Swiss, the Arabs and the Jews in Israel do not share a pluralistic identity. Palestinians are always conscious of the tension between their Palestinianization, self-identification, and their Israeli citizenship. Israeli citizenship is never sought, nor has it been a matter of choice for the Palestinian people; to the contrary, this citizenship has been imposed and has intensified their second-class status. This tension between Palestinian identity and Israeli citizenship is an eternal grief that Palestinians have to endure. As one Palestinian eloquently puts it “my state (read: Israel) is at war with my nation (read: Arab-Palestinians)” (Shamir 7). The contradiction of living two lives within one state—in this case Israel—and the binary opposition of being part of multiple domains: the colonizer/colonized, father/son, past/present, religious/secular, fiction/nonfiction are the realities of those Palestinians living in Israel.

Attempts to reconcile these antagonists uncertainty, alienation, non-belonging and frustration for Palestinians. In Dancing Arabs, the reader is exposed to the many paradoxes that Palestinians living in Israel confront in daily life.

Dancing Arabs (2002) is Kashua’s first novel; he wrote it at the age of twenty-eight, in Hebrew. Language, in postcolonial theory and to postcolonial critics, is equally important as identity. To the Kenyan scholar Ngugi Wa Thiong’o, in his collection of essays Decolonising the Mind: The Politics of Language in African Literature 1986, language politics is one of his main concerns regarding the relationship between the oppressor and the oppressed. Ngugi argues that people internalize colonization through language, and he condemns the pedagogical practice where Africans are exposed to the colonizer’s language from a young age, where they learn and absorb their oppressor’s language while being instructed to disdain their own language. This technique jeopardizes their very selfhood in Ngugi’s estimation. Thus, as we all exist within language, our existence can only be legitimized by internalizing the native codes of that
existence as being acceptable enough to learn first, or to learn at all. Ngugi asserts that one internalizes the first language one learns as the most legitimate. Moreover, he emphasizes that native literature must be written in native tongue in order to break the psychological chains of colonialism. In the same vein, Martinique psychiatrist Franz Fanon, who preceded him by more than three decades, stresses in *Black Skin, White Masks* (1952) that “[t]o speak a language is to take on a world, a culture” (38). Fanon demonstrates this in his discussion of how the creole language has been forbidden in the high society of the French Antilles. He examines the politics of native’s coming and going from the French metropolis to “the bush,” the slang term for the Afro-Caribbean neighborhood. When natives return home from abroad, their solutions to native problems are met with the skepticism and prejudice meant for the colonizer. Thus, the criteria upon which ideas are evaluated is found within the native’s language. If the native lost competence in his mother tongue, he is alienated by and from his native people, meanwhile, if he speaks creole, he is infantilized by the white Frenchman. In order to fortify himself against this dual oppression, he must learn the language of the metropolis so as not to be infantilized as well as the Creole language, in order to maintain his native identity. Neither Kashua nor his narrator are immune from this experience. For the reasons I have presented, Kashua has been criticized for adopting Hebrew as the sole language in his writings. In contrast to previous Israeli-Arab writers, such as Anton Shammas (1950) and Naim Araidi (1950) —these writers blend Hebrew and Arabic cultures and shift from one language to the other in their writings. In their works, they uncover the instability of their own identity in this antagonistic society and culture. On the other side of the spectrum, there is a new generation, such as Ayman Sikseck (1984) and Sayed Kashua (1975) who choose to write extensively in Hebrew. Kashua plainly asserts that Hebrew is his default intellectual language as Shimony has highlighted. Here, it is worth to demonstrate
the validity of both Ngugi’s and Fanon’s theory and concerns regarding the destructive consequence of teaching and instructing native children in the colonial language before mastering their native language. Both Kashua and his narrator attended prestigious Jewish boarding schools and went through the “process of assimilation into Jewish society and its culture” in early age (Shimony 149). Actually, Kashua is living within this split between the two identities and cultures. He provocatively reveals that: “To write in Arabic the way I speak it, which is the Palestinian-Israeli dialect, is not an option. Books must be written in literary Arabic, which I don’t know well enough” (qtd in Shimony 150). This is how he and entire generation of Palestinians have become representative of a segment of Arab-Palestinian society who cannot intellectually represent themselves in their native language. For generations since the 1948, Palestinians were pushed to learn Hebrew and English in schools and in order to function in the public sphere. Thus, their dialect of Arabic is dated and sounds very old-fashioned to modern Arabic speakers. So, Palestinians, if they have the ability to speak Arabic, are more likely to speak in dialect of the language with inflections and a dated vocabulary that draws attention to the speaker’s origin and heritage, thus, in order to write in classic Arabic, this generation need to learn it first. Moreover, I noticed recently in many contemporary documentary films that Palestinians in Israel are very conscious of this problem and voice their complains about how they are forced, for security reasons, to avoid speaking Arabic in public since they are daily encountering harassment, discrimination and suspicion wherever they are heard speaking Arabic (Sling Shot Hip Hop).

However, diagnosing the disease is only half of the cure. For Kashua and those of his generation, the remedy to the colonizing of language is to use the Hebrew language in voicing and writing Palestinian national literature. Kashua does not only do this so Palestinians who are
bereft of their language can read his works. Ironically, by adopting the oppressor’s language to articulate the existence of an identity that the oppressor’s narrative and rhetoric denies, Kashua brings the narrative of Palestine into the heart of Israeli culture, where Hebrew-reading audiences will be forced to confront his articulation of Palestinian identity.

This philosophy behind the criticism of Kashua’s choice in using the Hebrew language corresponds to Chinua Achebe’s argument that of how the English language has the power to carry the weight of the African experience. This second generation of Arab-Palestinian writers in Israel does not merely experiment with writing in Hebrew; they expand genres and the possibilities of expression by causing the language of Palestinian literature to cement the problem of Israel in the Palestinian consciousness. For that reason, I argue that the Hebrew language insulates Kashua from the danger of personalizing the sociopolitical issues he is criticizing in both societies. Though there is no “neutral” language to use in telling of these stories, Kashua’s efforts have illustrated how the same stories can be told in different languages, again, speaking to the permanence of Palestinian identity. The use of Hebrew gives Kashua space to expand the horizons of telling the stories of an oppressed people in a place where their ethnic and cultural identity is under erasure, for the Palestinian use of Hebrew itself is evidence of Israel’s efforts to obscure Palestinian identity. However, the novel discloses the prejudice of both societies and the culture of hate that flourishes and masks the relationships between them.

Moreover, Elad-Bouskila has an optimistic view of using Hebrew to speak the reality of Palestinians; she argues that an Arab writer in writing an autobiography in Hebrew acknowledges “the interaction between the Jewish and Arab identities and creates a dialogue that carries potential for healing” (qtd. in Shimony 149). With all these issues present, we approach how Kashua introduces and highlights the problematic relation of the language for Arabs in
Israel in the first section of the novel. However, it is in the language, and in this case Hebrew, I found that the colonized writers are colonizing the colonizer’s language and submit it to vocalize their oppressed narrative, so it would available to both the oppressed and the oppressors with no mediators.

Hitherto, the narrator noticed the necessity of mastering Hebrew in an early stages of his life. While investigating the grandma’s blue suitcase he had glimpsed his father’s photo in the newspapers; at this point, he faces the fact that the little Hebrew he knows is not enough to decode the mysterious appearance of his father’s photo in Jewish newspapers. Thus, learning Hebrew becomes a necessity in order to learn “your” history, and by the same token, your people’s history, “I made up my mind: I’ve got to learn Hebrew. I’ve got to be able to read a Hebrew newspaper”(Kashua 8). This is one of many ironic moments that sharply suspends the gratification of accomplishing an ambition, the discovering of the past, because there is an important issue at stake. What does it mean to a young Palestinian generation, represented by the narrator, who is coming of age, to learn the history of his family, mainly the father’s, from a Jewish newspaper? As mentioned earlier, in the introduction, Benedict Anderson in Imagined Communities would argue that print capitalism constructs a nation according to 20th century modes of media dissemination; therefore, to read about one’s own nation in a foreign language, especially the language of an occupying nation, is to see a distorted image of oneself and one’s national identity from the perspective of an entity that may have an interest in distorting and misrepresenting your nation. I argue that Kashua, sarcastically, is making a political statement regarding the Palestinians’ documented history before and after al-Nakba. Different lenses present themselves to help us in reading, interpreting and comprehending Kashua’s message. First, the allusion to the imposing Zionist narrative is authoritative. Benedict Anderson
underscores the significance of “newspaper as cultural product…. [from which the] inclusion and juxtaposition [of events about people in different places and times] shows that the linkage between them is imagined” (33). This imagined linkage draws its power from two “related sources… [the] calendrical coincidence. The date at the top of the essential connection—the steady onward clocking of homogeneous, empty time…. [and the second is] the relationship between the newspaper, as a form of book, and the market” (33). So, to the Palestinian, both Arabic and Hebrew newspapers become important documents that document narratives and counter-narratives among the two nations. Moreover, the protagonist turns to the newspaper's pages believing that the newspapers will clarify the mystery of his family’s past; his reasons are personal. The newspapers provide an artificial memory of events and incidents that chronicle Palestinian-Israeli relations since the establishment of the state of Israel. Edward Said in Orientalism argues that the established tradition of representation in Western scholarship makes an authentic representation of the East impossible. Representation of Palestinians in the West has also been influenced by orientalism, as seen from their depiction in news media as socially regressive terrorists who are a serious threat to the peaceful, modern, and civilized Jewish society. The dominant media portrayal of Palestinians in the 20th century has been negative in the West. Therefore, the historical record of the Palestinian story is always partial and incomplete in Western eyes, and there is only one narrator who dominates the narratives and conveys the “sole version” of the Arab-Israeli conflict, and that narrator typically has a Zionist perspective. Thus, the Palestinian’s story of al-Nakba and its aftermath, the tragic deaths, displacement, dispossession, and the right to fight to reclaim the homeland is absent from Western and even international media as much as it is absent from the consciousness of some Palestinians who have become absorbed by the media’s narrative of their nation.
Edward Said, in *The Politics of Dispossession* explains that Israel has always enjoyed a recognized position within European discourse despite anti-Semitism. Israel exists within the Western mind as a biblical nation. However, recent history complicates this perspective. Europe’s newfound guilt for pogroms, centuries of anti-Semitism, and the German holocaust gives Westerners a sense of responsibility toward the Jewish people, and so this sentiment is used to justify attempts to “make up” for the holocaust by enabling Israel. The Palestinian people and their national ambitions stand in the way of Europe completing its symbolic atonement. Further into the West, many American Protestants believe that the re-establishment of Israel heralds the beginning of the end of the world and that the destruction of Israel will be attempted only during the final battle of Armageddon, in which the Christ and his heavenly armies will return to defeat the combined forces of the Antichrist, destroying two thirds of Israel's population and converting the remaining third to their particular branch of Christianity. Zionist propaganda exploits these attitudes among Protestants to gain inroads into Western consciousness, even going so far as to agree with an essentially anti-Semitic belief (replacement theology) in order to adopt American narratives about Israel and garner further support. Israel invokes the idea of civilized people taming a wilderness and driving out savages in order to appeal to Western imperialist mentalities in the U.S. and elsewhere. Citizens of every former empire can identify with the adventurous spirit portrayed in discourse about the American frontier and frontier life when the narrative is reconstructed along the lines of the Israeli experience. Moreover, these cultural concepts contain values: value for land, value for the colonists over the indigenous inhabitants, and value for the imposition of what is seen to be a greater civilization. Zionist propagandists have to do little besides portraying Palestinians as terrorists, religious fanatics, and anti-Semites to evoke the image of barbarians at the gates in Western minds.9
Therefore, the perspectives from which one can read the Palestinian-Israeli story are always imbalanced due to the overwhelmingly negative narratives constructed about Palestinians. In *Dancing Arabs*, the protagonist's grandmother’s suitcase contains newspapers side by side with dozens of postcards that her son sent from jail. Ironically, their order in the suitcase resembles the actual positions of the two nations in the land at the time of writing. This represents the political tension at play in the reality of how the two national identities are literally living on top of one another, and the scene shows personal narratives becoming national narratives. The postcards were “hidden underneath. These were in Arabic. I recognized my father’s handwriting right away: beautiful and rounded, like a drawing. My father had been the best student in Tira. I’d always wanted to be like him” (Kashua 8). Kashua’s language and short sentences are very dense. He impregnates his words with painful meanings and connotations. The postcards were “hidden,” “written in Arabic,” in a beautiful handwriting—thus the father is literate and in charge of his story and subject matter, and in full command of his identity and native language. Furthermore, Kashua is making another political statement regarding the literacy of the Palestinian people, refuting the Israeli narrative about primitive, ignorant tribes who were roaming the land when they came to conquer a “land without a people.”

Additionally, the protagonist uncovers an earlier account of the Palestinian struggle recorded by an Arab Palestinian, beautifully written in Arabic, but hiding a deep and rich history. Moreover, the differences in the size between the newspaper and the postcards analogizes the literal sizes of two stories to their comparative degrees of public and international recognition and acknowledgment. While Israeli’s story is well-rounded, formed and extended over a wide expanse of space, the Palestinian’s narrative is concise and fragmented, written on tiny postcards. Thus, visual representation plays a crucial role in conveying the Palestinian story. Images,
photographs, the landscape, and artifacts all collaborate with words to tell the story. Moreover, the setting of the events is very important in Palestinian narrative. Places have their own connotations; the scene of the incident, where it occurs, when they are told, correspond to what is written and when. The postcards were sent from the prison while the father was imprisoned, but they were designed and printed in Israel and by Israelis; thus, the design of the postcard resembles the actual setting in which Palestinian story takes place: “There were many red triangles on the postcards, with some Hebrew writing inside them, and on the back was a black-and-white picture of a girl soldier eating a falafel” (Kashua 9). Here the scene is dominated by Israeli icons, the “David Star,” “Hebrew letters/words,” and “female soldier” all represent the dominant presence of the Jews and Jewish culture/power on the scene. Only one item depicts the “minority” Palestinian culture, the falafel sandwich. As I previously mentioned, the Palestinian cultural identity is under erasure in Israel, and in the best cases, it is subjected to a deliberate process of transformation. The concise description of the postcard depicts the reality in which one nation devours the other. The fight between the two nations is not limited to the land, but moves further beyond the territories to encompass all cultural icons including cuisines: hummus, falafel and baba ganoush all become part of the expanded conflict because the Israelis begin adopting them as their own. Still, material cultural, symbols and items emerge as a parallel battlefield in which to verify and preserve Palestinian cultural heritage.

Palestinian historians like Rashid Khalidi and critics like Edward Said emphasize the fact that the Palestinian nation is stateless, non-territorial and roaming, a nation that has been constructed in diaspora. Thus, writers, poets, politicians and historian all argue that diasporic Palestinians are inspired by one aspiration, that is, the dream of returning to their homeland. This, by itself is a distinctive characteristic of this nation that adequately embodies Renan’s
definition of nationhood, in which the entire nation respires by the same lungs and feeds one spirit. If this is so, this diasporic Palestinian nation does not embrace those who remain inside Israel, for they are already living there and they could not be identified as refugees or share the aspiration to return home with their fellows living under Israeli occupation; however, this is surely not always so. Karen Grumberg uncovers this dilemma, writing that the “[Israeli-Arab]… cannot fully participate in Palestinian national culture… since its central components are memory, yearning, and the dream of return—to the land where Israeli Palestinians still live” (156). Therefore, this segment of the archipelago, although it exists in the center, is fragmented within itself. On one side of the identity spectrum, some struggle with defining what it means to be Palestinian in the midst of Israeli society while, on the other side of the spectrum, those living in diaspora embrace the loss of Palestinian land as the defining characteristic of Palestinian identity.

Since the essence of Palestinian identity is this nostalgia and attachment to place, spaces are crucial in shaping the Palestinian identity. In the novel, Kashua excels in creating a miniature archipelago at the local level - in Israel - including the border line [green-line] with the West Bank by showing his protagonist and other characters remembering and communicating about the lost villages and all the former places of Palestine, many of which were destroyed during battles or were otherwise demolished or built-over by the Israeli government. I argue that this resembles the actual Palestinian archipelago and chronotope outside Palestine. Shimony emphasizes Grumberg’s claim that Kashua “shapes various spaces such as the blockage, the village, and the Palestinian home” to depict the Palestinian experience in the exile and their wandering in various places and simultaneously creating identities (147). Thus, Kashua depicts the imposed “nomadic/refugee” status of Palestinians even within Israel itself by mentioning the
physical loss of Palestinian communities. There is no doubt that Israeli citizenship gives the Palestinian a sense of free mobility between Israel, Jerusalem, West Bank and Gaza, though it might be a sense of artificial freedom because Israeli government continues to install roadblocks. This is in stark contrast to the mobility available to Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. However, this mobility intensifies a Palestinian citizen of Israel’s sense of dislocation and alienation from Palestine, as the citizen will not be treated as badly as a Palestinian with refugee status or one from the West Bank. In the novel, the nameless protagonist moves from his village Tira to Jerusalem to attend a Jewish boarding school, after which he settles in Beit Safaf, a small village in the West Bank adjacent to Jerusalem. Each place evokes similar sentiments and makes him question his existence and belonging; meanwhile, each place presents different challenges to the narrator: political, social, cultural and religious ones. I argue that these three spaces constitute a micro-archipelago that is very significant in intensifying the narrator’s identity refit.

Partha Chatterjee in *The Nation and Its Fragments* theorizes the immunity of the spiritual/private sphere as the realm in which India’s [native] nationalism and cultural identity have been preserved. Identity is a component of the private sphere, which is divided into two realms in a society under colonization. Chatterjee divides the colonized space into two realms, the material and the spiritual. The spiritual sphere is the incubator of family, religion, caste, and women, and is defined primarily by peasants and home life. It is the realm in which national activists imagined the nation before the political and military struggle. The theory postulates that the spiritual/private sphere holds up the native’s autonomy, agency, and nationhood without reliance upon the downward filtration theory; thus it is the power of the lower and middle classes that is relatively immune to domination and colonization. The private sphere is the realm that bears and preserves the essence of the cultural identity, the realm from which an anticolonial
national movement can derive its power and articulate its national narrative. *Tira*, the narrator’s native village, would have represented the authentic private sphere within this context since it is outside the Israeli cultural influence, to some extent. In that sense, it is the spring of cultural values from which the narrator learns the history of his nation.

Kashua’s settings are, initially, the family’s house, the village school, the grandma’s bedroom, and the protagonist's classroom, respectively. These places are the laboratories that implant the seeds of national consciousness in the young generation; the grandmother, the father and the teacher emerge as his mentors. The motif of place is sustainable throughout the novel in which the world of the narrator evolves in their peripheries. His relation to these places and their dwellers impact the narrator’s awareness and insight of place, time, events, and people. The roles they play and signify are crucial, because the narrator is in the process of forging his identity, an identity that might be able to function while resembling his ancestors’ identities. Since the three mentors speak the same language, the language of the national consciousness and the Palestinian identity, this would have impacted him in constructing the foundation of his identity. However, the protagonist's father is prepared to sacrifice his son's identity for him to have a chance at success.

In the domestic context, the narrator is living in the shadow of a grandfather who died fighting the Zionists in 1948. Moreover, the grandfather is everything a Palestinian man and patriot would be. His grandparents were “rich. . . [have T]hree camels, carrying all sorts of valuable goods, would take the wheat and the vegetables from their fields in el-Bassah back to the house. . . Grandpa and Grandma had cows and horses too” (Kashua 21). Moreover, the Grandpa was a smart man, who could write and read; “a hero, a strong man who had fought against the Jews, but he died at the entrance to his own home just as he was picking some grapes.
. . . [he] is a shahid. . . . [and a] shahid’s body doesn’t rot. It stays just the way it was” (Kashua 22). And by the same token, is his legacy and the way the family and the nation commemorate their shahids (martyrs). Meanwhile, the father has shared some of the grandfather’s legacy, albeit on a smaller scale. He was smart at school, and went to the university but did not finish his study due to his engagement in politics; he was imprisoned for blowing up the cafeteria at the Hebrew University. His academic and professional futures were destroyed after spending several years in administrative detention. However, in a land where personal ambition and national obligations are blurring, national duties are privileged. The father relinquishes his professional and personal dreams and that by itself dashes his mother’s hopes of seeing him becoming a scientist.

However, he never resigns to the fiat accompli of his people and country; in other words, he never relinquishes his aspiration to work to free his land and people. However, the series of military and political defeats that follow al-Nakba render this former activist as a frustrated person who is capable only of watching and commenting on the news.

In contrast to the grandmother, the father never articulates and explains his political stances to his sons; it seems that he assumes that new generation will join the Palestinian cause after observing and analyzing their present conditions; this is a false assumption that does not work any longer in such a hostile and alienating environment as the one Arabs in Israeli experience. This leaves the narrator and his brothers astonished by his reactions to the news and the rapid political and social events and changes. For example, the narrator highlights how his father “doesn’t understand how my brothers and I came out they way we did. We can’t even draw a flag. He says kids smaller than us walk through the streets singing ‘P.L.O. . . . Israel No!’ and he shouts at us for not even knowing what PLO stands for” (Kashua 17). Moreover, the narrator could not understand the contrast between their village and another village in the West...
Bank called Ya’bad. First of all, the “war in Ya’bad was very real, not like the one in Grandma’s stories. There were bullet holes in the walls of . . . [the] homes. . . Father said it wouldn’t happen to us, because we were different. We believed him, because the people in Ya’bad talked differently”; however, it is this difference that distinguishes “the people in Ya’bad and their children . . . [as] heroes. They weren’t spineless nothing like us” (Kashua 26-27). I argue that this feeling of guilt overcame the second and the third generations of Palestinian in Israel toward the loss of their nation, and that it explains why some Palestinians living in Israel are similar to Kashua’s protagonist, unpatriotic and apolitical from a Palestinian perspective. Their conditions and existence inside Israel make them “spineless” in their own estimations, and this attitude intensifies their struggle with their identity and sense of belonging, such that feelings of dysfunction and frustration overwhelm them. They neither belong to the Jewish society where they are second-class citizens, nor to the Palestinian society, because they cannot join them in their struggle and fight for independence. Similarly, as W.E.B. DuBois wrote in The Souls of Black Folk, African Americans experience “a world which yields …no true self-consciousness,” allowing the African American to experience self-perception “only through the veil of another world” (DuBois 9). Just as Palestinian tongues now host the Hebrew language, so were African Americans only able to see themselves through white eyes. Thus, to both the Palestinian journey into Jewishness and the Black journey into whiteness are impossible and would have no ultimate arrival destination.

Frustration with this new generation and their alienation from themselves is underscored by the history teacher, who is enraged by students’ ignorance of their land and their history. Here, Kashua may be expressing his own opinion toward the younger generation’s lack of political consciousness through the teacher in his protagonist’s history class, where the teacher
asks “if anyone in the class knew what Palestine was, and nobody did, including me [the narrator],” then in a very disdainful manner, the teacher asks “if any of [the students] had ever seen a Palestinian” (Kashua 104). The students are ignorant and their lack of response drives the teacher out of control, causing him to have “rapped every single one of us on the knuckles. . . . He whacked us with his ruler, ranting, ‘We are Palestinians, you are Palestinians, I’m Palestinian! You nincompoops, you animals, I’ll teach you who you are!’” (Kashua 104) It is only in this context that students are compared to animals and in which he degrades the students not for lacking intelligence, but for their ignorance of their history and past, and I argue particularly for their lack of the sense of national identity and consciousness.

The narrator’s sense of dislocation and not belonging onto the outside world is established at the beginning of the novel. I argue that his nightly climbing into his grandmother’s bed and leaving the room he shares with his brother, represents the early stages of his self-contempt that intensifies his sense of non-belonging and alienation from reality. Alienation is a trait of being part of the third generation, thus, the compact village context is eliminated by this isolation from both the Jewish and Arab societies. Meanwhile, the dilemma of the narrator is manifested by his attachment to the grandma’s figure, the only figure who depicts an authentic past and history. By the same token, his detachment from his family represents the rejection of his ethnicity and his actual reality. To once again mention Grumberg’s claim of the Palestinian in Israel lacking the collective aspiration of homecoming, I argue that Kashua, in this novel, invests in the grandmother’s bedroom and Tira to symbolize the entire land of Palestine, for the protagonist experiences the sentiment of homecoming to this village and bedroom every time he comes to visit his family. The narrator’s aimless journey has been intensified by the time he is away not from his house as much as from this room. He is constantly claiming his devotion to
his grandmother and her world, the bedroom. The significant of grandma’s bedroom is underscored by being the setting of the beginning and the end of the novel. For this character, the bedroom has taken the place of the land beneath his feet.

The significance of land is the center from which national identity emerges, and materialistic and spiritual/symbolic values are highly attached to the land among Palestinians communities inside and outside Palestine. The fight over land is not limited to the Arab-Israeli conflict on the national level; it was also common among Palestinian families and clans before al-Nakba, and still is to the present. In the last journal entry, titled Land, and appearing in the first part of the novel, Kashua underscores the significance of the land in the traditional and modern Palestinian society. As for the grandmother in the novel and as for the nation in general, they cling to the land as important marker of identity. However, it is the physical evidence of inhabitation of the land and historical testimony that signifies Palestinians’ steadfastness and the eternal bond between them and the place. In fact, land stands as a political allegory for freedom, justice and dignity to the Palestinian. Palestinians who remain in their lands are highly spoken of inside and outside Palestine. Those Palestinians are genuine heroes who exemplify the Palestinian adherence to the land and steadfastness. Kashua grants the grandmother many of these characteristics. As her husband’s second wife, she fought her personal battle with her stepchildren and the Jewish state to save her children’s inheritance—their share of the small land that is left by her dead husband. She remembers and tells her grandson how she relinquished her share of her husband’s house in exchange for a share of some land. There was plenty of land back then, and they had no problem giving… [me] two dunams of wheat fields in exchange. My grandmother says, ‘They threw me out, with my small children. Four girls and a baby boy still in swaddling cloth. Now they want the land. Let them go on dreaming.’ Nowadays everyone fights over an extra ten centimeters of land. Grandma’s stepchildren’s children claim that the distribution wasn’t fair, and they want her to give them half a dunam. But Grandma won’t budge. She gets
up, bares her fingernails, and fights for her land. What Jews took from her was bad enough. She takes the papers in their plastic wrapping out of the blue suitcase and mutters, ‘this is my deed for the land, and this is the one for the lands in the field. It’s all written here, with maps and lawyers’ signatures and everything. They thought I was stupid, that I’m simply take them at their word. But I got everyone to sign back. (Kashua 52)

The crux of the matter, even to this illiterate old woman, is the right to the land that cannot be granted by spoken words or an oral agreement; words are not trusted in issues that deal with land, because it must be documented. Grandma had registered the land but she never paid attention to the fact that she would have to issue birth certificates that document the date and place of birth of her children as coming from that land. Her fight over the land has been sustained for two generations, first with her stepchildren, and now with their children, and it is a matter that she would not substitute or even trust her only grown son to manage.

Grandma’s orthodoxy regarding the significance of the land is passed to her son. He even has more radical opinion towards those who fled or sold their lands; he keeps reinforcing a common Palestinian’s maxim: “’Al-ard zai al-ard,’—‘The land is like honor.’ Anyone who sells his land sells his honor” (Kashua 54). Abandoning one’s responsibility toward his land by selling or leaving it is equivalent to selling one’s body, or trading his woman/honor for money.

Moreover, the father articulates an advanced political awareness and living a daily threat of losing the remained of the land he and his family inherited. In his analytical approach to the current events and Israeli expropriation policy, he is disappointed from the current imbalance of power between the Palestinian and Israeli and knows that “it’s never going to work out, and the way things are going, they’re liable to take away even the land we still have left,” and he knows that it is a continuous struggle between the Palestinians and the Israelis (Kashua 55). The significance of the land is the only topic he can communicate to his sons, and the role it
embodies in one's identity and existence; the father would not miss any opportunity to
emphasizing the highly symbolic value of the Palestinian land:

He turns to us, his four sons, and says, 'You're bound to leave. None of you is going to
stay to defend the land. Refugees. Is that what you want to be? Look at what happened to
the ones who ran away. It would be better to die than to run. But you, what do you know
about the value of land?' (Kashua 55)

Within Arab and Palestinian contexts, selling one's honor means the ultimate disgrace and
shame one might experience during his life. This scandalous deed would remain to shadow and
degrade the reputation of his progeny for a long time, too. Though Dancing Arabs is far away
from promoting an idealistic image or significance to one's existence in two worlds in relation
to the narrator's position and condition; Kashua, as much as his antihero, seems to be very
cynical and reserved about direct political statements, leaving it to the reader to decode the tone
and the attitudes of the characters. Yet, consistent devotion is directed to the image of the
grandma and to the significance of the land. The grandma is the only idealized person in the
novel because the spiritual value of the land is the only value that has been perpetuated
throughout the generations in the novel, and she is responsible for accomplishing this for the
family. Refugees are seen as humiliated people whose humiliation impacts the nation. During
the last sixty-five years, Palestinians have come to regret the decision they made in escaping
their villages and homes during al-Nakba. One theory that explains this change of heart is that
departure from the land imposed itself due to the imbalanced power between the Jewish militia
and the unarmed Palestinians who were under a real threat of losing their lives after the Dair
Yasin Massacre. The first argument legitimizes their actions and rights to save their elders,
women and children. On the other hand, a second theory posits that the news had been
exaggerated as a propaganda effort and that any Palestinian's departure from Palestine facilitates
Israeli plans to clear and occupy the land. On Land Day, March 30, Palestinian refugees in
Israel make a kind of Via Dolorosa pilgrimage to their expropriated lands and villages. In the novel, this ritual ignites the anger in the father:

he doesn’t understand why they bother going there. If they really loved their village, they wouldn’t have run away in the first place. Those cowards are to blame for everything that’s happened. Better to die defending your land. And why did they sell what they owned there? My father refers to the sale of expropriated lands to Jews as land liquidation. Anyone who sells has given up. What kind of men are they”? (Kashua 213)

Therefore, what is at stake is Palestinian loyalty and masculinity in relation to the land. Their inclination to protect and defend their land is the criteria used to evaluate not only one’s patriotism, but one’s integrity and dedication to the community. As the entire nation has been displaced and occupied, a generation of Palestinian men have failed in regard to protect Palestine through military means. However, successive generations of Palestinian men are now burdened with the duties of upholding and defending the nation in diaspora and within the borders of the state of Israel. The sentiment is almost simple: if honor or land has been lost, both must be regained. However, Palestinians living within the borders of Israel have a special responsibility to their families and communities that contains and expands beyond the concept of personal honor, or even fulfilling masculine gender roles. Extolling the honor and masculinity gained by combat has become problematic and counterproductive, for adding to the burden Palestinian men face within Israel’s borders is the Israeli interpretation and Western reporting of Palestinian military actions, which are invariably characterized as civilian terrorism despite the context of occupation. Thus, Palestinians living in Israel must remain steadfast and defend what land remains at their hands through legal means and remain as aggressive as the grandmother is portrayed as being in Dancing Arabs in order to continually defend their land and honor.

Now, the responsibility to defend land and honor is not exclusively in the hands of men to wield or protect, but in the hands of all Palestinians who remain in the homeland. To the
diasporic Palestinian communities, the struggle against Israel and all those who still remain in Palestine to take up the cause against the occupiers have become beacons not only of Palestinian identity, but a struggle in which the diasporic community also takes part, for it is understood that the Palestinians remaining in Israel who can protect their land are no longer doing so for the sake of their own families, but on behalf of every Palestinian who has suffered dislocation and dispossession. Palestinians living in Israel hold the dreams of Palestinian refugees in their hands, so, these circumstances result in the cultivation of a form of solidarity that transcends borders while borders remain of great importance. If a Palestinian cannot take part in the struggle for the land, at least, be mindful that others struggle for them.

The double-consciousness Palestinians living in Israel experience is similar to the African or black experience in America; W.E.B. DuBois argues for the existence of African-American double-consciousness, or the consciousness of being in and outside one’s culture and place. I wish to expand the understanding of the experience of Palestinian double-consciousness. Within Israel, the mobility afforded to refugees is lost to Palestinians who have become Israeli citizens, so, whether as a matter of choice or imposition, they experience a division between their nation and their state that resulted in double consciousness. Additionally, Palestinians in Israel embody Fanon’s claim that the natives maneuver to encounter themselves and make sense of existence in regarding to the place where they exist or the functions they are entrusted with performing. This is much more intensified and complicated among the young generation of Palestinians in Israel who are searching for their authentic selves and a sense of belonging. The Palestinian’s private tragedy is reliably part of the collective tragedy, and by the same token, one’s status, achievements and triumphs are never personal; they are also part of and constitute the collective triumphs and the aspirations of the nation. Therefore, as an antidote to double-mindedness, a
Palestinian must put individuality at stake by joining the national collective imagination. Duty to the nation requires personal service, and in the absence of a state to impose such service, cultivating a sense of duty toward the nation falls to the family and to the individual. Thus, the boundaries between the private and the public are blurred and eliminated in Palestinian society.

One can take for granted that adjustments in place and time generate new attitudes toward consciousness, nationhood, and personhood among Palestinian youths due to the natural tendency of human beings to adjustment, modification, and adaptation to the new conditions and environment they happen to encounter. I would argue that Palestinian literature, thus far, portrays the first Palestinian generation as the authentic agents who actually experienced, as adults and mature individuals, the Palestinian national legacy and were fortunate enough to know what it means to be a Palestinian. Meanwhile, they are also unfortunate to live through the humiliation and the tragic consequences of al-Nakba, thus, they are also responsible for the decline of the nation’s legacy. Yet, their sense of national identity and belonging to an exclusive place is intact. The second generation lacks this essential quality. I would label them as a frustrated and resentful generation who have resigned themselves to indignation. The narrator’s father is a good representative of this generation. They are the container of both the patriotic and radical attitudes towards their nation, homeland, and the colonizer, respectively. The second generation of Palestinians since al-Nakba are more politically educated, and they remain faithful to the cause and the legacy of the nation, cherishing national demands for independence and Palestinians’ legitimate right of self-determination via whatever military or diplomatic mechanisms are available. As for the third generation, they are at the threshold, divided between the aforementioned two generations on one end of the spectrum, and between their realities, their existences in a state(s) that might or might not have the will to accept Palestinian identity. In
fact, I believe that they vacillate between earlier generations’ points of view, and due to the tremendous pressure that the two poles—their national aspiration (read: Arab identity) and their state (read: Israeli citizenship)—are expressing over them, they have to evolve new attitudes that might amplify their pursuit for a sense of existence and belonging in such a dysfunctional world.

What I am arguing in the rest of this chapter is that the narrator, after leaving his village to pursue Western liberal education at the Jewish boarding school, has attempted to dismantle the established orthodoxies of national identity in the two societies, that of the Israelis and the Arabs, simultaneously. As I mentioned above, to the Palestinians, the boundaries between the private and the public have been blurred since *al-Nakba*, thus, individualism does not exist but within the context or as part of the group. As for Kashua’s antihero, his scholarship has never been the platform for his personal desires or aspiration. Upon learning that he has been granted the scholarship, his people put their hopes and aspirations onto him, saying “[he]’ll become a rocket scientist. They say [he]’ll build the first Arab atom bomb” (Kashua 86). Now, the emphasis is not only on the national dimension, but encapsulates Arabs as a whole. This affirms how the individual destiny, in this society, is confined, if not chained, to the destiny of the group, and finally to the nation. However, this is not a unique characteristic of Palestinian or of Arab society. Ironically, the Jewish society shares this quality with their neighbors. In both societies, the individual is sacrificed in favor of the group or the nation. For example, interracial marriage or even a romance between the protagonist and a Jewish woman is forbidden in both societies. Their families have identical attitudes towards such relations, not for its negative repercussion on the family’s reputation or image, but for its impact on the nation and society. Within the Jewish context, the mother plainly puts that she prefers her daughter being a lesbian rather than taking
an Arab lover. On the other side of the spectrum, the father blames the “Jewish whore” for the
deterioration of his son’s psychological health and academic progression.

Despite Palestinians’ orthodox inclination to uphold their national identity as a non-
questionable consciousness, the fact is that through the course of time, different perspectives
have evolved, particularly among the young generation. As for the young generation of
Palestinian in Israel, they have become more conscious about their current status and condition
in Israel. They are acutely aware of the differences between national consciousness and one’s
political citizenship that exist in their society and in the society in which they are forced to take
part. Kashua’s protagonist, before moving to the new Jewish school, had already been under the
pressure of the legacy of the old generation: old/new and father/son. He was living in the shadow
of a martyred grandfather and national activist father. Through seeking an Israeli education, he
was challenging a world—his native world—that he would later be unable to understand. This
familiarity with the tradition, history, and nation’s stories, enhance one’s attempts to cope with
society and innovate techniques to handle the challenging social issues, obligations, and
relationships within this society; one who shares and speaks the same language as another, in the
words of Fanon, would “take on a world, a culture” (38). Even though the protagonist will
encounter various obstacles, at the end of the day, he will find his way out of the dark tunnel
after becoming forgetful of his identity. One might assume that an Arab Palestinian who is an
Israeli citizen is also familiar and intimate with Israeli society and that this intimacy and
hybridity become the boarding pass to this society. If we believe this and go further to suggest
that the merit of some distinguishing individual characteristics like intelligence and educational
advancement would help one merge into this society, we are absolutely wrong. Though Arabs
are considered to be Israeli citizens, they remain marginalized and second-class citizens. In one
week the protagonist has learned what it means to be an Arab living in an authentic Jewish system who occupies the margins of society, and who occupies the center.

The first week at the school was the toughest week of my life. Every day gave me new reasons [my emphasis] to cry my heart out. I cried when I had to say good-bye to Grandma. ‘Just don’t talk politics,’ she said, and kissed me. (Kashua 92)

It turns out that his transition at the Jewish school is really rough. The humiliation of this newcomer Arab student starts on the first day, and he is bullied not only by his roommates but by the management itself. The protagonist's name was misspelled in the name tag that has been handed to him; meanwhile, no one pays attention to him, or they make fun of the fact that no one could pronounce his name correctly. Yet, Jewish students mock the protagonist because he could not pronounce the difference between b and p, and this a piece in a long series of the humiliating events he endures. The protagonist is ridiculed for not knowing the Beatles, how to eat with a knife and fork, and even for his clothes. His classmates ask “Do they make special pants for Arabs?” (Kashua 93) And as if the humiliation on cultural grounds is not enough, it has been expanded to encompass political, ideological and racial orientations. On his way back after the first week to visit his family, the narrator encounters state terrorism via the military and police apparatus.

Thus, the process of the real politicization of the narrator has occurred in Israel itself rather than in his homeland. As previously noted, the protagonists’ return journey to home after one week in his school was interrupted when he was singled out and pulled off the bus by Israeli soldiers for a security inspection. The narrator is threatened by this humiliation and ongoing interrogation which he is experiencing only because he is an Arab—so he is, by default, suspicious. Likewise, being under constant threat of humiliation inside and outside school, the young student cries his heart out and decides that he is never going back to school. However, as I
mentioned before, Palestinian personal needs and desires do not count, they only count in relation to the bigger public aspirations. The pressure of the family and the society is very powerful, and it must be to stand a fighting chance against encroaching Israeli culture and the Israeli denial of Palestinian identity. Thus, the father’s reaction is very dramatic regarding his son’s decision, and he makes it clear that he has no choice—and that this is his only chance to escape the limitation of Arab society and life in Tira. Both the father and the teacher keep warning the younger generation of a devastating future of becoming fruit-pickers like their fathers and neighbors. Education, particularly Western education, is the only vehicle to a better future in this context. Eschewing previous traditional lifestyles in the name of preserving the nation is the core of the paradox of the Palestinian reality. While they uphold and value the land before and after al-Nakba, land becomes a symbol of their oppression and subjugation afterwards because it is in the hands of the Israelis. This transition from being the peasant owners of the land to being laborers in their looted lands intensifies their sense of powerlessness and impotence. To this, the narrator’s impotence to challenge this society carries him to the other extreme. He goes back to school to achieve one goal, that he will never be identified as an Arab again.

I look more Israeli than the average Israeli. I’m always pleased when Jews tell me this. ‘You don’t look like an Arab at all,’ they say. Some people claim it’s a racist thing to say, but I’ve always taken it as a compliment, a sign of success. That’s what I’ve always wanted to be, after all: a Jew. I’ve worked hard at it, and I’ve finally pulled it off. (Kashua 91)

It is this inferiority complex that Fanon highlights in which that—at this case—the Palestinian, Arab man, wants to prove at all costs, that he can achieve the same material success as his peers and embody Jewishness in all its materialistic, physical and cultural aspects. He starts with changing his appearance by shaving his moustache, wearing new Western clothes,
learning how to pronounce Hebrew like a Jew and listening to Hebrew songs and music. And as if these are not enough to come closer and be accepted in Jewish society, he finally falls in love with a Jewish woman. Fanon, in *Black Skin White Masks*, emphasizes the African obsession with being loved by a white woman, because the outside world will only correspond to the inside world of imagination, first of all, by being acknowledged by such a woman. Though the narrator has lived with the self-division of being part of these two worlds, he only experiences the life of the other—Jewish society and culture—only when he is with his Jewish girlfriend, Naomi. She becomes his mentor and the one who initiates him to Jewishness, and brings him into the new world of movie theaters and restaurants. With her he experiences a kind of an authentic Jewish life.

On the other side, by living with this girl, he is being admitted to not only the social and cultural life of the Israelis, he is also being admitted to the political actuality of this society. Palestinians live in politics; however, in this environment ideologies are not a matter of debates and intellectual arguments, they are the actual reality that people live and breathe due to the fact that they are living the actual conflict between these ideologies as they are represented by the Arabs and the Israelis. I am arguing that the narrator has been politicized and learned politics from his Jewish classmates, teachers and his girlfriend. For example, it is in the twelfth grade that the protagonist learns that

Zionism is an ideology. In Civics lessons and Jewish history classes, I started to understand that my aunt from Tulkarm is called a refugee, that the Arabs in Israel are called a minority. In twelfth grade I understood that the problem was serious. I understood what a national homeland was, what anti-Semitism was. I heard for the first time about ‘two thousands years of exile’ and how the Jews had fought against the Arabs and the British. I didn’t believe it. No way. . . . In Bible class, I discovered that it was Isaac, not Ismael, who’d been replaced with a sheep. (Kashua 117)
It is in this short course of time that two separate worlds come to exist in the life of the narrator. A new world is created in this school, and it comes to seem like the real world to the narrator. Though the narrator is willing to give this new narrative the benefit of the doubt, he is shocked by the facts he has learned. While the narrator has naturally learned the Palestinian side of the story, in his boarding school he comes to learn the other side of the story in the hardest way that one can experience. There is no doubt that the narrator has always been exposed to a partial knowledge about the world of the Israelis: a partial knowledge that would in no means clarify or represent the two sides of the story.

Edward Said in *Culture and Imperialism* emphasizes Homi Bhabha’s claim of how nations themselves are narrations. The power to narrate, or to block other narratives from forming and emerging, is very important to culture and imperialism, and constitutes one of the main connection between them. (*Culture and Imperialism*, xiii)

like the protagonist in the novel, Palestinians living in Israel are subject to living within two narratives: the marginalized Palestinian national narrative and the Israeli narrative about Palestinians. In many other societies, one would expect hybridity to be the natural result of coexistence, but with Palestinian and Israeli society both resisting integration and hybridity, the imbalance of power between Palestinians and Israelis becomes the defining element of both narratives. Simply put, winning the battle over the narrative is the only thing that matters, and the Israelis believe themselves to be winning because they control the military, enjoy Western support, and possess the majority of the land. In this situation, the Israeli propagandists are assured that time is on their side and thus do not attempt to overpower the Palestinian narrative entirely. This results in a paradox. Palestinians may not exist, but they are still the enemy. The effect is that, in the narrative, it is seen that for a Palestinian to embrace the Palestinian narrative entirely is to become involved in radical politics and potentially endanger his or her life.
However, to participate in the Israeli narrative is to take the equally radical position of loathing one’s own nation and people, emulating another in order to achieve success, and living with second-class status and bigotry in spite of one’s best efforts to conform to the “better” society. This is the position that the protagonist finds himself in, and after experiencing such a paradox so early in life, it is not surprising that he finds himself confused and nearing a psychological breakdown when he departs from falsely “succeeding” at being Jewish and begins to genuinely fail at being a Palestinian. This, too, I think is an intended effect of the Israeli narrative intersecting with the Palestinian one and overpowering it within the state of Israel. Palestinians are not allowed to become full-fledged Israelis; however, they are welcome to try, welcome to lose their identities in the process, and welcome to go home in shame to their societies that find their “cultured” ways to be offensive signs of the oppressor’s presence in the minds of their victims. Offering Palestinians the “opportunity” to conform to Israeli culture is but to convince them to accept their own destruction.

This double-bind represents a problem that it is impossible for the character in *Dancing Arabs* to resolve, thus, his psychological well-being suffers and he feels that reality is inhospitable to his very existence. Living in these two incompatible worlds only intensifies his distress, if it is not the root cause of the majority of it. He always has been intimidated and under the pressure of faking identities, no matter where he is, whether he is with his family, in his village, or at school. His success in Jewish society is illusory, since it is based on his rejection of his ethnicity; secondly, his assimilation and internalization of the Jewish society that never accepted or would have accepted him; and finally, it is based on his romantic relationship with a Jewish woman. The power in this relationship resides in her, and she ends the relationship as the characters graduate from high school. This underscores the temporary nature of any seeming
acceptance the protagonist can achieve and exposes his fantasy of integration into Jewish society for the imaginative desire that it is. Now, obsessing over the loss of the relationship, the protagonist becomes constantly tired and dizzy, sleepless and lacking an appetite. He attempts to commit suicide and must be hospitalized for a while, then goes through psychological therapy. Entering this state of despair marks the collapse of his entire life on the academic and social levels. Afterwards, he escapes Jerusalem, but he never returns to his family or to his village. The protagonist's failure to be endorsed in Jewish society perpetuates his resentment of Palestinian society and the ethnicity that he blames for his negative image, negative reputation, romantic failure, and academic failure. The only positive achievement he ever accomplishes is that he finally attends Hebrew University, in which he develops into an independent person who is capable of taking charge of his life. However, he is now consciously burdened by the knowledge that he is a second-class citizen with a low-paying job at a health clinic. Later, he becomes a bartender. During these times in the protagonists' life, he is awakened to the cruel nature of double-mindedness and begins to acknowledge that some of his failures are not entirely his own, but the effects of Israeli prejudices manifesting in his life. The protagonist becomes aware that he will never break through or “make it” in Israeli society. His dreams are crushed, and his professional and social lives begin to deteriorate. He again forsakes his studies and uses his unrestricted bus pass available only to Israeli citizens to ride around Jerusalem aimlessly, lost in miserable thoughts. This experience of being cut off from society and living as a second-class citizen is familiar to many immigrants who do not naturalize due to native prejudices. The protagonist is now an exile in his own country and feels as such. He is prevented from returning to Palestinian society due to his failures that prevent him from facing his family or his village. Yet, despite the protagonist's alienation from his native society, he is equally alienated from
Israeli society and finds the ability to choose between two worlds within this envelope of alienation. In effect, bridging these two worlds is to create a small, personal, third dimension based on alienation. Coming from this third position, one would have the ability to choose between two different worlds. The protagonist begins to make choices from his alienated position, taking an Arab wife while taking advantage of his privileged status of being an Israeli citizen who is fluent in Hebrew. This increases the couple's chance to remain in Israel and to continue to benefit from the protagonist's training and familiarity with Jewish society, but they will remain marginalized. The couple's choice to remain in Israel while knowing they will be second-class citizens speaks to the degree to which the protagonist has become alienated from his own people. Though he has embraced some aspects of being Arab, Israeli society has changed him, and he consciously occupies the third position of alienation or non-belonging. There is now no native culture to which he could return.

Within this context, the narrator's sense of isolation has been always attached to his departure from his native village, and he keeps persuading himself that he no longer has a place in his family since he has been alienated from them for so long. The narrator speaks to his uneasiness:

Unless I return to Tira now, my younger brother will get all my parents’ saving. . . Before my younger brother got engaged, he asked if I was planning to move back home, because if not, he’d prefer to take over the shell they built for me. . . . I told him that as far as I was concerned he could have them both, because I was never coming back. (Kashua 157)

Thus, the narrator chooses to live as a second-class citizen within Israel because he now prefers to face the prejudices of the Israelis rather than confronting his alienation from his family and native society, since he still regards being Palestinian as shameful. Thus, he is a “local exile” from his culture despite not having emigrated outside of Palestine. Being within the borders of the state of Israel and possessing an Israeli citizenship is enough to differentiate him from
Palestinians. Yet, life continues to force the protagonist to face the identity he seeks to abandon. He and his Arab wife settle in the West Bank neighborhood of Beit Safaf because they cannot afford the rent in Jerusalem or any of the Jewish neighborhoods. However, dwelling in an Arab neighborhood does not provide him with any sense of affinity with his people or intimacy with their culture: “True, our landlords are Arabs, but we still don’t feel like we belong. We have no relative or acquaintances or friends here the way we do in Tira” (Kashua 147). This differentiation between villages in the West Bank and Arab villages in Israel is frequent motif in the novel that illustrates the degree of segregation that exists in Israel.

This separation of societies intensifies during the second Intifada, which is portrayed in the novel. Earlier, the narrator's father spoke of the valor and courage of the West Bank Palestinians who live in Ya'bad and their eternal dedication to the Palestinian cause, something he said the younger Palestinian generation in Israel lacks when criticizing what he saw to be his son's political apathy. Again, we see the category of “authentic Palestinian” defined by the dedication to the national cause. When the second Intifada erupts, the narrator has long enjoyed the benefits of renouncing his Arab identity and living on the margins of Israeli society. However, he cannot repress his memories of being an Arab and his nostalgia for his childhood. He rages against the Palestinian patriots as his aimlessness and self-loathing are intensified. He drinks, grows apart from his wife and daughter, and even hallucinates about taking a lover. Meanwhile, he also becomes preoccupied with all of his previous failures. Dwelling in the West Bank gives the protagonist an approximate view of how other Palestinians are behaving, what they believe, what holds their society together in spite of Israeli oppression, and how they are willing to sacrifice their lives for Palestine. He begins to realize that he experiences no feelings for his people or their cause and blames his father for his political apathy and lack of identity.
The protagonist expresses anger that his father saw virtue in sending him to an Israeli boarding school in order to improve his future, angrily admitting to himself that he had the choice to resist succumbing to Israeli social pressure to conform and abandon his Palestinian identity, and that he failed.

Thus, we see that the Israeli denial of Palestinian identity serves to reignite the fire of national struggle within some Palestinians while it is equally capable of wiping out one's pride in being Palestinian, love for one's community and people, and Palestinian political consciousness. In the midst of these realizations, the protagonist begins to pursue what he sees as the ideal life of an Arab Muslim. He plans to resume his familial duties towards his wife and daughter, to give up drinking, and to begin to pray. Meanwhile, the political dimension of his decisions lurks in the background. Now, the narrator will become politically active in order to become a member of the Knesset, where he can work to advocate the Palestinian cause within the government of Israel. He grasps onto his dreams by making the pilgrimage to Mecca with one of his Arab friends from the boarding school who has also managed to reclaim his Palestinian and Muslim identity. However, this epiphany does not last for a long time. During his pilgrimage, he finds himself disappointed that there is no beer in Saudi Arabia. However, there is still hope for the narrator to see the light. He visits his family's home after all the time he spent apart from his family and village. One night, after he wakes up early to watch his grandmother preparing herself for prayer, to find her in the last hours of life. He “hug[s] her and kiss[es] her head, trying not to cry,” while she reassures him that she is not crying because she is afraid of death, but because “she used to think she’d be buried in her own land” (Kashua 227). She asks him “Do you remember where the key to the cupboard is? And we both cry together” (Kashua 227). The end of the novel is symbolic. Reunion with the grandmother, returning to her bedroom, and even
the trust with the blue suitcase key represent the reinforced bonds between different generations of Palestinians, their land, and their memories. These are the main components of Palestinian national consciousness, and though modern times may produce disoriented young Palestinians within or outside of their homeland, this disorientation is not permanent, for the original components of Palestinian identity constitute a powerful bond between the Palestinian generations because they place such high value on their heritage and, above all, their land. The novel's statement is clear: Preceding generations will always have to choose between identities and must be adaptable to some degree in global society, but Palestinian identity is cemented in literature, history, and memory and will thus always be available as long as the narrative is preserved.
CHAPTER 3
ARE THEY PALESTINIAN-JORDANIAN OR JORDANIAN-PALESTINIAN? DOUBLE-
CONSCIOUSNESS AND LOYALTY INFORM PALESTINIAN-JORDANIAN CO-
EXISTENCE IN LIANA BADR’S *A COMPASS FOR THE SUNFLOWER*

The novel under examination in this chapter is Liana Badr’s *A Compass for the Sunflower*, in which identity politics occupy a crucial place in the debates over Arab and Muslim political identity in general, and in debates about Palestinian identity and nationalism, especially. This chapter combines textual analysis, historical exposition, and political thought to discuss Palestinians living in Jordan, and the Palestinian-Jordanian identity. Additionally, some factors involving Palestinians’ experience in Lebanon cannot be avoided and are discussed in the context of Palestinian-Jordanian interests as they are portrayed in the novel. A major proportion of Palestinian people identify themselves as Palestinian with Jordanian citizenship, rather than Palestinian-Jordanians, or Jordanian-Palestinians. The intact identities of Palestinians who live in Jordan are prime examples of how Palestinian nationalism has overcome the identity politics that characterize most other political interactions in the Arab world.

However, being Palestinian-Jordanian is more complex than choosing between a Jordanian or a Palestinian identity. Understanding the double-consciousness that characterizes this mode of existence is key to understanding how Palestinian-Jordanians see themselves in the world, and to understanding how the world sees them. Since the totality of the Palestinian-Jordanian experience would be difficult to convey in an entire book devoted to the subject, I turn to the event known as Black September or the 1970-1971 war, a formative event in the identities of Palestinian-Jordanians, to explain the significance of their formation as a subgroup of Palestinians in the chronotopic archipelago model.
While *al-Nakba* is considered to be the most tragic event in modern Palestinian history, the events of Black September in 1970 are directly comparable in terms of the losses and shock experienced by the Palestinian people in Jordan. Indeed, each island in the archipelago is shaped after *al-Nakba* by another visitation of violence and atrocity upon unfortunate people. Black September in Jordan and the Sabra and Shatila massacres in Lebanon are only a few examples of such events, and all of them are points of departure from which Palestinians embark upon secondary and tertiary diasporic journeys. Each unique series of events and combination of experiences creates more islands in the archipelago. Additionally, the stories about these unbearable tragedies, losses, and the survival of humiliating living conditions have no smaller impact than the stories about the initial catastrophe of 1948-*al-Nakba*- when speaking of reinforcing Palestinian national consciousness.

Black September was an event of equivalent magnitude to *al-Nakba* that left scars upon the minds of Palestinians and Jordanians, altering relations between the two peoples in a defining way that has persisted since Black September. This dramatic event is the foundation of modern Palestinian-Jordanian political and social relations. Therefore, in order to be able to analyze the articulation of Palestinian-Jordanian political identity, I have to provide a historical, political and social overview that would bring resolution to some of the ambiguity regarding the combative perception and hostile attitude towards each other that Jordanians and Palestinians have experienced.

The first Palestinian-Jordanians were those Palestinians living within the current borders of the state of Israel on the eve of *al-Nakba*. After being expelled from their homes, these Palestinians traveled to Transjordan, the West Bank, Gaza, Syria and Lebanon. Since the West Bank and Gaza Strip are parts of mandate-era Palestine, we might imagine that the huge forced
movement to the West Bank and Gaza could be considered an internal or domestic relocation. The travelers on this internal exodus later came to be known as “internal refugees.” Though it might be viewed in the eyes of the world as “natural” or “normal” movement from one part of the country to another, this was not true for the internal refugees. This much is demonstrated by the remarks of a woman fleeing with her family from West Jerusalem to Ramallah, who remarked that “[u]nder constant pressure and harassment from the Israelis we had to flee West Jerusalem and leave places that were so dear to our hearts: Yafa Street, Al Aksa Mosque, Sakhra Mosque, Kaniesett Al Kiama” (Shaaban 166). Though the refugee woman speaks only of her nostalgia for urban life, leaving small towns and villages must have been equally traumatic experience of uprooting for the internal refugees.

This same woman and her family, after 1967 war, when Israel occupied the rest of Palestinian territories, the West Bank and Gaza Strip and the East of Jerusalem, and allowed some movement between the West and East of Jerusalem, decided to visit the family's old house in West Jerusalem. They found it occupied by a Polish dentist. Then, the “mother collapsed in tears and nearly had a nervous breakdown” while the rest of the family “were all crying bitterly” (Shaaban 167). The woman continues: “It was a horrible day. We went back to Ramallah feeling we had to do something about the degrading situation in which we found ourselves” (Shaaban 167).

This testimony shows that even internal displacement is still dispossession, humiliation, and loss. In response, Palestinians developed new means of self-identification that included the names of the villages and towns from which they had been removed. While it might seem that moving around within one’s historic homeland is no great tragedy, when movements are forced and loss of livelihood and property are part of the move, there is nothing natural or pleasurable
about relocating. Just as the woman quoted previously identifies with West Jerusalem, the
Palestinians of the western villages and rural towns have identified with their areas of origin,
and, as refugees, have even increased the prominence of their villages by using their names when
introducing themselves to each other. This habit makes forgetting or neglecting one’s origins
impossible, and shows that Palestinians reject their status as refugees. It is a fact that “[what]
underlies Palestinian identity in general, however, is attachment to the village or town of origin,
a sense of loss of homeland and of gross injustice at the hands of the international community,
and the centrality of the notion of return,” and meanwhile makes them exceptional with such
identification records (Brand 40).

It is also worth noting that during this time, the Palestinian people lack leadership. This
lack of a national authority is a continuing crisis that had its origins before al-Nakba, in the
1936-39 revolt against the British. Many Palestinian leaders were exiled and fled the country;
Haj Amin al-Husseini, who was a prominent Palestinian leader, was exiled to Egypt, Lebanon
and Iraq, and was barred from returning to Jerusalem by British authorities. The significance to
Palestinian-Jordanians is that without the presence of a Palestinian political authority, the
neighboring Arab countries, Jordan, Egypt and Iraq, stepped in to fill the role of a national
government after al-Nakba. Consequently, “Central Palestine,” or the West Bank and East
Jerusalem, was temporarily governed by Jordanian and Iraqi forces. Meanwhile, the Gaza strip
was temporarily under the Egyptian government. Multiple political identities were available to
Palestinians at this time: Pan-Arabist, Islamist Palestinian, and Israeli. The period after World
War II was a period in the Arab world in which the process of nation-state building started, but
never reached a satisfying conclusion. Arab countries were newly independent and enthusiastic
toward the idea of the Pan-Arab nationalism that had been promoted by Gamal Abdel Nasser. As
for Transjordan, King Abdallah desired to annex the West Bank to his evolving kingdom in 1950. The Jordanian king’s ambition to possess the West Bank is the root of mistrust between the Jordanian and Palestinian people. To the Palestinians, the Jordanians prevented the Palestinian leadership from reorganizing and from rebuilding a military. Other actions taken by Arab countries impacted Palestinians similarly, as well.

The critical decision of annexation, known as the Unity Act of 1950, had diverse impacts among Palestinians and Jordanians. The 1948 war and the partitioning of Palestine have been instrumental as formative events in the Palestinians’ quest for national liberation that led to a nationalist movement which established the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) in 1964. The annexation act reinforced the resurgence of Palestinian national consciousness and political identity. Palestinians who had been seeking to crystallize and solidify a national consciousness saw the annexation of the West Bank by the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan as another nail in the coffin of Palestinian independence, and, thus, became more Palestinian. Nonetheless, the event was a “watershed in invoking and strengthening the Palestinian identity vis-a-vis the Jordanian as well as the Israeli one” (Koprulu and Koldas 46).

The de facto co-existence of the Palestinian and Jordanian communities in the West Bank and Transjordan was a genuine co-existence and was, to some extent, natural before the annexation and the 1967 war. Contact between Palestinians and Jordanians after the Jordanian annexation took place in the West Bank, where the majority of residents were descendants of the Palestinians who had fled to the West Bank after 1967. Jordanian businessmen and civil officers found themselves living among these Palestinians when they came to the West Bank, and they found the population’s loyalty to Palestine to be unshaken. As for the hybrid Palestinian-Jordanians born through intermarriage during this time, they “hold the distinction of being
attached to both their places of origin” (Koprulu and Koldas 48). Thus, a large segment of Palestinians in Jordan remembered the Palestinian cause and “their attachment to the notion of ‘return’” remained intact after al-Nakba, the annexation to Jordan, and the 1967 war (Koprulu and Koldas 48).

Possessing dual identities causes Palestinian-Jordanians to face a unique kind of identity crisis. Thus, the multiple attachments, feelings of belonging and the de-territorialization of the nation across state boundaries are the common ties that define Palestinian unity and underlie the essence of the Palestinian identity in this part of the archipelago. Palestinian identity, however, has no requirement of residency in any particular area and is concerned with a shared experience of migration, displacement and dispossession. Nevertheless, the Palestinian-Jordanian is a unique case and community within the Palestinian archipelago. As’ad Ghanem explains the categorization of the two major types of nationalism: the first is the “Civic (territorial) nationalism” that “emphasizes the common territory and citizenship as the criteria of individuals’ inclusion in the national Group” (11). The second type is the “ethnic nationalism” which “lays the major emphasis on primordial ethnic affiliation as the criterion for inclusion with the national group. The values shared by the members of the national group are chiefly the group’s historical heritage and primordial ethnic values” (Ghanem 11). As in the Middle East and most of the Third World countries, the second type is the dominant form encountered; this is true when discussing both nationalism and how the members of these nationalist groups view and experience a clash of cultures with the “Other” (Ghanem 11). Palestinian-Jordanians are unique in one aspect at least, however, because the first type of nationalism implicitly underscores the construction of Palestinian-Jordanian identity as well as the second type of nationalism. A person could be of Jordanian descent, but with some Palestinian descent and a
Palestinian cultural and political identity, and this person would be fully Palestinian while remaining a Palestinian-Jordanian. Both forms of origin, ethnic and political heritage, are acknowledged and reconciled with one another, so both must be discussed.

Thus, the nascent Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan emerged as a bi-national state due to the huge influx of Palestinian refugees. It is through the division of identities present in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan that we see a reflection of the artificiality of dividing Palestinian land according to whether the land lies to the East or West banks of the Jordan River. The artificial division is “the very [foundation] of interaction and salience of multiple identities in the country” (Koprulu and Kolas 46). All these historic migrations and reconciliations of identities in Jordan, however, served the purpose of the Israeli government in further cementing the idea that Jordan is Palestine. Palestinians were intimidated by the act of annexation and felt that they had been betrayed by the Arabs, and that their identity is not only under erasure by Zionism, but that the Arabs also wanted Palestinians to assimilate and to abandon their Palestinian identities. The greatest paradox of the annexation of the West Bank is that in spite of the historic co-existence between Jordanians and Palestinians that set a good precedent for the experience, the effects of Jordanian rule of the West bank became instrumental in steering the politics of identity in the Kingdom into distinctly Jordanian and Palestinian factions.

The exposure and vulnerability Palestinians felt since the beginning of the British mandate became accentuated when the Palestinian people found themselves without a state and in circumstances that compelled them to accept the few alternatives to assimilation and disappearance that remained to them. The Jordanian annexation of the West Bank presented obstacles as well as an opportunity. During the formation of the state of Jordan, the Jordanians began to document and classify who was Jordanian and who was Palestinian. Benedict Anderson
argues that post-industrial era underscores two official personal identification documents: “the birth certificate and the passport” (“Exodus,” 322). Both documents had a significant status in nineteenth century nationalism and “later became interlinked” (“Exodus,” 322). The significance of the birth certificate is its concerns with identity and origin; birth certificates list the “baby’s father, place of birth, the state’s certificates created the founding documents for the infant’s inclusion in or exclusion from citizenship” per se (“Exodus,” 323). Therefore, the point of intersection of coordinated axes of primordial and spacial/political is encapsulated in the birth certificate. As for the passport, the second-most important identification document, in Anderson's words, it is the “product of vectoral convergence of migration and nationalism in an industrial age [and] was ready to confirm the baby’s political identity as it passed into adulthood” (323). Thus, the rift in Palestinian-Jordanian identity is not only established by their displacement and exile from their homeland; it was emphasized by these new identification documents and the bureaucratic administration that produced them. Identification cards, Egyptian/Syrian/Lebanese travel documents, Israeli blue/green identification cards, Jordanian (Yellow and blue identification cards)/European/American passports—and others can be added to the list—are the many documents that confirm Palestinian identity to their holders regardless of which island in the Palestinian archipelago they occupy. In one way or another, various governments have defined Palestinians by attempting to exclude or otherwise identify and categorize them as refugees.

Nonetheless, the birth certificate remains significant to the first generation of Palestinian refugees and their descendants, as do the title deeds to their lands, the kushan that they preserved. Palestinians preserve a substantial amount of information about their native villages and towns in their birth certificates. In one instance, a Palestinian-American who was born in
Palestine in 1941 renewed his passport and discovered that Israel had been listed as his place of birth; thus, he sent the passport back to be replaced and corrected for a simple reason that Israel was established in 1948. Benedict Anderson emphasizes that the passport’s significance and functionality is primarily in the marketplace. In the past, and I believe to some extent in the present, Palestinians viewed passports and foreign citizenships as tools that would facilitate their mobility from one place to another, never as authorized documents that told the truth about their identity or origin; unfortunately, movement was not as easy for Palestinians as it was for other owners of passports. As Rashid Khalidi asserted, it is the collapsing of internal and external barriers, or the ending of borders between different worlds that facilitate the mobilization of different masses of people (5). For Palestinians, every challenge met produces new obstacles to overcome.

Palestinians find themselves coerced into a quasi-cosmopolitan status, and this is a recurrent theme in Palestinian literature that will be mentioned again later. Pheng Cheah and Bruce Robbins have underscored the value of cosmopolitanism in creating a universal allegiance that is based on intellectual ethics, values that would undermine the now-outmoded ideas of nationalism (1). However, the Palestinian experience with cosmopolitanism has not reduced their nationalistic ambitions. Their travel documents prove that they have been excluded from the cosmopolitan scene in which universal allegiances and intellectual ethics unite all; rather, the Palestinian experiences despair and witnesses the plight of his nation. Part of the Palestinian experience with cosmopolitanism has been being ignored by international bodies.

Rashidi stresses that whatever the type of documents the Palestinian carries, whether it is Lebanese, Syrian, or Egyptian travel documents, they do not legitimize any citizenship in any country. As soon as the Palestinian crosses the borders of a country, his status of residency
becomes suspect and must be verified and re-checked. Since the Palestinian’s fate is to continue traveling, the tangle of legal and travel documents that follow Palestinians mark them as permanent refugees. Palestinians bear witness that cosmopolitanism is not acquired by any intellectual or material virtues, particularly in the Third World. Palestinians did not become cosmopolitan due to trade, or after widespread societal self-reflection accomplished in a time of comfort, prosperity, and high education; rather, cosmopolitanism was thrust upon them without explanation, and in the midst of personal and national disasters. The task of everyone in the nation was to understand their new, ever-changing environment, and this was but the first task in a sequence of many that even the most unprepared Palestinian had to face.

In order to attain the prestigious status of being cosmopolitan, one must be functional in the world and originate from a recognizable point. Cosmopolitan world-citizens need identities to transcend, after all, if cosmopolitanism is to be about transcending one's identity. Palestinians, having been robbed of their nation, have no material connection (other than the travel documents that mark their departure from their homeland) between the cosmopolitan present and the Palestinian identity that they still possess. Therefore, the nation's education in cosmopolitanism was extremely traumatic. Without borders and land, the nation had to be re-imagined.

The annexation of the West Bank produced many of these changes through the rapidity with which it took place. It was finished two years after the 1948 war, and its implementation continued through various disruptions until the 1967 war. The Jordanian government tried to enforce unity during this time through the efforts of their bureaucracy. Koprulu and Koldas synopsize the process of co-opting the Palestinian in Jordan by four major routes: the first one is the right to Jordanian citizenship and acquiring Jordanian passports to all Palestinians inside the East and West Banks. It is worth mentioning that this is a rare occurrence in Arab countries.
Naturalization is a very complicated, if not impossible, process in Arab countries. There is no doubt that this decision was very crucial in establishing alliances and hostilities simultaneously. Implicitly, this attempt at integrating Palestinian refugees into Jordanian society provided an adequate ground to “the idea that ‘Jordan is a homeland’ for them, and it did so on an international stage.

The second measurement was that of the exploitation of the idea of Arab nationalism and the commitment to Palestinian cause. In the time of enthusiastic Arab nationalism, the Jordanian regime promoted the integration of the two nations into one identity as a component of a greater movement of Arab nationalism and its dedication to Palestinian cause. Palestinians received these half-friendly overtures with skepticism, both on the social and political levels. They assumed that the unification of Palestinian and Jordanian in one identity and society, at this stage, would mean submission to the Zionist’s idea of Jordan as the “alternative homeland” for the Palestinians; many disliked it because they knew the consequence of assimilation was losing the Palestinians’ right of return to Palestine. As for the idea of the integration in the larger melting pot of Arab nations, the Palestinians had been on good terms with the essence of the idea and with their role in supporting this larger nation, but the fact that the establishment of another nation-state, Israel, in more than three-fourths of historical Palestinian land, made their integrating into the larger Arab nation a threat that would dissolve Palestinian national integrity and identity before any Pan-Arab alliance could reclaim it on their behalf.

There is no doubt that domestic and national goals were at play in the Hashemite regime’s policy. The annexation act came four years after the end of British Mandate and the independence of Transjordan in 1946. The fact was that the regime itself was a new nation in the process of constructing its own political identity and legitimizing its own existence while
Palestinian political identity was being marginalized. The Jordanian government found itself in the place of preparing for Jordan's future while the Palestinians within Jordan were still reeling from a series of tragic losses that had resulted in the dissolution of their political, civil, and military structures. Members of the Hashemite regime were thought to be prepared to take the places of Palestinian internal authorities, and partnership was stressed. Nevertheless, Jordanian politics shifted to tying identity to the image of the King of Jordan as the “sole and complete patriarch of Jordanian society” and as a legitimate authority for both Jordanians and Palestinians (Koprulu and Koldas 47). To create greater unity, the Jordanian government appealed to religion and stressed Islam as uniting factor that stood above all other values, ties, origins, and physical attachments; Islam was and still is the source of unification and identity among Jordanian tribes, and between Jordanians and Palestinians. It always has been employed to bridge any obstacles and conflicts between the two nations.

As I previously mentioned at the outset of the introduction to this chapter, the development of the Palestinian national movement and, by the same token, Palestinian national consciousness, surfaced in the early twentieth century. Though the dominant narrative condemns the emerging of Palestinian national consciousness by pointing to the fact that it emerged recently, and due to the establishment of the state of Israel within Palestinian land, scholars such James L. Gelvin, Edward Said and Rashid Khalidi and others suggest that reactionary movements are a major characteristic of nationalism, and that this often-leveled criticism is actually a point that Palestinians can make to claim the authenticity and legitimacy of their nationalist movement. Said argues that most nationalist movements in Europe and other parts of the world emerged in response to the “other” national movements. Additionally, Gelvin
emphasizes that the stigmatizing the Palestinian national movement as a reaction to the Zionist movement and Jewish national movement does not diminish its authenticity by any means.

A further discussion of Palestinian national ambition is relevant at this point in the chapter. Palestine was included in Emir Feisal’s ambitious project of “Great Syria” that was aborted by the implementation of the Sykes-Picot agreement of 1916, under which Palestine and Transjordan, known then as “Southern Syria” was under British authority while Syria and Lebanon were ruled by the French. This is the first paradoxical instance of national authority being “given to” (or, asserted over) Palestinians and it being rejected in favor of local Palestinian authorities, their national designs, and the desires of the primordial Palestinian nation. It is paradoxical that Sykes-Picot worked to reinforce the Palestinian national consciousness, because many of the developments Palestinians favored were part of this earlier “Pan-Syrian” consciousness that the British and French armies had effectively killed in the cradle as a consequence of their occupation.

Despite the setbacks Palestinians suffered when supporting Pan-Syrianism, their own national ambitions were solidly formed; under the British, they began to move in different directions and to find new means of and causes for expressions of nationalism. In many ways, the British mandate and the British cooperation with Zionism reinvigorated and emboldened Palestinians. In the 1920s, the “Palestinian Arab Executive Committee,” and the “Palestinian Higher Committee,” led by Haj Amin al-Hussaini were the first organized national groups to articulate the modern ideological counter-narrative to Israeli claims regarding the indigenous status of the Palestinian people in the historical land of Palestine, and, by the same token, their right to Palestine as their homeland (Ghanem 12). Moreover, it was this later group and its leaders that initiated the armed struggle against both the British and the Zionists and articulated
how Palestinians can only see themselves as a nation in Palestine and not in any other land or place.

These early Palestinian resistance groups had organic Palestinian political structures, as well. They were organized according to the “clan structure of contemporary Palestinians society: the Husseinin family and its allies versus the Nashashibi family and its supporters” (Ghanem 12). The consequences of World War II and growing immigration of European Jewish refugees to Palestine caused many Palestinians to perceive that the British meant to give political power to the Jewish immigrants. This sense of discontent and of being replaced in one’s own territory contributed to the outbreak of the great 1936-1939 Palestinian revolt, in which organized strikes and demonstrations spread across the country. Though the outcome of these events were not in the Palestinians’ favor, they were nevertheless essential to the formation of Palestinian national consciousness (Ghanem 12).

Meanwhile the Arab interventions and support came too late to aid the Palestinians. The Arabs’ leader regarded the Palestinian revolt as unproductive and brought it to an end. This intervention would mark “the beginning of the ‘Arabization’ of the Palestinian problem, which subsequently had a significant impact on the course of Palestinian problem and the evolution of political activity among the Palestinians” (Ghanem 12-13). After the Great Revolt, Palestinians found that many of their business opportunities had vanished and that their economic prospects were altogether dim. Members of the political leadership fared worse and were exiled. For example, Haj Amin al-Husseini who was perceived as the godfather of Palestinian national movement and resistance, was exiled to Beirut and then to Baghdad. He lived, but his efforts at continuing Palestinian reunification went in vain. While the Palestinian leadership was dismantled, the triumphant Zionists established their political leadership in Palestine and
empowered themselves at all levels: socially, politically, and economically. Then, the United Nations General Assembly’s Resolution 181, known as the Partition Resolution, divided the historical Palestine into two states, one for the Jewish and the other for Arabs.

Palestinians did not share in the joy of newfound independence and dreams of a new national destiny, as did the other Arab nations. The Partition resolution and the 1948 war eliminated hope for achieving the Palestinian concept of Palestine as a state. Next, an Arab army was deployed to Palestine after the partition resolution in 1947. The troops had been sent to prevent the establishment of a Jewish state in Palestine, but they failed in their goal, and the state of Israel was declared on May, 15th, 1948. Through all this, the perceived mismanagement of their nation’s crisis by the Israelis and the Arab League alienated the Palestinian people. The Arab League received blame because it had excluded Palestinians from leadership positions.

Haj Amin was skeptical about the usefulness of the Arabs’ intervention and worried about the future of his country, so he attempted to establish a Palestinian army independently from the Arab League, formed from Palestinian volunteers. The lack of coordination between the two armies and the delayed strategies of both armies made them both vulnerable to the Israeli strategy to divide the Arabs and Palestinians while simultaneously expanding Israel’s borders. The irridentism nature of Israel intensifies the Palestinian dilemma and the continuity of their tragedies on one side of the equation. On the other side, the Arabs and the Palestinians agreed upon the establishment of what would be considered the first Palestinian government under the name, the “All-Palestine” government (Hukumat Umum Falastin). Haj Amin was appointed as its President. However, Jordanian government prevented this government from operating in the West Bank, and Israel prevented any contact with or appearance of agents of this government in the territories under their control.
The only place the Palestinian government had a limited ability to exist and exercise its authority was in the Gaza strip; however, their office was closed in 1959 by the president of Egypt, Gamal Abdel Nasser. This decision had much to do with Nasser's philosophy of Pan-Arabism, which caused him to focus on promoting this form of nationalism instead of helping his Palestinian allies. What remained of the All-Palestine government after the closure of their office formed the nucleus of the group that was to become the “Palestinian National Movement,” where the Fatah party was founded. These new members of the Palestinian government had fled to Kuwait and established themselves there in 1957. Palestinians leaders such as Yasir Arafat, Khalik al-Wazir, Salah Khalef, Farouk Kadoumin and others were present (Ghanem 16). Thus, despite many setbacks and, certainly, experiencing a national struggle characterized and defined by setbacks, the 1950s were a productive era for Palestinian national movements. The 1950s also bear witness to many islands in the Palestinian archipelago being created through the exile of leaders to foreign nations, where they are able to organize without the interference of Israel, Britain, Egypt, or the Arab League. Palestinian students around the globe began to imitate Fatah by founding their own Palestinian nationalist parties. Cairo, Damascus, Beirut and Alexandria were the most notable cities near Palestine with large Palestinian student groups. These students took on the burden of representing the Palestinian people and their struggle in academia and public life, and their efforts mark a division between what I define as the “external” and “internal” Palestinian leadership during this time. Authentic, population-driven nationalist movements are halfway-in and halfway-out of the territory of Palestine, just like the Palestinians themselves.

Now, the state of Palestinian nationalism in Jordan must be examined in order to reunite this discussion of Palestinian politics with the theme of the unique condition of the Palestinian-
Jordanian. King Abdallah and the Jordanian regime had instigated several measurements to amalgamate the two communities into one entity in a tactical response to the strong “insurgence of a Palestinian counter-hegemonic identity” (Koptulu and Koldas 47). Signs of rebellion against the annexation were obvious in the early years and led to the assassination of King Abudalla on July 1951, when he was about to enter the Al-Aqsa mosque for Friday prayer.

King Hussein, Abdallah’s heir, took the throne in 1952, and preserved his grandfather’s policies by strengthening the annexation. The young king Hussein was so enthusiastic about the solidification of the annexation that he was able to eliminate much of the West Bank and Jordanian resistance to the idea. However, King Hussein and Gamal Nasser would conflict in 1964 over the recognizing of the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) as the sole representative of the Palestinian people inside and outside of Palestine. Nasser recognized the PLO at the Arab League summit in Cairo. At that time, the Jordanian regime refused to relinquish its role in Palestinian representation and would not recognize the PLO or the appointment of Ahmad Shukeiry as its chairman. However, the 1967 war and its ramifications on the Palestinian people and their land ended the era of Jordanian and Egyptian involvement in Palestinian affairs. Ironically, the defeat of the Arab armies during the 1967 war further empowered the PLO through the further dispossession, invasion, and relocation of Palestinians by Israel. These events echoed *al-Nakba* and increased solidarity among Palestinians.

The tragic consequences of the 1967 war saw Jordan lose the West Bank and East Jerusalem, The Sinai Peninsula from Egypt, the Gaza Strip (was under the administration of Egypt too), and Golan Heights from Syria, to Israeli occupation. The war undermined the Palestinian's faith that help would soon arrive from their Arab brothers while underscoring Palestinian self-reliance. Palestinian Fedayeen (Palestinian Liberation Fighters) challenged Arab
regimes but also “Shukeiry’s one-man control of the PLO and its institutions” (Ghanem 18). From this challenge, the PLO emerges as one of the most democratic and liberal organizations in its time, as it was led and managed by an executive committee and the Fedayeen organization, including Fatah, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, the Palestinian Liberation front, and the Arab Nationalists who took control of the PLO leadership and forced Shukeiry to resign only six months later, after the 1967 war.

During the 1967 war, the Fedayeen gained the Palestinians’ consensus to lead an armed struggle for the liberation of the nation. They stationed themselves in Jordan and initiated their attack on Israeli occupation forces from within the Jordanian border. Palestinians and Jordanians came together during this time, especially around the time of the battle of al-Karameh, which was a resounding victory against Israel. However, it is worth mentioning that, at the time, the Fedayeen had exaggerated the outcome of this minor war and believed that it was the first step toward Palestinian liberation. The Fedayeen’s exaggerated confidence allowed them to push forward with their “state-within-state” idea that king Hussein could not tolerate at the time. The Fedayeen’s confidence led to trouble, as the promotion of a Palestinian state within Jordan led to a war between the Jordanian army and the Fedayeen in 1970. In 1971, the Palestinian forces and the Fedayeen were expelled from Jordan. The expulsion of Palestinians from Jordan during these years is known as Black September. The event marks the end of the incubation of a Palestinian state and nationalist front within the state of Jordan. The expelled Palestinians had few options regarding where to go, and they took Lebanon as their new station after Black September, and the event has been engraved in Palestinian-Jordanian memory as a formative event in both Palestinian and Palestinian-Jordanian identity.
Research has shown that Black September, or the 1970 war between the Jordanian and
the Fedayeen, has been adequately discussed in historical accounts, news periodicals, political
articles and journals, and from a Palestinian nationalist perspective, but it has been hardly
represented in fiction. Therefore, I believe that Liana Badr’s *A Compass for the Sunflower*
(1989) is a unique piece of writing for at least two reasons: It is a pioneering novel that discusses
the Black September event, and was originally published in Arabic under the title *Bosala Min Ajl
‘Abbad Al-Shamas* (1979). The author draws from her own firsthand experience of Black
September to inform the narrative.

This chapter shifts away from the patriarchal historic perspective used in the previous
chapters and switches to preferring the feminine perspective. More than that, the chapter’s
discussion moves beyond the issues of identity and intellectual and cultural crises to represent
the shared Palestinian experience of armed struggle, and within a female context.
Simultaneously, this chapter will deal with the expanding of the Palestinian archipelago that is in
Jordan and Lebanon.

The novel’s protagonist, Jinan, is living in Beirut and corresponding with her friends in
Jordan and the West Bank through letters; moreover, she is also telling stories about the time she
spent in Amman after she and her family were expelled from Jericho. This chapter is
representing the early stages of Palestinians’ implementation of an independent physical,
national, armed, and ideological struggle to avenge and retrieve the nation that had been lost. As
I posited in my second chapter, memory is an essential medium and storage to the Palestinians in
general and to women in particular.

As in the earlier novel discussed in chapter two, this novel also has elements of
autobiography; thus, the events from Badr’s own personal life and experiences are integrated into
the novel and incorporated into the narrative through the author’s portrayal of the protagonist’s life. Jūzīf Zaydān and Bouthaina Shaaban write that Liana Badr has lived in the Palestinian diaspora since her childhood. Badr came from a Jerusalem intellectual and patriotic family. Though she was born in Jerusalem, after al-Nakba, she moved with her parents and sister to Jericho and after the 1967 war moved to Jordan, Syria, Egypt and Lebanon, just like her protagonist, Jinan.

Badr’s father was a political activist who was either imprisoned or exiled, and this politicized state of existence is also applied to Jinan. Moreover, Badr’s mother was also an intellectual and political activist. However, death took the mother from her family in a young age, and Badr and her younger sister were left to the care of an absent/present father and, by the same token, to an insecure future away from family intimacy and homeland sanctuary. However, though Badr shares with her people their collective displacement and tragedies, add to this that she spent a portion of her childhood in a Jerusalem orphanage. Her tragic experience ironically contributed to the development of her literary interest and skills, as she was instructed in books and arts at the orphanage. For Badr, these years were formative in her future profession as a writer, and she brings the importance of books, writing, and arts to the novel and shows how they play a crucial role in the lives of the novel’s characters. In Bouthaina’s Both Right and Left Handed: Arab Women Talk about their Lives, Badr contributes to this book and narrates her personal life. Therefore, many of Badr’s childhood and adulthood incidents are represented in her novels. At this point, I need to reemphasize that to Palestinian authors, the line between the personal and collective, the fictional and non-fictional, and the historical are hard to maintain. Nonetheless, Badr uses a magically realistic style that includes these perspectives without
reconciling them with observable reality or justifying the temporal and spacial shifts in the narrative.

This is Badr’s first novel. She wrote the original Arabic version in 1979, eight year after Black September, during a time when she was forced to move from Amman to Beirut. Thus, the novel’s protagonist's experience in the refugee camps replicates Badr’s personal experience. In an interview for the TV show, “Pen and Melodies” with Badr, Kawther al-Zain, describes her as a novelist and a woman who is “full with memories.” In this context, Badr highlights that she has always had the ambition to write a Palestinian Epic. Her personal experience taught her that Palestinian memories are always under the threat of annihilation. Badr offers her testimony from her professional journey as a Palestinian and as a novelist; she experienced several periods of personal memory annihilation by the tragic events the Palestinian nation has experienced.

As mentioned earlier, the novel was written eight years after Black September, while the author lived in Beirut. The reason for this delay, according to Badr, is that as a writer, she has never been able to write a novel about the present events and the Palestinians’ current condition because from the time of al-Nakba, there is always a new tragedy advancing on the Palestinian’s horizon; whenever she attempts to write a novel about a present issue, a new tragedy evolves and forces her to flee, and this always affects her memory of events. The expulsion, forced mobility from one place to another, and the impact of the destruction of her possessions, property and books, is always altering her memory. So, she has been always coerced to tell the story of the ruined places after leaving them—a submission to the demands of wartime life familiar to many Palestinians. A Compass for the Sunflower was written to tell the story of the Palestinian generation born after al-Nakba and to show how they became refugees, thus, this novel tells the stories of al-Nakba, the 1967 war, and Black September, and the author shows how she was
forced to leave the three places and write about them from a distance. Additionally, the novel reveals the motives behind the Fedayeen’s actions and the armed struggle against Israel. As a writer, Badr has never been able to deal with memory face-to-face, just as many Palestinians, for whom the ongoing tragedies always destroy memories, places, friends, families, and livelihoods; therefore, Badr's novels are a historical project as much as they are Palestinian literature.

Zaydān affirms that the autobiographical quality of Badr’s novel makes the narrative more “detailed and believable” (187). In this case, the account of the author’s personal life and experience influences the mode of narration. The fragmentation of the author's real life is depicted in the novel, so Badr could not adjust the novel to the classical novel formula in terms of maintaining textual and chronological order, and this is a common feature in most Palestinian novels. The novel is divided into thirty untitled chapters, and the story is set in the 1970s, when Jinan was living in a Palestinian refugee camp in Beirut. From there, the narrative follows Jinan’s thoughts in a stream-of-consciousness style that travels in the past and the present, moving the story backward to the earlier years of Jinan’s life in Jericho and to the refugee camps in Amman.

From the very beginning of her journey, the character expresses her agony and frustration under the pressure of memory and the past. In the opening first page, Jinan is in the street waiting for a taxi when she notices a pool of blood and, in searching for the source of the “red puddle,” she “saw a butcher hanging up the animal he had just slaughtered. I averted my eyes. Blood mingling with the grey and blue and white, and springing up through the cracks of memory. You forget, then suddenly you glance behind” (Badr 1). Though this is a scene that she encounters in Beirut, immediately her memory, as if it is trained, moves her back to the first aid center in the Jabal Al-Hussein refugee camp in Amman. The protagonist admits that she has no power over
her own memory; she is always at the mercy of this memory that involuntarily brings up the memories of adversities, and the fighting in Amman is among them.

However, what amplifies the Palestinians’ indignation is the juxtaposition of their idealized past to *al-Nakba* and devastating present. Sa’di and Abu Logud emphasize that “Palestinian memory is particularly poignant because it struggles with and against a still much-contested present (3). However, in post *al-Nakba* and the following years, the temporality of Palestinians’ memory takes a new direction. Now, memories of the happy days in Palestine before *al-Nakba* are vanishing. However, women preserve their traditional roles as cultural agents through the disasters. An important allusion to the women as cultural agents occurs in the early pages of the novel, as the protagonist remembers the nights when she and her lover, Shaher, used to “stare at the shapes of the clouds and invent names for them,” a habit that they terminated because of the development of the war and the tragic events around them, so they “closed the circle of time then sat on top of it, ill at ease, stealing glances at the white and blue and grey with a hidden yearning for the old days” (Badr 4). It is because of the war that they become, on one level, unable to have time to sit and staring at the sky competing about the shapes of the clouds, while now the only thing that is available is “stealing glances;” at this point, Jinan wonders how her “precise memory for trivial, unimportant dates amazed” Shaher (Badr 4). In order to hide his perplexed feeling from her powerful capacity of remembering, Shaher compares Jinan to the sunflower, and this makes Jinan wonders if he means that she is an “automatic clock that didn’t work” any more (Badr 4).

Sunflowers bring another allusion into play; a sunflower is always in search for the sun and looking above to the sky, so to Palestinian men, women represent this “national” flower that both carries beauty and seeds, just as the sun will always direct them homeward. The comparison
extends to women being flowers that one enjoys their company, while the flower is also full of seeds that would secure the future of the nation through reproduction, just as sunflower seeds are traditionally eaten and squeezed to get oil. Shaher’s following sentence and criticism of an Arabic Film titled “No Time for Love” demolishes the hope of containing or enjoying this intimacy, just as the sunflower would never keep the company of the sun all the time. However, to Palestinians, such moments of affection and intimacy are short-lived, and one might even feel guilty for living in these moments under their current condition of defeat and displacement. Jinan asks the eternal question about the role of constant war in their lives, and she says, “Now it was my turn to sound perplexed: ‘Why do the tanks always come and eat up periods of our history? The only dates we remember are the Declaration, the Rogers visit and the carnage of Black September’ (Badr 5). Thus, it turns to the couples that their current condition as refugees does not have room for such dreams, Shahr, from a devastated exile point of view, replies, “Because the exile has left firm, clear footprints. We mustn’t forget them [tanks, Balfour…] or, as Salima Al-Hajja says, we’ll become gypsies roaming the earth in permanent exile” and this is the destiny that Palestinians mostly fear (Badr 5). And this emphasizes Renan’s claims of the significance of tragedies, and how people desire to remember and invest in their cultural tragedies throughout history.

These tragic events become the defining moments of the struggle in the Palestinian calendar and memory; and all gain their significance from following, or allowing al-Nakba to happen. Palestinian memory acknowledges that other landmark events such as the 1967 war, Black September, the massacres at Sabra and Shatila, the first and second Intifada, etc., would not have occurred if they had not been preceded by al-Nakba.
Palestinians have ever been known for their pride and dignity, a trait that is shared among Arabs. So, al-Nakba not only destroyed their material and physical existence as a nation, but degraded their social status among their peers by confining them to refugee camps. Becoming a refugee is debilitating and humiliating to the Palestinians, who are sensitive to the constraints imposed by existing in camps and are still intimidated by the implications of being refugees. Since the establishment of the state of Israel, more than two-thirds of the Palestinian population have become refugees. Many scholars and historians emphasize that the Palestinians have feared the fact that “[t]heir fate hung on the decisions of politicians in the countries to which they fled or bureaucrats in international agencies and there is no doubt, from a political point of view, that internationalization of the Palestinian cause has harmed rather than benefited it (Sa’di and Abu Logud 3).

In the West, Palestinians were represented as Arab immigrants who came to the Holy Land and settled for economic reasons; the sentiment being advanced during the establishment of Israel was that it is time for these wandering Arabs to return to their homes. This Zionist narrative is especially abusive to the dignity of Palestinians, as it characterizes them as having always been the refugees that the occupation made them, thus denying centuries of Palestinian history and indigenous status. Furthermore, Said, Sa’di and Abu-Loghud underscore how the Zionist narrative plays on the biblical stories in which the justification of taking one’s land is biblical—that God promised this land to the Jews. Thus, in Europe and America, the Palestinian-Israeli conflict is the story of the rebirth of the Jewish nation and State, or in Spivak’s words, “righting the wrongs.”

Sa’di and Abu-Loghud argue that it is “[t]he death-rebirth dialectic, a philosophical conception with enormous purchase in both religious and secular Western thought, [that] was
applied to the Jewish people” in juxtaposition to the preceding crimes of European anti-Semites against the Jewish people (4). Thus, the rebirth of the Jewish state after decades of discrimination, diaspora and genocide, is made personal to the European and the American, making the establishment of Israel “conceived, as an act of restitution that resolved this dialectic, bringing good of evil” (Sa’di & Abu-Loghud 4). On the other side of the equation, the Palestinians were introduced as “ill-fated refugees” who are invited to join millions of refugees who wandered in Europe or even who fled their homelands in times of war, violence and partitioning resolutions, such as in India and Pakistan (Sa’di & Abu-Loghud 4). Palestinians understand the significance of this misrepresentation, and they also understand the public’s acceptance of the Zionist narrative. Even apolitical Palestinians are vulnerable to accepting it as a true narrative, though I am a little bit cautious in describing Palestinians as “apolitical” because after al-Nakba, all Palestinians are forced to become politically advanced and educated by their having become, involuntarily, cosmopolitan “world citizens.” Therefore, it is not only loss that drives Palestinians and the Palestinian cause, but a desire for acknowledgement of their past, accurate historic portrayal of their struggle, and the initiation of a legitimate redress of Palestinian grievances.

Elias Sanbar asserts that the misrepresentation and negligence of the Palestinian cause is a factor in their distrust of the activity of Western-dominated international forums in his article “Out of Place, Out of Time”:

The contemporary history of the Palestinian turns on a key date: 1948. That year, a country and its people disappeared from maps and dictionaries…. ‘The Palestinian people does not exist,” said the new masters, and henceforth the Palestinians would be referred to by general, conveniently vague terms, as either ‘refugees,’ or in the case of a small minority that had managed to escape the generalized expulsion, ‘Israel Arabs.’ A long absence was beginning. (87)
What Palestinians fear the most is obliteration in Western history books and the relegation of Palestinian memory into a realm of inaccessibility. Making memory public becomes a necessity to the Palestinians to “affirm identity, [tame] trauma, and [assert] Palestinian political and moral claims to justice, redress, and the right to return” (Sa’di and Abu Lughod 3). In Palestine after al-Nakba, the collective memory and the dates that Jinan counts becomes the “shrines” of Palestinian collective memory and the lodestone of the national identity compass. Contemporary Palestinian writers, scholars and historians noticed the importance of the cultural memory and collective efforts have been made to construct an oeuvre of Palestinian cultural memory. At this point, Benedict Anderson’s *Imagined Communities* is also useful to underscore how print-capitalism becomes useful in showing how Palestinians hold these memories and come to imagine themselves as a nation by transmitting and writing down those events from a pregnant memory through national poetry, national novels, and even personal letters. Anderson argues that in the modern era, nations come into being and are able to imagine themselves as a nation through print-capitalism. He states “print-capitalism, which made it possible for rapidly growing numbers of people to think about themselves, and to relate themselves to others, in profoundly new ways” (36).

Indeed, this claim is true and applicable to Palestine, just as much as it is to other nations that Anderson mentions. Letters, words, crosswords, puzzles, poetry, and books are recurrent images and motifs throughout the novel. To Jinan, the typewriter and the white papers are her permanent companions and through them she maintains an intact partnership and the sentiments of being connected to the nation. In respect to the chronotopic archipelago model, this novel illustrates the concept excellently by showing how the characters, and by the same token, the Palestinian national experience, is broken up over temporal and geographical locations, yet,
Palestinians are unified as a nation. Said argues that what holds Palestinians together is self-representation. In the novel, the typewriter and the white papers are Jinan’s companions in her self-imposed solitary confinement in Beirut, and these letters are the threads that would tailor the nation together. She writes:

> I looked at the letters [she] was typing on the white paper and they were like a crossword puzzle. The letters multiplied in all direction under my fingers: this is the city of crossword puzzles and chessboards and apartment buildings and hamburger joints. Big squares emerged divided up into various shapes by black partitions. Thurayya in Nablus; Shahd Al-Smadi in Amman; and Amer . . . . The letters rushed here and there on the page. I felt slightly sick as the words streamed around me at speed, from right to left, from east to west” (Badr 5-6).

After al-Nakba, letters become a significant mode of communication among Palestinians in diaspora. In the absence of modern communication technology, letters were the only outlet that ordinary Palestinians had and could afford. In the Zionist’s point of view, the primitive inhabitants of Palestine were illiterate; the astonishing fact is that Palestinians were amongst the few literate Arab nations during the early twentieth century. Moreover, after al-Nakba, they were compelled to increase their writing in order to reach their relatives, friends, and to maintain bonds in diaspora. So, it is not surprising how much importance Palestinians assign to education after al-Nakba. In the absence of their farms, gardens, and orchards, Palestinians must cultivate skills to empower them not only in their struggle for liberation, but also as a mean of survival. Education was promoted not only through regular schools for the youths, but also with evening schools that were established by the United Nation Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugee in the Near East, (UNRWA) and the PLO agencies in refugee camps. Educated Palestinians volunteered to promote literacy among old and young Palestinian refugees in the refugee communities in various host countries. The current circumstances of the dispersed nation necessitates education and literacy; parents, husbands, wives, and other relatives, in addition to
the national activists, all need literacy to communicate with each other across the archipelago. So, references to evening schools, and the attendance of old women in particular, is highlighted in this novel. Women potentially attended these schools on a larger scale than men because of their need to write letters to the members of their families, and to provide kinship to those who were either exiled or imprisoned. Through these letters, channels of communication were established, and the news about the nation is disseminated, endorsed and stored.

Meanwhile, print-capitalism, as Anderson argues, not only introduces the nameless “hero of the nation” in the national oeuvre, but also constructs “the collective body of readers” that embodies the “embryonic” of the nation “imagined community” (32). During Jinan’s stay in Beirut, Jinan is a regular visitor to the mail office in Beirut, checking every day if there are any letters from the Palestinians abroad; even the officer is annoyed by her frequent visits and inquires. Jinan becomes impatient and paranoid due to the delay of letters from friends. In Beirut, she “stopped at the inquiries desk. The official’s eyes bored into me above his small thick moustache. Without waiting for my question, he said, ‘No. No letters for you’” (Badr 3).

Meanwhile, she imagines how the officer is annoyed by her inquires; she continues “Then he raised his eyebrows to confirm his negative reply and to show his surprise. ‘That stubborn girl, and no mistake,’ he would say as soon as I’d gone past him towards the big lift. ‘If I had any letters for her, I’d give them to her’” (Badr 3). This passion for letters is incomprehensible to the mail-officer. To Jinan, these letters are analogous to the blood-vessels that feed the nation and bring them together in the archipelago. Back in her apartment she got out the typewriter and began to tap the keys; the letters appeared on the white paper, proceeding rapidly from right to left, from east to west. East and west are two sides of an equation according to Amer, Salima Al-Hajja’s son. Amer had come out of prison, and I’d had no news of him. But the same was true of Shahd; it was ages since any of her stories, written in a small clear hand, had reached me; and Thurayya’s letters, sent from
the West Bank via Europe, were a long time coming. I’d expected a letter from my sister Sima at least. (Badr 3-4)

At this point of Palestinian history, Jinan’s world represents a Palestinian semi-archipelago. It mainly consists of three islands: Jordan, where Amer, Shahd and Sima dwell in Amman, the West Bank, where Thuryaa lives, and Lebanon, in which Jinan is currently living. Letters with the stories about the beloved who remain in the West Bank and their suffering under the Israeli occupation travel and reach Jinan via Europe. The cycle of narration in the Palestinian archipelago and narrative constructs, first, the traditional oral mode of narration; secondly, it inscribes letters, only to become oral again and pass from person to person, as one person would read the letter and tell its story to the rest. There is no doubt that these letters were charged with stories of Palestinian suffering, nostalgia for the past, the sorrow of their current condition, and dreams of reunion. These are the major subject matters of Palestinian letters, in addition to the news about the Fedayeen and their armed struggle. Thus, the delay of the letters does not put Jinan down or discourage her from getting back to her typewriter and writing letters.

To return to Anderson’s print-capitalism and its significance in constructing the image of the nation, Palestinians use writing to intensify the implementation of connectivity between different islands in the archipelago as it evolves. In Beirut, Jinan utilizes the advanced technology of the typewriting machine; meanwhile, in Amman, Jinan depends on her handwriting to write, and on making copies on carbon paper of nationalist leaflets that “contain a call to participate in a demonstration” for the Palestinian cause (Badr 12). This engagement in the nationalist struggle informs my discussion about Palestinian-Jordanian identity, which I will discuss later. Meanwhile, I would continue to discuss the significance of print-capitalism in bringing the Palestinians together for the cause of the nation.
Leaflets became a tool in the hands of Palestinian nationalists and were used to disseminate awareness and news about the Palestinian national struggle in the public sphere. As mentioned above, a clear-cut line between the public and private lives of the Palestinians is an unattainable objective. The rapid changes and events in the Palestinian’s landscape are thus replicated in the novel. By this, I mean that the narrative about al-Nakba’s consequences, the 1976 war, and the Palestinian refugees conditions in the Arab countries are all encapsulated in the novel. Hence, the plethora of events, places, and time are all encapsulated in the novel, as well. Moreover, as stream-of-consciousness is the sole narration technique used, this complicates the analysis of the novel and challenges its readers. Readers would find it very difficult to organize the fragmented narratives and the rapid temporal and spacial shifts in the novel unless they have the necessary background information about the Arab-Israel conflict. The protagonist Jinan is always surrounded by people in her apartment, in the streets, and in the refugee camps wherever she is, so it is hard to grasp exactly when she is in company with these characters and when she is narrating stories about them and their past. Moreover, it is difficult to assume anything about Jinan’s perception of home after she left her home in Jericho. So, for the sake of analysis, I would assume that the dorm in the college in Amman is the only place that would substitute as her “home,” and would be considered her private sphere, where she lives with her fellow students. Thus, Palestinian’s life after al-Nakba comes to depend in substitutions: refugee camps for the homeland, schoolmates for the family are few examples of their evolved reality and current societal condition. At this point, the intellectual discussions of arts and philosophy between Jinan and Shahd only take place in this dorm. Nonetheless, the company of the tapping of the typewriter was oddly regular, reverberating like a clock with a hoarse tick: many letters and a single, repeated sound; many days and a single, unbroken stretch of time, unvarying except when we put it in our pockets and held it tight in our trembling fingers afraid that it would slip down and be submerged deep in our memories. (Badr 15)
Though this room supposedly represents their private sphere, the discussions and the items in the room remove it from privacy and attach it to the public sphere and the political discussion about national liberation. Therefore, the political traffic of events and national discussions suffocated and deprived the private sphere from any intimacy or lovely sentimental feelings. In chapter five, Jinan underscores the distinction between her commitment to the political and Shahd’s romantic orientation. The division between the two friends underscores the evolving interest of Palestinian intellectual women in politics and marks a shift from the traditional orientation of educated and intellectual women in arts and philosophy. The discussion uncovers Jinan’s revolutionary orientation and interest in revolutionary philosophy; her occupation with the national struggle of her people detaches her from the romantic side of her major, English, and moves her more to focus on the theory and the narrative of national movements. She openly criticizes Shahd’s romanticism; Shahd is an English major as well, and her habit of bringing flowers to their room and leaving them “scattered... in every corner and on all the bookshelves and on the covers of our wooden beds” annoys Jinan (Badr 15). Jinan believes that neither the time nor the place are adequate for the flowers, and she is overwhelmed by her feeling of sorrow that forces her to disparage Shahd’s occupation with “trivial issues,” that of beauty and aesthetics, by saying: “You’re unashamedly romantic, Shahd” (Badr 15). It is sad how, after al-Nakba, the Palestinians who were used to nature, to perceive picking up and distributing flowers in bedrooms as a reprehensible act that is condemned by women as well as men. This attitude is the result of Jinan's displacement from her original source of beauty that was her home and garden in Jericho, so, in her eyes, there is no room for flowers in her life anymore. Moreover, the followers’ presence in the room does not match the “revolutionary” decorative items of the room; the revolutionary books, the letters on the typewriter and their content, all aim to tell the story about
destruction and displacement and how the authentic beauty of homeland is completely destroyed and extinct. Questions such as what does it mean to exist and how can one live a better life in better conditions as discussed in these revolutionary books are irrelevant to the aesthetic, to love, and to the beauty that the flowers suggest. In this context I also discuss attitudes towards love and affection in the following pages through Jinan’s narrative and representation of Amer, the Fedayeen soldier.

The books of revolutionary philosophy and national movements that Jinan prefers to romance connect Palestinian revolutionary struggles to other national movements in the world. Palestinian writers, scholars, poets and, above all, by the revolutionaries themselves have all noticed this connection. These books make the Palestinian part of the larger community of revolutionary movements in the world, and they unify Palestinians who internalize the revolutionary philosophy and pass it down through the generations. Pan-Arabism has not only been a cause of Palestinians, but has been used by the Arabs to maintain involvement in the Palestinian-Israeli conflict and loyalty to Palestinians. Additionally, Pan-Arabism has been used by the Palestinians to maintain the bond with al-Umma and its responsibility toward the Holy Islamic and Christian sites in Jerusalem, Hebron and Bethlehem, in particular, and to holy sites in Palestine in general. Additionally, the revolutionary philosophy and the ideologies of national movements have informed the Palestinian national movement; connections to the Algerians’ struggle for independence and Vietnam’s resistance to foreign powers all are emulated by Palestinian nationalists. So, the functionality of these books is not less important than the stories read in the newspapers about the wretched of the earth and making the connection between their struggle and ours. As Anderson argues, “[t]he arbitrariness of their inclusion and juxtaposition…. Shows that the linkage between them is imagined” and portrays a similar
struggle and imagined community, yet in another part of the world (33). As the events in the novel took place during the 1970s, there is no doubt that Palestinian writers and their characters had the time since al-Nakba, (twenty-two years), to familiarize themselves with other nationalist movements in the world. This achievement alone would have been the result of reading newspapers and nationalist literature that recounted the struggles of others. For example, Palestinian Fedayeen exemplified and highly regarded the Vietnamese struggle against America. Jinan, as a national activist, underscores how the Vietnam War had inspired the Palestinians fighters and national activists in standing against American imperialism. She says:

Vietnam became the day-to-day focal point of our inspiration, in the act of heroism we heard about, in the books we read, and in the rooms and corridors where we argued and studied. It was said that from its yesterday Vietnam created its tomorrow, and we with this today of ours were carving out the future. We exchanged news and books and papers about Vietnam with enthusiastic fervor. (Badr 76)

Benedict Anderson’s theories of print-capitalism and nationalism are, again, relevant to my discussion of this novel and to how Palestinians imagine themselves as a nation via books, letters, and newspapers. Jinan is an English major, thus, she is an educated activist as much as Shahr and Amer, the French graduate engineer. Speaking and reading in other languages enables these young nationalists to access and read revolutionary narratives and philosophy in foreign languages, and in turn to spread this knowledge to the Palestinian revolutionary collective in Arabic. However, Arabic, as the mother language, never loses its significance in the thoughts of Palestinian intellectuals. The significant role of the language as the main carrier of the culture, tradition, and the essence of the nation is maintained among nationalist movements in general. Speaking Arabic becomes the criteria from which a Palestinian would judge the inclusion or the exclusion of a person and his attitude towards the Palestinian cause. Jinan remembers the “bald man in our neighborhood who looked at me from his distant spot but didn’t speak. He couldn’t
speak proper Arabic, so he didn’t have a beautiful mouth, our Arabic teacher said” (Badr 7). To this point, the aesthetic value of speaking Arabic became the criterion that would be applied to evaluate the attractiveness of the person and by the same token the poetic nature of their utterances and their meaning, and their political stand. Franz Fanon among other scholars scribes that “to speak a language is to take on a world, a culture,” and in the Palestinian context only Arabic speakers were the ones who support and speak for Palestine's cause (BSWM, 38).

However, defining one’s degree of authentic Palestinian identity according to one’s ability to speak Arabic is an error that Palestinians soon recognized. Edward Said argues that the incapacity of speaking English by Palestinian officials, mainly Yasir Arafat, had hindered the dissemination and the representation of the Palestinian narrative in the West and in the international forums, contrary to the Israeli voice and narrative that was and still is omnipresent in these forums (QOP, xxvii). Speaking English became necessary to advance the Palestinian cause by communicating the narrative in the English-speaking world. Naturally, as a consequence of Palestinians living in English-speaking countries, many Palestinian children would be raised in English-primary environments. However, for some Palestinians, those who were scattered in the neighboring Arab countries, losing the Arabic language is not an issue or a threat to their political identity as an Arab and Palestinians; thus, it was easier for Palestinians to assimilate to host Arab countries because there was no difference between public and private language.

Still, the Arabic language is valuable to Palestinians above foreign languages such as: English, French, German and Hebrew, all of which were perceived as the language of the enemy. Accordingly, its speakers are assumed to be pro-Israel by Arabic-speaking audiences; thus, Arabic became the “safe” language to use in Palestinian communication. As part of this
adherence to the mother language, Palestinians became concerned about losing their dialects by adopting the dialects of Arabic-speaking host countries. Additionally, Palestinians were concerned about losing their traditional dress and habits to the culture of similar Arabic-speaking host countries. Palestinian-Jordanians were particularly resilient when it came to maintaining their traditions, and it is not a secret that sophisticated Palestinian refugees brought modernity to Jordanian society. Palestinians, due to their geographic orientation and its religious significance, were more experienced in dealing with foreign cultures than were their Jordanian neighbors. Thus, replacing the Palestinian dialect with a Jordanian Bedouin dialect was not an issue or threat that Palestinians felt; if anything, Jordanians were adopting Palestinian customs. Using the Palestinian dialect gave people within Jordan an air of sophistication. Additionally, Palestinians became a majority in Jordan's capitol, Amman; this surely had an influence on other cities and even rural regions. Contrarily, in Syria and Lebanon, speaking without a Palestinian accent is a marker of the indigenous Lebanese or Syrian; for a Palestinian to speak with such an accent connotes assimilation into that culture, which to some extent Palestinian refugee do, and one can notice the influence of Syrian and/or Lebanese dialect on the Palestinian refugees.

Palestinian refugees in Lebanon were under constant threat of losing their identities, especially as the generations proceeded. The character of Umm Mahmoud exemplifies this group; she is from the old generation who left her village during the 1948 war to settle in Lebanon; she is concerned about the change of her daughters’ attitudes, how they dress, their loyalty to the land, and their attachment to it. Umm Mahmoud’s voice yelling at her daughters reaches Jinan’s room:

You stupid girls, you try and make yourselves believe you’re really living in Beirut. I know you put your address as Beirut when you write letters. The address deceives people in any case. If I was as empty-headed as you, I could carry a handbag the same as the mukhtar’s wife and strut around like you do in the tight trousers. Don’t think I don’t
know what goes on inside your heads, you lazy creature. You kid yourselves you’re city girls. I wouldn’t be surprised if you refused to work the land if we went back home. (Badr 87-8)

Palestinian Refugees uphold different assumptions and beliefs to encounter the pressure and the threat of absorbing into Arab societies. Umm Mahmoud, though she is a simple peasant woman, is very aware of the threat of assimilation into another society and how this would weaken the sentiments of cultural consciousness and might accelerate the substituting of another identity at the expenses of their Palestinian national and personal identities. Umm Mahmoud cannot stand that her daughters might abandon their Palestinian identities in favor of another, and the idea causes her much anxiety. In the era before al-Nakba, peasants constituted the majority of Palestinian society and their manners and cultural habits were dominant. Due to the enormous change and destruction of their social system, the loss of their homes and lands and the main sources of their livelihood and pride, peasants shifted their concerns to politics in order to understand the changes in their lives. The study of politics became a daily mental exercise, whether it was accomplished by reading the newspaper or listening to the news on the radio. For all Palestinians, despite their intellectual, gender or cultural background, their shared tragedy and the development of their political consciousness united them throughout the archipelago.

Therefore, Palestinian women came to occupy positions on multiple issues in the personal and national realms. An exiled Palestinian social worker explains this trait and the development of the political consciousness of the ordinary Palestinian; she argues “Even illiterate Palestinian women are politically very conscious and speak about politics in a logical way” due to their first hand experience of al-Nakba and its impacts on their personal lives (Shaaban 171). Umm Mahmoud is an archetypal Palestinian woman; she is underscoring the ultimate bond that brings and unites the Palestinians; it is the bond between the people and the
land as the main source of income, on one hand. On the other hand, the land’s market/material value, to the Palestinian peasants, has always had significance as a measure of social status and reputation. Umm Mahmoud’s main concern is not the modernization of her daughters as much as it is a concern about how urban life might detach her daughters from knowledge of their origins, and by the same token, detach them from their land and native home; she believes that her daughters’ experiences of city life are illusory. Beirut is an illusory address through which they can pretend to be Lebanese citizens, but this is not possible for their mother, who remains faithful to Palestine. This is a testimony of the political development and awareness in regarding to the jeopardy of one’s identity through imitation and pretence.

Umm Mahmoud impresses upon her daughters that dressing in tight trousers, or carrying fashionable handbags does not make you Lebanese or endow you with self-respect and dignity; only knowing that you are Palestinian will help you gain and keep these things. The daughters must not completely adapt to their new society, but must keep remembering the fact that they are refugees and living in a refugee camp in the suburb of Beirut. According to their mother’s logic, this knowledge should motivate them to resist the temptations of this foreign society while fighting to maintain their cultural identities. Though Umm Mahmoud is concerned about the direction her daughters are going in life, her daughters’ adaptability remains a beneficial trait. These passages illustrate the differences between two generations of Palestinians and their attitudes on assimilation; to Umm Mahmoud, assimilation is a tool her daughters are not using properly. Umm Mahmoud is attempting to reinforce the role of Palestinian women as the guardians of Palestinian national memory and the physical survival of the diasporic nation itself. Umm Mahmoud’s daughters must not become too accustomed to city life, lest they give up advocating for the Palestinian right of return to her village and her land. The family's current
situation as refugees is also a stressor for the older woman who is, perhaps, exaggerating her frustration with her daughters in order to express her more general feelings. She laments the poverty and humiliation the family is experiencing in the refugee camp in contrast to the life she had in her village in Palestine, and how her land used to provide her with a prestigious status:

How can I plan their lives properly? With a piece of land you give and take. But you spend money here and get nothing back... Where are the vines, the olive trees, the apple harvest? O mother, we had such prestige and our children only know sorrow! [to Jinan] You study and understand these things—we old ones remember Palestine and remind our children of it, for who’s going to guarantee to us that they won’t forget it if we don’t return in our lifetime? I swear, this generation is rotten to the core’ (Badr 88).

In Umm Mahmoud’s speech, we notice a common motif in Palestinian literature, that of “a romanticization and beautification of the lost homeland, casting “old Palestine” into the mold of a unique paradise-on-earth and instructing the Palestinian to reflect on the sanctified image of his land,” as Faisal Daraji argues in his article “Transformation in Palestinian Literature” (n.pag). A common feature in Palestinian literature that emphasizes the eternal attachment to Palestine is a comparison of Paradise to the gardens of old Palestine. This metaphor is also in accordance with the value of the land; so, the juxtaposition of bitter and happy memories gives rise to the cynical attitudes toward the political systems in the countries where Palestinians find refuge.

Umm Mahmoud represents women and a generation that continues to inform and educate the younger generation about their homeland, and how carrying this education forward becomes a sacred mission for them. If young Palestinians suffer from ignorance, the nation as a whole may begin to suffer from amnesia, and could be at risk for disappearing altogether. Thus, Umm Mahmoud fears the decadence of the urban nations in which her daughters find themselves, and she hopes that they will be able to resist the temptations of assimilation into Lebanese society so that the family will remain Palestinian. The situations, relationships, and actions taken by characters in the story at this point represent the state that Palestine was in during the beginning
of the diaspora. Palestinian awareness and responses to the dangers they faced helped to form the newly scattered nation and unite it against further dispersion into the Arab or Western worlds. The novel shows individuals caring for collective concerns, and how the duty to behave in this manner is passed on from generation to generation, as Umm Mahmoud proves to do. For these reasons, I believe that the Palestinian identity and nationalism are not merely constructed and presented to the world by Palestinian intellectuals and scholars, but by those people who, by the shared experience of suffering and humiliation, come to ascribe significance to their image and alienated status from their host society as defining characteristics of an independent and distinct nation. Furthermore, the Palestinians who suffer for the sake of helping the nation endure make the most sacrifices on the behalf of the nation.

At this point, we must examine how Palestinian refugees continue to have problematic relationships with their new surroundings in Amman and Beirut. I previously highlighted Palestinian attachments to their villages and towns; in the novel, Palestinian efforts to maintain identity are described in greater detail. In the Shatila refugee camp, Palestinian refugees grouped themselves according to their original villages; and as if that was not enough, in the cemetery, they expanded this system of classification and identification: “On the headstones [of the graves] they wrote, ‘Here lies So-and-So from Haifa’; ‘Here lies the So-and-So, daughter of Such-and-Such from Birwa’; they brought their identities with them, deposited them on the cold marble, and slept” (Badr 87). I don’t think that any other nation has ascribed such significance to identity, even after death, as the Palestinians have done. This fixation on identity was initiated by the first generation of diasporic Palestinians, and I believe that it is upon this foundation that the preceding generations have built a greater awareness of the significance of their national identity and struggle. Likewise, incubating identity in material culture is one strategy Palestinians use to
hold on to their identities while they travel; more importantly, the evidence of Palestinian existence attests to the reality of Palestine and bears silent witness to the inaction of the international community. Moreover, Palestinians’ unshakable attachment to their small cozy houses with olive gardens and citrus orchards inform their identities while linking them to the past, anchoring them in the materiality of a living nation. However, missing family members are a stark and obvious contrast to soothing memories. Jinan remembers how all of sudden she wakes up after the 1967 war and finds herself in Amman alone with her mother and little sister. Jinan is agonized by these new surroundings and describes her tremendous loss as a teenager. By the same token, this experience can be applied to all Palestinians who fled the war, such as the teacher who used to teach them that a beautiful mouth speaks Arabic, and to Ahmad, the “son of one of the fruit growers” who used to annoy them by challenging their knowledge of and ability to “[g]uess which is the voice of the female frog and which is the male’s,” that live in their neighborhood (Badr 7). She says:

When I woke up in the morning, our life had changed in many ways. I found out that my father had been arrested, and that our beloved house with its vegetable garden and the stream where the grass sang whenever we ruffled it with our bare feet no longer belonged to us. After that, I don’t remember exactly what happened. My father was away a long time and we lived in many different houses. Gone were the loquat trees whose unripe fruit we used to steal unrepentantly, though it always gave us stomach ache. Gone was the man who sold us delicious ice cream for half a piaster and the spectre of the decaying fingernails we could expect to find in it if we were to believe our families’ warnings. What I remember very clearly is that I stopped searching in cracks in the ground for a waxy yellow flower with shiny leaves. That city we moved to after my father’s arrest was not called Jericho. (Badr 8)

Jinan summarizes the Palestinians’ tragedy and what became of their society. Happy Palestine became one of the unhappiest societies in the world today, and the most recently formed diasporic national society; the traits of Palestinians are the traits of a people who were dispersed and suffered devastating and complex historical change that violently ended communal and
village life (Sa’di and Abu Lughod 3). The events of loss, displacement, and dispossession have become general memories of the Palestinians, and so in this regard, Jinan’s experience is similar to Badr’s. Jinan, after leaving Jericho, suffers from a partial amnesia and could not describe any of the frequent houses she moved to with the remaining members of her family during their stay in Amman. In this context, one might question the reliability of Jinan’s narration. How could she remember her home in Jericho if she cannot remember the houses in Amman?

The partial amnesia Jinan experiences may be the psychological phenomenon known as denial. Perhaps Jinan and other Palestinians could not identify themselves with the new houses or cities where they lived in exile, and Umm Mahmoud, as I discussed above, is another example of someone living in denial. At the time, Palestinians in general could not imagine themselves as homeless refugees or see themselves in other houses rather than their original ones. Palestinians remained attached to their houses and faithful to their native villages and towns, the archaic door key becomes a Palestinian icon that represents the constant believe and right of return to Palestine. In the early years of their diaspora, Palestinians were under the impression that their departure and displacement were temporary and that they would soon return. Jinan, on the eve of 1967, expresses her skeptical feelings about this premise of return, but cannot explain her uneasiness, remembering:

I gathered up my longing for Jericho and burnt it without regret. I knew very well that we would never return. I’d rushed all round our hose, confused and upset, and they’d shouted at me, ‘Quickly! All you need is nightclothes. In two or three days we’ll be back…’
(Badr 32)

So, here we have a ghostly image of a generation “whose own traumas might be made to seem like mere echoes, or who want to forget… wishing to for oblivion” (Sa’di and Abu Lughod 3). Yet, Jinan, in remembering the Palestinian experience of al-Nakba, makes the obvious link with the second major disaster, the 1967 war. However, as she makes the connection between her
trauma and the exodus of her grandfather in 1948, I believe that she is unveiling her frustration and hopelessness rather than suggesting that Palestinians or her generation are relinquishing their right of return. Her feelings are a realization of the fact of her dispossession and exile from Palestine. My reading of her epiphany is that it is a warning against depending, once again, on alliances with other Arab states and the death of her faith of their capacity to help. Thus, in this context I believe that Jinan has developed a new conceptual awareness and interpretation of the event that is taking place in her life. Jinan is skeptical about the hasty promises the elders are making regarding the “journey” they are about to undertake; however, to Jinan their conjectures about the timing of the “return journey” is a myth. She learns the lesson from al-Nakba; how a temporary departure turned out to be a trick; it was intended to be a permanent departure. She highlights her frustration and distress:

I felt sickened, thinking that this story of coming back in a couple of days was a pathetic re-enactment of what we’d always heard from those who’d left in the first disaster in 1948. ‘Two or three days’ they said. ‘Until the situation improves…. They took their little doorkeys with them just as my grandfather had taken his big metal key before them, and we departed. They took nightclothes and two bars of soap and I left Kanafani’s book The Land of the Sad Orange open by chance on the table. (Badr 32)

Nevertheless, the defeats the Palestinians encountered since al-Nakba did not hinder their faith and belief in their right to return to their homes. Faith in this eventual homecoming remains the cornerstone that identifies and defines Palestinians as a nation. Indeed, the right of return is a red line in terms of negotiation – Palestinian authorities dare not cross it. Additionally, Palestinians after the 1967 war had felt disoriented and distressed; and it seems that during this period that they temporarily lost faith out of frustration and distress. al-Nakba is still fresh in their memories, and for more than twenty-two years, the crisis has not been solved, and their grievances have gone unacknowledged. Palestinians were frustrated by the international negligence and the defeat of the Arab armies in the 1967 war. Likewise, bringing Kanafani’s
work to the scene also has a symbolic meaning. Kanafani is an influential figure in Palestinian literature; he is known as a novelist, but is also regarded for his short stories that describe the Palestinian tragedy, and evolving this genre into what he called “The Poetry of Resistance,” a genre that was also polished by Mahmoud Darwish. So, Kanafani’s works to symbolize the voice of the oppressed Palestinian that was vocalized through literature in after *al-Nakba*, and gives hope to those who have none. Jinan, due to her bringing up in an activist’s and revolutionist’s household, was exposed to this literature, and had internalized it during childhood.

It is from deep frustration that Jinan and her Palestinian fellows take up arms and support the Palestinian armed struggle that had been initiated from within Jordan. The frustration and the humiliation that Palestinians experienced in the refugee camps, particularly in Lebanon, nursed their belief that they would not be recognized as people with dignity and rights unless they reclaimed their land by they same means they lost it, force, as any other nation would do. During this time, Palestinians felt desperate to prove their worth to a world that was ignoring them.

Thus, to Palestinians, national identity is foremost the main tool that “guarantees status with dignity to every member of whatever is defined as a polity or society” as Greenfel maintains (49). Thus, further inhumane treatment emboldened the Palestinians and strengthened their resolve to fight. From people with such sentiments, the grassroots organizations that formed the Fedayeen were born. So powerful was the Palestinian national sentiment during this time that the errors of the Fedayeen were naively overlooked. Palestinian youths from the refugee camps joined in large numbers and many have affiliated themselves with the Fedayeen since that time. Hence, there is no doubt that injustice and the inequitable treatments of Palestinians had fertilized the Palestinian awareness of the significance of the national struggle.
The Fedayeen represented dignity to all Palestinian refugees because they assumed the position of being the authority that would defend the refugees and fight for their return. These Fedayeen took their fight to the social and political levels, too: providing a voice and satisfying needs for Palestinians. Thus, the Fedayeen earned the admiration and enduring support of their people. In the novel’s representation of the Fedayeen, they are the guardians of the Palestinian’s dignity and social rights in refugee camps in Jordan, Lebanon and Syria. This is from the mouth of Umm Mahmoud who has suffered with other refugees from the degradation and the brutal treatment of the Lebanese authorities. Regarding the time before the Fedayeen had come to Lebanon, she says to Jinan:

Daughter, before these Fedayeen existed we were forbidden to knock a nail into the wall. Five years ago Salem Al-Taraash’s daughter threw some water out over her doorstep and the police fined her twenty-five pounds for breaking the law. My house was flooded when it rained heavily one winter and Abu Mahmoud kept quiet; he couldn’t as much as knock a nail in on the roof to patch up the wooden boards without a permit from them. Daughter, I’m the first to rush off on a demonstration singing at the coming of the Fedayeen. (Badr 88)

So, the Fedayeen became the leadership that had been absent in Palestinians' lives, and people were eager to unite with them. The Fedayeen and their actions demonstrated that Palestine is a nation and willing to defend and organize itself against threats to its existence. Joining the fedayeen could restore one's dignity, pride, and steadfastness of the nation, even if one still lived in a refugee camp; the Fedayeen showed the Palestinians that to lead one another, they must back up one another.

Meanwhile, Jinan, in Amman, reminisces about the past in conversations with Umm Mahmoud. She laments those days of community support and sentiments saying:

O Umm Mahmoud, you always take refuge with me just as I take refuge in your abundant motherliness when I’m shattered by exile and loneliness, but it’s impossible to convince you that the afternoon is the one time in the day that you can relax; you come to the adult literacy classes in the Women’s Center with a bowl of rice to pick over or maloukhiyya
leaves to shred for soup. I wish you’d come and see me now. When will I hear the ring of
your voice and feel my pain and misgivings being pulled away from me, just as a wave
rolling up the beach is divested of its scum and seaweed? (Badr 89)

Using different lenses might be helpful in analyzing Jinan’s monologue; Sushelia Nasta, in her
introduction to her edited book *Motherlands: Black Women’s Writing from Africa, the
Caribbean and South Asia* argues that “[t]he idea of motherlands, mothercultures,
mothertongues” is significant to postcolonial literature (xix). Moreover, “the relation between
mothers and daughters, mothers mirroring and affirming identity or notions of birth of female
identity through transference to text and symbol, is also particularly important within post-
colonial context” (Nasta xix). Nasta might underscore the affirmation of women’s identities in
post-colonial literature, after liberating the actual homeland from the colonial in comparison to
the attachment to colonizer’s “motherland” during the colonization; however, in my study,
Palestinian women are still as their nation is struggling with the colonial power, and they find
themselves compelled to put their personal struggle on hold until the national struggle with the
colonizer ends. So, during the national struggle, Palestinian women’s attempts to affirm their
identities are in the shadows and contribute to the affirmation of the national identity. We see in
the novel, that a woman’s struggle is not truly highlighted. Palestinian women are mostly
troubled with the national struggle. They preserve and maintain the integrity of their own
traditional roles as mothers of soldiers, not as objects within a patriarchal system. Nasta argues
that “female figures were represented as powerful symbolic forces, repositories of culture and
creativity, they were essentially silent, and silenced by the structures surrounding them” (xiv).
However, in the novel the female characters are Palestinian women in real life; they are
portrayed as stronger and outspoken women. Their creativity in manipulating their surroundings
is astonishing. Umm Mahmoud and Salima Al-Hajja are examples of old women who are in
charge of their families and local community in the refugee camps. Thus, this empowerment has not been accomplished by or provided by the Palestinian society as much as the circumstances and the Palestinian status quo - that of occupation and exile - have impacted their lives and forced them to be more vocal, having a presence in the public sphere and in the national struggle.

Ironically, there can be no doubt that the hardships of al-Nakba resulted in the empowerment of Palestinian women both in the West Bank and in the exile. The constant threats of displacement, imprisonment and exile are behind this empowerment. Palestinian women learned the lesson in the harshest way; since al-Nakba, Palestinian life became vulnerable to being shattered apart at any time not only by the destruction of belongings and displacement, but also by the killing, imprisonment, and exile of the male members of the their household. As Badr puts it: “that any apparent stability for Palestinians is a mirage which vanishes as soon as you get close to it” (Shaaban 154). By necessity, Palestinian women are compelled to step out to become the breadwinners for their families. The nature of Palestinian women’s lives explains the nature of Jinan’s friendship with Umm Mahmoud, as well. Jinan is motherless; her mother died when she was young, a few years after their exile from Jericho, so the first bond that brings Jinan and Umm Mahmoud together is the latter’s unlimited motherly capacity and sympathy. Umm Mahmoud is a surrogate parent to the orphan Jinan, and this relationship is not unique; Palestinian women throughout the diaspora stepped into the roles of missing, exiled, or slain family members to preserve the social bonds of Palestinian society. At this point, it is significant to highlights the role of Palestinian women in spreading ideals of motherhood throughout a society of parentless children; Palestinian women advanced the notion of caring for all Palestinian children, and this is the behavior Umm Mahmoud is practicing with Jinan. The presence of Umm Mahmoud and Salima al-Hajja in Jinan’s life fills the vacant places of her
biological mother or the places left by other missing relatives. Jinan highlights her motherless
states in two ways: the first is in the literal sense, the fact that she is motherless and lost her
mother so long ago. Jinan’s other definition is an analogy to her political motherlessness, and her
loneliness in the exile from the motherland; the company of Umm Mahmoud quenches Jinan’s
thirst and fulfills all of her need to experience both types of motherhood. In the company of
Umm Mahmoud, Jinan is able to experience the love and the protection of the mother and virtual
closeness to the motherland, as well. Umm Mahmoud remains faithful to and preserves the
traditions of the people in the homeland. In her attendance to the adult literacy class, which Jinan
underscores as the only platform that Umm Mahmoud would have time to relax, she preserves
the domestic manner of the past when they used to gather in the afternoon, having their dinner
and sharing their dishes with neighbors and relatives.

The structure of the novel itself informs my analysis, and for this reason I might have
abrupt shifts in the topics I discuss; however, Jinan’s stream-of-consciousness style of narration
also contributes to the sudden shifts in the discussion, and as much as her voice leads the
narration, it also has some influence over the order in which my analysis must proceed. As I
stated above, while introducing the presence of the Fedayeen and what they came to symbolize
for Palestinians, I have digressed for a while to discuss women’s involvement in shaping the
image of the nation and how they preserve the essence of the nation. However, I must return
again to the Fedayeen. During the time of the novel, the Fedayeen are considered to be the
legitimate representatives of the Palestinians. Umm Mahmoud suggests their presence in
Lebanon brings protection and empowerment to the people; it is as if she is saying, finally,
Palestinians have someone who would die to defend and fight for their dignity and humanity.
Enrollment in the Fedayeen, of course was a sign of patriotic intent and pride in Palestinian
identity; thus, women stoically accepted the heroic deaths of their fathers, husbands, brothers and sons, whether they died as martyrs fighting Israelis or the other Arab powers. Palestinians have never declined their support or challenged the recruitment of Palestinian youths in the Fedayeen, or in any of the Palestinian national armed factions.

Thus, during this time and in this particular island in the archipelago, association with the Fedayeen informs the nature of the relationship between Palestinians and Jordanians. The nature of the conflict between the two communities was informed by the differences in the political and ideological dispositions towards the management of the Arab-Israeli conflict. Therefore, conflicts took place not only in the Palestinian-Jordanian context, but also on the larger Arab scale. Since the annexation in 1950, the Jordanian regime claimed the responsibility of maintaining Holy religious sites in Jerusalem, and the right to represent Palestinians living in Jordan and on the West Bank. Different stances were taken toward this claim, yet, the dominant stance was against this assumed authority. Palestinians were intimidated by the idea that the Jordanian hegemony would destroy any attempt to construct an independent Palestinian political identity. Consequently, the establishment of the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO), and the recognition of it as the sole legitimate authority and representative of Palestinian people empowered the Fedayeen who were mainly stationed in Jordan and were troubled by the Jordanian regime’s actions.

After the recognition of the PLO, the Fedayeen exaggerated claims about their power, proclaiming they could fight the Israeli army from any bordering Arab country, with Jordan being the foremost of that group. The Fedayeen made grave errors by underestimating the interest their neighbors had in any conflict with Israel, however, and so there was no coordination between the Fedayeen and the Jordanian government. Edward Said and Rashid
Khalidi underscore this deadly mistake and argue that the liberty and independence in managing the Palestinian-Israeli conflict could not be tolerated by the Jordanian government or by any other Arab regime, the Lebanese later on, and thus was perceived as establishing “a state within a state” (Khalidi 10). Few governments, indeed, could be comfortable hosting a diasporic nation that had organized a government and army separate from that of the host nation. The experience with the Fedayeen's mistakes convinced many Palestinians that no other nation was willing to allow them the space or resources needed to organize their own military struggle against Israel. Anyone who hosted them would have to pay a price for doing so. In 1970, in Jordan, there were bloody wars between the Fedayeen and the Jordanian army. Black September is characterized primarily by the tragic clashes between neighbors that resulted in paranoid over-reactions: the collective punishment of innocent elders, children, and women. The violence peaked in Lebanon, where the Israeli and Phalangist militias committed massacres in the Sabra and Shatila refugee camps. In both wars, the Fedayeen fell due to the treachery of their former friends who would not stand with them against the Israelis.

In the novel, Jinan’s involvement in the Palestinian revolution developed during her study at the college in Amman, and I assume that it is an UNARWA college, where only Palestinian students were enrolled and Palestinian teachers were recruited to teach in these schools and colleges. I have already discussed in the introduction to this chapter that Palestinian students in host countries imitate Fatah and establish their own Palestinian nationalist parties; moreover, they take on their shoulders the responsibility of representing their people in academia and in the public life. Involvement in social services in the refugee camps not only brings students triumph and ties them with their people, but social work also facilitates the formation of the collective national consciousness and strengthens the Palestinian national narrative. College
and education brings Jinan and her fellow students to the revolution in the same way as Amer’s education in France brings him in contact with other Palestinians and Arab students for the cause of Palestine. Amer’s involvement in the revolution was during his exile in France, where he learns how to take advantage of Western education and freedom, though it does not apply to the foreigners, and particularly, the Palestinian. He had once informed Jinan about the mass meeting and speeches he addressed in France, even though, the French “police had picked him up on numerous occasions” (Badr 21). Since the immunity of the Jewish and the state of Israel from any criticism is highly protected in the West, attempts to articulate the Palestinian view are silenced. The Late National Poet Mahmoud Darwish once addressed his Jewish interviewer in Paris:

Do you know why we Palestinians are Famous? Because you are (the Israelis) our enemy. The interest in us stems from the interest in the Jewish issue. The interest is in you, not in us. So we have the misfortune of having Israel as an enemy… because it enjoys unlimited support… and we have the good fortune of having Israel as our enemy because the Jews are the center of attention… you brought us defeat and renown. (Notre Musique)

Darwish’s statement highlights the paradox in the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, and how unlimited Western support for Israel marginalizes and simultaneously introduces the Palestinian to the world. In order to defend the Jewish and their right of existence, it is necessary to demonstrate a threat to them. It is, again, Said’s concept of the importance of the “other” in defining the self.

As much as the West needs the East to define itself, the Israelis need the Palestinians to define themselves, and it is again what the “other” is I am, (Israel/West), Palestinians are not. Amer, as well as many other Palestinian and Arab patriots, challenges French discrimination and prejudice from within, but at the time their interest was not in the Palestinians, and the Zionist narrative was the only voice that the West was ready to hear and to comprehend. The Palestinian narrative was neglected for a long time in the West. In Paris, Amer, in an individual attempt at pushing the
Palestinian message through, manipulates the French political and culture prejudices in different ways: first in his limited speech and public meeting, the French police and imprisonment could not in any way intimidate him or block him from speaking on the street about the great injustice that has been done to his nation. On the other side, Amer also plays on the orientalist tune regarding his romance. He passed to Jinan many photos of French girls who “are all faithful to me, but I’m not faithful to a single one of them. When I come back for good I’ll marry a girl who knows how to make sage tea and cook chicken in the oven with olive oil and onions” (Badr 21). I am reading in Amer’s romantic relationships with French girls as tools to avenge the unjust treatment that their country exercises against him and his people. Women are always instrumentalized in war and in peace and are used by the prevalent patriarchal systems; Amer’s approach to romance is an acquiescence to this system, but it is also a hostile inversion of the system's intended results.

Before proceeding further in this discussion, I would like to discuss how Amer, as an archetypal Fedayeen, is portrayed in this novel. Amer is young, educated, strong, proud, and above all faithful but to his people and cause. His exile in Paris was productive, and though he was involved in the revolution, this did not prevent him from another important goal, the pursuit of education. Amer graduated with a degree in engineering. Within Palestinian society, education is highly regarded because it is the role of the educated Palestinians to build a modern nation-state after liberation, a significant goal that Amer and many other young Palestinians have in common. Palestinian students rarely enjoyed the security of other students in the matters of financial support and sponsorship; most of the families were compelled to borrow money and some to even sell the few possessions they have remaining to them to finance their children’s education. However, Palestinian students’ distinction qualifies them for scholarships. Since the
early years of their diaspora, Palestinians have had the reputation of having the highest percent of educated people in relation to population number among the Arab nations. Most of the modern Gulf States have been built on the Palestinian’s shoulders and by their efforts. Nonetheless, the Fedayeen enjoy the reputation of being stubborn and highly determined fighters and men. It is ironic how much their images are manipulated in the media and literature. Though they have been behind the development of the Palestinians’ reputation as terrorists, and the hijacking\textsuperscript{16} of the airplane that is represented in this novel, other physically attractive characteristics are present. For example, they are portrayed to have a well-built body, be dark skinned, and these features give them an attractive physical, masculine image that many of them have used to their advantage in the West. Amer would happily play on the tune of the exotic oriental man in his relations with French women and would believe that this would satisfy his resentment toward their country and government. Amer’s anger and resentment towards the West is multiplied by the history of British mandate according to the Sykes-Picot agreement, and after that, by the British commitment to the Zionists and their promise to give them Palestine to establish their state. Amer does not distinguish between the British or the French; to him they are all colonizers and are behind his nation’s dilemma. This brings to my mind the character Mustafa Sa’eed in the Sudanese novelist Tayab Salih’s a \textit{Season of Migration to North}, and how Amer resembles Mustafa, who has also manipulated British society and women as an attempt to revenge the oppression and the exploitation of his land and people during the British colonization. During the time Mustafa spent in England for his education, he led a very violent, resentful life and maintained complex relationship to English society. Amer’s perception of and anger toward the West and France in particular conforms to Sa’eed’s. Both men have a deep resentment and indignant ill-will toward the West due to the supremacy they assumed over the indigenous in
both countries. Therefore, when Jinan asks what would come of these girls if he got married? He emphasizes his indifference regarding their feeling and answers: “That is their problem. Who asked them to get mixed up with a dark, sentimental young man from the East? The resemblance to Omar Sharif? I doubt it. More likely the magic of the revolution from the non-materialistic Orient, and the camel caravans and the oil wells!” (Badr 21). Now, here we are back at square one with Said’s *Orientalism*.

Amer is a Western-educated and nationalist revolutionary, and there is no doubt that he knows how the East is represented in the Western repertoire; so, Amer plays to these images deliberately, not out of ignorance or backwardness, but to “play the game” of the West, and to take advantage of their ignorance by assuming a position that will allow him to mix with and succeed in French society while expressing certain statements about his national case; as Said wrote, “The Orient was almost a European invention, and had been since antiquity a place of romance, exotic beings, haunting memories and landscapes, remarkable experiences” (*Orientalism*, 1). Though this image is not authentic, Westerners still enjoy the romance of living the stories they have read about and imagine how Eastern people embody mysterious qualities, so Amer has no problem in manipulating this society and gaining the advancements that conforming to this Oriental image might deliver. However, Amer’s engagement in the demonstration and violence could be read as a justification of Palestinian suffering, yet this challenge is an attempt to voice the Palestinian’s counter-story to Western audience on a smaller scale. On the other side of the spectrum, Amer’s actions could also reinforce the traditional traits of the Oriental man as irrational, compulsive, and with great tendencies to violence and lust. So, in the both ends of the spectrum, neither the Orient nor its people have ever been adequately represented in the West; moreover, the contemporary attempts to correct these images have
always been overshadowed and influenced by Western hostility to Islam and to the political, social and religious disparities of the two poles: the “East was only a career for Westerners. There were—and are—cultures and nations whose location is in the East and their lives, histories, and customs have a brute reality obviously greater than anything that would be said about them in the West,” and the Palestinians genuinely embody the result of this negligence (Said 5). Moreover, Amer references the Egyptian icon star Omar Sharif who is known in the West via his famous film *Lawrence of Arabia*. Sharif’s complexions and role in this film embody and reinforce the Orientalist’s exotic representation of the Oriental man with his olive-dark skin, attractiveness and even his lust, and implicitly highlights the influence of the media in manipulating its Western viewers on one side, and in representing and maintaining the enforcement of certain stereotypes and images of the Orient.

Nevertheless, Amer’s portrait as a careless young man and his materialistic indulgence do not damage his image as a Fedayeen or deviate him from his essential mission - that of representing the nation’s struggle and oppression by any means possible. Jüzîf Zaydân argues that a common feature in national literature and mainly that of the Palestinian novel is the idealistic representation of the fighters, i.e. Fedayeen “are portrayed as progressive and idealistic people, able to transcend their egoism for the sake of national cause” (175-6). Amer and Shaher are good examples of Palestinian fighters who embody these characteristics. Amer’s romantic affair with Jinan is informed by and part of his larger love to his country; he emphasizes that no matter how much French women love and are faithful to him, at the end of the revolution, he is going to marry a Palestinian woman who knows how to prepare Palestinian tea and cuisine. In Amman, Jinan learned from the newspapers that Amer is the commander in-charge of the airplane hijacking. Jinan says:
As the headlines of the daily paper caught my eye I thought, Newspapers aren’t weighed down by sorrows, or moved by joys. For them, like for poor Napoleon, there’s nothing new under the sun. What I saw next I found hard to believe: Amer in the doorway of a hijacked and of the hijackers’ demands and the conditions set for the release of the hostages, a repetition of accounts of other hijack operations. But this time it was Amer. He’d shaved off the beard which he’d come back from France with after graduation. He had a degree in engineering and he’d thrown himself into his work until he was interned for taking part in the September fighting. (Badr 10)

Hence, Anderson’s premise of the role of print-capitalism is not only useful in analyzing how the Palestinians come to imagine themselves as a nation in this archipelago, but also how newspapers play a crucial role in fastening the dispersed nation together in the Palestinian archipelago by informing them about revolutionary Palestinian actions. Yet, though the newspapers as the main transmitters of news about the nation, they remain immune from the devastating impact of this news in contrast to the people who are more prone to empathy, or enraged by such news. I believe that Jinan suggests the people and the place where the newspapers are issued. In this case, she means the Jordanian regime and the international community and their aggressive attitude toward the operation. The differences between the Palestinian’s and the Jordanian’s approaches are highlighted by the assertive feelings and judgments that each community would express toward the operation, and, by the same token, the Fedayeen themselves. Palestinians would interpret this operation as a reaction to the unlimited atrocities that they have been going through since their exile and displacement from their land. From a Jordanian perspective, this operation is a threat that would destabilize the authority and the sovereignty of the Hashemite regime. It is worth mentioning that the issue of sovereignty is the most crucial concern that determines the nature of the relationship between the Jordanian and the Palestinian Fedayeen. Furthermore, the Palestinians believe that they were pushed to extreme ends because no one heard or recognized their grievances, and that extreme means are necessary to reach extreme ends. As the novel portrays it, the relationship between the Jordanian and the
Palestinian is informed by this political and power struggle. In these early years after the defeat in the 1967 war and the second influx of the Palestinians to Jordan, the divergence between the two communities had broadened; fights and interrogations were the only two means of bringing them together.

The refugee camps in Jabal al-Hussein, Jabal Al-Nuzha or Baqa were the main sites of fights and aggression, while in the police and intelligence headquarters, the punitive interrogation and imprisonment were the main destiny of those who were lucky enough to stay alive. Jinan remembers her encounter with the Jordanian interrogator who “shouted in a melodramatic tone of voice, ‘Who was behind this demonstration? Own up, or you’ll find out what I can do to you’” (Badr 12). In addition to the participation in the revolution, Palestinian women also have learned how to cover for and support their men who encounter legal difficulties. Out of patriotism, Jinan and Shahd would accept their imprisonment and punishment rather than revealing the names of their fellows to the intelligence officers. So there is no doubt that suffering as Renan emphasizes informs and brings the nation together. It is this “natural” participation in the experience of sorrows and injustice in additional to exile, imprisonment and humiliation that create this solidarity in Palestinian society in diaspora, and become the natural resources that would fertilized the Palestinian national conscience in the individual and collective levels.

However, though the novel to some extent portrays the women involvement in the national struggle as a natural act, or could be read as a simple natural participation due to their actual circumstances of living in the refugee camps that is a fertile soil for Fedayeen to function and to recruit their members, their participation in revolutionary activities faces much social and familial resistance. Both Jinan and her friend Shahd had experience with imprisonment while
they were students, and this antagonistic relationship with the Jordanian intelligence officials has devastating consequences on their relationships with their families, and even with society itself. Shahd has lost her job as a teacher in a public school, and almost lost any chance to get another job in any other public school or office, and this would be the ultimate destiny for any Palestinian who participates or supports the Fedayeen. Furthermore, both women were under constant pressure from the society and their families. At this time of history, the participation of the young women in the national struggle was not totally understood and comprehended by every Palestinian. There was always a question about their agency, liberty, and even their ethics and code of behavior, though Jinan was immune from this pressure to some extent since she was an orphan. She was not burdening herself with the family’s challenges and managed to ignore the struggle with the society regarding her liberty and participation in the national movement. Shahd on the other side does not, ironically, enjoy this privilege. Shahd was expelled from her work as a teacher for political reasons. The principal handed her a letter saying: “‘This letter’s for you.’ It was to tell her that she’d been dismissed and was signed by one of the intelligence officers who’d been following her around wherever she went since September” (Badr 16). Thus, Shahd’s engagement in the national movement, though it was in its minimal level, that of distributing leaflets and participation in the demonstration, was not tolerated either by the regime, or by her uncle, who was in charge of her while she was in Amman. Her uncle “said with a spiteful laugh, ‘So long as you refuse to behave any better, I’ll be waiting just as eagerly as you to see what becomes of you’” (Badr 16). The uncle speaks gloatingly about her punishment, as if he is satisfied with what her life turns to, because of her stubbornness and challenge to his authority over her. He believes that this might teach her a lesson and bring her back to common sense
which he seems to believe means disengagement from the national movement, and concentrating on her career as a teacher and finding a husband.

The uncle is an archetype that represents the powerful presence of the patriarchal system even during wars and conflicts. Men could not close their eyes and ignore the challenges women presented to their positions of authority when the women are fighting and supporting this patriarchal system in its national fight with the colonizer. Though I believe that in the Palestinian case, men who are engaged in revolutionary activity are more tolerant of women’s participation, they still will not relinquish their traditional perspectives about women’s traditional roles in the society. They would likely be more accepting if they believed that the rise of Palestinian women in revolutionary activity is a temporary phase of intense activity. In Algeria and other decolonized countries, women suffered setbacks after nationhood because the patriarchal structure wished to again confine them to the spaces they had occupied prior to the revolution. For example, Amer openly reveals that he would not marry a Western woman, and that when things settled down he would marry to a traditional Palestinian woman who knows who to make tea with sage and traditional dishes; this is placing women back in their traditional gender roles, yet another dilemma Palestinian women have to face upon the achievement of their nation-state.

The uncle, besides his significance to an analysis of patriarchal practices, serves as a character who represents a semi-assimilated group of Palestinians in Jordanian society, one with a strong tendency to embrace the Jordanian identity and Jordanian narrative. Laurie A. Brand puts the Palestinian population in Jordan into four categories according to how they perceive and respond to their Jordanian citizenship both by dwelling in Jordan and by possessing Jordanian passports. According to Brand, the most problematic group is the Palestinians who live in the refugee camps; “the sense of Palestinianness is stronger” in the Palestinian refugees of 1948 or
1967; actually, they define their Palestinian identity “in opposition or hostility to a Jordanian identity,” meanwhile, we cannot ignore the sense of harmony and familiarity with the country and its people that had developed throughout the long years of Palestinian residence in Jordan (Brand 49). Yes; this makes Jordan “home,” but it is still not the “homeland” (Brand 49). This group remains strongly attached to the right of return and its glorious past in Palestine; in addition, this group constitutes the major source from which Fedayeen are recruited and ultimately supported. Meanwhile, the Palestinian refugees in these camps are very progressive and independent from any loyalties or submissions to Jordan’s sovereignty. In her first visit to the Baq’a camps, Jinan was taken by surprise by the Fedayeen and their lifestyle over there. To her:

There were real fedayeen who drank coffee full of grounds and sat up all night with no complaints about the cramped ugliness of their cafeteria, unlike our fellow students in the college. Their office was a small hut with a corrugated iron roof and, stuck to its bullet-riddle walls, photographs of young men who’d died as martyrs. Real Fedayeen who would become martyrs, who didn’t expostulate angrily for hours over the poor quality of the cooked dishes and the salads in the restaurant. (Badr 20)

There is no doubt that the difference in the quality of life between the Palestinian residing in the refugee camps and those in the urban areas informs their consciousness of their Palestinianness and of their existences as well. Refugee camps in Jordan, Syria, and Lebanon are another version of ghettos, to put it in a modern way that might suggest their ugliness and inhumane living conditions. These young Fedayeen who live in there are not ignorant of their reality as are Umm Mahmoud’s daughters in Beirut, nor have they become used to this reality as the reading of the quote might suggest; their detachment and negligence to this place come from their belief that this place would not become permanent home – they are only here to fight. The Fedayeen’s worries are directed toward finding some means of accelerating departure from these camps and the return to Palestine. Who would invest in a place that does not belong to him, especially when
he has the intention to leave as soon as possible? The compasses that the refugees have, and by this I mean the keys of their houses, are directed to Palestine, and so they think no one should improve upon or invest in these camps because establishing a permanent residence equals submission to losing their homes. The ugly conditions of the camps symbolize the future that awaits the refugees if they resign to their refugee status. These camps should remain in their current condition, so, by the same token, they should remain the force from which the Fedayeen and Palestinian refugee derive the power to carry on their national struggle. So, neither the Fedayeen nor the refugees, particularly the older generation, have deluded themselves by accepting the fake reality of urban life, like Jinan’s fellow students in Amman and Umm Mahmoud’s daughters in Beirut who live the illusion of having Amman or Beirut as names in their addresses. To this group of Palestinians, their Palestinian identity remains painfully intact, and Jordan or Lebanon are merely magnificent replicas of the ghettos and refugee camps because they are equivalent in terms of departure from normal Palestinian life. To them, any attempt to embrace the Jordanian identity would only give them the sense of a pseudo-political identity, not the dignity of Palestinian sovereignty.

The second group, according to Brand, consists of “the Palestinian middle class of small merchants and lower-level government employees” (49). This group comes up second regarding their sense of Palestinianness because their “hostility to Jordanian identity is less pronounced” (Brand 49). They have spent long years in Jordan and have integrated themselves into the economic and the social systems of the country; they have accomplished social and economic achievements, and have no will to relinquish these luxuries. It is correct to question the ambiguity of their role in the Palestinian national movement. Though these Palestinians might have supported the national movement, they tend to moderate their ideology and synthesize it
with the policies and goals of the Jordanian regime; this brings them close to embracing the Jordanian identity, but they are more on the side of compromising between the two identities in order to protect Palestinian economic achievements, since any conflict and instability would endanger their accomplishments. I think this stand is believable and natural, in any multicultural society, a subdivision must evolve with certain and new interests that need to be protected, and economic interest and social class would be at the top. However, in order to protect these interests, there is a necessity for a reconciliation between the society, cultures, and individual identities. This group will oppose any kind of physical conflict and support the Jordanian establishment and the development of relationships that emerge from mutual or combined economic, political, social and ideological interests. The uncle in the novel, due to his political stances, is likely a member of this group of Palestinian-Jordanians, or as they might call themselves, Jordanian-Palestinians.

At this point, I find Homi Bhabha's argument in *Nation and Narration* useful to my analysis. Immigration and travel have fragmented national identity and caused a tension between the theoretical nation that is constructed by national movements, and everyday actions and necessity. Bhabha argues that the nation comes into being, i.e. is constructed, and this fact underscores knowledge as unstable. Moreover, capitalism has been developed unevenly, making nation codified with both progression and regression—rationality and irrationality. In the same line with Franz Fanon, Bhabha moves, in *Nation and Narration* to affirm… Fanon’s revolutionary credo: ‘National consciousness, which is not nationalism, is the only things that will give us an international dimension.’ It is this international dimension both within the margins of the nation-space and in the boundaries in-between nations and peoples… a chiasmatic ‘figure’ of cultural difference whereby the anti-nationalist, ambivalent nation-space becomes the crossroads to a new transnational culture. (4)
Therefore, there is no island in the Palestinian archipelago that represents this dilemma of in-betweenness better than the Palestinian-Jordanian. As I argued in this chapter, the political and social hostility underlines the relationship between the Jordanian regime and the Palestinian Fedayeen on the further end of the spectrum. However, in between these two points, we still have people within the two communities who would have a third perspective, or in Bhabha’s words, views which occupy a liminal space in which their attitude towards their existence and future in the country is ambivalent. I believe that this group, recognized by their ambivalence, were more rational and realistic in their political beliefs and actions, unlike the ambitious, impetuous, Fedayeen and the Jordanian government, and it is in this identity that I can see the destructive dimension of nationalism. At this point of Palestinian history, this segment of society is rethinking past strategies, or as Bhabha describes it, they are at the crossroads from which a new transnational culture will evolve. Black September proves to both nations that in the Palestinian and Jordanian equations, the ‘other’ is never outside or beyond this emerging transnational society. Thus, defining and identifying the relationship between them would be difficult to encapsulate due to the different battles that are taking place at the same time in the national and international contexts.

For the Palestinians who remained in Jordan after Black September, their sense of identity remained ambiguous for a long time. No doubt; Bhabha’s utilization of the figure of the “Janus-Faced” Roman god (a doorway figure, who can see into the past with one side of the face and into the future with the other) accurately describes how Palestinian-Jordanians think of their national identity (3). Their case is similar to the construction of the Janus-faced discourse of the nation and how this “turns the familiar two-faced god into a figure of prodigious doubling that investigates the nation-space in the process or the articulation of elements: where meanings may
be partial because they are in medias res; and history may be half-made because it is in the process of being made; and the image of cultural authority may be ambivalent because it is caught, uncertainly, in the act of ‘composing’ its powerful image. (Bhabha 4). Indeed, the following years since Black September have proved that the Palestinian-Jordanian identity has been under construction as long as the Palestinian struggle itself. As I stated above, two major perspectives dominated Palestinian political and social consciousness, and both have remained viable after al-Nakba, through the 1967 war and through Black September.

However, as the following years were pregnant with more tragedies for the Palestinians, the process of articulating their narrative about their nation continues - the Sabra and Shatila massacres have yet to be discussed in detail; however, the scope of this dissertation cannot include that discussion at this point. Other identity-shaping tragedies include the Jordanian disengagement from the West Bank in July 1988, the first and second Intifada, the Gulf war, the 1990s Peace process, and the Oslo Accord and this later important event would be discussed in the next chapter. All these events continue to influence the direction that Palestinian nationalism takes. Back to Brand and the third group of Palestinian-Jordanians that emerged after the 1970-1971 war (Black September). He argues that this group is constituted of the upper middle class Palestinians; i.e. the Palestinian bourgeoisie, and as common among bourgeoisies class in the world, this group is defined by its affiliation to capitalism rather than to nationalism. In an unequivocal agreement with the Jordanian government, this group traded its loyalty and support of the Fedayeen to the Jordanian regime for “a stable atmosphere conductive to making money” (Brand 49). This group constitutes a major pillar in the Jordanian economy and has expressed no dilemma in identifying themselves as Jordanian by interest and Palestinian by origin. Most of them are well-established businessmen and highly educated. They willingly assimilate
themselves and are absorbed by the Jordanian political interest and agenda. They are unique in that they engage with and are even appointed to prestigious offices such as the Jordanian government's cabinet, ministries, and embassies, and even in the royal palace.

The last group of Palestinian-Jordanian is the group which uses Jordan and Jordanian passports as a bridge to cross to the Gulf States and to gain access to other countries. This group merely perceives its Jordanian citizenship as “a convenience, not as a basis of identity or belonging,” (Brand 49). A large portion of this group have permanent residences in the West Bank and usually make short trips to Jordan to visit West Bank relatives for the holidays, or to visit while on their way back to their jobs in the Gulf. It is worth mentioning that Israel's internal ministry prohibits Palestinians with permanent residency in the West Bank from using its airports, thus, these Palestinians are compelled to use the Israeli and Jordanian land bridges and face diverse types of humiliation on the Israeli borders, where they are always suspected of terrorism or other crimes and have to go through personal inspection, suffer delays, and endure interrogation for several hours with no justifiable or legal reasons, or even probable cause for suspicion. These two groups were not represented in the novel, due to the fact that the novel was written before the full articulation and development of these groups both in Jordan and the West Bank.

Before concluding this chapter, it is necessary to highlight the international perspective regarding the Palestinian image and reputation during this period of history. As I have already argued, the West had been deaf toward Palestinian’s misfortune and their narrative for a long time. During the period that this novel is covering from 1967-1971, hideous violence had been visited upon the Fedayeen, but they had also been violent. Black September and the fight with the Jordanian army caused a tremendous number of causalities to the Palestinian civilians and the
fighters. Destruction and imprisonment characterized Palestinian-Jordanian life at this time, thus, exiting this period in history, the final agreement between the Palestinians and Jordanians took place. The Fedayeen were expelled, moving to Lebanon, where another tragedy involving the Palestinian patriots began to form its roots. Additionally, the hijacking of two planes by Fedayeen served to characterize Palestinians as terrorists, a problem that continues at the time of this writing.

Amer, the fictional commander of the hijacking operation, has always emphasized the binary opposition between the West and the East. He lived and experienced the repression and the inequity of Jordanian society on an individual and collective level. In France, he was always the Oriental man who either symbolizes exotic East or a terrorist, who always is enraged and compelled to irrational action. To some extent, Amer plays the two roles in France, either in his love affairs with French women, or through his political activism and participation in the “May uprising in Paris,” when he and many other Arab and Palestinian students joined together and “smashed up cars and metro stations and broke bottles of bad wine…” (Badr 22). However, this does not harm the reputation of the Palestinians in the West as did the hijacking of the aircrafts by the Fedayeen in Jordan. Amer’s individual actions sometimes only have individual repercussions. Still, Amer always highlights the antagonistic relationship between the West and the East, between those who perceive themselves as the civilized nations and the “other” uncivilized ones, particularly the Arabs and the Palestinians. He condemns how “Civilisation’s a whore between the thighs of history, and she switches around from nation to nation, and continent to continent. Why the hell did the Arabs emerge from their encounter with civilization without so much as a camel?” (Badr 39).
Again, the topic turns to Said’s *Orientalism* and the degraded status of the Arabs in Western consciousness and by the same token the Palestinians. Amer is conscious of the representation of the Arabs in general in Western discourse, and how as Said argues that “the Orient’s special place is in European Western experience. The Orient is not only adjacent to Europe; it is also the place of Europe’s greatest and richest and oldest colonies, the source of its civilization and languages, its cultural contestant and one of its deepest and most recurring images of the Other” (*Orientalism*, 1). However, the only remaining image and memory of this “Other” is their mode of transportation, and to this we return back to the square number one in which Palestinians were represented in the Zionist narrative as a few Arab tribes who immigrated from the Arabian deserts.

Said writes that “Orientalism expresses and represents that part [the Orient] culturally and even ideologically as a mode of discourse with supporting institutions, vocabulary, scholarship, imagery, doctrine, even colonial bureaucracies and colonial styles” (*Orientalism*, 2). These factors have worked together not only in influencing the Western audience and making the myth of uncivilized Arabs believable, but it also reaches the colonizers themselves and causes them to believe in the myth of their own excellence. The hijacking of the aircraft underscores the contrast between the West’s and the East’s interests and reactions towards the Palestinian cause. Jinan says “The world is crowded with fugitives and people who are weary and sad; the only people who would have been happy to welcome Amer’s jumbo jet were his comrades, his weary mother and me in my sadness” (Badr 60). At this point, this attitude represents the Palestinian collective anger toward the world in general and frustration at how the Fedayeen failed to attract the variety of attention desired by Palestinian nationalists, but instead, created justifications for more difficulties being heaped upon the Palestinians. Jinan brings, again, Amer’s philosophy about
civilization as a major representative of the West and their negligence of the Palestinian's suffering; she says: “He had said, ‘This civilisation’s a whore lying between the thighs of history, who’s abandoned us and gone over to them. We should cut her down to size before she destroys us” (Badr 60). This antagonism informs the Palestinian Fedayeen’s relationship toward the West and shadows in the following year the world’s perception of the PLO.

In conclusion, in order to grasp the evolving Transjordan as a country or state, one must consider the consequences of combined British and Israeli efforts seeking to remove Palestinians to Jordan, thereby creating an “Arab homeland” for the Jordanian Bedouins and the Palestinians. However, these efforts forced a confrontation between the Jordanians and Palestinians, after which both groups had clearer ideas of their individual destinies and roles as neighboring peoples. The events of Black September have not permanently embittered the Palestinians against the Jordanians or the Jordanians against the Palestinians. Rather, both nations are now informed of the aspirations of the other, and both have worked to help define each other as separate entities. Jordan will forever owe a debt to the bourgeois Palestinians whose wealth has established the modern Jordanian state, and Palestinians will continue to be welcome in Jordan. And the Palestinian also, will forever owe a debt to Jordan that hosts them and enriches their political experience in one way or the other. The dual identity of Palestinian-Jordanian, instead of being crushed by Black September, was legitimized by it. The explosive struggle demonstrated that the Palestinians will not be exiled, absorbed, or assimilated into other Arab cultures, and while the memory of Black September prevents other nations from again hosting a Palestinian military due to concerns about repeating a similar incident, the memory of Palestinian resistance during Black September provides the Palestinians with a reputation for resisting assimilation and emphasizes that their problem would not be resolve but in their fatherland.
Culturally speaking, Palestinian stubbornness is a manifestation of their desire for a state and their legitimate existence as a nation of people with their own values, dialect, revolutionary cause, and history. After Black September, British partitioning plans went awry for a second time, for not only had the Palestinians resisted the encroachment of the Israeli state, but they had now successfully defied the colonists’ plans to submerge their national identity and cause within Jordanian identity and politics. In the process, the Palestinians helped the Jordanians to define themselves, leaving two separate nations within a space where the two have agreed to co-exist temporarily.
CHAPTER 4

A PANORAMIC VIEW OF THE WEST BANK AS THE EQUILIBRIUM OF PALESTINIAN ARCHIPELAGO: THE MODERN PALESTINIAN CONSCIOUSNESS IN SAHAR KHALIFEH’S *THE INHERITANCE*

In my previous chapters, I discussed the fabric of Palestinian identity in two locations on the Palestinian chronotopic archipelago, the islands of Israel and the islands of Jordan. The second chapter exposed the dilemma faced by the old and young generations who are living as second class citizens in Israel due to the fact that this is the sacrifice they have made to remain in the Palestinian homeland. Also, the chapter demonstrates that assimilation into Israeli society is so undesirable for Palestinians and Israelis alike that it is impossible. Though the protagonist excels in imitating Jewishness, from cultural and intellectual perspectives, his attempts were unsuccessful because Israeli society itself is not ready to include Arabs or Palestinians. On the Palestinian side, elders who remember the wars will never let go of their glorious and tragic past, simultaneously, and they instruct their children to carry on the struggle by refusing to assimilate to Israeli life. In Darwish’s words: “On this Earth there is that which deserves life” (*n.page*). Darwish is not only speaking of the land itself, but the idea of the indigenous people returning and reclaiming the land and beginning a new existence within it. This attitude is shared by Palestinians living in Israel, and there is no doubt that demographic factor is on their service in this case. Moreover, the political system of Israel itself is paving the way for a strong resurgence of Palestinian national identity, which is very ironic, considering Israel’s historical and political attitudes toward Palestinians. Current politics in Israel emphasize religious and ethnic identity, and thus will not allow the Palestinian to go or to assimilate. Eventually, the political system will become unable to sustain these brutal practices and will be coerced into acknowledging the
presence and legitimate political rights of Palestinians within Israel. Such a transformation may lead to a restructuring of the Israeli political system and irredentist nature, as well, and to the emergence of a more inclusive political body in which Palestinians are better represented.

On the second island of the archipelago, Jordan, the Palestinian-Jordanian community proved that a complete assimilation to another culture is difficult for Palestinians to accept, even when that culture is similar to and largely on friendly terms with Palestinians. Palestinian achievements and contributions toward the construction and development of Jordan require that Jordanians acknowledge their contributions and support the Palestinian cause, the demand for an independent nation-state. Moreover, the Israeli attempts to relocate Palestinians to Jordan as “the alternative” homeland united both the Palestinians and the Jordanians against this plot. Although the Fedayeen seemed to have lost the struggle after Black September, the Jordanian and Palestinian efforts to resist Israel are still rather successful, as Jordan is not, today, commonly identified as the Palestinian homeland. There is no doubt that the Palestinian-Jordanian’s case is very complicated due to the different social, political and economic factors that developed in the more than sixty-five years of co-existence. However, the Palestinian-Jordanian’s subjectivity is produced in the liminal space in which “strategies of selfhood-singular or communal” surfaces as a compromise between the two cultural identities; in different situations, the Jordanian or Palestinian aspect of subjectivity may take primacy (Location of Culture, 1). Palestinian-Jordanians would play on the Jordanian identity and celebrate their achievements and contributions to the building of the Jordanian nation-state, believing that the socio-economic privileges they are enjoying are the rewards for their sacrifices and participation in building the country, and that their loyalty to this “home” is obvious. Meanwhile, the same Palestinian-Jordanians remain faithful to the Palestinian cause and are still passionate about Palestine.
attaining political autonomy as well as preserving their distinct cultural identity. They believe that the two banks of the Jordan River are as two lungs in one body, each one supporting the other. However, the idea of a federal status for Palestine is not far away from the public and the political consciousnesses of the two nations. At this point of history, drawing the fine line between the two identities is still possible and a necessity for both.

In this chapter, I am expanding and narrowing the islands in the archipelago simultaneously, and the novel under analysis is Sahar Khalifeh’s *The Inheritance*. This is a very suggestive title, because I believe that Palestinians, though they are in a very unique condition of dispossession, have a rich legacy to reclaim and to continue to build. However, the metaphorical meaning of the title, *The Inheritance*, makes the novel’s subject difficult to decipher. What constitutes a second generation of exiled Palestinians’ inheritance, and what is the heritage that s/he is inclined to reclaim? Is it the land, the wealth, the history, the glorious past, or above all is it the sense of belonging to certain people and land, and the subjectivity created by this labyrinth? Even though the novel’s protagonist’s personal experience is as half-Palestinian, half-American, would a reunion with the Palestinian people represent backwardness, irrationality, and the absurdity of clinging to a different culture in contrast to what she has experienced as American? The answers to these questions are complex and manifold.

The novel consists of three parts; the first part, “Without Heritage,” the second part, “This Inheritance,” and the last, “And Then, The Inheritance”. The first part is the shortest in the novel; it’s only twenty-six pages of the novel’s total 251 pages; the second part is the longest, almost 182, and the last part is forty-three pages. However, the novel spans thirty years of time or more, and the shifts in time and between sections are accompanied with a shift of place. The novel begins in the United States, in New York and Washington, where the protagonist spends
her childhood and young adulthood. Then, the setting moves to the West Bank, to her father’s home village, Wadi al-Rihani.

The novel is narrated in first person, using a flashback technique to move from the present time back to events that occurred in last thirty years of the protagonist’s life. Thus, this novel is Zaynab Hamdan’s journey of searching for and discovering one’s identity; furthermore, it is a quest for belonging to an identified place and people. As I mentioned above, the title of the first part is “Without Heritage,” a very ironic and sarcastic title. However, there is an acknowledgment by the protagonist that there is something missing, absent or mysterious in her life; and this recognition is the first step toward problem solving and demonstrating the opposite, that she has a heritage that must be claimed. So, in order to analyze this chapter, I need to situate the discussion within the ongoing debates and discussion of the theories of nationalism in order to describe the protagonist's sense of identity. Identity construction in this novel prompts the question of whether nationalism is a primordial or a social constructed phenomenon. There is no doubt that nationalism is a very “elusive and even protean, in its manifestations” as Anthony Smith states (“The Nation,” 35). The debates about the authenticity and the legitimacy of Palestinian nationalism have taken different positions on Palestinian authenticity, historical existence, and emergence in the modern era as a response to Zionist nationalism. However, I discussed this point in detail in my previous chapters; what concerns me now is analyzing how Palestinian nationalism amalgamates the Primordialists and Modernists’ thoughts and definitions of nationalism. Since al-Nakba, Palestinians have been under constant pressure to “defend and strengthen [their] community or way of life against ‘their’ aggression or interference or excessive influence” (Mortimer and Fine viii). However, one must acknowledge the fact that the stretch of time of exile has left its fingerprints in Palestinian communities, yet the attachment to
the past, the villages, homes, orchards, and, most importantly, the coherent society that ceased to exist remain strong in the Palestinians’ consciousness. I am adopting Anthony Smith’s and Robin Cohen’s approach to nationalism as a primordial phenomenon as well as Ernest Gellener’s Modernist approach because I believe they explain and aid my discussion of Palestinian identity in Sahar Khalifeh’s novel.

Nationalism as a primordial phenomenon highly emphasizes Clifford Geertz’s definition and claim that there is a core identity that is logically and emotionally prior to any other forms of identity:

Primordial attachment…. Stems from the ‘givens’ of social existence…. congruities of blood, speech custom… are seen to have an ineffable, and at times overpowering, coerciveness in and of themselves. One is bound to one’s kinsman, one’s neighbor, one’s fellow believer, ipso facto [by that very fact]: as the result not merely of personal affection, practical necessity, common interest, or incurred obligation, but at least in great part by virtue of some unaccountable absolute import attributed to the very ties itself. (qtd in Cohen 4)

No doubt that Cohen also attaches a highly importance to the “givens” of social ties and sentiments. However, it might be understandable in the Palestinian case, since Palestinians are a society that was forcibly dismantled and displaced, so their experience with immigration is completely different from any other immigrant community in the modern time. Though there are many cases of exodus due to civil war, international conflicts, and even racial and ethnic genocides, none of the societies that have fallen prey to these ills have been denied their indigenous status or have been disenfranchised like the Palestinians. Thus, Palestinians are inclined to bond themselves to the virtue of ethnic sentiments that they are entitled to do, yet exaggerate the ties “of loyalty, of pride, of location, of belonging, of refuge, of identity, trust, and acceptance and security” (Cohen 5) Thus, Palestinians remain with no choice but to bond themselves to these memories in order to sustain the imagination of a community – the belief that
it exists and should remain intact. Moreover, Palestinian nationalism is primordial for several other reasons mentioned in the introduction. The old generation of Palestinians were fortunate enough to live in a geographical location that is known as Palestine; they had the chance to experience the sensations of Palestinian life, the taste of its fertile soil, its olive and citrus fruits; Palestinians had breathed the air and were baptized on its shores. They know the paths of old roads in Jerusalem and Bethlehem without the use of sight. Though this familiarity was only a memory of the older generation, it was nevertheless transmitted to the second and third generations of Palestinians in exile. What is astonishing that these young generations amplify these memories and are desperate to live and experience them, and they perceive these memories as parts of a heritage that they have rights to claim.

As aforementioned, the first chapter of this novel is titled “Without Heritage” and, indeed, no Palestinian is born without or does not have a heritage, even if it is not a materialistic one; they have the heritage of a historic struggle, oppression, and the pride of a people who were deprived of fundamental human rights. The first line in the novel states the present time as the chronological time from which the narration and the journey of discovery spring. Zaynab says:

I went to the West Bank looking for him, looking for them, searching for my own face in the land of exile. I wanted to know how it would look. I had received a letter from a man saying that my father was somewhere; in other words, that he was still alive. He said that he was my father’s brother from Wadi al-Rihan. (Khalifeh 3)

This is a very suggestive paragraph that summarizes the dilemma of the exiled and hybridized Palestinians. It is the assumption of one’s belonging and existence in two worlds, two cultures, that Zaynab knows and does not know simultaneously; this illusionary sense of belonging and non-belonging, satisfaction and dissatisfaction, is what stimulates many young Palestinians to take the journey to the place they learned about from their ancestors’ stories. It is very ironic that young Palestinians’ education about their fatherland comes through homeschooling; in the West
and in America, the protagonist’s country of citizenship, the Palestinian narrative is either completely absent or distorted according to the desires of the Zionist narrative, so Palestinian immigrants excel in telling their stories not only to their offspring, but also to the people on streets and to those they are acquainted with. So as Zaynab is taking this trip to West Bank, she is paradoxically traveling to the known and the unknown people and country. She reveals in the first line that she is in search not only for those whom she learned about but also in search for her own face in a land where its entire people are in exile.

Meanwhile, I would argue that the passion for the lost land that typically characterizes Palestinian narratives is transmitted and conveyed to the listeners, mainly to Palestinians’ children and friends; the Palestinian passion for existence and self-definition is irresistible. The highly educated Zaynab knows that the difference between America and the West Bank is huge; to her, no matter how much New York or Washington could be developed or modernized, in her imagination she had always visualized Wadi al-Rihan as being the opposite of New York, as a small clean town inhabited by simple people, good-hearted and nature-loving, not like New York. Whenever I heard my father talk about the place in the evening, I would run down the stairs, shouting “We’re going back home, we’re going back, we are going back.” But we never did because my father ran away or, to be accurate, I ran away. (Khalifeh 3)

So why would a young girl be so enthusiastic about going “back home,” and by which means does she perceive that unknown place as her home? What about New York, the place where she was born and lives, and where she goes to school? Why she can not, at this early age, feel that this is her home, and the place where she belongs? The reasons are, again, these powerful stories about Palestine that would even supplant the present reality because they are omnipresent in the life of the exiles and sole subject matter in the daily family’s gatherings.
Moreover, I must highlight the feature that Palestinians, as a dispersed community, share wherever they dwell: that of the narratives about the far, absent fatherland, with all the passion and affection that with which one could charge the letters and words of his stories. At this point, Zaynab starts the narration of her story that is at the same time, her father’s story. The father is a young Palestinian man who immigrated to America after al-Nakba, getting married to an American woman, who could not cope with him and his culture, and eventually left him with a young baby girl to take care of and an American green card that enables him to become a resident alien and to work and accumulate wealth. This incident marks a cornerstone in Zaynab’s character and sensitivity toward her identity, an issue that I am going to discuss in the following paragraphs. However, I need to focus at this point on the father’s character and his influence upon his daughter to underscore how a diasporic Palestinian family maintains a taut bond with their culture and heritage and passes this bond on to their offspring, even when they reside in American culture, an alien and antagonistic culture that marginalizes Arabs in general and Palestinians in particular.

The father started his career as a peddler who “sold all kinds of merchandise, regardless of its origin, as products of the Holy Land” (Khalifeh 3) investing in the Orientalist representation of the East and in the biblical stories that an average Christian American would be familiar with: the Holy water from the Jordan River, the baptism of Jesus Christ, in addition to the Orientalist stereotypes and representation of Arabia, the mysterious and exotic stories about “[t]he land of sand and camels, dates and incense, gum and the Qur’an,” above all, Mecca, and finally, the stories of the Arabian prince who lost his title and heritage due to the inevitable wars and conflicts in the Arabian desert (Khalifeh 3). Though the novel does not mention the level of the father’s education. I assumed from his character and personality that he was not a college
graduate. Nonetheless, he was smart enough to know about the images of the oriental people and the expectations of an average American housewife that he skillfully plays upon, and hits the right button to which he meets their expectations and fulfills their curiosity about that exotic part of the world.

In an ideal world, this man would be considered deceitful, cunning, or even a prevaricator; meanwhile, in this context I identify him as a smart, manipulative man who’s playing a game for the sake of survival. How could we blame a person who is forcefully deported from his village and homeland for inventing harmless stories to advertise his merchandise? Living within a capitalist system, he becomes a witty capitalist and knows how to function and to succeed. Thus, Muhammad Hamdan makes the right assumption about American society, learns his lesson very well, and applies it in real life. If he ever thinks of telling his real story, the story of Palestinians who were forced by the Jewish to leave their homes and village and become refugees in the world, would American society or even American customers listen to or believe him? Would they buy his products? He is completely aware of the American hostility toward Palestinians and the widespread acceptance of the Zionist narrative. Muhammad is aware that Americans only know the Jew’s sorrow and diaspora in Europe, and their inclination to support Israel as compensation for the European holocaust. As Zaynab describes it, she notices that her father was a successful man not because he learned and spoke English fluently, “but rather because of his eyes and his mustache and his ability to make up stories and invent dreams” (Khalifeh 5).

Zaynab was nurtured in this environment, and through her father’s storytelling in the public sphere might be false, there is no doubt that his personal story about the lost land is real and true, though it not is unfolded to and shared with public American. Thus, Zaynab is the
product of the father and his pseudo-environment; she is destined to inherit this trait from him, she “became a well-known writer in the field of human civilization,” and became an anthropologist (Khalifeh 5). Similarly, she inherits her father's wild imagination as well. Just as her father was constrained to lie about his identity and past, Zaynab does the same to cope with her double-life, and by that I mean her exposure to the liberal American culture, and the constraints her father set up on her and the family at home. Zaynab struggles to accept Arab-Palestinian culture and to cope with the different wives her father took after her mother. So, while the father, in the public sphere, projects a different identity, an identity that corresponds to well-established Orientalist discourse of the Orient and to the exotic stories of Shahrazad and Arabian Nights, privately, he returns to the authentic Palestinian culture and tradition which he imposes upon the members in his household in his closed miniature Palestinian community.

In this context, I, again, find Partha Chatterjee’s argument in responding to Benedict Anderson’s controversial work, Imagined Communities in which he asserts that nations are imagined into existence by the deterioration of all orthodox certainties of language, race, religion, and territories in favor of print-capitalism, mainly newspapers and novels, which make the existence of nations possible. Chatterjee deconstructs Anderson’s Eurocentric assertion that the “Other’s” imagined nationalism remains colonized. He argues that the “imagined nationalism” in Africa and Asia does not take after Western nationalism. On the contrary, the anticolonial nationalist movements in these countries have managed to produce and safeguard their own domains in which they excel in articulating their cultural identities in the private sphere.

Partha Chatterjee theorizes the immunity of the spiritual/private sphere as the realm in which India’s nationalism and cultural identity have been preserved. He divides the colonized
space into two realms, the material and the spiritual. The spiritual sphere is the incubator of family, religion, caste, women and is defined primarily by the presence of peasants and the rhythm of home life; it is the realm in which national activists imagined the nation before political struggle. The theory postulates that the spiritual/private sphere holds up the native’s autonomy, agency, and nationhood without reliance upon the downward filtration theory; thus, it is the power of the lower and middle classes that are relatively immune to domination and colonization. This is the realm that preserves the essence of the cultural identity; the realm from which an anticolonial national movement can derive its power and articulate a national narrative. It is in the public/material sphere that the colonizer is able to dominate through commerce and the language regulating it, forcing the culture and language of anyone who would be involved in the public sphere to conform to its idiosyncrasies as the colonizer has established them. However, the greater the pressure on the native to submit to the capitalist system in the material sphere, the more efforts will converge to preserve the private inner sphere. Furthermore, Chatterjee argues that those marginalized groups such as the outcasts, women, and the peasants, become the cornerstones of national resistance movements. However, tension between the material and spiritual sphere can produce fragmentations within the nation. Meanwhile, the essential paradox is the coexistence of an anti-Western nation in the spiritual sphere, and living in a Western nation-state in the material sphere, all under the eyes of European colonizers.

So, in this novel, the father rules his home with an iron fist and keeps a watchful eye on Zaynab, his elder daughter. To the father as well as to many other Palestinians, a family’s success and good reputation are not only gauged by how much wealth they could accumulate but by how they succeeded in safeguarding their women’s honor, culture, and traditions. The story of
their neighbor Huda, who is also half-American and became pregnant at the age of fifteen is the main story in the Palestinian community in Brooklyn, where witnesses saw “her father run after her in the street like a raging bull, carrying his longest knife” determined to kill her and wash out his honor and reputation with her blood (Khaifeh 6); Zaynab’s father blindly supports Huda’s father’s attempt and emphasizes that “He should have killed her, she sullied his name, stained his honor, and humiliated him among his people” (Khalifeh 6). However, Huda was lucky enough to find refuge at her American grandmother’s house. It is after this incident that the father makes a decision that he never puts into action; he intends to leave America and return to Palestine. In his meeting with other Palestinians, the father keeps bringing up the issue of returning home and encouraging his fellow men also to make up their mind to return home saying “What are we waiting for, friends? Haven’t we had enough of America and its trash? We all have boys and girls, do you want your daughters to be loose like American girls? Do you want to protect your girls, keep them pure, and bring them up strictly and marry them well?” (Khalifeh 7) At this point, one can see how the issue of women’s honor indicates an anxiety in men; they are eager to employ all means necessary to preserve their nation, their traditions, and their way of life. And this brings up how Palestinians fled their village in 1948 to save their lives and their women’s honor, a reason that is considered as a major one that some Palestinians use to justify such irrational and hasty reaction to the 1948 war. In the previous chapter, I mentioned that male attitudes about Palestinian women can be compared to the attitude Amer had toward Jinan when he compared her to a sunflower. Women are valued so highly that their ability to reproduce is of national importance – abusing this ability with illegitimacy and promiscuity is tantamount to a Palestinian man selling his land to the Israelis. Huda’s father’s actions could serve to reinforce negative Western stereotypes about Arabs, but his attempting to kill Huda is explained by the
depth of betrayal he feels and the importance he places upon his daughter and her having a successful future; furthermore, refer to my earlier discussion of the failure of Palestinian men to clarify why Huda’s father clings to his patriarchal traditions. As an exile, he is incapacitated and feels compelled to exert control and authority – of any kind – over his life’s chaotic circumstances; he wants to fulfill his traditional role and desires that women do the same.

Zaynab is aware of all the constraints that her father’s culture and ethnicity impose on her life. However, her sense of being an Arab and Palestinian remain intact. Though she lives in Brooklyn, Zaynab only sees herself as the daughter of Muhammad Hamdan, the man from the West Bank, the Palestinian man from Wadi al-Rihan. She perceives herself as the daughter and the product of this man, his people, and their culture. This is another testimony to how Palestinian people develop a geographical genealogy of Palestine. Zaynab’s father’s cultural traditions sound regressive and backward to her; however, they do not shake her sense of belonging to the place from which these traditions originated. On the other side of the spectrum, the absent figure of the mother – the American mother- in Zaynab’s life, plays a crucial role in her choosing a Palestinian identity rather than the American one. There is no doubt that her education in American schools influences her and leads, later on, to the trouble with her father and the cultural clash between her assumed Arab/Muslim identity and her American open cultural practices and freedom that occurs when she gets pregnant at the age of sixteen. Yet, the experience, the memories of her childhood and the nostalgia for those early years of her life overshadow and overpower all other ties and achievements she has accomplished in American society.

Additionally, though she has an antagonistic relationship with her father’s wives, who were all Palestinian, this coexistence brings her closer to the Palestinian culture; the step-mothers
ironically fill the place of the absent American mother. As a child, Zaynab could never
understand her affection towards her family’s homeland; whenever she heard her father and his
people mention the ‘old country’ she experienced happiness and delight that she immediately
communicates to her step-mother, yelling with joy: we are going back home. Yet, she cannot
explain or interpret this zeal;

As I heard the words ‘old country’ I jumped for joy and almost flew up the stairs to the
second floor. The words ‘old country’ were music to my ears, as melodious as the long
stretch of a mawwal. It was a miracle, a story similar to that of Aladdin and the magic
lamp, with its magic words, ‘shubayk, lubbayk,’ one of her father’s stories, enveloped in
smoke, incense, and butterfly wings. (Khalifeh 7)

Meanwhile, I would like to elaborate more about how the Palestinian’s stories always relate this
strong passion about the beloved homeland and people to the audience, and how the narratives
are intensively charged with emotion that would make an impression on one’s memory. It
because I have heard these stories that I decided to write this dissertation in order to discuss and
share the unique experience of Palestinian identity as a most precious heritage that naturally
transcends time and places to find fertile soil in the minds and the hearts of young Palestinians,
who find a comforting sense of pride and happiness by belonging to this unknown world. As I
mentioned in chapter three, Faisal Darraj in his article emphasizes a phase of “romanticization
and beautification” of Palestine in Palestinian literature in which Palestine is “casting… into the
mold of a unique paradise-on earth,” a technique that is natural existing in the oral narrative of
the illiterate or semi-literate Palestinian refugees (n.pag).

Therefore, I am confident to assume that, Palestinians, in telling their stories about
Palestine and its people, have instructed their children about this lost homeland while
embroidering their memories, like their dresses, with images of paradise, green valleys, turquoise
seas, citrus orchids, and the mysterious imaginary Orient, since all indeed exist in Palestine.
However, the tenderness of their feelings never fails to find a room in the hearts and the minds of their offspring. They amplify these feelings, curiosity and fascination about the Orient; by the same token, these stories generate in the youth a powerful will and longing to unite with this mysterious and far away place. Thus, the confusion that Orientalism imposes on Arab and Palestinian identity is transformed into a mystery for young Palestinians to solve that will, at the end of their journey, show them their true identities. In this way, Orientalism is not an obstacle to Palestinians finding their identities in the West; it is an enhancement to a previously existing identity, as Zaynab’s father’s creativity indicates by working within the Orientalist framework to make his identity comprehensible to Westerners, who will react to his words in manners he has learned to predict. Her father’s customers accept Orientalism at face value, so he integrates small truths into his exotic stories and marketing strategies in order to undermine Orientalism while “acting the part” of an exotic Easterner. This adaptive strategy is available not only to Palestinians living in the West, but to all Arabs and Eastern peoples living in the West. Playing into Orientalism makes a person approachable and understood to the Westerners because the Western audience is actually familiar with what they find to be the exotic elements of the East (they invented them, after all), and by embodying these cultural items, telling certain stories, speaking in a certain way, etc. a Palestinian can “pass” as a caricature of himself, just as Zaynab’s father does. The accuracy of the caricature’s representation is now entirely up to the individual, who can be as Oriental or authentic as they desire.

Meanwhile, imagining a society and life is different from the real experience of life itself in American society and culture. The Palestinian’s attachment to another place, people and culture is ordained to fade by time and over distance. No matter how much a person desires to remain in touch with Palestinian culture, the facts of American life overpower any theoretical
concept of being with the necessities of dealing with the present reality. So, the influence of
American culture has to manifest itself in one way or the other in Zaynab’s life; people cannot
live isolated, even if they strive to, from the dominant social standards and cultural values of the
places they inhabit. Zaynab, though, is attached to her father’s culture, yet she is conscious of the
pressure being exerted upon her to participate in two cultures.

Despite the fact that Zaynab believes that she is a Palestinian, this connection does not
empower her or protect her from the influence of American culture, and at the age of sixteen,
Zaynab finds herself in the same position that Huda experienced years ago, and her father is
equally shocked and ashamed. Zaynab runs to her grandmother’s house in Washington, where
she immerses herself in American culture and adopts an American identity to save her from the
ultimate punishment of death at the hand of her father. Zaynab’s grandmother becomes her foster
parent, and her influence becomes the power that drives Zaynab to establish herself in a capitalist
and individualistic culture with no ethnic ties, and to become such a self-sufficient and radical
person that her spiritual needs begin to suffer.

However, Zaynab is influenced by her environment as much as she is influenced by her
grandmother. The change of the setting in Zaynab’s life causes an essential change in her
premature identity and perception of self. A quantum leap occurs in her life after her separation
from her father and his culture. Her father represents not only the biological congruities of blood,
but represents the family’s bond to Palestine, and the unspoken affection for a specific
community, religion, language, and heritage. At this point, Zaynab is without a mother figure
and without the traditional society in which her personality was formed. Despite the fact that her
parents came from different backgrounds, cultures and worlds, their presence would have
qualified her to attain hybridity and would enable her to synthesize these two different cultures
and construct a functional identity. She could exist in a liminal space that would satisfy her
spiritual desires and sense of belonging. Zaynab contemplates on her current condition saying:

My language was lost before. I was lost and so my identity. My name and address
followed suit. My original name was Zaynab Hamdan, and with time it became Zayna. My father was called Muhammad Hamdan and with time I was left with neither Muhammad nor Hamdan. My father’s birthplace was Wadi al-Rihan and mine was
Brooklyn. As Zayna I was caught between two languages and two cultures—my father’s
Brooklyn and the West Bank on one side and my maternal grandmother’s American
culture on the other. I was later left without any culture and lived in a vacuum. My
father’s songs, the Qur’anic verses, and the praises of the Prophet were meant to protect
me from the negative influence of American culture. Obviously, they did not. There was
a simple explanation for this: I didn’t understand the meaning of the words and I didn’t
respond to the melodies. (Khalifeh 9)

The emphasis on the language is significant; one’s native language is necessary for the
construction of individual ethnic sentiments, subjectivities and identities. As for Zayna—I am
going to use her American name, thence, to underscore the evolution of her identity crisis—the
first place in which readers can notice primordial nationalism in her monologue is when her
detachment from her Palestinian identity starts with the loss of her language. Frantz Fanon in
Black Skin White Masks argues that alienation from the native culture begins with the adoption
of the colonizer’s language. As long as Zayna lives with her father in the domestic/private
domain of the family, her Arabic language is protected; by the same token, her genealogy,
exposure to tradition, and religious values are also secured. However, as soon as she loses her
Arabic fluency, she loses all these items of cultural identification. For a while, Zayna learns how
to build a resilience that would support her existence in two different worlds, simultaneously.
Although, in the public sphere, she speaks only English, she speaks Arabic at home and this
partially protects her identity and sense of belonging that she might temporarily surrender in
public life. The paradox is that she never feels that she adequately fits into either culture or that
her identity is secure in either one. She and her siblings were able to “distinguish a p from b, but
were unable to put together a single meaningful sentence” in English, which always surprised their American friends who had questioned if they ever attended schools and learned appropriate English (Khalifeh 9). The family’s Arabic-speaking friends show their disgust with the fact that the children do not speak decent Arabic. However, this division of Zayna’s mind into two languages feeds her anxiety, and ultimately leads to her alienation from both cultures. Thus, Fanon’s point is proved; living in two cultures alienates the individual from the self and from any organic culture. What stands in its place is Bhabha’s hybrid model of existence that is based on helping an individual navigate through two cultures. This model is not concerned with the reconciliation of differences, learning from one another, or supporting the hegemony of one culture over another; it turns cultural conflicts into decisions to be dealt with on a personal level, leaving the individual impotent to claim an identity without compromising their ability to survive in both cultures. It is as if the individual caught between cultures is compelled to make the choice of refusing to choose sides, leaving their cultural identity in a liminal space.

As I stated above, individual resistance to the prevailing culture cannot be sustained unless a strong community of a different culture can embed itself and succeed in recruiting and uniting its members; at this phase of her life, Zayna has no chance to attend Arabic language classes or to have the company of Arab Muslim peers who would, in one way or another, subsidize her knowledge of their culture; on the other hand, her relationships with the different wives her father took during her childhood and teenage years were antagonistic. If these relationships would have taken another direction, that might have helped her share solidarity with women in her community; that would cause her to invest in her society and would give her access to a semi-Palestinian culture. This antagonistic relationship with her step-parents contributes to her identity crisis and causes her to think critically about the values of her native
culture. When she begins to question the traditions of her parents, she makes the first step toward losing her identity.

By choosing the asylum of her grandmother’s American world, Zayna not only destroys her ties with her father and whatever he represents, she also relinquishes her sense of belonging to a family. She puts her baby up for adoption, and this act marks her complete alienation from blood ties with any familial members, both the father, siblings and children. Afterwards, Zayna directs her efforts to building a successful professional life that only deals with figures, words, and ambition. She puts the unsolved dilemma of her identity crisis aside in the time. Through her life after leaving her father, only two incidents have hunted her day and night: “giving up my son to an adoption agency and the second was meeting my mother for the first time” (Khalifeh 15). What I believe her experience with two incidents is evidence of her deprivation from any kind of blood ties or ethnic sentiment toward any person in her life. Definitely, Zayna’s long dwelling with her American grandmother influences her life and perception of self and the priorities in life, due to the potential that she is left lonely with no familial ties or connection, neither with the mother who gave her up years ago, nor the father and the son whom she dishonored and gave up respectively, she must now take control of her life and make her own destiny. Her grandmother’s advice is “Make success your aim because if you fail, people will feel sorry for you, but they won’t respect you or befriend you” (Khalifeh 15-16).

At this point, Zayna identifies professional achievements as the ultimate and only significant objects and meaning of her life. Her engagement with people, in professional level, is only experienced when she writes about their lives, merely, as figures, “competitors, individuals to beat;” as for “love… emotions, family ties, or friendship” they have no room in her private life (Khalifeh 16). Thus, her existentialism is transferred to her writing, people become merely
obstacles to success. The only person who makes her connected to a pseudo-community is the grandmother, who, after a while, ceases to exist as well. The death of the grandmother intensifies Zayna’s loneliness and the emptiness of her heart, and at this point she comes to terms with the absurdity of her life and existence as a lonely person with no communal support. She lost the connection with what she believes was her “unique personal characteristics. I didn’t feel nostalgic for the strange stories and tales of my childhood. I didn’t laugh or have fun, and I no longer enjoyed eating with others” (Khalifeh 16). Yet, Zayna tries to comfort herself and cope with these transformations, she never becomes fully content with herself or life. After all, what is at stake is her distinctive identity; it is this unique subjectivity that she believes the Arab identity provides to her, and as soon as she loses the significant element of uniqueness in her personal subjectivity, all else in her life loses meaning. In order to protect herself from another downfall, she creates her own incubator, where she locks herself away, immune from the outside people and her own emotions. Thus, what becomes of Zayna, or what we see from this character, is a partial involvement in American society that only enables her to function on the professional level; she has no personal or emotional investment in the surrounding world. In her office, she finds herself safe from the obligations of maintaining emotional connections to society and to a community to which she cannot relate. She describes this emotionless existence within American society as a comforting way of living:

    It was agreeable and our conversations were superficially pleasant. There were no fights, no blame, no frictions, and no aversions—and how could there be with such high walls erected between us! In this social setting, so different from the one I knew when I lived with my father, we neither touched anyone nor were touched. (Khalifeh 16)

So, while American society erects walls between people, the “other” Arab society is destroying these walls; in the latter arena, there is room for having authentic relationships and interactions between people. This demands fights, affection, reconciliation, and the exchange of genuine
feeling and emotions, ultimately, this society would embrace the differences between its members. How can someone live in a society without touching, or without being influenced by everyday events? Implicitly, Zayna’s words underscore the opposing characters of the West and the East, between “us” and “them;” though the West might represent itself as the rational, practical/logical pole, from their point of view, Eastern culture is the emotional one. However, as the father previously described, if you needed money in Palestine, you’ll find many people from whom you can borrow; if you get sick in Palestine, every one in the village will come and visit and check up on you; it is only in that remote society you would find and experience a natural human relationship of fights, arguments, love, affection, hate, solidarity and all the emotive qualities that define human beings.

Nevertheless, as much as Zayna strives to forget her past and her childhood, these memories are recurring; the memories of her childhood keep haunting her days and nights. In the back of her mind, the question about her identity remains unsolved, and though she digs deeply for answers in her memories, her loss of identity always surfaces when she concerns herself with any trivial issue about communities and societies; for instance, whenever her grandmother talks about America and American people, in the plural “us”, Zayna’s uneasiness increases, and she says: “The ‘us’ was painful to me. What does ‘us’ mean? Who is ‘us’? “Us” Americans? I am not American: (Khalifeh 17). Zayna the adult, the intellectual is very self-consciousness to the fact that she does not belong to this “us” to this society, or to a people that her grandmother believes herself as a member. Meanwhile, she also cannot answer her grandmother’s question when she asks “What are you then?” (Khalifeh 17) In response to Zayna's lack of identification. Thus, her confrontation with the identity quest increases: she could not answer, because she believes that she has none; “I was Arab because I wasn’t. Who am I then?” (Khalifeh 17)
Finally, Zayna asks the question that she has postponed for many years, and forces her to analyze her sense of identity and belonging:

Despite my mother’s citizenship, my birth certificate, my school certificate, my books, my accent, my clothes, and everything about my life, I was not truly American. The depths of my mind were inhabited by visions and pictures, love songs, those Arabic mawwals moving like the passage of a breeze, the scent of violets, the fragrance of memories, all leaving behind a honey-sweet solution in the heart. Memories would rush in like a swarm of butterflies, hovering in the room until the morning, filling the darkness with the fragrance of jasmine, rare incense, Arabic coffee with cardamom, almonds and cinnamon, mahaleb and nutmeg, grilled bread and chestnuts. (Khalifeh 17)

What Zayna had internalized during her childhood of her father’s indigenous code, tradition, manners, and culture has been engraved upon the blank tablet of her mind and personality. Thus, Zayna’s pseudo-assimilation into American culture does not replace her original ethnicity or cultural identity, despite Zayna’s years of disengagement from her Arab-Palestinian identity. At this phase of her life, she has to deal with her own double-consciousness as well as external perceptions of herself. The time has come to acknowledge the fact that though she has resided within American culture, her essence remains Palestinian, and her experience as a Palestinian is what remains in her inner consciousness. Zayna is unconsciously pursuing a Palestinian identity, but resisting her memories and attachment to her family consciously due to forces beyond her control. In her solitude, she pleads for her father’s forgiveness and wishes to re-unite with him and his world; whenever her grandmother hears her beseeching words for the lost father she shakes her as to wake her and end her nightmares, saying “It’s nothing but a dream Zayna, just a dream” (Khalifeh 17). Nevertheless, Zayna refutes this trivial analysis of her trauma, and her fond memories of the father whose companionship and touch she has lost: “No, I’m not dreaming…. A dream? A dream? What about the little girl and all the anthems, the songs, the laughter, the pleasure, the food and drink, the mezza and araq?” (Khalifeh 17-18) These memories are not coming from a vacuum, and her past is no longer the imaginary world she
created as a little girl listening to her father’s stories of *Arabian Nights* and * Antar and ‘Abla* or *Shatir Hassan*; she has grown up and become an anthropologist who learns about authentic nations and societies; she is now dealing with the real world, the real people, their conflicts, emotions, struggles, and above all, her own belonging to a particular nation. Zayna soon realizes that Palestine is a real nation that is imagined by real people, and that she is part of it. This revelation pushes her to reconcile herself with her past and to solve the dilemma of the unresolved issue of her identity. She must restore the ties and cross the bridges that have long separated her from life as a Palestinian. Thus, these ethnic sentiments are the essence of the Palestinian primordial nationalism, the biological and innately psychological attachment to a genuine society. Emotions are the essence from which identity flourishes after being socially anchored by interpersonal bonds. Zayna only perceives a bond with “that” distant society of Palestine; she is confident that she can find refuge in, trust others, and be accepted there, and that taking these actions would help her fulfill her longing to be part of a family and a community. This desire is analogous to the parental attachment to children, and the reverse – this much is obvious in Zayna’s unspoken words and through her feelings; she misses her father and the intimacy she once experienced with him, and his “gregariousness and preference for group membership” (Cohen 5). The sentiments about the place where the father was born are transferred to his daughter, and both come to believe that their existence depends on these bonds that fasten them to Palestine and its people.

By the age of thirty, Zayna could no longer deal with her sense of alienation and rootlessness. Her epiphany is prompted by reflection after she realizes how “My academic life was barren, tasteless, and emotionless” (Khalifeh 19). Though she inherits her mother’s wealth and lives a life of luxury, her feeling of deprivation is so overwhelming; Zayna’s realization of
this feeling and its cause is a cathartic moment in which she solves the problem posed by her identity crisis; the passage of time ascertains that “the gap between my past and my present grew narrower, I was extremely homesick, and frankly, longed for my past” (Khalifeh 20). Here, again the recurrence of the motif of homecoming, as much as in the previous chapters, is a unique trait of the Palestinian nation, both of the old generation and the young generation – the desire for a homecoming experience that never leaves the conscious mind, the longing for the grandfather’s house and village. I believe that exiled Palestinians have breast-fed their children this nostalgia for Palestine before *al-Nakba*, and Zayna’s family is not exceptional in this aspect. The increasing frequency of the disturbances in her life and personality because of this nostalgia are no longer tolerable, and directly addressing her sense of rootlessness becomes necessary. She ultimately submits to the fact that “The only solution was to admit that I wouldn’t settle down and find peace until I returned to my past, to what was lost” (Khalifeh 20).

At this point, I would like to move to what I would like to call: “the return-journey narrative.” Almost all Palestinian expatriates have to travel to multiple destinations before reaching home, if Palestine is their final destination. In order to trace the vestiges of her father, Zayna needs to start with the place she left him, Brooklyn. Upon her visit to her place of birth and to the place where her father had tried to establish his roots, a conceit that abruptly ended when he lost his daughter to American culture, she finds that another Palestinian family has established itself in the same place with no trace of her father remaining. The family tells her that the previous owner of the place had left after he had been dishonored by his only daughter. However, the dwelling of another Palestinian family in the home of her childhood confirms the fact that the tragedy continues; Palestinians exist and suffer the agony of exile and displacement – they exist in Brooklyn and elsewhere. Moreover, the place is still haunted by her father’s spirit,
“his shadow was here, his sadness and that look,” and this identical feeling is embodied and expressed by the family that laments the lost fatherland (Khalifeh 23).

“Palestine is not a land without people for people without land,” and as long the steadfastness of its people for their right to return to their ancestors’ homeland remains intact, Palestinians will be called to return to their sacred home no matter the routes and the paths they need to bridge. In part two of the novel, “This Inheritance,” Zayna finally receives the long-awaited message she hoped for, a sign that would lead her back to her father. Though, her father, due to the pressure of his tradition and reputation, had given Zayna up for lost, he never totally forgot about her. He has maintained a record of and passed her information, address and place of residence on to his brother who does not hesitate to write to her, asking for her attendance to see her dying father, and to reclaim her inheritance. The letter’s message is: “Come quickly before the thread breaks and you lose your claim to the inheritance” (Khalifeh 29).

To Zaynab, taking the journey to fatherland to claim her inheritance is taking a journey of discovery to the inner, authentic, and long-imagined identity for which she has been searching throughout the novel. In the novel, the audience transcends time and geography along with the characters; so, by all means Sahar Khalifeh’s The Inheritance is a panoramic view of the Palestinian culture and society in the post-Oslo era.

Now, it is necessary to, again, provide historical context, since the time is shifting to post-Oslo era. In 1993, the Oslo Accord, an agreement signed in Norway by Yasir Arafat and Yitzhak Rabin, was thought by many Palestinians to be a peaceful step toward achieving a Palestinian nation-state in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Those Palestinians who had refused to accept the United Nations’ Partition Resolution received the Oslo Accord with optimism and had great expectations for the outcome; they also were willing to make the necessary compromises.
According to the letter of the agreement, Palestinians made the necessary mental, historical, and political adaptations, reimagining the Palestinian nation as existing within a small piece of their former territory. After Oslo, these Palestinians also believed that their suffering would be redressed by international community and Israel, and that they had finally reached a resolution to the long conflict with the Jewish settlers.

However, actions speak louder than words. More than two decades have passed since 1993, yet, irridentalist Israel state continues to confiscate Palestinian territory and builds new settlements neglecting any bilateral and international agreements, UN resolutions and above all the Oslo Accord. Palestinian public consciousness has adjusted itself to this painful fact, as well. Still, they are determined to receive a kind of compensation that would allow them to achieve self-determination and, indeed, their promised independence. Thus, the hope for a Palestinian nation continues to be beyond the horizon for many of its constituents.

Persisting issues regarding the illegal Israeli settlement in the West Bank, sharing sources of fresh water, and control over other resources remained unaddressed by the Oslo Accord. Hence, the Post-Oslo era is characterized by more conflicts, unrest, distrust, and resistance to Israeli occupation. The rise of the second Intifada, the assassination of Yasir Arafat, and the severity of Israeli attacks on Hamas in Gaza, in addition to atrocities such as the Jenin massacre are all testimonies of the hardships Palestinians have faced after the Oslo Accord. The destructive nature of these events have not only facilitated the collapse of the political system in Palestine and agitated Palestinians’ mistrust toward the Palestinian National Authority, (PNA) – it assaults the social fabric and national steadfastness that had, previously, been relatively immune from Israel’s attempts to undermine Palestinian solidarity. The Post-Oslo discord still characterizes Palestinian society locally and in diaspora at the time of this writing. Palestinians
have awoken to the reality of the pseudo-political independence of their nation after Israel’s failure to keep the agreement made at Oslo, and Palestinians recognize that their national authority now derives its legitimacy from the Israelis rather than from Palestinians. Ensuring Israel’s physical security when dealing with Palestinians has become the main task of (PNA) in the eyes of many Palestinians. Those living inside and outside the West Bank and Gaza Strip are overwhelmed by their sense of betrayal and frustration at the PNA’s mismanagement of Palestine’s domestic and international affairs. Over the years since the Oslo Accord, Palestinians have lost hope that the corrupted PNA has the power to improve the deteriorated economic, political and social conditions in the national landscape. On the contrary, what is at stake now in Palestine is the national solidarity, unity and the existence of Palestinians within their own homeland. Now, the presence of the PNA continues to disappoint, frustrate, and anger Palestinians. Many political and social analysts emphasize the fact that the Palestinian landscape has never experienced this kind of antagonistic relationship between the Palestinian people and their political leaders since the rebellion against the British Mandate.

Surprisingly, the Oslo Accord permitted the return of exiled Palestinians, but this permission was restricted to Palestinian political leaders, and they were the only diasporic segment of Palestinian society that was privileged enough to receive the right to return. Accordingly, the problem of the exile remains unsolved for the vast majority of refugees, and the eventuality of the extension of the right of return to all Palestinians remains a dream for Palestinian refugees. Furthermore, Israel maintains the right to decide who can return and who cannot, further adding to the illegitimacy of the Oslo Accord. Israeli surveillance still remains among the people of the “imagined” territories under the PNA’s sovereignty, and those Palestinians who do gain the right to return are nevertheless subjected to monitoring and
harassment by Israeli intelligence services. The years following the Oslo Accord have proven that an equitable peace agreement between Israelis and Palestinians has never been achieved. Many members of Palestinian political leadership have been assassinated since then, and even the most fortunate among them who have returned to Palestine continue to face obstacles placed by the Israeli state that prevent redevelopment, economic progress, and the restoration of the normal lives of all Palestinians living in the West Bank and in Gaza.

The characters in *The Inheritance* are returning to Palestine during the midst of the unrest surrounding the Oslo Accord. Chapter two, entitled “This Inheritance,” is the tablet where Khalifeh and her protagonist Zayna are inscribing the narrative of the microcosm Palestinian society that they have observed. It is through Zayna’s integration with her father’s family and the net sum of the relationships that they have, that Zayna comes to portray this society, their aspirations, frustrations, actions, and above all, their sense of existence and identity in a semi-liberated society and under a pseudo-national authority. The narrative depicts the lives of Palestinians who not only live in the closed society of Wadi al-Rihan, but portrays the re-emerging bourgeois Palestinian societies of Jerusalem and Nablus.

As noted earlier, Palestinians have to travel long distances and pass through many officially imposed barriers before they *may* return to the villages of their grandparents, and this, only if they are allowed to enter. Rashid Khalidi stresses the fact that in a globalized world, borders and barriers cease to exist, or at least are crumbling, but this is primarily for the fortunate citizens of first world countries and others whose feelings of belonging and identity are secured. Borders and walls are erected in the faces and interfere with the lives of Palestinian people whose identities are always cause for suspicion and must be validated and re-checked. Thus, the decay of borders limits Palestinian mobility and intensifies their sense of humiliation and anxiety.
about their identities. Paradoxically, the verification of a Palestinian identity on the “crossing points brings home to them how much they share in common as a people,” and as a dispersed nation (Khalidi 1). Palestinians who are fortunate enough to possess a first world passport, like Zayna and Kamal in this novel, must endure interrogation that is nonetheless humiliating and frustrating, making their experience of homecoming an uncomfortable adventure. To Zayna, the American citizen, her journey to the West Bank only crosses the Jordanian border. On her journey to Wadi al-Rihan, she took the direct flight from America to Ludd’s (Ben Gurion) the Israeli international airport, crossing the city of Natanya in Israel. She also crossed the borders between historical Palestinian cities and villages on this journey, the Green line: the line drawn between the West Bank and Israel. Only an Israeli taxi would have an official permit to cross all these borders in a single journey, and Palestinian passengers are still at the mercy of drivers who have the authority to define to what extent they will serve these travelers by determining where they would drop off or pick up their passengers. Zayna’s driver drops her off at the main entrance to Wadi al-Rihan, “refusing categorically to get close to the crowded streets of the city,” for security reasons, which turns out to be a false excuse, and he leaves her to finish her trip on foot (Khalifeh 29). The juxtaposition of the two cities -Natanya and Wadi al-Rihan- makes Zaynab aware of the devastating contrast between the Israeli cities and the Palestinian ones. Contrary to the modern, busy, organized roads of Natanya, the street of Wadi al-Rihan were in very bad condition, “filled with potholes, curves, and weeds” (Khalifeh 29). What is more astonishing to Zayna are the deserted streets, though the driver’s excuse was the crowded streets of the city, “[t]here were no cars, no children, and no pedestrians” (Khalifeh 29). Zayna is shocked by this depopulated and ghostly landscape of the town; where have her people and their stories gone? The answer for her inquiry comes faster than she has expected, as “windows
opened and shut quickly; faces hid behind curtains but followed my every move” (Khalifeh 29). Indeed, this is the devastated fact of the reality of Palestinians in the West Bank under the Israeli military occupation: a nation under house arrest. With all the newly erected borders and barriers between Palestinians cities, Palestinians in the West Bank are in fact in a large prison. It is the modern apartheid paradigm that not only separates the Palestinians from the Israelis, but from their Palestinian fellows and relatives. Zayna’s sense of disappointment originates in this moment. These deserted streets are a miniature version of the country at large; the scene fills her “with sadness, oppression, and a captivating nostalgia” (Khalifeh 30). She is under the pressure of her over-romanticized childhood memories to retrieve and find what she had imagined to be real; “My eyes wandered in all directions in the street that was jammed with buildings lined up without harmony. I had long dreamed of seeing them, but I found only emptiness, silence, and clutter” (Khalifeh 30). There is no doubt that to Zayna, this first experience of the place would influence her sense of the place and its people, and by the same token, her sense of belonging to Palestinian society. Ultimately, this is a heinous experience not just to Zaynab, but also to many other Palestinian expatriates. There is a definite contrast between the handed-down memories of Palestine, Orientalist myths, and the reality that Palestinians experience under the Israeli occupation. Depending on their point of origin and the qualities of their host society, returning Palestinians may be in for a shock when they observe the conditions of Palestinians living in the West Bank.

Fanon’s diagnosis of the native intellectual’s dilemma in coping with his native culture is crucial at this point. In Wretched of the Earth, Fanon writes that a colonized cultural subjectivity passes through three phases: assimilation, disturbance, and fighting/resistance (222). In the first stage, the intellectual has assimilated and celebrated the colonizer’s cultural patterns, structure
and language. In the second phase, he experiences a kind of epiphany and enthusiasm to retrieve
the lost cultural heritage. In the final phase, we find the articulation of the revolution and the
spirit of resistance that emerges when the intellectual becomes part of the masses. Fanon works,
first of all, on deconstructing the colonized person’s psyche and freeing him from the inferiority
complex at all levels, moving him with aid of the indigenous intellectuals to discover himself,
reclaim his subjectivity, and then to celebrate his cultural identity. Asserting an indigenous
identity and nationality over the power of the colonizer and native bourgeois is the final step to a
colonized person’s process of self-realization. Chatterjee shares this perspective with Fanon,
describing how the Indian native intelligentsia who were educated in the colonizer’s schools
recreated a distinctive Indian aesthetic to reclaim their lost native culture heritage, and,
moreover, they established schools to replace Western missionary schools in order to teach the
next generation to use and to admire their language and literature, as Zayna’s and Mazan’s
attempt to establish the Art and Culture Center to retrieve and celebrate Palestinian cultural
heritage.

To this extent, Zayna has adopted Fanon’s paradigm of identity reclamation, but with
some modification. The intimacy of her childhood and her lovely relationship with her
Palestinian father and the exotic, Oriental world she saw him to inhabit while living as an
American was suppressed during the formative years of her mature personality and character.
Her asylum in American culture certainly saves her life from the devastating Arab traditional
practices and intolerance regarding women’s sins. Later on, her assimilation into American
culture and its Protestant work ethics: the hard work, frugality, and diligence, turns out to be her
vehicle for salvation from her youth’s and ignorance’s sins. From another perspective, her
materialistic advancement becomes the main tool that compensates her cultural and societal
disorientation. The illusion of professional success and accomplishment allows her to suffocate her desire to be part of a community. Thus, there is no doubt that Zayna fully assimilated to American culture in a certain period of her life. However, Zayna’s attachment to her past and to her father are, ultimately, undeniable. What is unique about Zayna’s experience with her denial of her identity is the fact that she does not completely reject her native culture despite her father's attempt to kill her in the name of his culture and tradition. Zayna suppresses this culture deeply in her inner self, and with no criticism, as if protecting it from any external assault or threat.

Thus, contrary to Fanon’s theory, Zayna never experiences an inferiority complex regarding her native identity. This might be attributed to the fact that she had been thoroughly removed from any dynamic interactions with the native culture in the formative years of her life. Zayna never has a chance to project this identity into the American society or to be rejected because of it. In Zayna’s case, the core of her identity has been preserved by her youth’s affection toward this imagined community, and that is immune from any cultural clash or conflict.

Zayna has experienced both the first phase and the second phase of Fanon’s theory of native intellectual development during her residency in the United States, and this is remarkable due to the vast geographic and personal distances she and her family have established, far away from her native culture. Remarkably, Zayna’s epiphany and enthusiasm to renew the contact with the lost father and nation occurred after her complete assimilation into American society.

Finally, her desire to validate the existence of this imagined community overtakes her long negligence of her roots. Upon her arriving to Wadi al–Rihan, she is bewildered by the disastrous condition of the town and its people, and this reality challenges her beliefs about herself and her people, but it does not disturb her determination to go ahead with her goal and to
explore this society. Also, Zayna is not deterred in using her spatial proximity in order to experience this society; to the anthropologist, Zayna, this an exceptional opportunity that, indeed, might help her resolve her identity crisis.

The contrast between the condition of Palestinian society in the public sphere and the private sphere remains a significant feature in the novel. While in America, Zayna’s father lost his battle against the influence of American culture on his family; Palestinian society in the West Bank maintains the same battle to immunize the private sphere from the Israeli’s political power and cultural hegemony. As Fanon and Chatterjee distinguish, the private sphere is the fortress of the cultural identity, as long as it is safeguarded from the colonizer’s domination, and as long as the essence of the nation is shielded and perpetuated. The Israelis have exercised continuous attempts to dismantle the Palestinian private sector in many distinctive ways: women’s emancipation, brainwashing of the youths to become collaborators, and the imprisonment, torture and exile of the revolutionaries are but a few examples of those attempts and atrocities. Zayna’s trip from the airport to the Wadi al-Rihan exposes her to a partial image of the devastating conditions of the Palestinian public sphere. Nonetheless, the passionate welcome she receives from her cousin Nahleh, upon her arrival, lessens the sense of disappointment. Nahleh identifies her as soon as she speaks with accented Arabic, calling her name: “Zayna, Zayna,” and kissed her warmly, “as if she had known me for years” (Khalifeh 30). Despite the long devastating and frustrated Israeli’s practices towards Palestinians that have driven them to alienation and depression, the Palestinians in the West Bank are exceptional in persevering their capacity to welcome their expatriates and share with them the experience and the ecstasy of homecoming, even if it short-lived.
However, no matter how Palestinians attempt to protect their private domain, the events outside, in the public sphere, have significant impact on women in particular and on the collective in general. Palestinians are overwhelmed by the occupation and any visitor will also be touched by this reality. Though Palestinians have trained themselves to live as normally as possible and to be optimistic about their future after Oslo, disappointment, fear, and mistrust have largely ended these collective attempts to construct a sustainable community that would have adequate social and economic network. The aloofness of the public sphere that Zayna experiences is because of the curfew. This is the reality of Palestinian society after Oslo: despite optimism, nothing is changed in their daily lives. Israeli soldiers still patrol and children still throw stones at them. Nahleh was surprised at how Zayna made it to Wadi al-Rihan from between the Israeli soldiers and the Palestinian throwers’ stones. “How did you manage to pass during the curfew? Didn’t they see you, didn’t you see them? And you walked? It’s bizarre, truly bizarre!” (Khalifeh 31) What could have saved her from the Arabs’ stones, and from the Israeli harassments? The answer is her identity.

During Zayna's attempt to restructure her subjectivity, Nahleh draws Zayna’s attention to “be careful lest people suspect me of being one,” an Israeli (Khalifeh 31). Is Zayna not “a brunette and aren’t [her] eyes chestnut black, like all Arabs?” (Khalifeh 31) Zayna lives her life with the a secure assumption that her physical complexion, skin’s and eyes’ color are the evidence of her ethnicity and by the same token, her Arab identity. Though she has projected and embodied American culture for a long time, deeply inside herself, she believes she is Arab by essence, and this is how she perceives herself, and it is how she assumes that the world perceives her as well. She is not mistaken by this assumption; these features have been always perceived by the Westerners and the American as signs of deficiencies, deviance, and mystique.
Meanwhile, Nahleh draws on the metaphor of the dress as an exterior face, or an icon that would project and assert Palestinian identity inside the West Bank and Israel. She is not dressed like a Palestinian and could pass for Israeli instead. In this antagonistic context, Palestinians are consciously forced to celebrate their material culture in order to preserve and protect their national identity in their homeland, so Zayna's ignorance of the dress code makes her noticeable in a crowd of Palestinians, yet, I believe that she passes in the two cultures because of the ambiguity in regarding to her cultural identity the blending of Western dress code with oriental complexion that she represents and the difficulty to examine this hybridity from a distance.

Nonetheless, the great-house of Zayna’s uncle’s symbolizes the warm emotions of the Palestinian private sphere to which she is welcome. The intimacy of this house brings Zayna back to the real experience and contact with the collective nature of this society. In a few hours, the house becomes a miniature of the entire society; the architecture of the house and the interior are in contrast to the outside: the dirty roads, the vandalism on the walls, the piles of scrap metals in the streets, the untreated sewage and garbage, the ugly and deteriorated conditions of the outside – all this vanishes as soon as she enters her uncle’s clean, neat house. The warm welcome of her cousin and later on, the gathering of the relatives, friends and neighbors who come from all directions of the city to welcome her bring an end to her experience of sadness and estrangement.

The intimacy of the collective society Zayna experiences is only in the house; each visitor embodies a fragment of the Palestinian society and by the same token, the evolving diversity of Palestinian identity. The garden becomes the setting of the narratives that unfold either by the characters themselves, or the ongoing dialogues. What astonishes Zayna is the sense of loss and
fragmentation that the characters embodied. The crowd consists of her cousins and their families; her uncles’ wife and her cousin, and their Christian friends Violet and her mother.

At this point, a significant issue surfaces regarding education and its impact on the Palestinian perception of self-esteem. As noted previously, education grew in importance for all Palestinians after *al-Nakba* and after the 1967 war as I highlighted in previous chapters. I do not suggest that education was unimportant before diaspora; but after *al-Nakba*, the role of education becomes imperative for the advancement of Palestinians in their countries of refuge. Thus, education becomes a component of Palestinians’ reputation in Arab world and beyond, so being educated has become a significant component of their modern image and subjectivity. Zayna's relatives are no exception. Palestinians who remained in the West Bank were forced to travel abroad, either in search for jobs in the Gulf countries, like Nahelh, her brothers and her friend Violet, or to search for advanced education abroad, like Kamal; however, some were forced to abandon this goal either to deal with familial issues, or due to economic reasons, like Said.

Moreover, Israel policies before the first Intifada facilitated and encouraged young Palestinians to seek work inside Israel as low-skilled labor; these policies attracted mainly the ignorant youths whose unfortunate socio-economic conditions were the main reasons behind the relatively high percentage of semi-literate Palestinians on the eve of the first Intifada. Moreover, beside the significant political and social consequences of the first Intifada in accenting the Palestinian cause and amending the international community’s perspective toward the Palestinian cause, the first Intifada had destructive consequences on the education system in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Closing schools, colleges and universities and suspending the learning process became Israeli officials’ schemes of choice. De-education and de-culturing the new generations of Palestinians are fatal weapons in the hands of the colonizer because an ignorant and illiterate
society is much easier to handle and restrain. Thus, I demonstrate again that Palestinians’
experience with colonization, by all means, is different from other nations’ experiences with
colonization, and by that I mean the British and the French. The British targeted the upper class
colonized people in their colonies and worked to educate them in their schools in order recruit
them, whereas the French were more aggressive in their colonies and worked to eliminate native
languages and cultures, replacing them with French language and culture. As Fanon wrote in
Black Skin, White Masks, speaking the language is appropriating its culture and values. The
Israelis do not use these strategies against the Palestinians, however.

The goal of the Israeli occupation is to eliminate Palestinian culture, and this is a main
reason why Israelis and the Palestinians reject assimilation or the substitution of one language by
the other. Within Israel, promoting Palestinian illiteracy has become a weapon to fight
Palestinian cultural and intellectual advancement. With illiterate Palestinians, the mouthpieces of
the Israeli state can maintain the myth of Palestinian primitiveness prior to the arrival of the
Israelis and, by the same token, Zionist supremacy. In the novel, Zayna has six educated cousins:
Nahlah is a teacher who worked in Kuwait and returned after the first Gulf War; the second is a
civil engineer who studied and works in Germany; the third is a chemical engineer lives and
works in United Arab Emirates; the fourth is a lawyer who also lives in United Arab Emirates
and works for a powerful sheikh. However, the problematic brothers are the fifth and the sixth,
the youngest. I discuss the sixth first, because his education is completely different from the
common education; it is the education of the revolutionary.

The former Fedayeen soldier, Mazen, embodies the nationalist and patriotic characteristic
in the novel. Nevertheless, he is the most defeated and disoriented one. His story is the story of
the most Fedayeen; he had experienced the war and the fighting in Lebanon, and he was “the
victim of a small mine explosion during his resistance years” (Khakifeh 32). As I mentioned before, the Oslo agreement was a failure, and Palestinians did not gain the authentic self-governance over Jericho and Gaza Strip as promised. Returning Fedayeen joined the majority of men inside the West Bank who have been under the subjugation of the occupation; therefore, mostly all men in the novel turn out to be politically and emotionally impotent. Mazen represents the frustrated segment of the ex-revolutionaries in the society who are incapable of forgetting past accomplishments or catastrophes. In Lebanon, Mazen lost his beloved and his cause; his attempts to establish new relationships at home are all in vain. His trauma and sexual impotence are translated in his cynical attitude toward his family and his society. Even his alleged affection towards Violet turns out to be unproductive and destructive to both of them; despite Violet’s attempts to work out this relationship, his depression and sarcastic attitude kills her love for him and pushes her away. The failure of this relationship is the main reason behind Violet’s decision to immigrate to the United States with her mother. However, Zayna has a positive influence on Mazen. Her ambition to learn about and help in restoring Palestinian society is ideologically consistent with Mazen’s goals. Therefore, the idea of an Art and Culture Center suits his ambition. The project becomes the child he has yearned for a long time, and Zayna helps him finish it. Mazen the revolutionist has only experienced defeat, but at this point, he comes to believe that the war against the enemy and the occupation is not a physical one anymore, it is a cultural one. He learned three things from war: defeat, political theories, and poetry. Through his experiences with his unconventional education, the lessons he has learned are that a smart nation, nevertheless, “would stand up after the defeat, … rise and become a nation,” with a commitment to its life and work, and that steadfastness would become their arms against the enemy, helping them to preserve their culture, and resist occupation (Khalifeh 189). Both Zayna’s and Mazan’s
enthusiasm toward this cultural project fit into Fanon’s third phase of intellectual development of native intellectuals, when the intellectuals become part of the masses and cease to be observers. The project changes Mazan, and his enthusiasm towards this project brings back and moderates his fighting spirit. As soon as he discovers that he still has something to give to his country, his anger towards his simple father who could not understand “the revolution and its theories, and how a man of science like Kamal, with a precise mathematical mind, thinks, and how a man like they Bey with a history and deep roots, thinks,” dissolves and is replaced by a resolve to preserve Palestinian culture (Khalifeh 191). This project becomes the force behind Mazan’s development as a character and his optimistic outlook.

Definitely, the Israeli occupation and the deterioration of the peace process have negative impacts on the psychological and physical lives of Palestinians, mainly in the lives of the men who must live in fear and defeat. In The Inheritance, male characters are emasculated and portrayed as being “defeated, embittered, and disillusioned,” among them Mazan who is distinction as a pathetic narcissism figure, “full with self-pity, living on his memories of glorious past in Beirut and crying over his lost love” and revolution (Amireh 764). The frustration that men experience in the public sphere effects their performance and relationships in domestic society. As much as The Inheritance is populated by frustrated female characters, it is also populated by male characters who are bringing all the frustration and oppression they are experiencing at the hands of the occupation or in the exile to their homes and to their families, where women must witness and react to it. Zayna’s great uncle is the head of the family; he is old and sick, but a notable man who represents the simultaneously oppressive and oppressed patriarchal authority in the West Bank. From one side, he is oppressed by the power of the occupation that continues to repress his nation and confiscate Palestinian land, and on the other
side, he is disappointed by the feeble Palestinian National Authority that was supposed to be in charge and take care of the nation; so, after Oslo, Palestinians in the West Bank confront a dichotomy of power from which they cannot benefit. As if aging, illness and the national tragedy are not enough, the uncle is also overwhelmed by the broadening gap between his generation and the younger generation.

Therefore, the diasporic condition that characterizes Palestinian society and family, on a smaller scale, causes the “generation gap” between the family members and between individual Palestinians and their society. After the Oslo accord, the uncle (legitimate Palestinian national authority) is elderly and sick; thus, his children (various Palestinian national groups after Oslo) are able to challenge his authority and cause disunity within the family. This familial discord is another metaphor for the virtual archipelago of Palestinian experience. The politics of the various islands are not always the same. In the novel, examples of this are how the uncle's beloved only daughter has run away and married an old, low-middle class man, and by this, she is not only degrading herself and her reputation, but the reputation of her father and brothers. Additionally, the eldest son, whom the uncle trusts with the family business, turns out to be an idiot and a loser; he ruins the business as well as the family's economic reputation. The novel highlights the dichotomy between the social, economic and cultural enhancement of the expatriates and exiled Palestinian in contrast to local Palestinians who remain in the West Bank and do not experience diaspora as do the professor of anthropology, Zayna and the civil engineer Kamal. They benefit greatly from diaspora, and their values are closer to the traditional values the uncle represents. However, their brothers and sisters have strayed from the right path, in the uncle’s eyes.

Khalifeh touches upon this binary opposition between the cultures of diasporic and local Palestinians. Diasporic Palestinians are seen to be more modern and understanding of cultural
and scientific advancement. Most of the characters who dwell in the West Bank, however, are represented either as regressive, fossilized, or greedy. The local women are either low-class or are only capable of having a large number of children as a way of investing in their accepted gender roles. Zayna’s cousin, Said, is an illiterate who works in the candy business. He is married to a low-class woman, who knows nothing about modern customs or manners, and his five children are undisciplined. Nahleh his sister, who was forced to stay with Said in his apartment in Nablus during the Israeli curfew, is disgusted by the condition of her brother’s household and children. As for her sister-in-law, her “low origin gave her no concept of good manners… The children would delve in the food helping themselves directly from the serving plate, their fingernails too long, their noses running, and their skin chapped from dryness and colds” (Khalifeh 88). The other women in the novel are also represented as degraded old fashioned women from their exterior; though they wear traditional dresses, they are not the original beautiful embroidered Palestinian dresses, and the women show off by the excessive gold they are displaying. “The cousin’s urbanized peasant wife wore a dress with ruffles and a kilogram of gold around her neck. Each of his thickest daughters wore an ounce of gold around her neck” (Khalifeh 34).

As for the men, the novel portrays three types of men: the first type are peasant Palestinians who have abandoned the cultivation of the land, they became occupied by their own individual interests and the privileges they have in the growing bourgeois Palestinian society. Though some have accomplished their materialistic desires, accumulating wealth, they remain backward, irrational, traditional, and even apolitical. Said, for example, is a totally regressive son, husband, and father. As aforementioned, he destroyed the family business despite his privileged origin and upper-middle class family, he had taken a low class wife whom he and his
family call the “bundle,” which means a street girl. To explain Said's life choices, all that is said is that he “was more stupid than she” (Khalifeh 86). His arrogance is unbearable, too, “[h]e talked to people from the tip of his nose and dealt with them snobbishly and haughtily” (Khalifeh 86). He assumes that the family’s prestigious, powerful and glorious name empower him to do so, despite the fact that he is a complete failure.

The second type of man in the novel is represented by the old Abd al-Hadi, the Bey. He represents the developed bourgeois Palestinian as genuine, but worthless. The Bey used to work “as an advisor, consul in embassies in number of capitals” (Khalifeh 59). His family is from the ancient city of Jerusalem, from which he inherited a house that remains a testimony of his high rank that he does not hesitate to brag about. His artificial politeness and hypocrisy do not deceive the audience for long; Zayna’s impression of him summarizes this character who has never honestly served his people or felt their suffering:

The Bey, a man used to elegant circles, greeted us in a stylish and polite manner. He was distinguished in everything, despite his ugliness, his sagging jowls, a conspicuous gold bridge, broken yellow teeth, and a pale wrinkled skin. All in all, he inspired admiration or respect, or both at first, but his conspicuous bragging and unpleasant appearance soon undercut that impression. (Khalifeh 59)

Thus, the Bey and the social class he represents, are judged by their investment in their native society and the services that they could afford to offer. However, as the novel displays, he is far from being part of the collective. This class is seen to invest only for their own individual and personal interests. They live in their ivory towers and detach themselves from their community and people. In the novel, the Bey does not hesitate from taking advantage of Violet’s kindness and hospitality. Secondly, his participation in the project of the Art and Cultural Center with Zayna and Mazan is for no reason but to emphasize his visibility and proximity to the Palestinian National Authority.
The third type of men is the expatriate; this group is represented by Kamal, the German-educated civil engineer and the former revolutionist Mazan. Mazan, as aforementioned, returned with both a physical and psychological scars from Lebanon, he is depressed, furious, and disturbed as a result of his post-traumatic stress disorder symptoms and the political defeat of his faction. For many years, he discharged this anger on his family and society. It is only after he meets Zayna that his attitude changed for the better. The Art and Cultural project becomes the point from which he will fulfill his duty to Palestine. Similar to Mazan is Kamal, who is also under the pressure of the family to settle in the West Bank. Despite years of exile, the brothers’ nostalgia for the land and community they lost persists. Both men are patriotic and would, under normal circumstances, not think twice about serving their nation; however, these patriots have been suffering depression and devastation and have withdrawn from the political and social systems due to the Palestinian National Authority’s weakness and continual failure in managing the peace process negotiations with Israel. In the post-Oslo environment, the PNA fails the peoples’ expectations entirely. Thus, their frustration is not with or about their society, but the society and the family becomes the target for characters who need to discharge this anger. Their sense of defeat overwhelms and impacts their rationality. Mazen is eager to get some support and encouragement that will lead him back to the right path, so his ambitious and enthusiastic response is not strange; Zayna’s idea of the Art and Cultural center becomes the tool that reconciles him with his nation.

The evidence that national and primordial sentiment are much more powerful than any other kinds or types of feelings, even personal frustration and traumas, is demonstrated by Mazan’s attempt to work for his people. Despite his depression and anger, he is an example of a Palestinian nationalist who is the embodiment of both personal and nationalistic rebelliousness.
His social and political rebelliousness is behind the scandal in the novel, in which he exposes and exploits Nahleh’s love affair with the landlord. He is also a womanizer who never considers women's feelings or tries to cover up his clandestine love affairs; he is intrigued by the decadence of the Palestinian revolution in the post-Oslo era and openly criticizes his national authority. Nonetheless, one cannot uproot himself twice, and so Mazen would not fight against the “natural” forces of feelings, social sentiments, and his responsibilities toward the nation. There must be a moment or an epiphany in which he can resume his responsibilities and role as a soldier who is in the service of his country and nation. Zayna’s positive influence on Mazen leads him to realize that he can fight to maintain Palestinian culture at home instead of on the battlefield; in this way, opening the Arts and Cultural Center is his final revolutionary act that reconnects him to his society and allows him to fulfill a duty suited for the new circumstances of their lives.

As for Zayna, her ambition for learning about Palestinian society and her desire to participate in the development of the people she missed during exile is an instrument that will enable her to restructure her subjectivity. To both characters, the art exhibition project suggests the rebirth of the nation that they have lost in exile, and it is a substitute for the progeny that will save the lineage of the nation’s history from decadence amidst political corruption and incompetence. Therefore, both Zayna’s and Mazan’s enthusiasm toward this cultural project is indicative of them experiencing Fanon’s third phase of the colonized intellectual's development.

Kamal, Mazen’s brother, is the industrialist and highly capitalist scientist who returns to the West Bank to navigate the business landscape. While Zayna and Mazan, the humanists, think about how their humanistic revival would enhance Palestinian society, Kamal is more concerned about the scientific and industrial promises his homeland could offer him, and by the same token,
how his community could benefit from his knowledge and science. Thus, in order to finance his project, he does not hesitate to suggest the selling of the family’s land. Kamal, by breaking this taboo, represents the selfish face of the returning Palestinians who spread capitalist ideology they acquired in the West. The novel highlights this clash of values between what is expected in the community and what the returning businessmen bring in hopes of making improvements, the point being that their greed is not productive, as they believe it to be. Zayna says:

The returnees would usually bend down and touch the earth with their forehead, and declare before the cameras and the journalists with tears in their eyes, that the homeland was like the lap of a mother and without it they were nothing…. Between invitations they would go to the city to study the conditions of the market…. They would ask about the price of the land, the cost of a dunum, that of an apartment, the rent for a storage place, and a shop…. They wondered whether people here thought the returnees owned a bank, or printed banknotes …. While some gave their blood, they gave money, and the revolution took away everything. Now, they wanted a share in the cake. (Khalifeh 95)

The cake is the land in this metaphor, and all that is left is that which the Israeli confiscations have left to the Palestinians. Now, the returning Palestinians come to share the land, and they do not see a problem with usurping control over land that their specific families did not struggle to remain within. Returning Palestinians are confined to land that traditionally and still belongs to those who dwelled upon it, so, whereas purchasing land is not looked down upon by default, the purchase of land from poor locals by wealthy expatriates is considered to be impolite at best. At worst, expatriates are purchasing land before former residents can arrive to reclaim it. Kamal’s idea of investing in the neighborhood has been twisted by his acceptance of the profit motive and foreign models of doing business. The perception is that Kamal is ready to participate in the development of his native country only by using his knowledge, not by using his money – others see that he uses his money for his own advancement. In responding to his father’s anxiety toward his philosophy towards the land and his right to it he says: “Father, why do you want to turn it into a tragedy? This is reality, this is life. did you want us to give our money and our capital to
the occupier?” (Khalifeh 95) Thus, Kamal, is the product of exile society, and by this I mean the Western capitalist society, that places more value in profit than any sentimental investment in the land.

I have touched, in the first chapter, upon the symbolic value of the land to the Palestinian and how it symbolizes Palestinians’ dignity and authentic existence in Palestine; though long years of occupation has dismantled old generation’s authority in the issue of land, the young generations are ambiguous toward Palestinian ownership of the land and the land’s products. By no means would the old generation tolerate any attempt or suggestion of selling land for any reason, even if those voices were those of their own children. The father’s response summarizes the genuine value of the land to all Palestinians:

This crazy, at my age and after all I’ve seen and endured for the land, do you want me to sell it on the open market? I would rather die. As long as I’m alive on this earth, this land will not be sold. This farm has been in the family from father to son, it belongs to us, to the Hamdan family, whoever sells it will incur my anger. I will curse whoever sells it from my grave. (Khalifeh 95)

While Kamal evaluates the land’s value from a capitalist/materialist point of view, the father and Mazan are more concerned with the spiritual and even sacred value of the land. The land is the symbol of the historical existence and bond with the fatherland. Though, these expatriates should value the land the most because they have experienced what it means to be uprooted from the land, it seems that the influence of their education and absorption of capitalist ideology has changed their values regarding the significance of land ownership. Though the novel highlights this segment of Palestinians who have completely assimilated into Western culture, it also underscores the powerful Palestinians who stand against this intruding ideology. Palestine is ready to sacrifice its own children, or suffer the loss of children, rather than losing land. However, as soon as the issue of land is mentioned, the father stands against the idea, and the
family puts its private problems aside, uniting to protect their ancestor’s land. They force Kamal to find another avenue through which to solve his financial problem.

Land is extremely significant; accumulating and buying land brings fame to Palestinian families and to the individual as well; this is true despite a Palestinian man’s past, or family background and profession. Land is a criterion used to evaluate one’s accomplishments and wealth in Palestinian society. The land puts Zayna’s father in the forefront of his society; upon his return to his village, Wadi al-Rihan, he bought a lot of land; “The man who used to carry the basket for the Christians in Bab al-Khalil, became somebody!” (Khalifeh 35) Zayna’s father's accomplishment is not what he did in America, or increasing his amount of money; it is what he does with the money. Despite the Israeli measurements and on continuing confiscating of the Palestinian lands and farms, these practices have never impeded Palestinians from buying and expanding the lands they own. Zayna’s father bought lands in Nablus, “owns … a hill on the way to Sinjel,” and what worth more is the two dunums he got “on the road to Jerusalem, near the airport. When the problem is solved and the airport opens…. Its value will climb as high as airplane” (Khalifeh 36). Thus, Palestinians do not hesitate to buy land even in contested sites like Jerusalem, or even in places that are under Israeli control, near settlements, or land that lies under construction near the apartheid Wall.

However, there is still more to being Palestinian than owning land in Palestine, returning to the West Bank, or being one of the Palestinians who live in diaspora. The identity is constantly evolving as Hall emphsizes, and this makes Palestinians truly exceptional. Moreover, Bhabha argues that there is a need to think beyond narratives of originary and initial subjectivities and to focus on those moments or processes that are produced in the articulation of cultural differences. These ‘in-between’ spaces provide the terrain for elaborating strategies of
selfhood - singular or communal - that initiate new signs of identity, and innovative sites of collaboration, and contestation, in the act of defining the ideal of society itself’ (Nation and Narration 2). Moreover, it is in the emergence of the interstices—the overlap and displacement of domains of difference—that the intersubjective and collective experience of nationness, community interest, or cultural value are negotiated.

How are subjects formed? The novel demonstrates Bhabha’s claim that terms of cultural engagement, whether antagonistic (with the occupation or the generation gap) or affiliative (the intimacy of belonging), are produced performatively. The representation of difference must not be read hastily as the reflection of pre-given ethnic or cultural traits set in the fixed tablet of tradition. Thus, I would like to take Bhabha’s paradigm and expand it to show how in the novel the different orientation of the novel's characters demonstrates how cultural values are negotiated not only in diaspora but in their native place as well (inside the domestic sphere). Moreover, Bhabha’s idea of the interstitial passage between fixed identification opens up the possibility of a cultural hybridity that entertains difference without an assumed or imposed hierarchy (Nation and Narration 4). In this sense the Palestinian society in the West Bank is analogous to the painful labor that Palestine has to experience for the sake of the birth of the modern Palestinian consciousness. This clash between the generations, the local and the expatriates, and even between genders is a necessity to accommodate the entire Palestinian archipelago in one nation, and the phenomenon highlights how the configuration of time and space has influenced Palestinian identity.

The characters are distracted by their personal experiences and the domestic obstacles created by the Israeli occupation, the malfunctioning of the Palestinian Authority, and the generation gap, all of which have proved that their ambitions to “become a human being, a son
of Adam…. [to] live free of worries, anxieties, and pain,” are overwhelming (Khalifeh 184). These characters are driven by their desire to reclaim their lost heritage and, by the same token, their fragmented identities. Their eternal struggle with and antagonistic relationship toward the Israeli occupation are maintained throughout their lives. Meanwhile, their techniques evolve. After Oslo, Palestinians are facing challenges in two areas: the first is that of destabilizing the presence of the occupation in their land and lives, and the other challenge is the advancement of the current regressive political, economic and social structure of the West Bank community. Mazan’s and Zayna’s drive to establish the Art and Culture Center is prolonged; Kamal finds patrons for his project from among the locals, wealthy Palestinians who would sponsor the project for the sake of profit. Despite Mazan's success, the project is doomed to fail because the occupation is “building a new checkpoint to mark the borders between the past and the present, between an occupation that had lasted years and an occupation that will last forever” (Khalifeh 183). Nonetheless, Palestinians continue to innovate and represent themselves, navigating through the occupation and striving to achieve existence as a nation-state. The “fragmented” collective of Palestinians, as illustrated in the novel, despite their different affiliations and backgrounds, come together in the inaugural ceremony to celebrate the Art and Culture Center project. Even if it is a false sense of liberation, they want to experience the sense of “liv[ing] a normal life, like the rest of the world” and be visible to this world (Khalifeh 193). Thus, Palestinians, particularly in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, are very conscious and share “unstable, uncertain, and unpromising” lives along with diasporic Palestinians (Khalifeh 195). These shared conditions form a shared exceptional Palestinian experience; while those inside the West Bank and Gaza Strip are under an occupation that keeps drawing Israel's borders inside Palestine, forcing people out of their homes, the Palestinian refugees are experiencing similar
conditions outside Palestine, as demonstrated in the previous chapters. Refugee camps are similar to the neighborhoods of the West Bank in that the houses inside have begun to resemble ghettos. As long as these conditions persist, Palestinians will cling to nationalism and their national identity as their most valued and enduring possession.

Yet, the question that arises is: what is behind the Palestinians’ will to carry on this struggle? There is no doubt that these characters are challenging two worlds, the world of the occupation on one hand, and the world of being a self-made nation on the other hand. However, the political situation impacts the characters in diverse ways that reveal more about the characters motivations. Kamal, the engineer, decides to withdraw from managing a sewage project; in response to his decision, his family and the local community attempt to change his mind by provoking him, and even, as he thinks, by “blackmail[ing] him in the name of the homeland, patriotism, his expertise, and modernization” (Khalifeh 187). Mazen leads the counterpart argument against his own brother, reminding Kamal of his own words and complaints about “the bitter taste of exile in the West” and his feeling of alienation being “like a branch cut from its tree,” of the “estrangement,” the feeling of being “tasteless and meaningless, with no aim and without roots” (Khalifeh 188). There is no doubt that Kamal’s experience is similar to Zayna’s experience, and that their longing for community and belonging has brought them back to the West Bank.

Unlike Zayna, Kamal is confronted by issues of human rights abuses, and he cannot cope with this, even if he must do it in order to reintegrate himself into his native culture. Kamal, as a scientist, believes that it is the duty of society to provide him with an adequate environment in which to work, research, and do business; he demands justice and the rule of law. However, Kamal is impotent to establish or even to participate in setting up or defending Palestinian law.
The novel portrays different attitudes between the humanists and the scientist regarding their authentic participation in the building of the nation, yet the novel also demonstrates the difficulties that the long residence in exile produced and how one’s subjectivity is constructed and influenced by the surrounding culture. Primordial sentiments remain lethal weapons against the occupation. This primordial feeling of kinship empowers the characters to pass Palestinian nationhood onto their children. As I stated in my first chapter, in Palestinian society, the well-being of the nation or the country is placed above any other individual interests or desires; no one would tolerate the exchange of nation’s or the society’s welfare for the individual. So, the dream of returning to the fatherland is more complicated than crossing the borders and reaching one’s old village, place of birth, or grandfather’s land. The novel demonstrates how different factors are in play in Palestinian society, and how the regressive and degrading conditions of the Palestinians in the West Bank impacts both returning Palestinians and natives in different ways. The old generation always dreams of ending the exile for their children, and of returning home to use their wealth accumulated in diaspora to help rebuild Palestine.

On the other hand, the returning Palestinians also have to come down to earth, and so do their dreams; one simply cannot return with money and buy independence. Palestinian society in the West Bank is willing to welcome its children with open arms; however, the children themselves have to make the necessary adjustments to “adapt” to their native culture. This is another instance of Bhabha’s hybridity, but now it is a kind of hybrid hybridity, where identity is forged while adjusting and rethinking a second liminal space between cultures, but as a rift between two native societies! Conceiving of Palestine in this way is to re-draw the borders internally, between Palestinians who lived in diaspora and those who remained on the land. By later blurring this boundary, the Palestinians who have returned can fully reintegrate themselves
into their native cultures. When Palestinians return, however, the chronotopic archipelago will be stacked upon itself, and everyone therein will have to meet everyone else, combine their memories and experiences as a collective, and learn to be Palestinian together once again.

Though Zayna is considered the protagonist of the novel, and although her quest for identity and belonging is the main subject matter, her interaction with other characters and her narration of their stories are not less significant than her dilemma. Palestinians share a collective experience of suffering, dispossession and displacement, so they, in turn, also have a collective experience of identity crisis.

The novel demonstrates that Zayna’s real inheritance is her bond with her family and community rather than a material inheritance. At the end, Zayna returns to America, leaving her young brother at the care of his patriotic, traditional grandmother. She trusted her uncle to hold the land she inherited from her father; it is at this point that she understands that her real inheritance turned out to be her authentic experience of a Palestinian family and community. Zayna returns back to the U.S. empowered by her unshaken sense of identity with a people and a place that are real and no longer childhood dreams and images.

My uncle drove me to the airport and said, reproachfully, ‘It isn’t acceptable that you’re going away and leaving us.’
I wiped away my tears for the first time in many years; I had recovered my ability to feel.
I said affectionately, “I’ll be back, I’ll return, by God I will.” (Khalifeh 251)

This novel, ultimately, asks Palestinians to imagine the future of a Palestinian nation-state and to see how the Palestinians must re-imagine themselves when they return to the West Bank and Gaza Strip. The novel also brings to the surface the complexity of Palestine’s diasporic society, and the plural or multicultural Palestinian identities that years of diaspora and exile have created. I would conclude with Stuart Hall’s emphasize on the “significant difference which constitute ‘what we really are’; or rather- since history has intervened- ‘what we have become’.”
Hall reconciles the tension between imposed identities and self-cultivated ones in his description of a progressive but internally evaluated identity. Palestinians, as Hall has described, must find who they really are after witnessing and enduring the intervention of histories that they did not write and did not invite into their story. As the novel illustrates, most of the characters, the expatriates Zayna, Mazen, Kamal even Nahlah and Violet are experiencing a dilemma of making the right decisions and sacrifices in order to reestablish themselves in their native society. Therefore, the West Bank is the catalyst of the archipelago that must make the necessary social and political eruptions to bring these smaller-larger islands to the center, and to mend the bonds loosened by the passage of time. The West Bank has established an equilibrium that keeps the entire Palestinian archipelago balanced.
CHAPTER 5
CONCLUSION

The analysis of Palestinian identity and nationalism in this dissertation has uncovered tenacity, a willingness to survive, and an eagerness to unite a diverse and diasporic people are behind what may, at first, be perceived as ordinary nationalism. Palestinian nationalism has endured without a government, state, and land for more than six decades. It is clear that Palestinian nationalism is an exceptional concept, and that Palestinian exceptionalism is a developing component of Palestinian identity that will, inevitably, be part of the ideology of a future Palestinian nation-state, and I would argue that a new “melting pot” would be a necessity in the Palestinian nation-state. I believe that the question of the existence of Palestinian nationalism has been resolved by the impressive writings and efforts of many prominent Palestinian and Western scholars, and that their works have rebutted the Zionist myth regarding the nonexistence of Palestine as a national entity. The presentation of identity as a product of trauma spanning space and time in Palestinian literature is further evidence of the accuracy of the research conducted by all the scholars I have cited, and others as well. The works I have analyzed are art that reflect the true history of the Palestinian people, and they may be remembered as seminal works around which the folk history of Palestine takes shape in the future. Still, Palestinians’ narratives, as James L. Gelvin asserts, resemble all other national movements that “construct historical narrative that traces the unbroken lineage of a group—a nation—over time” (6). To both the Zionists and the Palestinians, historical facts are the foundations of their claims to nationhood and imagined communities, and both, through time, have enshrined these facts, romanticized, and even mythologized these narratives in articulating
their national consciousnesses. Both sides of the conflict, Palestinian and Israeli, claim authentic historic rights to establishing nation-states in the historical land of Zion. However, the imagining and reimagining of themselves and their states in this land have been contested over time. The cause of the “problem of Palestine,” in the most basic sense, is that although the United Nation Resolution of Partition 181, in 1947, described the borders of two states, only one has ever existed, and that state is Israel. To this date, Israel is the only state in the world with no written Constitution and no defined borders; in other words, Israel remains an irridentalist state. Therefore, when one nation’s territory is claimed by another as being “unredeemed” in a historic and political sense, ideas of national membership become unstable (Mayhall 270). Therefore, all Zionists are, by necessity, irridentalists. This officially amorphous geography demonstrates the Zionist commitment to stretching its boundaries as far as possible, whether via invasions and wars, or through building unauthorized settlements. The 1967 war and Israel invasions of Lebanon in 1982 and 2006, are genuine examples of Israel’s unlimited ambition to expand the territory under the current state of Israel from Egypt to the Euphrates, creating the Greater Israel of the Zionists’ dreams. This project is to be completed at the expense of Arab governments and nations, and at the expense of Palestinians in particular. However, the stateless condition of the Palestinians has left them unable to claim any borders in accordance with United Nations Resolution 181, giving them similar license to reinvent themselves and their nation without considering current borders. In these moments, Palestinians invented and claimed their own irridentalist politics to confront and contradict Zionist policies. However, Palestinians in their diaspora have mastered the art of imagining and reimaging themselves as a nation in the continually shrinking and contested land of Historical Palestine. This unique juxtaposition with the Zionist narrative is another reason why the Palestinian narrative is exceptional – it is, quite
literally, an inversion of the Zionist narrative. Zionist actions have, ironically, produced the diasporic, nation-seeking state of existence in the Palestinian people in an attempt to remedy the Jewish people's experience of similar conditions and to satisfy Jewish ambitions to organize their diasporic nation into a nation-state.

Definitely, several nations in Africa, Asia, and South America, and even North America have had diasporic experiences; however, never before has the indigenous status of a people been denied in order to deprive them of their nation's territory. Thus, Palestinian experience is unique because Palestinians must continue to struggle to be seen and cannot reclaim their status as indigenous people of Zion until they are recognized.

Though Palestine has no borders, this unstable condition forces Palestinians to assert that they exist as a united nation when they encounter others in the communities they have entered in diaspora. Thus, the transformation that has come about in the fabric of Palestinian society is also exceptional; different lenses are necessary to comprehend the uniqueness of Palestinian experience of nationalism and their articulation of cultural consciousness because their identities are amorphous and consciously performative. Political, social, economic, regional, and historical exigencies have shaped the web of relations, conflicts, challenges, ties and bonds that disturb, influence and tailor Palestinian subjectivity to suit each moment of their collective existence.

As I stated in my introduction, *al-Nakba*, the catastrophe, is a dramatic historical, political and social event that marks the disturbance of the Palestinian societal fabric, scarring it irreparably and transforming it into the Palestinian identity of the modern era. Through my analysis of literature and application of theory and personal experience, I have established that Palestine is a nation of peasants and farmers that was violently transformed into a nation of vagabonds and wanderers who sought answers in education and community organization in
accordance to modern procedures. After World War II, Palestine had no powerful support or patrons as influential as the allies Israel has enjoyed. Palestinians could not choose to simply side with the former U.S.S.R. during the years of the cold war. Therefore, their choices were limited to continuing to fight, or to submitting to their destiny as planned by the great powers of the time, the British and the United States. The international community gambled that Palestinians would be absorbed in “the melting pot” of Arab societies, or for those who were more fortunate and moved to the West, it was thought that they would be assimilated into and absorbed by the large hegemonic cultures, and so the story of the Palestinians will end. The scholars and literary evidence I have gathered in this dissertation testify to how dramatically the British plan to partition Palestine failed, and how the international community failed the Palestinian people by turning a blind eye to their plight.

Nevertheless, the resistance Palestinians have shown over the years proves that they will not submit to any scheme to dispossess them. On the contrary, the consequences of international negligence, political and military conflicts, and collective penalties are that the United Nations will one day be challenged by this powerless, dispersed nation. Palestinians after al-Nakba were overwhelmed by their collective sense of hopelessness and extortion, but in the following years, even up to the time of the writing of this dissertation, Palestinians are still under the pressure of this overwhelming sense of injustice and humiliation, yet their confidence is still growing. I believe and agree with Ernest Renan’s assertion that “having suffering together… [and that] common suffering is greater than happiness” and how “national sorrows are more significant than triumphs because they impose obligation and demand a common effort” (17). Thus, this collective feeling of injustice and abundance is the force behind Palestinians’ collective effort to reclaim their nation's land. It is also true that within this context of continuous tragedies and
disasters, the coming Palestinian generations find themselves ready to make repeated sacrifices in order to achieve the nation's goals, and they have proved to do so far. Thus, Palestinians are guided by a common reverence for the romantic and happy past memories that illuminate their present and motivate them to carry on their struggle for sake of a similarly happy future.

Palestinian scholars and Western scholars have explored Palestinian nationalism as a phenomenon similar to the emergence and the articulation of nationalism in the Western world, but this is not enough. What this dissertation demonstrates is that the contradictions, obstacles, negative sentiments, and challenges that Palestinian people encounter daily actually sustain their sense of nationalism and cultural identity. Palestinians are an exceptional people because they cannot be erased. They refuse to be erased.

The idea behind this dissertation came from my personal experience, that of being a Palestinian-Jordanian, which could be considered a segment of the collective experience of Palestinian people according to the chronotopic archipelago model of the nation. In Palestinian communities, the lines between the individual’s story and the collective narrative of the nation are blurred and cease to exist. One Palestinian story is another Palestinian story, and the only difference between them would be the rotation of the axis or the orbits where the identical actions and events have occurred or are occurring along the chronotope. Thus, since 1948, the unfortunate Palestinians have been experiencing the same disasters within the chronotope’s expanding trajectory of events. This reciprocal intersection between time and geographical space is behind the construction of my concept of the Palestinian Archipelago and its situation along the chronotope. Furthermore, the model is designed to help celebrate the uniqueness of Palestinians’ “know-how” of forging individual and collective cultural consciousness while protecting one collective identity anchored in Palestine.
Modern theorists of cosmopolitanism and globalization do not hesitate to express their abhorrence of nationalism as the main cause behind wars and genocides in modern times. They are looking forward to nationalism’s annihilation by the modern phenomena of globalization and cosmopolitanism, and seek to advance a humanist idea of people as citizens of the world. Meanwhile, theorists of nationalism admit the elusiveness of a decisive definition of nationalism is a challenging obstacle, as Anthony Smith asserts. In my study of Palestinian Nationalism, I have had to depend on the primordial notion of nationalism because it arises from the texts time and again, independently of all other nation-sustaining strategies. Primordial nationalism seems to exist among Palestinians simply because the people believe in it and experience it not as a valid reality, but as a default assumption about themselves and their experiences.

As Khalidi argues, Palestinians have some “success in asserting their national identity inside and outside Palestine, and they have consistently failed over the years to create for themselves a space where they are in full control or are fully sovereign” (10). Thus, the Palestinian experience of nationalism was and still is “largely extra-territorial (without territorial sovereignty), and therefore always lived [as] a sort of substitute life somewhere other than Palestine,” as Said asserts (QOP, xxviii). Therefore, the archipelago model I have developed is very similar to established descriptions of Palestine according to Palestinian scholars. The dispersion and constant relocation of Palestinian communities in different locales forced these people to search for a virtual center that would reflect the image of a nation-state, or perform its function.

There is no doubt that the figure of Yasir Arafat and the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) have become the public images of the Palestinian political body. Moreover, the different parties and factions under the PLO umbrella did espouse primordial sentiments and
demonstrated the importance of ethnic bonds in the lives of the diasporic Palestinians. “Ethnic ties are a matter of loyalty, of pride, of location, of belonging, of refuge, of identity, trust, acceptance and security,” that analogize the unconditional affinity and devotion love of the family (Cohen 5). The nation of Palestine is imagined as a greater family, so, despite the continuous expansion of the Palestinian archipelago since the latter half of the twentieth century, Palestinians remain focused on Palestine. Today, Palestinians lament the days of the late Yasir Arafat and his fellows in this time of division in which Palestine is enduring the ramifications of Palestinian socio-political decadence.

The first novel I analyzed, Dancing Arabs, was written by Palestinian-Israeli male writer Sayed Kashua. In the second chapter, I moved to another island in the archipelago, the kingdom of Jordan. The second novel is A Compass for the Sunflower, written by Liana Badr, a Palestinian female writer. The third novel, The Inheritance, is written by Sahar Khalifeh, also a prominent female Palestinian writer. Though the larger portion of events in the third novel takes action in the West Bank, I have placed it the third in the sequence of the chapter because it deals with an American-Palestinian protagonist who has forged and constructed her cultural identity and consciousness in the United States of America, who decided to visit her fatherland in her thirties. This novel illustrates to what extent the Palestinian archipelago has expanded, simultaneously, it also demonstrates how elasticity and resilience are distinctive features of modern Palestinian people.

As mentioned earlier, primordial nationalism, or the perennial phenomenon is the base from which I analyze and discuss the Palestinian experience of nationalism and the collective concept of nationhood, since this approach has a great role in “highlighting the role of perceptions and beliefs in guiding people’s reactions” (Ozkirimli 213). Anthony D. Smith is a
pioneer in articulating theories of primordial nationalism who claims “belief in the ‘persistence’ and ‘durability’ of ethnic ties” (The Ethnic Origins of Nation, 16). Smith argues that the basis of modern national cultural consciousness are the traditional values, symbols, and myths and that cultures “tend to be exceptionally durable under “normal” vicissitudes and to persist over many generations, even centuries” (16), and by this, Smith is describing how primordial attitudes are setting the platform for elites to build on established norms, values and myths to construct and aggregate individuals around the notion of a nation. Since myths, values, traditions and symbols are what underline the individuals and the collective perception of their collective subjectivity, this would be translated into the practices that the individual upholds in their diasporic communities. Meanwhile, this action would distinguish them and preserve the essence of their cultural identity whether on the individual level or the collective level. As Said states in his interview with Salman Rushdie about Palestinian collective practicing of the traditional customs, the Palestinian’s conduct even makes them distinct from other Arab communities by having a distinct national cuisine (POS, 115-16).

The Palestinian experience of displacement, dispossession and dispersion deprived them of simple dignity for many decades. Thus, to Palestinians, national identity is the main tool that “guarantees status with dignity to every member” of Palestinians, and the experience of Palestinian solidarity and support for the Fedayeen in Jordan and Lebanon can be attributed to this faith in the necessity of national dignity (Greenfel 49). Palestinians’ experience of their refugee status impacts their psychological and inner integrity and, where it once deprived them of self-confidence and dignity, identity is now a source of pride. Thus, the nationalism and political identity that is embodied by the PLO offers Palestinian a vessel through which to fight and restore their sense of rights to self-respect and human dignity.
I would like to organize the outcomes of this dissertation into three categories according to Frantz Fanon’s model of the three phases of the development of the native intellectual consciousness and to show how they are persistent in the literature. I have been observing the greater revelation of Palestinian cultural identity, and I have come to see how Fanon’s model is applicable to understanding not only the individual perception of identity but also the society's identity as a whole. Moreover, I found William Newman’s social theory in American “melting pot,” assimilation, amalgamation and pluralism corresponding to Fanon’s theory of the colonized intellectual consciousness: assimilation, disturbance and resistance. Therefore, in the following paragraphs I am going to summarize my findings for each chapter according to the aforementioned models to present the outcomes of this dissertation and my discovery of a larger version of contemporary Palestinian national identity.

In the second chapter titled, “The ‘Real” Experience of Being Trapped Inside and Outside of Palestinian Consciousnesses” in Sayed Kashua’s Dancing Arabs, we see that a distinctive characteristic of a Palestinian sense of cultural identity in the contemporary era is a journey of exploration. The historical, political and social circumstances that Palestinians have been encountering since al-Nakba impacts their sense of identity, and, by the same token, the production of Palestinian national discourse. I started with this novel for three important reasons: the first reason is that the remaining Palestinian Arabs and Arab villages inside Israel represent the essence of Palestinian identity and evidence of their rights and indigenous status in Palestine; villages are the centers to which the first generation of diasporic Palestinians have dreamed of returning; the second reason is that Palestinian Arabs in Israel are the foremost segment in the Palestinian archipelago who had been challenged by the overwhelming policies of cultural cleansing by Israel. The third reason is the fact that for more than forty years, from 1948
(al-Nakba) to 1994 (The Israel-Jordan Peace Treaty), Palestinians inside Israel were in a virtual quarantine from the Arab world and segregated by the Israeli society. This isolation has destructively affected their sense of Palestinian identity and left them hunting for a cohesive sense of a genuine political identity that would meet their aspirations and represent them. The common denominator in the three novels I have analyzed is that they have autobiographical elements. Most Palestinian writers have a first hand experience in life with some of the historical and socio-political events that the nation has experienced overall. Thus, as I stated in the chapter, Sayed Kashua’s unnamed, anti-hero does not just represent Kashua’s experience of being an intellectual in a hostile Jewish society, he is an archetype of many young Palestinians who have internalized the “inferiority complex” and find themselves prepared to take the “journey to Jewishness.” The similarity between this group of Palestinian journey to Jewishness and the Africans/Blacks “journey to whiteness” is astonishing. And Fanon’s Black Skin, White Masks was my aid in exploring the dilemma of the protagonist in this novel. For the purpose of discussion, I find it necessary to introduce Fanon’s theory of the “inferiority complex” that exemplifies the force behind the protagonist’s determination to take this impossible journey to Jewishness. Fanon diagnoses the symptom of self-division that the black man encounters during his residence in the white society that coerces him to take different measurements in order to become “whiter,” or, more human. The colonizer has always targeted the essence of the colonized identity, whether it is changing his language, culture, or familial belonging that would radically change his political and cultural entity. My findings in this novel prove Fanon’s theory of how language is a very significant medium that informs the individual's perspective of his subjectivity. In order to cope with his new situation as a student in a Jewish boarding school, the novel's protagonist focuses on the language, since knowledge of language is the medium used to
integrate in any society. Nevertheless, the protagonist’s assimilation into Jewish society turns out to be impossible, and a genuine experience of belonging to this society is a mirage. He only wakes up to the fact that no matter what he does, he will remain different and an outsider to Israeli society. Fanon asserts that the psychological consequences of assimilation into the colonized culture are always destructive to the native since the colonizer’s society is shut down in the face of its own victims. On the other side, the reaction of the native society is similar to that of the host. When the individual rejects his own family and native society, the ultimate outcome is a similar attitude or reaction by the native society, and that is: alienation and isolation. Thus, one becomes a “local exile” in his native culture and society.

I believe that this segment of Palestinian people, the “local exiles,” suffer from W. E. B. Du Bois’ notion of “double consciousness.” The dilemma of dreaming to belong to a society that you are “shut out from [it] world by a vast veil,” though, on the contrary to Du Bois’, our protagonist has an overwhelming desire to tear down that veil, but his attempts are futile (8). Reminders from the older generation are items that remain a powerful force that sustains the past alive in the youth's consciousness, whether it is desired or not. The question that will remain in the consciousness of the young generation is similar to the blacks youth's question: “Why did God make me an outcast and stranger in my own house?”( Du Bois 8) Palestinians in Israel will always encounter a colonizer “which yields him no true self-consciousness, but only lets him see himself through the revelation of the other world,” and it is not a picturesque one (Du Bois 9). Palestinians in Israel are always under the pressure of this double-consciousness, “the sense of always looking at one’s self through the eyes of the others, of measuring one’s soul by the tape of a world that looks on in amused contempt and pity” (Du Bois 9). And so the Palestinians in
Israel are left with two unreconciled souls and identities. Despite their envied status, (they, at least, remain in their homeland) their quest for political and cultural identity is ongoing.

However, my view is that the denial of an Israeli identity to the Palestinians in Israel serves to reignite the fire of national consciousness, one’s pride in being Palestinian, love for one’s community and people, and by the same token, Palestinian political consciousness. Though they have tried to wipe out and brainwash those Palestinians who seek education in Israeli educational institutions, the land, the refugees, the nation in diaspora, and memories of injustice will remain the forces that will keep strengthening the bonds between different generations and communities in the Palestinian archipelago. Another important dimension that the scope of this dissertation could not cover is the demographic dimension. No matter how many Jewish people from around the world Israel will attract to the Holy Land, Palestinians inside Israel, as much as outside, have a very high fertility and productiveness rate, so I have no doubt that the political system and structure in Israel will be obliged to adjust for a genuine political and social inclusion of the Palestinians in the state of Israel. Though cultural disorientation might be a marked characteristic of young Palestinians inside Israel, the same trauma that produces this disorientation is also experienced by Palestinians in the West Bank and by those in diaspora. This disorientation is not permanent, since the original components of Palestinian identity constitute a powerful bond between Palestinians because they still place a high value on their heritage, suffering, and above all their land. The novel’s statement is clear: Palestinian generations will always have to choose between identities and must be adaptable to some degree in global society, but Palestinian identity is cemented in literature, history, memory and the continuous struggle for redress, justice and rights, and so it will always be available as long as the narrative is preserved and mobilized, and as long as Palestinian literature and
discourse produce and reproduce everyday struggle and collective sense of Palestinian cultural consciousness.

While Palestinians’ struggle inside Israel is heavily informed by their struggle for social and cultural identity outside Israel, in my third chapter, the case of Palestinian-Jordanian, my findings show that their struggle is informed by their quest for a political identity. Many different factors are in play in this island, as I discussed in the chapter. The act of annexation of the West Bank to the Transjordan in 1950, the 1967 war, and the Black September war in 1970 and their devastating consequences on the two nations are some main points of reference. However, it is worth mentioning for the purpose of contrasting between Palestinians in Israel and Palestinians in Jordan the fact that both states have given the right to the Palestinian communities to have dual Jordanian and Israeli citizenships when acquiring their passports. Israel was coerced into making this allowance by the Jordanian government, which insisted that Palestinians needed Jordan passports as a jurisdictional attachment that had been necessitated by the annexation act. Moreover, contrary to the Israeli maneuvers to prevent any authentic assimilation or integration into Israeli society, the Jordanian government has desperately attempted to absorb Palestinians into Jordan culture. Furthermore, while Israel has desperately isolated and suppressed Palestinians inside its territories, in Jordan, Palestinians do not encounter any attempt to erase the Palestinian culture or tradition. This might be attributed to huge similarities between the two cultures, or the social, religious and traditional values of the people living along the two Banks of Jordan River. These similarities are self-asserted, and, except for Black September, Jordanians and Palestinians have historically been on good terms with one another. On the social and cultural level, I find myself coming to terms with asserting that amalgamation is the right term to portray the existing relationship between the two communities on the social level. As
intermarriage combines the two groups, the notable feature is that the intermarriage between the two communities does not produce a new group or race to the Jordanian society as much as it combines and brings the two communities together with a significant bond, that of blood, and synthesizes it with the other already existing bonds such as language and religion.

Nevertheless, with such an optimistic image of the relations between the two communities, it has been for a long time very problematic and complex on the political scene. Sovereignty, political representation, the idea of Jordan as an alternative Palestinian homeland, political hegemony, political and economic power, the finality of Jordan’s domination always informs the relationships between the two communities. The Palestinians are overwhelmed with a sense of lacking a political identity and political leadership that will acknowledge and protect their dignity and pride, defend them against any political, social and economic injustices. Without this political identity, they do not have a meaningful political representation within Jordan, and so they remain vulnerable to the wishes and demands of Jordanians tribal fabrics and power, who are fully represented in Jordan’s political system. So, though they have Jordanian citizenship and passports, that does not mean that the influential, but marginalized Palestinians are first class citizens with access to all services and positions in the state apparatuses, and it does not mean that they are fully absorbed by Jordan’s society and political system. Palestinians still would be distinguished by their grandfathers’ and father’s place of birth and absent/present political identity and origin, and by the same token, their loyalty to the political system is always suspect. However, the British and Israeli idea of Jordan as the “alternative homeland” for Palestinians caused a reaction among the Jordanians that, motivated by their compassion for Palestinians and unwillingness to allow them to fail to reclaim their identities, caused the Jordanian government to make efforts to permanently distinguish Palestinians from Jordanians.
After and during Black September, some Jordanians had reason to greet Palestinians with suspicion; the Jordanians supported efforts at Palestinian independence, but not at what they perceived to be their own expense.

In the fourth chapter, the characters and their identities depict a more current version of the Palestinian identity in crisis; it also proposes solutions. As Ozkirimli states, “Dominant constructions of nationhood are continually challenged by alternative, often conflicting, definitions. The individual, then has to make two choices: he has to decide not only to which community to belong, but also which particular communal definition to endorse” (221). The Palestinians depicted in *The Inheritance* exhibit a willingness to sacrifice for the sake of collective goals and a collective inventiveness that establishes, re-evaluates, and reinterprets these goals as the community moves forward in time, whether as a whole, or as several different pieces, each revolving around and building momentum toward the equilibrium produced by contact with the West Bank.

The motion of identities toward the center is a theme of the novel, which depicts a Palestinian-American woman and her attempt to reintegrate herself into Palestinian society in the West Bank by restoring her bonds with her shattered family. She is not the only exile who returns from abroad, and so the novel depicts her recording her reactions to her relatives’ attempts to integrate themselves into the West Bank side of the family.

Each character in *The Inheritance* becomes an archetype of a segment of contemporary Palestinian society. Thus, the sense of this fragmented identity is substantial for the characters. Palestinians were forced to forge and perform different identities in diaspora to be able to cope with their trauma and to be functional in the host societies, though, on individual levels, through their professional distinction and excellence, they have made significant efforts to restore
national culture, pride, and sovereignty to the point that they have over-romanticized the image of the homeland and its people. This novel’s events cement the notion that Palestinians’ unique conditions and experiences are behind their strong attachment to the idea of the national consciousness, although their long dwelling in diaspora has left its imprints in their subjectivity. While deeply, they believe that the national, traditional essences that constitute this identity are preserved and protected, the real experiences and encounters with the native society inside the West Bank uncovers the rifts in this identity. This is the flexibility that human beings have to accommodate themselves to and embody in order to preserve the essential elements of their cultural values, regardless of where they live or what circumstances they encounter. I believe that this flexibility is one of the main reasons behind Palestinian visibility in the host societies and, simultaneously, behind the international acknowledgment of their existence and rights to self-determination and a nation-state. The characters in this novel ultimately form plural identities that are based, respectively, on their self-conception while in diaspora and their self-conception after returning to Palestine. Relatives have become foreigners in this situation, but they are nevertheless Palestinian.

Therefore, Palestinians’ success in constructing the modern image of their community; their endorsement of Palestinian traditions, values, and heritage are the essences of Palestinian national consciousness. Moreover, despite their individual experiences, that of triumph or of disaster, the modern image of Palestinian identity and nationality entirely depends on their collective experience of suffering. Their common tragedies have united Palestinians, fueling their desire for self-representation. I have mentioned that Palestinians prove to, consciously and unconsciously, reject complete assimilation and absorption into any host country. Though this is certainly due to the discriminatory practices of Israel and the bureaucracy of Jordan, Lebanon,
and other nations, the Palestinians resist assimilation into these societies with force equal to that with which they are labeled as refugees or suspicious persons. Clearly, the acceptance of a Palestinian identity is worth the trouble it will inevitably cause at border crossings; Palestinians have learned the lesson that one without an authentic identity rooted in an idea of nationhood is not recognized easily or completely, and suffers a lack of respect unless he asserts these rights. The novel, as it ends, finally describes a solution: the identity crisis will take time to solve—more time—but currently, it is possible for Palestinians to return to the West Bank or to Gaza, where they can reconnect with their nation and experience the lives of the people trapped within these areas. Returning to the land is difficult, and land cannot simply be purchased without causing problems; however, just as accepting harassment at borders is necessary for maintaining the Palestinian identity, so is accepting the disconnection between diasporic and landed Palestinians. Only after the facts of separation and its consequences are acknowledged can they be addressed. The novel ends optimistically, suggesting that returning exiles will be able to re-adapt to life as native Palestinians, but without losing the cosmopolitan edge they have gained in diaspora. Palestine, in the future, will be a distinct and exceptional nation, and a globally aware and cosmopolitan nation.

To conclude, “ethnic membership is neither externally given, nor fixed; it is determined, consciously or unconsciously, by the group itself and varies according to changing circumstances,” and this fact proves true in my examination of Palestinian experience in the archipelago (Ozkirimli 217). Wherever Palestinians go, they form their own identities and bring their Palestinian identities with them; in this context, assimilation is not assimilation when cultural influence is moderated by such a powerful nationalistic spirit, nor is assimilation expected to be permanent. On a broad scale, this activity increases the social versatility of
Palestinians, increases their economic mobility, and provides hope for the nation’s future while defining Palestinians as a unique and exceptional people whose willingness to exist has carried them forward over time.
ENDNOTES


Christmas 2012: “133 countries take the courageous step of recognizing the State of Palestine on the 1967 borders.”

2 1967 war known in Arabic as al-Naksa (the Setback in English), also as the Six-day war; June war, was another major tragedy in modern Palestinian history. This war was fought between Israel and the neighboring Arab States: Jordan, Egypt, Syria and even the Iraqi army participated too with the Jordanian. Arabs not only lost the West Bank and West Jerusalem and Gaza Strip to Israel, but also, Sinai Peninsula from Egypt and the Golan Heights from Syria.

3 1948 Arab-Israeli War, know in Arabic as al-Nakba. This is the name is used in this dissertation to reference this war.

4 According to the Jewish Virtual Library the 2014 census shows that the population of Israel is 8,252,500. The Jewish 75% (6,186,100), Arabs 20.7% (1,709,900), others (non-Arab Christians, Christians, Baha’i, etc) 4.2% (356,500). It is worth to mention that the new Israeli narrative recently starts to prompt the idea of identifying and referencing to the Arab Christian, Baha’i as other rather than Arabs to maintain a Jewish majority. However, they could not conceal the fact that the growth rate of the Jewish population was 1.7%, while the growth rate for Arabs was 2.2%. http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org
5 Israel is the only state in the modern time that does not have a constitution. Two major law documents take the place of the constitution: the first is the Declaration of the Establishment of the State of Israel (1948). The second is the Israeli’s Law of Return (1950). It is in the former, which is a two-page document, that emphasizes Israel as a Jewish state and open to receive Jewish immigrants from all over the world, though the Declaration document references the non-Jews and includes them as the “inhabitant” and expresses the will to guarantee freedom of religion, conscience, language, education and culture. It does not mention or state any reference to political rights, equality or representation in the state. For further information see onedemocraticstate.org. The Declaration of the Establishment of the state of Israel.

6 It is worth to mention that the new Israeli narrative recently starts to prompt the idea of identifying and referencing to the Arab Christian, Baha’i as other rather than Arabs to maintain a Jewish majority. However, they could not conceal the fact that the growth rate of the Jewish population was 1.7%, while the growth rate for Arabs was 2.2%.
http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org

7 Ngugi in this context responds critically to Chinua Achebe’s argument that speaking the colonial language, English in this case, does not disrupt native literature. Achebe is interested in reclaiming some of the arbitrarily imposed artifacts of colonialism for himself and his writing; Ngugi works to restore his native language instead.

8 The term is also used in African fiction to refer to the native village.

9 For example, consider the following: Edward Said in The Politics of Dispossession cites Palestinians being made out to be “a murderous race of mindless fanatics,” “if they do” exist at all (p.86). In The Question of Palestine, Said quotes Israeli newspapers describing “Arab terror” against “Israeli civilians” (p. xxxvi) In the same book, Palestinians are described as having the
“barely tolerated status of a nuisance,” and are seen in Israel as “refugees, extremists, or terrorists” (p. xi).

10 The number of Palestinian in Jordan is a very controversial issue. There is no current official Jordanian census of the Jordanian from Palestinian origin; however, it is assumed that Palestinian community constitutes half of the Jordanian demographic; in 2008 they reached 3 millions; according to Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics the number increased to 3.24 million in 2009. Moreover, the UNRWA records have two million registered refugees as of January 2012. For further information see: “Palestinian at the end if 2012.” Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistic; “Where We Work-Jordan”. UNRWA.

11 Blue cards are the cards issued by Israel government for Israeli citizens and permanent residence in Israel. While Green Cards are the cards that designate the Palestinian residence of West Bank.

12 Yellow Cards-category of Palestinians of 1967 who have permanent residency in Jordan and a yellow card-family reunification); at the same time, they have a Jordanian five-year passport with ID number and family Book. While Green Cards are the cards issued by Jordanian government to the Palestinians of 1967 who have permanent residency in the West Bank; they also possess a five-year passport without national ID card, no family Book, and they need work permit.

13 Kushan: is the Arabic word for the land deed; it is also used in Palestinian peasant dialect to reference the birth certificate as well.

14 Irridentism is defined as “any territorial claim made by one sovereign nation within an other;” additionally, irridentalist politics depends upon popular belief and is difficult to contain (Mayall 270).
15 Umm Mahmoud, “the mother of Mahmoud”: it is very common within Arab societies to call the father/mother by the name of their first son.

16 The Popular Front For the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP): a Palestinian Marxist-Leninist and revolutionary leftist founded and leaded by Dr. George Habash (Christian-Jordanian). They hijacked three planes: SwissAir, TWA jet and Pan American on September 1970. The first two were forced to land in Jordan’s Azraq are and the third landed in Cairo. Though the passengers were safely released, this attempt was the main reason behind labeling the PLO as a terrorists organization and overshadow its reputation for a long time. Moreover, it accelerated the and enlarged the conflict between Fedayeen and Jordanian government.
10 Nov. 2014.


*Notre Musique (Our Music)*. Dir. Jean-Luc Godard. Cannes Film Festival, 2004. Film.


www.onedemocraticstate.org


Shaaban, Bouthaina. *Both Right and Left Handed: Arab Woman Talk About Their Lives.*


