

**VISUAL NARRATIVES OF DIVISION IN CONTEMPORARY
PALESTINIAN ART AND SOCIAL SPACE.**

By

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Abstract

This study analyses artworks by contemporary Palestinian artists that respond to visual narratives of division in social space from a perspective grounded in a South African context. The state of Israel is built on Historic Palestine. Political Zionism has created an ideological narrative of division that positions people of the Jewish faith as the rightful heirs to the land on which Palestinians have lived for centuries. In order to execute their vision of an exclusively Jewish nation state, the founding pioneers of political Zionism colonised and ethnically cleansed Historic Palestine, establishing Israel in 1948. To sustain the exclusive claim to Palestinian land, Israel has divided the space and the people in it at every possible level. The greatest testament to these efforts is the Israeli apartheid wall and checkpoint security system that can be described as a monumental visual narrative of division. With each second that passes, Israel claims more Palestinian land and expands on existing fences, walls and barriers. It is no secret that the Occupied Palestinian Territories are rapidly transforming into open-air prisons. Israel has stolen the Palestinian horizon line and replaced it with a concrete wall that blocks out light, vision and optimism. Within the shadows of these conflicted, traumatised sites of division, Palestinian artists seek openings, cracks and loopholes that signal the possibility for physical and psychological transgression of these seemingly impenetrable structures of division. I have developed a creative methodology that can be understood through the metaphor of ‘looking with the skin’ as a way to identify and analyse visual narratives of division and artistic responses to sites of division in Palestinian social space. Looking with the skin combines aspects of participant observation (specifically the emphasis on engaged fieldwork) from the discipline of Anthropology with the method of visual analysis from the discipline of Art History. In my application of this method through primary fieldwork conducted within the Occupied Palestinian West Bank Territory from 2013 and 2014, I have learnt that Israel’s colonisation, military occupation and system of apartheid directly impacts the ability of Palestinian artists to make and disseminate their work as well as the choice of content within their artwork. The artworks analysed in this thesis by the artists Khaled Jarrar, Yael Bartana, Larissa Sansour, Hasan Darahgmeh, Fareh Saleh and Emily Jacir can be positioned in relation to artworks by artists based within a South African context, namely Thando Mama, Serge Alain Nitegeka and Doung Anwar Jahangeer. In this thesis I present a combination of my own photographic documentation of sites of division with the West Bank OPT in relation to the specific artworks made by the artists mentioned

above. In my analysis of the photographic documentation and the artists' work I highlight similarities, parallels, threads and intersecting narratives that connect different artists to one another and to the sites of division they are responding to within their artistic practice. This study carves a small conceptual pathway through ideological and physical walls from South Africa to Palestine through the study of contemporary art and visual culture.

Declaration

This thesis is my own original work and has not been submitted in part, or in full, for any degree or examination at any other university. It contains no material previously published or written by other individuals, except where due reference is made and/or acknowledgements are provided in the text. This thesis is submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Art History at Rhodes University, South Africa.

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The body of this thesis (from the Preface to the end of Chapter 8) comprises 267 pages and 91 004 words.

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Acronyms

ATG	Alternative Tourism Group
DAAR	Decolonizing Architecture Art Residency
IAAP	International Academy of Art Palestine
IDF	Israeli Defence Force
IUAV	University of Architecture in Venice
JNF	Jewish National Fund
JRMiP	Jewish Renaissance Movement in Poland
JVJP	Jewish Voices for a Just Peace
MFA	Masters of Fine Art
OPTs	Occupied Palestinian Territories (including East Jerusalem, West Bank and the Gaza Strip)
RSA	Republic of South Africa (<i>or should this be SA? Jai to check acronym that Rachel's actually used in thesis</i>)

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Preface

This Preface provides insight into the observations and experiences that inform the framing of my investigation into visual narratives of division in Palestinian art and social space. This preface is also my personal introduction as the narrator of the study. I begin with two visual narratives of division presented as written photographs. The first is situated in my home in Durban, South Africa and the second is situated in the Palestinian West Bank Territory where I lived between 2013 and 2014 while conducting fieldwork. There is a thread that connects these two different examples around the issue of division, of borders and the demarcation of boundaries related to the desire for a safe and stable home, which extends throughout the thesis.

A Visual Narrative of Division: Durban, South Africa, 17 December 2009 11:30 am

Stuck in traffic at the corner of Berea and Musgrave Road one humid Durban morning my mother urged me to look at one of the older buildings that faced the street. I knew this building, I had seen it many times before on route to school or to purchase groceries, only now I could not see the building anymore because a grey concrete wall had recently been constructed around its perimeter; the wall was about five metres high, just tall enough to prevent people from being able to see the front door, the garden and the windows and walls of the old building. The top of the new wall had been finished off with a brand new ream of razor wire. Draped inside the shiny loops of razor wire were pieces of glittering Christmas tinsel. As I stared at this urban installation I wondered who had taken the time to add a detail like Christmas tinsel (a festive, welcoming gesture) to a crenulation of razor wire (a somewhat less inviting defensive visual gesture)¹.

A Visual Narrative of Division: Qalandiya, West Bank Occupied Palestinian Territory, 21 August 2013 3:00 pm

When I arrived in the West Bank for the first time and looked up at the 8m high wall that forms part of the Qalandiya checkpoint separating Jerusalem and Ramallah, one of the first things that struck me were the number of different objects trapped inside the razor wire above it. The Israeli apartheid barrier wall in this part of the West Bank is made out of thick grey concrete panels locked into one another such that not even a slither of light is able to transgress its tight façade. At the top of the structure, reams of razor wire and fencing that have been used to complete this divisive barrier are visible. Surveillance cameras and watchtowers interrupt the surface of the partition at strategic points. Fleeting signs of human life can be seen

¹ That year I built a series of chandeliers out of razor wire and stitched a large curtain out of sticky fly paper traps to form an installation I presented as my graduate work, *Precaution Remains*, 2009, Fort Selwyn, Grahamstown under the supervision of Maureen De Jager.

trapped inside the razor wire and framed by the gridded fencing: a soccer ball caught in mid flight; a single shoe captured in a web of metal and razors.

The necessity for security and protection from violence and crime as the motivation for spatial division is a prominent aspect of everyday life in South Africa. Born in 1987, I cannot recall a time when security and fear were not central concerns. At the same time that equality, freedom and democracy became a reality in South Africa (from the early 1990s onwards), the racist fears and myths of a so-called black demographic threat mushroomed, shape-shifted and settled into narratives of crime and violence which justified and prompted the increase in private security measures and private security companies and simultaneously abandoned public spaces to the rejected and the homeless. At the same time that South Africans celebrated the end of institutional apartheid in the 1990s, homeowners living in my neighbourhood reinforced old security measures and started to add new security features and surveillance technology to their homes. While the Jewish pre-school² I attended celebrated the different cultures and ‘ethnicities’ in our classroom, and waited with anticipation for Nelson Mandela’s release, white South Africans packed their suitcases and immigrated or ‘returned’ (as some expressed it) along old colonial lines of global movement to places like England or Australia.

The South Africa in which I was raised is a site of rich socio-historical intersections replete with hybridisation and cross-cultural communication. It is also a place that is deeply scarred by old lines of ideological and physical division that have fed and generated new lines of separation that directly inform the contours of the built environment. Like most urban areas in South Africa, the middle-class suburb of Glenwood, in Durban where I grew up, came with its share of warnings and rhetoric of crime and violence: places where ‘privileged’ children were not allowed to venture alone; places where those children who did move alone were considered by middle class white South Africans to be either orphans or from families without the means and/or desire to care for them properly. In retrospect, I can see how whole areas and communities considered ‘dangerous’ were (and still are) avoided and mythologised as sites of prostitution, crime and poverty. These lines of avoidance and the rhetoric of fear and insecurity that accompany them seemed to re-enforce lingering racist ideas about

² I attended a Jewish pre-primary school called *David* that was attached to a synagogue. My mother sent me to this school because it was one of the few schools in Durban that were admitting ‘non-white’ South Africans before 1994. My friends at school were Arab, Indian, Coloured, and Muslim, Catholic, Christian and Jewish. This particular Jewish community were known for their anti-apartheid activism in South Africa and some of their members are active within the South African Jewish Voices for a Just Peace organisation.

neighbourhood degeneration in post-apartheid suburbs as associated with the influx of black people into previously white areas.

When I embarked on my Masters of Fine Art (MFA) in 2010, the concept of visual narratives of division in relation to borders, boundaries and the legacy of apartheid in post-apartheid South African social space was central to my project. It was within the context of this project that I found myself drawn to the idea of articulating and understanding the existence of socio-political and personal experiences of division and how they can be narrated and expressed within artistic practice, especially artistic practice that engages with social space. I subsequently constructed my own visual narrative of division in the form of the *Eyes of the Wall and Other Short Stories*³, a site-specific experiential installation. As a requirement for the degree, I wrote a mini-thesis in which I unpacked the architectonic installation that I had constructed and contextualised it in relation to the art practice I was most drawn to at the time, namely that of the Palestinian artist Mona Hatoum. At this stage of the process I had no intention of pursuing a PhD in Art History, nor did I expect I would be travelling to Palestine any time in the future. Artists can activate the imagination effectively and take one back in time or across the borders of another country or simply through the doors to their personal home.

The experiential installation work of the Palestinian artist Mona Hatoum provided me with the opportunity to travel to another continent, to a version of Palestine, seen through her eyes, that I had never encountered before. In retrospect I realise that discussions of Israeli apartheid and narratives of division must have been circulating in the academic environment where I was based, but I only gave it dedicated thought and attention when it was presented to me in the form of an artist's work. Hatoum and the people who wrote about her work took me to a place that was completely different to my own, yet, if the descriptions I had been reading and the representations I examined were accurate, Israel and South Africa shared an unfortunate site of intersection in the form of apartheid. If I could access a whole other world and empathise with the experience of others in that world through the work of Hatoum then perhaps I could analyse the work of artists responding to sites of division in a way that might

³The *Eyes of the Wall and Other Short Stories*, March 2012, site-specific experiential installation comprised of architectonic hybrids of windows and curtains, walls and doors and beds. Resin, found objects such as bedsprings, silicone moulds of window/curtain sculpture hybrids and doors. The Tennis Court on St Peter's campus between the Fine Line Press and printmaking department and the photography department at Rhodes University.

provide South African academics, artists and students with routes of access to a context that is regularly misrepresented and misunderstood.

In this thesis I use the idea of walking on a path, of taking a journey as a metaphor for my own doctoral process. My journey is one that takes place physically in the Palestinian West Bank territory. I enjoy running and walking both short and long distances. I have run in South Africa and I have run in Palestine. One can learn a lot about a place by running along its streets and alleys, climbing its hills and hitting its flat plateaus. One learns even more by taking a slow walk through a place merely for the purpose of trying to understand it better. It is indeed true that one of the ways in which to “measure the quality of one’s freedom is to take a walk”⁴ (Seaton 2008). By running and walking I have consistently engaged with the way in which urban planning and architecture demarcate access routes, opening up space for movement and social interaction at the same time that they can create barriers, no-go zones and hostile paths⁵.

My walking shoes are made by me, Rachel Baasch (a South African artist and urban explorer) from local materials using local methods. I have four toolkits with me at all stages of the thesis journey: a pair of ‘walking shoes’, a selection of artist or academic ‘guides’, a ‘visual diary’ containing images and photographs and a ‘conceptual backpack’ filled with relevant literature. Each of the core chapters (Chapter Three, Four, Five and Six) describes ‘sites of division’ where visual narratives of division can be identified and analysed using the toolkits that make up the metaphorical method of ‘looking with the skin’⁶.

The walking shoes stand for my personal experience and fieldwork and act as practical tools for walking (metaphorically and in actuality) from one point to another through the perspective of one’s “individual particular” (Said 2004:80). The walking shoes provide a way for the ideas and concepts I carry in the backpack to hit the ground and make contact with the actual context I am interrogating. These shoes symbolise a site of connection between the

⁴In awarding Raja Shehadeh the Orwell prize for literature, Jean Seaton (Chair of the Orwell prize committee in 2008) made this observation regarding the idea of measuring the quality of one’s freedom by taking a walk, in response to Shehadeh’s *Palestinian Walks: notes on a vanishing landscape*, 2007.

⁵ I experienced the in-hospitality of Johannesburg’s road networks and highways by getting lost while running. I have experienced the virtually non-existent sidewalks that line main roads and highways. These narrow slithers of earth are wedged between high-speed freeways and the walls, fences and trees that line the road. One feels vulnerable jogging along the sides of these connecting high-speed freeways. People commuting by foot are precariously positioned in pieces of geography that indicate a prioritisation of travel by private vehicle. Those who commute by foot are not welcomed in these contexts.

⁶ Looking with the skin is a methodological approach that I have developed through fieldwork experience and relevant literature reviews. I detail this method and the way in which it draws on certain postcolonial theorists such as Edward Said and Homi Bhabha in Chapter Two: Looking with the Skin: Tools, Texts, and Techniques.

theories, ideas and experience I have accumulated as a South African artist and visual culture analyst, and my application of these experiences within a Palestinian fieldwork context.

Directly related to the walking shoes are the artistic or conceptual guides that I profile in each individual chapter. This profiling is about personal identification and not intended to place fixed labels on different aspects of an individual's identities in a reductive sense.

The 'visual diary' represents the documentation process and the pictures, some of which are written photographs, like the two opening visual narratives at the beginning of the preface, while others are photographs I have taken myself that I use to aid my interrogations and analyses of the visual narratives I have observed at certain stops along the way. The 'conceptual backpack' is filled with books, ideas and theories, and observations and information I have accumulated as an artist and researcher along the way. The contents of the backpack are derived from and simultaneously inform each of the individual toolkits and my metaphorical approach of looking with the skin. I elaborate on the components of each toolkit in the second chapter Looking with the Skin: Tools Texts and Techniques, where I unpack the methods, procedures and techniques I developed for each individual chapter journey.

I measured the quality of my freedom as a young woman moving through Palestine and found that my freedom extended deeper and wider than the basic freedom of movement afforded to Israelis and denied to Palestinians. I examined the quality of my freedom and realised that it lacked character because it could not be shared with those who know its corners, contours, ridges and ravines far better than I. I realised that, through the stories they told and the places they described but could not venture into, they managed to cast the shadows of their presence onto the shapes and forms of this journey. I measured the quality of my freedom in relation to this measurement when I returned to South Africa and found the same thing. My freedom of access to resources, institutions and opportunities in my home, in my own nation state, serves as a site of contrast rather than commonality between myself and those I share my home with. I want to live in a world that respects the fluid nature of my own personal borders and provides a space in which I am able to respect the boundaries of others and share the depth and breadth of my freedom with anyone who chooses to exercise their own human rights in this regard. This dissertation is my personal attempt to locate narratives of division within sites of division as a way to counter the narratives of closure and division

and the detrimental effect these narratives have when it comes to the quality of freedom experienced by people in South Africa and Palestine.

Chapter 1 Introduction: Framing the Route

This doctoral dissertation considers the construction and representation of narratives of division (specifically colonialism, apartheid and military occupation) in Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories from the perspective of a South African artist and doctoral student of visual culture and art history. In this introduction I map out the boundaries of my study and explain the contours of the conceptual and geographical route that I take through specific sites of division.

As exemplified in the preface, the thesis itself can be described both as a physical and a conceptual journey through the Palestinian West Bank Territory. This introductory framing section can be likened to an airport or the border crossing where one arrives in a country, in my case Israel, where one is required to declare the nature of one's trip, the motivations for going on this particular journey and a list of people one intends to visit as well as the names and details of the places where one will be staying and what one might visit there. Thus, this introduction can be likened to the procedure of arriving in a foreign country and being questioned by security and passport control⁷.

I arrived in Ben Gurion Airport in Tel Aviv on 21 July 2013 with an overweight backpack, a large tripod, a new camera, and my walking shoes. On this, the first of three separate three-month fieldwork blocks, I was stopped on my way out of the aeroplane arriving from South Africa and asked to open my backpack containing the camera and my laptop. The bag was searched and I was escorted to a room. I had an official letter from my supervisor with me that supported my stated purpose in the country and I was told to submit the letter to a woman behind the desk before I was asked to disclose the nature of my visit to Israel.

Israeli passport control: Ragel, What brings you to Israel?

Rachel: I am an artist and a PhD student from South Africa interested in the Art and ancient architecture of Israel, like the Wailing Wall in the old city of Jerusalem. That's why I have the camera and the tripod. I am here to take photographs of walls and windows in the old city.

⁷ Mieke Bal (2002:11) writes about the benefits of working with important concepts such as "narrative" and "framing" that can travel between different disciplines. For further reading see: Bal, M. 2002. *Travelling Concepts in the Humanities: a Rough Guide*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

This was not entirely untrue. I am an artist and a PhD student and I was indeed there to take photographs of walls and other aspects of Israeli architecture like the apartheid barrier wall (rather than the wailing wall). I was going to go to the Old City of Jerusalem, but I would do so on route to Ramallah in the West Bank. Lastly, I was indeed there to locate and document “windows”, like I said, but of the conceptual, artistic kind (rather than just the literal kind I implied by my response).

I answered the rest of her questions with a series of prepared answers I had been rehearsing on the plane and received my three-month Israeli tourist visa which permitted me access to Israel, the Palestinian West Bank (but not the Gaza Strip) and the illegal Jewish Settlements in the West Bank. My reasons for twisting the truth in the airport are related to the way in which Israel implements an apartheid system of separation and control within a framework of the necessity for security. Israel treats anything or anyone Palestinian, and anything or anyone perceived to be connected with Palestine or the Palestinians, as a ‘security’ risk. The West Bank can only be accessed through the Allenby border crossing in Jordan (which is controlled by Israel) or by flying to Tel Aviv and accessing the territories from within the borders of Israel itself.

My real motivation for travelling to Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPTs) (which I did not divulge to passport control) was directly related to the way in which Israel monitors and controls the movement of Palestinians through real and imaginary barriers in a way that takes the basic “logic of partition” implemented by the apartheid Government in South Africa to its extreme realisation (Weizman 2007:15).

The Israeli military occupation of the West Bank Territory, which includes the Israeli apartheid barrier-wall, a complex apartheid road network and an intricate checkpoint system, is justified by Israel as the inevitable response to fears of Palestinian ‘terrorism’ which accumulated in the region after the establishment of an Israeli nation state in 1948, and escalated with the first and second Intifadas. The central narrative used to justify the large-scale use of aggressive architecture on a national level is connected to the threat of potential harm, damage or death which influences the fear-fuelled Israeli imagination. This narrative acts as a wall in its own right, masking and blanking out the Palestinian narrative of dispossession and resistance. Supporting the Israeli ‘necessity for security’ narrative is the

racist assertion that Palestinians are not distinct from their Jordanian, Egyptian, Syrian or Lebanese neighbours, and thus can and should be absorbed into these and other neighbouring countries, allowing Israel to expand and maintain stability as a Jewish nation state.

The Israeli apartheid barrier wall is an aggressive, unaccommodating example of a visual narrative of division that should be analysed and unpacked in depth by artists and readers of visual culture such as myself. In the same way that one might examine and analyse a sculpture or a painting, one can visually analyse the structural developments and behavioural manifestations of fear and insecurity through the seemingly mundane elements of architectural design. Like a text, one can situate this visual data in its relevant context and conduct a thorough analysis of its visual messages. In this study, I unpack some of the ways in which narratives of division generate structural and ideological expressions of division that can be observed, documented and represented within Israel and the OPTs. Visual narratives of division can be seen in the form of walls, roads, signage systems and the performance of everyday rituals related to perceptions of risk, threat and insecurity. Furthermore, these visual narratives of division reinforce existing practices and ideologies of separation, while simultaneously generating new narrative threads and discourses of insecurity that prompt the construction of more walls, barriers and impermeable policies of inclusion and exclusion.

I was there to interrogate the visual narratives of division that correspond with Israel's "logic of partition" within the Palestinian West Bank from an informed perspective as a South African artist and reader of urban space (Weizman 2007:5). Furthermore, as I told the security officer that first day in the airport, I intended to locate and document windows. The windows I was referring to are conceptual or metaphorical, rather than literal, and take the form of artistic practice connected to a Palestinian context that offers access points or alternative perspectives regarding the "logic of partition" and its structures in the OPTs (Weizman 2007:15).

1.1 Visual Narratives of Division

Narratives pertaining to the forced removal, exclusion and division of people, such as the history of colonisation, occupation and apartheid⁸ in Israel and the OPTs, present evidence of what Eyal Weizman (2007:15) terms a “logic of partition”. The narratives supporting or resisting this “logic of partition” influence, and are influenced by, the policies which monitor state borders as well as the individual’s experience of home and security (Weizman 2007:15).

‘Narratives of division’ are individual and collective stories that relate to geographical and psychological displacement, dislocation, forced removal and segregation. These narratives are fluid and fragmentary; they assist in the construction of state ideology and national identity in addition to individual conceptualisations of the self. These narratives articulate the parameters of inclusion and exclusion within a defined territory, while simultaneously influencing the construction of defensive walls, barriers and technologies of surveillance and control. These technologies and structures of division are used as tools to reinforce apartheid ideological narratives built on fear and insecurity. Imaginary walls prompt the construction of physical walls; physical walls then generate the conditions necessary to maintain and exacerbate existing threats and justify the need for further walls, barriers and policies of socio-spatial discrimination.

The phrase ‘visual narratives of division’ is a reference to the idea that personal and national narratives of disruption, dislocation, displacement and dispossession are expressed in the form of visible divisions and disconnections that can be interpreted in relation to how people feel within their homes⁹ (or the lack thereof) in places like Israel and the OPTs. The representation of different perspectives regarding a sense of safety and security within a place can be read in the performance of risk-related rituals and technologies of defence, from barbed wire to concrete walls, surveillance technology and armed security personnel. Furthermore, a visual narrative of division represented in the work of a specific artist can

⁸Whilst conducting fieldwork in the West Bank, I was informed that the Hebrew term for separation “hafrada” is used to describe Israeli apartheid in a Hebrew-speaking context. I have used the term “apartheid” as it seems to be the more common expression used within relevant publications (Tilley 2012:1); (Cook 2008:246); (Soske & Jacobs 2015:2).

⁹ My reference to home includes the idea of a home as a physical structured shelter (such as a house) designed to accommodate the human body. The notion of home is also perceptual and emotional in terms of how one identifies individually and intimately with a place.

offer additional ways of seeing or perceiving difficult or traumatic narratives from a subjective and intimate perspective.

The necessity for security

The ‘necessity for security’ narrative used by Israel to justify the application of oppressive and dehumanising systems of domination and closure is the same narrative that dictates the way in which Israel manages its airport security along with the rest of Israel and the OPTs. It is this same narrative of division that has prompted the construction of divisive walls, separate roads and the creation of isolated Palestinian enclaves in the geographical area previously known as Historic Palestine. These visible narratives of division (walls, security fences, apartheid roads, military bases, watchtowers, soldiers and security guards) are the reason I was in Israel in the first place. While waiting for permission to enter the country, I was already noting the examples of the “logic of partition” described by Weizman visible in the airport (Weizman 2007:15). I could see the special queue for Israeli citizens that contained only Jewish Israeli passport holders, while Palestinian passport holders were waiting on the opposite side of the hall where they are taken into a special room for body searches and interrogations despite holding the necessary permits and passport documents. Anyone who could be identified (according to a set of superficial criteria) as Arab and/or Muslim received this ‘special’ screening. What I noted in addition to this was that the Israeli passport control paid special attention to foreign nationals not perceived to be European¹⁰.

One of the major problems with this necessity-for-security narrative, and the fear of terrorism that is used to justify it, is that it allows the individual to ignore and distort specific details about the precise nature of the Palestinian–Israeli conflict. Rashid Khalidi aptly observes (Khalidi 2006:x):

The one dimensional and ahistorical approach to the conflict through the prism of terrorism that is prevalent in the United States obscures thoroughly the specificity of Palestine, Israel, Lebanon, and other regional actors, like Syria and Iran, and how these relate to one another.

¹⁰ Israel’s racist and discriminatory practices are not restricted to Arab Palestinians or Muslim Arabs from other countries. Jewish Ethiopian immigrants and citizens of Israel are degraded within the Israeli context to the extent that Israel places pressure on “Ethiopian women to receive shots of the birth control hormone Depo-Provera” before immigrating to Israel from Ethiopia to prevent them from ‘contaminating’ the European Jewish community (Iyov 2016). An article titled *Israel is a Racist Country. Take it from me an Ethiopian Israeli* explains that on paper Ethiopian Jewish Israelis and Israeli Africans have equal rights as citizens of the country but in reality they are treated as cheap labour, shovelled into ‘African’ ghettos and denied the opportunities afforded to European (Ashkenazi) Jews (Iyov 2016).

1.2 A South African Starting Point

As expressed in the Preface, I explore the physical and conceptual contours of visual narratives of division in Israel and the OPTs from a post-apartheid South African perspective. At the core of this study is the acknowledgment that all human beings have the right to pursue safety and protection from the natural elements such as wind and rain, cold or heat, as well as the threat of uninvited or undesirable transgression of one's personal and locational boundaries. I believe that all human beings have the right to security and freedom of movement, to access adequate housing and the resources necessary to achieve prosperity. My definition of what constitutes basic "human rights" is informed by the South African Bill of Rights¹¹ and underpins my ethical position in this thesis (The South African Constitution, Chapter Two, Constitutional Assembly 1996).

On the issue of "freedom and security", the South African Constitution confirms that "all human beings have the right to freedom and security of the person" (Chapter Two, Sub-section 12). In order for this right to be exercised, all human beings should have "the right to access adequate housing" as clarified in Sub-section 26: Housing (1). Furthermore, "the state must take reasonable legislative and other measures, within its available resources, to achieve the progressive realisation of this right" (Chapter Two, Sub-section 26:2). Roofs and walls provide shelter for the body and the mind to rest, to recover from physical or mental illness, to develop, to learn and to grow. All human beings should have the right to imagine themselves and their lives better in the future, to picture a horizon line and access the resources (health care, education, food and water) that are necessary to reach one's professional or personal goals. A relative sense of stability and surety in one's financial, emotional and physical position is necessary for human beings to prosper in contemporary society. Sub-section 22 of Chapter Two of the South African Constitution refers to "freedom of trade, occupation and profession" and clearly states that "every person has the right to choose their trade, occupation or profession freely". The ability to respect the rights of others to security and freedom, and to achieve prosperity within one's home, one's greater

¹¹It is important to note that the constitutional rights of all South Africans as stated in the Bill of Rights are not exercised by a large portion of the population. My assertions regarding these basic rights to freedom and security of the person, access to adequate housing and the resources necessary to prosper are based on the strength of these ideas and not on the way in which they have been applied with partial success in a South African context. I believe that it will take time and a concerted effort on the behalf of citizens such as myself and those in positions of national or state power to ensure that all South Africans are able to exercise these basic human rights.

environment and within other geographical locations, can only be fully realised if all human beings are granted these basic rights equally. Despite the articulation of these rights nationally and internationally, one finds the stark unequal distribution of wealth and basic resources throughout the world and with that a large degree of economic and thus physical and emotional/psychological insecurity. One of the goals of this thesis is to locate a balanced approach to the built form that acknowledges the basic human right to security and safety and the potential to pervert security measures by creating enclave geographies and gated communities.

1.3 Research Question and Related Objectives of the Study

The research question I have designed for this study refers to my conceptual interrogation of visual narratives of division (such as walls, checkpoints, watchtowers, fences, barriers, and signage systems) that are generated by ideological and historical narratives of division (such as apartheid, colonialism and military occupation in Israel and the Occupied Territories) and can be analysed in relation to Palestinian art and social space. This question reads as follows:

What can be learnt about sites of division in Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories through a study of visual narratives of division represented in Palestinian art and social space?

In order to address and analyse these narratives of division represented within the Israeli/Palestinian built environment and critiqued within the work of artists responding to the Palestinian context, I construct a number of small discursive “pictures” or sites of division (Mitchell 2005:xiv). Each chapter addresses a detailed part of a larger “picture” in which a basic need for stability and safety in one’s home is perverted or warped by narratives of fear, division and insecurity (Mitchell 2005:xiv). Through my method of ‘looking with the skin’ (discussed in Chapter Two: Looking with the Skin: Tools, Texts and Techniques) I critique each site of division with the aid of artistic/theoretical ‘guides’ and the other tools and methods detailed in the second chapter¹².

¹² In Chapter Two: Looking with the Skin: Tools, Texts and Techniques I describe the conceptual and practical tools I have used in more detail; these include ‘sites of division’, ‘walking shoes’, ‘guides’, ‘visual diary’ and ‘conceptual backpack’. A site of division is a place where visual narratives of division can be identified, ‘walking shoes’ is a metaphor for the engaged and embodied fieldwork research I conducted in Israel and the OPTs between 2013 and 2014, the ‘guides’ are a combination of theorists and artists from South Africa and Palestine who guide my ‘walking shoes’ and assist me to collect the material contained within the ‘visual diary’. The ‘visual diary’ is a metaphor for the visual and written material (artworks, photographs and field notes I analyse and critique in the study. Each of the metaphorical toolkits is informed by the literature contained within my ‘conceptual backpack’, which also aids me in the interpretation and analysis of my findings.

The first goal of this study (alluded to within my research question) is to identify and critique visible and invisible walls, barriers, bars and blockades that characterise everyday life in the Palestinian West Bank and East Jerusalem territories¹³, using a combination of participant observation drawn from the disciplines of Anthropology and Visual Analysis from my intellectual home in art practice and art theory. This goal relates directly to the second objective of the study, which is to understand the relationship between ideological narratives of division (such as apartheid, colonialism and military occupation) and physical structures that divide and close spaces (such as the Israeli apartheid barrier wall and related mechanisms of separation and control) as it is reflected in Palestinian art and social space. In order to realise these goals I have identified a third goal, which is to develop a creative conceptual framework for processes of looking, recording and representing narratives of division that is self-conscious, sensitive and responsible; one that considers Said's (cited in Bhabha 2005:371) notion of "slowness" as one selects "what to connect with, how to connect and how not to connect" with different aspects of the "national and the aesthetic".

There are only a few rigorous academic publications dedicated to the study of "studio-based arts" emerging from the Palestinian context within the last one hundred or so years (Kamal Boullata 2009:55). These include *Palestinian Art* by Gannit Ankori (2006), *Palestinian Video Art* by Bashir Makhoul, *Palestinian Art: 1850–2005* by Kamal Boullata (2009), and Samia Halaby's (2001) *Liberation Art of Palestine: Palestinian painting and sculpture in the second half of the 20th Century*. The fourth goal of this study is therefore to contribute to the existing knowledge base established by these publications, by critically analysing the work of contemporary artists responding to narratives of division in a Palestinian context. My articulations on the individual artists' projects will thus contribute to existing material on their work (which in most cases is very limited). Directly related to this objective is the fifth goal of the study, which seeks to articulate a nuanced discussion of visual narratives of division represented within examples of Palestinian art and the built environment from a self-reflexive South African perspective. This perspective is figuratively rooted in the 'soles of my Walking Shoes' as indicated in the Preface.

¹³My decision to limit the study to these two of the three Palestinian OPTs was circumstantial. My application for a permit to visit the Gaza Strip was denied by the Israeli authorities.

1.3.1 Chapter Outline

Chapter Two: Looking with the Skin: Tools, Texts and Techniques acts as the methodological entry point to the overall thesis. This chapter is divided according to the following metaphorical categories: ‘Sites of Division’, ‘Walking Shoes’, ‘Conceptual Guides’, ‘Visual Diary’ and ‘Conceptual/Theoretical Backpack’. Each of these individual categories constitutes a different aspect of my method of ‘Looking with the Skin’. This metaphor combines the emphasis on embodied lived experience advocated by the anthropological method of participant observation with the method of visual analysis used in Art historical and visual culture research.

In Chapter Three: Stories and Structures: ‘Buildings and the Nation’ in Palestinian Art and Visual Culture, I travel back in time to the establishment of Israel as a nation state in 1948 and the visual narratives that informed early Zionist pioneers and waves of Jewish immigrants to historic Palestine in the late 18th and 19th Century up to the present. In my backpack I have Mirzoeff’s *The Right to Look* and Ilan Pappé’s *The Ethnic Cleansing of Palestine*; assisting me in this chapter is Thando Mama from the Eastern Cape in South Africa who aids my analysis of Larissa Sansours’ *Nation Estate*, 2012. I consult Khaled Jarrar who assists me in contextualising the Palestinian national narrative as it exists now in Palestine, informed by the history of dispossession and displacement that resulted in the construction of a state for Jewish people and a condition of statelessness for the Palestinians. I contextualise political Zionism in relation to discussions of Afrikaner Nationalism and the key role played by fear and insecurity in the construction and representation of national narratives that determine dialectics of inclusion and exclusion. I analyse the work of Yael Bartana, specifically the *And Europe will be Stunned...* 2007–2011 series that forms part of her ongoing political art project the Jewish Renaissance Movement in Poland.

Chapter Four: Walls, Blocks and Barriers in Contemporary Palestinian Art contextualises structural divisions such as walls, fences, barriers and checkpoints as symbolic objects in relation to the practice of artists working in and responding to narratives of division in a Palestinian context. This chapter identifies physical walls and other markers of division as they can be examined in relation to specific examples of Palestinian art and visual language in conversation with social space. I examine the strategies employed by the South African based artist Serge Alain Nitegeka in relation to the work of Khaled Jarrar, which arguably

offer additional perspectives and possibilities for psychological transgression beyond the seemingly impermeable barriers which order and control movement. These practitioners are engaged in ongoing dialogue with the peculiarities and ideologies of dividing narratives within meaningful and personalised frameworks of lived place. In this chapter I unpack the potential for socially engaged artistic practice to locate openings in sites of physical and psychological division.

Chapter Five: Guarded Visions: Walls, Watchtowers and Warped Perspectives in the Occupied Palestinian Territories considers the way in which physical and ideological systems of separation and security influence individual perspectives of safety and belonging. I consider the influence of “space on thought” (Bachelard n.d.) in terms of physical, ideological, and political boundaries and barriers that articulate sites of disconnection and alienation as well as zones of contact and connection. I suggest that visual narratives of division can be analysed through defensive structures as they manifest in urban planning and architectural design within the Palestinian West Bank territory. My discussion includes an analysis of personal documentation of defensive aesthetics and certain behaviour patterns and rituals that accompany these visible responses to measurements of risk and insecurity. I refer to Eyal Weizman’s observations regarding Israel’s implementation of an apartheid and fortification system in the Occupied Palestinian Territories. I argue that the fortification and separation of physical space deepen segregation, and increase fear, hostility and disconnection between people living in this context. Furthermore, I suggest that this relationship between narratives of division and insecurity and structural mechanisms of control within the West Bank influences and impacts on individuals such that personal perspectives become guarded and defensive. The mediation of subjects through a defensive lens can prevent individuals from forming connections that acknowledge the permeability of seemingly impenetrable distinctions between inside and outside, or self and an-other. The looking, recording and representation of people in a place that is guarded and framed from a position of insecurity reduces the capacity of individuals to locate openings that traverse restrictive boundaries. In order to contextualise my discussion, I have included personal documentation of defensive structures photographed in the West Bank between 2013 and 2014. I position my observations and analyses in relation to discussions about the Oush Grab Military Base presented by the Decolonizing Architecture Art Residency (DAAR) in their recent publication *Architecture After Revolution* (2013).

Chapter Six: Sites of Division: Political Tourism and the Aestheticising of the Israeli Apartheid Wall analyses the implications of ‘site-seeing’ and ‘visuality’ in terms of ‘political tourism’ and its potential to perpetuate stereotypical modes of cultural consumption and production in the global South.

I conclude the dissertation with summaries of the sites of division I have observed in each of the individual chapters and the conclusions I have reached through my analyses. I finish this part of my lived engagement with the visible and invisible language of division that exists in Palestine by reflecting on what I have done, where I have gone within each chapter and why I have taken the reader to these particular sites of division. This thesis is my attempt to write a story about narratives of connection in sites of intersection as my own response to narratives of division within sites of division. In locating visual parallels and narrative overlaps I believe I can also open passages and paths between South Africa and the Palestinian OPTs. These openings begin as concepts, thoughts, ideas and representations; this concluding chapter draws conceptual and thematic connections across the different chapters between the different artists around the topic of visual narratives of division.

Chapter 2 Looking with the Skin: Tools, Texts and Techniques

The combination of tools, methods and concepts that I have used to gather material and present my findings in this study come together to form an approach that I call ‘looking with the skin’. Looking with the skin is a metaphor for an embodied, engaged and sensitive approach to both the exploration and the representation of visual narratives of division. I have broken this method down into five metaphorical categories: *Sites of Division*, *Walking Shoes*, *Guides*, *Visual Diary* and *Conceptual Backpack*. In this chapter I unpack these individual metaphors and relate them to the connecting metaphor of looking with the skin and the overall study.

My data-collection process (detailed in the walking shoes section) employs certain key aspects of the anthropological method of participant observation, with the emphasis placed particularly on fieldwork and immersive forms of observation. The selection of which aspects of this method I employ has been derived as a response to my own lived experience conducting fieldwork in Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories between 2013 and 2015. Over this time I have developed a framework for thinking about participant observation through the metaphor of looking with the skin. I elaborate on this idea through my own narrative descriptions of experiences and observations noted throughout the fieldwork process. How one sees and what one is able to see is largely determined by social circumstances and relative privilege concerning freedom of movement. As a visiting researcher in Israel and the West Bank OPT (bearing a foreign passport), I was permitted more freedom in terms of “practices of looking” in this context than the Palestinian citizens I shared a home with in Ramallah (Mirzoeff 2011:1). I could picture and document parts of the West Bank such as Jerusalem, where those born and raised there could not. I was afforded a perspective denied most extensively to Palestinians and, to a much lesser degree, the Israeli citizens who shared the same geography. My understanding of this particular set of power dynamics was reiterated by the less spectacular, less sensational moments of personal interaction – a friend’s request for a bottle of sand from the beach in Tel Aviv because her Green West Bank Identification Document did not allow her entry into this part of the country; another friend’s detailed questions about what the city of Ramallah “looked like” on the inside, because she had never actually been “inside” it, despite being raised in Maale Adumin, a large settlement positioned on a hilltop next door.

While my research is concerned with the analysing of divisive structures and ideologies and their privileging of certain perspectives, I found myself in the position where my own looking, reception and representation of such systems potentially renders me complicit in their normalisation. Meir Wigoder (2010:293) argues that “pointing the camera at the Israeli Separation Barrier-Wall involves a fundamental paradox: no matter how critical we are of its construction, once we choose to photograph it, we are colluding with its construction and preservation”. The metaphor of looking with the skin has developed while engaging in participant observation as a way to think through certain processes of observation, documentation and representation.

2.1 An Introduction to Looking with the Skin

My proposal for looking with the skin is a tentative and exploratory one. It is situated at the border between a desire to articulate a framework for mutual looking and connection, and the fear that my own practices of looking, recording and representation might also contribute to the systems of division of which I am critical. At the same time, I think that this tension or contradiction within the fieldwork process should be explored and grappled with. I want to locate an approach to observation, interpretation and representation that is conscious, considered, self-reflexive and accountable. In this way one starts to ask questions of “how to connect” with the world (Said 2004:78). How one negotiates the research process and selects which aspects of something to connect with, and which not to, is instinctive and individual to the researcher. Over the nine-month period that I spent as a participant observer in the West Bank I developed this framework for thinking about looking through the metaphor of the skin. The skin is a semi-permeable boundary that provides a reference point from which to comprehend ideas of interiority and exteriority. One’s understanding of the home (and, by extension, the community, city or state) as a protective shelter for the body can be related to a perception of the skin as a semi-permeable layer of living tissue that mediates the flow of matter between an inside and an outside. It can be argued that human beings model physical and psychological structures, ideologies and actions on an understanding of the inside and the outside; separated by the boundary that is the skin. The notion of a metaphorical looking with the skin is related to questions of how one can slowly and selectively connect with the lived

reality of people in place in a way that engages knowingly and responsibly with “practices of looking” and representation (Mirzoeff 2011:1).

As I have established in the Introduction chapter, this is a study that seeks to interrogate the concept of visual narratives of division. These visual narratives of division are located in sites of division where they can be ‘sighted’, observed and analysed. In order to analyse the notion of a visual narrative of division in a specific site, I use the metaphor of ‘walking shoes’. This idea of walking shoes can be understood in terms of the common expression of ‘getting dust on one’s boots’ or ‘getting one’s boots dirty’ used by anthropologists conducting in-depth fieldwork within a particular context. The category of walking shoes includes the practical tools (walking and observing, note-taking, participant observation and photographic documentation) employed in my process of collecting material. These walking shoes allow me to connect intimately with the fieldwork context, and the thesis guides within that context. The metaphorical category of walking shoes includes the tools and techniques I have developed in order build connections with the individual thesis guides and artist guides within sites of division where visual narratives of division can be identified, documented and analysed. The guides further enable the soles of my walking shoes to make contact with these visual narratives of division within the selected sites of division in the Palestinian context. These guides also assist me in locating sites of connection, openings and ruptures that can be found in closed and fortified sites of division. By using the methods grouped under walking shoes, I observe and document the visual and written material that falls within the metaphorical category of the visual diary. Included here are images of artworks made by the artist guides who lead me through the thesis, personal documentation of visual narratives of division found in sites of division, and “written photographs” (Kawulich 2005:2) and descriptions of observations. The contents of the visual diary are substantiated by the contents of my conceptual backpack that contains the relevant literature selected for this study. There are certain texts and theorists that I refer to, or draw on throughout the study. This literature is summarised in the section of this chapter titled ‘conceptual backpack’. The contents of the conceptual backpack have directly informed my analysis of each visual narrative of division and the framing of each of the toolkits described in this chapter.

2.2 Sites of division

I characterise a ‘site of division’ as a place where narratives of division can be observed within a particular location. These sites of division are both conceptual and geographical. The Zionist colonisation of Palestine in the early 1900s is a narrative of division that has produced visual evidence in Israel and the OPTs. Not only are Israel and the OPTs a site of division in the sense of a place that is literally divided, where the evidence of division can be seen or ‘sighted’, they are also a site of division in terms of the divided perspectives that characterise the history of this geography. In Chapter Three: Stories and Structures: Buildings and the Nation in Palestinian Art and Visual Culture I negotiate these sites of division. The reality of forced segregation and apartheid geography experienced by Palestinian artists living in the West Bank can be identified in specific cities like Ramallah or Jerusalem. These narratives of division generate smaller sites of division that inform the content of individual artists’ work. I analyse the visual narratives of division found in these sites in Chapter Four: Walls, Blocks and Barriers in Contemporary Palestinian Art. Chapter Five: Guarded Visions: Walls, Watchtowers and Warped Perspectives in the Occupied Palestinian Territories is situated in physical sites of division, namely Hebron and Qalandia where conceptual sites of division such as the warping of individual perspectives generated by visible structures and narratives of division can be identified. The final site of division negotiated in the thesis is found in Chapter Six: Sites of Division: Political Tourism and the Aestheticising of the Israeli Apartheid Wall. Physically located in Bethlehem and in Ramallah (with a brief pause in Hebron), the conceptual site of division in this chapter is political tourism and practices framed as alternative tourism in the West Bank OPTs. In each of these chapters I consult the work of practising artists who work in ways that can be described in terms of what Simbao (2016:3) terms as “site-situational”. These artists respond directly to the sites of division in which they are located or connected to. Their work, which responds to existing visual narratives of division such as the Israeli apartheid wall, can be understood as representations of visual narratives of division as well as sites of connection. Their work is not site-specific in any strict sense of the term but can be described under the title variations of site-specificity detailed by Miwon Kwon. These include “site-determined, site-oriented, site-conscious, site-responsive [and] site-related” (Kwon 2002:1). Using the tools grouped in the walking shoes section I am able to move through these sites of division in a way that incorporates the principles of looking with the skin.

The artists I have positioned as guides and the artists I analyse in this thesis engage directly with existing visual conversations in specific sites. Instead of framing their work as “site-specific” (a more fixed and rigid configuration of the art-site relationship) I prefer to work with the concept of “site-situational” art, created by Ruth Simbao (2016:3). This idea of the “site-situational” draws on the notion of “constructing situations” conceptualised by the Situationist International group. According to Simbao (2016:3):

What is important to my [her] creation of the term ‘site-situational performance’ (or ‘site-situational art’), are the constantly moving, in-the-moment relationships between environments and people, and between the acts of recognising, interpreting and creating.

In her configuration of the art-site relationship, “place” is a character named “Audacity”. Audacity is an “intermediary trickster character who mediates between space and time”, who cannot be held down or fixed in any way. Simbao frames her as “a conversation; not just the subject who engages in conversation, but the very conversation itself” (Simbao 2016:3). In this relationship, the artwork or performance is not involved in a conversation with a specific and meaningful place; instead, the artwork/intervention/installation or performance steps into an existing on-going conversation, a series of situational dialogues mediated by place.

2.3 Walking Shoes

The metaphor of walking shoes is about making direct contact with the fieldwork context. One’s walking shoes, one’s personal frame of reference and abstract/intellectual knowledge of a particular place, make contact with the actual lived experience of people and objects in that place. In the instance of my study, the walking shoes provide the means of getting from one site of division to another. They allow for the application of prior knowledge and understanding within the actual place from which that particular knowledge is derived. These walking shoes are my own; they have been made by me and shaped by the South African context I call home.

This concept of walking shoes can be understood in terms of what Edward Said (2004:80) calls the “individual particular”. In *Humanism and Democratic Criticism*, Said (2004:80) refers to the idea of the “individual particular” as a basic reference point from which one

comprehends the self and others within one's immediate and extended space. In his reflective discussion of Said's life and work in the essay *Adagio*, Homi Bhabha (2005:371) reiterates this concept and talks about "the ground note of the 'individual particular' from which all human narration begins". The "individual particular" can be interpreted in terms of the way that all human beings view the world through a personal and specific lens (Said 2004:80). This lens is informed by context-specific narratives related to narratives of belonging in place that are used to construct and represent the self and one's perception of the self in relation to the external world and others within that world. One can argue further that this perception of the self determines how one connects with other people, objects and ideas. The content of this thesis is drawn from first-hand experience of making contact with the Palestinian context informing my study. I write from a place that tries to consider the "ground note" of my own "individual particular" (Said 2004:80) in a self-reflexive approach to looking, interpreting and narrating certain observations and experiences.

Different artists, authors and individuals living and working in both South Africa and Palestine inform the development of this notion of the walking shoes and the idea of walking as a research method. Doung Anwar Jahangeer (who I profile and discuss further in Chapter Six) uses walking as both a research method and a medium for his "site-situated" experiential performance artworks. Jahangeer is an "artist/architect/performer" who has developed his own notion of "anarchitecturewithoutwalls" (Simbao 2013a:408). My understanding of the benefits of walking as a mode of looking in relation to my own home were reinforced by my participation in one of Jahangeer's *City Walks* (2000–present) which he started around the corner from my own home in the city of Durban in South Africa. The *City Walks* led and narrated by Jahangeer bring participants into close proximity with the intimate details of a city like Durban. According to Ruth Simbao (Simbao 2013a) "Jahangeer conceptualized and implemented the city walk initiative as a way of directly engaging with and observing the flux and mutability of his adopted city, Durban". In a South African context, there is a distinct class division between those who walk as their primary mode of transport and use public transport systems where possible, and those who almost never walk, rarely use public transport systems and travel primarily via private car. This way of moving in a place restricts and edits *what* one sees and *how* one sees certain things.

During the walks Jahangeer converses with the participants and those who join him along the way. He often tells the story of his first experiences in the South African city of Durban in the early 1990s and speaks about the emphasis that residents placed on fear and insecurity. He describes his early encounters with people living in Durban as saturated with consistent reminders to be careful, cautious, followed by instructions about which areas to avoid and who to treat with trepidation. This fearful response that he talks about is a symptom of colonial and apartheid attitudes to urban planning and segregation of civil society and continues to morph along the shifting shape of the economic separations symptomatic of apartheid. According to Jahangeer (in Simbao 2013b:410), “places in South Africa ... are plagued by constructions of fear built on false assumptions of difference”. The built environment of “the country continues ... to be marked by social, cultural, and economic schisms” (Jahangeer in Simbao 2013b:410). This phenomenon of fear and anxiety in relation to people and place is not unique to the South African context. Jahangeer faces his own fears and the inherited fears of others in his “performative walking” through different cities in South Africa and other parts of the world. He provides an antidote to fear and disconnection, a taste of human experience and walking as a mode of looking. “Jahangeer asserts that people who do not walk in cities are merely voyeurs, reducing their experience of the city to vision as they view the city from behind the glass of car windows and high-rise buildings” (Simbao 2013b:410)¹⁴. The artist helps to personalise these places and reveal elements that are intriguing or aesthetically pleasing as well as those that indicate the underlying apartheid logic that continues to permeate South African spaces post apartheid. One can argue that “performative walking” can be seen as a means to subvert structures, policies and rhetoric that aid dis-connection (Simbao 2016:408).

Serge Nitegeka’s invitation embedded in the title of his installation ...*and walk in my shoes*, 2011 acted as an additional point of inspiration for the walking shoes concept¹⁵. Nitegeka’s installation is concerned with his own experience as a refugee in South Africa facing xenophobic discrimination and hostility towards foreign nationals from other African countries in the post-apartheid context, despite the propagation of the notion that South Africa is a country for all who live in it. His invitation to take a walk in his shoes is an opportunity to empathise with his experience facilitated by an embodied experience of space

¹⁴ Jahangeer makes this comment in reference to the philosopher to Michel de Certeau

¹⁵ I profile Serge Alain Nitegeka and use him as a South African artist guide in Chapter Four: Walls, Blocks and Barriers in Contemporary Palestinian Art.

and movement. Jahangeer's practice of walking as both research method and representational form mirrors the work of Palestinian author and human rights lawyer Raja Shehadeh. Shehadeh's work also connects to the work of Serge Nitegeka in terms of the idea of inviting the viewer or the reader to take a walk with him. Shehadeh¹⁶ walks in places in the West Bank considered dangerous for Palestinians. In *Palestinian Walks: Notes on a Vanishing Landscape*, he describes his own personal experiences of physical and psychological assault as he observes the relationship that exists between the divided, vanishing Palestinian "land and the contemporary culture of fear and blood, crime and punishment" that characterises it (Shehadeh 2007:xiii-xiv).

In his guided narration of specific places, Shehadeh explores and represents the interesting, beautiful aspects of a place where "distorted" images and representations eclipse the remaining "treasures" (Shehadeh 2007:xi). This constitutes an interesting form of activism. Instead of merely describing the horrors and trauma of the "vanishing landscape", Shehadeh invites his reader to walk with him through the hills of Ramallah¹⁷ in order to highlight the things that he feels should be seen and preserved for future generations to experience. He writes about the Palestinian landscape intimately, describing it in terms of his own back yard. He states:

All my life I lived in houses that overlook the Ramallah hills. I have related to them like my own private backyard... I have watched their changing colours during the day and over the seasons as well as during an unending sequence of wars. I have always loved hill walking, whether in Palestine, the Swiss Alps or the Highlands and outlying islands of Scotland, where it was a particular joy to ramble without fear of judgement or harassment (Shehadeh 2007:xi).

Shehadeh (2007:xiv) expresses his desire to "persuade the reader how glorious the land of Palestine is, despite all the destruction that had been wrought over the last century" and urges his reader to walk with him. This is a sentiment expressed by Anis Daraghma on some of the walks we took together. Dr Daraghma spoke about his own desire to show the world a side of Palestine that is often distorted or overshadowed by stereotypical representations and spectacular images in mass media.

¹⁶Raja Shehadeh is a Palestinian lawyer and author who lives in Ramallah. He is also the founder of the Al Haq human rights organisation and the author of a number of books that deal with international law and human rights in the Middle East.

¹⁷Raja Shehadeh explains that the Palestinian West Bank city of "Ramallah was established some five hundred years ago by five clans". He explains that his "family belonged to one of these clans, but by the early years of the twentieth century they had left Ramallah, given up farming and joined the professional class in Jaffa, which they came to consider as their home". Shehadeh (2007:3) describes how his "grandfather Saleem served as a judge at the courts of the British Mandate over Palestine" while his father "practiced as a lawyer" in the coastal city of Jaffa from the "office which he established in 1935". He also describes the way in which both his father and his grandfather were "forced to leave the city of their choice" during the Nakba in 1948. According to Shehadeh, his "father came to Ramallah where I [he] was born". Shehadeh's grandfather, Saleem, was "exiled to Beirut, where he died two years later" (2007:3).

2.3.1 The South African Soles of my Walking Shoes

My walking shoes are also about the need to remain grounded in my particular frame of reference, to remember that all looking and all experiences are subjective interpretations mediated through my own “individual particular” (Said 2004:80). The metaphor of my walking shoes is also about the particular contribution I can make to my area of inquiry that is a result of the way in which my shoes have shaped. I am a practising artist and academic, competent in both theoretical and practical research with an ability to merge the two in creative ways. Because of my experience as a practising artist I am able to understand and engage with the processes and concepts employed by other practising artists from something of an insider perspective. As a South African born in the 1980s I can recall the final years of apartheid and the hope and joy of the early 1990s, followed by the turbulent 2000s and the recent dissolution of the 2010s. This means that I have studied apartheid in my own country, I have observed the devastation of such a system and I understand the detrimental effects of a separatist, discriminatory system that serves to divide people from one another at every level. This aspect of my walking shoes means that I can identify and interrogate the application of Israeli apartheid in a completely different and initially foreign context with relative ease. It also means that I am able to connect with others from a ground note of some sort of shared understanding. When travelling the West Bank, Palestinians I encountered who learnt that I was from *Jenoob Afriqiya* (South Africa) would make comments like: “Ah *Jenoob Afriqiya*. So you know about apartheid then”, or alternatively I would be asked “What do you think about Israeli apartheid, here in Palestine?” On the occasions that I found myself in Tel Aviv or West Jerusalem I would occasionally be asked “Do you think Israel is an apartheid state?”. In a few microscopic ways I was treated differently to the other ‘internationals’ from primarily ‘first world’ countries working, volunteering, studying or living in the West Bank. There was often a sense of recognition, an acknowledgement of our shared understanding of a particular kind of political system. My Palestinian friends, guides and even strangers I met did not need to explain the details of what an apartheid system is or how it functions on so many microscopic levels that most of the time it is not actually visible, nor did they need to articulate the precise nature of colonialism and what it means to steal someone’s land and build a new country in it while eradicating or displacing and excluding the local inhabitants already living there. As a reader of art history and visual culture I can also step out of this

perspective and view the work of an artist from a theoretical or analytical position. I have found that my ability to connect and empathise with the art making process meant that the artists I engaged with felt comfortable revealing their studio spaces to me, divulging information about unfinished works and ideas they may ordinarily struggle to articulate in more formal settings.

2.3.2 Walking Shoes, Participant Observation and Looking with the Skin

My first official experience of immersive fieldwork began when I left Johannesburg and set foot in Tel Aviv airport for the first time in 2013 with the specific goal of collecting information and material for this doctorate. In the proposal phase of the doctoral process, I selected the method of participant observation as a basic framework for my approach to fieldwork and found it complemented the art historical and visual culture background of the study. Marshall and Rossman (Kawulich 2005:2) define participant observation as “the systematic description of events, behaviours, and artefacts in the social setting chosen for study”.

Erlandson, Harris, Skipper and Allen (in Kawulich 2005: 2) explain that “observations enable the researcher to describe existing situations using the five senses, providing a ‘written photograph’ of the situation under study”. The opportunity to experience a particular phenomenon (such as apartheid in Israel and the Palestinian Territories) through primary fieldwork offered me the chance to learn about narratives of division in the West Bank context directly. Schenshul, Schenshul and LeCompte (in Kawulich 2005:2) define “participant observation” as the “process of learning through exposure to or involvement in the day-to-day or routine activities of participants in the researcher setting”. Demunck and Sobo (in Kawulich 2005:1) emphasise “participant observation as the primary method used by anthropologists doing fieldwork”. Dewalt and Dewalt (in Kawulich 2005:1–2) argue that “fieldwork involves ‘active looking, improving memory, informal interviewing, writing detailed field notes, and perhaps most importantly, patience’”. I learnt a valuable lesson on my first fieldwork trip to the West Bank when I accompanied Dr Daraghma to different limestone quarries in the West Bank, where he introduced me to members of the community, farm owners, town mayors and human rights activists, ecologists and artists. During this trip he quickly picked up the anxiety I felt about ‘wasted time’ in this context.

It was during this first of the three fieldwork trips that Dr Anis Daraghma taught me about the importance of slowing down and having “patience” in the Palestinian context, where time and space are controlled and manipulated by Israeli authorities and civilians at every turn (Dewalt and Dewalt in Kawulich 2005:1–2). The blockades, closures and theft of time as well as the unpredictable nature of checkpoints are a part of routine life in the West Bank. I quickly realised that the idea of “research”¹⁸ as something separate from everyday life would only result in the acquisition of superficial insight: the kind of insight that is pre-packaged and prepared specifically to quench the thirst of “parachute” journalists traversing one conflict zone after another and only skimming the very surface of the events taking place in the locations they are flown to (Sundaram 2014:1). An integral aspect of the way in which I conducted my research within Israel/Palestine is connected to how one creates a home for oneself. In order to “feel the eye of the place”, as the artist Hasan Daraghmeleh suggests, it is necessary to settle in unknown space (even if only briefly) and take as much time as possible to allow it to acquire meaning by inhabiting it with one’s own body (Daraghmeleh 2014). Through participant observation, I was able to feel and perceive narratives of division within this setting, through my five senses, in a way that I could not do from my home in South Africa.

According to Bernard (in Kawulich 2005:2), the anthropological method of participant observation allows one to “collect different types of data”, adding to a diversity in ones sources. He argues further, “being on site over a period of time familiarizes the researcher to the community, thereby facilitating involvement in sensitive activities to which he/she generally would not be invited” (Bernard in Kawulich 2005:2). An experiential and immersive approach to research can allow one to observe an object or image within a local context from a sensitised position. One can argue that, in using the method of participant observation, the visual arts researcher can gain a better understanding of certain objects, images and performances as he/she circulates within a specific cultural context.

¹⁸ Linda Tuhiwai Smith (Smith 1999:2) addresses some of the problems with the term “research” in indigenous communities that have been colonised and scarred by imperialism. She points out the problems associated with the word “research” but does not suggest that one discard the term altogether. For further reading on the conceptualisation of “indigenous research”, “indigenous research protocols” and “indigenous methodologies”, see Smith, L.T., 1999. *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples*, London: Zed Books.

2.3.3 Walking and Talking

In the West Bank OPT Palestinians are subject to invasive forms of interrogation on a daily basis. The traditional method of formal interviews used by art historians to gain insight into an artist's practice was not suitable in this context. I found it far more productive to use an unstructured interview method while allowing the individual artists to direct and lead our interactions. In a formal interview setting, the individual being interviewed may feel interrogated or scrutinised. One is more likely to mediate or filter one's thoughts before expressing them to the person doing the interview. In response to this context, I chose to engage in a way that directly employs the embodied, multi-sensory approach of looking with the skin.

Practically, I found the best way to conduct these unstructured walking interviews was to prepare a rough set of questions ahead of time. I would keep these questions in mind during my interactions with the artists but did not rely too heavily on them, nor did I use them to restrict my enquiries. I chose not to record the artists or individuals I engaged with and focused instead on the places they led me to and the things they directed my attention to. We would generally walk together (or sometimes drive) through the West Bank to their studios and the sites and scenes that motivated their artistic production. Each individual artist and academic took me on a tour or excursion of some sort to a specific site where narratives of division evidence themselves in the landscape. While walking, they would tell me personal stories of displacement, segregation or discrimination as a result of Israel's colonisation, occupation and apartheid system in the Palestinian OPTs. After the interaction I would record my observations and the narratives and stories relayed to me in detailed field-notes. I would write out descriptions of things I had heard, felt, smelt, tasted and seen during the experience. In this environment I found it essential to make eye contact and participate in the activity I had been invited to partake in, whether that was a meal, a view or conversation. When one is too focused on a particular objective, it is easy to lose sight of other important details that are not in one's line of focus.

2.3.4 Walking and Learning

While based in the Palestinian West Bank, I studied Arabic in a formal classroom setting and practised what I had learnt while moving and negotiating the West Bank context. My

studying of the language became a site of connection between the Palestinians who travelled on the Number 81 bus from Ramallah to East Jerusalem through the Qalandiya checkpoint and myself. Passengers seated next to me in the bus as we all waited, sometimes for hours in traffic at the checkpoint, would often watch me work on my Arabic homework with interest. Most people did not hesitate to test my knowledge or scribble a word onto my notebook; almost every one of the interested persons declared that I was not being taught one or the other thing correctly. The Arabic notebook that I worked into and the Arabic worksheets given to me by my tutor provided other people with a window of access, a way to initiate communication with me, the stranger on the outside of an invisible border. I was able to connect with individuals on a particular inside in this way and the division became less rigid.

2.3.5 Walking and Looking

The implications of what it means to observe, interpret and represent something outside of oneself in terms of the photographic document were rendered far clearer in my mind through my direct engagement and experience living and working within the Palestinian West Bank Territory. I can recall the moment when my actions and position as researcher lost their abstract theoretical quality and acquired the emotive properties of lived experience.

While establishing a temporary home for myself in Ramallah, I made note of things I wanted to document, specifically the security zones and checkpoints such as the Qalandiya checkpoint between Jerusalem and Ramallah. On an intellectual level I understood that the Israeli colonial and apartheid project and its symbolic forms had become naturalised and normalised in this context. It was only through participating as an observer in these sites that I began to emotionally process the depth and breadth of displacement, dispossession and dehumanisation experienced by humans forced into inhuman conditions within this context. My relationship to photography changed when I was faced with the embodied reality of an invasive apartheid, colonialism and military occupation. The realisation of what it means to look, record and represent a reality outside of my own is an ongoing process, but I would like to mention a particular incident that added some perspective to how I starting thinking along the lines of a site-specific seeing as essential to my notion of looking with the skin.

I moved to a new apartment just outside of Ramallah, which I shared with a Palestinian woman. We became friends. A few weeks earlier I had read an essay by the Israeli academic and artist Meir Wigoder (2010:293) on photographing the West Bank barrier wall; in the essay he argues:

Pointing the camera at the Israeli Separation Barrier-Wall involves a fundamental paradox: no matter how critical we are of its construction, once we choose to photograph it, we are colluding with its construction and preservation.

Wigoder's (2010:306) essay is accompanied by a series of photographs of the West Bank wall and guidelines on how one could or should document the structure to resist the spectacle and avoid being "seduced by the theatrical gesticulations of a conflict that is recorded and fed by photojournalism".

The photograph depicted in Figure 2.1 was at first not that difficult for me to look at. Al Ayzariah, the village where this section of the wall has been documented, is the site of my friend's family home. Until I made the connection between this image and the narration of her lived experience in relation to this structure, the image did not have any profound effect on me. One day I was invited to dinner in her family's home in Al Ayzariah, I packed my camera thinking I may take a few photographs for my research, knowing that the building was next to the wall, sliced off from the arteries that previously connected them to Ramallah and Jerusalem.



Figure 2.11: Wigoder, Meir. 2010. The Wall: Al Ayzariah (Wigoder 2010:296).

I could not bring myself to lift the camera out of my bag and point it and shoot at anything. The image of the wall portrayed nothing of the ramifications it had had on her and her family's life over the last 20 years. Moreover, the wall itself, the thing that I could latch my gaze onto and record to show others, was only the smallest of symbolic gestures of a much larger, far more destructive project of separation and colonisation that could not be captured by any number of images, maps, stories or diagrams. In that instance I did not want to reinforce my already complex position as outsider looking in; I could not meet her gaze or assert her right to look and my right to look back through the mediation of a camera lens.

That experience of seeing was a type of feeling-seeing, a site-specific seeing where I was forced to acknowledge what I was connecting with, how I wanted to connect and how I did not want to connect with a particular lived reality. Her family lives in Area E, an area that is disconnected from the rest of the West Bank and does not slot within Area A administered by the Palestinian Authority or Area B which is supposed to be managed by both the Palestinian Authority and the Israeli Military, nor does it belong to Area C designated as either National Park or Israeli settlement and governed by Israel and controlled by the army. It has no official governing system and there are no authorities to build or fix roads, to ensure that houses have water or electricity or to prevent citizens being persecuted by crime.

The wall that separates her family's home from Jerusalem blocks the view they once had of the landscape, the town has died from the blockades, and attempts to claim the area (E1) for the expansion of Jewish settlements have resulted in a number of problems for her and her family and her community. With no Palestinian Authority present to turn to and not under Israeli jurisdiction, she and her family feel insecure, they feel unsafe and threatened by the people they live with and the continuous military invasions that take place on a regular basis. She wanted to be a translator, but speaks of the fact that she no longer fantasises about her future because it depresses and frustrates her. She needs to accept where she is and what that means for her life as a Palestinian woman. The narratives of division which serve as the subject of my study are significant only because of the ideologies that they represent and because there is no photograph or book that can articulate the sense of closing and claustrophobia that is imposed on an individual's body, the feeling of seeing which denies representation and the right to the real; her right to the real, her right to imagine herself beyond the confines of a prison that shrinks daily and serves as a tourist attraction for visitors.

2.4 Guides:

The guides profiled within each of the chapters have been carefully selected and presented in each of the relevant sections where they appear. The majority of the guides are practising artists with the exception of Anis Daraghma, who is the director of the Palestine Museum in Cape Town, Alia Rayyan, who is the director of the Al Hoash Palestinian art court, and Samer Kokaly, who is with the Alternative Tourism Group. Alia Rayyan is also an artist but I do not analyse her work specifically in the thesis; rather I draw on her insight into the barriers faced by Palestinian artists in the Occupied Palestinian Territories. I have engaged with nearly all of the guides directly and two of them (Eyal Weizman and Sandi Hilal) indirectly through Alessandro Petti, who is the director of the Decolonising Architecture Art Residency in Beit Sahour (discussed in Chapter Five of this thesis). The choice to profile the artists in this way is an effort to personalise them for the reader. These are real people with different frameworks of identification and expertise. I selected this strategy because it is creative and potentially assists in presenting a more intimate analysis. These guides are an alternative to the problematic notion of "informants" used and recently discarded by many anthropologists.

The term “informants” alone is suggestive of criminal activity, warfare and military action and the idea of an informant is directly connected to the Western concept of “research” which in a Palestinian context is often met with a knowing “distrustful” smile and a “closed door”¹⁹ (Smith 1999:1). Linda Tuhiwai Smith (1999:1) argues that “from the vantage point of the colonized, a position from which [she] write[s] and choose[s] to privilege, the term ‘research’ is inextricably linked to European Imperialism and colonialism”. My use of guides instead of informants is also about shifting the power dynamic somewhat. In placing the control within the hands of the individuals who guided me through the Palestinian context, I open the study up to chance encounters and outside influences. While one may want to differentiate between academic research and the research of journalists and film-makers in the attempt to argue that one is less crude and problematic than the other, Smith (1999:1) argues that most local populations and their communities “do not differentiate scientific or ‘proper’ research from the forms of amateur collecting, journalistic approaches to film-making or other ways of ‘taking’ indigenous knowledge that have occurred so casually over the centuries”.

2.5 Visual Diary

My visual diary contains the visual material I have collected in the research process. This material can be divided into primary fieldwork documentation in the form of photographs and “written photographs” and secondary material in the form of reproductions of artists’ work (Bernard in Kawulich 2005:2). I have two types of photography in the thesis. The first includes images taken using my smart phone in places where a camera is inappropriate and insensitive. The second type of images includes photographs that I have taken using my camera in places where it is not dangerous or disrespectful to be seen taking photographs. This primary material also includes the notes I have taken after engaging with different artists through the idea of ‘walking conversations’ as a form of unstructured interview. I did not anticipate the challenges and ethical complexity of my position as researcher nor did I fully internalise the implications of my use of this material as subject matter prior to the experiential fieldwork process. While I have indeed used my own images and those made by other artists, journalists or individuals, it is imperative to state that there is no explanation or representation (no matter how honest the reproduction) that can convey the monumental, sensory-overwhelming architectural construction of this monolithic dividing object. Nor can

¹⁹ Throughout the thesis I use the metaphors of doors and windows. In the section titled Conceptual Backpack I explain my use of these metaphors as reference to notions of opening and closure.

any one representation successfully stand for the human tragedy that is the Israeli apartheid barrier wall. The following passage is an example of one of the written photographs I made in response to the Israeli apartheid barrier and the challenge of photographing the structure within my field notes in September 2013:

The Israeli apartheid barrier wall 15 September 2013, 2:00 pm

The scale of the concrete pillars, both their width and height, cannot be felt or internalised through a photograph or painting. One needs to stand next to the looming structure within its dark shadow to understand the relationship between one's own dwarfed body, observing the contrast between living flesh and lifeless grey mass to perceive some sense of its monumental character. The manner in which the slabs of concrete are engineered to prevent even the smallest slither of light from passing between them is virtually impossible to capture in an image or video. It is only when one encounters an area where the concrete has been broken or chipped away and a sliver of light has managed to escape that one can understand the impact of its absence. The cold, rough texture of the industrial material itself must be physically touched, leaving its memory on the finger tips. The observer must be confronted by the inability to see the view or surrounding landscape. One needs more than anything to experience the sense of claustrophobia and invasiveness presented in the homes and communities of real people who watch you as you arrive to capture, document and consume the horror of their lived everyday reality. A shocking spectacle for the foreign viewer, that is the reality for people whose real lives are played out against and within the shadow of the West Bank Wall.

This primary material is complemented by secondary material in the form of reproductions of individual artists' work. Some of the visual artists, and thus their art practice, are from a South African context. I use the work of these artists, Serge Alain Nitegeka (Figure 4.9), Doung Anwar Jahangeer (Figure 6.5) and Thando Mama (Figure 3.26) and the concepts articulated within their work in a guiding capacity. Within each of the relevant chapters I have profiled these guides from South Africa and positioned their practice in relation to the work of artists responding to narratives of division in a Palestinian context. I examine the practice of the individual Palestinian artist guides: Khaled Jarrar (Figure 3.17), Fareh Saleh (Figure 4.20), and Hasan Daraghme (Figure 6.21). In addition to positioning these artist guides and their artworks in relation to the primary material gathered for this study, I have also included the founding members of the Decolonizing Architecture Art Residency: Eyal Weizman (Figure 5.1), Sandi Hilal (Figure 5.18) and Alessandro Petti (Figure 5.17) as guides. In addition to analysing the work of the different artist guides I also analyse artworks by Yael Bartana, Emily Jacir and Larissa Sansour.

I have treated this visual and written material as a network of sources providing different types of information that complement or speak back to one another within the individual sites of division negotiated in each of the chapters. The artists I profile and analyse are responding to the built form documented in the photographs and referenced throughout the thesis. Each photographic document offers a “picture”²⁰ of one part of the reality experienced by Palestinians. Each of the artworks from a Palestinian context depicts a personal perspective; a response to the sites described in my photographic documentation and written observations (Mitchell 2005 :371).

2.5.1 The selection process

This doctoral thesis is not situated strictly within a traditional art historical framework. My approach to images and ‘pictures’ is better described in terms of a visual culture study²¹. As a study of a visual narratives of division I position the artists as heuristics rather than as the subjects of the study. These artists are my guiding lenses to assist in understanding and representing visual narratives of division. These artist’s works are treated as texts that aid the understanding of a particular phenomenon of visual narratives of division. Thus my selection of artworks depended on the other visual data I had collected and information I had acquired outside of traditional art spaces. The artists discussed in this dissertation were selected according to the theme of visual narratives of division represented in the work of contemporary Palestinian and South African artists. This is actually a rather large pool given the way in which a divided Apartheid and Post-Apartheid past permeates artistic representation. Of the artists I had identified as fitting this criteria, I selected the ones that I

²⁰ My use of the term “picture” is in reference to W.J.T. Mitchell (2005:xiv), who argues that “in its most extended sense ... a picture refers to the entire situation in which an image has made its appearance”.

²¹ While this doctoral study is categorized as a Phd in the discipline of art history, my overall approach to the study is situated within a visual culture framework more than within a traditional art historical approach. According to Elkins (2003:39) “The argument for a general approach to images- over a traditional art-historical sequence of courses—is that it allows visibility itself to be questioned and permits new kinds of questions to be asked that can’t be raised in conventional classes of art history, anthropology or sociology” (Elkins 2003 39) According to Elkins visual culture has the potential to open up the “visual to a more inclusive set of concerns” (Elkins 2003:37). In trying to define visual culture Elkins explains: “Some researchers use the term visual culture to denote new theoretical approaches in art history (Michael Ann Holly, Paul Duro) some want to expand the professional territory of art studies to include artifacts from all historic periods and cultures (James Herbert); others emphasize the process of seeing (W.J.T Mitchell) across epochs (David Rodowick); while still others think of the category of the visual as encompassing non-traditional media (Nicholas Mirzoeff), but also of the institutional discourses of science, medicine and law (Lisa Cartwright)”.

could access at that particular time in the West Bank and East Jerusalem Occupied Palestinian Territories²².

2.6 Conceptual Backpack

The literature included in the conceptual backpack is used to analyse the material in the visual diary. I have divided the literature thematically rather than according to specific authors. The themes include “Looking with the Skin”, “Walls, Windows, Doors and Skins”, “Vision, Visuality and Blindness” “Walking, Walls and Elastic Geography”, “Narratives of Division: Geopolitical Intersections” and “Palestinian Art Publications”.

2.6.1 Looking with the Skin

In considering how to engage responsibly with different forms of representation in terms of looking with the skin, I consider Said’s articulations regarding a humanist approach of slowness and reflection in deciding how to go about comprehending and representing detailed aspects of the world. In his contemplation of Said and this particular aspect of his work, Homi Bhabha highlights some of Said’s convictions on the topic. Bhabha (2005 :371) writes:

[S]lowness is a deliberate measure of ethical and political reflection that maintains tension rather than resolves it; it is a temporal register that regulates the narrative movement through which (in negotiating the unresolved tension between the aesthetic and the national) we make those connections that allow us to see part and whole, that is the main thing: what to connect with, how and how not?

Embedded in this one quotation are the guidelines for a methodology of connection. Said’s articulations on the notion of a slow and measured consideration of “what to connect with? how? and how not?” to connect with critical aspects of the world such as the “aesthetic and the national” inform my method of looking with the skin. At a point in history where there is a proliferation of images upon which to latch one’s gaze, and a variety of media to filter that information through, the challenge is not necessarily to consume and process as much information as possible, but to find a means for slowness in “posing that slow question of articulation and affiliation – what to connect with, how and how not?”. Situated within the

²² There are multiple Palestinian artists who address the issue of visual narratives of division from different perspectives. In subsequent publications I intend to analyse further examples and extend on the selection of material I present in this thesis.

discipline of comparative literature Said emphasises the necessity for multiple perspectives and longer processes of looking and interpreting.

Sara Ahmed and Jackie Stacey (2001:2) propose that one “think through the skin, ‘thinking through the skin’ is thinking that reflects...on inter-embodiment, on the mode of being-with and being-for, where one touches and is touched by others”. In the chapter “Skin as country in the Central Desert”, Jennifer Biddle (in Ahmed and Stacey 2001:178) argues that “the very boundary ‘we’ so-called ‘modern-western subjects’ understand the ‘skin’ as providing – that is, ‘skin’ as a material, external cover for the stable, self-identified and self-identical subjectivity – is not a universally held understanding”. She goes on to explain that “skin, in the Warlpiri Aboriginal context, provides the medium through which women regularly can and do transform into the object world: ‘become’ landscape, country, other species”(Ahmed & Stacey 2001:178).

2.6.2 Walls, Windows, Doors and Skins

The skin connects each of our sensory organs and serves to integrate and protect one’s intimate and personal space of the inside from an outside through orifices and openings. The mouth is an extension inwards of the skin of the lips, which themselves are an extension of the skin on the face and the skin of the body. Located inside the mouth is the tongue, the sense receptor responsible for taste. Just a short distance away are the ears, the eyes and the nose. Each is a sensory organ that develops out of the skin. And each is also skin. If one considers that each sense receptor in the body is actually a part of the skin, it is not unreasonable to consider them as working together within a sensorial network. One can argue that there is a layer of added depth, detail and nuance that can be enabled through this understanding of sensory perception as a collusion, an intersection and a collection of different sensory data that inform the viewing and interpretation of each individual receptor.

In the *Eyes of the Skin: Architecture and the Senses*, architect and architectural theorist Juhani Pallasmaa (2005:10) emphasises the “significance of the tactile sense for our experience and understanding of the world”. Pallasmaa (2005:10) makes the point that “our skin is actually capable of distinguishing a number of colours; we do indeed see by our skin”. Pallasmaa argues further that “the very essence of the lived experience is moulded by

hapticity and peripheral unfocused vision”. According to Pallasmaa (2005:10), “focused vision confronts us with the world whereas peripheral vision envelops us in the flesh of the world”. In keeping with the emphasis placed on the nature of looking (Elkins 1996) and the politics of vision and visuality (Mirzoeff 2011), Pallasmaa (2005:10), also advocates that “alongside the critique of the hegemony of vision, we need to consider the very essence of sight itself”.

On the interconnectivity of the senses Pallasmaa (2005:10–11) confirms that “all the senses, including vision are extensions of the tactile sense”. All the individual senses are connected by skin and are themselves a part of the skin; our sensory receptors – ears, eyes, nose, mouth – are “specialisations of skin tissue, and all sensory experiences are modes of touching and thus related to tactility”. Our ability to make “contact” with the world is facilitated by the skin as the “boundary line of the self through specialised parts of our enveloping membrane” (Pallasmaa 2005:11). In his discussion of the need to think about one’s sense organs as specialised extensions of the skin, Pallasmaa cites the work of anthropologist Ashley Montagu (in Pallasmaa 2005: 11) who argues that as the “oldest” and the most “sensitive” of all our body’s organs, the skin, is “our first medium of communication, and our most efficient protector”. She refers to “touch” as the “parent” of the ears, eyes, nose and mouth.

In *Architecture from the Outside*, Elizabeth Grosz (2001:39) explains that the representation of “space” is a “complement of the kind of subject who occupies it”. The wall, the floor, the door, and the window are architectural reflections of the human body. Juhani Pallasmaa (2005:17) notes that “architecture is fundamentally confronted with questions of human existence in space and time it domesticates limitless space and endless time to be tolerated, inhabited and understood by human kind”. As Henri Lefebvre (1991:170), author of *The Production of Space* confirms:

There is an immediate relationship between the body and its space, between the body’s deployment in space and its occupation of space. Before producing effects in the material realm (tools and objects), before producing itself by drawing nourishment from that realm, and before reproducing itself by generating other bodies, each living body is space and has its space: it produces itself in space and it also produces that space.

Grosz (2001:xv) examines a notion of the “outside that is both paradoxical and perverse”:

It [the outside] is paradoxical insofar as it can only ever make sense, have a place, in reference to what it is not and can never be – an inside, a within, an interior. And it is perverse, for while it is placed always relative to an inside, it observes no faith to the consistency of this inside. It is perverse in its breadth, in its refusal to be contained or constrained by the self-consistency of the inside.

In the same discussion, Grosz explains that philosophically speaking the outside is always on the inside of something else. To stand in one's garden looking at one's house may be considered an outside position, yet while one is on the exterior of a building, one is still within a piece of property, a road, an area, a suburb, a town, a country, a continent, and so on. According to Grosz (2001:xv), "the outside is the place one can never occupy fully or completely, for it is always other, different, at a distance from where one is". It is impossible to be on the outside of everything, "always outside", as Grosz (2001:xv) confirms that "to be outside something is always to be inside something else".

Imperative to this analysis of Grosz's (2001:xv) theories is the point she makes concerning the perspective that is offered through a detachment from the intimacy and immediacy of the inside. To occupy an outside position is "to see what cannot be seen from the inside", yet while the position of "outsideness" offers an insight that is difficult to gain from within, to be on the outside of (something) is to lose the possible comfort, security and sense of belonging which can be felt through the insider position, whilst potentially gaining the "ability to evaluate that position and to possibly compare it with others" (Grosz 2001:xv). In his chapter "The Dialectics of Outside and Inside" in *The Poetics of Space*, Bachelard (1958:211) observes the influence of "spatiality upon thought" and writes:

Outside and inside form a dialectic of division, the obvious geometry of which blinds us as soon as we bring it into play in metaphorical domains. It has the sharpness of the dialectics of yes and no, which decides everything. Unless one is careful, it is made into a basis of images that govern all thoughts of positive and negative.

In the formation of knowledge and understanding one relies on the comparison of binary terms, hence the concept of an outside is reliant on the existence of an inside. The implications of such binaries have far-reaching effects in terms of how the individual negotiates and perceives him/herself in relation to the outside, the so-called space of the "other". Grosz (2001:61) explains how "thought results from the provocation of an encounter". According to Grosz (2001:61), "thought is what confronts us from the outside, unexpectedly". She confirms :

Thought confronts us necessarily from the outside, from outside the concepts we already have, from outside the subjectivities we already are, from outside the material reality we already know. Thinking involves the wrenching of concepts away from their usual configurations, outside the systems in which they have a home, and outside the structures of recognition that constrain thought to the already known (Grosz 2001:61).

Shelter and the walls which provide it are necessary for optimal living. We need to articulate our own borders and semi-permeable barriers through which we mediate external sensations and experiences, filtering the harmful from the beneficial. The boundaries of the body are guarded by our instincts to preserve the interior, to protect it from harm, death, disease or trauma which can damage the physical and psychological interior. It can be suggested that the building of ideological and structural barriers is directly connected to real and imaginary threats located within one's environment. When faced with the unknown, we assess the risk associated with our (often) limited and primarily visual understanding of the group or category to which this threat belongs.

Windows and doors can be built into seemingly impenetrable walls. I use the window and the door symbolically and metaphorically throughout the thesis to refer to notions of opening and closing. Sarah Nuttall and Cheryl-ann Michael (2000:4) address a perception of South Africa "as a closed space that needs a window out onto the world". She makes reference to Njabulo Ndebele, who "signals the need for an opening, for a transformation of thought", and notes that a closed space fosters and allows for the "projection outwards of fears of chaos, marking a psychic closure" within the individual (Nuttall and Michael 2000:4). Nuttall and Michael's (2000:3) discussion on the "narrative of closedness" is specific to a South African context, yet her articulations on the necessity for "new forms of imaging" in relation to identity and place can also be applied to a discussion of Israel and The Palestinian Territories. The door, like the window, can serve as an opening. The door can be opened to welcome a someone on the 'outside' or it can be kept closed, rejecting the person standing outside of it.

According to Lefebvre (1991:209), the door is "transitional, symbolic and functional". The door marks a passage of entrance or exit between two spaces. It functions to separate the external environment from the internal area of the home. As Lefebvre (1991:209) explains, "the object 'door' serves to bring a space, the space of a 'room', say, or that of a street, to an end; and it heralds the reception to be expected in the neighbouring room, or in the house or interior that awaits". The door can be opened to welcome guests or visitors into the comfort

of one's home. It can also be closed shut in the face of the unknown or the unwanted. In Bachelard's (1958:222) reference to the door, he alludes to the powerful relationship between narrative and space: "a mere door can give images of hesitation, temptation, desire, security, welcome and respect". He asserts that "if one were to give an account of all the doors one has closed and opened, of all the doors one would like to re-open, one would have to tell the story of one's entire life". As a "threshold", Bachelard (1958:222) notes that "the door schematizes two strong possibilities ... at times it is closed, bolted, padlocked, at others, it is open, that is to say, wide open".

Historically, human beings have attempted to deny the permeability of the body through the tabooing of physical excretion, and other abject bodily functions. Similarly, the human being has also attempted to close off the house to the external world, adding to and expanding on the basic walls, windows, floors and doors through measures of security that block openings and access points. There are a variety of environmental or circumstantial factors that result in the closing of the body and the home, which unfortunately relate to fear and anxiety, often in relation to threats to one's security such as crime or violence. The problem with such a closure, a blocking off, can be compared with the human body, which cannot survive if it is unable to excrete, expel and absorb. The negative effects of rendering the house, the home and the state impermeable can arguably act to stunt the psychological growth of the individual and furthermore his/her ability to interact with other individuals beyond the personal boundary. According to Grosz (2001:67), "the outside is not a fixed limit but moving matter animated by peristaltic movements, folds and foldings that altogether make up an inside: they are not something other than the outside, but precisely the inside of an outside". One's physical understanding of that which is internal and that which is external (marked by the boundary of the skin) is extended into the spaces one creates and constructs. Each of these constructions engages in dialectics of movement between the human body and the boundary. As Gaston Bachelard (1958:211) suggests, these "dialectics" of space influence and inform every aspect of social and private life. One can argue that the demarcation of physical space is directly related to individual and collective narratives of occupation and inhabitation. The notion of home, of safety and security through the sensations of belonging and protection resonate with most if not all human beings. It is hard to deny the inseparable and mutually informative issues of space and narrative and the far-reaching implications they have for perspective.

With regards to the “closure of South African imaginations” (Nuttall and Michael 2000:5), prompted by imperial and colonial ideology and legally instituted through the apartheid government, one can argue for the existence of irrational fears and misconceptions, imaginings and exoticisms of individuals who threatened the so-called purity of white South African colonialists. A large part of the intention behind the implementation of apartheid was to prevent mixing and ‘contamination’ of the so-called ‘pure’ white race, yet it is impossible to prevent matter or thought from entering another zone, another territory if the metaphorical door or window has been opened. The authority exerted over the South African population by the apartheid system could not prevent the inevitable creolisations and hybridisations of thoughts, ideas, cultures or genetics. Nuttall and Michael (2000:5) note that “alongside the closure of South African imaginations there exist intimacies and connectivities, other ways of seeing”. These alternative ways of seeing and forms of intimacy managed to surface despite apartheid and the narrative of closedness it enforced.

2.6.3 Vision, Visuality and Blindness

The act of looking, of turning one’s head and directing one’s gaze at an object, person or place is necessary for one to see that thing. Thus looking produces seeing. I look at the wall because I want to see it. The desire to see the wall causes me to look at it, to focus my gaze in a particular direction allowing my eyes to process the thing I am looking at, and thus I see it and the process is complete. This may seem simple at first, a process of cause and effect. Yet this is not the case, as James Elkins (1996: 48) argues; it is not the eye which sees, “what sees is the mind, the person connected to the eye, but the eye itself is just tissue”.

When we look at something the eye collects light, colour and movement that filter through the mind before it is registered as something seen. Seeing is constructing, it alters the thing that is seen and transforms the seer. Elkins (1996:12) confirms that “seeing is metamorphosis, not mechanism”. The visual regularly claims to provide the observer with an ‘authentic reality’ or at the very least an ‘authentic copy of a reality’. As human beings we place trust in seeing. Our language is steeped with references that embed seeing with notions of truth. We often hear phrases such as I “saw it with my own two eyes”, “seeing is believing”, or “I will believe it when I see it”. In the traditional discipline of western history, objects and images

are considered factual evidence of events and things that have certifiably taken place. A written record is considered trustworthy while an oral account of events is treated suspiciously. Photography, in particular is considered a snippet, a snapshot of reality and a truthful document that can be used to prove a story or series of events.

In *How to Use your Eyes*, James Elkins (2000:ix) claims that “[o]ur eyes are far too good for us. They show us so much that we can’t take it all in, so we shut out most of the world, and try to look at things as briskly and efficiently as possible” He asks the reader to consider “What happens if we stop and take the time to look more carefully?” (Elkins 2000:ix). He notes that, if one engages in a slower process of looking, there is the possibility to see the world in ways “we had never expected” (Elkins 2000:ix). Elkins (2000:ix) talks about “learning to use [one’s] eyes more concertedly and with more patience than [one] might ordinarily do”. He confirms that using one’s eyes more deliberately is “about stopping and taking the time simply to look, and keep looking, until the details of the world slowly reveal themselves” (Elkins 2000:ix).

The notion of taking the time to look, consciously and deliberately, at the world may seem like a simple and rather effortless research method. One opens one’s eyes and focuses on looking at something, and attends to the details of the thing that is being looked at before mentally shelving it among other similar things in the mind and moving onto the next. In actuality, a process of slow, conscious and engaged looking requires concentration and effort. It can be a rewarding process, where the ordinary reveals itself as extra-ordinary and the ugly is given the opportunity to transform itself into something interesting to look at. Seeing is subjective and particular to the individual who is looking. The way that one looks at something is already engaged in the way one wants to see that thing. There is no ‘pure’ gaze, no empty looking. Seeing is bound to our desires and fears and, as Elkins (1996:22) explains, there is no such thing as “just looking”. He confirms:

When I say I am ‘just looking’, I mean I am searching, I have my eye out for something. Looking is hoping, desiring, never just taking in light, never merely collecting patterns and data. Looking is the possessing or the desire to possess—we eat food, we own objects, and we “possess” bodies—and there is no looking without thoughts of using, possessing, repossessing, owning, fixing, appropriating, keeping, remembering and commemorating, cherishing, borrowing, and stealing. I cannot look at anything—any object, any person—without the shadow of the thought of possessing that thing. Those appetites don’t just accompany looking, they are looking itself.

If seeing is indeed metamorphosis, and looking is bound to desire, then one can argue that the image that is created in the mind, and the image that is represented by the seer, is equally bound to the way in which one wants to see that thing. As the brain perceives light, colour and movement, the imagination uses that which is known, understood and previously experienced to order and categorise visual information into something we refer to and understand as seen. Thus, while seeing, we are simultaneously constructing an image of the real. In this regard it is important to note that simply ‘seeing’ something does not mean that it is a finite and concrete truth. Rather, it is one individualised conception of a constructed and thus ultimately flawed perception of one version of a reality. Furthermore, the image that is produced by the photographer, the painter or the artist is not only the product of one version of a reality, or one way of seeing, it is also influenced by the individual’s desires, hopes, fears or needs as well as the manner in which they may want to present the image externally within the world.

If seeing is “companion to blindness”, as Elkins argues, one can also argue that the reduction of an object, place or individual to a representation in the form of an image (such as a photograph) is also to reduce light, colour and movement into something fixed. While the image may convey some aspects of the ‘sight’, it is also a simplified, framed and thus mediated perspective of how one individual perceives that specific sight. It is important to note that no act of looking, seeing or representing a sight (that which has been seen) is objective. If we are indeed “searching” when we are looking, then the image we consider as “seen” is drenched in the ways we want to see the world. The image or vision is constructed as light, form and movement passing through minefields of fear, desire and understanding. In this regard one can argue that there is no such thing as an objective perspective, if each individual sees not with their eyes but with their mind and each mind (and each set of eyes) sees differently, that there is far from only way of looking. Thus we have arrived at the point where we cannot certifiably say what seeing is. Perhaps, at the very least, we can suggest that understanding “seeing” is more to do with an understanding of “blindness” than the ability to say exactly what seeing is. As far as Elkins is concerned we can potentially agree on what seeing is not.

Barone and Eisner (2012:166) confirm that “any perspective on the world is always partial and therefore incomplete”. James Elkins reiterates this point when he tells us that “the world is filled with things we do not see even though they are right in front of us”. Elkins (1996:57) suggests that “we are all guilty of not seeing” and notes that “most of us don’t see most of the time”. In his discussion he elaborates on the challenge of moving beyond “usual seeing” (Elkins 1996: 57). He writes about how “it is difficult to break through the wall of usual seeing and begin to discover how many other things there are to see” (Elkins 1996:56). He explains that “it requires practice and special information – you have to know what you are looking for – and it also requires energy, since it involves special concentration” (Elkins 1996:56).

The writer and critic Don DeLillo (2010:13) echoes Elkins when he asserts that “it takes close attention to see what is happening in front of you. It takes work, pious effort to see what you are looking at”. My core methodological position is one that acknowledges that blindness is the very condition of sight: seeing and blindness are inseparable. While it is impossible to see everything there is to see, it is possible at the very least to acknowledge that blindness and the failure to see some things are necessary for us to focus and see other things. It is not possible to see everything, thus the internal conviction and external assertion that one is able to ‘see’ everything there is to see is a failure to understand the very conditions of seeing itself. James Elkins (1996:41) argues:

Seeing is irrational, inconsistent and undependable. It is immensely troubled, cousin to blindness and sexuality, and caught up in the threads of the unconscious. Our eyes are not ours to command; they roam where they will and then tell us they have only been where we have sent them. No matter how hard we look, we see very little of what we look at.

“All perspectives have a slant on things, and what that slant omits may be as important as what it includes” (Barone & Eisner, 2012:166–167). According to Elkins (1996:41):

No two people will see the same object: that’s a truism that is proved each time two artists try to draw the same object and end up with two irreconcilable versions of it. What makes it more than a common truth is that it applies just as well within a single person. I am divided, and at times my modes of seeing are so distinct from one another that they could belong to different people. At other moments they coalesce, but I am normally aware that different viewpoints collide in the ways I see.

If one considers the uncertainty and blindness inherent within processes of observation, and thus interpretation, it is reasonable to suggest that representation is equally partial and flawed. According to Elkins (1996:54), “the world is filled with things we do not see, even though they are right in front of us”. The anxiety of representing something or someone is initiated at the observational stage of the process. When one starts to think about the nature of seeing while trying to see something, the first thing one notices is just how very little one actually sees.

The more time I spend trying to ‘see’ clearly in order to avoid misrepresentation, the more aware I am of the numerous perspectives that I am not processing. As the sensory information is processed by my brain and interpreted according to what I do or do not ‘know’, I am reminded of the limits of my understanding and the fact that my understanding of something is limited by my knowledge of the languages and tools I need to interpret it. By the time I am considering how best to represent the material I have observed and interpreted, I have accumulated the shortfalls of the two earlier processes. I know that I have missed many things in the observational stage, and more has been lost in the filtering process before I express a representation of what I have seen and experienced. The result is that my representation of someone or something is both subjective and incomplete. The notion of visuality discussed by Nicholas Mirzoeff is also built on that idea of that which cannot be seen.

Mirzoeff (2011:3) asserts that “visuality” does not denote the visible in the sense of that which can be seen, and explains that the visualising “process is not composed simply of visual perceptions in the physical sense, but is formed by a set of relations combining information, imagination, and insight into a rendition of physical and psychic space”. Visuality “classifies”, “separates” and “aesthetic[izes]” the power of a group or individual with the authority to “arrange the relations of the visible and the sayable” and thus deny the return of looking by the subjects of “visualization” (Mirzoeff 2011:3). According to Mirzoeff (2011:3–4), these three operations: “classifying, separating, and aestheticizing ... form ... a “complex of visuality””. This complex of visuality prevents “mutual” and “knowing ... practices of looking”, maintaining a division between those denied rights (such as the “right to look”) and those endowed with the power to oversee and look (Mirzoeff 2011:1).

Visuality is linked to authority. While it is related to the ability to see or “oversee” a territory, it is more about that which exists beyond the reach of the eyes and thus has to be imagined and manufactured into a “visualization” (Mirzoeff 2011:3). Mirzoeff (2011:3) notes that: “visualizing is the production of visuality, meaning the making of the processes of ‘history’ perceptible to authority”. He argues that visuality “must be imaginary rather than perceptual, because what is being visualized is too substantial for any one person to see and is created from information, images and ideas” (Mirzoeff 2011:2). Having the means to gather the information required in order to “assemble a visualization manifests the authority of the visualizer” (Mirzoeff 2011:2).

Mirzoeff explains that “visuality” is a 19th Century term meaning the “visualization of history” (Mirzoeff 2011:2). He notes that “visuality’s first domains were the slave plantation in the sixteen hundreds” and the use of the term itself dates to the eighteen hundreds and the “tradition of heroic leadership, which visualizes history to sustain autocratic authority” (Mirzoeff 2011:2). According to Mirzoeff, the modern battlefield required the general (heroic leader) to survey the landscape and domain of the territory, while simultaneously gathering information from “subaltern natives” (Mirzoeff 2011:3). He explains, “visuality both has an extensive and important history and is itself a key part of the formation of western historiography” (Mirzoeff 2011:2). He notes further that visuality and its visualising of history are part of how the ‘West’ historicizes and distinguishes itself from its others” (Mirzoeff 2011:2).. Mirzoeff argues that “a given modality of visuality is composed of a series of operations that can be summarized under three headings: naming and classifying...separating... and aestheticizing” (Mirzoeff 2011:3).

Classifying

Mirzoeff (2011:6) argues, “the authority of coloniality has consistently required visuality to supplement its deployment of force”. The first part of the process is about mapping, naming, categorising and thereby classifying a piece of land and the people contained within it. Mirzoeff explains that the process of identifying and categorising an unknown place in this way was historically “founded in plantation practice, from the mapping of plantation space to the identification of cash crop cultivation techniques and the precise division of labour required to sustain them” (Mirzoeff 2011:3). The exercise of naming and identifying things,

places and people is also about making certain things more visible so that they can be monitored by those with the power and authority to “oversee”; Foucault (in Mirzoeff 2011: 3) calls this “the nomination of the visible”.

Separating

The second modality of visibility, “separation”, operates in tandem with the first (Mirzoeff 2011:3). In order to separate one thing as different and inferior to another, it is essential to construct a framework of ‘knowledge’ that can be used to dominate and control those nominated as the collective other. According to Mirzoeff (2011:3), visibility “separates the groups so classified as a means of social organization”. The people who have been named and classified are prevented from “cohering as political subjects” or connecting intimately with the plantation owner or “heroic leader” of a pioneering colonial group. Mirzoeff (2011) confirms that “visibility separates and segregates those it visualizes to prevent them from cohering as political subjects, such as the workers, the people, or the (decolonized) nation”.

Aestheticising

The third modality of visibility “makes this separated classification seem right and hence aesthetic (Mirzoeff 2011). The way in which Mirzoeff uses the “aesthetic” in this sense is not as “a classificatory scheme of the beautiful” but rather in line with what Jacques Rancière (in Mirzoeff) describes as “an ‘aesthetics’ at the core of politics ... as the system of a priori forms determining what presents itself to sense experience” (2011:4). The aestheticising aspect of visibility operates in conjunction with classifying and separating.

In the essay *Humanity, Inhumanity, and Closeness in the Look*, Tanella Boni (2002:57) argues that “[a]ll looking is primarily an action of the eye, but it also involves our bodily position in relation to other bodies, other living beings, in relation to the things around us, in relation to the other ... when our eyes look so do our minds. It is through looking that we create connections and works of art.” It is interesting to note the way in which Boni positions works of art and connections alongside one another, as if suggesting that works of art and other aesthetic experiences are ways in which to facilitate certain connections, and that looking, observing through the eyes, is one way in which we are able to make such connections and perceive visual stimuli. Boni also talks about the understanding of ourselves in relation to other bodies as related to looking, where “to live is to look at other people and at ourselves”. By creating a home for myself in Ramallah in the West Bank and participating

in some of the daily rituals that result from life under an Israeli apartheid system, I was able to imagine, at least in part, how life may have been during apartheid in South Africa. I will argue that, if approached sensitively and slowly, the process of engaged and immersive multi-sensory observation can enable a degree of empathy and understanding. Furthermore, comparative looking of an experiential nature deepened my understanding of the way in which an informal apartheid continues to etch real and imaginary rifts and walls between people living in Israel and the OPTs. Thus, through comparative looking that employs a notion of looking with the sensitivity and flexibility of the skin, I am able to comprehend the present post-apartheid context in South Africa and an apartheid context in Israel and the OPTs from a comparative perspective. There are certain historical similarities that exist between the occupation, construction and controlling of physical space in South Africa and Israel/Palestine that open up a space for dialogue and multi-directional forms of observation that can facilitate new networks of comprehension and contemplation.

2.6.4 Walking, Walls and Elastic Geography

Raja Shehadeh refers to the notion of the *sarha*²³, a particular kind of walk undertaken by Palestinian men within the West Bank context. The idea of the *sarha* can be likened to the notion of the *dérive* conceptualised by the Situationists, yet the *sarha* has been a part of Palestinian life for about five hundred years while the *dérive* is considered a relatively new phenomenon.

The *sarha* is a particular way of walking; “not just any walk qualifies as a *sarha*”. According to Shehadeh, “a man going on a *sarha* wanders aimlessly not restricted by time and place going where his spirit takes him to nourish his soul and rejuvenate himself” (Shehadeh 2007:2). He describes the way in which his childhood was punctuated by stories of “how his grandfather, Judge Saleem liked nothing more than coming to Ramallah in the hot summer and going on a *sarha*”. He explains that it was “mainly young men who undertook these expeditions”. A group of young men would “take a few provisions and go to the open hills, disappear for the whole day, sometimes for weeks and months”. According to Shehadeh they

²³Shehadeh (2007:2) explains that in its active form (as a verb) the Arabic word *sarha* “means to let the cattle out to pasture early in the morning, leaving them to wander and graze at liberty”. He states that the commonly used noun *sarha* is a colloquial corruption of the classical word (Shehadeh 2007:2).

generally had no set “destination”. “To go on a *sarha* was to roam freely, at will, without restraint”. This practice has become virtually impossible to do in contemporary Palestine.

The Israeli settlers occupy the hilltops in strategic positions throughout the West Bank, especially those referred to as the “youth of the hill” (Weizman 2007:4). In their efforts to claim the West Bank Territory (referred to by fervent political Zionists as Judea and Samaria), Jewish settlers attack Palestinians and terrorise them on a daily basis in their efforts to drive them out of the West Bank, so that the land can be colonised and added to the bulk of Palestinian land presently owned by Israel. Not only do Palestinians find themselves victimised and subject to terrorism; the actions of these settlers are encouraged, or at least ignored, by the Israeli state (as I discuss further in Chapter Five). The resulting state of insecurity means that Palestinians are fearful about travelling through many parts of the West Bank, especially pieces of land positioned between Palestinian towns and villages and Israeli settlements. Shehadeh writes that within his lifetime he has watched the hills and valleys of Palestine “slip away”. He describes the crass erection of “cities ... industrial and theme parks, and wide, many-laned highways more suited to the plains of the Mid-west of America than the undulating hills of Palestine”. Weizman notes that journalists have described the outposts that precede the settlements as “akin to frontier towns in the wild American West: caravans organized in a circle around a windswept hilltop, inhabited by rugged but enthusiastic settlers slinging the straps of their guns around their shoulders” (Weizman 2007:83).

In relating the *sarha* to the *dérive*, it is important to consider Weizman’s observations regarding the co-opting of theories developed by “radical theorists and artists” like the “Situationists” within the Israeli Defence Force (Weizman 2007:211). Weizman warns that the “language of theory itself could become a weapon in the contemporary conflict” (Weizman 2007:211). He goes on to note that “education in the humanities, often believed to be the most powerful weapon against capitalist imperialism, could equally be appropriated as a tool of colonialism itself” (Weizman 2007:211). Taking this into consideration, I have tended to steer clear of the idea of the *dérive* and have opted instead to contextualise my use of walking as a research method in terms of this idea of Shehadeh’s reference to the *sarha*. This is not to suggest that the practices and philosophies of the Situationists and the theories of Deleuze and Guattari are intentionally destructive. As Weizman indicates, “radical

theorists and artists” can certainly not be blamed for Israel’s “recent aggression” especially when their work has been divorced from its ethical/political context (Weizman 2007:211).

2.6.5 Narratives of Division: Geopolitical Intersections

It has been well established by specialists and academics, human rights activists and freedom fighters living and working in Israel and the OPTs, in South Africa and in multiple countries around the world, that the Israeli state is guilty of the “crime of apartheid”. In *Beyond Occupation*, Tilley draws on the expertise of South African and international politicians, human rights lawyers and analysts who have conducted a thorough analysis regarding the application of colonialism, occupation and apartheid within Israel and the OPTs. It is becoming increasingly difficult for the educated and informed South African citizen to ignore the fact that the expansion and domination of the Israeli state in Palestine constitutes colonialism and apartheid. Anyone with a basic knowledge as to what constitutes one’s basic human rights can see that Israel is a colonial apartheid state built in a country that already belongs to a whole other nation of people – the Palestinians.

In an essay published within the anthology *Apartheid Israel: the Politics of an Analogy*, in her reference to the film, *The Village Under the Forest*, Heidi Grunebaum 2015:n.p) argues that “the similarities between South Africa and Israel emerge obliquely, cross-referencing one another faintly as traces, echoes and reflections”: she describes these reflections in terms of the metaphor of the “mirror”. Israel is there to remind us how far South Africa has come and how much further we still have to go. By looking back to the apartheid state of Israel, South Africa can see the magnitude of its mistakes and the enormous amount of work that still needs to be done to realise the democratic country of South Africa as “a place that truly is a “ home to all who live in it”. For Israel, the case of South Africa serves to reflect the horrors of what kind of nation Israel is and its legacy. It is also an opportunity to locate a way out, and a reflection and a sounding board. In his essay (included within the same anthology), Salim Vally summarises why it is essential to begin from the basic assertion that Israel is an apartheid state. The analogy is useful for a number of reasons including but not limited to the following statement by Vally: “Israel ... should be seen in all its nakedness as a pariah state like Israel’s dear and unlamented former friend, apartheid South Africa”.

While parallels regarding visual language and representation have been referenced in a few articles and discussions pertaining to South Africa and the Palestinian Territories, I am yet to discover in-depth articulations on these issues within the field of Art History and Visual Culture. Furthermore, there are no examples of dedicated study that conduct rigorous analytical examination of this area, approached specifically from a South African scholarly perspective. The number of specialists analysing the art, visual culture and social structures of countries framed within the global south is increasing (Comaroff and Comaroff 2012). However, it is important to note that comparative research of countries within the global South, such as South Africa and The Occupied Palestinian Territories, still tends to be dominated by academics situated in the North, perpetuating a North-to-South gaze, as scholars of relative privilege draw up theories and analyse art and representation in the South from an “outsider” perspective. Very recently, the publication of a collection of essays written by academics from Africa and South Africa addressing the analogy specifically has added a much needed layer of depth to the discussion. Without simplistically entrenching the constructed labels of “North” and “South”, this study argues for new or alternative “ways of seeing” that subvert dominant narratives of division articulated through a South-to-South scholarly analysis.

In his introduction to *Complex Entanglements*, Papastergiadis (2003) asks the reader in “which direction” one might look when one chooses to “look outside” of one’s “cultural space”. Do we look “up, down, to the side? Do we look towards the force that is above us? Or do we seek to find something in the space that is adjacent to us?”. He notes the way in which processes of “cultural looking” in places like Australia have tended to dismiss one’s immediate geographical or conceptual “neighbours” in favour of well-worn colonial paths and networks of global trade and exchange. In writing about Australia as a colonial nation, he suggests that “the aversion or aloofness that we [Australians] have towards facing our neighbours is symptomatic of a deeper ambivalence”. He explains:

The illusion of independence that hangs in our post-colonial imagination has created new spectres of incompleteness and belatedness. Perhaps we display a supercilious disdain towards the smaller neighbour because we dread the sense of seeing our own impotence, or we distance ourselves from a rival like South Africa because we dare not recognize an equally brutish racial mentality. There is a common lament amongst post-colonial critics; one must travel to the metropolitan centre in order to learn about the history of a neighbour.

In my own experience as a researcher in South Africa I encountered different manifestations of a similar mindset. My choice to travel to other neighbouring African countries such as Mozambique or Zimbabwe to conduct arts and visual culture research was regularly met with surprise and patronising questions about “what kind of art one might find over there?” In some cases people asked me why I would choose to go somewhere in the African continent to conduct research into contemporary art and visual culture, instead of going to Europe or the United States of America where I could look at art in established centres of production and dissemination. These sentiments imply that all valuable art, art that is worth knowing about, is oriented towards the ‘civilised’ centre. This centre is seen to be both the ‘site’ of all valuable artistic production as well as the ‘sight’ where one can see all valuable art from around the world, categorised and displayed by those with the authority to declare the “relations of the visible and the sayable” (Mirzoeff 2011). When I realised how easy and affordable it was to travel to one of our neighbouring countries, I too found myself surprised that I had remained relatively unaware of what visa documents I required to travel to Mozambique or Namibia, not simply for tourism purposes but in order to work, live or study. Despite the geographical distance of England or Australia, information regarding the value of a British passport and the different stories about people trying to acquire visas to work, study and even immigrate to England circulated and continue to circulate amongst young South Africans. Papastergiadis offers his own admission regarding the fact that it did not occur to him to consider the links between countries in the global South such as South Africa and Australia until he found himself in England, the country responsible for the colonisation of both Australia and South Africa. He writes:

I must also confess that, like the editors of a recent anthology of essays on Australia and South Africa, my own axis for comparative thinking and knowledge of other former colonies was sharpened by my contacts in England. At home it never occurred to us that more benefit could be found by thinking sideways – towards other ‘Southern Spaces’.

In his articulation on the need for new South–South global networks in addition to existing North–South connections, Papastergiadis (2003:16) suggests that one focus on establishing “new networks of connections between countries in the global south with a shared history of colonisation and displacement”. He notes the manner in which the “conditions and co-ordinates of exchange continue to favour the old metropolitan centres”. Despite the perpetuation of a centre–periphery mindset that looks in one direction towards the global “West” or the “North” from the so-called “East” or “South”, he asserts that “our goals should

not be confined to contesting, converting or convincing the metropolis to the ways of the periphery”. Rather, one should attempt to create new circuits and networks of exchange and connection between places like South Africa and Palestine, for example.

A new circuit that linked, for instance, South Africa, the South Pacific, and South America may reveal affinities that are deeper than those found within the old North-South axes. If we look towards our neighbours, rather than seek approval from those above, it may enable a deeper understanding of our own histories and the ambivalence in our communicative systems (Papastergiadis (2003:16).

2.6.6 Perspectives on Palestinian Art Publications

Gannit Ankori’s *Palestinian Art* (Ankori 2006) begins in a self-reflexive manner with the author’s statement regarding the complexity of her position, “the ground note of her own individual particular”. Ankori (2006:7) writes that, “although [she has] made every effort to approach the material gathered and presented within [Palestinian Art] as objectively as possible”, it is imperative to note that her “subjective position as an Israeli-born art historian dealing with Palestinian art during a period of conflict between Israelis and Palestinians cannot be ignored”. Ankori provides a thematically and chronologically ordered text that begins in the years preceding the *Nakba* in 1948 and analyses artwork made by Palestinian artists in response to a conflicted and disrupted history until the early 2000s when the book was published. The text contextualises Palestinian art and cultural production in relation to the narratives that shaped Palestinian identity including the *Nakba* in 1948, the *Naksah* of 1967 and the First (1987–1993) and Second Intifada (2000–2005) as well as the failure of the Oslo Accords in the period between the two Intifadas. Ankori accurately points to the serious lack of published material dedicated to the analysis of Palestinian Art. She notes that in 1986 when she began research on the topic “there was virtually no research literature on Palestinian art” Ankori (2006). The absence of dedicated scholarship focused on the art produced by those who consider themselves Palestinian was reflected in my own context in South Africa. After deciding to pursue a doctorate focused on Palestinian art and visual culture, I discovered that the only publication kept in the shelves of our library at Rhodes University was Gannit Ankori’s *Palestinian Art*, 2006. While other authors had published their research by this point, the only text to make it onto the shelf in the Fine Art section of our library was this one. The text is thorough, offering a strong point of departure to begin research in contemporary Palestinian art, but it is important to expand on this research and add additional

publications to the selection on offer. Since then the number of publications stored on the library's shelf have increased somewhat to include Kamal Boullata's *Palestinian Art: 1850–2005*.

Boullata's text is based on thirty years of fieldwork written from the perspective of someone who is a Palestinian artist himself. Like Ankori, Boullata's writing is self-reflexive and personal. While it contains rigorous scholarship and analysis, his theorisation and discussion of Palestinian art are contextualised by his personal experiences as a Palestinian artist born in Jerusalem and "exiled first to Beirut and later to the United States and France" (Fisher 2010:482).

The recent publication of *Palestinian Video Art*, edited by Bashir Makhoul, picks up from where Ankori and Boullata leave off. The work discussed in the individual chapters overlaps with Ankori and Boullata regarding the discussion of older, more established Palestinian artists living in the diaspora, such as Mona Hatoum and Emily Jacir, and iconic artists such Suleiman Mansour. Focusing specifically on contemporary Palestinian video art, the individual chapters are written by knowledgeable academics and practitioners working in the field. This includes chapters by Tina Sherwell (director of IAAP), based in the West Bank, as well as academics and practitioners positioned in the diaspora. As a practising artist and theoretician, Makhoul's ability to merge his knowledge of the two can be seen in the creative selection and presentation of artists' work. The book was published in Jerusalem through the Al Hoash Palestinian art court.

A second publication by Aissa Deebi and Bashir Makhoul (in Hon & Bishop 2013) titled *Otherwise Occupied* provides insight into the present positions negotiated by Palestinians in the international art community. Each of the texts by Makhoul and Ankori reinforce the basic underlying historical narrative of colonisation, occupation and apartheid that characterises the Palestinian context, and the arts and culture produced within and in response to that context. Ankori was born in Jerusalem: from a political Zionist perspective she is thus a Jewish-Israeli citizen. One may argue that Israeli scholars or scholars based in the diaspora are outsiders to the Palestinian context, yet it can be valuable to consider Groszs' articulations on the paradox of interiority and exteriority. According to Grosz one can never be fully "outside"; to be on the outside of one thing is to be on the inside of something else. Perhaps the 'inside' to which

I am referring and within which I position myself can be considered an imaginary or discursive place where individuals occupying different positions in different locations and different fields can agree on the same basic assertion regarding the condemning of Israel's colonisation, occupation, and implementation of apartheid within Palestine.

Approaching the idea of an art book from a slightly different perspective, the publication *Keep Your Eyes on the Wall: Palestinian Landscapes* combines images of Palestinian artists' work with essays about narratives of division in Palestinian landscapes. The Palestinian artists included in the text are (Noel Jabbour, Raed Bawayah, Taysir Batniji, Raedah Saadeh, Steve Sabella, Rula Halawani) as well as German artist Kai Wiedenhöfer. The essays and the artworks are brought together thematically rather than illustratively

Using the metaphorical approach of 'looking with the skin' and the four toolkits that make up this method – 'walking shoes' 'guides' 'visual diary' and 'conceptual backpack', I critically analyse different 'sites of division' within the chapters that follow. These are fluid, creative concepts that are intended to assist me in opening up the space for different conversations and perspectives to form around the work of Palestinian artists responding to ideological and visual narratives of division within Palestinian social space.

Chapter 3

Stories and Structures: ‘Buildings and the Nation’ in Palestinian Art and Visual Culture

3.1 Chapter Entry Point

Political Zionism is a national movement that appropriated aspects of the Jewish religious narrative in the construction and re-configuration of Eretz Israel²⁴. This narrative is presented as stretching from the birth of the three monotheistic religions (Judaism, Islam, Christianity) in Jerusalem to the present. At the centre of the Zionist national myth epic is a narrative of division that set the tone for the Zionist colonisation of Historic Palestine²⁵ from the moment it was mobilised in the late 19th century. In this chapter I present the conventional narrative propagated by the Israeli state as well as the revisionist account of historical events that highlight the misrepresentations and mistruths on which the state of Israel was established and the Jewish people “invented” (Sand 2009:1). Despite the rhetoric employed by the Israeli propaganda machine, the military geography and sophisticated system of division and control in the Palestinian Territories is not a circumstantial response to the threat of Palestinian terrorism. The need to divide and conquer has always been central to the political Zionist project of colonising or ‘re-claiming’ Palestine (Tilley 2012:xv). There is a dialogue that exists between the imaginary construction of a national narrative and the physical construction of a nation state in terms of urban planning, physical boundary marking and architecture. I argue that the relationship between stories and structures can be analysed within the work of different artists who negotiate the boundaries of Palestinian national identity as a response to Zionist colonisation in the 1900s.

In this chapter I am guided by Dr Anis Daraghma as I describe the conventional narrative propagated by political Zionism before I present the revisionist historical perspective on the construction of Eretz Israel as an exclusive Jewish state in the country previously known as Palestine, now called Israel and the OPTs. I analyse the work of Israeli artist Yael Bartana in relation to Mirzoeff’s articulations on the “three modalities of a visibility complex” as they inform/ relate to the construction and visualisation of ‘the nation’ in contemporary Israel and

²⁴ Eretz Israel is the biblical name for Palestine recorded in the Torah and used in the Jewish religion.

²⁵ Historic Palestine is the name used to describe the geographical area that was inhabited by the Palestinian people prior to Zionist colonisation and expansion in the 19th Century.

the OPTs. Yael Bartana represents the logic of partition, fear and defence that has always been a part of the political Zionist movement (and other essentialist national movements such as Afrikaner nationalism²⁶) within her Polish Trilogy *And Europe will be Stunned*. In constructing and representing her own fictitious national myth epic, she draws the viewer's attention to the way in which myth, fiction and belief are mobilised and represented as truth by a national movement such as political Zionism. The Palestinian artist Khaled Jarrar focuses on the constructed and mythical aspects of the Palestinian nation in his series *Live and Work in Palestine*. He brings together symbols associated with Palestinian identity and converts them into postage stamps and entry visas to an "unrecognised" nation, extending on the underlying sentiments beneath Bartana's fictional construction of the Jewish Renaissance Movement in Poland.

In the early 1900's both South Africa and Israel were granted independence from British control²⁷. In South Africa the country was to be governed by the Afrikaners who were supported by the British settlers in establishing an apartheid state, with the National Party elected to power in 1948, discrimination against the indigenous black population was legalised and institutionalised. Lennox Sebe (chief minister of the Xhosa Bantustan of Ciskei between 1972 and 1981 and president from 1981 to 1994) claimed that the state of Israel formally acknowledged the Ciskei Bantustan as an independent state. According to the author of *The Unspoken Alliance: Israel's Secret Relationship with Apartheid South Africa*, this claim was "immediately denied" by the Israeli apartheid government for fear of being associated with the apartheid regime in South Africa at the time and tarnishing their international reputation (Polakow-Suransky 2010:157). President Sebe travelled to Israel on a few occasions. After visiting the monument to Israeli heroism in Masada²⁸, Sebe was inspired to build his own national monument in the Ciskei called Ntaba KaNdoda in 1981. The South African artist Thando Mama has incorporated the Ntaba KaNdoda monument into his recent work *Of Nationhood*, 2015 that looks at the failure of the South African Rainbow Nation

²⁶ Afrikaner nationalism is a political movement that emerged in the Dutch communities in South Africa in the 1900s as a response to British persecution before and during the South African wars (also known as the Anglo-Boer wars). I discuss Afrikaner nationalism further on in this chapter.

²⁷ For more information regarding the decline of the British empire and the proclamation of the state of Israel in mandatory Palestine please see: Benton, M. 2013. *The Palestinian-Israeli Conflict: A very short introduction*. Hampshire: Oxford University Press.

²⁸ Masada is an archaeological site in the Southern part of Israel that has become a disputed emblem of Israeli heroism and suicide. The fortress that is commonly referred to as a monument was built by King Herod the great between 37 and 31 BCE and is supposed to be the site of a mass Jewish suicide during the first Jewish- Roman war. According to Robert Paine (1994:371) "the death of those at Masada was recorded by Flavius Josephus" but there are conflicting memories that exist around the history of the site. In the article 'Masada: A history of a memory', Paine (1994:371) argues that there is more than one Masada because "memory produces different Masada's". (Paine 1994:371). For a more information see the article: Paine, R. 1994. Masada: A history of a memory. *History and Anthropology*. 6(4), pp371-409.

narrative twenty years after the end of apartheid. Positioning Mama’s work as a heuristic, I examine the work *Nation Estate* by Palestinian artist Larissa Sansour, who presents the viewer with a seemingly ideal version of a Palestinian nation state in the form of a futuristic high-rise building. Using Mama as a guide I examine her video and relate it back to the dystopian elements within Bartana’s trilogy and the national symbols created by Jarrar. The artists presented within this chapter are able to highlight the problems associated with certain narratives and nation building initiatives as well as how they can be imagined differently. If it is possible to invent a nation from symbols, myths and beliefs, then it is also possible to imagine the formation and realisation of these nations in a more fluid, flexible and porous manner.

3.2 Contextualising Israel and the OPTs

3.2.1 A Window from South Africa to Palestine

 Photo credit: Anis Daraghma	Name Dr Anis Daraghma
	Date of birth 1970 Sex Male
	Place of birth Tubas
	Current place of residence Cape Town, South Africa Forced/chosen Chosen
	Self-identified nationality Palestinian
	Expertise Human Geographer
	Relevant qualifications BA, Birzeit University, Ramallah PHD, University of the Western Cape
	Relevant projects The Palestine Museum in Cape Town (director)
Period of engagement January 2013– July 2016	

Figure 3.1 Guide profile for Dr Anis Daraghma, Compiled by Rachel Baasch (2016).

Dr Anis Daraghma²⁹ provided my first window³⁰ into Palestine while I was still based in South Africa. We met at his home in Cape Town, where he introduced me to the story of

²⁹ Dr Daraghma told me about the forced removal of indigenous South Africans living in areas declared national parks or game reserves in South Africa in the process of erecting fences and gates around pieces of land declared national parks. These internally displaced people would be dumped on the perimeters of their homes. He then told me about the way in which the same practice was also implemented in

Jewish colonisation, occupation and apartheid that have shaped the contours of his home in Palestine. It is only in recent years that the political Zionist narrative of divine right and return has been placed under scrutiny, and its misrepresentation of historical events exposed. In his efforts to explain the history of Palestine, Daraghma accurately highlighted the historical parallels that exist between my home in South Africa and his home in the OPTs. There is of course the first point of comparison that has been established by academics and theoreticians, namely that of apartheid (Baasch & Daraghma 2013a). He referred to the documentary *Roadmap to Apartheid* directed by Ana Noguira and Eron Davidson, 2012, which accurately summarises the uncanny similarities that exist between South African and Palestinian history within the last two hundred years. In *Roadmap to Apartheid* the motivation for the Jewish colonisation, occupation and implementation of an apartheid government, namely the persecution of Jews during the Holocaust, is contextualised in relation to the South African³¹ wars that saw the persecution of Afrikaner nationals at the hands of the British³² (Davidson & Noguira 2012). It is within this context that one sees the first organised use of concentration camps to imprison indigenous black South Africans and Afrikaner women and children. It is from these narratives of persecution against a minority that one sees the emergence of two essentialist, ethnocentric pariah states in the form of the apartheid state of Israel and the apartheid state of South Africa. Both nations lay claim to the territory they covet on the basis of religion and myths of a “chosen people” with a “promised land” (Prozesky & de Gruchy 2002:89). Like the Nationalist Party government in South Africa, the Israeli state have implemented a form of puritanism that asserts the superiority of one race, religion, or class over another and based a national movement on this. A key aspect of Afrikaner Nationalism was the “reinterpretation of Afrikaner history as sacred history” (Prozesky & de Gruchy 2002:89). This notion of Afrikaner history as “sacred” was employed in the years preceding the Anglo–Boer wars particularly by the then president of the

Israel and the OPTs. According to Daraghma there are large pieces of land, including Palestinian villages and farm lands, that have been declared nature reserves by the Israeli estate and bordered off as Israeli ‘property’, resulting in the internal displacement of Palestinians especially the nomadic Bedouin communities. This is another form of slow violence reminiscent of the “slow violence of architecture” mentioned by Eyal Weizman in the documentary *Rebel Architecture: The Architecture of violence* by Ana De Sousa (2014).

³⁰ My reference here to a window is influenced by the South African academics Sarah Nuttall and Cheryl-ann Michael (2000:4), who addresses a perception of South Africa “as a closed space that needs a window out onto the world”, as well the words of Mandy Turner, the director of the Kenyon Institute in Jerusalem who argues that the windows for Palestinian academics living in East Jerusalem, Gaza and the West Bank have been closed. This is not a literal reference to the window but a metaphorical one that is meant to suggest the idea of the window as an opening or access point, a way in which to perceive or see an unknown or under-explored area.

³¹ The South African wars were previously known as the Anglo–Boer wars. The first South African war or Anglo–Boer war took place between December 1880 and March 1881. The second South African war or Anglo–Boer war started in October 1899 and ended in May 1902.

³² I am not positioning the persecution of the Afrikaners at the hands of the British within the context of war as ‘the same’ as the Holocaust. To say that one thing is similar to another is not to say that they are the same, the equivalent of each other. These are distinct historical events with their own distinct features. In drawing a conceptual line of connection between the two one can potentially see how political Zionism and Afrikaner Nationalism were similarly mobilised by a fear of domination or eradication (whether this meant eradication in the literal sense or figuratively in terms of being forced to assimilate and abandon one’s ethnic or national identity).

Transvaal, Paul Kruger (Prozesky & de Gruchy 2002:89). In the period that followed the second South African war leading up to 1948 when the National Party (NP)³³ came into power, this idea of Afrikaner history as “sacred history” with the Afrikaners selected by God as the “Chosen People” became the “normative filter through which Afrikaners as a whole interpreted their history” (Prozesky & de Gruchy 2002:89). According to the Calvinist Christian ideology of the Afrikaners, “the Great Trek was the Exodus from the bondage of British rule at the Cape” (Prozesky & de Gruchy 2002:89). The “years of struggling in the wilderness against all odds” could be likened to the forty years of travel through the Sinai desert endured by the Jews, “on route to the promised land”, which in the case of the Afrikaners was not the Land of Israel, but the “Boer Republics” in South Africa (Prozesky & de Gruchy 2002:89). According to de Gruchy, having reached the Promised Land of the Boer Republics, the Afrikaner nation “like the Israel of old fulfilled a [supposedly] divine mandate to remain separate from and rule over the heathen nations in the interests of Christian civilisation” (Prozesky & de Gruchy 2002:89).

On this basis, armed with religious myths of promised lands and chosen peoples, the Afrikaner Nationalist Party rose to power in 1948 and applied the racist separatist ideologies of their national movement within the South African context. Like the political Zionist appropriation of the Jewish religion to form a puritanical type of nationalism, the Afrikaners selected parts of the Old Testament and mobilised them to their specific agenda. According to de Gruchy, “although the majority of Afrikaner ideologists claimed to be Calvinists, they were more imbued with the spirit of racial superiority and romantic nationalism than with reformed theology”. The persecution experienced by the Afrikaners at the hands of the British, who attempted to Anglicise the Afrikaners and claim their land and resources, further substantiated their claims of a Chosen People destined to suffer before being led to salvation in a land Promised to them by God.³⁴

³³ The ANC responded to the National Party’s election in 1948 by committing to a resistance campaign. In order to minimise the impact of this resistance (and entrench control over), the state initiated what is best described as “a series of draconian laws specifically aimed at restricting political activity” of black South Africans, which included the Suppression of Communism Act of 1950, the 1953 Public Safety Act and the Criminal Law Amendment Act of 1953 (World Commission on Dams, 2000). Other notable acts at the time were the Prohibition of Mixed Marriages Act (1949), the Immorality Act (1950), the Population Registration Act (1950) and the Group Areas Act (1950). Collectively, these laws determined “whom a person could marry; with whom one could have sex; what type of person one was; and where a person must live according to strict racial categorisation” (Turton et al. 2004: 55).

³⁴ While I am discussing the Afrikaner national movement specifically, it is important to note the key roles played by the British Empire in establishing the necessary platform for the apartheid government to take shape and flourish. While the blame tends to fall directly on the Afrikaans population for their role in legalising a system of separation and racial supremacy, the British are by no means innocent in this equation.

As I travelled through the actual Palestinian West Bank with Dr Daraghma a few months after our first meeting in South Africa, I observed the use of apartheid practices in the present Palestinian context in a way that I was not able to do in South Africa. My perspective as a visitor to the country is a privileged one. Armed with the right foreign passport, one is able to travel all of Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories. My Palestinian companion and guide Dr Daraghma is not granted this freedom of movement in his own home.

3.2.2 Historical Context: Two Narratives

On one of my first fieldwork trips with Dr Anis Daraghma in August 2013, I accompanied him in pursuit of a particular limestone that is mined in the West Bank which he wanted to transport from Palestine to South Africa for display in the Palestine Museum in Cape Town. We travelled to a limestone quarry near the town of Tubas, one of the few quarries in the West Bank that has not been claimed or destroyed by the Israeli occupation. Here I was introduced to Abu Alim, who owns the quarry and the neighbouring farm. Abu Alim is old enough to have witnessed the ethnic cleansing of Palestine, the colonisation of Palestine and the invention and subsequent construction of Eretz Israel in Palestine. Neither Eretz Israel nor Historic Palestine exist. What does exist is Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories. During our meetings, he would speak freely about his life, his work and his understanding of how civil society moved in Palestine before the British mandate and the Nakba in 1948. Daraghme acted as translator, adding his own details and explanations to the story at regular intervals.

The first point that Dr Daraghma translates is Abu Alim's assertion that the present Israeli–Palestinian conflict is not a decades-long religious war. The Palestinian–Israeli history is not a story of an unsolvable religious war, as it is so often taught in schools. In fact, Daraghma and Abu Alim tell me that small communities of Jewish Palestinians have lived in relative peace for centuries with their Muslim and Christian Palestinian neighbours. Like many Palestinians of his generation, he saw the Zionist movement not in terms of a dispossessed people, fleeing as refugees from the Holocaust, but as a branch of European colonisation (Baasch & Daraghma 2013c). Rashid Khalidi (2006:120) explains:

It is important to understand in this regard that Palestinians did not see Jewish immigrants to Palestine primarily as refugees from persecution, as they were seen by most of the rest of the world. They saw them instead as arrogant European interlopers who did not accept that the Palestinians were a people or had national

rights in their own country, believed that Palestine instead belonged to them, and were coldly determined to make that belief into a reality.

After leaving Abu Alim's home, Daraghma and I drove through the West Bank as he narrated different aspects of Palestinian history in relation to the landscape. While listening to his stories and observing the West Bank geography, I asked him about the footballs I could see trapped in the razor wire crest of the Israeli apartheid wall. He explained that many of these balls are kicked or thrown into the barrier as a statement, with the intention of trapping the ball in the barrier in a defiant gesture to remind those on the other side that the Palestinians still exist. In other cases, the ball may have been caught in there by accident while children were playing football nearby. We also discussed the possibility that children were using the wire crest as a goal. Trapping the ball above the wall eight metres off the ground could ensure the player and his team extra points (although this would mean sacrificing the ball itself). Daraghma went on to tell me a story about football³⁵ in relation to Jewish communities living in Palestine before Zionist colonisation in the 1900s. According to Daraghma, Muslim, Jewish, Christian, and Druze Palestinians would engage in friendly competition with one another, battling it out within the framework of a game, especially football. He said that although the teams supported their players with fervour, there were very rarely any serious outbreaks of violence.

3.2.3 Visualising Israel, Erasing Palestine

There are two key narrative threads central to the history of Israel and the OPTs that contradict one another historically. The first of these narratives of division is told by the founders of political Zionism and their successors. The second is the revisionist historical narrative that has surfaced in publications in recent years and examines the multiple disguised and overlooked or completely neglected narratives that relate to the Palestinian experience of Zionist colonisation.

³⁵ In South Africa we don't use the term football, we refer to football as soccer, but, in Palestine, the English translation of the Arabic word for the game is football and so I use this name throughout the thesis.

3.2.4 Conventional Narrative

The conventional narrative propagated by political Zionism characterises Eretz Israel as the exclusive “Promised Land” (Prozesky & de Gruchy 2002:158) of all Jewish people from anywhere in the world. This narrative is substantiated by ‘facts’ found within the Old Testament. In this version of events the Jewish nation was established around one thousand five hundred years before the birth of Christ (BCE) in Egypt as twelve tribes enslaved by an Egyptian pharaoh. Moses leads the twelve tribes of God’s chosen people out of slavery in Egypt. As the people chosen by God they trek across the Sinai desert for forty years before conquering the land of Israel that had been promised to them in the Bible. One thousand years later the Babylonian empire conquers the Jewish Kingdom of Israel and the Jews are exiled. This is the beginning of the Jewish Diaspora. Since then all Jews, everywhere, have yearned for the chance to return to their home – Eretz Israel. These Jews have never settled into other countries nor have they managed to establish homes for themselves anywhere else in the world. The Holocaust and the persecution of Jews in Eastern Europe and other parts of the world confirmed that the Jewish people are destined to be persecuted wherever they go, until they are able to return to their home in Eretz Israel. In this version of the story, there was never a country called Palestine nor was there ever a legitimate “nation” of Palestinians (Cook 2008:22). When Jews started to immigrate to Eretz Israel in the late 1800s it was considered an empty land without people, hence the popular slogan coined by Israel Zangwill (cited in Cook 2008:22) of “a land without people for a people without a land”. If this message was not taken literally, it was interpreted as a reference to the barbarity of the ‘uncivilised’ nomadic Arabs absent of culture and civilisation, who had taken up temporary residence in the land that belonged to the Jews. The first waves of Jewish immigrants are represented and imagined as brave pioneers laying the foundations of the Zionist national movement while surrounded by ‘hostile’ Arabs. In this version of history, the defensive design embodied by the “tower and stockade” is justified by the threat of hostile, barbaric and uncivilised Arabs surrounding the rightful heirs of the land (Cook 2008:22). In 1948 The Israeli War of Independence was fought and won by a fledgling Israeli army who defeated the joint forces of Egypt, Jordan and Syria. According to the Jewish narrative appropriated and distorted by Zionism, the Palestinians living in villages and towns had left voluntarily, and these refugees were absorbed back into the neighbouring Arab countries they had ‘originally’ come from.

3.2.5 Revisionist Narrative

The conventional narrative described above is not only racist and discriminatory, it is also factually incorrect. Revisionist Israeli historians such as Ilan Pappé and Palestinian historians such as Rashid Khalidi have adequately highlighted the false threads that run throughout this picture. The modern political Zionist project constructed and re-imagined Historic Palestine in the image of Eretz Israel as the exclusive promised land of all Jewish people from any country in the world, while simultaneously visualising an “ethnically cleansed Palestine” (Pappé 2006:1). Political Zionism gained momentum in the late 1800s as a “national revival movement” influenced by the increasing persecution of Jews in central and Eastern Europe (Pappé 2006:10). Attempts to justify that the biblical narrative used to mobilise political Zionism can be proved through archaeological findings and historical evidence have failed. Cook (2008:16) makes reference to the work of Israeli historian Ze’ev Herzog, who in 1999 “admitted that archaeology had failed to find evidence that an ancient Jewish nation ever existed”. Cook (2008:16) cites the following statement made by Herzog with regards to their findings:

This is what archaeologists have learned from their excavations in the Land of Israel: the Israelites were never in Egypt, did not wander in the desert, did not conquer the land in a military campaign and did not pass it on to the 12 tribes of Israel. Perhaps even harder to swallow is the fact that the united monarchy of David and Solomon, which is described by the Bible as a regional power, was at most a small tribal kingdom.

According to Oren Yiftachel (2002:223), Palestinians have recently begun constructing their own “ancient narratives of belonging to the land, focusing on their historical links with the Canaanite and Jebusite tribes believed to have resided on the land prior to the Hebrew biblical conquest”. Following this biblical period, Palestine was conquered by the Greek, Assyrian, Roman, Persian, Arab, Crusader, Byzantine and Ottoman empires (Yiftachel 2002:223). Yiftachel (2002:223) explains that the name Palestine comes from the “Roman title for their local province – Palestina”: this was apparently based on the supposed location of the “biblical Philistine people”. He notes that the people considered Palestinians today are most likely descendants of “Hebrew tribes and other communities” who remained in Palestine and “converted to Christianity [or] Islam” and were later joined by Arab immigrants from surrounding countries (Yiftachel 2002:223).

The national myths of pioneering settler communities united by a shared essence of 'Jewishness' is a misleading representation of the way in which Israel was "invented", packaged and re-imagined by political Zionism (Sand 2009:1). While this narrative has been popularised and is now accepted as 'The Jewish Story' that exemplifies the idea of a homeless and persecuted people desperately awaiting the chance to return to their 'native homeland', Pappé (2006:10) points to its historical inaccuracy. He explains that, within Judaism, Eretz Israel had been "revered throughout the centuries by generations of Jews as a place for holy pilgrimage [but] never as a future secular state". According to Pappé (2006:10):

Jewish tradition and religion clearly instruct Jews to await the coming of the promised Messiah at 'the end of times' before they can return to Eretz Israel as a sovereign people in a Jewish theocracy, that is, as the obedient servants of God (this is why today several streams of Ultra-orthodox Jews are either non or anti-zionist)".

Political Zionism "secularized and nationalised Judaism" (Pappé 2006:11). In order to realise the idea of a Jewish nation state in historic Palestine, "Zionist thinkers claimed the biblical territory and recreated, indeed reinvented, it as the cradle of their new nationalist movement" (Pappé 2006:11). He notes that in the eyes of these earlier pioneers and Jewish settlers "Palestine was occupied by 'strangers' and had to be repossessed. 'Strangers' here meant everyone not Jewish who had been living in Palestine since the Roman period" (Pappé 2006:11).

In the selection of a geographical location for the establishment of a national homeland for the Jews, Zionist pioneers and political leaders located and named the geographical location of preference. In the earlier stages of the national movement, the 'fathers' of Zionism considered Argentina and Uganda as possible locations for the establishment of an exclusive Jewish state, before settling on Historic Palestine as the site for a Jewish homeland. The biblical connection with Palestine and the existing Jewish minority rendered this particular place the preferred site for the creation of a Jewish Nation State (Cook 2008:22). Citing the words of Theodor Herzl, Cook confirms this point:

'The message of the Chosen People makes sense in secular, nationalist and historical terms. ... The Jews can be considered a self-chosen people.' And, although Herzl considered both Palestine and Argentina to have merits as the site of a Jewish homeland, he admitted: 'Palestine is our unforgettable historical homeland. Its name alone would be a powerfully stirring rallying cry for our people' (Herzl cited in Cook 2008:22).

The founders of Zionism thus nominated the chosen people – the Jews – and named and classified the local Palestinian inhabitants of Palestine as either invisible, uncivilised and invaders or aliens to the “land the Zionist movement coveted” as its own (Pappé 2006:11). In the naming and classifying of the existing Palestinian inhabitants as inferior to the chosen European Jews, the propagators of political Zionism also articulated a power division which clearly positioned the small minority of existing Jewish inhabitants and new waves of Jewish immigrants to this land as the rightful and superior heirs to the land, and the current inhabitants as not only inferior and uncivilised but also as foreigners, contaminants to be eradicated or transferred to neighbouring states. Supporting this attitude was the assertion that the Arabs who occupied Palestine were nationally, culturally and spiritually “undistinguishable” from their Arab neighbours in surrounding countries, and thus could and should be easily absorbed with little objection.

Towards the end of the 19th Century and start of the 20th Century the Zionist movement grew; Pappé notes that by the beginning of the 20th Century “most of the leaders of the Zionist movement associated this national revival with the colonization of Palestine” (Pappé 2006:10). At the same time that the Jewish National Fund bought up large dunams³⁶ of Palestinian land to be “used and worked solely by Jews” they also started collecting information about the Palestinian population, constructing the “village files” (Pappé 2006: 17; Cook 2008:23). The “village files” contained detailed information about Palestinians and the land they lived on. They included the exact “topographic location of each village, its access roads, quality of land, water springs, main sources of income, its socio-political composition, religious affiliations, names of its mukhtars, its relationships with other villages, the age of individual men and so on” (Cook 2008:23).

In 1878 a small group of Jewish immigrants arrived (primarily from Eastern Europe) and established the “first Zionist agricultural colony in Palestine (Petah Tikva)” (Pappé 2006: 282)³⁷. The formation of Palestinian Nationalism developed roughly at the same time that political Zionism started to emerge³⁸. While the drive for independent statehood had been

³⁶ The word “dunams” is the “traditional unit of measurement used by the Ottomans” to refer to Palestinian land. This term is still used today in many countries that fell under the Ottoman empire .

³⁷ Four years later in 1882, “25 000 Jewish immigrants begin to settle in Palestine” (Pappé 2006: 282). I have included a detailed timeline of the events that took place between 1878 and 1949 in Appendix C, pages 247-251 (Pappé 2006:282-287)

³⁸ While it is important to understand the history of Palestine in relation to the Israeli–Palestinian conflict, Rashid Khalidi accurately insists that this should not serve a reductive purpose. In *The Iron Cage* (Khalidi 2006:xxx), he argues that “achieving any serious understanding of

growing in Palestine under Turkish rule, the necessity for a cohesive and organised national Palestinian movement became apparent in the face of British Imperialism, when the threat of Zionist colonisation gained momentum in the early nineteen hundreds with the arrival of “40 000 Zionist immigrants”, increasing the Jewish population to 6% (Pappé 2006:282). Bashir Makhoul argues that at the “heart” of what one “can describe as Palestinian national identity is its struggle with power relations in the form of the continuing Zionist colonisation of Palestine” (Makhoul 2013:20). Rawan Sharaf (in Hon & Bishop 2013:43) observes: “throughout the modern history of Palestinians, self-identification has been largely realized, categorised and established through the relation with the colonial context and its history”. He argues that the forms, symbols and narration of Palestinian identity became “either a visualization of the colonizers’ perceptions of Palestine or Palestinians”, or the complete opposite: a Palestinian identity constructed in direct opposition to that visualised and projected by the coloniser (Hon & Bishop 2013:43).

3.3 Creation of the Nation

National identity and notions of belonging to a group and/or a place are fluid, shifting and personal concepts. Like the nations to which they are attached, these relationships are invented and imagined. The problem that arises in relation to nationalism and the nation state is not simply that these concepts are invented and therefore ‘not real’; rather the problem arises when the properties of the nation and national identity are afforded the status of divine or innate truth and then mobilised to suit a particular agenda. Benedict Anderson’s notion of the nation as an “imagined community” is an accurate one (Anderson 1983:1). It is indeed the case that one will never know all the other members of the nation to which one considers oneself to belong. According to Anderson (1983:5) it is as a result of the industrial revolution and the rise of “print capitalism” that “nation-ness” and the “modern nation” developed. Anderson (1983:6) unpacks a statement by Ernest Gellner, who argues that “nationalism is not the awakening of nations to self-consciousness: it invents nations where they do not exist”. While this comment by Gellner is accurate to a degree, Anderson (1983:6) argues that Gellner is aligning the notion of “invention” with ideas of “falsity” and “fabrication”, which he considers to be somewhat negative concepts (Anderson 1983:6). He suggests that

this poignant conflict...requires a broad comprehension of Palestinian history in its own terms, and in its own context, which includes but cannot be subsumed by or subordinated to Jewish and Israeli history. Just as one cannot understand the history of France without taking into account its conflicts with Germany and Britain over the past three centuries, it would be unthinkable to reduce French history to these conflicts, or treat it as an addendum to the history of its erstwhile rivals”. Khalidi provides a thorough in-depth discussion of Palestinian history and the development of Palestinian National Identity.

“invention” should be aligned here with “imagining” and “creation” (Anderson 1983:6). Some nations, like the Palestinians, do not have a state. They are a “stateless nation” (Yiftachel 2002:223). The Palestinian land that they associate with their national identity is rapidly “disappearing” (Cook 2008:3). Technically speaking the land associated with Jewish political Zionism, namely Eretz Israel, also does not exist. Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories are neither Historic Palestine nor are they Eretz Israel, yet they are also both of these places. In re-creating Eretz Israel as a nation state in Historic Palestine, political Zionism literally “cleansed” the country of Palestinian inhabitants, destroying their villages and towns before planting pine trees to cover up the evidence left behind (Pappé 2006).

Gannit Ankori (2006:9) describes her experience of this phenomenon in the 1980s while driving with an American tourist and a Palestinian taxi driver to the village of Majdel Kroum in the Galilee. She explains how the American tourist asks a question about what is now known as Canada Park. The following dialogue is an extract from the preface to Ankori’s *Palestinian Art* and accurately summarises the underlying violence of the supposedly “charitable” gestures of the Jewish National Fund. She writes:

The American: What is this beautiful place?

The Israeli: this is Canada Park. It is a wonderful place for picnics. The pine trees were planted by the Jewish National Fund. Forestation was part of the Zionist ideology of making the desert bloom.

The Palestinian: Yes, this place, Latroun, is now called Canada Park. The trees were planted as part of the Zionist effort to cover up three Arab villages that were destroyed and depopulated after the war of 1967.

(Ankori 2006:9)

In the documentary, *The Village Under the Forest*, 2013 Heidi Grunebaum (2015:162), a Jewish South African film-maker, interrogates the way in which “forests planted by the Jewish National Fund (JNF) to make the wilderness bloom in Israel were cultivated over the ruins of many Palestinian villages depopulated and destroyed” during the Nakba in 1948. According to Grunebaum (2015:162), “the ruins of one of these villages, Luby, lie beneath a JNF forest named ‘South Africa Forest’”. Jonathan Cook explains that, a few years after the occupation of the remaining Palestinian territories (those not claimed in the ethnic cleansing in 1948), “the Jewish National Fund – again drawing on its experience of erasing evidence inside Israel of the hundreds of destroyed villages – used charitable donations from

Canadians to plant a forest over the villages' lands, which were renamed Canada Park" (Cook 2008:54). In analysing the "slow violence" of these techniques of erasure, Kamal Boullata (2009:188) observes that "[s]eeing human traces, but not those who left them, is the villager's clue that one is looking not at some anonymous landscape but at a very specific place". If one were to walk the paths left by these traces, the "viewer may retrace the steps of a people's dispossession"(Boullata 2009:188). Despite their efforts to erase the Palestinian nation from Historic Palestine and its history, Makhoul (2013:20) confirms that these efforts have only served to further concretise the idea of a Palestinian nation in the global imagination. Contemporary artists like Yael Bartana, Khaled Jarrar and Larissa Sansour respond to the issue of the nation within the Palestinian/Israeli context.

3.3.1 Yael Bartana and the Zionist Imagination

Yael Bartana's video trilogy *And Europe will be stunned...* 2007–2011 tells the story of the Jewish Renaissance Movement in Poland (JRMiP), a fictitious political project that directly reflects and engages with real politics. Each of the films depicts a particular stage in the development of this movement. The first film, *Mary Koszmary (Nightmares)* 2007, presents the viewer with Slawomir Sierkowsky's call for the return of 3.3 million Jews to "the land of their forefathers" (Bartana, Buschmeier, et al. 2011:n.p). Having nominated the Chosen People in the first film, the second film *Mur i Wieża* shows the new immigrants who have followed Sierkowsky's invitation to re-establish the Polish Jewish community in Poland as they construct a new settlement in Warsaw. The settlement symbolises a division between the new settlers and their surroundings. In this film Mirzoeff's second modality of a "complex of visibility" namely, "separation", is therefore represented. The final film *Zamach* (Assassination) refers to the aestheticising and mythologising of political ideologies through the absurd idolisation of symbols and signifiers of a heroic leader. There is something disturbing about the elevation of individuals to the status of a God through myth, and thus the normalisation of their ideologies and often the mobilisation of them in distorted and unintended ways. This film can be analysed in relation to Mirzoeff's third modality of a visibility complex, "aestheticizing". The films and the photographic images produced as part of *And Europe will be Stunned...* are seductive and virtually seamless. They are almost too well executed, adding to the sense of unease in watching the prospective movement play out.

According to Bartana, Lingwood et al. (2011:3), the films address “histories of competing nationalisms and militarisms”, including the narratives that characterise the “Israeli settlement movement, Zionist dreams, anti-Semitism, the Holocaust and the Palestinian right of return”(Bartana, Lingwood et al. 2011:3). The films reflect on and critique the narratives mobilised by political Zionism in “the invention of the Jewish people” as a constructed nation attached to the imaginary geography that is “Eretz Israel” (Sand 2009:1). In collaboration with Slawomir Sierkowski³⁹, a well known political figure in Poland, the artist presents a fictional alternative to current political narratives and movements and places the modern nation project under the spotlight. In her realisation of the work, the artist has established “a new political movement” that extends beyond the imaginary world of art and artists. (Juli Carlson 2013: 1)describes the project thus: “both real and intangible, the JRMiP is simultaneously a project about politics as much as it is political”. These films present the possibility of an inclusive political group that is not formed according to nationalist ideals. It is a movement that does not discriminate – all are welcome to join its ranks – yet the films have a disturbing quality. As Bartana replicates the political Zionist narrative and the way it visualised the creation of Eretz Israel in Historic Palestine, small warning signs appear that signal the dystopian possibilities of a seemingly perfect proposal. She speaks back to her own heritage as the daughter of Polish Jewish parents who cut ties with Poland after fleeing Nazi persecution in World War Two. She suggests a simultaneous looking back and looking forward in order to deal with the present when constructing the idea of a nation. For example, the films take us back in time through their quotation of Zionist propaganda films from the 1930s and representations used to attract Jews from Eastern Europe and other parts of the world to the land of Israel in the 1940s and 1950s.

Within each of the three films that make up Bartana’s trilogy, *And Europe will be Stunned...*, one can identify the “three modalities of a visibility complex” – “naming, separating, and aestheticizing” – as described by Mirzoeff (2011:3–4). Each of these three modalities are exemplified within the films as they reflect the modalities of a “visibility complex” at play within the political Zionist movement (Mirzoeff 2011:3–4). As one engages with each of the individual pieces, the way in which “visibility” was strategically employed in historic Palestine from the beginning of Zionist colonisation until the present becomes increasingly

³⁹ Slawomir Sierkowski is the founder and chief editor of *Krytyka Polityczna* magazine (Bartana et al. 2011: 2)

evident. As much as the works are concerned with political Zionism, socialism, colonialism, apartheid and the construction of a Jewish nation in the land of Eretz Israel, the artist explains that the story represented in the films is “universal” (Bartana, Lingwood et al. 2011:2). She argues that these works are not simply “stories about two nations – Jews and Poles...these are mechanisms and situations that can be observed anywhere in the world” (Bartana, Lingwood et al. 2011:2). The films employ the aesthetic style of Zionist propaganda films in a critical response to the Zionist colonisation of Palestine as well as the narratives that defined the Holocaust and the way in which other global projects of nation building naturalise and institutionalise rigid parameters for inclusion or exclusion.

Mary Koszmary (Nightmares)

In the first film, Slawomir Sierakowsky stands in an empty sports stadium in Warsaw (Figure 3.2 A and Figure 3.2 B) in Poland, where he calls out to the three million Jews who left Poland during the Holocaust and settled not only in Palestine but all over the world. Sierakowsky wrote the speech himself and, together with Bartana, they converted it into a manifesto (Figure 3.3). In this manifesto accompanying the JRMiP project, she refers directly to the list of countries nominated by Herzl and the founders of political Zionism as potential locations for establishing a nation state for Jews, including “Argentina” and “Uganda” (Bartana, Buschmeier et al. 2011:1). The movement rejects these places including, “Palestine”, and argues not for the colonising and dominating of a host nation but for the “plug-in principle” where the members “settle down like a guest next to its host” (Montmann 2011:1). Montmann (2011:1) confirms this in her essay contribution to the JRMiP project:

This is not a Zionist movement that yearns for Palestine. It yearns for Poland, inside the fortress of Europe. It has no need for any territory marked by borders because it intends simply to plug in. Neither mono-ethnic nor mono-religious, it is internationalist and open to all refugees and outcasts. Horizontally interconnected like a network, it needs no central leader. It is a political experiment.

This first film references the Zionist call to Jews around the world, urging them to immigrate to Palestine from the end of the 1800s and establish the Jewish state. In this naming and classifying process the first of the three modalities of a “complex of visibility” can be seen in operation, only in this instance there is a reversal of the historical trajectory (Mirzoeff 2011:4). Sierakowsky is “urging three million Jews to return to Poland” and abandon the idea

of themselves as the “chosen people” with a promised land (Bartana, Lingwood, et al. 2011:2). The space is empty, there are no Poles to be seen anywhere. While the manifesto clearly suggests that the JRMiP intends to join their “Polish brothers and sisters”, the lack of Poles in the landscape can be read as an allusion to the Zionist notion of Palestine as an empty land, awaiting colonisation (Bartana, Buschmeier et al. 2011). The manifesto and overall message of the films is hopeful. Bartana is presenting an ideal political movement, yet the film is disconcertingly “reminiscent of a WWII propaganda film” (Bartana, Lingwood, et al. 2011:2).

There is something unsettling about the use of national symbols and signifiers of essentialist national movements while simultaneously declaring that the movement is not in favour of these political systems. Sierakowsky is propagating the ‘vision’ of the movement in this film. He is presenting an image of Poland as “grey and homogenous” without the Polish Jews, as he calls on them to resurrect the thriving Jewish community that once lived in the very place where he stands in Warsaw in Poland (Beylin 2011:1). The projection of a utopian collective that is conveyed by the manifesto and the leaders call to action is disturbed by the film’s visual imagery. In Figure 3.2, for example, Sierakowsky stands in the centre of the stadium surrounded by a few children dressed in the JRMiP uniform while he holds a bunch of red flowers. The generally drab or muted tones of the film are contrasted against the bright red of the scarves and flags held by the children. If the JRMiP is indeed about individual freedom, democracy and acceptance, one might ask if it is necessary to have a uniform. “The aesthetic system of totalitarianism is organized around imagery of the leader, political symbols, pageants, ceremonies, anthems, propaganda and uniform” (Bartana, Lingwood et al. 2011:4). In this film and the other two films, the overall agenda of the movement is contrasted by the use of symbols and aesthetics that are associated with “totalitarianism, dictatorships [and] political ideologies” (Bartana, Lingwood et al. 2011:4). The use of the sports stadium is interesting too if one considers the way in which national movements like the post-apartheid rainbow nation project utilised sporting events such as the 1995 Rugby World Cup⁴⁰ to ‘bring South Africans together’ around a joint goal.

⁴⁰ It is worth noting that, while rugby as a sport was successfully used at this time to bring South Africans of all cultures and ethnic groups together, it has recently been highlighted as a problematic site of national conflict and disjuncture. With the growing rhetoric regarding the lack of meaningful transformation that has happened in South Africa within the last twenty years, state officials have attempted a quick-fix patch up approach, part of which involves implementing BEE (Black Economic Empowerment) agendas within significant education and sporting institutions. This has been implemented by insisting that a certain number of the South African rugby team members must be racially classified as ‘Black’ South Africans regardless of whether they qualify over other ‘White’ South African candidates or not. While this is one way to ‘fast-track’ transformation in a somewhat superficial capacity, it has been deemed problematic and unsuccessful from a number of different vantage points. Until 1994, rugby was a colonial sport popular within Afrikaans and English South African households



Figure 3.2 A and Figure 3.2 B: Yael Bartana, *And Europe will be Stunned...* Film stills from *Mary Koszmary (Nightmares)* 2007



Figure 3.3: Yael Bartana, 2007. *And Europe will be Stunned...* Film stills from *Mary Koszmary (Nightmares)*

and communities. Because the sport was associated with apartheid and European colonisation it was generally unpopular within Black Coloured and Indian households; thus there is a lack of interest and expertise that is slowly changing over time. By trying to fast-track transformation, officials have placed Black South African rugby players in a hostile and complicated environment where they often find themselves to be the “token” Black team members. These team members are often younger and more inexperienced than their fellow teammates and are aware of the patronising ‘favour’ bestowed on them by the ‘generous’ post-apartheid government.

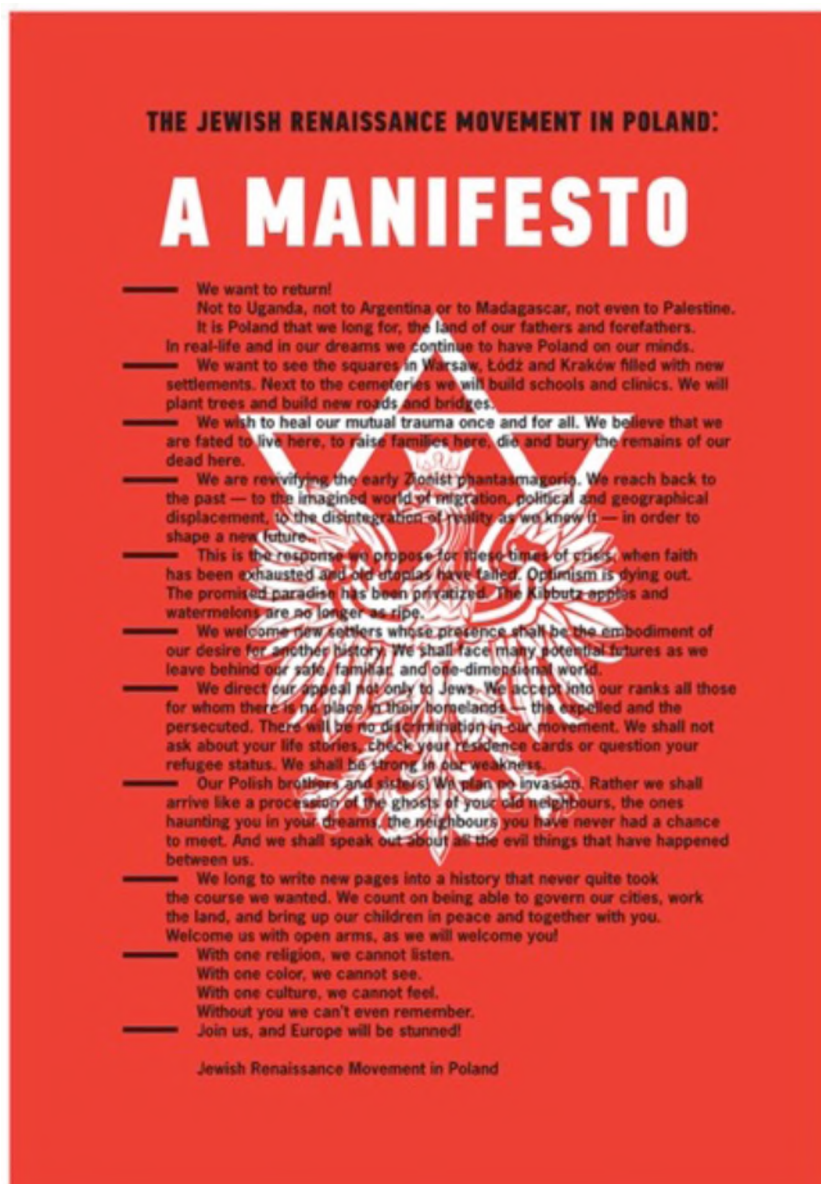


Figure 3.4: Yael Bartana, 2007–2011 *And Europe Will be Stunned...* Jewish Renaissance Movement in Poland (Manifesto).

“We want to return! Not to Uganda, not to Argentina or to Madagascar, not even to Palestine. It is Poland that we long for, the land of our fathers and forefathers. In real-life and in our dreams we continue to have Poland on our minds. We want to see the squares in Warsaw Łódz and Krakow filled with new settlements. Next to the cemeteries we will build schools and clinics. We will plant trees and build new roads and bridges. We wish to heal our mutual trauma once and for all. We believe that we are fated to live here, to raise families here, die and bury the remains of our dead here. We are revivifying the early Zionist phantasmagoria. We reach back to the past – to the imagined world of migration, political and geographical displacement, to the disintegration of reality as we knew it – in order to shape a new future. This is the response we propose for these times of crisis, when faith has been exhausted and old utopias have failed. Optimism is dying out. The promised paradise has been privatized. The Kibbutz apples and watermelons are no longer as ripe. We welcome new settlers whose presence shall be the embodiment of our desire for another history. We shall face many potential futures as we leave behind our safe, familiar, one-dimensional world. We direct our appeal not only to Jews. We accept into our ranks all those for whom there is no place in their homeland – the expelled and the

*persecuted. There will be no discrimination in our movement. We shall not ask about your life stories, check your residence cards or question your refugee status. We shall be strong in our weakness. Our Polish brothers and sisters! we plan no invasion. Rather we shall arrive like a procession of the ghosts of your old neighbours, the ones haunting you in your dreams, the neighbours you have never had a chance to meet. And we shall speak out about all the evil things that have happened between us. We long to write new pages into a history that never quite took the course we wanted. We count on being able to govern our cities, work the land, and bring up our children in peace and together with you.
Welcome us with open arms, as we shall welcome you!
With one religion, we cannot listen.
With one color, we cannot see.
With one culture, we cannot feel.
Without you we can't even remember.
Join us, and Europe will be stunned!"*

Mur I Wieza (Wall and Tower)

In the second film *Mur I Wieza*, 2009, the new Jewish settlers that have arrived in Poland build a Kibbutz that resembles a “concentration camp” (Lewin 2011:1). According to Marek Beylin, the new JRMiP settlers are “building a kibbutz on the site of the former Warsaw ghetto, where the Holocaust took place, near the Umschlagplatz, from where the Germans sent several hundred thousands of Jews to the ovens” (Beylin 2011:1). Bartana reconstructed the kibbutz to the exact size and dimensions of those built in the earlier years of Zionist immigration to Palestine. Again there is a contradiction between the imagery and the other elements of the film. Elated, nationalist music swells in the background as the “Kibbutzniks surround the kibbutz with a wall and erect a tall watchtower inside”. According to Hilal et al., the Israeli architect Sharon Rotbard claimed that “the tower and stockade have been in the DNA of Israeli Architecture since the establishment of the early Jewish colonies in the 1930s” (Hilal et al. 2013:125). They describe these watchtowers as “omnipresent”, “menacing” devices of stored violence. The camera zooms in as they add a ream of razor wire to the top of the kibbutz walls (Figure 3.5 A). The images and the message do not add up. The warm welcoming invitation of the Polish Leader and the manifesto of the JRMiP suggest that the settlers may use something other than this historically militant architectural design. In explaining this aspect of the film, Beylin (2011:1) argues that, from the perspective of the Kibbutzniks on the inside of the structure, these defence systems are the “expression of vigilant uncertainty”, yet, when “seen from outside, the wall and tower are symbols of mistrust and strangeness” (Beylin 2011:1).

The camera pans across the park to the site of a language lesson (Figure 3.6A) The Hebrew-speaking settlers are being taught to speak Polish. This scene alludes to the revival of Hebrew

(“a non-living language”) as a modern spoken language in order to find a common dialect that all the new Ashkenazi⁴¹, Mizrahi⁴² and Sephardic⁴³ Jewish immigrants could use to communicate (Cook 2008:21). These new immigrants were coming from distant and diverse locations and the new state of Israel needed a national language to unite them as “a nation”. At this point in history the only thing each of these disparate communities had in common was a religion – Judaism. If one thinks of the idea of Christianity, there is no Christian nationality nor is there a Christian Nation State. One can have a nation like South Africa where there are people who adhere to the Christian faith, but Christianity is not a qualifying national marker. In the introduction to the *Invention of the Jewish People*, Shlomo Sand (2009: 3) tells the story of a non-religious Polish communist born to a Jewish mother, and the difficulty he has acclimatising to the new Jewish state of Israel:

It defined him as Jewish by nationality and religion—since the 1960s the state had recorded a religion for all citizens, including confirmed unbelievers...Though he learned to communicate in Hebrew, he did not much care for the language, and continued to speak Yiddish with his family and friends. Shulek was nostalgic for the Yiddish land of Eastern Europe and the revolutionary ideas that had seethed and fermented there before the war. In Israel he felt he was stealing other people’s land; though it wasn’t his doing, he continued to regard it as robbery. His obvious alienation was not from the native-born Sabras, who looked down on him, but from the local climate. The hot breath of the Levant was not for him. It only intensified his longing for the heavy snows that blanketed the streets of Lodz, the Polish snow that slowly melted in his memory until his eyes finally closed. At his graveside, his old comrades sang “The Internationale⁴⁴”.

⁴¹ The Ashkenazi Jews refers to an ethnic category of Jews who come primarily from Eastern Europe including Russia and Poland.

⁴² The term Mizrahi Jews is used to describe Jews who come from countries that are predominantly Muslim within the Middle East including Syria, Iraq, Iran, Yemen, Afghanistan.

⁴³ The Sephardic Jews are Jews from North Africa including Ethiopia, Morocco, Tunisia and Libya. Sometimes Sephardic Jews are also referred to as Mizrahi.

⁴⁴ The Internationale is the anthem of the socialist movement and has been used by communist and anarchist movements as well.



Figure 3.5 A and Figure 3.5 B: Yael Bartana, *And Europe will be Stunned...* Film stills from *Mur I Wieża* (*Wall and Tower*) 2009.



Figure 3.6 A and Figure 3.6 B: Yael Bartana, *And Europe will be Stunned...* Film stills from *Mur I Wieża* (*Wall and Tower*), 2009.



Figure 3.7 A and Figure 3.7 B: Yael Bartana, *And Europe will be Stunned...* Film stills from *Mur I Wieża* (*Wall and Tower*), 2009.



Figure 3.8: Yael Bartana. 2009. *And Europe will be Stunned...* Film still from *Mur i Wieża (Wall and Tower)*



Figure 3.9: Yael Bartana. 2009. *And Europe will be Stunned...* Film still from *Mur I Wieza (Wall and Tower)*

Zamach (Assassination)

In the final film, *Zamach*, Sierkowski, the leader of the JRMiP, has been assassinated and Bartana takes us to his funeral. Supporters of the movement mourn the death of their leader while simultaneously calling on members to continue his legacy. It is at this point in the trilogy that the third modality of a visuality complex – “aestheticization” – is evident (Mirzoeff 2011:3–4). The members of the movement erect an enormous grey concrete sculpture, made from the same material as the Israeli apartheid wall. In Figure 3.14, one sees the enormous concrete bust of Sierkowski as it descends like a God from the heavens. Images such as Figure 3.12 show the way in which earlier events depicted in *Zamach*, the third film, are memorialised and framed in a nostalgic manner.

These films are described as examples of “faction” – a merging of fact and fiction (Cramerotti 2009:22 cited in Snodgrass 2011:2). In the first instance the nation is imaginary, it is a construction, yet the idea of the nation state is positioned ideologically as the ‘real’ while the imaginary political movement invented by the artist is the ‘imaginary’. Upon closer inspection, this separation between the imaginary world of art and artistic invention and the supposedly factual world of nation states becomes harder to define. If one treats the nation as an imaginary creation based on social constructions, myths and stories, then the fictitious

national movement invented by Bartana is no more absurd or ludicrous than the existing national ideologies we embrace.



Figure 3.10: Yael Bartana. 2011. *And Europe will be Stunned...* Film still from *Zamach (Assassination)*



Figure 3.11: Yael Bartana. 2011. *And Europe will be Stunned...* Film still from *Zamach (Assassination)*



Figure 3.12 A and Figure 3.13 B: Yael Bartana. 2011. *And Europe will be Stunned...* Film stills from *Zamach (Assassination)*



Figure 3.13 A and Figure 3.14 B: Yael Bartana. 2011. *And Europe will be Stunned...* Film stills from *Zamach (Assassination)*



Figure 3.14 A and Figure 3.15 B: Yael Bartana. 2011. *And Europe will be Stunned...* Film stills from *Zamach (Assassination)*



Figure 3.15: Yael Bartana. 2011. *And Europe will be Stunned...* Film still from *Zamach (Assassination)*

The strength of Bartana's politically engaged artworks lies (at least in part) in the fact that they can be tested out, considered and imagined, providing the set for scenarios to be played out in an experimental fashion prior to the application of actual measures in real time and space. As a site of imagination and play, the potential national narratives and cultural formations proposed by artists like Bartana are fluid and flexible in a way that the modern nation state of Israel presently is not. By representing the imaginary options for a future state of Palestine/Israel, each artist shows the viewer how such seemingly flawless visions of any utopia can become perverted by fear and anxiety, preoccupied with protecting a 'pure' inside from a so-called threatening and irreconcilable outside. The narratives proposed by 'perfect' utopias easily warp into dystopia. *And Europe will be Stunned...* suggests the need to examine the more intricate details of this relationship between the aesthetic and the national,

while simultaneously opening up the viewer's imagination to previously unknown or unexplored variations of political ideologies.

Erica Lehrer and Magdalena Woligorska (2013: 510) discuss the Jewish Renaissance Movement in Poland project by Yael Bartana as one of three case studies that exemplify the idea of “New Genre Art Inventions” (NGAI's) as a contemporary response to the traumatic narratives of a Jewish- Polish past⁴⁵. These new genre art interventions position different social, political and historical problems alongside one another. A key characteristic of NGAI's is their “radically recombinative quality” (Lehrer & Waligórska 2013:312). Practitioner/s or “memory workers” are able to merge and juxtapose spatially and temporally disconnected places and/or past historical narratives to form new propositions for the “future-present” (Lehrer & Waligórska 2013). For example, Bartana's JRMiP makes reference to the period before WWII when Poland was home to three million Jewish people. The project acknowledges the recent trauma of a Polish-Jewish past but suggests a re-examination of these historical events and a revisiting of them in the present. Lehrer & Waligórska (2013) describe Bartana's work as predominantly “future- oriented” and argue that the JRMiP (like that of the other two case studies mentioned in the text) exemplifies the “what if” element that is characteristic of NGAI's. According to (Lehrer & Waligórska 2013: 510) the NGAI's are presenting “new visions for mutual identification and affiliation” and should be seen as “embodied embodied experiences that stage and invite participation in ‘repertoires’ of cultural memory” rather than simply as representations. The authors suggest that this approach can be considered a “subjunctive politics of history—a ‘what if’ proposition that plays with reimagining and recombining a range of Jewish and Polish memories, present-day realities and future aspirations” (Lehrer & Waligórska 2013: 510). NGAI's are characterised by their use of playful, innovative media and experiential performances and interventions that are “expressly political” and geared towards “social change” (Lehrer & Waligórska 2013: 512). While Lehrer & Waligórska discuss the use of NGAI's specifically within the context of Jewish- Polish relations, the type of art they characterise as NGAI's can also be identified in the work of Larissa Sansour discussed later on in this chapter. Sansour also situates her work in the future-present and combines the visual language of settlements and gated communities with a Palestinian desire for a nation state in *Nation Estate*. Like Bartana's JRMiP, Sansours

⁴⁵ The other two case studies are Rafał Betlejewski's *I Miss you Jew!* and Public Movement's *Spring in Warsaw*. For a discussion of these please see the article: Lehrer, E., & Waligórska, M. 2013 'Cur(at)ing History : New Genre Art Interventions and the Polish-Jewish Past' in *East European Politics and Societies and Cultures*, 27(3), 510–544. Sage Online.

Nation Estate is created using media that can be “digitally networked” across vast distances (Lehrer & Waligórska 2013: 512). Both projects also emplify the idea of the artist as a type of “memory worker” or “therapist”. Therapists reflect ourselves back at us by asking questions, they interpret reality and show it to us in a way that helps us to see it better. In this instance the artist collects perceptions of the past and the present and presents the viewer with a “what if” scenario from which to imagine a possible future/s.

3.4 Welcome to Palestine



Name
Khaled Jarrar

Date of birth
1976

Place of birth
Jenin, OPT

Current place of residence
Ramallah, OPT

Self-identified nationality
Palestinian

Expertise
Visual Artist

Relevant qualifications
Interior Design (1996);
Post-graduate Diploma (2000 – 2002)

Noteworthy artistic projects
Football, 2012; Live and Work in Palestine, 2011- present ;*Whole in the Wall*, 2013; *Hunger Wall*, 2014, *Upcycle the Wall*, 2012-present

Sex
Male

Forced/chosen
Forced

Photo credit:
Ayyam Gallery

Period of engagement in 'visual narratives of division'
August 2013 – June 2014

Figure 3.16: Guide profile for Khaled Jarrar. Compiled by Rachel Baasch (2016).

In a different, yet overlapping respect to Yael Bartana, the Palestinian artist Khaled Jarrar responds to the question of Palestinian national identity and the idea of a Palestinian nation state within his project *Live and Work in Palestine*, 2011–present. Jarrar has created his own passport visa stamps and postage stamps for a desired Palestinian nation state. Jarrar’s work can also be seen as an example of the idea of “faction” (fact+fiction) that is used to describe Bartana’s work (Cramerotti 2009:22 cited in Snodgrass 2011:2).



Figure 3.17: Khaled Jarrar. 2011. *Live and Work in Palestine* (passport stamp design).

In this performative intervention Jarrar responds to the physical and ideological dividers controlling the movement of Palestinians and Israelis within and between the territories occupied by Israel. In the creation of his own version of a Palestinian entry stamp/visa (Figure 3.18), which he administers from the bus station in Ramallah⁴⁶ where many visitors to the West Bank arrive after crossing the Israeli checkpoint in Qalandiya, Jarrar engages with symbols and signifiers of nationhood and the ideological context which supports the demarcation and characterisation of physical space in the West Bank OPT. Like Bartana, Jarrar engages with the invention of the nation and the loaded signifiers used to define essentialist ‘truths’ and articulate the boundaries of the imagined community such as “population censuses, national maps, ID cards, passports and various national symbols [including] the flag, the national anthem, the local currency, the postage stamp” (Pappe & Hilal 2010:183). *Live and work in Palestine* is fully realised when it is performed and experienced by the traveller first hand (Figure 3.19 A – Figure 3.21 B). The performance is situated in a very specific socio-political framework and the project subverts dominant narratives of division in a few respects. According to his catalogue essay *Whole in the Wall* published by the Ayyam gallery, *Live and Work in Palestine* entailed “the creation of a national stamp and a global performance of stamping the State of Palestine into over six hundred and fifty passports, which began at the West Bank’s Qalandia checkpoint and Ramallah bus station” (Ayyam Gallery 2013). The stamp design includes stylised

⁴⁶As the de facto capital of the West Bank Territory, most people who wish to travel to the Palestinian Territory do so via the Qalandia checkpoint that connects and separates the East Jerusalem territories and greater Israel from Ramallah and the West Bank. There are only two places from which one can enter the West Bank – via Israel or via Jordan. There are no international airports in the Palestinian Territories and so one enters via the airport in Tel Aviv or via the airport in Jordan before crossing through the Allenby border which, like all other checkpoints and border stations in the West Bank, is monitored by the Israeli border control and military in collaboration with the Jordanian border control.

representations of the “jasmine” flower and the “Palestinian sunbird” (Ayyam Gallery 2013). Surrounding these two symbols are the “words ‘State of Palestine’ in English and Arabic” as well as in Hebrew. Despite the fictitious nature of the stamps and his simulated checkpoint, members of the public are hesitant to allow the artwork to ‘contaminate’ the sacred signifier of citizenship and belonging, that is, the passport.

In his exploration of the development of the passport, John Torpey comments on the ways in which state authorities have a monopoly of the means of movement. Border controls encapsulate this with their capacity to determine who may enter and who may not...but there is another possible monopoly...emerging in this context: that centred on the ‘means of identification’ (David Lyon 2007:122).



Figure 3.18 A and Figure 3.19 B: Khaled Jarrar. 2011 – present. *Live and Work in Palestine*. Documentation of Khaled Jarrar stamping passports with the Palestinian visa.

In discussion with the artist he describes the way in which he has tracked and monitored the experience of the travellers whose passports contain his fictitious markers that signify the desire for an autonomous Palestinian state and legitimacy of identity. The recollections of events relayed to Jarrar through email or telephonic conversations from the security checkpoints and airport security are an integral part of the work. He explains that a few individuals had their passports confiscated by security, most endured lengthy interrogations, some reported the confusion and disconcerted responses of trained security personnel in how to deal with the ‘false’ signifier. Some passport bearers reported that the border officials, soldiers and security personnel were uncertain about how to deal with the fictitious stamp and treated the markers as part of a seemingly ‘harmless’ art project or some kind of playful nostalgic souvenir. Other reports noted that the stamps had resulted in lengthy interrogations, body searches and in some instances passports were taken away from the bearers entirely (Baasch & Jarrar 2013).



Figure 3.19 A and Figure 3.20 B: Khaled Jarrar. 2011. *Live and Work in Palestine* (visa stamp in passport)

The work draws one's attention to the fact that the stamp and visa documents created by Jarrar are signifiers of a "stateless nation"(Yiftachel 2002:223); a nation that has been forcibly evicted from the land they have lived on, worked on and associate their Palestinian national identity with. As a spectator one is invited to participate in this project and not simply watch. In having the artwork printed into one's passport, one is personally acknowledging the legitimacy of the Palestinian right to a state. In the moment that one purchases a set of Jarrar's postage stamps and places them on a postcard to send to Israel and the OPTs or anywhere else in the world, one is validating the nation state invented by Jarrar. Within the framework of Jarrar's Palestinian nation state, Yael Bartana would be included as a Palestinian citizen.



Figure 3.20 A and Figure 3.21 B: Khaled Jarrar. 2011. *Live and Work in Palestine* (visa stamp in passport).

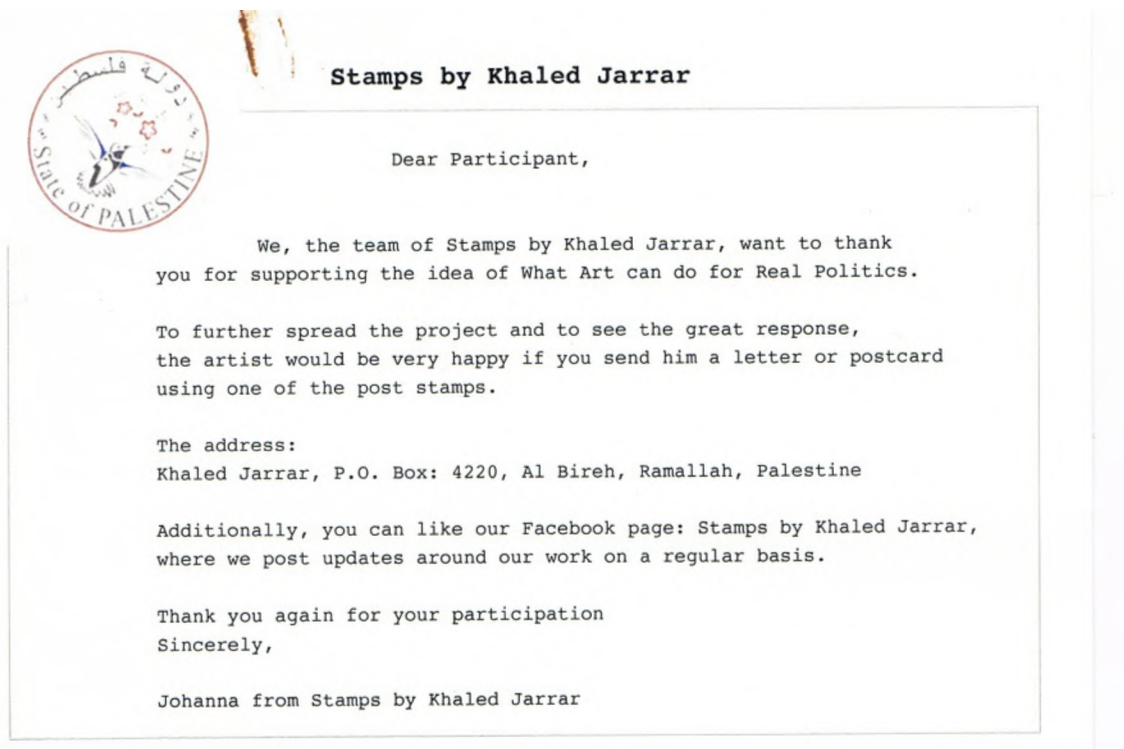


Figure 3.21: Khaled Jarrar. 2011. *Live and Work in Palestine*, 2011. Scanned reproduction of the note I received when I purchased my own set of Khaled Jarrar's fictitious Palestinian postage stamps.



Figure 3.22: Khaled Jarrar. 2011–ongoing. *Live and Work in Palestine* (Scanned copy of the card of Postage stamps I received in the post after making an online purchase)



Figure 3.23: Khaled Jarrar. 2011–present. *Live and Work in Palestine* (Postage stamp).



Figure 3.24: Khaled Jarrar. 2011–present. *Live and Work in Palestine*. Postcard sent to Khaled Jarrar in Palestine.

If one would like to travel to the Palestinian West Bank, one is assessed and granted entry only according to the criteria stipulated by the Israeli government. As an occupied territory, Palestinians and the Palestinian Authority⁴⁷ have little or no say as to who does or does not enter their areas of inhabitation⁴⁸. *Live and work in Palestine* highlights the statelessness of Palestine and the authority suggested by an imagined symbol as well as the lack of control Palestinians have when it comes to immigration and tourism in their own homes.

On the one hand, the stamps are aesthetically pleasing. People like to collect stamps as ‘evidence’ of where they have travelled, and as souvenirs of ‘authentic experience’. On another level, there is the significance that the passport represents. It is essential if one wants to travel away from home and be allowed to return home again. By placing an invented stamp for a state that does not legally exist within the pages of this sacred document, one is inviting interrogation and the potential for other more severe consequences such as having a passport or visa cancelled and being denied the ability to return to Israel in the future. In addition to the passport stamp, Jarrar has created his own Palestinian postage stamps that are now available for purchase at post offices in Belgium, the Netherlands, France and Germany (Figures 3.23–3.25). These postage stamps have been used to send postcards from Tel Aviv in Israel as well as the countries mentioned above. Anderson (1983:3) confirms that, despite the fact that “nation-ness” is an invention, “it is the most universally legitimate value in the political life of our time”. The symbols created by Jarrar point to political structures. These political structures are further concretised by actual physical buildings. The South African artist Thando Mama negotiates the relationship between monumental structures and national identity in his work of *Nationhood*, 2015.

⁴⁷The Palestinian Authority are the governing party in the Occupied West Bank territories. The Palestinian Authority are afforded very little governing autonomy.

⁴⁸One is generally advised by experienced travellers and researchers to avoid any mention of the West Bank. It is often said that it is best to pretend that the Palestinian territories and the Palestinians themselves do not exist.

3.4.1 Of Nations and Buildings



Name
Thando Mama

Date of birth
1977

Place of birth
Butterworth

Current place of residence
Grahamstown, South Africa

Self-identified nationality
South African

Expertise
Printmaking, photography, video

Relevant qualifications
BFA, 1999 Natal Technikon
MFA, pending
Rhodes University

Relevant projects
MTN contemporaries award winner, 2003
Of Nationhood/Desolation, 2015

Sex
Male

Forced/chosen
Chosen

Photo credit:
Palesa Matsama, Goethe on Main

Period of engagement
October 2015 – July 2016

Figure 3.25: Guide profile for Thando Mama. Compiled by Rachel Baasch

In Thando Mama’s recent video work *Of Nationhood*, 2015 the artist juxtaposes his body against the cold concrete of the monument at Ntaba KaNdoda in Keisakamma Hoek in the Eastern Cape, South Africa. The national monument of the Republic of Ciskei at Ntaba KaNdoda was established by President Lennox Sebe in 1981 after he paid a visit to Israel and was apparently “impressed by the monument to Israeli heroism at Masada” (Prozesky & de Gruchy 2002). The Ciskei was one of the ten “Bantustans”⁴⁹ (Figure 3.36) or “black homelands” established by the apartheid government of South Africa through the Group Areas Act⁵⁰ (Tilley 2012:44)⁵¹. According to Tilley (2012:44):

The South African Bantustans were represented by the white government as satisfying the political rights of black South Africans by allowing them to exercise

⁴⁹ Known as ‘homelands’ or ‘bantustans’, these areas of South Africa were envisaged as self-governing territories that contained only a specific black ethnic group. The ten homelands that were declared are illustrated in the map in (Figure 3.27). Four of the ten homelands were additionally declared to be ‘independent’ of South Africa (the independence was nominal in that the homelands were not recognised by any other country as independent and sovereign entities). Crucially, all designated citizens of the homelands had their citizenship replaced with that of their respective homeland, and were thus no longer South African citizens (Terreblance, 2002). Under this apartheid ‘grand vision’, the Xhosa residents of cape provinces were thus required to relocate either to the Transkei or the Ciskei (the two so-called ‘independent’ homelands for Xhosas in the eastern part of the Cape province (Clifford-Holmes 2015).

⁵⁰ The Group Areas Act enforced influx control, spatial separation based on race, and mandated a policy of “own management for own areas”, all in order to “limit the extent to which affluent white municipalities would bear the financial burden of servicing disadvantaged black areas” (RSA, 1998: 12). With the Group Areas Development Act of 1955, the apartheid government began implementing the recommendations of the “Commission for the Socio-Economic Development of the Bantu Areas” (Union of South Africa, 1955). The commission had acknowledged that the European sector would have to accommodate many millions of unemployed ‘Bantus’ unless government actively developed the ‘Bantu areas’.

their right to self-determination (in territorial 'Homelands' demarcated by the white government). Yet the international community determined that the Bantustans were only more elaborate figments of apartheid's doctrine of forced racial separation and condemned their creation on this basis.

In a similar capacity to the Palestinian Authority, who administers the West Bank and East Jerusalem Territories, the leaders of the Bantustans generally benefited from their relationship with the apartheid government. The authorities within the Bantustans would be paid and coerced by the National Party to maintain the status quo, acting as the long arm of the apartheid regime. President Sebe insisted that "all citizens of the Ciskei ... 'swear their oaths and allegiance to the nation before this National Shrine'" (Chidester et al. 2003:307). Mama refers to the poem by S.E.K. Mqhayi which is said to have influenced the location of the monument. According (Chidester 1999:140), "the monument ... can mark the intersection of personal and national identity"; if this is the case then what does Ntuba KaNdoda say about Mama and the intersection of his "personal and national identity"? "Mama looks at the relationship between the monument and the ground on which it is placed" (Leibbrandt 2015:1).

In Mama's video one can see how the monument has been abandoned and destroyed by the residents living there. Playing in the background of the film are the Nkosi-Sikelela stanzas from the South African National Anthem, originally a Methodist hymn and then converted into a 'struggle' anthem before being used as part of the South African National Anthem. The anthem is central to the work.

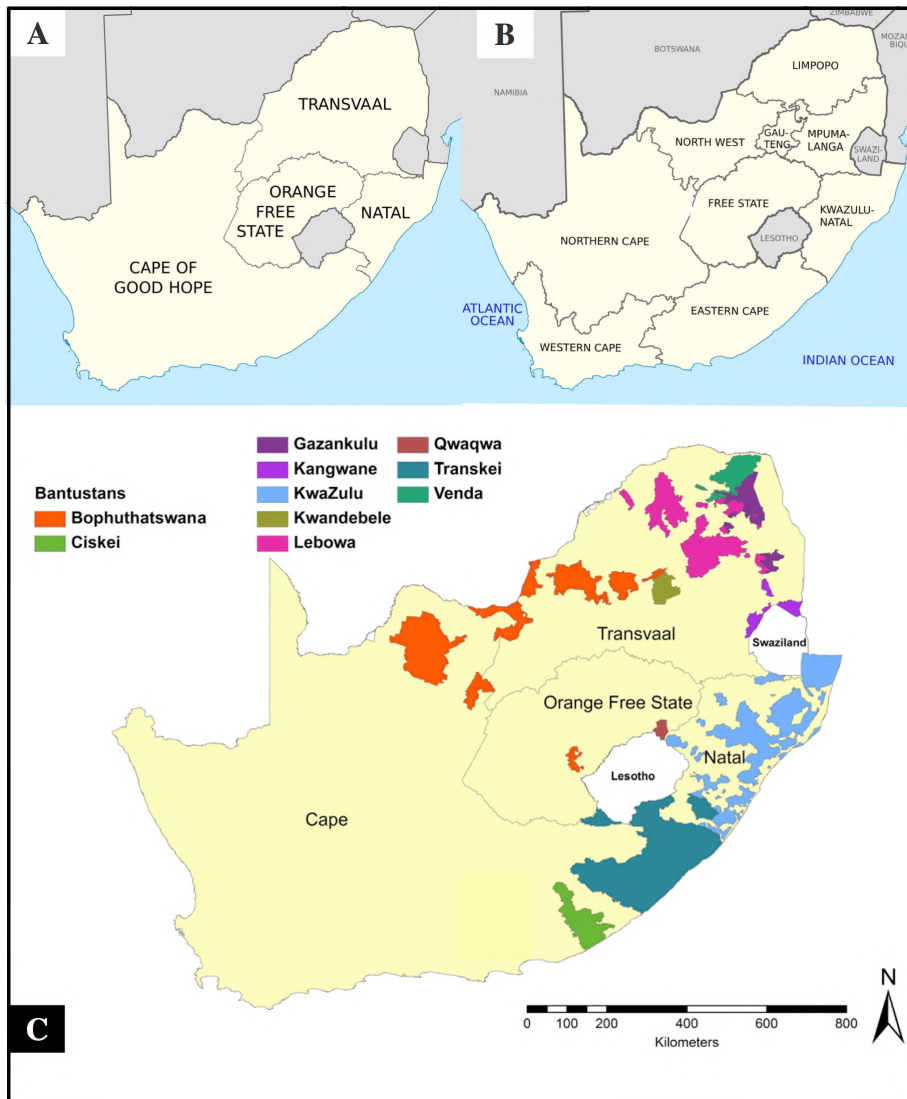


Figure 3.26: Composite image of three maps. Map A illustrates the provinces of South Africa in effect from 1910 (when the ‘Union of South Africa’ was declared) through to 1976. Map C illustrates the ten homelands/bantustans that were self-governing territories between 1977 and 1991. The four ‘independent’ territories were Transkei, Bophuthatswana, Venda, and Ciskei (which were collectively referred to as the ‘TBVC states’, indicating the order in which the homelands gained independence). Map B illustrates the post-apartheid provinces in South Africa (showing the reincorporation of the previous homelands, including the TBVC states, into the Republic of South Africa) (Clifford-Holmes 2015: Figure C.2).

Most South Africans, especially white South Africans, do not understand all the verses of the National Anthem. As the colonisers, white South Africans were never expected to learn the languages spoken by the people they colonised, yet the people who were colonised were expected to speak the language of the coloniser fluently. As children in schools across the country we were taught to memorise the words to our national anthem, but we were not taught what these words mean or where they come from⁵². The national anthem is supposed to symbolise a bringing together of different cultural and linguistic groups into one diverse,

⁵² Born in 1987, I was in primary school in 1994 when the transformation to a post-apartheid South African nation was fully underway.

multi-cultural South African nation. But instead, one can argue that the anthem serves as a site for separate togetherness. One can have South Africans of all linguistic, cultural or ethnic groups in the same space singing the national anthem ‘together’ while the actual translation and meaning of the anthem itself is lost at least partially to almost everyone in the room. There are very few people in South Africa who are fluent in each of the five languages that have been thrown together to make the National Anthem⁵³. Thus a situation in which a diverse group of South Africans are required to sing it means that at each stanza in the anthem, a certain amount of meaning is lost. The result is that those verses that are well known to the individual are sung out clearly and confidently while the unknown verses are mumbled apologetically in the hopes that one’s inability to pronounce certain words and phrases will not be detected by others. The emphasis placed on learning the anthem in schools has never placed any focus on the actual history of the anthem itself. This adds an additional layer of obfuscation to the song. Even if one is able to sing all the verses and understand their translation, the chances of knowing where the anthem actually came from and its history are generally lost.

Thando Mama has chosen to address the construction and history of this “mash-up of deferred reconciliation” within his recent exhibition *Of Nationhood/Desolation*, 2015 (Leibbrandt 2015). In the exhibition the artist addresses issues of “monuments, memorialization and national identity in contemporary South Africa” (Leibbrandt 2015). He juxtaposes three elements essential to the nation: “the body, memory and the monument” (Baasch & Mama 2015). The formation of a pseudo-Ciskein nationality during the apartheid era speaks to some of the narratives underpinning contemporary national dissolution in South Africa. In an interview with Miriam Daep (Daep & Mama 2015:1) from the Goethe-Institut in South Africa, Mama refers to the responsibility of artists and cultural practitioners to bring debates around issues of “national and international importance to a broader community”. He explains his motivations for wanting to ignite a national conversation about the national anthem in the current political climate. According to Mama (Daep & Mama 2015:1):

There is a lot of art that is political, and a lot that is not; some art is directed at individuals or individual critics, some at a political system, but we have not really addressed anything to ourselves as a community or society. The issue of the national anthem is our issue, yet we have not engaged with it. Period. Some people

⁵³ The first two lines of the first stanza of the National Anthem are in Xhosa, the second two lines are in Zulu. The second stanza is sung in Sesotho, the third stanza is in Afrikaans and the final stanza is in English. The Anthem was officially adopted in 1997 and includes five of the most widely spoken of the eleven official languages of the country.

wont even sing certain parts, others do. But beyond that we have left it to the more extreme ideological groups in our society to define this debate. I think as cultural practitioners or artists we need to come out and raise these issues. We are quiet when it comes to the issues of land, access to housing, access to gated communities. We let things be.



Figure 3.27: Photographic documentation of Ntaba KaNdoda showing the plinth where a bust of the Ciskein President Lennox Leslie Wongamu Sebe previously stood but has been removed. Photograph by William Martinson, 2014 (www.artefacts.co.za 2014)



Figure 3.28: Thando Mama. 2015. *Of Nationhood*. Film still.

In Figure 3.29 Mama stands in the place where President Lennox Sebe's sculpted bust previously stood before it was destroyed. If the monument is a representation of the individual as a member of the nation state then what does this monument say about South Africa today? If the monument itself is not even on the South African post-apartheid map, what does this structure articulate about the erasure of history that took place during and post the apartheid period? According to Leibbrandt (2015:1), *Of Nationhood* looks at "whether structures intended to preserve the memory of the past (Xhosa chiefs and Methodist hymns-cum-struggle anthems) can serve any meaningful memorialising purpose and whether they are impervious to the erosion of amnesia and shaping of selective histories".

If architecture is a mirror of the human body, of the differentiation between an inside and outside, then how does one read the Ntaba KaNdoda monument in relation to the artist's body in *Of Nationhood*? In the video, Mama is literally positioned on the outside of the monument. If the idea of nationality and belonging are 'housed' in structures like this one, then Mama's work suggests that he as the individual cannot access the 'inside', the group that is supposedly represented by the national monument. Larissa Sansour presents an inverse of this inside/outside dialectic. The Palestinian nation state that is longed for and dreamed of is the unreality she finds herself trapped within. The 'real' Palestine is depicted on the outside of the building, beyond its sanitary walls. Like Mama, Sansour interrogates the relationship between stories, structures and the human body.



Figure 3.29: Thando Mama. 2015. *Of Nationhood*. Film still.

3.5 Larissa Sansour and the Nation Estate

Sansour addresses this relationship between the built form, the self and the nation. Sansour contrasts her body against the cold sanitised projection of a future Palestinian nation state in a similar respect to Mama's *Of Nationhood*. *Nation Estate* references the high-rise, upward-oriented architecture that is presently developing at a rapid rate in the West Bank, East Jerusalem and Gaza Strip territories. The actual areas demarcated as Area A – Palestinian civilian territory – are shrinking as a result of illegal Israeli settlement expansion and violent settler groups who drive Palestinians out of their homes and take up occupation in abandoned towns and villages, thereby expanding Jewish territorial control. Internally displaced persons are forced to reside in cramped refugee camps that can only expand upwards. The ongoing forced removals and demolition of Palestinian homes and villages adds to the numbers seeking refuge and a future in the OPTs, especially the West Bank. This is further aided by the assisted Jewish immigration (Aliyah⁵⁴) and settlement policies financed by Israel in the attempt to stabilise a Jewish demographic majority in Israel.

Due to the increasingly shrinking nature of the territories allocated to Palestinians, more and more people are forced to re-settle outside of the country's borders, while others remain as internally displaced persons within the OPTs. This has resulted in a Palestinian population that exists in a condition of perpetual homelessness. Within the West Bank itself, particularly in cities like Ramallah, the older architectural style of buildings that spread horizontally across the landscape have been edited and replaced by a newer 'international' style of vertically-designed buildings. According to Tina Sherwell (2013:229), *Nation Estate* "comments on the continually shrinking space that Palestinians under Palestinian Authority and occupation are permitted to live, work and build upon as the artist presents us with an ironic new vision of the dreamed of homecoming".

On one of my journeys with Dr Anis Daraghma, he pointed out the difference between the older, sturdier stone architecture of the West Bank prior to the influence of colonial capitalist

⁵⁴ Aliyah is a reference to the immigration of people of different nationalities who happen to be of the Jewish faith and are automatically awarded Israeli citizenship as a result. In their efforts to maintain demographic majority in Israel and the OPTs, the state of Israel offer (preferably young) Jews the chance to visit Israel on an all expenses paid holiday where he or she is taken on tours of the country's exciting and significant sights, fed, put up in hotels and invited to test out a life in Israel. There are numerous government programmes designed to assist this Aliyah process, including the opportunity to live a city like Tel Aviv or a kibbutz in the settlement as well as providing a monthly stipend that is enough to cover food and accommodation and overall living expenses while the person settles into their new life. Individuals are expected to attend the free Hebrew lessons offered to them and integrate fully into Israeli society. There is preference given to European and American Jews while the state still tends to discriminate against Arab and African Jews.

aesthetics, as it contrasted with the weaker, newer buildings. He explained how fragile the architecture of the buildings is and describes them in terms of a “colonial aesthetic” (Baasch & Daraghma 2013b). The rapidly shifting features of the Palestinian built environment has also prompted certain individuals, like Daraghma, to try and preserve aspects of Palestinian life that are disappearing as a result of Israeli expansion and their control over the Palestinian economy. The Dar Zahran building is an example from Ramallah, where a Christian Palestinian family resided for centuries; one of the remaining family members has preserved the contents of the house, the original architecture and photographs taken during the Ottoman period and the British mandate. Many people are not aware that, until quite recently, Ramallah was a Christian Palestinian town. One of the tragedies of the Israeli colonisation of Palestine is the way in which it has generated racism and discrimination between Palestinians who previously lived with one another. The animosity between Jewish, Christian and Muslim Palestinians is the result of the Israeli apartheid logic of separation that has filtered down into every aspect of Palestinian social life. In South Africa, the apartheid government actually encouraged the development of tribalism in the Bantustans where they placed the forcibly-removed black South Africans of the country. In the Palestinian territories, a similar form of tribalism has taken shape; the socio-political circumstances in which Palestinians in the territories operate promotes closure, division and conservatism.

In *Nation Estate*, Sansour presents the viewer with something that might seem like an ideal utopian version of a future Palestinian State in the form of a “high-rise skyscraper” (Sherwell 2013:229). The aesthetic is clean and sanitary, yet there is something sinister about this clinically contained and compartmentalised simulacrum of a place. The sanitised version of a seemingly desirable Palestine does not have the ‘feeling’ of Palestine. Situated in the desert, Palestine is a relatively dusty place. The different floors, each of which is a city including Nablus, Jerusalem, Ramallah and Bethlehem, seem like places one may want to visit briefly as if they existed in a museum, but do not appear to be used, inhabited or lived in. Each floor is furnished with the “iconic landmark of each city” (Sherwell 2013:229). In Jerusalem one finds a replica of the Dome of the Rock – the actual building is on the outside of the nation estate and can be seen through the glass in Figure 3.41. Sherwell (2013:229) describes the work as a “vertical glass housed theme park”. This contained, summarised version of Palestine is supposed to be the “high-life” advertised in the poster seen in Figure 3.30. Sansour’s poster is based on the iconic tourism advert depicted in Figure 3.31. The poster

titled “Visit Palestine” was designed by an Austrian Zionist named Franz Krausz. Sansour has quoted this particular iconic poster that formed part of the Zionist propaganda of the 1920s and 1930s; this is the same kind of propaganda quoted by Bartana in *And Europe will be Stunned....* Sherwell suggests that *Nation Estate* alludes to the new gated community of Rawabi under construction in Palestine as well as the illegal Israeli settlements positioned in the West Bank.

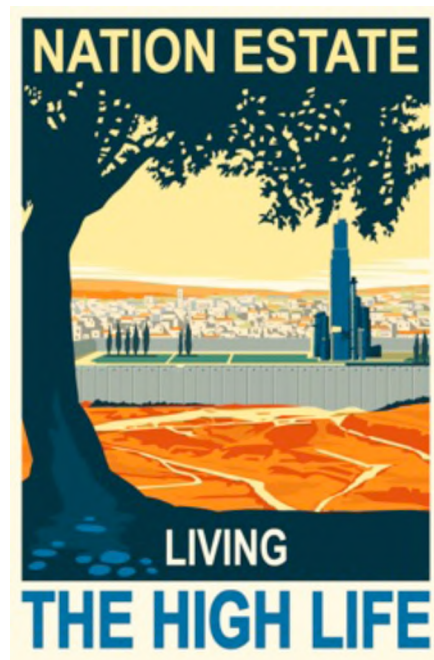


Figure 3.30: Larissa Sansour, *Nation Estate*, 2012. Advertisement for “the high life”. Photo and film.



Figure 3.31: Reproduction of the original poster by Franz Krausz from 1936, promoting tourism and Zionist immigration to Palestine.

Like *Nation Estate*, Rawabi “is also under continual surveillance so you can watch the building of the dream estate continuously live on-line” (Sherwell 2013:230). There is a frightening similarity between the Israeli settlements in the West Bank and East Jerusalem Territories and the Rawabi city construction. If one looks at Figures 3.33 and 3.34, the similarity is striking. Rawabi (Figure 3.33) looks as if it has been modelled on the ‘utopian’ ideal of the illegal settlements, raised above the poorer villages and towns. Sansour’s work speaks to this trend in urban planning and notion of privatising paradise included in the JRMiP manifesto. The phenomenon of gated communities and spatial closure is a global phenomenon, especially in countries where there are stark divisions between wealth and poverty. Sansour’s nation estate is exclusive and exclusionary; only a select elite will have the opportunity to enjoy the high-rise, safe and sanitary Palestine enclosed by glass. Those who are privileged enough to access the Palestinian Nation Estate are also able to observe those suffering around them, excluded from entry.

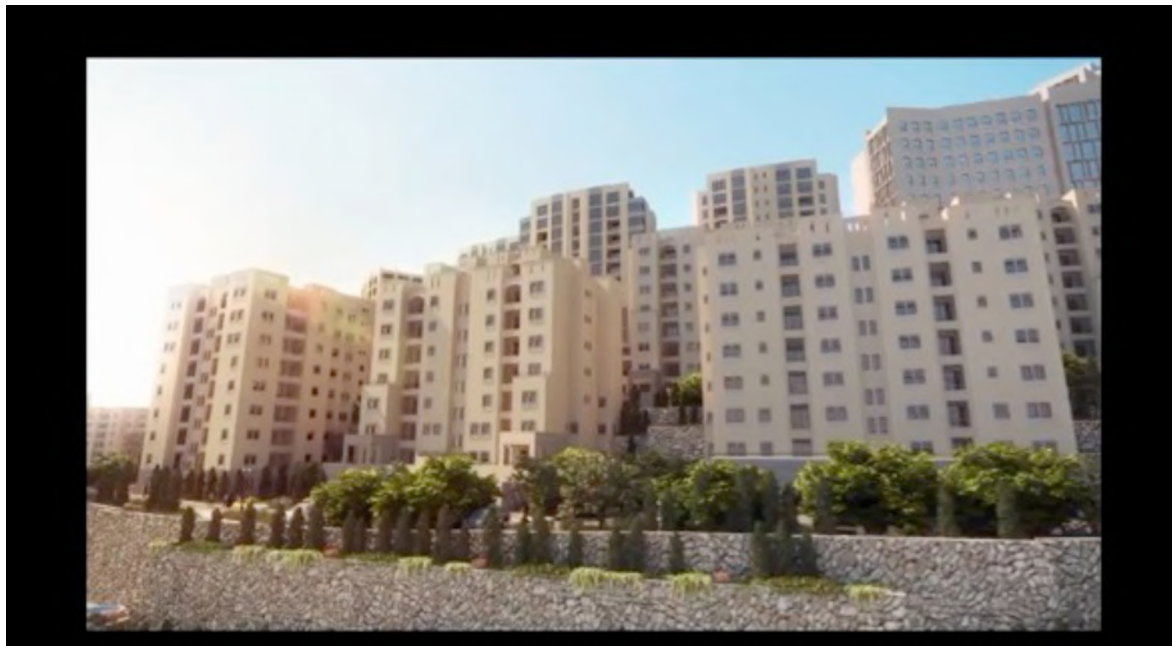


Figure 3.32: Photographic documentation of the Rawabi settlement currently under construction, March 2016



Figure 3.33: Photographic documentation of an illegal settlement positioned in the West Bank.

The advertisement for Rawabi (Figure 3.33) depicts a new city that bears a very strong resemblance to the settlements mushrooming throughout the West Bank Territory. Like the illegal settlements, Rawabi is positioned on a hilltop above the surrounding Palestinian landscape. Like the housing blocks of the settlements, the buildings in Rawabi do not have any water tanks on their rooftops; this is because the Rawabi municipality ensures that, like the Israeli settlers next door, members of the Rawabi community will have proper running water all the time and will not need to store their water in water tanks above their houses. The city streets and social spaces depicted in the advert for Rawabi resemble the streets and social spaces of West Jerusalem and Tel Aviv or the interior of the settlements. They do not bear much resemblance to Palestinian cities like Ramallah and Bethlehem, for example.



Figure 3.34: Photographic documentation of the Rawabi settlement currently under construction, 2016 (www.rawabi.ps 2016).



Figure 3.35Larissa Sansour, *Nation Estate*, (Jerusalem). Photo and film 2012.

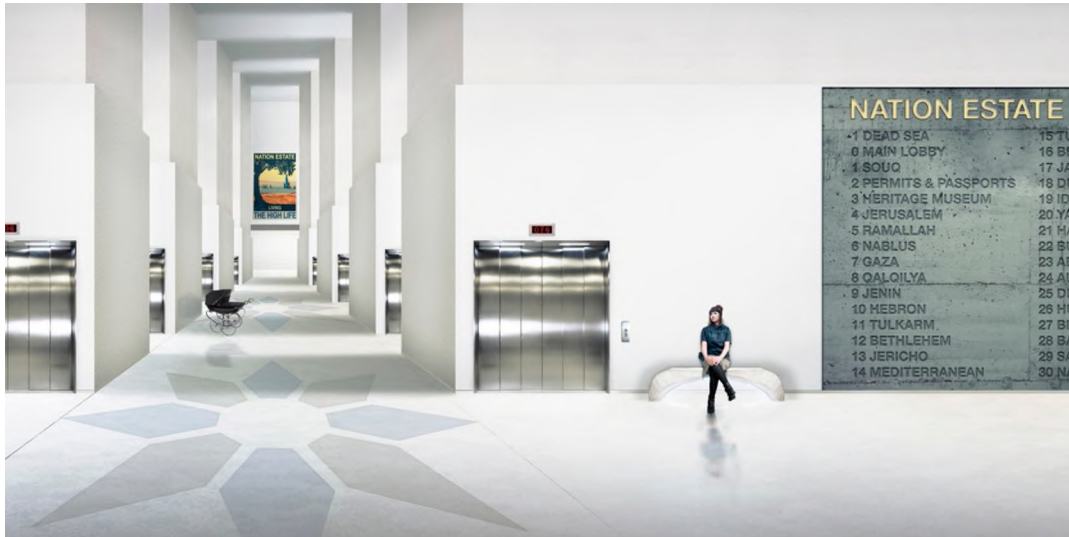


Figure 3.36: Larissa Sansour. 2012. *Nation Estate* (main lobby). Photo and film.



Figure 3.37: Larissa Sansour, *Nation Estate*, 2012. Photo and film

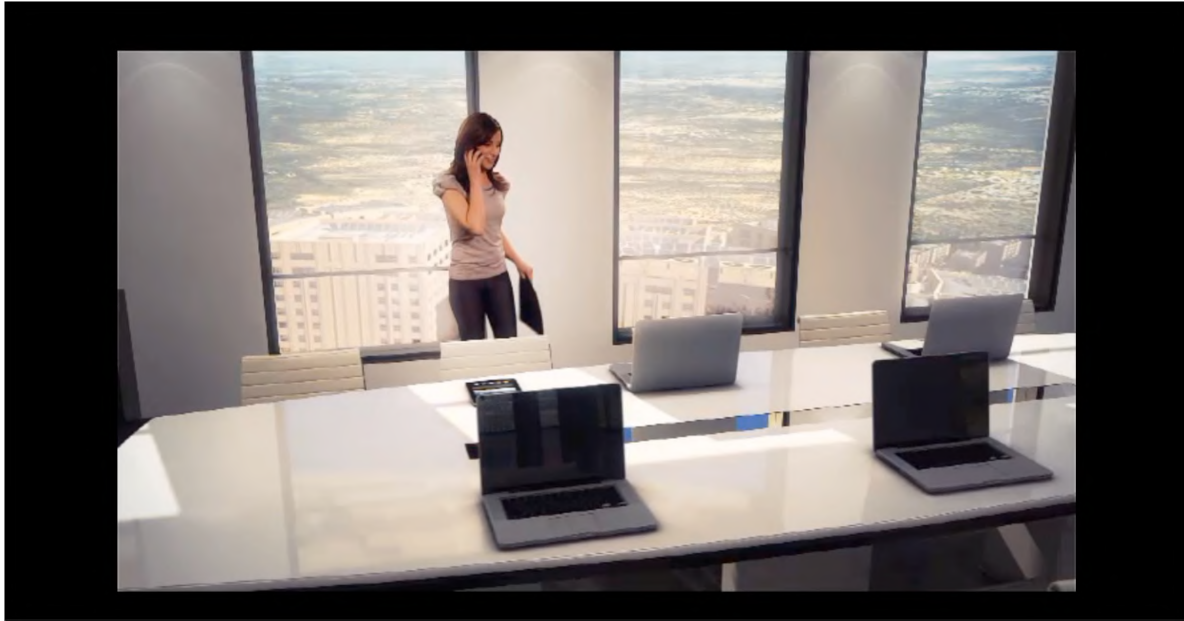


Figure 3.38 Advertisement for the new Palestinian city of Rawabi under construction in the West Bank (www.rawabi.ps 2016).



Figure 3.39: Photographic documentation of illegal settlement construction in the West Bank (www.rawabi.ps 2016).



Figure 3.40: Photographic documentation of illegal settlement construction in the West Bank.



Figure 3.41: Photographic documentation of the Rawabi settlement currently under construction. (www.rawabi.ps 2016).

In a South African context, the political rhetoric of equality, opportunity and openness is in contrast with the built form and the social behaviour that accompanies that built form. In the post-apartheid period, the private security industry has exploded and the number of closed and gated communities and estates has dramatically increased. A number of individuals have privately taken direction from the deeply ingrained apartheid logic of division, separation and

hierarchy and implemented it in their personal environment. The political borders that marked the boundaries of the excluded Bantustan homelands have not shifted in any notable respect; they have merely been replaced by economic borders that run along the same racially-divided contours. From this perspective, the ideal utopia of the promised rainbow nation has also been “privatised”, as Yael Bartana argues. Only a small portion of middle-class and upper-class South Africans are able to enjoy the benefits of a democratic, multi-racial society; for the rest of the population, the oppressive weight of separate development continues to grow deeper and wider along socio-economic boundaries. In my discussions with the South African artist Thando Mama, he described the way in which the site of his recent project *Of Nationhood*, namely the Ntaba KaNdoda monument, has been left abandoned and desolate, forgotten by the new national trajectory of Nation building. In the post-apartheid period, the specificity of the history of different cultural and linguistic groups has been abandoned or discarded in order to consolidate the transformation process. In Figure 3.30, Mama is positioned on the outside of the monument. If this structure marks the “intersection of the personal and the national” as then, perhaps the artist is alluding to his inability to access the ‘national identity’ that is supposed to represent him (James 2012:23).

3.6 Chapter Exit Point

Theorists like Edward Said (2000a) and Benedict Anderson (1983) have rejected notions of belonging in relation to place as a form of innate truth, stressing the role of invention and imagination that is present in the construction and recollection of community and identity. In *Invention, Memory and Place*, Said (2000a:182) speaks of the “unending struggle over territory, which necessarily involves overlapping memories, narratives and physical structures” present in Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories. He states that:

The interplay between geography, memory, and invention, in the sense that invention must occur if there is recollection—is particularly relevant to a twenty-first century example, that of Palestine, which instances an extra-ordinarily rich and intense conflict of at least two memories, two sorts of historical intervention, two sorts of geographical imagination (Said 2000a:182).

The nation is made up of stories; these stories are constructed out of myths and narratives that are edited to suit a national agenda. In this editing process, history is lost, erased or blanketed over in pursuit of the national image. If historical evidence or experience contradicts the

national image constructed by the state then it will be rejected. While the invention of the Jewish people and the Land of Eretz Israel is a particularly stark example of this practice, it is certainly not the only national movement to edit history in this way. The South African post-apartheid agenda has not succeeded when it comes to the acknowledgement of the crimes of apartheid and the structural measures needed to initiate a genuine process of reconciliation and compensation. Rather than address the history of the individual Bantustans themselves, including the failure of nationalism within them and the structures built to represent this nation, state authorities have simply ignored or abandoned these leftovers of colonialism and apartheid. Each of the artists discussed in this chapter tackles aspects of the relationship between stories and structures when it comes to the creation of the nation. Yael Bartana depicts the fundamental contradictions that exist between the projection and imagining of ideal political ideologies and the reality of how easily these systems warp and distort despite the best of intentions. Jarrar invents his own inclusive Palestinian nation state through the creation of stamps and visas, inviting outsiders to participate in the legitimization of a “stateless nation” (Yiftachel 2002:223). In this way he subverts existing narratives of division and the physical structures that represent them. The structures within both Mama’s work and that of Sansour are cold and unliveable. The monument in Mama’s work is a remnant of a failed pseudo-nationalism that is yet to be consolidated by the post-apartheid nation. The structure included in Sansour’s work is a projection of future desires.

The geo-political frameworks that presently define identity and inform one’s perspective of the self as bound to notions of geographical belonging and origination are constantly shifting. Despite the increasing need to open boundaries to people crossing borders, the boundaries of modern nation states and the ideologies supporting political projects of nation building do not accommodate the contingent reality of people moving and inhabiting real places. Narrow and limited “visualisations” of who can or cannot be accommodated, protected or celebrated within the parameters of the nation directly affect the way in which individuals perceive themselves and others living and moving between and within these constructed borders (Mirzoeff 2011:3). Each of the individual artists analysed in this chapter tackles the need for more fluid, creative formulations of the relationship between the individual and the nation. The Israeli apartheid barrier wall has become Israel’s national monument. It is their largest, grandest architectural feat and it is certainly monumental in scale and symbolism. The artists

I address in the following chapter respond to this monumental marker of division in a Palestinian context.

Chapter 4 Walls, Blocks and Barriers in Contemporary Palestinian Art

4.1 Chapter Entry Point

The Israeli apartheid barrier wall is not only a public monument to the barbaric, inhumane actions of the Israeli state on a macro scale: it is also symbolic of the micro narratives of division that have permeated the most intimate folds and crevices of individual Palestinian lives. Very few things are considered stable or predictable within the West Bank Occupied Palestinian Territory where I lived during the course of my fieldwork. Infrastructures and institutions can be destroyed by the Israeli state or the Palestinian Authority without explanation or notice. The military checkpoint and apartheid wall system has usurped the most valuable of human resources from Palestinians – space and time, chipping away at the psychological wellbeing of individual Palestinians with every permit request or body search. Taken out of context, the act of forcing people to wait in queues does not necessarily appear particularly violent. Requesting passports and visa permits from people as they enter the borders of a country is also not considered an act of violence, yet in the context of the Occupied Palestinian Territories these actions must be understood as criminal. These are crimes committed against a whole nation who have been turned into refugees, second-class citizens, temporary residents or non-citizens by the Israeli state. This reality has undoubtedly influenced the subject matter of individual contemporary artists' work as well as the circumstances they are forced to negotiate in order to make that work in the first place.

The first visual narrative of division I critique in this chapter is the Qalandiya checkpoint where Palestinians are routinely denied entry, interrogated, and subjected to body searches, lengthy delays, and questioning from IDF soldiers. I describe my personal observations at the Qalandiya checkpoint, documented using my smart phone and in the form of written photographs. I look at the way in which Khaled Jarrar responds to visual narratives of division by chipping concrete off the Israeli apartheid barrier wall before sending it to London or Helsinki where he up-cycles it into new objects in works such as *Football*, 2012 and *Whole in the Wall*, 2013. I position the South African based artist Serge Alain Nitegeka as a guide in the chapter, as a creative way to think through Jarrar's practice. After describing the practical circumstances in which Palestinian artists are working I examine the transactional artwork of Fareh Saleh and Emily Jacir, who respond with innovative projects that centre on personal interactions. Artworks like Saleh's *Free Advice*, 2016 or Jacir's

Where We Come From, 2001–2003 focus on the significant value of time and the freedom to move in space by offering up their own time and freedom of movement to others. As I navigate the contours of the contemporary Palestinian art landscape, I describe my interactions and observations of the way in which Palestinian artists are dealing with the pertinent issue of walls, barriers and borders in their practice.

4.2 Qalandiya Checkpoint⁵⁵

The Israeli apartheid barrier wall and intricate military checkpoint system (Figures 4.1–4.7) is a monstrous demonstration of Israel’s attitude to basic Palestinian human rights. There is nothing beautiful or attractive about the Qalandiya checkpoint (or any of the others for that matter). It resembles a perverted form of human cattle ranch in a recently bulldozed, inhospitable dust bowl. It looks as if someone has taken a map of the area and drawn a circle with a pen and then literally cut around the edges and lifted the life that existed there previously with an enormous forklift, leaving behind the rubble of destroyed homes, parks, roads and schools. This is the first place I describe in this chapter, this is the Qalandiya checkpoint, a non-human place. A place that is marked clearly and deeply by Israeli narratives of destruction and domination, and the erection of vertical mass-produced displays of military power and control.

Khaled Jarrar describes the Israeli apartheid barrier wall as an “icon of oppression” and talks about the way in which it actively divides Palestinian lives and homes (Ayyam Gallery 2013: n.p). According to Atallah (2012:4), “Jarrar rejects Israel’s justification of the barrier on security grounds” and argues that the wall was not “built for security but for racist separation”. Jarrar makes the following observation regarding the impact of this divisive object in Palestinian social space:

The apartheid wall, built in violation of international law, cuts across our land and our water. It divides farmers from their trees and crops, villages from cities, the faithful from their places of worship, parents from their children, children from their schools, and partners from one another. It stops people from getting married and living together and it destroys the possibility of living peacefully in an undivided country (Ayyam Gallery 2013: n.p).

⁵⁵ The town of Qalandiya and the Qalandiya checkpoint have been the site of different artistic interventions such as the Qalandiya Bienale. The first Qalandiya Bienale took place in 2012 and was titled “Art in Life in Palestine”. According to Nicola Gray (2015: 166) the Qalandiya Bienale can be viewed as an act of “defiant cultural resistance...an attempt at inclusive and positive action to overcome fragmentation and create new opportunities for cultural practitioners and audiences alike”.

Virginia Tilley (2012:149) confirms Jarrar's assertions that the wall is illegal under international law and "constitutes the most significant barrier to Palestinian movement, aside from its de-facto impact on negotiations towards future borders". She notes further that the checkpoints supporting the apartheid wall system not only deny the movement of Palestinians practically, they also "constitute a psychological barrier to movement by imposing humiliating and dehumanising processes⁵⁶" on civilians (Tilley 2012:149). According to the innovative cell-phone application Azmeh⁵⁷ there are exactly fifty active Israeli checkpoints in the Palestinian West Bank Territories. B'tselem human rights organisation cites the existence of a total of 96 "fixed checkpoints" in April of 2015⁵⁸. In addition to the large number of fixed checkpoints, B'Tselem confirms that there were also "361 flying checkpoints" identified in 2015.

In the Palestinian context walls, barriers and fences are used to articulate a particular kind of language, one which is grounded in and sustained by fear, aggression and insecurity. Artists respond to this visual declaration of closure and segregation in the language of sculpture, installation, performance and video that seek openings and cracks in seemingly impermeable walls and boundaries.

⁵⁶ Eyal Weizman points out in the documentary *Rebel Architecture: the Architecture of Violence* by Ana de Sousa that the checkpoints have been designed to humiliate and slow people down. For example, the arm of the checkpoint turnstile is shorter than it typically would be in a normal turnstile, so that when the Palestinian body moves through, the arm pushes up against you to prevent people from carrying any weapons or baggage.

⁵⁷ Azmeh is a cellphone application designed by a Palestinian resident of the West Bank Territory. The application runs from a 2G connection because Palestinians are unable to access 3G or 4G in the OPTs as a result of Israeli monopolisation and domination. The application cannot be accessed by the IDF because of its particular user profile settings. Thus the application also includes details about relevant activity related to the tunnels that run beneath Israeli borders and checkpoints.

⁵⁸ According to B'Tselem (2015) 57 of these are "internal checkpoints" situated within the Palestinian West Bank Territory; the other 39 of the fixed checkpoints are the final "inspection points before entering Israel". In Appendix A, Table 2 on page 226 I have reproduced the table provided by B'Tselem detailing the precise location of the checkpoints and summaries of who is or is not permitted to move through them.



Figure 4.1: Photographic documentation of the Qalandiya checkpoint between Ramallah and the rest of the Palestinian West Bank Territories classified as Area A under the Oslo accords. Stretching diagonally across the image is a faint reflection of the sign caught in the window of the No 81 bus. The sign is written in Hebrew, Arabic and English. In English it reads “This Road leads to Area ‘A’ Under the Palestinian Authority The Entrance for Israeli Citizens is Forbidden, Dangerous to Your Lives And Is Against the Israeli Law”. iPhone, August 2013. Photograph by Rachel Baasch (2013c)



Figure 4.2: Photographic documentation of the Qalandiya checkpoint between Ramallah and the rest of the Palestinian West Bank Territories classified as Area A under the Oslo accords. In this image the

reflection of the bus window can be seen in the top half of the image and a smudge is visible in the bottom left hand corner. iPhone. Photograph by Rachel Baasch (2013c)

Qalandiya checkpoint is the main checkpoint separating the Palestinian West Bank from the East Jerusalem OPT and greater Israel. Most of the people who use this checkpoint live in East Jerusalem and travel to Ramallah and other West Bank cities for work, school or medical treatment. Figure 4.1 is a photograph of one of the red and white signs positioned at the entrance to the city of Ramallah at the Qalandiya checkpoint⁵⁹. In Figure 4.3, one can see the town of Qalandiya⁶⁰, including the Qalandiya refugee camp and the city of Ramallah behind it.

Arum Aruri's (2014: 1) photographic report for the B'Tselem Human Rights⁶¹ organisation points to the subtle, insidious violations of Palestinian human rights that take place at checkpoints like Qalandiya on a daily basis. The violations of human rights that occur under Israeli Occupation are not limited to tragic events and newsworthy cases of violence, death and destruction. Israeli authorities shape the everyday "routine life" of Palestinians through their ongoing denial of the basic right to freedom of movement and security (Aruri 2014:1).

There are hardly ever any Israeli citizens who pass through the Qalandiya checkpoint. Illegal Jewish settlements positioned on hilltops, claimed through violent colonisation by militant settlers (who are both directly and indirectly supported by the Israeli apartheid state) are connected to greater Israel through the sophisticated Israeli road network designed to provide speedy safe passage for Jewish Israeli citizens and all visitors to Israel and the illegal settlements within the West Bank. These road networks, like the "whites-only" roads of

⁵⁹ The sign is written in Hebrew, Arabic and English. In English it reads "This Road leads to Area 'A' Under the Palestinian Authority The Entrance for Israeli Citizens is Forbidden, Dangerous to Your Lives And Is Against the Israeli Law"

⁶⁰ One of the first things I learnt about the Qalandiya refugee camp was related to the mining of the Jerusalem stone (a pale limestone). Anis Daragme told me that the mining of the stone in a nearby quarry creates a fine layer of white dust that settles on everything in the camp. He says that it is deceptively beautiful. The same dust that covers cars and houses, streets and trees in a fine white blanket is also the cause of respiratory infections and other related illnesses that develop from sustained exposure to the dust of the stone. The Jerusalem stone is also controversial in other respects because of how Israel have politicised the material by insisting that all new Israeli buildings in the expanding Jerusalem settlements (illegally built on Palestinian territory) must be modelled on the architecture of the old city of Jerusalem. Thus the material is used to naturalise an essentially false narrative, in which Palestinians have never lived in historic Palestine, while the settlers who have only lived there for a relatively short period of time are framed as having been there since the time of the Israelite kingdoms of Judea and Samaria. Weizman explains this in the documentary *Rebel Architecture: The Architecture of Violence* by director Ana De Sousa (2014). I discuss this documentary in Chapter Five: "Guarded Visions: Walls, Watchtowers and Warped Perspectives" on page 174).

⁶¹ B'Tselem is an Israeli human rights organisation that was established in 1989 during the first Intifada by Israeli academics, journalists and political activists. The organisation publish reports covering the violation of Palestinian human rights through colonisation, occupation and apartheid in Israel and the OPTs. According to the website, their "reports have dealt, for example, with torture, fatal shootings by security forces, restriction on movement, expropriation of land and discrimination in planning and building in East Jerusalem, administrative detention, and settler violence" (B'Tselem n.d.).

South Africa⁶² during apartheid, are similarly out of bounds to Palestinians in general⁶³. It is against Israeli law for any Palestinian with a West Bank ID or number plate to use these roads despite the fact that they run through Palestinian territory, while checkpoints and other blockages inhibit the use of Palestinian road networks.

4.2.1 Observations and Reflections

The military geography of the West Bank, which cuts, snags and blocks the flow of people in place, is a forced and undesirable reality for almost all Palestinians⁶⁴, who have no choice but to observe the system enforced on them. The contemporary Palestinian identity is one that is marked in some way or another by forced immigration, displacement, dispossession, systematic oppression and denial of the right to freedom and security. These individual Palestinians, with lives and families, classes and jobs, illnesses, strengths and talents, are the unwilling participants within a system they have no choice but to observe.

Due to the heightened surveillance of the Israeli security checkpoints, it is not generally advisable to carry a large camera and take photographs visibly unless under special circumstances. In these spaces I found my camera cumbersome and awkward. It was evident that, within the checkpoint context, standing in queues with Palestinians waiting to move through turnstiles and body scanners was not the kind of environment in which people want to be recorded or documented. The area itself is unattractive, which makes it difficult to treat the scene as a tourist attraction, photography is an invasive medium and in this context it seemed dehumanising to document Palestinians in these undesired circumstances.

I responded to these circumstances by using the bus trips to observe the checkpoint architecture, using my smart phone to take photographs as discreetly as possible. I would hold my phone up as if I were trying to read something on the screen and then take the image as quickly as I could, hoping I was getting some of the visual information in the frame⁶⁵.

⁶² The Reservation of Separate Amenities Act of 1953 was a law passed by the apartheid government in South Africa that excluded people of other racial groups and prevented them from accessing basic public resources and moving within certain spaces such as beaches, sidewalks, roads, parks and park benches.

⁶³ According to Tilley (2012:149) "The ICJ [International Court of Justice] has already held that 'the construction of the wall and its associated regime impede the liberty of movement of the inhabitants of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, with the exception of Israeli citizens and those assimilated thereto'".

⁶⁴ As with apartheid in South Africa, the Israeli state empowers a small elite group of Palestinians tasked with maintaining the apartheid regime within the OPTs, hence the popular notion that the Palestinian Authority is largely made up of politicians who are employed as "security guards" or "babysitters" – Israel's long arm into the Palestinian Territories (Tilley 2012)

⁶⁵ I did this not so much out of fear of being caught by the Israeli Defense Force, who have become used to having their photographs taken by activists and journalists; rather I took photographs in this way out of respect for the Palestinian passengers on the bus or walking through the checkpoints.

These photographs contain my own reflection and the reflection of other passengers inside the bus captured in the glass. In Figure 4.3, for example, the photograph is distorted by a smudge on the left hand side of the image and includes the reflection of the inside of the bus in the glass through which one sees the checkpoint outside the bus. The image points to the layered or mediated way in which the process of observation, interpretation and representation takes place. The first layer to the image is that of my own basic framing, my personal way of “looking” at the world and selecting what objects to capture (Elkins 1996:41; 2000:ix). This is influenced by the circumstances of my viewing from inside a bus positioned in a particular part of the checkpoint waiting in traffic, or while the bus is slowly moving through. The second layer of mediation is that of the glass window of the bus through which the eye looks through the lens of the camera and then through the glass to the outside.

These first images (Figure 4.1 – Figure 4.7) contain information about the checkpoint context and thus the circumstances in which these scenes are captured. While actually taking the pictures, my attention was focused on the view of the Qalandiya checkpoint, and I only noticed the reflections in the glass windows of the bus captured in the images at a later point. These reflections and smudges draw attention to the context in which the scene has been observed and the image captured. They act as clues about the characteristics of the environment and the circumstances of the picture. The shadow of a person sitting inside the bus reinforces the other contextual clues of the image.



Figure 4.3: Photographic documentation of the Qalandiya checkpoint between Ramallah and the rest of the Palestinian West Bank Territories classified as Area A under the Oslo accords. In this image the reflection of the window stretches across the top half of the image at a diagonal. iPhone. Photograph by Rachel Baasch (2013c)



Figure 4.4: Photographic documentation of the Qalandiya checkpoint between Ramallah and the rest of the Palestinian West Bank Territories classified as Area A under the Oslo accords. In this image the reflection of the window and the shadow of a passenger can be seen in the top half of the image. iPhone. Photograph by Rachel Baasch (2013c)



Figure 4.5: Photographic documentation of the Qalandiya checkpoint between Ramallah and the rest of the Palestinian West Bank Territories classified as Area A under the Oslo accords. In this image the reflection of the window and the shadow of a passenger are centred and there is a smudge that can be seen in the bottom left hand corner. iPhone. Photograph by Rachel Baasch (2013c)

Initially I perceived the smudges and reflections as faults or errors in the pictures. Approached from another perspective, one that engages in a considered exercise of thinking and looking with the flexibility and porosity of the skin, these errors and distortions become important signifiers of additional layers of mediation. I imagine that at some point in the recent past someone, perhaps a child, like so many I had seen riding the No 81 bus on the way home from school in Jerusalem, had placed a greasy thumb here while looking out the window, waiting to pass through this inhumane site.

These indexes point to the fact that the checkpoint is not a rare and bizarre spectacle, it is a real lived everyday reality for Palestinians. For some individuals, children especially, this checkpoint routine is all they have ever known about the journey to school or home, or to visit family and friends. Children who are born after the wall was built will never know the place that existed before this divisionary object was installed. A wall can serve to divide one's line of sight. The same wall can also serve to frame a portion of space so that one perceives it in a particular way. Walls allow for intimacy and dreaming as they cordon off private spaces, yet they can also serve as the objects or tools of oppression and restriction. The same elements of design that provide a sight for growing, learning and prosperity are

also the same elements of design that symbolise the diminishing of individual autonomy, and aid in the stifling of the imagination.

At the Qalandiya checkpoint I searched for the slightest trace of shame in the faces of teenage soldiers barking orders from behind bulletproof glass. Did they know that the system they worked for, the Israeli apartheid system that they support, is destroying the hopes and dreams of millions of Palestinians on a routine basis? But instead I was met with self-righteous dismissal. Occasionally, my passport would be examined for a few seconds longer than usual and I would be asked the same standard question about my nationality: “*Where are you from? Where is this country, ZAR?*”. I always responded in exactly the same way: “*I am from South Africa*”, I would say in English⁶⁶.

On each occasion that I was dismissed and allowed entry with no need for special permits, I felt ashamed that my foreign passport⁶⁷ entitled me to special treatment in someone else’s home, as long as I behaved appropriately of course. If I were to visibly protest and challenge the Israeli apartheid system in these spaces, then I would also draw attention to myself and run the risk of being removed from Israel and the OPTs and being denied further entry for at least ten years or more. This is nothing of course in comparison to the way in which Palestinians are treated routinely, let alone if they transgress or challenge the authority of the Israeli gaze⁶⁸.

While waiting on the bus reflecting on these interactions and observations, I wrote the following passage:

Qalandiya Checkpoint 07 October 2014 10:30 am

Without the foil of a child’s face, I snap my smartphone at soccer balls trapped inside the Israeli-apartheid barrier-fence. Smash! go the candy crushers waiting

⁶⁶ On each of the few occasions that this interaction took place, I had wanted to answer the question in Arabic but faltered, answering in English, intimidated by the authority of the Israeli state and aware that speaking Arabic to an IDF officer was probably not a good idea. I was in the Occupied Palestinian Territories, a part of the world where the main spoken and written language is Arabic, and I liked to answer this question, partly because I was proud to be South African and partly because it was one of the few phrases in Arabic that I could say with ease (*Ana min Jenoub Afriqiya*) and enjoyed practising.

⁶⁷ I chose to maintain a low profile so that I could move without too much difficulty in and out of the territories gathering the data I needed for my visual diary and thus the narration of this journey.

⁶⁸ Thawra told me a story about the frustrating experience she had had working as a translator for a group of international volunteers facilitating a collaborative project with Palestinians from the West Bank in Israel. She explained how difficult it had been to secure the necessary permits for all the Palestinian West Bank Territory citizens in the group to get into Israel in the first place. Upon arriving at the checkpoint, one of the more aggressive activists in the group provoked an IDF soldier by spitting in his face. Infuriated by the incident, he ensured that the Palestinian West Bank ID holding members of the group did not cross the Qalandiya checkpoint and thus were unable to participate in the project. While a soldier will hesitate when assaulting a foreigner, Palestinian lives are treated like objects, obstacles that can be removed, broken, displaced and violated without legal or ethical consequence.

on the bus. The soldier at the checkpoint plays the same game. As he waits for a 'new set of lives' a new set of Palestinian bodies are crushed through to the other side. Kching! and we shift one vehicle forward. Snap goes the smartphone as I frame this foreign place. 1000 sighs later we heave a second space. Two seats to my side, a baby vomits and cries. Her mother catches my eye as she reassures the child, and tells me that a very important rabbi died in West Jerusalem today. The traffic has been redirected through East Jerusalem, clogging up the road arteries, which is why our bus at the checkpoint has barely moved for three hours. I don't like to stare, so I turn my head to the side and study the posture of an IDF soldier standing in front of the wall, hardened, as if she herself were a human extension of this wall. I dare not take a photograph of her. Instead I sit and look and try to imagine a time before the wall existed, a time before the soldier outside closed the doors to her eyes (Baasch 2014e).

When I wrote these words I was waiting in the 81 bus at the Qalandiya checkpoint in Palestine. I had a meeting with the Israeli academic Meir Wigoder, author of the photographic essay titled *The Blocked Gaze: A user's guide to Photographing the Israeli Separation Barrier-Wall* (Wigoder 2010). It was during trips like these that I documented the soccer balls (Figure 4.6) and other objects trapped in the razor wire crenulation of the separation barrier wall (Figure 4.7) and spent time thinking about the work of Khaled Jarrar (Figure 4.8) prior to my first meeting with the artist in Ramallah.



Figure 4.6: Personal Photographic documentation of soccer balls trapped in the razor wire and fencing lining the top of the Israeli apartheid barrier wall, iPhone. Photograph by Rachel Baasch (2013c)

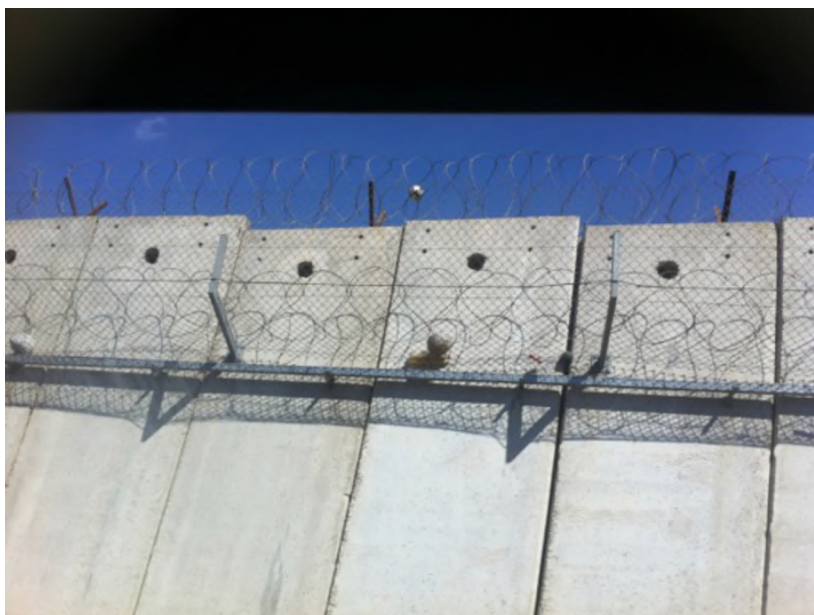


Figure 4.7: Personal Photographic documentation of soccer balls trapped in the razor wire and fencing lining the top of the Israeli apartheid barrier wall, iPhone. Photograph by Rachel Baasch (2013c).

In Figures 4.6 and 4.7 I have documented the soccer balls and other objects trapped in the Israeli apartheid barrier wall using my smart phone. The balls in these images appeared trapped in mid air – caught in the middle of a game. On my regular trips through this checkpoint, I spent a lot of time looking at the different objects trapped in the loops of razor wire – shoes, plastic bags and packets, and of course, the balls – many balls of different sizes, in different conditions – some had been ripped and deflated, while others remained plump and firm, neatly caught in flight.

Like the other photographs taken from within the bus while travelling through the checkpoint, this image also includes information about my position, as the photographer – a small piece of information in the top left hand corner, a piece of the window frame of the bus, points to the context in which I framed the scene. The photo is taken while trying to avoid attracting attention to myself from the inside of the bus whilst moving through the checkpoint⁶⁹. Figure 4.7, like Figures 4.1–4.6, is similarly distorted by the circumstances of my taking the photograph from within the bus at the moment that the bus leaves the checkpoint. The panels of concrete are almost curved by the angle of the image and the

⁶⁹ Sometimes the IDF soldiers get onto the bus to check passports and send those who need to walk through the checkpoint out. This is not a good time to try and take photographs. The most appropriate time is just before the bus reaches the front of the queue while waiting in traffic or just after one has been allowed through the checkpoint and climbed back onto the No 81 bus to get from the checkpoint to the bus stop near the Old City of Jerusalem. By this time the soldiers have shifted their attention from you and your group of travellers to the next group on their way across.

mediation of the glass of the bus window. Like Figure 4.5, one can see the black of the window framing the picture from inside the bus looking out. It was on these occasions that I started to think about the work of the contemporary Palestinian artist Khaled Jarrar, an artist I had previously given little thought.

The sculpture depicted in Figure 4.8 is made out of concrete that Khaled Jarrar has chipped from the apartheid barrier wall and “up-cycled” into artworks that he sells primarily to an international market (Jarrar in Baasch 2013). Beginning with the soccer ball works that stem from a story about a “football pitch for Palestinian children destroyed by the erection of the Separation Wall”, Jarrar has extended this theme to include sculptures of other pieces of sporting equipment, such as a basketball, volleyball and table tennis rackets (Ayyam Gallery 2013: n.p). Jarrar responds to this divisive structure with another alternative: why not take concrete from the Israeli apartheid barrier wall and “re-employ this divisionary object in an integrative manner?”(Ayyam Gallery 2013).



Figure 4.8: Khaled Jarrar, Football, 2012. Reconstituted Concrete from the Apartheid Wall, 22 cm diameter (edition of 7) (Ayyam Gallery 2013).

In his interview with Diana Atallah, Khaled Jarrar suggests that “a source of separation” such as the Israeli Apartheid Barrier Wall “can become a source of unity” (Jarrar cited in Atallah 2013:3). The soccer ball as an object refers immediately to the notion of a game, of play. The game has rules of engagement that centre on the possession and control of the ball. These rules are based on internationally agreed upon standards that people across large distances put

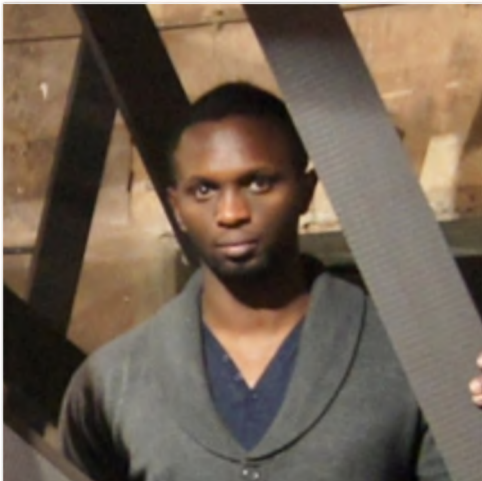
into practice when playing the game, despite what else they may disagree on. In this sense the soccer ball becomes a site of connection. Despite the primary purpose of the Israeli apartheid wall as a device of segregation, one can argue that it has also become a site of conceptual connection for different artists working in Palestine or in the diaspora.

Jarrar is taking a risk in removing the concrete from the wall. He must work “quickly” and “cautiously” at a section of the wall “that does not have high security towers or cameras” (Atallah 2012: 1).⁷⁰ The concrete belongs to Israel, it is their apartheid project, their material, it is their creation and essentially it is illegal for him to remove it. Yet, at the same time, one can argue that the wall itself is actually illegally built on Palestinian Territories in the first place and thus Jarrar is justified in up-cycling it. I accompanied the artist to his studio in Ramallah, where he showed me sections of the wall that he had removed with hammer and chisel and broken down in order to build them into new art objects (Baasch & Jarrar 2013). Jarrar’s message is simple and playful, but it is powerful. If human hands and minds are able to erect such a large structure of division, surely they are equally able to break that structure down and convert it into something else, a piece of art, a functional object, a souvenir, perhaps even using pieces of up-cycled concrete to build the walls of new houses where Palestinian homes have been destroyed.

In *Whole in the Wall*, 2013 (Figure 4.11 and Figure 4.12), Khaled Jarrar installs a replica of the Israeli apartheid wall, that he made out of reconstituted concrete removed from the apartheid barrier, within the Ayyam Gallery space in London. *Whole in the Wall*, 2013 utilises similar strategies to obstruct and direct the movement of the viewer to those employed by the artist Serge Alain Nitegeka (profiled in Figure 4.9) in *Obstacle 1*, 2012 and in *...and walk in my shoes*, 2011. Nitegeka addresses the obstacles facing foreigners and migrants, refugees and non-citizens in the form of his experiential installations. Nitegeka’s installations *...and walk in my shoes* and *Obstacle 1*, as well as his transactional artwork *100 Stools*, 2011, draw on the artist’s personal experience as a refugee seeking asylum in South Africa. The artist’s work negotiates issues around mobility, the flow of people in place and the experience of closure, denial of access, and disruption. Percy Zvomuya (2011) explains

⁷⁰ The Palestinian performance artist Raeda Saadeh presents a slightly different approach to the idea of interventions on the apartheid wall to that of Khaled Jarrar. While Jarrar uses his body to physically break down sections of the apartheid wall in order to make his artwork Saadeh juxtaposes her own feminine body against the apartheid wall. In the work *Look Up*, the artist uses her face as a landscape on which a small replica of the apartheid wall has been built. The work references both portrait and landscape photography and exemplifies a softer less violent, less destructive approach to the issue of the Apartheid wall. Other Palestinian artists working with this aspect of visual narratives of division include the older more established Palestinian artists Slueiman Mansour and Khalil Rabah.

that, “as a Burundian living in South Africa, a substantial part of Nitegeka’s work references his status as a migrant”. In *Obstacle 1* (Figure 4.10), the artist obstructs the entrance of the gallery space so that the viewer is forced to clamber through the wooden beams in order to reach the exhibition on the other side.



Name
Serge Alain Nitegeka

Date of birth
1983

Place of birth
Burundi

Current place of residence
Johannesburg, South Africa

Self-identified nationality
Burundian, Adopted South African

Expertise:
Sculpture, installation

Relevant qualifications:
BFA (Wits 2009)

Relevant artistic projects:
...and walk in my Shoes, 2011
Human Cargo, 2008

Sex
Male

Forced/chosen
Forced

Photo credit:
SCAD (Savannah College of Art and Design), 2016

Period of engagement
July 2011-present

Figure 4.9: Guide profile for Serge Alain Nitegeka. Compiled by Rachel Baasch (2016).

His “site-situated” installation (presented within the concrete space of the Gallery in the Round in the basement of the 1820 Settlers Monument in Grahamstown) titled *...and walk in my shoes* (Figure 4.11) presents the viewer with an opportunity to engage imaginatively with the artist’s personal experience as a refugee seeking asylum (Simbao 2016:3). The Gallery in the Round is a dark space situated in the dungeon of the monument. The monument itself is an architectural blunder. Modelled on the idea of a colonial ship arriving to South Africa, the 1820 Settlers Monument honours the “contributions made by English-speaking settlers to Africa” (Grahamstown Foundation 2016)⁷¹. Nitegeka’s *..and walk in my shoes*, seen in Figure 4.11, is made up of black wooden beams that radiate from the centre of the concrete gallery in every direction. These criss-crossing beams stretch out to the edges of the space such that one cannot move through the installation without having to navigate the obstacles.

⁷¹ The idea of honouring the British colonisers of the 1800s in South Africa is somewhat controversial given the negative impact of British imperialism and colonisation in the country and the continent as a whole. The positive side to the monument is that it serves as the central performance and exhibition space to the Grahamstown National Arts Festival. The building has a variety of both professional and slightly quirky exhibition spaces. One of these is the Gallery in the Round, where Nitegeka’s installation was displayed.

Within both *Obstacle 1* and *...and walk in my shoes*, Nitegeka has divided the space and sliced it up into multiple frames.



Figure 4.10: Serge Alain Nitegeka. 2012. *Obstacle 1*. Wooden beams painted black (Stevenson 2012:55)

Rita Kersting (Stevenson 2012) describes the title of the work (*...and walk in my shoes*) as an “instruction for action which one attempts to follow”, navigating one’s way through the “uncomfortable and awkward route” constructed by the black beams. In discussion with Rita Kersting Nitegeka, Stevenson (2012:80) explains: “I have removed the rendered figure from my work, but you, the viewer, become that body. I’m giving that role to whoever is in the space for that moment”. Nitegeka’s installations focus one’s attention on the corporeality of movement and what it might mean to be denied the freedom to move.



Figure 4.11: Serge Nitegeka. 2011. *...and Walk in my Shoes*. Installation in the 1820 Settlers Monument in Grahamstown (Stevenson 2012:37)

Jarrar is offering his viewers a similar opportunity to the one that is put forward by Serge Nitegeka in *...and walk in my shoes*: the opportunity to experience the barriers faced by the displaced and the dispossessed, those individuals who have the unfortunate experience of being rendered homeless – stateless immigrants and foreigners who struggle to move through the borders and barricades established by national narratives of inclusion and exclusion. According to Ashitha Nagesh (2013:1), the “imitation wall” installed in the Gallery space by Jarrar is built in such a way as “to severely obstruct access to the exhibition”. In order to see the artworks displayed on the other side, one has to “clamber ungracefully through a small hole that is the shape of Palestine” (Nagesh 2013:1). The hole is only large enough to fit one person through at a time and Nagesh (2013:1) describes the difficulty in moving through “Palestine’s long, narrow shape” without getting trapped or falling over. She refers to his work as creating a form of “gallery apartheid” (Nagesh 2013:1). Jarrar’s *Whole in the Wall*, 2013 was constructed and displayed at the Ayyam Gallery in London and thus I was unable to experience the installation first hand. I have however experienced Nitegeka’s *...and walk in my shoes* first hand. This experience, of moving through Nitegeka’s installation – taking a walk in his shoes – has offered me an entry point, an access route to other works such as Jarrar’s *Whole in the Wall*, 2013 that I can relate to and understand via this conceptual

window. I am not suggesting that an experience of one artwork can be simply transferred onto another work in order to conduct a straightforward visual analysis or comparative study. What I am suggesting is that locating a point or site of connection between two artists working in completely different locations can assist one to position an artist's practice in relation to larger global concerns as well as in relation to one's personal experience.

Jarrar describes the motivation for creating *Whole in the Wall*, 2013 as linked to a personal narrative of a woman who communicates with her daughter through a small hole in the barrier. In this instance the wall is separating an old Palestinian woman from her Palestinian daughter. The wall is not separating a victimised Jewish Israeli citizen from an unpredictable Arab other as Israel would like us to believe. Working with concrete, video, photography, performance and installation to “thoroughly investigate and reflect on the effect of the Separation Wall in daily life”, the Ayyam Gallery describes him as presenting “a coherent theme throughout his oeuvre; all works revolve around the current socio-political state of Palestine and stories of life in the shadow of the wall” (Ayyam Gallery 2013: n.p).



Figure 4.12: Khaled Jarrar, *Whole in the Wall*, 2013 (installation view) reconstituted concrete from the Israeli Apartheid Wall , dimensions unknown (Nagesh 2013).



Figure 4.13: Khaled Jarrar. Close up view of *Whole in the Wall*, 2013. Reconstituted concrete, Ayyam Gallery, London.

Nitegeka's transactional artwork *100 Stools*, 2011 sheds light on the barriers faced by refugees, asylum seekers and immigrants not only in a South African context but in countries all over the world. In Figure 4.14, one can see in the foreground the 100 stools made by the artist from wooden shipping crates. In the background, a mix of refugees, asylum seekers and immigrants primarily from "Nigeria, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Ethiopia, Eritrea, Senegal, Zimbabwe, Malawi and Mozambique" queue up to receive official permits so that they may remain in the country (Malcomess 2012:85). These are people who have fled their own homes because of "political and military conflict" and "economic and social fallout". In South Africa they are granted temporary asylum-seeker permits valid for as little as one to three months" (Malcomess 2012:85). In South Africa they are also exposed to xenophobic violence⁷² and discrimination.

⁷² The reasons for the xenophobic violence in South Africa that has escalated since 1994 differ. Some people blame the "contestation for scarce resources" and failure of the South African government to adequately provide for its citizens. Others "attribute the violence to the country's violent past, inadequate service delivery and the influence of micro politics in townships, involvement and complicity of local authority members in contractor conflicts for economic and political reasons, failure of early warning and prevention mechanisms regarding community-based violence; and also local residents' claims that foreigners took jobs opportunities away from local South Africans and they accept lower wages, foreigners do not participate in the struggle for better wages and working conditions"(www.sahistory.org 2015).



Figure 4.14: Serge Alain Nitegeka. 2011. 100 Stools. Wooden stools. (O'Toole 2015:3).

The artwork revolves around the gesture of handing the stools out to people waiting in queues outside the Home Affairs building in Pretoria. Bettina Malcomess' opening description of the situation in which Nitegeka intervenes with the artwork can be described as a written photograph, and accurately conveys the scene.

5.15 AM, Monday, Marabastad, Pretoria, December 2011

People are beginning to queue for the day outside the department of home affairs refugee Reception Centre in Pretoria. Some will have slept here overnight. The queues form in an empty field across the road from the centre...along with the lines of those awaiting access are rows of vendors, selling food and other useful items to the hundred of people who pass through this site each day, the same people who will return the next, there are different queues, although none bears any signage: 'Newcomers', 'Status,' 'Awaiting Decision', 'Appeal'. Approximately 1000 people gather here each day; 600 will be allowed inside the centre. Since the queues arrange themselves informally across the road from Home Affairs, on reaching the end of the queue a person must literally cross the road to enter the building on the other side. A kind of Border (Malcomess 2012:83).

Nitegeka was only eleven years old when he “fled his homeland with his family, first to Rwanda, then Congo, later Kenya and finally South Africa” (O'Toole 2015:3). Familiar with the traumatic experience of finding oneself homeless in a strange place, in *100 Stools* Nitegeka “wanted to give the queuing refugees something practical: a chair” (O'Toole

2015:3). According to Malcomess (2012:84), the first time the artist attempted to give the stools to “people queuing outside Home Affairs” he was stopped by security officials as he did not have “permission”. Malcomess (2012:84) accurately highlights that this attitude towards a “gentle and very humane artistic intervention in addition to the photographs of people queuing up outside the building “sum[s] up the precarious position of the immigrant and asylum-seeker not only in South Africa but in the postcolonial and colonial context”. Edward Said (2000b:138) states that “our age – with its modern warfare, imperialism, and the quasi-theological ambitions of totalitarian rulers – is indeed the age of the refugee, the displaced person, mass immigration”.

In a recent work installed in Helsinki in Finland, Jarrar builds a wall out of bread that blocks the entrance to a tunnel that forms part of the Baana⁷³, a passageway that runs through the city and accommodates cyclists and pedestrians (Jarrar 2014:n.p). He documents the “performative intervention” titled *Hunger Wall* (Figure 4.15) in a short video piece. The video depicts the stages of the construction process and the narratives that emerge in response to the public intervention. He starts out by opening the packets that contain the bread and piling them up together with the help of passers by and others who have heard of Jarrar’s invitation to build a bread wall. The artist and those who have joined him proceed to secure the breads together using plastic cable ties, assembling them into long panels. Khaled and his helpers secure a large wooden frame to the opening of the tunnel and attach the bread strips to the frame and each other, building up the surface of the bread-barrier. As they are doing this, a woman responds to the work with her own personal narrative about the depression in Finland that took place when she was a child (Figure 4.16 A). Jarrar’s performative intervention is also about generosity. He opens the space for others to share their personal narratives and connect these narratives to other experiences. Despite the vastly different contexts that Jarrar and the woman in the video occupy and the massive differences in terms of their personal lived experiences, the bread wall that he creates acts as a locus of connection. The artist may only block the bridge for a period of “one” minute in order to complete the artwork and take a photograph before he must dismantle it. The installation is up just long enough to document it photographically before the artist starts to take it apart and hand out the loaves of bread.

⁷³ The Baana is a designated pathway for cyclists and pedestrians only. Built in Helsinki and opened in 2012, the word “Baana” is Finnish for “rail”. The Baana is often the site of “colourful artistic interventions” (www.publicspace.org 2012).

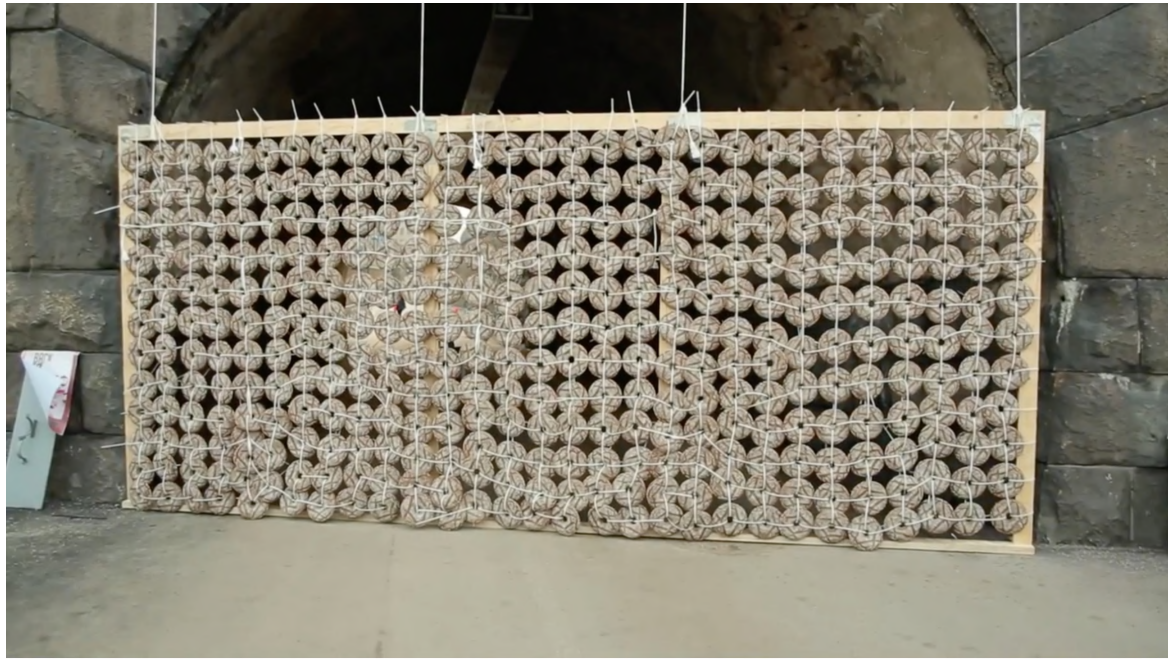


Figure 4.15: Khaled Jarrar. *Hunger Wall*. 2014. Installation, bread and plastic cable ties, Helsinki, Finland (Ayyam Gallery 2014)



Figure 4.16 A and Figure 4.14 B: Khaled Jarrar. 2014. Film stills from the *Hunger Wall*, Helsinki, Finland



Figure 4.17 A and Figure 4.17 B: Khaled Jarrar. 2014. Film stills from the *Hunger Wall*, Helsinki, Finland



Figure 4.18 A and Figure 4.18 B: Khaled Jarrar. 2014. Film stills from the *Hunger Wall*, Helsinki, Finland

In our unstructured walking interview, Jarrar expressed his amusement in observing the tragic irony of how relatively easy it is to send an object or even an animal from Palestine or to Palestine, yet it is nearly impossible for Palestinians to travel and move freely in the same way (Baasch & Jarrar 2013). In the case of Khaled Jarrar, it is far easier for the artist to send sections of stolen concrete chipped off the barrier for reconstruction in another country than it is to secure a permit to leave and return to his home without being barred access when he needs to enter Jordan or Tel Aviv to take a flight. When it comes to acquiring the necessary permits the artist needs to physically move for the purposes of exhibiting and showcasing his work, he comes up against multiple barriers in his own home. The more successful the artist becomes internationally, the more well known he becomes in Israel, the more potential there is for him to experience increased movement restrictions. An article in the *Jerusalem Post* titled “Palestinian Artist chips away at the wall” by Diana Atallah (2012:4) emphasises that “cutting out concrete from the wall is illegal, and the video shot by his friends can potentially expose Jarrar to legal jeopardy and even danger as international requests for ‘wall art’ continue to mount”⁷⁴.

4.3 Barriers in Palestinian Art Practice

Palestinian artists come up against a number of different kinds of practical and ideological walls that block and deny freedom of movement and the freedom to make and disseminate their work. Makhoul (2013:23) notes, “it’s important to remember that ‘Fine Art’ in the European sense has been established as a recognised cultural activity in the region for only a relatively short period of time”. He explains that “access to the sorts of institutions needed to

⁷⁴ Jarrar is certainly not the only or the first Palestinian artist to experience difficulties in moving but he has received the most international attention. Historically, the occupation has prevented Palestinian artists from disseminating their work and exhibiting in other countries since 1967 when Israel claimed the West Bank, East Jerusalem and Gaza strip (if not since the proclamation of the state of Israel in 1948).

support and reinforce it were and mostly remain very limited” (Makhoul 2013:23). The physical barriers and policies established by Israel to prevent Palestinian civilian movement within Israel and the OPTs also prevent the flow of artists and artistic production. The International Academy of Art in Palestine (IAAP) is one of the few tertiary institutions in the OPTs that offer a specialised qualification in contemporary art practice and art theory (www.artacademy.ps 2016). The art school was established by the Palestinian Association for Contemporary Art (PACA), as a response to the lack of dedicated Fine Art schools in the Palestinian Territories. Dr Tina Sherwell, who is presently the director of IAAP, explains that the academy is both inward looking and outward looking in the sense that students and staff are drawn to the school from both a local Palestinian context within the OPTs as well as from the Palestinian diaspora and the international community (www.artacademy.ps 2016). The objective of the school is to equip students with the skills and knowledge to engage critically with contemporary art in a Palestinian context and abroad. Thus the institution is enabling artists to connect with other artists, to form new networks and frameworks of global interaction, in a place that is isolated and closed off from the rest of the world as a result of the Israeli occupation. According to Sherwell (2011:1):

The International Academy of Art has taken as its starting point the aim of instituting a contemporary education program and activities informed by the modern context of art practice and art education—in order that its students will be prepared for engaging with the future development of visual culture in their own culture and on the world platform.

The Al Hoash Palestinian Art Court is one of the few galleries/museums that publish literature on contemporary Palestinian art, but it is cut off from Ramallah and the West Bank and Gaza Strip territories due to the occupation. The first time I met Alia Rayyan at the Zamn café in Ramallah was in August 2013. She had recently been appointed as the director of the Al Hoash Palestinian Art Court in Jerusalem and expressed her frustrations regarding the barriers that inhibit everyday life and artistic practice in the OPTs.

Rayyan described the crippling effect of the occupation on everyday life as it inhibits the practice of Palestinian artists living in Israel and the OPTs as well as those based in the diaspora. In our discussions she noted the challenges of organising a local exhibition of Palestinian artists’ work. These artists are directly impacted by the physical barriers of the OPTs as well as psychologically impacted by the stress and trauma of life under occupation. A simple exchange, such as a meeting between an artist based in the West Bank and a curator

working in a gallery based in East Jerusalem a few kilometres away, can be a difficult if not impossible task. If Rayyan would like to include an artist based in Gaza⁷⁵ within a group show displayed at the Al Hoash Palestinian Art Court in East Jerusalem, for example, she will come up against a number of blocks and barricades both directly and indirectly⁷⁶ resulting from the Israeli occupation (Rayyan in Baasch 2013b).

	Name	
	Alia Rayyan	
	Date of birth	Sex
	1974	Female
	Place of birth	
	Bremen, Germany	
	Current place of residence	Forced/chosen
	Ramallah, OPT's	Chosen
Self-identified nationality		
Palestinian/German		
Expertise		
Artist, curator, art director		
Relevant qualifications		
Political Science, sociology (University of Hamburg), Master in Art History (SOAS);		
Relevant artistic projects		
Public Art Lab, 2014-present		
Photo credit: Alia Rayyan,		
Period of engagement in 'visual narratives of division' July 2013 – present		

Figure 4.19: Guide Profile for Alia Rayyan. Compiled by Rachel Baasch (2016).

Palestinian artists living in refugee camps in surrounding countries are regularly prevented from entering the West Bank through the permit system. Palestinian artists based in the diaspora are also regularly denied access to the OPTs by the Israeli state and run the risk of being turned away at the airport in Tel Aviv or the Allenby border crossing in Jordan. The Israeli state have full control over who can and cannot enter the territories and greater Israel, and therefore hold power over who can and cannot exhibit or practice in the OPTs. A large amount of collaborative work between Palestinian artists, curators and academics takes place via Skype and social media because of the heavy restrictions placed on Palestinian freedom

⁷⁵ Recent legislation has been passed that permits Palestinians living in Gaza to leave the Territory via the West Bank or visit the West Bank territory. This new law also states that Gazans who leave the territory may only return after a year outside of the area. This is a highly restrictive regulation despite its seeming creation of 'openings' in the Israeli regime of socio-spatial division and domination.

⁷⁶ I say directly and indirectly here because there are aspects of Palestinian everyday life, such as the prejudice of Palestinian landlords towards Palestinian tenants, that are indirectly the result of the Israeli Occupation. At one point I was shocked to discover that Khaled Jarrar was struggling to find a landlord in Ramallah willing to rent him a decent apartment. Landlords favour 'foreigners' and employ the same racist language as the racists who are oppressing them.

of movement and the prison-like closures enforced by Israel on residents in the Gaza Strip. Should Rayyan want to organise a group show of Palestinian artists that includes artists based in the West Bank and East Jerusalem territories as well as the Gaza Strip, it is easier to do so in another location thousands of kilometres away. Shehadeh (2007:xviii) confirms that “the Gaza Strip has become completely out of bounds for Palestinians from the West Bank.” According to Shehadeh (2007: xviii), “a merchant from Ramallah finds it easier to travel to China to import cane garden chairs than to reach Gaza, a mere forty minute drive away, where cane chairs, once a flourishing industry, now sit in dusty stacks”. In the same respect, an artist or arts writer based in Gaza who may want to work with an artist, writer or curator based in the West Bank will find it easier to meet in a country thousands of kilometres away, than in Israel and the OPTs. Furthermore, should an Israeli artist/curator and a Palestinian artist/curator wish to collaborate, it would be virtually impossible to do so in Israel and the OPTs and would probably have to take place in a different country outside of the Middle East⁷⁷.

The lack of publications on Palestinian artists’ work that is produced by those who identify themselves as Palestinian and the absence of platforms to sufficiently support such publication are problematic⁷⁸. This is the result of obstacles and restrictions that prevent the expansion and establishment of a functioning and sustainable Palestinian art community of critics and practitioners who are able to make and disseminate their work freely. On my visits to the Al-Hoash Palestinian Art Court, Rayyan introduced me to some of the literature that has been written and published by Palestinian academics about the work of Palestinian artists through the Al-Hoash Palestinian Art Court. Al Hoash is one of the few organisations in the West Bank that publish work about contemporary Palestinian Art written by Palestinian artists such as Bashir Makhoul. In his discussion of the need for organising structures and arts institutions in the West Bank, Makhoul (2013:24) aptly states:

One might reasonably expect that the centre of Palestinian art would be in Palestine itself but, without an organizing structure of a state with a government and a capital, there is no proper centre to Palestine. There are active cultural concentrations in the

⁷⁷ In Chapter Six I describe the Skype advert that uses the narrative of closure and the inability for Palestinians and Israelis to meet for business or personal reasons as its content. The advert suggests that ‘Skype’ have provided a solution to the barriers that divide Palestinians and Israelis, allowing people to communicate and work without having to move physically through their live video feed.

⁷⁸ One of my primary motivations for pursuing this doctoral qualification is so that I might assist in providing platforms and opportunities for Palestinian academic and artistic work to be written about by Palestinians with insider knowledge on narratives of division in relation to visual art and culture in the context of the OPTs. I am not suggesting that academics from other places should cease to write about Palestinian Art in order to allow Palestinian voices to be heard; what I am suggesting is that academics who want to develop the discourse can do so (at least in part) by developing platforms and creating opportunities for Palestinian art historians and critics to write about work made by Palestinians.

main urban hubs of Jerusalem and Ramallah of course, but many of the artists are living in the Diaspora or move between Palestine and other countries. Places such as Jerusalem and Ramallah have an organizing role in the cultural life of Palestine through exhibitions, festivals and education that maintain a strong relationship between the idea of Palestine through artistic activity and the land of Palestine.

Insufficient attention is paid to the necessity for new openings, for new windows and doorways to be built into seemingly closed and impenetrable spaces. This lack of openings corresponds with a lack of psychological and intellectual openings within Palestinian social, spiritual and intellectual space. Mandy Turner, Director of the Kenyon Institute in Jerusalem, argues that the windows of Palestinian academia are closed. Jerusalem, which used to be a centre of intellectual activity and artistic production, has become completely isolated from the Palestinian West Bank and Gaza Strip territories as a result of military occupation, apartheid and colonisation.

I attended the *Contestations, Emotions!/: Social and artistic expressions in the Public Space* conference at Birzeit University (18 and 19 February 2014). A number of artists and academics participating in the conference raised the pressing issue of spatial closure and the impact of the barriers and blockages inflicted by the Israeli occupation on artistic practice and engagement along with other aspects of civilian life. Within the context of the conference, academics and practitioners presenting on their practice, such as Rana Bishara and Fareh Saleh, dismantled the romantic notion of artists creating masterpieces under conditions of suffering and oppression. The barriers that usurp Palestinian space and time in Israel and the OPTs (while opening up space and time for Israelis) do not inspire and motivate artists; rather they erode, demotivate and discourage. There is nothing inspiring about living and working under crippling conditions of psycho-social domination and a logic of partition that runs deep into the connective tissue of interpersonal relations.

Some of the Palestinian artists who presented papers on their work, such as Rana Bishara and Fareh Saleh, noted the reality of trying to make art in a place that restricts and bars and blocks one at every turn. Like these artists, Alia Rayyan expressed the sense of fatigue one experiences in negotiating obstacles at every level of inter-personal exchange. Rayyan explained that every task or engagement is met with an obstacle, from the checkpoints to

personal depression⁷⁹ and the psychological impact of life under a military occupation. Both time and space in the OPTs are manipulated and usurped by the various players operating with varying degrees of authority. Those with significantly more power, such as the Israeli military and violent settler groups supported by the state, can be seen to mark space clearly and violently.



Name
Fareh Saleh

Date of birth
1985

Place of birth
Palestinian refugee camp in Syria

Current place of residence
Ramallah, OPT's

Self-identified nationality
Palestinian

Expertise
Contemporary dance, performance and choreography , conceptual performance art

Relevant qualifications
Languages
Contemporary Dance

Relevant artistic projects
Free Advice , 2016

Sex
Female

Forced/chosen
Chosen

Photo credit:
Brown University (www.middleeastbrown.org)

Period of engagement
February 2014- May 2014

Figure 4.20: Guide Profile for Fareh Saleh. Compiled by Rachel Baasch (2016). (University 2016)(University 2016)(University 2016)

I returned to the Zamn café⁸⁰ a few days after the conference to meet Fareh Saleh, where we discussed her *Free Advice*, 2016 (Figure 4.21 and Figure 4.22) project. In *Free Advice*, 2016 Saleh goes to “the streets of Ramallah, Vienna and Budapest with a ‘Free Advice’ sign to open a dialogue” and “exchange” free advice with passers-by (Stockholm University of the Arts 2016:1). During the conference in Birzeit, Saleh raised the issue of the Palestinian public

⁷⁹ Palestinians are increasingly being medicated and treated for depression as a result of the oppressive environment in which people are forced to eke out a marginal existence with the knowledge that their Israeli neighbours are thriving under ideal utopia-like conditions. Writing about depression in the Palestinian West Bank, Madianos et al. (2011:1) state: “a population under continuous strain and apprehension, living in unremitting socio-economic deprivation, is more likely to suffer from major depression”.

⁸⁰ The Zamn café is considered the meeting place that local Palestinians suggest when they first meet with a ‘foreigner’ or an ‘international’. This is generally used as a first meeting site after which (according to Thawra) you will know whether or not someone trusts you if they do or do not invite you to any other venue. If you are invited to someone’s home, their favourite café, favourite view or any other personal site, then you know you have earned a small degree of trust. This is of course opinion (and a humorous one at that) rather than a fact or rule.

abandoning public space in Palestine as a result of the Israeli Occupation and their extended arm in the form of the Palestinian Authority⁸¹.

Saleh discussed her work as a choreographer and performance artist and outlined the project she was conceptualising at the time (and has since realised) called *Free Advice*, 2016.

Her medium is materially inexpensive (cardboard and a black marker) yet it is her time, her physical presence and the offer of something personal in a public setting that gives this work its value. In reference to her *Free Advice* project Saleh (Stockholm University of the Arts 2016) states :

The piece is a continuation of my research on art production as a form of daily protest in Palestine. During its creation I looked for interaction with ordinary people, to investigate my relationship – as an artist – with the society I live in. I went to the streets of Ramallah, Vienna and Budapest with a ‘Free Advice’ sign to open a dialogue and exchange advices with passers-by.

Fareh Saleh is at the earlier stages of her career, following in the footsteps of transactional performance art created by established “mid-career Palestinian artists”, such as Emily Jacir, who use practical forms of exchange to address narratives of division, displacement, “diaspora and the Israeli Occupation in their work” (Demos 2013:104)⁸². Her transactional art practice offers an opening, a site of connection where people are invited to converse with a stranger, to exchange advice. Transactional art can be understood in terms of the interaction, the exchange between two or more people being central to the artwork itself. For example in Nitegeka’s *100 Stools*, the wooden stools are not the important aspect of the artwork and neither is the photographic documentation. These are merely props, tools that allow a transaction to take place (Plewe 2008:977). In Saleh’s *Free Advice* the artwork is also about an exchange, a transaction between two or more people.

⁸¹ It is considered ‘popular opinion’ that the Palestinian Authority function under the thumb of the Israeli state.

⁸²The Palestinian artist Taysir Batniji also works with transactional art forms. In Batniji’s *Watchtowers* 2008 the artist recruits another photographer to take photographs of watch towers in the West Bank on his behalf. Despite the fact that he is Palestinian, he is unable to travel to the West Bank to take the photographs himself. As a result of the circumstances in which the artist is practicing the work becomes about an interaction and not simply a photographic object.



Figure 4.21: Saleh, Fareh. 2016. *Free Advice*. Interactive performance. Photograph by Zina Zarour (Stockholm University of the Arts 2016).



Figure 4.22: Saleh, Fareh. 2016. *Free Advice*. Interactive performance. Photograph by Daniel Grimm (Stockholm University of the Arts 2016).



Figure 4.23: Jacir, Emily. 2001–2003.*Where We Come From*, detail (Munir) American passport, 30 texts, 32 c-prints and 1 video text . Interactive performance. Photograph by Daniel Grimm (Stockholm University of the Arts 2016).



Figure 4.24: Jacir, Emily. 2001–2003.*Where We Come From*, detail (Munir) American passport, 30 texts, 32 c-prints and 1 video text . Interactive performance. Photograph by Daniel Grimm (Stockholm University of the Arts 2016).

Working with transactions and interactions, Emily Jacir points to the absurd yet tragic reality of Palestinian “(im)mobility – the inequality between those who can and cannot enjoy the rights of the freedom of movement” (Demos 2013:104). Jacir’s *Where We Come From*, 2001–2003 is a transactional artwork where the artist offers to fulfil the desires of Palestinians who cannot move freely in particular parts of the West Bank in order to fulfil personal requests they might have. These include the delivering of parcels and gifts, the execution of specific actions and the communication of messages. In her making of the work, Jacir asked individual Palestinians the following question: “What can I do for you in Palestine, where you can’t go but I can?” (Lichtenfels & Rouse 2013:171). One of the thirty transactions, between Jacir and a Palestinian named “Munir”, is represented in Figure 4.24. Demos (2013:104) accurately observes that the individual Palestinian subjects and their requests are “conveyed through a skeletal descriptive language reminiscent of bureaucratic discourse”. Demos (2013:104) explains that, instead of attempting to represent the subjects of her work within the accompanying photographs, Jacir has deliberately emphasised their absence. According to Demos this strategy implies a “parallel between political disenfranchisement and representational erasure” (Demos 2013:104).

4.4 Chapter Exit Point

The barriers facing contemporary Palestinian artists are innumerable. The Israeli apartheid logic of partition has penetrated deep into the fabric of everyday Palestinian life. Human interactions in the OPTs are consistently thwarted by narratives of division that block and deny the exchange of Palestinian skills, resources and the movement of people. Each of the individual artists I engage with in this chapter responds to the ideological and practical barriers to artistic practice in Palestine in different ways. Fareh Saleh renders herself somewhat vulnerable standing in the centre of Ramallah, in Al Manara Square, holding a sign that reads *Free Advice* and opening herself up to human interaction as well as rejection and humiliation. Emily Jacir’s transactional art practice positions an exchange as an artwork, where she offers to fulfil the requests of Palestinians who cannot travel to certain parts of Israel and the OPTs where Jacir is permitted to go. These artists are using their practice to open up the potential to empathise and connect with someone else’s experience. This is a strategy that can be seen in the work of contemporary Palestinian artists Fareh Saleh, Khaled

Jarrar and Emily Jacir working in a Palestinian context. Khaled Jarrar responds to the logic of partition imposed by the Israeli apartheid system by creating openings through his artistic practice. These openings are small but they have symbolic power. In the series of works using up-cycled concrete from the Israeli apartheid wall such as *Football*, 2012, he playfully subverts the authority and impenetrability of the Israeli apartheid barrier. Jarrar's response is to propose the re-use, the up-cycling and the reinvention of the barrier, turning it into artworks, souvenirs or functional objects that bring people together rather than tear them apart. In up-cycling sections of the structure, he alters the basic message of the wall and shifts it from being a symbol of division to a site of connection. Furthermore, works such as *Whole in the Wall*, 2013 invite the viewer to step into the artist's personal experience, to take a walk in the artist's shoes, as Serge Alain Nitegeka might suggest. In doing this he provides an experiential platform that connects the viewer's experience of the artwork with the artist's personal narrative of division.

Operating under the conditions of an Israeli apartheid, each of the guides and artists reacts to and reinterprets division differently, offering a selection of perspectives and responses each of which centres on the basic notion of the boundary in a socio-political context. These artists also touch on issues of perspective in relation to physical and psychological closure. Walls and barriers deny the freedom to move as well as the freedom to look. In the next chapter, Chapter Five: Guarded Visions: Walls, Watchtowers and Warped Perspectives, I examine the way in which divisive structures imposed on the Palestinian landscape distort individual perspectives and deny Palestinians the "right to look" and the right to be seen within Israel and the OPTs.

Chapter 5 Guarded Visions: Walls, Watch Towers and Warped Perspectives in the Occupied Palestinian Territories

5.1 Chapter Entry Point

In the first part of this chapter, I analyse photographs documented at the Qalandiya checkpoint, in the Old City of Hebron and in Bethlehem. I use these examples to critique the fortification and separation of physical space in the name of security as it deepens segregation and increases fear, hostility and disconnection between people moving and living within the Palestinian West Bank Territory. I argue that narratives of division such as colonisation and apartheid and the implementation of extreme physical, social and political mechanisms of control within the occupied West Bank mediate the way in which people see one another. The mediation of subjects through a defensive lens can prevent individuals from forming connections that acknowledge the permeability of seemingly impenetrable distinctions between inside and outside, or self and an ‘other’. The looking, recording and representation of people in a place that is guarded and framed from a position of insecurity reduces the capacity of individuals to locate openings that traverse restrictive boundaries. I use my personal documentation of security-related structures, symbols and architectural design photographed in the West Bank between 2013 and 2014 as visual examples. Guiding my analyses is the architect, author and founding member of DAAR, who addresses the violence of architectural design in Israel and the OPTs within his work.

While physical divisions such as walls can be interpreted as representations of insecurity, they can also serve to construct a condition of insecurity. I unpack the way in which the Israeli state construct a situation of insecurity in order to justify military occupation and apartheid. I consult Weizman’s *Hollow Land* (Weizman 2007) as well as his article *Walking through Walls: Soldiers as architects in the Israeli–Palestinian conflict* (Weizman 2006). I draw on Ana de Sousa’s (de Sousa 2014) documentary *Rebel Architecture: The Architecture of Violence*, in which Weizman takes the viewer through parts of the West Bank, highlighting the use of architecture as a strategic weapon employed by Israel and the Israeli Defence Force (IDF).

I discuss the Decolonising Architecture Art Residency (DAAR) based in Beit Sahour⁸³ and analyse the way in which projects initiated by DAAR activate architectural structures such as the Oush Grab military base as “optical apparatuses” in an ongoing process of “decolonization” (Hilal et al. 2013:32). Here I argue that DAAR offers an example of spatial practice that can potentially perforate the authority of “visuality” and its divisive privileging of space and perspective within this geography⁸⁴ (Mirzoeff 2011:1). Sandi Hilal, Alessandro Petti and Eyal Weizman (the founders of DAAR) are profiled as guides and lead my observations and analyses in relation to discussions about the Oush Grab Military Base presented by these three guides (Weizman, Hilal and Petti) in the publication *Architecture after Revolution* (2013) that documents and elaborates on the work of DAAR.

5.2 The Right to Look



Name
Eyal Weizman

Date of birth
1970

Place of birth
Haifa

Current place of residence
London, UK

Self-identified nationality
Israeli

Expertise
Architecture, Visual Culture

Relevant qualifications
BA Architecture, Architectural Association
PHD London Consortium/Birkbeck College

Relevant projects
DAAR, 2007-present
Forensic Architecture, 2010-present

Sex
Male

Forced/chosen
Chosen

Photo credit:
www.aljazeera.com

Period of engagement
December 2014– present

Figure 5.1: Guide profile for Eyal Weizman. Compiled by Rachel Baasch (2016).

According to Eyal Weizman (2007:7) (profiled in Figure 5.1), the “logic of partition” in “frontier zones” (such as the West Bank OPT) “resembles an incessant sea dotted with multiplying archipelagos of externally alienated and internally homogenous ethno-national enclaves”. This segregated, shifting, and highly contested geography is monitored “under a

⁸³Beit Sahour is a small Palestinian city located 1.5 km east of Bethlehem. On the east side, the city is bordered by the Palestinian villages Ash Shawawra and Dar Salah. On its northern side the town is bordered by another two Palestinian villages called An Nu'man and Al Khas as well as the Israeli settlement Abu Ghneim, with the Palestinian village Hindaza to the south (Beit Sahour Municipality 2014).

⁸⁴My use of the term “geography” can be understood in relation to Edward Said’s (2000a:182) description of “geography” as a “socially constructed and maintained sense of place”.

blanket of Israeli aerial surveillance” (Weizman 2007:7). Fences, walls, checkpoints, razor wire, metal grids, burglar bars and additional structures that are used to fortify settlements, roads, military zones and designated areas in the West Bank OPT confirm and defend boundaries which have been declared through Israel’s ongoing occupation and colonisation of land. These structures are supplemented by sign systems that direct and control the bodies of those who live and move in these areas. Signage systems and physical markers of division are further supplemented by legislation granting individuals with “full citizenship, weak citizenship or no citizenship at all” (Weizman 2007:5).

In the West Bank OPT, Palestinian citizens are denied the “right to look” and the “right to be seen” (Mirzoeff 2011:4). The red and white signs (Figures 5.2 and 5.3) that discourage Israeli access into the territory designated as Area A (Palestinian towns and villages)⁸⁵ prevent Israelis from engaging in practices of “mutual” looking with Palestinians in an intimate setting (Mirzoeff 2011:1). Instead, interactions between the two binaries play out within a variety of ideological and spatial hierarchies and layered mechanisms of separation and control.

“OPT Palestinians” who hold ‘green’⁸⁶ ID cards restricting them to the boundaries of the West Bank Territory may not enter Israeli settlements which exist in the West Bank or “Israel-proper” and are thus prevented from seeing or being seen by their “Jewish-Israeli” neighbours (Tawil-Souri 2012:159). Walls, fences, checkpoints, no-go zones, buffer zones, watchtowers, warning signs and military personnel prevent “mutual” looking (Mirzoeff 2011:1). These spatial fortifications reaffirm political and ideological separations and deny citizens the opportunity for “inventing the other”, thus inhibiting moments of embodied connection and “recognition” (Mirzoeff 2011:1).

The implementation of physical divisions that correspond to political and ideological separation assists in maintaining the prevalence of the fear-fuelled imagination such that looking, seeing and perceiving is mediated by fear, anxiety and insecurity. Charlotte Lemansky (2004:106) confirms that “fear-management strategies of erecting walls and

⁸⁵The West Bank OPT is divided into three areas, namely Areas A, B, and C. Area A is designated for Palestinian civilian residency and placed under the government of the Palestinian Authority. Area B refers to the Jewish Israeli Settlements under Israeli civilian and military control; sophisticated bypass roads and public transport systems connect the settlements to “Israel proper” such that they act as convenient extensions of the country, and do not feel like illegal enclaves placed on Palestinian Territory. Area C refers to Palestinian residential areas that are controlled by the Israeli military.

⁸⁶The reference to different coloured ID cards is not a reference to the actual ID documents themselves but the plastic sleeves within which they are carried.

enclosing neighbourhoods” can have a “perverse effect [that] ... serves to increase fears and deepen segregation”. Warning signs such as the ones depicted in Figures 5.2 and 5.3 serve as continuous reminders to citizens and visitors that there is something of which to be fearful, and that the transgression of certain boundaries is dangerous.

This particular visual language, comprising objects and devices that are directly related to security, freedom of movement and warning, reinforces the idea that protection from perceived danger is a necessity. The examples of physical fortification, such as walls (Figure 5.4), watchtowers (Figures 5.5 and 5.6) and fences (Figure 5.7), included in this chapter can be read as symptoms and expressions of fear and insecurity. It can be further suggested that, while these structural and spatial responses to real and imaginary threats in one’s environment may reduce immediate anxiety and provide an initial sense of security, they simultaneously reinforce practices of inclusion and exclusion. These security mechanisms reinforce a “logic of partition” and aid in the authorising of “visuality” (Weizman 2007:15).



Figure 5.2: Photographic documentation of one of the red and white warning signs positioned at the Qalandiya checkpoint between Ramallah and Jerusalem. Photograph by Rachel Baasch (2013c). *The sign is written in Hebrew, Arabic and English. In English it reads ‘This Road leads to Area “A” Under the Palestinian Authority The Entrance for Israeli Citizens is Forbidden, Dangerous to Your Lives And Is Against the Israeli Law’*



Figure 5.3: Photographic documentation of one of the red and white warning signs positioned at the entrance to a Palestinian village in the West Bank. Photograph by Rachel Baasch (2014a). *The sign is written in Hebrew, Arabic and English. In English it reads “This Road leads to Palestinian Village The Entrance for Israeli Citizens Dangerous”*



Figure 5.4: Documentation of the Israeli apartheid wall along route 60 to Jerusalem via Qalandiya checkpoint. Photograph by Rachel Baasch (2013c).



Figure 5.5: Documentation of a watch tower, photographed along route 60 between Jerusalem and Bethlehem. Photograph by Rachel Baasch (2014a)



Figure 5.6: Documentation of a watchtower, photographed along route 60 between Jerusalem and Bethlehem. Photograph by Rachel Baasch (2014a)

In the West Bank, “visuality’s aura of authority” is signified and reaffirmed by security and control mechanisms which include surveillance cameras, watchtowers and strategically

positioned military personnel, where those with the privilege to look cannot be seen by those who are visualised (Mirzoeff 2011:7). These structures and the “authority” of the “visualizer” prevent individuals who occupy the same geography, the same home from asserting their “right to look”. According to Mirzoeff (2011:2–3), “visuality” is the “opposite of the right to look”. One can argue that the “right to look” requires eye contact as a starting point (Mirzoeff 2011:1). It is initiated at a “personal level with the look into someone else’s eyes to express friendship, solidarity or love” (Mirzoeff 2011:1). Mirzoeff (2011:1) states:

The right to look claims autonomy, not individualism or voyeurism, but the claim to a political subjectivity and collectivity ... [y]ou, or your group, allow another to find you, and in so doing, you find both the other and yourself. It means requiring the recognition of the other in order to have a place from which to claim rights and to determine what is right. It is the claim to a subjectivity that has the autonomy to arrange the relations of the visible and the sayable.

While there are many sites where Palestinians and Israelis are able to ‘see’ one another (such as Hebron), the spatial and ideological layers that distort one’s perspective do not support or encourage “the right to look” (Mirzoeff 2011:1). An armed soldier positioned on the rooftop of a house surveying a civilian area through a security fence, like the one visible in Figure 5.7, is a standard, everyday feature of this area in Hebron. The places documented in Figures 5.7 and 5.8 are not war zones or military bases, they are designated Palestinian civilian areas where settler groups have illegally colonised parts of the Old City of Hebron. In response to the claiming of these areas, the Israeli military, supported by the state, have established checkpoints, fences, walls and watchtowers, and allocated four soldiers to each Jewish-Israeli citizen to protect them from the Palestinians living in the area. The desire for security and stability for the illegal settler community in Hebron has resulted in an artificial living environment, where soldiers become almost structural as they take on a similar role to a fence or wall. This form of psychological and physical closure is a perversion of the very idea of safety and security.



Figure 5.7: Photographic documentation of an Israeli Defence Force soldier positioned behind a fence on top of a building in the Old City of Hebron. Photograph by Rachel Baasch (2013c).



Figure 5.8: Photographic documentation of Israeli Defence Force Soldiers and policeman protecting Jewish Settlers in the Old City. Photograph by Rachel Baasch (2013c).

The mediation of one's perspective through a makeshift fence, through the bars of a checkpoint turnstile, or from behind the body of an armed soldier does not articulate a safe space for individuals to assert "the right to look" (Mirzoeff 2011:1). Thus, despite their physical proximity, the way in which the 'other' is filtered and seen in such a context reinforces two homogenous and narrowly rendered binaries. From the viewpoint of a Palestinian civilian living in Hebron, the individuals who have occupied parts of their town and evicted them from their homes are militant and aggressive 'outsiders' making claims to an inside that they consider home. These 'outsiders' are perceived as a dangerous and unpredictable threat to Palestinian livelihood and security. From the perspective of the Israeli-Jewish settler living in Hebron within the confines of safe zones, permitted to carry firearms for their protection, the Palestinians who were already living in the area prior to their arrival are nomadic, uncivilised, 'barbaric Arabs' who do not have the same biblical claim to the land as the Jewish colonies framed within a Zionist discourse of right and return. In places such as Hebron, separation is maintained by ideological narratives of belonging that position one group as the empowered, rightful claimants of an area, while excluding those who fall outside of this narrative and its physical boundaries.

At checkpoints such as Qalandiya, which control the movement of people between parts of the West Bank OPT like Ramallah and the city of Jerusalem (Figure 5.9 and Figure 5.10), the Palestinian body and the property that accompanies that body are inspected and interrogated – at times partially or fully undressed. Palestinians have little to no control over the "relations of the visible and the sayable", especially when it comes to the policing of their bodies, homes and communities (Mirzoeff 2011:1). Signs, arrows and authorised military personnel direct the body through passages and fences. Paper has more weight than flesh as identification documents are demanded in order to prove that one has permission to move and permission to exist. ID books are requested before eye contact is made (if it is made at all) and the grounds of engagement are shifted and altered without warning or notification. The Israeli body is not policed in this respect. Settlements such as the one visible in Figure 5.11 and Figure 5.12 are elevated on hilltops and built to protect the Israeli home and body from harm and humiliation. Weizman (de Sousa 2014) explains that it is mandated in Israeli law that all Israeli settlements in the West Bank build their houses with red roofs so that the IDF can differentiate between Palestinian areas and Israeli areas when attacking Palestinian towns and villages.

Raja Shehadeh (2007:xiv) explains the way in which “Israeli planners place Jewish settlements on hilltops and plan them such that they can only see other settlements while strategically dominating the valleys in which most Palestinian villages are located”. Curiosity and interest about the lives of one’s neighbours is denied in the interests of Israeli citizen protection, and apartheid is justified by the ‘necessity for security’(Leuenberger 2013:10) refers to the way in which the West Bank is divided and partitioned “through the establishment of barriers, no-go areas” and an Israeli apartheid road system inaccessible to Palestinians. This system “channels Palestinians and Israelis into separate but often parallel geographical spaces”. Despite their proximity to one another, there are very few places where Palestinians and Israelis are able to meet.



Figure 5.9: Documentation of Palestinians waiting in a queue to pass through the Qalandiya checkpoint. Photograph by Bronwen Salton (2014).



Figure 5.10: Documentation of Palestinians waiting in a queue to pass through the Qalandiya checkpoint. Photograph by Bronwen Salton (2014).



Figure 5.11: Photographic Documentation of a settlement in the West Bank, showing the settlement elevated on a hilltop in relatively close proximity to a Palestinian village. Photograph by Rachel Baasch (2014a)



Figure 5.12: Photographic documentation of a settlement near Bethlehem positioned behind the Separation Barrier Wall. Photograph by Rachel Baasch (2014a).

5.3 Constructing Insecurity and Architectural Violence

The decision to implement and abide by security control measures is based on measurements of risk. One calculates the potential risk of a space or action according to experience, images, stories, signs and signifiers, in conjunction with the subjective imagination, in order to create a picture. This picture influences the behaviour of the individual within a particular place – where one may or may not choose to go and how one engages with other individuals living and moving in a particular area. How one sees and experiences an environment is directly influenced by the constructed image of risk associated with the place. Each picture is interpreted differently by the individual and relies on the “ground note of the ‘individual particular’ from which all narration begins” (Said in Bhabha 2005:371). Experience, knowledge, perspective, as well as personal and national forms of identification, all influence the individual response and perception of risk in this geography.

On the surface one may perceive a simple dialectic of the state protecting its citizens from danger. The implementation of security and control mechanisms in the West Bank might seem like a relatively straightforward scenario where the Israeli government and military personnel construct a “visualization” of the territory they control, and classify the severity of the threat to their citizens, before responding with the implementation of measures to secure and protect the desired members of their nation (Mirzoeff 2011:3). Full citizens included within the parameters of the Israeli nation (who benefit from its resources) accept (and perhaps welcome) the construction of walls, fences and military personnel that separate them from their neighbours, because they fear the demonised ‘other’ they have been warned against⁸⁷. These structures are normalised as a necessity, a basic need for survival, and serve to prevent the utopian existence within its confines from contamination, preserving the purity of the so-called civilised nation – warding off the ‘uncivilised’ demographic threat hidden behind its walls.

Weizman (2007:5) points out that “[u]nder Israel’s regime of ‘erratic occupation’, Palestinian life, property and political rights are constantly violated”. The extensive measures taken to

⁸⁷ In the documentary *Rebel Architecture*, Weizman speaks to an Israeli settler living in the Gilo settlement regarding the apartheid wall and the fact that, when it is completed, it will destroy the view this man and his family have of the West Bank. The man responds to Weizman by saying: “I didn’t decide to put the wall up but I feel safer since it’s there”.

ensure that Israeli citizens feel safe and secure in their homes come at the expense of Palestinian insecurity. Weizman (2007:5) explains that, in order to justify the necessity of security narrative, the Israeli government and the military must maintain “a condition of insecurity and instability”. He notes:

The spatial organization of the Occupied Territories is a reflection not only of an ordered process of planning and implementation, but ... of ‘structured chaos’, in which the – often deliberate – selective absence of government intervention promotes an unregulated process of violent dispossession (Weizman 2007:5).

The maintenance of “structured chaos” in the West Bank plays a strategic role in ensuring “security measures ... [do] ... not bring about absolute security” (Weizman 2007:5). Weizman (2007:5) refers to the Occupied Territories as “elastic geographies”⁸⁸. He explains that unlike the “geography of stable, static places ... frontiers are deep, shifting, fragmented and elastic territories [where] distinctions between the ‘inside’ and the ‘outside’ cannot be clearly marked” (Weizman 2007:5).

Mirzoeff (2011:21) echoes Weizman regarding “structured chaos” as working in favour of “maintaining a permanent state of crisis” in the Occupied Territories. The unstable and “erratic” nature of borders and boundaries in the West Bank (Weizman 2007:5) adds to the sense of anxiety experienced by people who live and move within its shifting parameters. The entity or individual with authority over a territory (such as the Israeli state) relies on this anxiety and insecurity to maintain hegemony and division. Furthermore, one can argue that citizens respond to this unpredictable situation by trying to stabilise or concretise the imaginary constructions of an inside and outside that can never actually be fully separated or permanently fixed as mutually exclusive entities. If one returns to the metaphor of ‘looking with the skin’ and the idea that the skin itself is a semi-permeable boundary of peristaltic tissue that offers one with a point of reference for understanding notions of interiority and exteriority, then it stands to reason that attempts to separate the inseparable can never be fully realised.

⁸⁸One can argue that there is a degree to which all geographies are somewhat elastic, but the use of the phrase in this instance is specific to Weizman’s discussion of the Occupied Palestinian Territories.

5.3.1 Ruptured Walls

In the documentary *Rebel Architecture: The Architecture of Violence* by filmmaker Ana de Sousa (2014), Weizman elaborates on the strategic role played by architecture and urban planning in the Israeli–Palestinian context. The illegal Israeli settlements that have been built on Palestinian territory are designed with the notion of surveillance, security and spatial control as priorities. Settler groups select mountains and hilltops overlooking Palestinian villages and farms for the construction of housing blocks and communities. In this particular context, the seemingly “mundane elements of planning and architecture have become tactical tools and the means of dispossession” (Weizman 2007:5). Weizman describes the way in which architecture and the built environment constitute a form of “slow violence” (de Sousa 2014)). Everything from “trees” to “terraces” and “houses” are strategic weapons employed by Israel to destroy the Palestinian urban fabric (Weizman in de Sousa 2014). The selective absence and presence of military control and regulation in this area means that, while Palestinian citizens are heavily policed and prosecuted, the violent and aggressive actions of militant Jewish Israeli settler groups are strategically ignored, and even supported by the state.

It is important to note that physical structures such as walls and fences cannot in themselves create hostility and disconnection, nor do they independently ensure security or protection. Writing in the context of South Africa, Martin J. Murray (2011:207) notes how “one must be careful not to take an overly deterministic view of the power of architectural form”. He confirms that the “interdictory spaces provided by such impediments as partitions, walls, and barriers are not in themselves instruments of exclusion and confinement”. According to Murray (2011:207), none of these physical structures, security objects or surveillance technology “necessarily predisposes urban residents toward spatial practices that are grounded in racist ideologies”. He states:

There is no straight unswerving line from architectural design to the spatial politics of social exclusion and confinement. Yet the use of architecture as an instrument of spatial design is not a benign exercise that brings together aesthetics and technique under the guidance of skilled professionals and talented experts...architectural design neutralizes representation—making the built environment appear unproblematic, innocuous, and uncontroversial. Yet architecture and the built form

of the city possess a power that is largely concealed under the aesthetic veneer of tolerance, professionalism and creative artistry (Murray 2011:207).

Eyal Weizman describes the way in which Israeli soldiers have the power to radically alter and manipulate the geography of the Palestinian landscape and its cities through urban warfare. In the article *Walking through walls: Soldiers as architects in the Israeli–Palestinian conflict*, Weizman (2006:8) “reflect[s] upon an emergent relationship between armed conflicts and the built environment”. He also explains how this relationship is grounded in postmodern and critical theory, the same theory that is regularly used in oppositional critique.

Weizman interviews the commander of the IDF paratrooper brigade Aviv Kokhavi, who was in charge of the siege on Nablus and the Balata refugee camp⁸⁹ in April 2002 during the Second Intifada⁹⁰. Weizman (2006:8) notes the particular way in which Kokhavi conceptualises their attack on Nablus in terms of the idea of “walking through walls”. Kokhavi responds to Weizman (2006:8) concerning the way in which “the IDF conceived of this attack” by explaining that the army decided to look at the architecture of the space differently. Kokhavi states that he and his fellow soldiers interpreted physical spaces in terms of closure and threat. He emphasises the idea that people interpret spaces differently depending on who they are and what they need or desire from that space. For example, the IDF “interpreted the alley as a place forbidden to walk through, and the door as a place forbidden to pass through, and the window as a place forbidden to look through, because a weapon awaits us in the alley, and a booby trap awaits us behind the doors” (Weizman 2006:9). Kokhavi argues that the Palestinian “enemy interprets space in a traditional, classical manner” and that in order to avoid falling into the traps laid out by the enemy he must reject this interpretation. Furthermore, according to Kokhavi (in Weizman 2006:9), in order to “win” the war he must maintain the element of “surprise” by emerging from an “unexpected place”. Thus, as Kokhavi confirms, the IDF “opted for the method of moving through walls ... like a worm that eats its way forwards – appearing outside and then disappearing”. He states:

⁸⁹The operation led by Kokhavi in the “Kasbah (old city) of Nablus in Balata refugee camp alongside it... formed part of a larger operation known in Israel as ‘Defensive Shield’”(Weizman 2006:8). Operation ‘Defensive Shield’ is derived from the Hebrew name *Mivtza Homat Magen*, which translated literally means Operation Defensive Wall, and was an attack on Palestinian cities during the second Intifada in April 2002. Operation Defensive Shield involved a siege on Yasser Arafat’s compound in Ramallah and heavy curfews and restrictions on all cities in the West Bank. Suad Amiry in *Sharon and My Mother in Law* (2007) and Raja Shehadeh in *When the Bulbul Stopped Singing* (2004) write about the personal experience of confinement on the inside of homes that become like cages, rattled and shunted around, penetrated by soldiers and bulldozers with the power to violate the boundary between inside and outside.

⁹⁰The Second Intifada or Second Palestinian Uprising was a revolt against the Israeli occupation that started in September 2000 and ended in 2005.

We were thus moving from the interior of homes to their exterior in a surprising manner and in places we were not expected, arriving from behind and hitting the enemy that awaited us behind a corner... We took this micro-tactical practice [of moving through walls] and turned it into a method, and thanks to this method we were able to interpret the whole space differently!... I ordered my troops: friends! This is not for your consideration! There is no way of moving otherwise! If until now you were used to moving along roads and sidewalks, forget it! From now on we all walk through walls! (Kokhavi in Weizman 2006:9).

The attack on Nablus commenced on 3 April 2002 when the army disconnected the city's access to electricity and water as well as cutting off all telephone reception. They then "placed snipers and observations posts on the mountains and ... high buildings that surrounded it, and cordoned the city and its surrounding camps in a perimeter enclosure" (Weizman 2006:9). After closing different networks of connection between Palestinians living in Nablus and inflicting a rigid curfew on its citizens, "a large number of small military units entered ... from all directions simultaneously, moving through walls rather than the routes where they were expected" (Weizman 2006: 9). These soldiers ruptured the walls of private homes where Palestinians sleep, eat and live. These are homes inhabited by children and mothers, fathers and grandparents, they are not designated battlefields and their inhabitants are not enlisted soldiers.

Kokhavi informs Weizman (2006:9) about how he would instruct the soldiers to set up their camps during daylight hours in such a way that suggested a "forthcoming systematic siege operation" after which they would "apply a fractal manoeuvre swarming"⁹¹ simultaneously from every direction and through various dimensions on the enclave" (Weizman 2006). Weizman observes that the "new military techniques" employed by the Israeli army are grounded in "critical and postmodern theory, including the writings of Deleuze and Guattari, Bataille, and the Situationists". Weizman notes that these are often the same theoretical "tools through which forms of oppositional critique have themselves frequently been articulated". Mirzoeff (2011: 285-286) makes a similar point in *The Right to Look*, where he notes:

It was striking to observe the Israeli Defence Force making extensive use of poststructuralist thinkers like Deleuze and Guattari, the situationist Guy Debord, or the deconstructionist architect Brian Tschumi in thinking about how to fight urban

⁹¹Weizman describes swarming as a military technique used by Israeli soldiers which relates to the idea of decentralised nodes of power. Swarming is described by Kokhavi in Weizman as "a state military whose enemy is scattered as a network of sporadic gangs ... must liberate itself from the old concept of straight lines, linear formations of units, regiments and battalions ... and become itself much more diffused and scattered, flexible and swarm-like ... In fact it must adjust itself to the stealthy capability of the enemy.... Swarming to my understanding is simultaneous arrival to target from a large number of nodes – if possible from 360 degrees " (2006: 12).

counterinsurgency warfare in the period following the al-Aqsa intifada of 2000. If the conclusion was to begin walking through walls as a bizarre form of nomadism, meaning literally piercing holes in building walls to gain the element of surprise, the rhetoric of the Operational Theory Research Institute is nonetheless disconcertingly familiar to any reader of critical theory.

Weizman mentions the way in which the Second Intifada saw the use of bulldozers as strategic weapons. A survey conducted by Nurhan Abuidji confirms that more than half the buildings in Nablus were ruptured, perforated or destroyed by bulldozers and soldiers during the siege on Nablus in 2002 (Figure 5.13). Despite the IDF's positioning of this form of warfare as less violent, less invasive, and more "humanitarian", Weizman (2006:10) argues otherwise, noting the number of people whose deaths are hidden within the interior of Palestinian homes and framed as accidents arising from the need to build pathways for the IDF, rather than deliberate acts of violence and Israeli terrorism. The following excerpt from a testimony by a Palestinian woman from Nablus provides some insight into the Palestinian experience of this form of warfare:

Imagine it – you're sitting in your living room that you know so well, this is the room where the family watches TV together after the evening meal ... And, suddenly, that wall disappears with a deafening roar, the room fills with dust and debris and through the wall pours one soldier after the other, screaming orders. You have no idea if they're after you, if they've come to take over your home, or if your house just lies on their route to somewhere else. The children are screaming, panicking.... Is it possible to even begin to imagine the horror experienced by a five-year-old child as four, six, eight, twelve soldiers, their faces painted black, submachine guns pointed everywhere, antennas protruding from their backpacks, making them look like giant alien bugs, blast their way through that wall? (Aisha in Weizman 2006:10).

The trauma inflicted on civilians through this form of warfare is part of an intimidation technique used by the IDF to force Palestinian insurgents "into the streets and alleys" so that the army could "hunt them down" (Weizman 2006:10). Trapped within their homes with no form of communication between buildings, families are isolated and cornered within the very place that is supposed to offer protection and security. Thus the Palestinian home has become the battlefield that is determined by Israeli soldiers with the power to violently manipulate, deconstruct and reconstruct the private and public space within.



Figure 5.13: Film still from the documentary *Rebel Architecture: The Architecture of Violence* showing the way in which Israeli soldiers move through walls as a form of urban warfare. Al Jazeera (De Sousa 2014).



Figure 5.14: Film still from the documentary *Rebel Architecture: The Architecture of Violence* showing the way in which Israeli soldiers move through walls as a form of urban warfare. Al Jazeera (De Sousa 2014).

While the Second Intifada ended in 2005, the reorganisation and “reinterpretation” of the Palestinian “built environment” in terms of “armed conflict” has not ceased (Weizman 2006:9). One can argue that its methods and tools have only multiplied and become more sophisticated. The building of the Israeli apartheid wall and on-going destruction of Palestinian homes to make way for checkpoints, settlements, apartheid road networks and security buffer zones is testament to that⁹².

⁹²The terrorist attacks that increased during the Second Intifada are positioned as the primary motivating factor for Israel’s construction of the so-called security barrier and intensification of its military occupation and policing of civilian life in the OPTs. Yet it should be noted that the idea of building a physical barrier dividing the Palestinians from the Israelis was proposed in 1992 during the First Intifada by Yitzak Rabin (prime minister at the time). Two years later, a barrier was built between the Israeli town of Bat Hefer and the Palestinian town

In his discussion of urban warfare and the way in which architecture becomes a weapon used by the IDF as an oppressive mechanism, Weizman argues that the same weapon must be used to fight back or to resist this form of attack. Weizman has established the Forensic Architecture research agency at Goldsmiths, University of London. The agency developed ways in which to use architectural facts as evidence within legal and political battles. By analysing the built form and the destruction that is left behind, they are able to recreate the way in which the IDF have staged an attack (Figure 5.15 A and Figure 5.15 B). In analysing the minute details of where bombs are directed, where they come from, precisely what weapons have been used and the precise timing of the events, politicians and lawyers can use this architectural evidence to disprove Israel's claims regarding retaliation or protection when in fact their actions should be framed as organised attacks engineered to destabilise and terrorise the Palestinians.



Figure 5.15 A and Figure 5.15 B: Film stills from the documentary *Rebel Architecture: The Architecture of Violence* showing the way in which Forensic Architecture digitally reconstructs buildings that have been damaged by warfare. Al Jazeera (De Sousa 2014).

of Tulkarm. In the same year that Israel signed the Oslo Accords recognising the Palestinian right to self determination and self representation in the form of the PLO and agreeing to withdraw their presence from the Palestinian Territories, they also established the Shahal commission to begin planning the construction of a separation barrier. Peace negotiations such as the Oslo accords based on the rhetoric of 'finding a solution' have become diversion tactics that act as walls and barriers to Palestinian self determination while Israel continues to grab more land and create impossible living conditions for the Palestinians so that they leave the OPTs and Israel.



Figure 5.16 A Figure 5.16 B: Film stills from the documentary *Rebel Architecture: The Architecture of Violence* showing the way in which Forensic Architecture digitally reconstructs buildings that have been damaged by warfare and uses them as evidence. Al Jazeera (De Sousa 2014).

5.4 Oush Grab and Countervisuality



Name
Alessandro Petti

Date of birth
1973

Place of birth
Pescara, Italy

Current place of residence
Bethlehem

Self-identified nationality
Italian

Expertise
Architecture, Urban Planning, Author

Relevant qualifications
BA, Architecture, 2000 (IUAV)
MA Architecture, 2001 (IUAV)
Honorary Professorship (Al Quds University)

Relevant projects
DAAR, 2007-present (co-director and founding member)

Sex
Male

Forced/chosen
Chosen

Photo credit:
Adam Ferguson for the New York Times

Period of engagement in 'visual narratives of division'
December 2014– present

Figure 5.17: Guide Profile for Alessandro Petti. Compiled by Rachel Baasch (2016).

The Decolonizing Architecture Art Residency (DAAR) was established in 2007 by Eyal Weizman, Sandi Hilal and Allesandro Petti as an “architectural practice” and an “artistic residency programme” (www.decolonizing.ps 2016). As architects and academics, their “aim was to extend the analytical reach of their respective investigations” and individual projects in order to engage with the spatial realities of colonisation, occupation and apartheid in a practical and “propositional manner” within the context of Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories (DAAR 2015). Projects which are part of the proposed “decolonization” of specific sites such as the Oush Grab Military Base in Beit Sahour (Figure

5.1) identify and make use of “cracks and loopholes within existing colonial systems of separation and control” (Hilal et al. 2013:31).



Name
Sandi Hilal

Date of birth
1973

Place of birth
Bethlehem, West Bank OPT

Current place of residence
Beit Sahour, West Bank OPT

Self-identified nationality
Palestinian

Expertise
Architecture, Urban Planning, Author

Relevant qualifications
MA Architecture and Urban Planning ,2001 (University of Sapienza,Rome)
PHD, Cross Border Policy and everyday life, 2006 (University of Trieste in Italy)

Relevant projects
DAAR, 2007-present (co-director and founding member)

Sex
Female

Forced/chosen
Chosen

Photo credit:
Adam Ferguson for the New York Times

Period of engagement in ‘visual narratives of division’
December 2014– present

Figure 5.18: Guide profile for Sandi Hilal. Compiled by Rachel Baasch (2016).

One of the features of an “elastic” geography such the West Bank is that colonial architecture including (in this case) watchtowers and military bases can be left unoccupied during periods of relative calm (Weizman 2007:6). Located at the entrance to the town of Beit Sahour just outside of Bethlehem, the Oush Grab military base is one such example. Historically, Oush Grab has served as a strategic military outpost and site for the authorising of “visuality” as a supplement to colonial and military agendas since the early 1900s (Mirzoeff 2011). The site of the base, positioned at the edge of Beit Sahour, just before the desert begins, on a hill with a clear 360 degree view of the geography in that area renders it the ideal location for a military outpost. Before the base was claimed by the IDF in 1967, it was utilised by the Jordanian army as a military base. Between 1936 and 1939, prior to the Jordanian army occupying the space, Oush Grab was controlled by British troops during the “Arab Revolt” and the British mandate period (Hilal et al. 2013:10). There is speculation that, before the British took over the base, it was an “Ottoman outpost” yet there is insufficient evidence to support this narrative (Hilal et al. 2013). There are also rumours that the base was used by the

“Roman legion” yet there is no official “proof” to substantiate this claim either (Hilal et al. 2013:10).



Figure 5.19: Documentation of the Watch Tower in Oush Grab, 2008. Photograph by Francesco Mattuzzi.

The town of Beit Sahour, the home of the DAAR studio, is historically significant as a site of “common”⁹³ struggle since the beginning of the First Intifada⁹⁴ where “internationals, Palestinians and Israeli Jews would struggle together against the occupation and colonialism” (Hilal et al. 2013:17). The town is home to popular resistance movements⁹⁵ and organised

⁹³ Hilal et al. explain that, during the time of the First Intifada, the “term ‘joint’ was used to describe the kind of struggle being waged...today the term common is perhaps the more apt to describe the struggle because it does not assume that pre-existing identities are coming together” (Hilal et al. 2013:17).

⁹⁴ The First Intifada was the first uprising of Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip territories against the Israeli occupation. “The uprising is said to have begun in December 1987” when an IDF truck collided with a civilian vehicle, killing four Palestinians in the Jabalia refugee camp (Said 1989:5). Palestinians responded with armed resistance and civil disobedience. This included general strikes and economic boycotts where Palestinians refused to pay taxes to Israeli administrators, refused to drive Palestinian cars with Israeli number plates and refused to work in the Israeli settlements in factories making Israeli products. In addition to this Palestinians built barricades to prevent Israeli access into certain areas and engaged in the throwing of stones and Molotov cocktails. Israel responded to the uprising by firing at Palestinians, resulting in a total death count of between 1162 and 1204 Palestinians. A total of 100 Israeli civilians and 60 IDF soldiers were killed over the duration of the First Intifada, which ended formally in 1991 but actually continued informally until 1993 when the Oslo Accords were signed. For a more in-depth discussion of the First Intifada, see Said, E. (1989): *Intifada and Independence*, in Z. Lochman & J.Beinin, eds. *Intifada: The Palestinian Uprising Against Israeli Occupation*. Cambridge: South End Press.

⁹⁵ According to Hilal et al., “During the First Intifada, when schools were closed by a military order, self-organized neighborhood committees established a network of alternative education study groups within homes and car garages, where the reading list included Ghassan Kanafani, Mao, Hanna Mina, Sahar Khalifeh, Trotsky, Naji al-Ali, Karl Marx, and Emile Habibi”.

opposition such as the “White Intifada”⁹⁶ in 1989 (Hilal et al. 2013:17). It is also the place where the Alternative Information Centre⁹⁷ was established in 1984 as well as the International Solidarity Movement founded in 2001. According to Hilal et al. (2013:17), “its recent history is intertwined with the ideal of borderless solidarity and a secular, democratic, inclusive, non-armed struggle”. In noting the need to locate “common platforms for a common struggle against a system of inequality and control”, Hilal et al. (2013:18) suggest that the town of Beit Sahour provides the right kind of “common platform” to engage in experimental processes of decolonisation and future speculation.

By insisting on the need to decolonise Palestine, Hilal et al. (2013:18) assert that the appropriate framework for understanding the situation in Palestine is one of colonisation, and thus “decolonization is necessary”. In negotiating the need to decolonise Palestinian spaces marked by Israeli colonisation and occupation, DAAR have carefully considered the contemporary meaning of decolonisation as a concept, and the possible ways in which one goes about decolonising architectural structures embedded in colonial narratives.

Instead of focusing on the ideas of revolution and solution that dominate discussions around the Israeli–Palestinian conflict, DAAR have directed their energy into conceptualising “the morning after” (Hilal et al. 2013:24). They have elected to focus their efforts on how to deal with the architectural structures of the Israeli occupation and colonisation if and when they have been abandoned. A revolution depends on a single definitive moment and does not account for what will happen after the revolution. The idea of finding a solution to the Israeli–Palestinian conflict is problematic. Finding a solution suggests that there is an endpoint, a fixed state that can be reached. Decolonisation is an ongoing process of transformation; it is neither a fixed solution, nor is it a momentary departure from a previous condition.

Hilal et al. (2013:19) note that “the handing over of colonial buildings and infrastructure is always a dilemma for the user, for it is torn between two contradictory desires: destruction and reuse”. “If architecture is a weapon in a military arsenal that implements the power

⁹⁶ The White Intifada was a campaign of “non-armed civil disobedience” that took place in Beit Sahour in 1989 during the First Intifada. Members of the Beit Sahour community refused to pay taxes to the Israeli occupying forces. The Israeli powers responded to the White Intifada with violence and various forms of collective punishment such as placing the town under curfew for 42 days and cutting off the city’s phone lines.

⁹⁷ The Alternative Information Centre (AIC) plays an important role in educating tourists and visitors to Israel and the OPTs regarding the socio-political situation and its history. I refer to the AIC in Chapter Six: Political Tourism and the Israeli Apartheid Wall as part of my discussion on tourism.

relations of colonialist ideologies”, then according to Hilal et al. (2013:19) “architecture must burn”.

In talking of destruction as an option, Hilal et al. cite the case of the Israeli settlements in Gaza that were evacuated in 2005. The IDF bulldozed and destroyed the settlements resulting in the creation of toxic waste that has poisoned the soil and the water. Thus, instead of being able to build new Palestinian homes and towns, these sites are abandoned; wasted land and wasted resources that continue to contaminate Palestinian space.

From this perspective, the liberation from colonisation necessitates the destruction of its forms and structures. Destruction prevents the replication of colonial power dynamics that take place when those structures are reused by new authorities. Hilal et al. (2013: 20–21) confirm:

Reusing the evacuated structures of Israel’s domination in the same way as the occupiers did – the settlements as Palestinian suburbs and the military bases for Palestinian security needs—would mean reproducing their inherent alienation and violence: the settlements system of fences and surveillance technologies would inevitably enable their seamless transformation into gated communities for the Palestinian elite.

In considering destruction as a possible solution to the architectural weapons of a colonial regime, Hilal et al. (2013:20) refer to Franz Fanon, who argues that in order “to destroy the colonial world” one must demolish the “colonialists city”, burying the aspects of this process. After a revolution or shift from the condition of coloniality to one of post-coloniality, certain theoreticians claim that the leftover structures and buildings of the colonising powers must be destroyed; if they are re-used by the new post-colonial powers, there is a very big chance that they will be used for the same kind of oppressive purpose as they were used for under colonial administration. Yet there is another side to destruction. Destruction can be wasteful and toxic. When Israel evacuated the settlements in Gaza they also destroyed the buildings and the infrastructure; in doing this they created a large amount of toxic waste that has now contaminated the soil and water in the area, making it uninhabitable. These sites are now wastelands.

Hilal et al. suggest that Giorgio Agamben's (2007:23) concept of "profanation" might be a useful way to negotiate decolonisation. In his essay *In Praise of Profanation*, Agamben (2007:23) explains that the "sacred" is that which is separated from man, things that in some way "belonged to the Gods," removed from "common use" by human beings. Thus, "in the strict sense, profane is the term for something that was once sacred or religious and is returned to the use and property of men." The project *Return to Nature* proposed by DAAR can be considered a profanation of the colonial architecture and the 'religion' or ideological belief system it represents. While colonialism might not be considered a religion in itself, it has the properties of a religion as defined by Agamben. Religion separates things as special, sacred, not for use by the common human being. Similarly, the colonial structure is intended for use by a select elite, whether the members of a colony who have settled in another country or military personnel. A space like the Oush Grab military base is removed from common use. The people of Beit Sahour are denied access, kept at a distance from the symbol of power elevated on a hilltop. The profanation of the base as a method of decolonisation would ideally return the structure and its surrounding space to common use.

5.4.1 The evacuation of Oush Grab

The Oush Grab base was officially evacuated by the Israeli Defence Force in 2006 (one year after the Second Intifada had ended) and placed under the Beit Sahour municipality. In *Architecture after Revolution*, Hilal et al. (2013:8) elaborate on some of the projects and events that have taken place on this site. They note that, a few years before Oush Grab was abandoned by the IDF, a group of international and local protesters "broke into the military base and called for its immediate removal" (Hilal et al. 2013:8). Apparently the soldiers positioned within the building were "taken completely by surprise, and did nothing but watch" (Hilal et al. 2013:8). Although this action did not result in the immediate evacuation of the base, the response of the soldiers could be viewed in terms of "countervisuality". Mirzoeff (2011:24) states that "the performative claim of a right to look where none exists puts a countervisuality into play". The protesters who enter the forbidden territory risk their own protection in order to assert the "right to look" in a designated military zone. Although the action is brief (and arguably insignificant), the surprised response of the soldiers who purportedly did "nothing but watch" perforates visibility's "aura of authority" just long

enough to disrupt the seemingly impermeable blanket of Israeli surveillance and control. The inability to see into a watchtower such as that of the Oush Grab base (Figure 5.2), means that the person situated on the outside looking in is generally uncertain as to whether there is someone on the inside of the structure looking out.

Since 2006, the Oush Grab military space has been a site of continuous tension. Initially the space was visited by members of the Beit Sahour community and utilised by DAAR as an ‘optical apparatus’ from which they initiated a process of “imaginative speculation” (Hilal et al. 2013:9). Documenting the early stages of engagement with the base, shortly after its evacuation, Hilal et al. (2013:9) note that “people experienced the first moment of access to the military outpost differently”. Using the site as an “optical apparatus” allows for the reversal of viewpoints, such as that depicted in the photograph taken by Francesco Muttuzzi from inside the Oush Grab watchtower (Figure 5.20). People positioned on the inside looking out had a brief moment to see how they may have been viewed from the ‘perspective of the oppressor’ (Hilal et al. 2013:9). There was a degree to which the structure and those who controlled it were demystified. The abandoning of the Oush Grab military base presented a moment for citizens to look at their space from the position of the visualiser. The perspective offered through this reversal of the direction of looking presented a moment of autonomy and self-determination. From the outside looking in, it is difficult or even impossible to see into the watchtowers or walk around the inside of the base in order to view its building in proximity to one’s own body.



Figure 5.20: The view from inside the Oush Grab military base overlooking the town of Beit Sahour in the West Bank, reproduction courtesy of the Decolonizing Architecture Art Residency. Photograph by Francesco Mattuzzi, 2008 (Hilal et al. 2013:14-15).

According to Hilal et al. (2013:9):

For some, it was a moment of spontaneous transgression. Entering the watchtowers overlooking Beit Sahour, we had the feeling we had accessed the control room in a panopticon prison, sharing for an instant the perspective of the oppressor. Inside we discovered graffiti (of the kind more commonly found in toilets) written by a soldier musing about the sunrise and the atmosphere of the city in the early morning.

In 2008, DAAR and the Beit Sahour community collaborated with the Palestinian Wildlife Society and other activist groups to alter the site's function and turn it into a community park. The creation of buffer zones and no man's lands surrounding the Oush Grab tower meant that the area became the perfect place for plants, birds and animals to inhabit. Oush Grab is positioned at the intersection of more than "500 million birds that fly over the Jordan valley during their autumn and spring migrations". According to Hilal et al. (2013: 123):

These large flocks of birds have their regular points of orientation, and the former military base of Oush Grab overlooking Bethlehem is located along the narrow bottleneck of this path...twice a year, for a few weeks each autumn and spring, tens of thousands of birds land on the hilltop. Around them, a temporary micro-ecology of small predators and other wildlife forms.

Because the base has remained free of human presence for long periods of time, the fortifications in Oush Grab, designed to keep “the enemy” outside, created an “untouched space inside” rendering the environment ideal for wildlife. Hilal et al. (2013:123) describe the “re-orientation” of this site through birdwatching when Imad Al Atrash (director of the Palestine Wildlife Society “leaped onto the abandoned watchtower, quickly followed by his students” in February 2008.



Figure 5.21 Imad Al Atrash atop the watchtower in Oush Grab. Photograph by Francesco Mattuzi, 2008. Copyright DAAR (image courtesy of Decolonizing Architecture Art Residency) sourced from DAAR website.

This action, documented in Figure 5.21, disregards the history of this colonial structure; it is an “irreverent act” that disregards the “sacred” nature of the base as something reserved for persons in a position of power. “Imad and his students” are not concerned with deliberately altering the site’s function; their actions are governed by their “commitment to the practical

demands of bird watching” Hilal et al (2013:123). Their treatment of the site is refreshing, the birdwatchers are “oblivious to any symbolic meaning” and their actions do not “transform the watchtower into a museum nor did [they] undo its military history”, yet in their practical reorientation of the site’s function they have added a new narrative layer completely apart from the oppressive history of the site.

When news of the park’s success circulated in the region, one of the settler groups, known as “the Women in Green”, proclaimed the establishment of a new Jewish settlement named Shdema and began a process of claiming the base through various forms of vandalism, graffiti and occupation (Hilal et al. 2013:135). At the time of writing this article, Alessandro Petti (2014) reported that the future of the Oush Grab military base remains uncertain. According to Hilal et al. (2013:137), “in the winter of 2013, a permit [had] been given to establish the settlement of Shdema”. If the settlement were to be built and fortified, the area would become the “last link closing the chain of colonies surrounding and strangling Bethlehem” (Hilal et al. 2013:137). The park has been destroyed and the watchtower can no longer be used as an ‘optical apparatus’ to return the authoritative gaze of the visualiser or subvert the original intentions of its construction. There is speculation that Oush Grab “might become a military base again” (Hilal et al. 2013:137).

In response to this, DAAR have proposed the project *Return to nature* (Figures 5.22 and 5.23), which suggests that the buildings be rendered inhospitable and uninhabitable to human life. *Return to nature* would involve a “perforation of all the external walls of the buildings ... with a series of equally spaced holes”, eroding the division between an inside and outside so that a place like Oush Grab is rendered dysfunctional to a particular purpose. If the proposal were executed, the base would no longer serve as a secure point from which to control and monitor individuals in a hostile and unfriendly scenario.



Figure 5.22: *Return to nature*, Sara Pellegrini and DAAR, 2013.



Figure 5.23: *Return to nature*, Sara Pellegrini and DAAR, 2013.

5.5 Chapter Exit Point

The implementation of defensive technology such as walls, razor wire, electric fencing and alarm systems within the structures of homes, communities, cities and states is indicative of a social climate of fear and insecurity that is extreme but not unique to the Palestinian context. While these features are reactions and responses to a fear of violence and risk, they also increase fear and deepen segregation, thereby aggravating some of the social, political and economic factors that contribute to and result in an exacerbation of the threats that are being designed against. Architecture is employed strategically by the Israeli Defence Force and the Israeli state within Israel and the OPTs. It is possible to read this architecture as evidence of colonial violence and urban warfare. The “slow violence” of Israeli architecture and the built form creeps through Palestinian spaces in an insidious, menacing manner (de Sousa 2014). In the West Bank OPTs, architectural divisions assert the authority of colonial visibility and deny the “right to look” (Mirzoeff 2011:1). Rather than serving their purpose of making one feel safe, “technology built for protection helps reinforce the perception of each other as a threat to security and livelihood” (Leuenberger 2013:9).

The authority claimed by visibility relies on the belief that only one group may see while the other may not; it further relies on the notion that those denied the right to look, can never at any point subvert its gaze. Thus, in the briefest moment that the subject of visualisation looks back, the potential to rearrange the relations of the visible and the sayable are set in motion and shifts in perspective are activated. To subvert the authority of the Israeli hegemonic gaze for even the briefest moment in time might just signify the possibilities for future punctures and perforations of seemingly impermeable distinctions between an inside and an outside. Projects that challenge the “authority of visibility” have the potential to offer alternative points of view and directions for looking that may in time result in the facilitation of “mutual” recognition of the “right to look” and the right to exist in a context that is regularly deemed hopeless and framed within a circular narrative of conflict, dispossession and division (Mirzoeff 2011:1).

Chapter 6 Sites of Division: Political Tourism and the Aestheticising of the Israeli Apartheid Wall

6.1 Chapter Entry Point

Researchers, artists, journalists, academics, activists and those who consider themselves ‘politically conscious’ travel to Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories to witness, protest, document and gather experiential information about the ongoing colonisation, apartheid and occupation of historic Palestine. Most of these activities are done with good intention – individuals seek to understand the lived experience of people in these places or to record images and stories for the purpose of educating others or to draw the world’s attention to the architecture of military occupation through artworks and slogans placed on the surface of walls and other symbolic surfaces. In response to the socio-political reality of Israel and the OPTs, an economy of “political tourism”⁹⁸ – framed as a form of “alternative tourism” – has emerged that caters to the particular needs and perceived agenda of certain visitors to the area (Clarke 2000:12). This type of site-seeing takes place in physical sites where divisions of power privilege certain perspectives while masking or denying others. Political tourism is certainly not the only form of site-seeing active in the West Bank. There are a number of other tourists who travel to this region and have been doing so for centuries for a myriad of purposes, including religious pilgrimage, an interest in architecture or archaeology or in order to visit family and friends. Historic Palestine (now Israel and the OPTs) is a significant site for Muslims, Christians and Jews, with “Christian pilgrimage” making up “nearly 60% of tourists” (Muaddi 2012:3). At the same time, the discourse of fear and threat that exists in relation to these spaces has resulted in insecurity and hesitancy when it comes to travelling beyond Israel’s complex borders into the OPTs. This has had a negative effect on “traditional mass-tourism” and other forms of tourism in the area which Isaac (2010b), Muaddi (2012) and Kassis (2013) position as a strong motivating factor for the emergence of “alternative tourism”.

In this chapter I analyse “political tourism” as a sub-genre of “alternative tourism” within a Palestinian context (Moynagh 2008:3). I describe my personal experience of participating in

⁹⁸ I use the term political tourism as it includes the idea of ‘justice tourism’ and ‘solidarity tourism’, both of which have an underlying political agenda. While ‘justice tourism’ applies to tourism that actively upholds basic human rights and seeks to positively impact the local economy, ‘political tourism’ is often used in a Palestinian context to describe the different forms of alternative tourism including wall tourism, volunteer tourism, cultural tourism or study tourism. When using the term ‘political tourism’, Palestinians are somewhat critical of the industry, looking at it in terms of both negative and positive manifestations. The labels ‘justice tourism’ and ‘solidarity tourism’ have immediate positive associations, whereas the idea of ‘political tourism’ allows space for critique.

one of the Green Olive Tours to Bethlehem and Hebron in October 2013. I narrate my experience of the tour with the aid of the Palestinian tour guide, Samer Kokaly (Figure 6.1) and provide visual examples in the form of my own documentation of the tour and the sights it negotiates. My discussion is substantiated with information provided by Rami Kassis (2013) of the Alternative Tourism Group (ATG) and Rami Khalil Isaac (2009; 2010a; 2010b), who address the issue of alternative tourism within the Palestinian context. After describing the contours of the alternative tourism landscape and political tourism as a sub-genre of alternative tourism, I unpack some of the perceived positive and negative aspects of it in relation to artworks made on the Israeli apartheid barrier wall. I delve a little deeper into the phenomenon of “wall tourism” and the issue of beautifying the Israeli apartheid wall (Isaac 2009:247). I consult Malu Halasa’s (2013) essay *Oppressive Beauty: Against Aestheticizing the Wall* and describe my observations of artists painting the apartheid wall in Bethlehem. I consider the potential for certain forms of political tourism to assist in shifting the way in which visitors and tourists perceive places such as Palestine. At the same time I argue that certain manifestations of the economy of political tourism as it exists in places like the West Bank OPT run the risk of “aestheticizing” and therefore normalising an abnormal socio-political circumstance (Mirzoeff 2011:4).

After critiquing the political tourism industry in Bethlehem, I return to Ramallah, where I address some of the arguments surrounding this aestheticising process and interrogate the way in which the Area D hostel in Ramallah frames the apartheid wall and Israeli occupation in a problematic respect through advertising strategies and representations. In Ramallah I consider how one should engage responsibly with representations of Palestine and Palestinians. Guided by the Palestinian artist Hasan Daraghme, I address the potential for spectacular, sensationalised images and representations to desensitise the viewer and mask other aspects of a Palestinian reality. In video works such as *I’m so high on you*, 2012 (a collaboration with the artist Noor Abed), Daraghme responds to issues of framing and the way in which the camera can serve as a distancing mechanism. His explorations of “stillness and movement in the Palestinian landscape” translate into works that examine the difficulty of locating sites of intimacy and human connection in the face of multiple disruptions and mediating policies, structures and systems of distance and division in the West Bank (Sherwell 2015:1).

There are two key questions guiding this chapter that read as follows:

Firstly: What are the implications of ‘site-seeing’ and ‘visuality’ in terms of ‘political tourism’ and its potential to perpetuate stereotypical modes of cultural consumption and production in parts of the global South such as the Palestinian West Bank?

Secondly: How do artists, academics, researchers and journalists who occupy positions of relative privilege navigate the process of looking in this context in a way that does not reinforce hierarchical power structures which enable national projects of separation, exclusion and ultimately erasure?

6.2 Political Tourism in The West Bank OPT

6.2.1 Alternative Tourism

“Alternative tourism”⁹⁹ is a vague and ambiguous term (Butler 1992:31). In order to define it one must first identify what form of tourism it is an alternative to. Butler (1992:31) argues that “alternative tourism” is a reaction to mass tourism, and is characterised by large groups of people travelling to seaside ‘resorts’ and ‘clubmed’ destinations where unattractive, imposing architecture has been slapped onto an existing landscape (to support the mass tourism industry) with little to no consideration for the actual environment or the people who already live within it. Tacky, tasteless theme parks, “environmental degradation” and cultural homogenisation are generally associated with this form of tourism (Butler 1992:31). In his discussion of justice tourism, (a sub genre of alternative tourism closely related to political tourism), Rami Kassis (2006:1), director of the Alternative Tourism Group based in Beit Sahour in Palestine, elaborates on the way in which the tourism industry can have a positive impact on local places by “allowing contact between different peoples” and facilitating “intercultural exchange and tolerance”. He notes that the tourism industry “has also become a vital resource for developing local economies” and that in an ideal situation “it promotes job creation, infrastructure development, and economic growth and stability”. Unfortunately the world is becoming increasingly divided and unjust. Kassis (2006:1) notes that this “ideal” of a fair and mutually beneficial exchange between tourists and hosts is regularly “disturbed by

⁹⁹ According to Isaac (Isaac 2010a), the “[l]abels for the alternative to mass tourism include ‘alternative tourism’ (Eadington & Smith, 1992), ‘responsible tourism’ (Wheeler, 1991), ‘new tourism’ (Mowforth & Munt, 2003; Poon, 1993), ‘soft tourism’ (Sharpley, 2000), ‘low-impact tourism’ (Wearing & Neil, 1999, p. 5), ‘special interest tourism’ (Douglas, Douglas, & Derret, 2001) and ‘sustainable tourism’” (Wheeler, 1993).

the imbalance in the encounter between wealthy Western visitors and poor local populations”. Kassis (2006:1) argues that this power imbalance in the touristic encounter tends “to place local cultures in a position of inferiority”. In the following excerpt from his paper *The Palestinians and Justice Tourism*, Kassis (2006:1) elaborates on the problematic aspects of mass tourism:

Instead of acting as a forum for cultural exchange, this kind of dysfunctional tourism often leaves host peoples feeling that the visitors’ culture is superior. This can lead either to attempts to adopt Western culture at the expense of local ways of life, or conversely, to legitimate feelings of hostility towards Western influence on the part of host populations. Traditional mass-tourism can cause disturbances and discomfort in the everyday lives of the host population if priority is given to the establishment of infrastructure geared towards tourists to the detriment of local businesses, marketplaces, schools, and places of worship, as well as the local environment.

According to Isaac (2010a:23), “alternative tourism” has been defined in opposition to, and as a desirable replacement for, conventional “mass tourism”. This definition suggests that traditional mass tourism exists on one end of the tourism spectrum while alternative tourism exists on the other end. If one is looking for an alternative to mass tourism, something that can replace it, then one is also suggesting that the thing itself (mass tourism) is negative – a problem that needs fixing. If approached uncritically, this frames alternative tourism as a positive “substitute” or clean break away from the perceived problems with mass tourism, and positions alternative tourism as the ultimate solution to the uglier side of the tourism industry (Isaac 2010a:23). Butler (1992: 31) describes alternative tourism as a “widely used and abused” term that is applied indiscriminately and without understanding. He argues that the phrase alternative tourism “sounds attractive” and implies thoughtfulness, “concern” and careful consideration, signifying a “new approach” to an “old problem”.

Alternative tourism is framed as a form of tourism that does not negatively impact the geographical environment and the people living within it and does not reinforce unequal power dynamics between visitors and the local inhabitants of a place. It is positioned as a form of tourism that is sensitive and considerate, that tries to have a positive impact or at least no impact on a place. Eadington and Smith (1992:3 in Isaac 2012:23) support this definition and characterise alternative tourism as “forms of tourism that are consistent with natural, social and community values, which allow both hosts and guests to enjoy positive and worthwhile interactions and shared experiences”. Political tourism is a sub-genre of

alternative tourism that relates closely to the category of “justice tourism”¹⁰⁰ or solidarity tourism (www.alternativetours.com 2008:1). Alternative Tours (2008:1) characterises “political tourism” as comprising of tours that are “often...located in areas of conflict or social strife and aim to educate visitors about the issues” through exposure and commentary.

6.2.2 Green Olive Tours: Political Tourism in Action

Green Olive Tours work in collaboration with the Alternative Tourism Group (ATG) to provide “alternative tours” in Israel and the West Bank OPT (Schlomka 2016:1). In October 2013 I participated in one of the Green Olive Tours day trips to Bethlehem and Hebron.

When booking the tour I studied the descriptions provided on the web site and the customer reviews that promised to provide the tourist with an “eye-opening” experience. The group I joined were collected from the Young Men’s Christian Association (YMCA) just outside the Old City in Jerusalem. From this pick up point we were driven to the Bethlehem checkpoint, where we were handed over to a Palestinian tour guide named Samer Kokaly (Figure 6.1). Kokaly cannot enter the Jerusalem OPT as he does not possess the necessary permits or blue Israeli ID. Technically the tour begins without our Palestinian tour guide while we are still in Jerusalem, before we are handed over to Kokaly at the Bethlehem checkpoint¹⁰¹.

Kokaly is welcoming, open and animated as a guide. He wastes no time and launches into introductions: “I am Samer Kokaly a Christian from Bethlehem, a Palestinian Arab Christian”. He tells us that many people are not aware that before modern Jewish colonisation and Israeli occupation, “Christian, Jewish and Muslim Arabs lived together in Palestine”¹⁰². He insists emphatically that the current situation in Israel and the OPTs is not the result of “deep religious hatred between Arab Muslims and European Jews”; rather it is the result of a “complicated history of forced colonisation, dehumanisation and military occupation”. It is important for him that he shows us the “reality” of Israeli occupation as influencing the desperate and violent actions of extremist groups so often positioned as ciphers of all Palestinians, everywhere. He also takes the time to express the fact that Palestinians do not

¹⁰⁰ Other sub-categories of alternative tourism are “volunteer tourism”, “political tourism”, “justice tourism”, “adventure tourism”, “cultural tourism”, “ecological tourism”, “study tourism”, “sustainable tourism” and “volunteer tourism”(www.alternativetours.com 2008:1)

¹⁰¹ The Bethlehem checkpoint is one of the few remaining entry points to the city and is almost entirely closed in by the Israeli apartheid wall, military buffer zones and illegal settlements. Most sections of the wall in this part of the West Bank stand at eight metres high interspersed with watchtowers that are erratically occupied.

¹⁰²This is a sentiment affirmed by Anis Daraghma on my first fieldwork trip in the West Bank.(Baasch & Daraghma 2013b)

share one homogenous “Arab Muslim identity” characterised by extremism and some sort of innate violence (Kokaly 2013).



Photo credit:
Rachel Baasch, Hebron 2013

Name
Samer Kakaly

Date of birth
1969

Sex
Male

Place of birth
Bethlehem, West Bank OPT

Current place of residence
Bethlehem, West Bank OPT

Forced/chosen
Chosen

Self-identified nationality
Palestinian

Expertise
Tour guide

Relevant qualifications
Tourism & Air studies, Thessaloniki, Greece

Relevant projects
Alternative Tourism Group (ATG)
(operations manager)

Period of engagement
October 2013 –June 2014

Figure 6.1: Guide profile for Samer Kokaly. Compiled by Rachel Baasch (2016).

The group I joined consisted of a diverse selection of people who did not fit the typical profile of a “political tourist”¹⁰³ (Moynagh 2008:3). Most of them were visiting Jerusalem and staying in the Old City or a hotel nearby; one couple had selected the three-day tour package that includes three nights accommodation with the Kokaly family in Bethlehem in the West Bank. A retired Christian couple from the United States have decided to see Bethlehem from this perspective “for themselves”, influenced by emerging sentiments in the US regarding Israel’s application of apartheid in the OPTs. The couple are evidently pleased that our guide is a Palestinian Christian who employs a ‘peace-oriented’ discourse. This tour is a bold detour for these two travellers who have journeyed to Historic Palestine with a religious pilgrimage agenda. A middle-aged couple from New Zealand on holiday have decided to find out more about the ‘rumoured’ Palestinians and take the opportunity to see Bethlehem “with their own eyes”. This tour covers Bethlehem and Hebron, and according to the website we “will visit holy sites, a refugee camp and hear about life under occupation

¹⁰³ Maureen Moynagh describes the “political tourist” as another manifestation of the cosmopolitan. She characterises the “political tourist” as someone who travels to places where “political instability” and the abuse of basic human rights is a reality, in order to learn and potentially educate others about the ongoing violation of the right to freedom, access to resources and safety of the person.

including the issues of confiscated land and the economic stranglehold that the occupation has placed on the city” (Schlomka 2016).

Kokaly (Kokaly 2013) warns the group that this particular tour is not an easy one to engage with. He explains that he can only guide this tour through Bethlehem and Hebron once or twice a week because he finds it emotionally draining and can leave him feeling hopeless. In Hebron visual narratives of division can be found in all the corners and crevices of the city. In Figures 6.2–6.4 I have documented the fencing that is used to catch the rubbish, urine, rocks, stones and other objects that Israeli settlers have thrown out their windows into the Palestinian market below. The market is desolate; only a few stalls remain and their owners are desperate to sell the few items they have on display. The owners of these stalls are well versed in the political tourism agenda and retell the story of Hebron, the trauma experienced by Palestinians living there and the impossible conditions under which they live, to anyone willing to listen. Their stories are sincere and correlate with the narratives of division retold by revisionist Israeli historian Ilan Pappé (Pappé 2006), and Palestinian author and human rights lawyer Raja Shehadeh as well as our tour guide, Samer Kokaly. These stories are emotive; they draw the tourist into the tragic dimensions of the world embodied by Palestinians. Emotive and sensationalised interactions can serve as a mask or barrier in their own respect: In finding oneself seduced by these narratives, it is also possible to lose sight of other less spectacular narratives of division and connection that also play out within this context.

Green Olive Tours provide visitors, who may otherwise have avoided such spaces, with the opportunity to come into physical contact with the structures and systems which implement division in the West Bank OPT. Part of the advertising for these tours includes references to safety and security – the bus collects you in West Jerusalem or Tel Aviv and in some instances you are returned to the collection point inside the ‘safety’ of Israel’s borders within a day, unless you have selected one of the longer visits (from about three days to two weeks). While the tours may indeed facilitate a ‘safe’ and educational journey into these spaces, they also run the risk of reinforcing the notion that the Palestinian West Bank and, by extension, the Palestinians who live there are to be treated with caution and that visiting these areas is indeed dangerous. The justification for Israel’s oppressive apartheid geography, continued military control and checkpoint system in these zones is based on the assertion that the Palestinians who live there are ‘terrorists’ and that these systems exist to protect Israeli

citizens and international tourists from the danger that exists beyond Israel's 'civilising' borders.

Green Olive Tours in collaboration with the Alternative Tourism Group offer the tourist an opportunity to gain knowledge about the Israeli–Palestinian conflict and the socio-political reality in Palestine through lived experience. According to Clarke (2000:18 in Isaac 2010b:587):

These tours differ from classical models of propaganda and ideology in that they are based in practice. Groups of people are led around the city, to be exposed to 'the reality' of the situation. They are encouraged to imagine what it must be like to live there, to appreciate the proximity of the other side and to take these experiences home with them to tell others. In this sense they are similar to the other forms of 'experimental travel', which offer the chance to see for yourself.

This form of political tourism is a welcome departure from the narratives propagated by Israeli tourism agencies and mainstream media. These tours do promote justice in Israel and the OPTs and certainly provide the space for international tourists to show their solidarity with the Palestinian struggle. These tourists generally leave Palestine with a greater awareness of the inhumane living conditions inflicted on the Palestinian people. Many of these tourists go on to inform family and friends back home about this reality, substantiating their claims with photographs, postcards and the retelling of stories told to them by Palestinians who work with the tour group and others encountered along the way. Thus, this example of political tourism, organised in collaboration with the Alternative Tourism Group, does indeed promote justice in the West Bank OPT. At the same time that one can acknowledge its value and even argue that its positive effect far outweighs its negative impact, there are still a few issues that should be addressed from a critical perspective.



Figure 6.2: Photographic documentation of items thrown from illegally occupied homes above the Palestinian market in the Old City of Hebron. Photograph by Rachel Baasch (2013d)



Figure 6.3: Photographic documentation of items thrown from illegally occupied homes above the Palestinian market in the Old City of Hebron. Photograph by Rachel Baasch (2013c).



Figure 6.4:Photographic documentation of the view through the fence that separates the Palestinian market place from the Jewish settlers who have illegally occupied Palestinian homes above them. Photograph by Rachel Baasch (2013c).

The continuous rhetoric of ‘seeing for your self’ can act as a wall in and of itself. The tours are planned, the Palestinians who work with Green Olive Tours are presenting a particular picture through the stories they tell and the sights they direct tourists to. From this perspective, one can argue that the tours are presenting a staged ‘reality’. The idea of truth that is used as an advertising strategy by Green Olive Tours is not insincere but should be seen as a performance of truth rather than The Truth with a capital T. The tours leave visitors with a sense of having gained insight and knowledge about the reality of Palestinian life under occupation, yet it must be noted that, no matter how sophisticated or nuanced a particular tour may be, it can only provide a certain degree of insight. There are things that one learns through spending an extended period of time visiting or living in a place that cannot be processed within a day, three days or even two weeks. Thus, to some extent, visitors may be fooled by the illusion of deeper understanding and greater knowledge and then go on to speak with authority about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and Palestinian victimisation.

There is a power dynamic favouring those with the privilege to move, to travel and to visit another country in order to witness the suffering of others that is problematic. Travelling even a short distance to see and experience a place of interest costs money. If one leaves the borders of one's own constructed nation state, passports and visas are necessary, as is the guarantee that one is permitted to enter through the boundaries of the desired destination and return home when the journey is complete. In this sense then, site-seeing is restricted to a small percentage of the global population and international travel is a luxury. The practice of site-seeing, of visiting places or physical sites of interest, is certainly not a new phenomenon, yet it is related to a degree of economic privilege and freedom of movement. The very concept of "holidays" and the ability to travel for pleasure "remain[s] an exclusionary and exclusive luxury" (Hutnyk 1996:x). Palestinians are denied the freedom of movement and access to the resources necessary to travel to other countries where they are in the position of looking rather than the subjects being looked at.

While sub-genres of alternative tourism such as political tourism, justice tourism and solidarity tourism may seem like a new and ideal form of tourism, academics such as John Hutnyk (1996:x) have interpreted it as a trendy manifestation of mass tourism that has arisen in response to market-driven demands, tapping into a new market of privileged "political tourists" (Moynagh 2008). Political tourism is generally a phenomenon in places where a "period of political instability" has passed and a place is deemed "safe to visit". Isaac cites the example of political tourism in a South African context where tourists can "learn about the obsolete political system of Apartheid" (Isaac 2010a: 23). One of the characteristics of political tourism in a Palestinian context that distinguishes it from other locations is that the "period of political instability" reported in the media is not yet "obsolete" and the OPTs have not been deemed "safe to visit"¹⁰⁴. This adds another perspective to the phenomenon of political tourism and its potential to perpetuate a colonial visibility complex within a Palestinian locale. The system that inflicts suffering on Palestinians and prevents them from exercising their right to freedom of movement has not ended. In this regard one might argue that the political tourism industry also runs the risk of aiding in the aestheticising and normalising of the occupation by turning the socio-political reality of Palestinians into a tourist attraction. The prison-like environment of the OPTs turns into a kind of living museum – where Palestinian suffering under the Israeli occupation is put on display,

¹⁰⁴ This is also a debatable point, depending on the perspective of a journalist, travel agency or tourism.

sensationalised, documented and consumed by curious tourists seeking an experience that differs dramatically to their own everyday reality. Hutnyk (date) argues that even the “most progressive and well-intentioned ‘alternative’ tourisms tend to create the illusion of ‘nice’ cottage capitalism, soothing ideological anxieties while extending the commercialization and the tourist industry”. In this line of argument, site-seeing within the framework of political tourism facilitates visibility by asserting the authority of a particular type of gaze embedded in privilege with the power to see a site and the people who live within it from a particular ‘top-down’ perspective.

I would like to add another dimension to this argument by using the example of Doung Anwar Jahangeer’s city walks that he conducts in South Africa. As a performance artist and architect, Jahangeer has appropriated the role of the tour guide as an artistic strategy that he uses to guide visitors and locals through parts of South Africa considered dangerous and undesirable as a result of socio-political instability and economic inequality. On the surface these city walks could be viewed as a form of political or ‘alternative’ tours such as those described by Steven Robins, who writes about township tours in Cape Town, South Africa, or the tours guided by Samer Kokaly in the West Bank. The artist invites people to meet him at a street corner in the city of Durban; from here he narrates different aspects of the city that he has acquired insider knowledge about through his long-term engagement with and investment in the communities who operate here. He introduces people to different parts of the city, including the marketplace where they are encouraged to try some of the food on offer or purchase items on sale. Jahangeer’s walks are political and he does not consider apartheid to be “obsolete” as Isaac suggests. During his walking tours he speaks about the legacy of apartheid and the way in which the apartheid logic of partition continues to shape the South African landscape. Jahangeer’s work is framed as a form of contemporary “performance art” that engages directly with narratives of division within a South African context.



Name
Doung Jahangeer

Date of birth
1996

Place of birth
Mauritius

Current place of residence
Durban, South Africa

Self-identified nationality
Mauritian-born, adopted South African

Expertise
Architect; artist

Relevant qualifications
Bachelor of Architecture (1993 – 1996);
Post-graduate Diploma (2000 – 2002)

Noteworthy artistic projects
Conceptualised and implemented *The City Walk* initiative

Sex
Male

Forced/chosen
Chosen

Photo credit:
xxx

Period of engagement in 'visual narratives of division'
July 2011 – present

Figure 6.5: Guide profile for Doung Jahangeer. Compiled by Rachel Baasch (2016).

The way in which practices are framed impacts their reception. Jahangeer is an artist who adopts the role of the tour guide; while he may intervene temporarily within a city or town, there is no discernible art object to speak of. Like the tours conducted by Samer Kokaly, participants take their own photographs, documenting aspects of the walk they would like to capture or remember. Jahangeer is narrating and performing different stories for those who walk with him and choose to listen. The differences between what Jahangeer is doing in South Africa as a performance artist and what Samer Kokaly is doing in Palestine as a tour guide are not all that far apart. If Jahangeer can be mistaken for a tour guide then perhaps Samer Kokaly can be mistaken for a performance artist. Like Jahangeer, Kokaly is presenting participants with a perspective on the political situation in the OPTs; his role is performative. Jahangeer has invested time and energy familiarising himself with the lived reality of South Africans in places like Durban in South Africa; these individuals have the choice to engage with those who participate in Jahangeer's *citywalks* and thus they have the choice to perform and narrate their own stories in the way that they choose. If one departs from the Western perspective of artists as creators of sacred objects that are removed from the everyday, and looks at the idea of the artist as "fabricator"¹⁰⁵, curator, collector of information with the intention to sensitise individuals to things they may otherwise have failed to notice, then

¹⁰⁵ When Serge Nitegeka is interviewed by Joan Legalamitiwa (2012) and asked when he decided he wanted to become an artist, he responds by explaining that he did not understand the idea of the artist when he was younger, but had always thought of himself as a "fabricator".

Kokaly could be framed as an artist. The fact that the political tours guided by Samer Kokaly have a performative aspect to them is not necessarily in and of itself problematic. The individuals attending the well-organised political tours are not the same people who uncritically appropriate the political situation in order to profit from it. The political tours are curated, choreographed and fabricated by the individuals who present their stories and engage with tourists because they want to. These Palestinians are not passive bystanders with no choice but to be observed by foreigners. Within the framework of the political tours organised by Green Olive Tours and the Alternative Tourism Group, Palestinians are insiders with insider knowledge of things that are unknown to the tourist. Individual Palestinians involved in the creation and execution of these tours are constructing and fabricating the picture they want to present to the outside world. In Israel and the OPTs this actually affords individuals a small amount of space and time in which they are able to represent themselves and counter the images and representations that are imposed on them by Israel and her collaborators.

6.3 Wall Tourism and the ‘Colonial Canvas’

Travelling with Kokaly to Bethlehem, one of the highlighted stops is a section of the Israeli apartheid wall where Banksy’s famous graffiti works are visible. Since the destruction of homes and businesses in Bethlehem with the Second Intifada, followed by the construction of the apartheid wall from 2002 onwards, the local economy of the city has been destroyed. The Palestinian inhabitants of this area have come up with innovative ways in which to use the apartheid wall in order to generate an income. Inhabitants of the city, especially those who own homes and businesses that have been destroyed or isolated by the wall’s path, are using the circumstances not only to generate an income through tourism, especially political tourism, but also to draw attention to the inhumane conditions that have been imposed on them. As a group, we are given time to look inside the “Banksy Shop” (Figure 6.5), where one can purchase reproductions of artworks on t-shirts and postcards. Just around the corner one can eat at “The Wall Steak House” or purchase curios from “The Wall Curio Shop”. Opposite The Wall Steak House, one of the business owners in the area has painted a white square that is used to project movies and football matches, as can be seen in Figure 6.6. Next to the homemade cinema, the owner of “The Wall Steak House” has placed a large picture of a piece of steak to advertise his business (Figure 6.7), and the thin artery that runs between the restaurant and the apartheid wall has been named “Wall Street” (Figure 6.8). Covering the

surface of the wall is a selection of artworks and graffiti that have been sprayed, painted or stuck on since 2002. Some of the images have been carefully rendered while others have been added quickly and somewhat carelessly. Certain parts of the wall have a thick layer of paint that has accumulated over time with different artists and individuals painting over old artworks and adding new ones. Slogans and signs of solidarity and disdain for the oppressive Israeli regime and presence in the area stretch up and across the concrete slabs. In some places the use of colour, shape and image are aesthetically pleasing. While the intentions of those who decorate and adorn the structure may be genuine displays of activism and solidarity, the implications of this kind of art making on those who actually inhabit the space is complex and contested.

6.3.1 Arguments in Favour of Placing Art on the Apartheid Wall

The first argument in favour of placing artwork on the apartheid wall claims that it draws attention to the reality of Palestinians living in an apartheid state under Israeli occupation. This gesture is translated by many Palestinians as a show of solidarity with the Palestinian struggle and is welcomed and embraced by many Palestinians. The second argument in favour of placing artworks on the apartheid wall is related to the creation of a wall tourism industry (as indicated in the previous description). In drawing attention to the apartheid wall through the use of graffiti, posters, paintings and photography, artists and activists have assisted in making the wall a sight/site of interest for other tourists, artists and activists to visit and add their contribution. The attention paid to artwork on the wall has also mobilised a number of other international artists and graffiti writers who travel to the area specifically to place artwork on the enormous wall ‘canvas’ and to assist in creating awareness of the apartheid structures and ideologies that control and divide the space. The wall has even been termed “the ultimate holiday destination for graffiti writers” (Wiles 2013). The third argument that positions artwork on the wall in a positive light is simply that it renders an architectural monstrosity like the Israeli apartheid wall a little easier to tolerate.

The fourth argument for the placing artwork on the barrier is related to the way in which the wall becomes a “space of democracy” for public expression, “taking art out of the museums and widening the sphere of politics” (Fouroudi 2016:8). In a space where basic freedom is denied to Palestinians, the wall (on the Palestinian side) serves as non-discriminatory ‘exhibition space’ where people of different artistic abilities are able to share a site of

expression. Thus, a section of wall may present an artwork by a popular internationally recognised artist while at the same time someone who lives near a section of the wall in Bethlehem, for example, is equally able to express or tag the space in the way that he/she chooses regardless of his/her artistic training or international reputation. It is when these artistic expressions enter the realm of representation in books and photographs or discussions that a form of hierarchy or privileging is reinstated. Most if not all the documentation of work that has been made on the wall itself cites and attributes specific images to specific artists; the problem with this is that most, if not all of the artists who are named and recognised are not Palestinian and do not live in these places. I am sure that the conscientious journalist or academic may have attempted to locate the Palestinian authors of various other works displayed on the wall, yet, for whatever number of reasons, they have remained unsuccessful. The second issue is concerned with language. While there is certainly a large portion of the expressive gestures on the structure which are written in Arabic, the majority of the messages conveying solidarity and disdain for the oppressive regime are written in English, Spanish or French. Thus one needs to ask: for whom these messages are intended?



Figure 6.6: Photographic documentation of the sign at the entrance to “Banksy’s Shop”. Photograph by Rachel (Baasch 2014c). *In Banksy’s shop one can purchase curios, postcards and other paraphernalia with reproductions of Banksy’s work and other artworks that have been added to the wall on them. In the shop one can also purchase spray paint in order to add one’s own artwork or gesture of solidarity to the wall.*



Figure 6.7: Photographic documentation of a section of the apartheid wall positioned opposite The Wall Steak House. Photograph by Rachel (Baasch 2014c). *In this image one can see how creative additions to the wall serve both a practical and symbolic purpose. The white square painted over the artwork onto the wall serves as a screen to project movies and football matches. To the right of the white square is a picture of a piece of steak, advertising The Wall Steak House restaurant opposite it.*



Figure 6.8: Photographic documentation of a section of the apartheid wall positioned opposite The Wall Steak House. Photograph by Rachel (Baasch 2014c). *Here the wall has been used to advertise The Wall Steak House restaurant with a blown up photograph of a piece of steak.*



Figure 6.9: Photographic documentation of a section of the apartheid wall. Photograph by Rachel Baasch (2014c). In this image one can see that the street name “Wall Street” has been placed on the wall in Bethlehem.

6.3.2 Arguments Against the Placing of Artwork on the Israeli Apartheid Wall

Palestinian academics, artists and members of the public who live in the shadow of the wall or theorise its multiple facets have problematised these gestures. The first argument against the placing of artworks on the apartheid wall is connected to the idea of the wall as a ‘colonial canvas’. At the *Contestations, Emotions! Social and Artistic expressions in the Public Space* conference held at Birzeit University in February 2014, a conference attendee¹⁰⁶ raised a valid point concerning the idea of artwork on the wall as a form of resistance: she argued that the Israeli apartheid wall should not be considered an active site of resistance or subversion (Birzeit University 2014). As far as she is concerned, it is a ‘colonial canvas’ that has been demarcated by the Israeli state as if they have said: ‘here is the canvas for your expressions of disdain and displeasure’. She argues that the gestures of Palestinian and international civilians, activists and artists on this ‘colonial canvas’ have no real impact on the Israeli state. It is as if Palestinians and their sympathisers are decorating and therefore normalising and accepting the wall into their lives. She considers these gestures redundant

¹⁰⁶Unfortunately I was unable to see who it was exactly it was that made this particular comment but consider it relevant to the discussion which is I why include it here.

and suggests that they reinforce old colonial power relations rather than playing a subversive or transformative role.

The second argument against the making of artworks on the wall (directly related to the first) is that it beautifies and therefore aestheticises something that Palestinians do not want to naturalise or normalise. From this perspective, one is dealing with the idea of “aestheticising” as it is characterised by Mirzoeff (2011:3) in relation to the three modalities of “visuality”, that is “naming and classifying ... separating ... and aestheticising”. In this regard the placing of artwork on the wall fulfils the third component of a “visuality complex”. Having named and categorised the Palestinians as a homogenous and ‘barbaric’ threat to Jewish-Israeli existence, the Israeli state separated them from their Jewish neighbours using the apartheid wall and military occupation to institutionalise that separation. In the building of the wall itself, Israel confirmed and aestheticised that separation by giving it a visible and concrete form. Once the wall had been constructed and the separation clearly articulated and aestheticised, the Israeli state had established the ideal “visuality complex” through which the Palestinians could be monitored and controlled by the colonising powers (Mirzoeff 2011:3). In arguing against the putting of artwork on the wall, opponents insist that international activists, artists and local Palestinians are in fact assisting the Israeli government in this aestheticising process. In the areas where the wall can be found separating a Palestinian area from an Israeli area (which is less common than one would think, given that the separation barrier tends to divide Palestinian cities and villages from other Palestinian cities and villages), one can observe the strategies employed by Israeli citizens and state-employed artists, landscapers and architects to render the structure invisible or at least attempt to blend it into the surroundings. Sections of the wall that surround settlements, for example, will be disguised by trees and rose bushes that have been strategically planted in a way that hides the wall partially or completely. In other instances, artists have painted attractive landscapes onto the wall that help blend it in to the external surroundings.¹⁰⁷

The tour guided by Kokaly did not sensationalise this aspect of the trip or emphasise Banksy’s work more than any other part of the tour. Kokaly’s perspective on the artworks is nuanced. He explains the issues that exist regarding the positive effect of drawing attention to the Palestinian situation at the same time as potentially normalising the occupation. This is one of the places in the West Bank that I personally found difficult to negotiate. In taking

¹⁰⁷ While I did not document this personally, in the documentary titled *Wall* by Simone Bitton (2004), the narrator highlights particular instances where this can be seen.

photographs of the wall and the artwork on the wall, I am able to collect data and visual material for my research. I can use this material to educate others in South Africa and elsewhere about the Israeli apartheid state and the occupation. But, in doing this, I am also aware of the sentiment expressed by Meir Wigoder (2010:293), who argues that photographing the wall serves to monumentalise it; through repetition and documentation something that should be temporary can become fixed. The sense that I may be aiding the Israeli state in normalising this undesirable reality made me want to put the camera down, apologise for my invasion of this context and leave as soon as I possibly could. Wigoder (2010:293) goes ahead despite his assertions about the problem of photographing the wall to include his own documentation of the wall in different parts of the West Bank. In the end, I decided that, as an academic, a reader of visual culture and a practising artist with access to this material, it would serve no productive purpose for me to step out of the conversation. Instead I turned my thoughts towards the question of how one goes about negotiating a particular scenario rather than continuing to obsess over the question of what it is that one is or is not doing. In this way I applied my method of looking with the sensitivity and flexibility of the skin and considered Said's (2004:78) emphasis on "slowness" and the need to approach the issue of connection and how to connect with the "aesthetic and the national" in a way that seeks to maintain tension rather than resolve it.



Figure 6.10: Photographic documentation of the artwork on the Israeli apartheid wall in Bethlehem. Photograph by Rachel Baasch (2014c) Some of the visible text reads: "This lie cannot live", "Free Palestine", "Banksy's shop". The iconic image of Handalah¹⁰⁸ can be seen in the centre bottom half of the image.

¹⁰⁸ Handalah is a cartoon character created by the Palestinian artist Nal Al Ali. He is a child from a refugee camp. He has no shoes and stands with his back to you, defiantly facing the wall.



Figure 6.11: Photographic documentation of the artwork on the Israeli apartheid wall in Bethlehem. Photograph by Rachel Baasch (2014b)

The story pasted to the wall reads as follows:

When I was 17 I bought an accordion. I wanted to let the children be happy, to change their situation a bit. During the uprising when nobody could go out, I opened my home for the children, and played the accordion for them on the veranda. They were singing "The World is beautiful. Let us be happy. Let us love each other. Let us have peace here". While there were shootings outside, at home it was safe. Vera, from Bethlehem.

6.3.3 "We paint walls": Observing International Artists at the Apartheid Wall

A few months after my trip with Green Olive Tours, I accompanied a British volunteer who wanted to produce a documentary about artwork on the Israeli apartheid wall. There is an interesting series of interactions that take place on this wall between international artists and

Palestinian civilians (some of whom are artists) in dialogue with the Israeli apartheid wall and the oppressive regime it stands for. While observing the interactions between the volunteer making a documentary about art on the wall and the different players in the Bethlehem context, a number of dimensions to this discussion became apparent. I observed a particular scenario that played out between two artists from France who were adding their artwork to the wall in Bethlehem and the local inhabitants of the city in this area. The particular part of Bethlehem where Banksy's famous work can be found opposite the Banksy shop is also a civilian area. Most of the Palestinians who previously lived there have been driven out of their homes or have had their houses destroyed by the occupation or warfare, but there are a few people who have remained in the area. For these people, the wall is positioned within their private spaces, just outside a bedroom window or even running right through one's garden.

It struck me as somewhat disrespectful and problematic that two young artists had positioned themselves here, one of whom had removed his shirt while they painted the wall as one can see in Figure 6.12. I watched and listened as the British volunteer making his documentary asked the two artists a few questions about their work and what it was that they were doing at the wall in Bethlehem. These two artists were living in Tel Aviv and had travelled to Bethlehem for the day in order to add their contribution to the enormous 'wall canvas'. They explained that they had painted many walls around the world, like the Berlin wall; "We paint walls, and this is a wall so we came to see and put our art on it" (Baasch 2014a). Upon further questioning the British volunteer was left somewhat disappointed having discovered that the artists were not terribly well informed when it came to the politics around the wall itself and did not position their work as a gesture of solidarity or resistance. The large red face-like image they had painted was apparently a trademark of their work. The artwork they added to the wall did not contain any particular symbolic resonance and had no clear connection to the Palestinian context. In addition to this, the artists appeared to be painting over an image of the Palestinian flag in order to paint their own artwork in its place (Figure 6.13 and Figure 6.14). Standing to the side, observing this scenario, a Palestinian man leaned over to me and said: "Don't worry, when they are gone we will cover it – paint something else, like this" he said, gesturing towards his own artwork on the wall (Figure 6.15).



Figure 6.12: Photographic documentation of the apartheid barrier wall in Bethlehem. Photograph by Rachel Baasch (2014c). *In this image two graffiti artists from France can be seen painting the apartheid wall in Bethlehem, while they are filmed by a British volunteer working on a documentary about art and the apartheid wall.*



Figure 6.13: Photographic documentation of the apartheid barrier wall in Bethlehem. Photograph by Rachel Baasch (2014c). *In this image one can see the British volunteer making the documentary wearing a shirt that reads "Challenge yourself to change your world", while the French artist has removed his own shirt. Above the partially dressed artist to the right of the volunteer, the text on the wall reads: "International Solidarity".*



Figure 6.14: Photographic documentation of the apartheid barrier wall in Bethlehem. Photograph by Rachel Baasch (2014c). *In this image one of the two artists from France is painting over an image of the Palestinian flag that can be seen in Figures 6.12 and 6.13 above.*



Figure 6.15: Photographic documentation of the apartheid barrier wall in Bethlehem. Photograph by Rachel Baasch (2014c). *In this image one can see the artwork made by the Palestinian artist 'Moodj' that he painted over an artwork on the Israeli apartheid wall that members of the Bethlehem community in that area did not like very much.*

This added an additional dimension to the scenario I witnessed. International artists and activists were welcome to put whatever they liked onto the apartheid wall, but the Palestinian

civilians who lived with it every day would edit or paint over the things they did not like. In my discussions with Claire Anastas, whose house has been completely enclosed by the wall's path, (Figure 6.16), she pointed to artworks that she liked because they reminded her of the people who had placed them there, people who had engaged openly and sensitively with her and her family. She explained that the wall is ugly, undesirable and invasive; "Nobody wants it here but we have to live with it until it is demolished" (Baasch & Anastas 2014). She says that in the instances where she likes the images and text selected by the artist, especially if the artist has consulted her and other individuals living in the area, the artwork can have a positive impact. "I have to look at this wall every day and I would rather look at an artwork that I have good memories about instead of this grey concrete wall" (Baasch & Anastas 2014).

From my conversation with Anastas, it is clear that the process of placing the artwork on the wall (how) is more important to her and her family than the object and act itself (what). In Figure 6.17 she gestures to one of the artworks painted by a young girl who was visiting Bethlehem with her family; she explains that this particular artwork is one of her favourites because it has good memories attached to it. When she looks at the painting she is reminded of the interaction. She goes on to tell the volunteer making his documentary that there are artworks that the community have removed because they scare the children in the area. She mentions a project by the artist known as JR, who took photographs of Israelis, enlarged and distorted them before sticking them to the Palestinian side of the wall. He did the same thing on the other side of the wall, taking photographs of Palestinians, which he enlarged and distorted before pasting them on the Israeli side of the wall. The project received a large amount of international publicity, the artist's intention being to show both sides that the other is also human, with the distortions intended in a humorous way. Anastas explains that the children in the area were frightened of the enormous black and white portraits looming over them, so the people living in the area removed them soon after the art project had concluded.

Opposite Anastas' house, she shows me a small gap in the wall that has been created by civilians chipping away at the concrete when the IDF are not watching. Through this gap one can catch a glimpse of the area Israel has illegally annexed. This is the site of Rachel's Tomb, a sacred site for Jews, Muslims and Christians. Numerous armed military personnel who stand guard over them escort Jewish-Israeli citizens wishing to visit the tomb. Anastas explains that the view through the gap in the wall is all her children have ever known of the

place on the other side, a place that used to be a part of Bethlehem, a part of their home. She says that the gap will probably not last long and that it will be filled as soon as Israeli soldiers discover it.



Figure 6.16: Photographic documentation of the apartheid barrier wall in Bethlehem. Photograph by Rachel Baasch (2014c). In this image one can see Claire Anastas' home, which is completely surrounded by the Israeli apartheid wall.



Figure 6.17: Photographic documentation of the apartheid barrier wall in Bethlehem. Photograph by Rachel Baasch (2014c). In this image Claire Anastas is gesturing towards the painting of the olive tree on the left hand side of the image that she is personally fond of.



Figure 6.18: Photographic documentation of the apartheid barrier wall in Bethlehem. Photograph by Rachel Baasch 92014c). *This image shows a close up view of the artwork pointed to by Claire Anastas during our conversations. Photograph by Rachel Baasch, Bethlehem May 2014.*



Figure 6.19: Photographic documentation of the apartheid barrier wall in Bethlehem. Photograph by Rachel Baasch (2014c). *This image shows a section of the apartheid wall that has been carefully and inconspicuously chipped away so that one is able to see a slither of the life that exists on the other side.*

6.3.4 Ramallah D: “Cross Your Own Borders”

Directly related to the issue of ‘how’ one goes about making art on or about the apartheid wall, one also needs to consider ‘how’ wall tourism is promoted within the West Bank. Figure 6.19 shows an advertisement I documented in a hostel on the beach front in Tel Aviv which states “Cross Your Own Borders” – while one might consider the advert to be directed at Jewish-Israeli citizens, it is important to note that only a foreign passport holder is permitted to travel to the Palestinian areas demarcated as Area A (Palestinian towns and villages) as per Israeli law. The advertisement depicts a young man peering inquisitively over a frequently photographed section of the wall in Bethlehem – a section adorned with slogans and graffiti – just next to the attractive site of a few of Banksy’s artworks which every political tour of Bethlehem will take you to visit. The hostel, run by a Swiss entrepreneur, has appropriated the language of military occupation and guarantees an ‘authentic’ Palestinian experience which includes naming the front desk “the checkpoint” and providing guests with keys attached to different-coloured ID cards. The question of *what* the advert is doing is relatively simple to answer and immediately sheds a positive light on the idea of crossing political borders in order to engage with another reality. While the overall agenda of the advert might be to genuinely encourage tourists and Israeli citizens to come and stay in Ramallah, the advertisement itself is problematic. The young man peering over the wall is looking down over a dwarfed version of the Israeli apartheid wall in Bethlehem. James Elkins (1996:22) tells us that looking can be “the gentlest, least invasive way to make contact with the world”, yet there is a violent side to looking. Directing one’s eyes towards an object or human being can be aggressive and forceful. Elkins (1996:22) describes certain forms of looking as invasive and “possessive” According to Elkins (1996:22), “seeing is also controlling and objectifying and denigrating ... it is an act of violence and it creates pain”. The camera is an extension of the eye and the capturing of an image in a photograph can also be considered an act of violence. Sometimes the violence of the photographic image occurs through excess and the proliferation of images that prevent slow and considered processes of engaging with the world.



Figure 6.20: Photographic documentation of a poster advertising the Area:D Hostel in Ramallah found on the pin board at a backpackers' hostel in Tel Aviv. Photograph by Rachel Baasch.

6.4 Walls of Seeing

The Palestinian artist Hasan Daraghme uses photography and video to interrogate the way in which processes of seeing are mediated by the physical eye, the psychological I and the lens of the camera. Like the Palestinian author and human rights lawyer Raja Shehadeh and the South African based artist/architect/performer Doung Jahangeer, Daraghme suggests that one engage in the practice of walking as a way to connect with the lived reality of an actual place. In describing his research and practice to me, Daraghme spoke about how he listens to the “eye of the place” (Daraghme 2014). While walking with the artist through Ramallah he related a particular narrative from the village where he grew up. This was a ‘true’ story about a man who loved the moon. Daraghme told me that this man would stare at the moon

and dream about it, watching it grow and shrink. He would collect boxes and crates and pile them one on top of the other, building a tower in the attempt to get closer to the moon. Of course he never gets anywhere, but he continues to try every night. He was trying to reach the moon, to hold it, he was seduced by the look of the moon and his desire to own it, to have it for himself. After telling me this story we stopped at a coffee shop where he showed me the video work he had made called *Passing*, 2013 (Daraghmeh 2014). In *Passing*, 2013, Daraghmeh plays with the relationship between time and space when it comes to the question of how one sees someone or something. At first glance the video could be mistaken for a still photograph of a building. Yet, as one stares at the image, waiting for ‘something’ to happen, very slight shifts and ripples of movement emerge in the corners and minute details of the scene. As the slight distortions and warped areas of the picture become more visible one starts to wonder if the artist filmed the scene reflected into water or if he simply manipulated the picture digitally.



Name
Hasan Daraghmeh

Date of birth
1983

Place of birth
Nablus

Current place of residence
Oslo

Self-identified nationality
Palestinian

Expertise
Video, photography

Relevant qualifications
BA, Fine Art, 2014- International Academy of Art Palestine (IAAP)
MFA. 2016 Oslo National Academy of the Arts

Relevant projects
I'm so High on You,
Flower of Salt

Sex
Male

Forced/chosen
Chosen

Photo credit:
Hasan Daraghmeh

Period of engagement
August 2013– May 2014

Figure 6.21: Guide Profile for Hasan Daraghmeh. Compiled by Rachel Baasch (2016).

The first time I engaged with the artwork, I felt uncertain as to whether my brain and/or my eyes had simply imagined these tiny movements and slow shifting perspective of the image. If one is prepared to look carefully and slowly, details of the video reveal small clues, hints of time passing in space. Each time one watches the video a new and unexpected detail has the space and time to emerge. It was only when I had returned to South Africa and re-watched *Passing*, 2013 a number of times (whilst in the writing up stage of the thesis) that I noticed

the shape of a bird flying out of a window before quickly disappearing into the shadow of a windowsill. This work evokes the sensation of waiting and watching that is so prevalent in the West Bank context. Waiting has become a central feature of everyday life for Palestinians living under Israeli apartheid. In order to cross the multiple checkpoints positioned within the West Bank, a Palestinian with a West Bank ID must first get permission from the Israeli Minister of the Interior. If Daraghmeh wants to travel to Jerusalem 15 km away in order to exhibit his work or attend an exhibition opening he needs to apply for a permit. It can take weeks, months and even years for the Israeli government to process Palestinian permit requests, many of which are rejected without explanation. Once the individual has managed to secure a permit they are still not guaranteed freedom to move through the checkpoint. The young soldiers who man the border posts and checkpoints can choose to deny entry to a Palestinian even if he/she is in possession of the correct documentation. The bio-power afforded to these individuals is abused and soldiers regularly take pleasure in exercising their right to deny entry¹⁰⁹.



Figure 6.22:Daraghmeh, Hasan. 2013. *Passing*. 4:36 min. Video.

¹⁰⁹I met a woman called Bisan who told me that she lost her second child while waiting to cross a checkpoint on route to the hospital. The woman gave birth to her son at the checkpoint where she was denied the right to pass by Israeli soldiers and forced to wait on foot for 6 hours before being allowed to cross into Jerusalem and get to the hospital. As a result of complications during the birth and the woman's inability to get to the hospital, the baby died.



Figure 6.23: Daraghmeh, Hasan. 2013. *Passing*. 4:36 min. Video.

In *I'm So High on You*, 2012, a collaboration between Daraghmeh and the Palestinian performance artist Noor Abed, one can “discern a small figure dancing on the skeleton structure of a high rise skyscraper under construction” (Sherwell 2013:228). The unfinished building is “one of the new icons of the Palestinian Authority’s landscape of commerce and enterprise in Ramallah” (Sherwell 2013:228). This kind of unfinished high-rise building can be seen repeated all over the West Bank. Sherwell (2013:228) observes the “contrast” that is created between the “miniature figure” and the “monumental structure”. The softer lines of the performer’s body contrast with and emphasise the rigid verticals and horizontals of the “high rise skyscraper under construction”. These buildings are not designed to accommodate the body or the community. The building is incomplete; it does not have windows, doors or walls; in this way it acts like a framing device, highlighting the soft lines of the tiny figure moving across it. While watching the woman move one feels as if one has insight into the things that are normally protected or concealed by the walls of the home. The dance is not a performance for anyone in particular, the women dances as if she is alone, as if no one can see her. Despite the intimacy of this perspective, one is still kept at distance, behind the camera, on the other side of the camera’s view. The artist is taking a risk in this piece. In the context of Ramallah, a woman dancing alone on the top floors of a building within public view is a foreign and unfamiliar sight¹¹⁰. The shell of the structure, the walls that shelter the

¹¹⁰ One of the responses to the disempowerment of Palestinian men through Israeli colonisation, military control and occupation has generated a condition of ontological insecurity and social disconnect. Extreme conditions of hopelessness or disillusionment provide the perfect environment to foster tribalism and religious extremism, both of which generate and reinforce patriarchy and the disempowerment of

body are absent and, as Sherwell (2013:229) points out, Abed's "movements carry an air of danger as she dances on the top floor of this off limits space".



Figure 6.24: Noor Abed and Hasan Daraghme. 2012. *I'm So High on You*. HD video, silent, 'loop'. 08:14 mins .



Figure 6.25: Noor Abed and Hasan Daraghme. 2012. *I'm So High on You*. HD video, silent, 'loop' (08:14 mins).

women. One of the concerns regarding the influx of international tourists and volunteers in Ramallah is that it creates tension within the Palestinian domestic space. The Israeli occupation and colonisation has actually prompted a more conservative and traditional turn in Palestinian society. Social codes for men and women are different. While men may move with ease in public spaces, visit bars that sell alcohol and cater to an international market, women are restricted to the space of the home. This is a confluence of multiple factors that are regularly misunderstood by the international community, who tend to impose Western values and pass judgment about the 'oppressive Muslim culture' without fully understanding the reasons why social dynamics play out in the way that they do within this space. Traditional conservative values are perceived as 'innate' characteristics of Arab Muslims, without an awareness of the fact that Palestinian society has become increasingly conservative as a response to the threat of cultural homogenisation and Israeli colonisation.

While walking past similar unfinished constructions to the one depicted in *I'm so High on You*, Daraghmeh and I unpacked the possible readings one can get from the title. I asked the artist if the title was an allusion to the intoxicating 'high' one can feel when falling in love with another person. In this state of intoxication one can be blinded by what one wants to see and fail to see that which is directly in front of one. Daraghmeh confirmed this as a possible interpretation while maintaining that the title is intentionally ambiguous. It speaks about the relationship between physical construction and the power to control or oversee a territory. To be high above someone implies that one is in a position of authority. Daraghmeh and Abed have constructed a visual narrative of division in response to the multiple narratives of division that already exist in this context. The film opens up the space for different narrative interpretations to emerge by denying one's expectations for linear progression. One finds oneself looking harder and more carefully at the screen when one engages with pieces like *I'm so High on You* or *Passing*. Daraghmeh's *You Know* requires a similar degree of patience and focus. The video appears to be still at first glance, nothing seems to be happening, yet, upon closer inspection, if one looks carefully one will notice the plants moving slightly. These slight disruptions in the image are suggestive of time passing in a loop rather than time frozen.

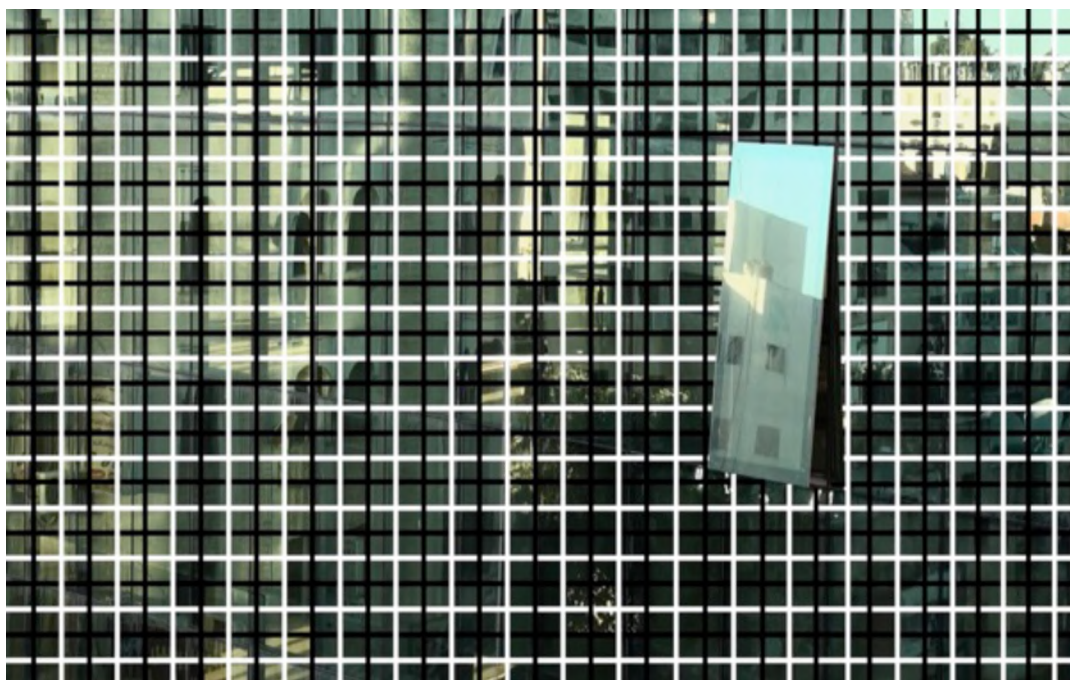


Figure 6.26: Hasan Daraghmeh 2014. *You Know*. Video.

In *You Know*, 2014 the artist plays with different layers of visual mediation. On the surface of the video a type of window mirror reflects the corner of a white building with a white water tank¹¹¹ and dark grey windows. The viewer is presented with a layered image; black and white gridlines slice up the scene behind it so that it becomes difficult to see what exactly is positioned behind the grids. Certain parts of the scene are in focus while others look slightly blurry as if the camera lens is smudged or the scene was recorded in a water reflection that can be seen behind the black and white gridlines. The subtle shifts and lack of linear narrative draw the viewer's attention to the way in which the camera acts as a distancing or mediating tool, despite its claim to capture 'real' life. In the video installation *Flower of Salt*, 2014, which formed part of the same exhibition, Daraghmeh presents the viewer with multiple images collected over months of photographing and filming in the West Bank. In my discussions with the artist, he notes the details of specific locations such as Al Manara Square in the centre of Ramallah and parts of Jericho where he collected his footage. Despite the quantity of visual information that the artist presents in his video installations, one is not actually able to see anything with any clarity. The innumerable miniature frames crammed into the space of the screen become a barrier, a blockade that prevents one from seeing any actual detail.

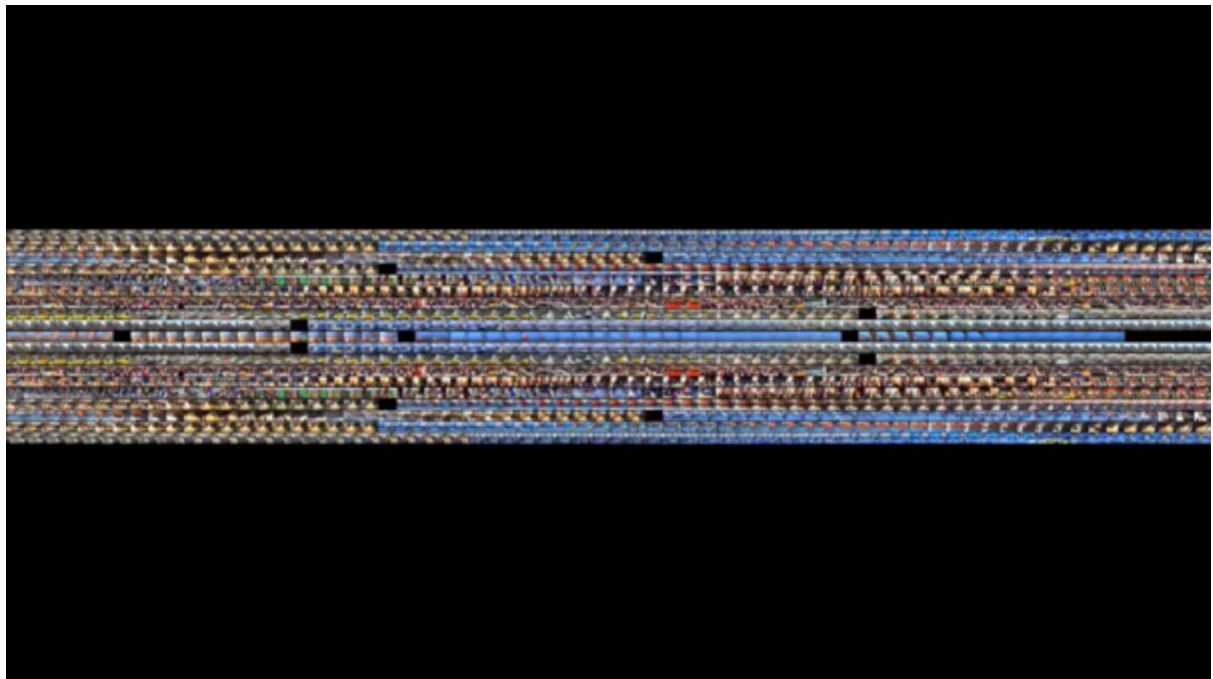


Figure 6.27: Hasan Daraghmeh. *Flower of Salt*. 2014. Video.

¹¹¹ According to Anis Daraghmeh (Baasch & Daraghma 2013a) the white water tanks are more expensive than the standard black variety found on Palestinian roof tops and are therefore considered a status symbol.

Works like *Flower of Salt*, 2014 (Figure 6.27) consist of millions of tiny deconstructed film stills that move so fast one cannot make out any clear image. In this work, Daraghmeh accurately highlights the blindness and distortion that can be generated by objects and tools that claim to aid seeing and the ability to collect visual information. Instead of gaining clarity or insight into one or more of the individual places that the artist has captured, one is mesmerised by the attractive colours and patterns seductively moving across the screen. There is something disconcerting about the aesthetically pleasing translation of images that smooth over the sharp angles of everyday life in the Occupied West Bank territory. Daraghmeh highlights the manner in which the illusion of seeing and knowing can be successfully constructed through visual representations and technologies such as photography and video. The meaningful and specific sites recorded in his footage become generic; losing their individual quality they transform from meaningful places back to unknown and meaningless spaces. The distancing mechanisms used by Daraghmeh are disconcerting. One can argue that his works allude to the danger of losing perspective through the very means that claim to aid and enhance the process.

Walking through the city of Ramallah with the artist, he brought my attention to the massive digital screens that had been erected in central parts of the city by the Palestinian cell-phone network Jawwal ¹¹². These screens are used for advertising cell-phone contracts and prepaid packages. The strategy used by the company in order to capture the attention of passers-by involves a process of live recording. As one moves past the area in which the screens can be found, one's movements and interactions are recorded by surveillance cameras and projected back into public space for public viewing. Mesmerising one by the mirror reflection of oneself and others navigating the city, the company can then flash advertisements or simply by having the logo on the edge of the screen they simultaneously create an association or visual link between the Jawwal network and the idea of global connectivity and technologies of connection. This intervention in public space is accepted by Palestinians living in Ramallah despite the way in which it too invades one's privacy. Daraghmeh and I discussed the implications of this advertising technique within this particular context. If the state of Israel were to erect the same technology within the West Bank Territories it would be received very badly, yet the way in which this intervention is framed in terms of promoting

¹¹²In the Appendix section of the thesis I have included the questions I prepared prior to my meetings with Hassan Daraghmeh. I did not use these questions in a strict or formal respect but treated them as guidelines, starting points to encourage conversation.

global networks in a place where connection and movement are denied on multiple levels of society seems to be regarded receptively. The acceptance of this form of surveillance and monitoring struck me as curious. Why had this company decided to use this form of technology associated in this context with a military occupation and apartheid logic of separation, dehumanisation and ethnic cleansing? I found the cameras invasive. Perhaps they highlight the nature of everyday life as performative and constructed. Alternatively, one could suggest that this intrusion into public space adds an additional layer of mediation that aids a process of disconnection while simultaneously presenting itself as promoting connection and communication. It is a strange thought to think that seeing can be enhanced by ‘not seeing’, by closing one’s eyes and focusing attention on seeing less, on opening one’s ears, and skin receptors to touch, to smell, to taste in order to focus on the eyes and seeing as connected to the skin and thus requiring the use of one’s other receptors to allow for a fuller ‘picture’ of something to form.

6.5 Chapter Exit Point

In the consumption and reception of images, signs and structures, the quantity of visual material and the rate at which it is delivered can prevent one from engaging self-reflexively and critically with people, places and the various forms through which they are mediated and represented. Media, technology and geography can be used (by individuals and groups) to aid connection and communication across physical and ideological distance. These tools can also be manipulated to frame ideas, people and places, such that visual perceptions are disconnected from the body and one’s other sensory receptors. It is easier to demonise a constructed enemy if the representation of the so-called enemy precedes eye contact and frames an image of the other as something to be feared, eradicated or kept at a distance. Political tourism has the potential to reinforce stereotypes and stock characters (Jawad 2011)), perpetuating a colonial apartheid “visuality complex” in the Palestinian West Bank (Mirzoeff 2011). Artists like Jahangeer and Daraghmeh offer a way to engage with the “eye of the place” that echoes the idea of looking with the skin. Their work offers an antidote to the ‘walls of seeing’ that are created by speed and excess in terms of representation. Certain manifestations of the political tourism industry are problematic and insensitive, such as the disrespectful behaviour of artists in Bethlehem (Figures 6.12–6.14) and the advertisement for the Area D hostel in Ramallah (Figure 6.20). While these are examples of precisely the

opposite of the slow and considered method of looking with the skin, there is also a third aspect to this scenario embodied in the example of Samer Kokaly and the Alternative Tourism Group. These individuals are also not passive bystanders looking on as international artists add artwork to the walls outside their homes. Whatever they do not like will be edited out, removed or covered. Furthermore, the way in which artists disrespect tradition and custom in a context like Bethlehem is actually to their own detriment. The two artists painting the wall in Bethlehem do not necessarily possess the power one might assume they do. As foreigners who do not speak the lingua franca of the country, Arabic, they are immediately positioned as outsiders. Their behaviour is also evidence that they have no understanding of the culture or customs of this place. This then makes them the subject of ridicule. Palestinians are well known for their incredible sense of humour and playful approach to challenging situations. In presenting themselves as ignorant, insensitive and disrespectful, the two artists are in turn treated as such. The Palestinians who tell their stories – like the South Africans who engage in Jahangeer's walks – are choosing to present themselves in a particular way. They are choosing the words for their own stories and deciding how much information to offer. It is patronising to assume that Palestinians are not in control of the way in which they are represented. There are numerous ways. Yes, when it comes to representations created by Israel and the external media, but when you are inside the borders of the West Bank, engaging with Palestinians who live there, they have control. They are the ones who fabricate (meaning pull together) the reality they want to present to the world and use political tourism as a vehicle for doing this.

Therefore, while it is of critical importance to treat the political tourism industry from a rigorous critical perspective, it is also important to remember that individuals – like artists – fabricate, collect, disseminate and reconfigure a particular reality in the way that they would like to. Thus while site-seeing can potentially perpetuate stereotypical modes of cultural consumption, it can equally act as a counter-visual gesture on the part of players who create the tours in the first place. If tourists are genuinely intrigued and interested in the Palestinian context then they may choose to return and to stay for a longer visit.

The individual Palestinians involved in the tours choose how they want to present themselves and the stories they want to tell as well as how they tell them within the framework of the tours. The fundamental difference between the political tours led by Samer Kokaly in the

West Bank and the performance art *citywalks* executed by Doung Anwar Jahangeer is framing. Thus, on the one hand the tours can be seen as perpetuating stereotypes through the performance of victimhood, but on the other hand they could be framed as curated and directed, strategically executed yet unstructured experiential performance art pieces. The work of the Alternative Tourism Group in Palestine is indeed a creative success. It is one of the ways in which Palestinians are speaking back and looking back to the Israeli occupation, colonisation and apartheid, not only from the perspective of the collaborations and connections that are facilitated between Palestinians and Israelis, but also in the way that Palestinians are creating an interest in the minds of Israeli citizens, Jewish immigrants to Israel and a diverse range of international tourists. Even though the tours are short and cannot penetrate beyond a certain layer of self-representation, people who are genuinely interested and curious will come back, stay longer and engage with the context over a longer period of time in a potentially sensitive and sincere manner. The two French artists gain nothing of real value from their work. They are laughed at and mocked by the community in Bethlehem because they clearly do not understand the cultural codes that exist there, they are disrespectful, maintaining an outsider position and, in turn, they are disrespected by those on the inside. Thus, there is an element of political tourism that perpetuates certain manifestations of the colonial visibility complex, but there are also elements of a “counter-visibility” that appear within sites of division (Mirzoeff 2011:5).

Chapter 7 Narratives of Connection in Sites of Intersection: A Conclusion

Different nations around the world have things in common; a love for a particular kind of sport, a shared language or perhaps a shared religion. In the case of South Africa and Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories we share an unfortunate site of intersection – apartheid. Colonialism and apartheid are defining narratives of division that have shaped the post-apartheid South African nation. In Israel and the OPTs, colonisation, military occupation and Israeli apartheid continue to destroy the livelihood of the Palestinians while encouraging Israelis to abandon their humanity. From the outset my research has been concerned with locating intimate connections within powerful narratives of socio-political division. These connections manifest in the form of spatial parallels, structural similarities, historical mirrors and thematic commonalities. This thesis is the beginning of my own personal effort to carve out a small conceptual pathway between South Africa and Israel and the OPTs through contemporary art.

The artists I have selected to guide and aid my analyses provide metaphorical ‘windows’ and ‘doors’, cracks and loopholes within monumental narratives of division and seemingly impenetrable structures fuelled by fear and insecurity. In this study I have located sites of conceptual and thematic connection around the pertinent topic of physical and ideological division in a Palestinian context. I have done this in order to understand the visual language of division as it can be read in the built form of the Palestinian landscape. Furthermore, I have engaged in this study because of the way in which apartheid has left its own marks of separation and colonisation on the present post-apartheid landscape within the context I consider home.

The artists that I have analysed in this thesis respond compassionately and sensitively to an emotional geography that has been torn, twisted, ruptured and divided. These artists seek openings in places where imposed physical walls, fences and borders close openings and areas of passage. This is one of the sites of intersection that extend to all examples of artistic practice analysed in this document. In this conclusion I propose a new configuration of possible connections and overlaps between each of the individual practitioners work. Some aspects of this new proposal touch on concepts or ideas articulated in the individual chapters, and I propose to flesh them out further, while others are less obviously present. I have done

this as a way to conclude the thesis without closing the discussion, signalling the opportunity for further interrogation and analysis around the pertinent topic of ideological and spatial division in social space.

7.1.1 Video And Architecture

In Chapter Three: Stories and Structures: ‘Buildings and the Nation’ in Palestinian Art and Visual Culture, I addressed the creation of Eretz Israel in Historic Palestine and examined the work of Khaled Jarrar, specifically the piece *Live and Work in Palestine* which negotiates existing national narratives of inclusion and exclusion in Israel and the OPTs. I described the history of political Zionism and the invention of the Jewish people and examined Yael Bartana’s response to these narratives in the video trilogy *And Europe will be Stunned...* Like Yael Bartana, Larissa Sansour and Thando Mama work with representations of architectural structures within film. While I have discussed the way in which Mama addresses the failure of the post 1994 Rainbow Nation narrative of togetherness and inclusion within his video piece *Of Nationhood*, 2015 and positioned this work next to Larissa Sansour’s imaginary projections for a future Palestinian state in *Nation Estate*, 2012, there is still space to extend the discussion to include Hasan Daraghmeh’s use of architecture within his video works, *Passing* and *I’m so High on You* (discussed in Chapter Six).

The parallels that exist between the use of video and architectural representation in Yael Bartana, Larissa Sansour, Thando Mama and Hasan Daraghmeh’s work could make for an interesting study focused specifically on architectural representations within video art from South Africa and Palestine. Both Daraghmeh’s collaboration with the artist Noor Abed in *I’m so High on You* and Sansour’s *Nation Estate* quote the upward-oriented architecture that is characteristic of new developments in the OPTs. While I have highlighted the similarities between Thando Mama’s *Of Nationhood* and Sansour’s *Nation Estate*, one can also draw a line or thread of connection between the representation of architecture within video that is evident in *I’m so High on You*, by Daraghmeh and Abed and Mama’s *Of Nationhood*. Like *Of Nationhood* and *Nation Estate*, *I’m so High on You* positions the human body in relation to a building. In doing this the work can also be discussed in terms of dialectics of interiority and exteriority that appear in *Of Nationhood*, with Mama positioned on the outside of the Ntaba KaNdoda monument, and within *Nation Estate*, where Sansour is confined on the

inside of the imaginary utopian Palestine, yet on the outside of the ‘actual’ Palestine seen through the glass window in the video (Figure 3.38).

In *I’m So High On You*, Abed can be seen moving across the top floors of an incomplete high-rise building. She is on the inside yet visible and exposed to the outside. The building has no walls, doors or windows to protect her, to shelter her and there is a sense of danger in her movements, knowing that she could fall out of the frame at any point. These dialectics of interiority and exteriority are all also present in the viewing process. The viewer is positioned behind the camera, at a distance from the miniature figure of Abed, behind the invisible layer created by the camera itself. In a focused discussion on the use of video as a medium within these artists’ works, there is the potential to include additional artworks made by these artists, such as Yael Bartana’s *Summer Camp* (Figure 7.1) or Khaled Jarrar’s *Infiltrators* (Figure 7.2). I selected specific artworks by Bartana, Jarrar, Sansour and Mama that dealt with the concept of national narratives of division within Chapter Three, but in doing this I discovered additional sites of intersection in the choice of medium selected by the individual artists, specifically the representation of architectural structures within video art.



Figure 7.1: Yael Bartana. *Summer Camp*, 2007. Two channel video installation. (Gandolfo 2015:191)



Figure 7.2: Khaled Jarrar. 2012. Film still from the documentary *Infiltrators* showing two young people climbing over the wall. (Šurković 2013).

7.1.2 Transaction, Interaction and the Art of Exchange

In Chapter Four: Walls, Blocks and Barriers in Contemporary Palestinian Art, I described the Qalandiya checkpoint and the related walls, barriers and obstacles imposed on Palestinian social space by the Israeli state. I discuss artworks by the Palestinian artists Khaled Jarrar, Fareh Saleh and Emily Jacir, who respond to these structures of division in their individual artworks. I bring Serge Alain Nitegeka (a Burundian artist working in South Africa) into the discussion and relate his experiential installations ... *and walk in my shoes* and *Obstacle 1* to Jarrar's *Whole in the Wall*. In this chapter I also touch on the idea of transactional art, embodied in Saleh's *Free Advice* and Jacir's *Where We Come From* as one way in which artists are seeking connections in sites of division through human interactions.

Transactional art places emphasis on human interaction and exchange as a form of currency. According to Plewe (2008), "the notion of value as the entity to be exchanged often becomes the central issue of the artwork". While I have referred to the transactional artworks of Fareh Saleh and Emily Jacir in Chapter Four: Walls, Blocks and Barriers in Contemporary Palestinian Art, and touch on the concept in relation to Serge Alain Nitegeka's *100 stools*, there is space to extend an analysis focused specifically on the use of transaction as a medium within art from South Africa and the OPTs to include Jarrar's *Live and Work in Palestine* (discussed in Chapter Three) and Jahangeer's *City Walks* (discussed in Chapter Six). In his *City Walks* Jahangeer gives people his time within a particular space. He acts as a type of bridge or mediator, helping people to see the hidden details within a particular place.

When Khaled Jarrar stamps his Palestinian visa into the passports of people arriving in Ramallah in *Live and Work in Palestine* (Figure 3.19 A – Figure 3.21 B), he is giving people a gift; Plewe explains that “where a transaction happens between artists and audience” that is based on a “give away”, the artist “deliberately wastes or destroys a potential gain”. Jarrar could turn his visa stamps into collectable items but they would lose their social value. In stamping people’s passports with this stamp, he is not simply giving them a memento or souvenir from their trip to Palestine, he is also giving them the opportunity to join the movement towards establishing an officially recognised Palestinian nation state.

A number of contemporary artists working in South Africa and in Israel and the OPTs are moving away from the emphasis on rarefied objects, and are implementing the idea of transaction as a medium within their practice. These artists who work with transaction as a medium are also concerned with social justice. Nitegeka’s *100 stools* like Jacir’s *Where We Come From*, Saleh’s *Free Advice*, Jarrar’s *Live and Work in Palestine* and Jahangeer’s *City Walks* all employ transaction and human interaction as a means to subvert dominant power structures and socio-political walls and barricades. A study of transactional art practice as a strategy used by artists from South Africa and Israel and the OPTs who are concerned with issues of social justice is one direction in which the concerns expressed in the thesis could be extended.

7.1.3 Architectonic Interventions

I chose to position Nitegeka’s ... *and walk in my shoes* and *Obstacle 1* alongside Jarrar’s *Whole in the Wall* within Chapter Four: Walls, Blocks and Barriers in Contemporary Palestinian Art because of the clear overlaps between their use of construction and deconstruction in the creation of experiential installations. Jarrar works with concrete chipped off the apartheid wall. Nitegeka uses wooden planks and in certain installations, such as *The Tunnel* (Figure 7.3), he uses the wood from old packing crates used for importing and exporting goods in and out of South Africa. Neither of these are traditional Fine Art materials: they are industrial materials that can be found in one’s everyday life; concrete walls and wooden doors and floors are familiar to most people. In Chapter Four I established that both of these artists respond to ideological and spatial division by building experiential installations from other deconstructed structures and repurposing the materials they are made out of in order to build new experiences. Jarrar is responding to the Israeli apartheid wall,

while Nitegeka is responding to the national borders of South Africa and the experience of immigrants and refugees seeking asylum in a country where xenophobic violence and bureaucracy act as walls and barricades for foreign nationals, especially those from other African countries. Each of these artworks are “architectonic”¹¹³ (Lefebvre 1991:209). One is physically required to step inside a space that refers to or is made from architectural forms in order to understand the artwork through multiple sensory receptors. These are not artworks that can be fully understood at a distance, from the removed position of spectator.



Figure 7.3: Serge Alain Nitegeka. *The Tunnel*. 2010. Wooden pallets, cable ties

Chapter Five: Guarded Visions: Walls, Watch Towers and Warped Perspectives in the Occupied Palestinian Territories focused on the impact of divisive structures and their corresponding ideologies on “practices of looking” in the West Bank OPT. Through my analysis of photographic documentation of defensive structures (walls, barriers, fences) I unpacked the way in which in these visual narratives of division in social space correspond with psychological closures and divided or warped perspectives within cities like Hebron and Bethlehem, for example. In this chapter I have referred to the work of the Decolonizing

¹¹³ “Architectonic: Of or pertaining to architecture” (Oxford English Dictionary 2012)

Architecture Art Residency (DAAR) in Beit Sahour, specifically their intervention within the site of the Oush Grab military base.

Like the connection established between artists working with representations of architecture within video, the use of architectonic intervention as a practical strategy within Jarrar's *Whole in the Wall* and Nitegeka's ...*and walk in my shoes* and *Obstacle 1* can be extended to include Jahangeer's *City Walks*, and the spatial interventions of the Decolonizing Architecture Art Residency (DAAR) within the Oush Grab military base in Beit Sahour. Like Jarrar and Nitegeka, Jahangeer's and DAAR's interventions in public space are "architectonic" in the sense that they engage with existing architectural structures, specifically those that are designed to separate and control human beings. Like Khaled Jarrar, Jahangeer deconstructs walls. The way in which Jarrar chips at the Israeli apartheid barrier to construct pieces like *Football* and *Whole in the Wall* is a literal physical act of deconstruction. Jahangeer breaks down walls through narrative and spatial intervention. These two artists are discussed in relation to different themes in the thesis, yet intersect regarding the intention to subvert ideological barriers by breaking down existing walls (both literally and figuratively). Furthermore, both of these artists use architectonic interventions that require the viewer to actively participate in order for the artwork to be realised and fully understood. The experience that is facilitated by these artists allows for new narratives of connection to form between the viewer and the artwork and the viewer and the space in which the artwork is located. In this way, Jahangeer and Jarrar are subverting narratives of division by constructing their own narratives of connection through architectonic interventions and experiential artworks.

In the case of DAAR, the group took over the abandoned military base (Oush Grab) and deconstructed it, converting it into a community park and providing members of the Beit Sahour community with the opportunity to experience the tower as an "optical apparatus" (Hilal et al. 2013:9). As noted in Chapter Five: Guarded Visions: Walls, Watch Towers and Warped Perspectives, members of the Beit Sahour community were able to go into the one remaining intact watchtower and look out at their town from the perspective of the oppressor. The military base was then converted into a public park, which was unfortunately destroyed by the 'Women in Green' in their attempts to claim the hilltop where the base is positioned in order to build a new settlement called Shdema.

The spatial interventions that took place in the Oush Grab base, such as the organisation of a game of Bingo (Figure 7.4), use the existing architectural structures but subvert their intended function as mechanisms of oppression, control and ultimately division. When faced with the possibility that the base might be claimed for the Shdema settlement and once again turned into an oppressive divisive structure, DAAR in collaboration with the artist Sara Pellegrini came up with the *Return to Nature* proposition. In this way they then use the walls of the base as sites for imaginative projection and speculation. Their propositions for a perforation of all the external walls of the base illustrated in Figure 7.3 (as well as in Figure 5.22 and Figure 5.23) has not been realised, but an alternative narrative to the existing scenario has been created through the artwork.



Figure 7.4: Photographic Documentation of the Oush Grab military base being used for a game of Bingo. Decolonizing Architecture Art Residency. Photograph by Francesco Mattuzi, 2008. (www.decolonizing.ps 2016).

The Oush Grab base is a visual narrative of division. Multiple stories of oppression, destruction and military occupation are embedded in the site. The active subversion of the structure's intended purpose through the facilitation of a game of Bingo creates a visual

narrative of connection. Furthermore, the conversion of the base into a community park creates a site of intersection for the people of Beit Sahour. DAAR do this by physically positioning themselves within the site of division and engaging directly with the architectural forms in front of them. Their spatial interventions are architectonic. They have not flattened the existing buildings in order to begin from scratch and build a brand new park, instead, they appropriate and transform that which is already part of the landscape conversation.



Figure 7.5: *Return to Nature*, Sara Pellegrini and DAAR, 2013.(www.decolonizing.ps 2016).

Like DAAR, Jahangeer responds directly to structures and sites of division through experiential spatial interventions such as his “performative installation” in Grahamstown in 2012 and the *City Walk* he created for the same exhibition, *Making Way*, 2012 curated by Ruth Simbao. The same 1820 Settlers Monument (Figure 7.6) where Nitegeka installed ... *and walk in my shoes* in 2011 is the site of division selected by Jahangeer for his architectonic spatial intervention *The Other Side with the Matabese Family*, 2012 (Figure 7.7 A – Figure 7.8).



Figure 7.6: Newspaper clipping from the *Port Elizabeth Times* where one can see the settler family sculpture in the foreground facing the monument building in the background. (*Port Elizabeth Times*, 2010).

Positioned in front of the Settlers Monument building is a sculpture depicting a family of three British settlers (Figure 7.6), that, like the monument building itself, are supposed to commemorate the contribution of the British settlers to South African society (which, as I noted in Chapter Four in relation to Nitegeka's use of the space, is a somewhat controversial issue). In the work, the artist edits the sculpture of the settlers with crushed red soil mixed with water to form a thick paste¹¹⁴ that he carefully paints onto specific parts of the sculptures. In the video documenting the work, Jahangeer explains that the intervention is “not only about doing a performative installation ... the intention is for it to start a conversation” around issues of post coloniality and post apartheid identity in relation to inherited systems of power and the structures that represent them (Wilby 2012).



Figure 7.7A and Figure 7.7 B: Doung Anwar Jahangeer. *The Other Side with the Matabese Family* (detail) (2012). Performance for the exhibition *Making Way*, 1820 Settlers National Monument, Grahamstown. Photograph by Ruth Simbao (www.makingway.co.za 2012).

¹¹⁴ This soil is the colour of red ochre and is used by the Zulu people for rituals and ceremonies as well as sun protection.



Figure 7.8: Doung Anwar Jahangeer. *The Other Side with the Matabese Family* (detail) (2012). Performance for the exhibition *Making Way*, 1820 Settlers National Monument, Grahamstown. Photograph by Ruth Simbao. (www.makingway.co.za 2012).

The philosophy behind Jahangeer's *City Walks* is the notion of "anarchitecturewithoutwalls" (Simbao 2013a:408). In 2008 he co-founded¹¹⁵ the "Non Profit Organisation (NPO) dala, that focuses on devising initiatives that engage art/ architecture for social justice" (Simbao 2013a:408). The work that Jahangeer has done with dala is not dissimilar to the work of DAAR. This site of intersection in terms of artists and architects working towards social justice warrants further exploration.

Chapter Six: Sites of Division: Political Tourism and the Aestheticising of the Israeli Apartheid Wall examined the political tourism industry (as a sub-genre of Alternative Tourism in the West OPT) and the phenomenon of Wall Tourism that has developed alongside political tourism in the area. I engaged with the phenomenon of Wall Tourism and the potential for activist art and graffiti art placed on the apartheid wall to actually aestheticise and therefore normalise visual narratives of division articulated by the Israeli state in the form of divisive walls. I brought Jahangeer into my discussion of political tourism

¹¹⁵ The other founding members of dala are Rike Sitas and Nontobeko Ntombela. Sitas is a social scientist and Ntombela is a curator, complementing Jahangeer's skills as an architect. All three members of the organisation are experienced artists and educators who have been "involved in a number of local and international projects and exhibitions". According to Sitas, Jahangeer and Ntombela, "the strength of dala lies in the interdisciplinary skills the founders bring to the organisation" (www.dala.org.za 2016).

and looked at his *City Walks* in terms of how he shifts the traditional role of the tour guide in his performative interventions. In this chapter I also analysed the work of Hasan Daraghmeh, who responds to the proliferation of spectacular, sensationalised imagery that actually serves as a kind of wall, a barrier that prevents one from being able to see aspects of reality while simultaneously claiming to aid seeing and understanding. The sensitive nuanced approach embodied in Jahangeer's architectonic spatial interventions could add a necessary layer of subtlety and nuance that is lacking in many aspects of the political tourism and the wall tourism industry in Israel and the OPTs.

7.2 Future Research That I Will Undertake

My analysis of Khaled Jarrar's work contributes to existing publications on the artist's work, only a few of which are in the form of academic papers, chapters, books or journal articles¹¹⁶. Furthermore, my discussion covers areas that overlap with publications such as *Palestinian Video Art* by Bashir Makhoul, which feature the work of Jarrar but do not offer in-depth analysis of his work, nor do they position his work in relation to art production from other countries in the global South such as South Africa. While there is a substantial amount of literature that examines the work of Yael Bartana and Emily Jacir, there is a limited amount of academic literature that analyses the work of Larissa Sansour, Fareh Saleh and Hasan Daraghmeh. My assimilation of existing texts written about these artists in combination with primary research in the form of guided walks and studio tours means that my analyses contribute to the small but growing body of literature on the work of Palestinian artists.

At the time of my visiting Israel and the OPTs, the Gaza Strip Territory was out of bounds to those without special permits. I was unable to secure a permit at the time and was thus unable to travel to Gaza to engage with Palestinian artists practising and studying in this context. I hope to secure a permit in the future and expand my study of Palestinian art and social space to include artists based in Gaza who are responding to specific narratives of division within this context.

¹¹⁶ There are additional angles to the work of Khaled Jarrar that could be explored in further publications such as the issue of gender. Many of the artworks that intervene with the apartheid wall are male oriented and there is an aura of masculine bravado that surrounds these artists. Furthermore, female Palestinian artists are treated differently in public spaces to male artists, these subtle differences warrant further exploration in relation to the ideas discussed in each of the chapters especially when it comes to discussions around aestheticizing the apartheid wall.

I will also take this research project further by curating an exhibition based on my findings. The exhibition would travel around both South Africa and the OPTs (and possibly Israel) and would consist of a selection of artists from both nations. As part of the exhibition I would host a symposium or conference with the artists and a selection of art historians and theorists from both nations. This is not a restrictive proposal, in the sense that the artists I select are not limited to individuals with South African citizenship, and it will include artists such as Serge Alain Nitegeka (originally from Burundi) and Doung Anwar Jahangeer (originally from Mauritius) who have adopted South Africa as their home. Similarly, in a Palestinian context, my selection of artists will not be limited to artists born within and still living in the Palestinian Occupied Territories. Artists who identify as Palestinian but live outside of the OPTs and Israel, or are deeply committed to the arts in a Palestinian context and thus have relevant and valuable experience, will be invited to participate.

In connection with the exhibition and symposium I will facilitate an arts-based student exchange programme¹¹⁷. Ideally sending a South African artist/student to the West Bank, East Jerusalem or Gaza Strip Territories¹¹⁸ and bringing a Palestinian artist/student to South Africa for a minimum of three months¹¹⁹. The idea would be to involve these artists in the exhibition and symposium that I would title *Visual Narratives of Division: South African and Palestinian Intersections*. In connection with the exhibition I will publish a catalogue that includes essays by art historians and colleagues within the SARChI research team at Rhodes University as well as essays by Palestinian academics and art historians.

7.2.1 Future Research That Can Be Undertaken by Other Academics

At present, the barriers I describe in Chapter Four concerning the ability of Palestinian artists to disseminate their work internationally directly influence the quantity of material that is

¹¹⁷ This idea of an exchange programme is very much at its formative stages. I have identified the International Academy of Art in Palestine and the National Research Foundation SARChI chair programme in Geopolitics and the Arts of Africa situated at Rhodes University with its home in the department of Fine Art as potential organisations I could collaborate with in order to realise the proposal.

¹¹⁸ Sending a South African arts student to Gaza is a more complicated endeavour than sending someone to the West Bank or East Jerusalem. It is more difficult to secure visas and permission to visit Gaza. The Gaza Strip territory is a volatile space. Israel regularly tests military weapons in Gaza; furthermore, the inhumane conditions inflicted on Palestinians living in Gaza means that conflict and violence regularly erupt between Palestinian freedom fighters and the Israeli Defence Force (IDF). The most recent period of armed conflict between Palestinians in Gaza and the IDF took place in 2014, shortly after I had left the West Bank and returned to South Africa, and has left the Gaza Strip in even worse condition than it was before Israel's Operation Protective Edge. The conflict results in thousands of Palestinian casualties and a few Israelis, although the majority of the Israelis who died in the operation were soldiers.

¹¹⁹ It would be ideal for the exchange programme to be longer but the standard tourist visa allowing entry into Israel and then into the Occupied Territories allocates only three months. Likewise in South Africa, border control will issue the visitor with a standard three-month visa unless one is able to secure a study permit. In Israel it can be very difficult to secure visas for longer than a three-month period and so I will base my initial project plan on this period of time.

available on the topic of contemporary Palestinian Visual Art. There are very few platforms and initiatives to support the development of the infrastructure and resources needed to establish and maintain networks of artistic production. One of the goals identified in the first chapter is concerned with contributing to the few existing publications available on individual artists' work. I subsequently discovered that there are very few places where Palestinian artists and academics can publish books, especially academic books, within the OPTs. Furthermore, conferences such as *Contestations, Emotions! Social and artistic expressions in the public space*, held at Birzeit University, raised specific issues facing artists working within the area of art and social justice, such as the poor implementation of adequate copyright laws to protect the intellectual property of Palestinian artists and writers working in the area. This not only explains (in part) the lack of published material grounded in a Palestinian context, but also serves as the basis for further inquiry into the precise nature of authorship in this context.

I would like to point out another secondary research finding that warrants further study. Many (if not all) of the arts and photography books that represent photographs of graffiti and wall art in Palestine such as *Facing the Wall* (Shalem & Wolf 2011) and *Against the Wall* (Parry 2010) do not always mention the names of the Palestinian artists who author these spaces¹²⁰. The publications acknowledge international activist groups and artists, almost all of whom are not from Palestine and do not identify as Palestinian, yet they often neglect to locate and include the names of these local authors. Whether this is a case of carelessness or lack of information I am not exactly sure, but further in-depth research needs to be conducted in order to attribute credit to individual Palestinian artists and their work.

7.3 Exit Point

Architecture and the body are informed by one another, and the way that one constructs and behaves within a place influences one's perspective of the self and others in relation to the self. The skin is scarred, blemished, sensitive and resilient. If we seal its openings, close its pores and prevent all 'contaminants', demonised others and 'unsavoury' ideas from confronting and negotiating our own, we are likely to be left with something bland,

¹²⁰ Both *Facing the Wall* (Shalem & Wolf 2011) and *Against the Wall* (Parry 2010) are valuable publications with exceptional photographic documentation. I am certain that the authors of these texts have not intentionally neglected to locate the individual artists who have authored some of these works; I suspect that this information was not included due contextual circumstances and the limitations of the project.

homogenous and fragile. 'Looking with the skin' is a metaphorical attempt at connection and reception that is self-aware and deliberately slow. It encourages one to take the long way around, to consider 'what to connect with', how to connect and how not to connect with the familiar and the foreign in meaningful ways (Said 2004:78). It does not dismiss the lasting influence of narratives of division or the defensive structures that contribute to a guarding of one's vision, and protection of the body, nor is it a suggestion to unrealistically discard fear and insecurity for a new utopia, without walls and boundaries. I have applied this method in both the gathering of the fieldwork that is presented here as well as within my analyses of individual sites of division.

A sensitive and experienced architect or engineer will look at a place and design a building, a bridge or a road with the existing landscape and geography as a central consideration. An architect designing a home should consider the relationship between the shapes and lines of the land and the choice of building designs and materials. Each of the individual choices made by architects, town planners or home-owners influences the visual language of a place. If one can learn to see this connection in order to work with the existing features of a place one is likely to produce a more nuanced product. James Elkins points to the potential of creative practice to rearrange how one might see and engage with the world. He states:

Within limits, I do not want to see things from a single point of view: I hope to be flexible, to think in as liquid a way as I can, and even to risk incoherence. And above all, I want to continue to change – I do not wish to remain the same jaded eye that I was a moment ago. Art is among the experiences that I rely on to alter what I am (Elkins 1996:41).

Visual narratives of division in social space directly impact the way in which individuals see themselves and others. Ideological and physical walls deny vision, they prevent the individual from engaging with certain sites and regularly block horizon lines both metaphorically and literally. Artists are directly concerned with how people see the world. They attend to the unrecognised or under appreciated details and highlight overlooked nuances or micro narratives disguised by larger political trajectories. Like Elkins, I rely on art to guide my perspective, to challenge my perception of things I consider known and to render the unknown less threatening.

There is a clear thread that connects each of the visual examples within this thesis around the topic of visual narratives of divisions, yet in grouping a selection of artists and artworks and

personal documentation of social space I am building narratives of connection and locating sites of intersection. The connections that I have explored between the artists Yael Bartana, Khaled Jarrar, Larissa Sansour, Emily Jacir, Hasan Darahgma, Fareh Saleh and Serge Nitegeka, Doung Anwar Jahangeer and Thando Mama within the thesis as a whole have facilitated the location of additional sites of intersection in terms of practical strategies and mediums used by artists to respond to narratives of division in the Palestinian context. Thus, in closing this discussion I am also opening the conversation up to different avenues and possibilities for future research.

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Appendix A: Israeli Checkpoints in the OPTs

Number on Map	Checkpoint Name	Checkpoint Location
1	Anata (cars) Anata (Pedestrians)	Jerusalem –Anata
2	Altara	Nablus-Birzeit
3	Annab	Nablus-Tulkarm
4	Azzoun Gate	Qalqilya – Tulkarem
5	Asyoun Junction	Hebron- Bethlehem
6	Aroub Camp	Hebron- Bethlehem
7	Ar Ramtha border crossing	Daraa- Ar Rumtha
8	Bethlehem (Qubet Rahel)	Jerusalem – Bethlehem
9	Beit Sahour	Jerusalem- Beit Sahour
10	Beit Jala (Tunnels)	Jerusalem- Beit Jala
11	Beit Fajar	Beit Fajar –Asyoun Junction
12	Beit Fourek	Nablus- Beit Fourek
13	Container	Bethlehem- Ramallah
14	DCO Ramallah	Jerusalem - Ramallah
15	Der Sharaf	Nablus- Tulkarem
16	DCO Qalqilya	Qalqilya - Nablus
17	Daood	Jerusalem- Kufr Aqab
18	Durra Border Crossing	Haql-Aqaba
19	Ein Sinya	Nablus- Ramallah
20	Ein Yabrud	Nablus- Ramallah
21	Get Junction	Qalqilya Nablus
22	Huwara	Nablus - Ramallah
23	Hizma	Jerusalem – Jericho
24	Hamra	Nablus – Jericho
25	Halhoul Bridge	Hebron- Halhoul
26	Hagay	Hebron- Dura
27	Hawawer	Hebron- Halhoul
28	Haql Border Crossing	Aqaba-Haql
29	Jabaa'	Jerusalem- Ramallah
30	Jalazon	Nablus- Ramallah
31	Jeep	Jerusalem – Ramallah
32	Jabara	Nablus - Taybeh
33	Jalameh	Mqebleh- Jenin
34	Jaber Border Crossing	Nasib – Jaber
35	Kufr Aqab Junction	Jerusalem- Ramallah
36	King Hussein Crossing	Jericho- Amman
37	Karameh Border Crossing	Turaibil-Ruwaished
37	Lo 'lo'	Jerusalem – Abu Ghosh
39	Mudawara Border Crossing	Halit Ammar – Mudawara
40	Nabi Saleh	Salfit- Ramallah
41	Nashash	Hebron- Bethlehem

42	Oyoun Haramiyeh	Nablus- Ramallah
43	Qalandiya (cars) Qalandiya (pedestrians)	Jerusalem – Ramallah
44	Ras Aljoura	Hebron- North
45	Shuafat Camp (cars) Shuafat Camp (pedestrians)	Jerusalem- Camp
46	Sheikk Hussein Crossing	Bisan – Amman
47	Umari Border crossing	Haditha- Umari
48	Walajeh	Jerusalem- Beit Jala
49	Za' atara	Nablus- Ramallah
50	Z'ayem	Jerusalem – Jericho

7.4 Timeline : Chronology of Key Dates (Pappe, 282 – 285)

1878	First Zionist agricultural colony in Palestine (Petak Tikva)
1882	25,000 Jewish immigrants begin to settle in Palestine (mainly from Eastern Europe)
1891	Baron Maurice de Hirsh, a German, founds the Jewish Colonization Association (JCA) in London to aid Zionist settlers in Palestine
1896	<i>Der Judenstaat</i> , a book advocating the establishment of a Jewish state, is published by Austro-Hungarian Jewish writer Theodor Herzl
	The JCA begins operations in Palestine
1897	Zionist Congress calls for a home for Jewish people in Palestine
	Pamphlet by founder of socialist Zionims, Nahman Syrkin, says Palestine “must be evacuated for the Jews”.
	First Zionist Congress in Switzerland sets up the World Zionist Association (WZO) and petitions for “a home for the Jewish people in Palestine”.
1901	Jewish National Fund (JNF) set up to acquire land in Palestine for the WZO; the land is to be used and worked solely by Jews.
1904	Tensions between Zionists and Palestinian farmers in Tiberias area
1904 – 1914	40,000 Zionist immigrants arrive in Palestine; Jews now total 6% of the population.
1905	Israel Zangwill states Jews must drive out the Arabs or “grapple with the problem of a large alien population...”
1907	First kibbutz established
1909	Tel Aviv founded north of Jaffa
1911	Memo to Zionist Executive speaks of “limited population transfer”.
1914	World War I starts
1917	Balfour Declaration; British Secretary of State pledges support for “a Jewish

	national home in Palestine”.
	Ottoman forces in Jerusalem surrender to British General Allenby
1918	Palestine occupied by Allies under Allenby
	World War I over, Ottoman rule in Palestine ends.
1919	First Palestinian National Congress in Jerusalem rejects Balfour declaration, demands independence
	Chaim Weizmann, of the Zionist Commission at the Paris Peace Conference calls for a Palestine “as Jewish as England is English”. Other Commission members says “as many Arabs as possible should be persuaded to emigrate”.
	Winston Churchill wrote “there are Jews, whom we are pledged to introduce into Palestine, and who take it for granted that the local population will be cleared out to suit their convenience”.
1919 – 1933	35,000 Zionists immigrate to Palestine. Jews now total 12% of the population and hold 3% of the land.
1920	Founding of Hagana, Zionist underground military organisation
	Britain is assigned the Palestinian Mandate by the Supreme Council of San Remo Peace Conference
1921	Protests in Jaffa against large-scale Zionist immigration
1922	League of Nations Council approves Britain’s Mandate for Palestine
	British census of Palestine: total population of 757,182 people (78% Muslim, 11% Jewish, 9.6% Christian).
1923	British Mandate for Palestine officially comes into force
1924 – 1928	67,000 Zionist immigrants come to Palestine, half of whom are from Poland, raising Jewish population to 16%. Jews now own 4% of land.
1925	In Paris, the Revisionist Party is founded, which insists on the founding of a Jewish state in Palestine and Transjordan.
1929	Riots in Palestine over claims to the Wailing Wall (133 Jews and 116 Arabs are killed, mainly by British forces).
1930	International Commission founded by the League of Nations to establish the legal status of Jews and Arabs at the Wailing Wall.
1931	Irgun (IZL) founded to support more militancy against Arabs.
	Census shows total population of 1.03 million (16.9% Jewish).
	British director of development for Palestine publishes report on “landless Arabs” caused by Zionist colonization.
1932	First regularly constituted Palestinian political party, the Istiqlal (Independence) Party, founded
1935	Arms smuggling by Zionist groups discovered at Jaffa port
1936	A conference of Palestinian National Committees demands “no taxation without representation”.
1937	Peel Commission recommends partition of Palestine, with 33% of the

	country to become a Jewish state. Part of the Palestinian population is to be transferred from this state.
	British dissolve all Palestinian political organisations, deport five leaders, establish military courts against rebellion by Palestinians.
1938	Irgun bombings kill 119 Palestinians. Palestinian bombs and mines kill 8 Jews.
	British bring reinforcements to help suppress rebellion.
1939	Zionist leader Jabotinsky writes: "... the Arabs must make room for the Jews in Eretz Israel. If it was possible to transfer the Baltic peoples, it is also possible to move the Palestinian Arabs."
	British House of Commons votes in approval of a White Paper, which plans conditional independence of Palestine after 10 years and the immigration of 15,000 Jews into Palestine each year for the next 5 years.
	World War II begins.
1940	Land Transfer Regulations come into force, protecting Palestinian land against Zionist acquisition.
1943	Five-year limit planned in White Paper of 1939 extended.
1945	World War II ends
1947	Britain tells newly-formed UN that it will withdraw from Palestine
	UN appoints committee (UNSCOP) on Palestine
	UNSCOP recommends partition
	November 29: UN adopts Resolution 181 on partition of Palestine
	Mass expulsion by the Jews of the indigenous Palestinian Arabs begins

Chronology of Key Dates (continued) – detail for 1948 – 1949 (Pappe, 285 – 287).

JANUARY 1948	
	'Abd al-Qadir al-Husayni returns to Palestine after ten-year exile to form a group to resist partition
20	Britain plans to hand over areas of land to whichever group is predominant in the region.
FEBRUARY 1948	
	War breaks out between Jews and Arabs
18	Hagan announces military service and calls up 25 – 35 year-old men and women
24	US delegate to the UN announces that the role of the Security Council is peacekeeping rather than enforcing partition
MARCH 1948	
6	Hagana announces mobilisation

10	Plan Dalet, the Zionist blueprint for the cleansing of Palestine, finalised
18	President Truman pledges support to the Zionist cause
19 – 20	Arab leaders decide to accept a truce and limited trusteeship rather than partition, as suggested by UN Security Council. Jews reject the truce
30 March – 15 May	Coastal “clearing” operation undertaken by Hagana, expelling Palestinians from the coastal area between Haifa and Jaffa
APRIL 1948	
1	First delivery of Czech arms arrives for Hagana (includes 4,500 rifles; 200 light machine guns; and 5 million rounds of ammunition)
4	Plan Dalet launched by Hagana. Villages along the Tel-Aviv-Jerusalem road captured and residents expelled.
9	The massacre of Deir Yassin
17	UN Security Council resolution demands a truce
20	Palestine trusteeship plan submitted to the UN by the US
22	Haifa cleansed of its Palestinian population
26 – 30	Hagana attacks an area of East Jerusalem, and are forced to hand it over to the British.
	Hagana captures an area of West Jerusalem (all Palestinians in West Jerusalem expelled by Jewish forces).
MAY 1948	
3	Report claims that between 175,000 and 250,000 Palestinians have been forced from their homes.
12 – 14	Czech arms arrive for Hagana
13	Arab Legion attacks Jewish communities in retaliation for Jewish military action.
	Jaffa surrenders to Hagana
14	Israel declares independence as British Mandate ends.
	President Truman recognizes State of Israel
20	Count Bernadotte appointed as UN mediator in Palestine
22	UN Security Council resolution demands ceasefire
11 June - 8 July	First Truce established
JULY 1948	
8 – 18	Fighting breaks out anew as IDF capture Lydd and Ramla
17	IDF launch an offensive but fail to capture the Old City of Jerusalem
18 July – 15 Oct.	Second Truce established, broken by the capture of several villages by IDF.

SEPTEMBER 1948	
17	UN mediator Count Bernadotte assassinated by Jewish terrorists in Jerusalem. New UN mediator is Ralph Bunche.
OCTOBER 1948	
29 – 31	Thousands of Palestinians are expelled during Operation Hiram.
NOVEMBER 1948	
4	UN Security Council calls for immediate truce and withdrawal of forces.
	UN adopts Resolution 194 on Palestinian refugee right of return.
	Israel blocks return.
Nov 1949 –	IDF begins to expel villagers from settlements inside the Lebanese border.
1949	
24 – 28 Feb.	Israeli-Egyptian Armistice
	Between 2,000 and 3,000 villagers expelled from the Faluja pocket by IDF
23 March	Israeli-Lebanese Armistice
3 April	Israeli-Jordanian Armistice
20 July	Syrian-Israeli Armistice