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Lifestyle of resistance: Palestinian *Sumud* in Israel as a form of transformative resistance

By Nijmeh Ali*

Abstract: Sumud, the concept most frequently employed to describe the daily reality experienced by Palestinians in Israel, translates as steadfastness and refers to a form of infrapolitics or everyday resistance. It describes a stubborn insistence on continuing with life despite all obstacles, but it can also suggest that resistance involves reactive actions carried out by weak people. "Everyday resistance" can also encompass a lifestyle in which resistance is understood as both a "value" and a "behaviour", one in which opposition is focused, not just on Israeli power structures, but also on the internal Palestinian power structures that affect Arab society in Israel. This article investigates how this expanded definition contributes to an understanding of both Palestinian behaviour in Israel and the internal and external challenges Palestinians face in their struggle for freedom, equality, and change within Israel and Palestinian society more generally. The paper contributes to the exploration both of the challenges young Palestinians face in Israel and the potential role of resistance in constructing transformative processes.

Key words: Everyday resistance, Neopatriarchy, Palestinians in Israel, Young Palestinians in Israel.

* Nijmet Ali is a Doctoral student at the National Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies of the University of Otago. The current paper is part of PhD research project that explores the hidden potential of Palestinian resistance in Israel.

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Researching the Palestinians in Israel

Writing about resistance and Palestinians is not new. Rich research already exists that focuses on how Palestinians make use of forms of armed and unarmed resistance; however, this rich research is not complete.[1] Most of it focuses on Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, while their counterparts in Israel are excluded from Palestinian political discourse and from resistance research; this exclusion owes its origins to the geographical fragmentation of the Palestinians and to questions about "who is a Palestinian?" that intensified after the Oslo Accord in 1993 when *Felastin* was reduced geographically to the West Bank and Gaza Strip. The group discussed in this article, Palestinians in Israel, was effectively marginalized. The work of writing about the Palestinians in Israel does not simply involve telling their story, which is important; it also contributes to the action of locating them in the political discourse of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. This action can challenge their exclusion from peace negotiations and add depth to the understanding of the conflict. Jamil Hilal, who has written about "Reclaiming the Palestinian Narrative",[2] has pointed out that the dominant political literature on the Palestinian question is permeated by misrepresentations of the history, geography, and identity of the Palestinian people. If the occupation of Palestine in 1967 is considered as a starting point for the conflict, then there is no need for anyone to examine responsibility for the historic injustice that was inflicted on the Palestinian people in 1948, but no genuine reconciliation can be achieved without an acknowledgment of the *Nakba*. Only if the *Nakba* is taken as a starting point will all Palestinians be taken into consideration in future political agreements or negotiations. Their inclusion is vital if a path is to be constructed towards a true reconciliation rather than a temporary "ceasefire".

Research on the Palestinians in Israel is both dynamic and politicized. Academic infrastructure in Israel was mobilized in the service of the Jewish State's ideology, and this has worked to erase Palestinian memory and presence.[3] Close investigation shows that three theoretical schools of research have shaped most of the research in relation to Palestinians in Israel. First, classic modernization theory was employed to explain the minority's status by emphasizing its internal, cultural, and psycho-social characteristics;[4] this kind of research presented the Palestinian minority as primitive and non-modern in order to justify and legitimize the existence of Israel, which was associated with beneficial, modern, and enlightened characteristics. This view still helps to justify superior-inferior relations between Jewish Israelis and Palestinians in Israel, and is used to imply that Palestinians will never become modern unless they are de-Palestinianized and de-Arabized.[5] The dominance of modernization theory cannot be examined without mention of Samuel Noah Eisenstadt from the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, whose students examined Palestinians in Israel and Jewish immigrants from Arab countries (the *Mizrahim*); Eisenstadt's students suggested that these groups offered classical case studies of communities that had successfully modernized and westernized, thanks to their life in Israel.[6] Modernization theory, which ignores the role of power and hegemonic relationships between Palestinians and Jewish people in Israel, shaped the first efforts to research Palestinians, and these studies illustrate how the method, topic of research, and the researchers' own political approaches have contributed to the silencing of Palestinians in Israel as political actors.

Challenges to the modernization approach emerged in the 1980s from outside Israeli academia and were mainly posed by Palestinian scholars who were citizens in Israel and familiar with the contradictory reality of the Palestinians' life in Israel. Elia Zureik's pioneering 1979 work *The Palestinian in Israel: A Study of Internal Colonialism* represented the first Palestinian research to analyse the Palestinian minority within the framework of political sociology, and it identified Palestinians as an ethnic-national group surviving within a colonialist model. Zureik applied a Marxist dependency theory framework in order to interpret state-minority relations and argued that the modernization perspective, which idealized the Zionist project, was a project of colonization in which state-minority relations created a situation of internal colonialism.[7] Zureik's work created a legacy, not only because of the theoretical challenges it posed, but also because it suggested that critical analysis of Israel was legitimate at a time when any criticism of Israel's policies was silenced and labelled as anti-Semitic.[8]

The third school emerged via the politicization of the conclusions of the study of the collective identity of Palestinians in Israel. The first works on the identity question focused on the tension between Arabic national identity and Israeli civic identity and on the psychological mechanisms, linked to the modernization process, that allowed the coexistence of these contradictory identities. Focusing on political changes in the collective identity of Palestinian citizens, Rekhess developed his Palestinianization and radicalization thesis.[9] In his view, the union of Palestinian identity in terms of political extremism leads to the delegitimization of the State by Palestinian citizens and to the blurring of the distinction between the civic struggle for equality inside Israel and the national struggle for liberation in the occupied territories.[10] Sammy Smooha opposed the radicalization thesis and criticized its assumption that the two components of identity it singles out – the civic-Israeli and the national-Palestinian – exclude one another. In its place, he proposed a politicization model which regards the two identity components as independent of each other,[11] a move that indicates a parallel strengthening of both the national and the civic components of identity. Smooha saw the politicization process as representing the will of the Palestinians to participate actively and autonomously in the Israeli public space, without abandoning their national Palestinian identity.[12] He rejected the distinction made in the radicalization thesis between political activism and radicalism and pointed out that the failure to distinguish between politicization and radicalization reflects the attitude of the Jewish majority, which considers any autonomous political activity by Palestinians as radical and illegitimate.[13] However, all of these research schools still view Palestinians in Israel only as powerless people who are subjected to the State power structure due to their national affiliation, something that leads researchers to concentrate in their research on Palestinians' civic status in Israel. Different theoretical models have been developed for researching Palestinians in Israel, such as the "cultural diversity model",[14] the "diversified citizenship model",[15] the "ethnic democracy" model,[16] and the "ethnocratic system".[17] Approaches based on a "settler-colonial"[18] dichotomy or the "politics of indignity"[19] were adopted by critical scholars as the primary research frameworks for studying the Palestinians in Israel.

In this paper, I suggest an additional angle to this research by taking into consideration the potential role that Palestinians in Israel can play in shaping Palestinian resistance and transforming power structures. Furthermore, I suggest that "everyday resistance" theory is valuable as an analytical framework for exploring another aspect of the political behaviour of Palestinians in Israel. To explore this further, it is important to explore the concept of *Sumud* as a way of describing a repertoire of everyday resistance, and it is also important to capture its gaps and the contribution a new assessment of it can make to an understanding of Palestinian resistance.

Sumud

The concept of *Sumud* as steadfastness finds its roots originally in Islam.[20] However, *Sumud* emerged as a political term in the Palestinian context during the 1970s and 1980s, when it

was used by the PLO to emphasize the importance of maintaining a physical presence on the land in the face of Israeli policies that were working to carry out a policy that can be understood as a kind of "silent ethnic cleansing".[21] Firstly, they sought to empty and reconstruct the geographical space; secondly, they worked to impose different means of control over Palestinians' daily lives; and thirdly, they made it hard for Palestinians to continue with the lives available to them. *Sumud* was adopted as the term that described their right to remain on the land, their need to resist forced expulsions, and their commitment to have many children who would continue the struggle for liberation and independence.[22] This understanding of *Sumud* has been criticized as a form of "passive non-resistance focusing on survival only",[23] but conceptualizations of *Sumud* vary. It can be understood as an attitude, a cultural trait, or an "inward-directed" life stance.[24] *Sumud,* in other words, represents an ability to live in the shadow of loss and calamity. Richter-Devroe conceptualizes *Sumud* as a social practice and a form of everyday and non-violent resistance.[25] Raja Shehadeh, a Palestinian lawyer and activist, adds the dimension of political strategy when he describes it as representing a "third way" that takes the form of neither armed struggle nor passive acceptance.[26] *Sumud* is often used to describe Palestinians' inner strength,[27] particularly in the occupied Palestinian territories (OPT) and in the refugee camps.

Palestinian resistance against the Israeli occupation is usually understood within the framework of two major uprisings – the first and the second *Intifada* (1987-1991 and 2001-2003)[28] – but this approach creates two gaps: first, it excludes the *Sumud* of the Palestinians in Israel who live in part of Mandatory Palestine that was occupied in 1948 but is not included in the "occupied Palestinian territories" for political reasons; secondly, the linking of resistance to specific Palestinian events pushes out other forms of resistance in Palestinian daily life, something that may prevent us from gaining a deep understanding of oppressed people's resistance strategies. A desire to explore these two gaps informs this paper. It aims firstly to locate Palestinians in Israel within Palestinian resistance research by introducing their *Sumud*; and, secondly, it seeks to contribute to a greater understanding of the power of everyday resistance as a transformative force by exploring that *Sumud* and its potential to challenge internal and external power structures.

Palestinians in Israel generally label *Sumud* as cultural resistance.[29] Culture is understood here in two ways: firstly, culture, with a small "c", represents a set of values, norms, and patterns of actions that people follow, and secondly, in its artistic sense, culture refers to a physical phenomenon or artefact; for example, a piece of graffiti, or styles of music, dress, or speaking.[30] These divisions are interesting because they reflect and at the same time shape our thinking and behaviour, and so, as Stephen Duncombe states, "They are the Culture of resistance culture".[31] Scott views culture as a political space, the backyard of the weak, which offers room "off stage" for the release of anger, emotions, ideas, and opinions that cannot appear in public.[32] In Scott's terms, culture becomes a space where the weak can present their hidden truth. This idea suggests that culture can contribute to an understanding of the kinds of resistance expressed by the weak and of the different stages of resistance. This article suggests that Hall's characterization of culture as a behaviour and product and Scott's understanding of culture as a political space are both important to an interpretation of the lifestyle of resistance for Palestinians in Israel.

At the current moment, research into Palestinian cultural resistance (styles of art, music, graffiti, and dress, for example) is more popular than research into a "culture of resistance", or what I call the "lifestyle of resistance" that presents resistance as a value that constructs a political behaviour. However, when attention is paid to the dynamic role of culture in enabling transformative resistance to develop, it enables the examination of resistance in relation to different factors such as age, gender, and class. This article will go on to discuss this possibility in relation to the case of young Palestinians in Israel, who resist both the Israeli power structure and the internal power structures of Palestinian society. I will suggest that transformative resistance creates room for the kind of "healthy criticism" which can

develop, reconstruct, and give a revolutionary spirit to the political life of Palestinians in Israel.

Resistance theory and everyday resistance - theoretical considerations

This section presents the analytical framework of the paper and analyses the potential of everyday resistance for revealing the political behaviour of Palestinians, and particularly young Palestinians, in Israel. Resistance theory helps to unmask the complexity of power relations in society in general, and in the politics of the subaltern in particular, by telling us that there is no one type of resistance or universalized form of struggle. Local resistance, understood as both context and experience, should be recognized as an independent and significant site of resistance; organized collective action may not be possible everywhere for a variety of different reasons, and so other forms of resistance must be discovered and acknowledged. Early work on resistance focused on large protests, movements, and revolutions which confronted their targets directly and openly, and this research took it for granted that resistance is visible and can be easily recognized and classified as such. However, James Scott's research on peasant politics challenged this definition by introducing the theoretical concept of "everyday resistance" to cover forms that were neither as dramatic or visible as riots, revolutions, civil wars, or any other forms of collective, organized, or confrontational activity.[33] Everyday resistance is quiet, dispersed, disguised, or invisible and constitutes what Scott calls "infrapolitics".

The theory of "everyday resistance" focuses on how people act in their daily lives in ways that challenge dominant power relations.[34] Scott moved away from structuralism as he studied the political behaviour of the peasantry in Asia, and he adopted an ethnographic method to focus on individual reactions and behaviours that contributed to this shift. Research associated with poststructuralism helped to make micropolitics and "everyday resistance" popular. The theory of everyday resistance tries to explain the puzzle posed by the fact that weak people are apparently silent when they face the impoverishment and exploitation imposed on them by more powerful social groups. Everyday resistance is capable of generating everyday politics; and the infrequency of mass social resistance does not mean that resistance is absent from everyday politics. The theory suggests that the calm faces of the weak hide genuine rage, distrust, and antipathy to the oppressors, and this quiet resistance can result in revolution.[35] Moreover, everyday resistance is "not a peasant monopoly",[36] but exists as a form of expression that is available to all kinds of subalterns.[37] The concept of "everyday resistance" has been expanded to explain resistance in the workplace, the family, and queer communities, and researchers study forms of everyday resistance expressed not only by specific categories of people, such as women, migrants, and peasants, but also sometimes "new agents" such as white-power activists.[38] Kerkvliet explains that the theory of everyday resistance moved research beyond the trivial and popular view of traditional politics by bringing to the analysis several, previously missing, but politically significant elements of social change.[39]

"Everyday resistance" theory offers an important route into the analysis of resistance by young Palestinian people. It allows researchers to give a human face to resistance by highlighting everyday lived experiences, and it also helps to identify different levels of uneven power relations, which can be used to develop a properly nuanced picture.[40] A focus on everyday resistance unmasks a society's internal power structure, and so can make a significant contribution to efforts to explore the challenges young Palestinians face in their everyday lives. Lilja and Vinthagen point out that not all resistance succeeds, and it can instead reproduce relations of dominance.[41] Their insight raises questions about how far everyday resistance effects and restructures power relations. This article pursues David Jeffress's suggestion that resistance can alternatively be conceptualized as "transformation".[42] Jeffress understands "transformational resistance" as an effort to transform social relations, rather than as a reactive movement.[43] This raises questions, first,

about how power structures can be negotiated or resisted; second, how Palestinians in Israel use everyday resistance to construct a lifestyle of resistance; and, third, how a lifestyle of resistance is important for transformative resistance and for promoting internal change at social and personal level.

Scott's insight into the everyday resistance of infrapolitics contributes to our understanding of the alternative spaces that the powerless or weak create so that they can act safely and freely within existing power structures. However, Bayat challenges Scott's idea of powerful spaces and argues that agency is in fact the "space" which enables acts of everyday resistance. Bayat suggests understanding "resistance" through the existence of power and counter-power, not in binary opposition, but in a complex, decoupled, and ambivalent relationship.[44] This understanding is based on the Foucauldian idea that "wherever there is power, there is resistance".[45] Much of the literature of resistance is based upon Foucault's insight that power is everywhere, "circulates", and is never "localized here and there, never in anybody's hands".[46] Foucault's ideas challenged the powerlessness of ordinary people, recognizing their agency and their political role, and there is no doubt that the acknowledgment of the agency of subjects, who were previously dismissed as "the passive poor", "submissive women", "apolitical peasants", and "oppressed workers", released the weak from their powerless positions, and has contributed to the recognition of the need to attend to everyday resistance.[47] Certainly, the idea that the powerless have power and Bayat's understanding of agency offer opportunities to cast new light on the potential ability of Palestinians in Israel to transform their current power positions.

The theory of everyday resistance provides another perspective in efforts to understand political behaviour at the grassroots level. It identifies the regular practices, as well as the unrecognized, disguised, and anonymous acts that are employed by the weakest members of a society to undermine existing power structures. Yet, the value of everyday resistance theory faces a major challenge because the concept can easily be overextended. One way to tackle this challenge is to define each act of everyday resistance according to its potential to undermine hegemonic power relations, an approach that also helps draw attention to visible and more subtly expressed internal power structures. This approach can, for example, help unmask the internal challenges that prevent young Palestinians from gaining leadership positions. However, the Palestinians in Israel, including the young, are challenging the hegemonic Zionist narrative (intentionally or not) by continuing their lives, their stories, their names, their dreams, and most of all their existence and development as a people. Thus, I view everyday resistance as a theory that offers hope to powerless people, not only because it recognizes the power of the powerless, but also because it constructs the hope of change by preventing the victims from "sinking" under their victimization. In the following section, I explore the ways in which the *Nakba* persists, not just as an event, but as an actual living "context" which makes every expression of Palestinian identity a de facto act of resistance.

The everyday life of *Nakba* and the idea of "*Mankubin*"

The defining event in Palestinian people's memories and lives is the *Nakba*, which is the disaster that befell the Palestinian people in 1948. Between 770,000 and 780,000 Palestinian inhabitants of 532 towns and villages, whose land had accounted for 92.6 per cent of the area that became Israel, were made refugees.[48] While *Nakba* has been translated into English as "catastrophe", "disaster", or "calamity", these translations do not present a full understanding of the active implications of its Arabic meaning. English also has limitations when translating *mankubin*, unless we can stretch the language a bit and call Palestinians a "catastrophed" or "disastered" people,[49] who live in ways that reflect the consequences of the *Nakba*; some as refugees, some under occupation, and some under the discriminatory Israeli regime.

The *mankubin* reality affects many aspects of Palestinian lives. Regular and simple issues such as collecting mountain herbs became patriotic symbols of the lost homeland and part of a

battle for Palestinian existence. Thus, Palestinians are resisting attempts to localize the *Nakba* in the past and describe it as a finished event rather than an ongoing reality. As Joseph Massad states, "This is not an epistemological struggle but a lively political one".[50] Mahdi 'Amil's famous claim that "you are not defeated, as long as you resist"[51] reflects the *mankubin* reality by rejecting any attempts to push the *Nakba* into the past. In these terms, each annual commemoration of the *Nakba* also marks one more year of resisting it. This explains the Israeli reaction to the *Nakba* commemorations which culminated with the Knesset approving the "Basic Budget Law" (Amendment No 40), nicknamed the "*Nakba* Law", in 2011. The law allows for the "suspension or lessening of government funding for bodies that support action against principles of the state",[52] and it targets Palestinians in Israel by delegitimizing their collective memory. In this context, the everyday life of Palestinian citizens has become a confrontation zone in which the conflict takes a variety of different forms. It is not restricted to land confiscations or house demolitions, but is also conducted via the telling of the story of the place itself. Palestinian existence and culture, including stories, dancing, literature, art, and traditions pose a challenge both to Zionist hegemony and the Israeli denial of Palestinian people's existence, and so every aspect of life that reflects a sense of Palestinian memory or belonging becomes a process of everyday resistance. Some scholars view this kind of activity as a form of cultural resistance. I suggest extending the political role of culture by viewing it as a transformative form of resistance that shapes political behaviour among the Palestinians in their everyday resistance.

As a result of the *Nakba*, Palestinians in Israel witnessed the collapse of Palestinian society and the exile of most Palestinians including the Palestinian elite. Kimmerling and Migdal view the Palestinians who remained in their homeland as powerless and traumatized.[53] These people were left as a body without a head when the people who had offered them social, commercial, and political leadership became refugees outside of Palestine. As I noted earlier, powerlessness and victimization are the dominant tropes in research which focuses on Palestinians in Israel, but if the concept of "resistance" is employed in research into the lives of Palestinians in Israel, new ways of understanding their calamity and loss start to emerge. After the *Nakba*, Palestinians in Israel adopted resistance as a lifestyle which allowed them to retain their Palestinian lifestyles and identities in the shadow of their great defeat. My grandmother Amneh, who witnessed the *Nakba*, told me, "There was no time and place to cry, the only thing that was important was how to continue from here".[54] Rather than sinking under their victimization, Palestinians in Israel started to organize themselves politically and socially. Their experience opens the door for an exploration of how forms of resistance relate to power structures in an everyday life of confrontation. The tension between minority-majority, individual-collective, and private-public identities actually shaped the development of political behaviour for the Palestinians in Israel, and, in the next section, these conflicted identities will be carefully considered to enable a deep understanding of *Sumud* and resistance.

Sumud and resistance in the shadow of Israel

Before the Palestinians in Israel can be evaluated in terms of resistance research, attention must be paid to the historical contexts that shaped the development of *Sumud*. This section presents a description of Palestinian life in Israel and introduces key resistance events, including different forms of resistance that can be identified as *Sumud*, and their effects on Palestinian political behaviour.

The Palestinian-Israeli conflict is among the most longstanding and complicated conflicts of the modern era. It began at the end of the 19th century as a struggle between the Zionist movement and the national Palestinian movement over the same land. The battle peaked in 1948 when the Zionist movement won the war and established the State of Israel. For the Palestinians, this event, known as the *Nakba*, marked the collapse of their national dream and has become the defining event in their individual and collective lives.[55]

Before 1948, approximately 1.4 million Palestinians and nearly 620,000 Jews lived in the territory of Palestine. After the war, only 156,000 Palestinians remained in the new-born State of Israel. Israel found itself dealing with Palestinians who were, until 1948, an integral part of Palestinian and Arab resistance to the colonial project of the Zionist movement.[56] Before 1948, Palestinian resistance actors had combined elements of violent and non-violent protest, and this pattern was reflected in the 1936-1939 revolt which took the form of a national uprising against the British colonial mandate in Mandatory Palestine. However, after the 1948 war, which was an open, violent, and direct confrontation, Palestinians became minority citizens in an "enemy" State that was in conflict with them and the Arab nation with which they identified. Furthermore, they were perceived by Israeli governments and the Jewish majority as a "hostile minority", "fifth column", "security risk", and a "demographic bomb".[57] Dan Rabinowitz defines Israel's Palestinians as a "trapped minority" – part of a larger group spread across at least two States – and as citizens of a State hegemonized by others, who are unable to influence public interests. At the same time, Palestinians in Israel are marginalized within their mother nation.[58] As a result of these dramatic changes, and given the lack of political leadership, it seems that the adoption of open resistance strategies was not an option.

The early years of Israel's formation as a State had the biggest influence on the individual and collective memories of its Palestinian citizens. The period was defined by military rule, which was imposed in the areas where Palestinians lived on 21 October 1948, and was based on the Defence (Emergency) Regulations established by the British Mandate in 1945. These regulations limited Palestinians' freedom of movement and expression.[59] The governor had the rights to arrest people without a warrant and detain them without trial, control their movements, and expel them from their houses. He could also close schools, businesses, and newspapers, and prohibit demonstrations or protests.[60] Military rule was the central Israeli institutional mechanism that shaped the lives of Palestinian citizens of Israel and "Palestinians were transformed from being the owners of the place, into strangers in it".[61] This did not prevent them from perceiving themselves as an indigenous national minority that remained in its homeland, Palestine, after its great defeat and the establishment of Israel in 1948.[62] Therefore, the Palestinians' first struggle in Israel focused on the question of citizenship. Ironically, Israeli citizenship was seen to offer permanent status to those Palestinians who resisted by all means the fate of becoming refugees. *Baka'* – which translates as "remaining in Palestine despite the new owners", and a name that was given to the place in addition to the reconstructing of geography and society – is considered as a form of *Sumud*. Yet, full citizenship did not guarantee full equality in the Jewish State. Two basic laws define the status of Palestinians in Israel. First, the Law of Return guarantees automatic citizenship to all Jews who come to live in Israel, and, second, the Citizenship Law, finalized in 1953, declares that only those who lived in Mandatory Palestine and registered as citizens in the November 1948 census that took place on 21 October 1948 can be automatically recognized as full citizens (this condition is not applicable to Jews). However, closer investigation shows that in November 1948 most of the Palestinians who became citizens lived in areas not yet occupied by Israel and as a result could not participate in the census.[63] In practical terms, this means that, out of 156,000 Palestinians, 100,000 were not registered as citizens by November 1948. The struggle for *Baka'* (remaining in the homeland) as a resistance form of *Sumud* (steadfastness) cannot be mentioned without reference to Hanna Nakkarah who is known as the "People's lawyer". Nakkarah led the legal struggle against the permanent "Red IDs" that were issued to those Palestinians who remained in Palestine; in fact, the battle over citizenship and Nakkarah's efforts prevented the creation of an additional wave of Palestinian refugees.[64] Still, the threat of transfer did not disappear as a future scenario, especially in times of crisis, either from Palestinian awareness or from Israeli public debate.[65]

Open resistance during the period of military rule was risky and dangerous and so it was mostly hidden and took a variety of different forms. Hillel Cohen points out that Palestinians

listened secretly to the political speeches of the charismatic Egyptian leader Gamal Abdel Nasser as one form of resistance, and they also composed political songs to be sung at weddings.[66] Under military rule, words of resistance became a weapon, and this enabled another form of resistance that constructed the *Sumud* of the Palestinians in Israel: culture. Their inability to directly confront Israeli power structures encouraged Palestinians to turn to culture as a space of confrontation, and so they used music, literature, and art as weapons.

Following the *Nakba*, Palestinians found themselves subject to a new reality, one which set the stage for the development of a cultural movement that politicized everything. Words, such as *Portugal* (orange), *zeitun* (olives), *shajar zeitun* (olive trees), *el-hassad* (harvest), and so on, were all transformed from agricultural discourse to political discourse. Words associated with everyday life were being used to describe the *watan* (homeland) and the *sumud* (steadfastness) of *El-jamaheer* (the masses), which were presented as the cornerstones of Palestinian resistance. Because the oppression people suffered was continual, forbidding, and silencing, Palestinian culture became the agent for negotiation between the everyday and extreme;[67] it represented the continuation of normal life, but it also symbolized Palestinians' battle against the obliteration of their identities. In this scenario, resistance was not only a national duty, it was also a lifestyle.

When direct political activism is impossible, cultural activity can represent the first step towards rising up from the ashes of destruction, and it can equip a society with strength no government or regime can easily either prevent or provide.[68] Poetry was one space in which national identity survived after the *Nakba*. What political activists and leaders could not or dared not express their views, poets wrote and sang loudly. Poetry and literature served as political statements that helped to develop political awareness and consciousness, and they intertwined discourses on love, hate, death, birth, and family issues with political arguments about land confiscation and state oppression.[69] Poetry festivals became very popular and offered spaces where language could be used as a weapon with some impunity. The Israeli secret service was unable to decide if these kinds of gathering constituted subversive acts or cultural events.[70] Poets participated in these "popular meetings" side by side with politicians and read their poems to the masses. Magazines such as *Al gad* and *Al jaded*, emerged to provide a "hub" for young Palestinians as writers and readers.[71] The first study that coined the term "Literature of Resistance" in the context of Palestinians in Israel was published in 1967 by Gassan Kanafani. Since then, Kanafani's study, "Resistance Literature in Occupied Palestine 1948-1968",[72] has become a landmark for describing the Palestinians' *Sumud* in Israel. Four famous names – Tawfiq Ziad, Samih al Qassem, Rashid Houssien, and Mahmoud Darwish – laid the foundations for establishing this resistance and succeeded in challenging the "cultural ghetto" of their life in Israel.[73]

When military rule ended in 1966, a confident generation of young Palestinians went on to lead a resistance of confrontation against the Israeli authorities. In 1976, the Palestinians in Israel led one of the most important battles in the history of Palestinian resistance: Land Day. This was the first time since 1948 that the Palestinians had organized themselves collectively, calling for a general strike, and protesting against land confiscation and the Judaization of the Galilee. Palestinian workers, students, pupils, and teachers did not attend their workplaces, schools, and universities. In response, the Israeli government declared the area to be a closed military zone and used force to break the strike. By the end of the day, six Palestinians had been shot dead and hundreds had been wounded and arrested. This day is labelled as a "Pride Day" when masses of Palestinians raised their voices in front of the *Soultat* – the Israeli authorities. At the first commemoration in 1977, Tawfiq Ziad opened his speech with the claim that "last year we grew up twenty-eight years", referring to the number of years that Palestinians had been living in the State of Israel. Since 1976, Palestinians everywhere have commemorated Land Day annually on 30 March every year. Palestinians in Israel from different political backgrounds march together both to address the significant place of this

event in their collective memory and to emphasize the ongoing reality that they are part of the Palestinian people. Land Day marks, then, an important milestone in the *Sumud* of the Palestinians in Israel as a Palestinian national minority and also as citizens in Israel.

Land Day directly affected the political behaviour of Palestinians in Israel in a positive way because it showed that, despite their weakness and years of subjugation to military control, they were not powerless. For the first time since their participation in the Israeli election of 1949, the majority of Palestinians voted in 1977 for the Israeli Communist Party, the only non -Zionist party, which included Palestinian and Jewish people among its leaders and members. This marked the point at which Palestinians in Israel overcame their fear and moved toward direct political confrontation with the Israeli system, adding the words "rights" and "owners of the land" to their lexicon.

The second confrontation resulted from the breakup of the second *Intifada* in 2000, which spilled over into Israel. The confrontation followed the visit of Ariel Sharon to *Haram al-Sharif*; the holiest Islamic site in Palestine and the third most sacred site after *Mecca* and the *Madina*, and young Palestinians in Israel came out to occupy the streets in an act of solidarity with the Palestinians killed in Jerusalem. As a result, 13 young Palestinian citizens of Israel were shot dead by the Israeli police. Ilan Pappé in his influential book *The Forgotten Palestinians* describes the events of 2000 as representing an "earthquake" in terms of Israeli-Palestinian relations in Israel.[74] This description might also be applied to their effects on the relationship between young Palestinians and their leadership, which are discussed further in the sections below.

It is clear that, over time, *Sumud* has taken a variety of shapes and moved between forms of hidden and open confrontation and different practices that have included legal, political, and cultural resistance. In addition to the "literature of resistance", which shaped the awareness of all Palestinians, the two main open confrontations on Land Day and during the events of 2000 constructed the resistance memory of Palestinians in Israel. This cumulative experience contributes to the development of resistance behaviour and helps to explain why Palestinian resistance in Israel can best be understood as a lifestyle. However, the impact of each event has been different. Land Day is a symbol of a successful struggle which motivated Palestinians to take action and to support their leadership, despite the loss they had endured. Meanwhile, the events of 2000 in the second *Intifada* represented the collapse of the trust that had existed between the people and their official political parties.[75] The disappointment that arose from the outcomes of the *Or* Commission (the official committee that was appointed by the Israeli government to investigate the events of 2000) reflects the trapped situation of Palestinians in Israel, when the confronted authorities also function as the judging ones. However, the closure of the investigation without charges being brought against anyone from the Israeli police remains an "open wound" in the memory of Palestinian citizens, and as a result, young Palestinians became more critical, not only toward Israel, but also toward their own leadership which was viewed as "weak". This led young Palestinians to raise their voices to demand change within their own society. Not only did they call for the replacement of their political representatives with "new" young, fresh faces, but they also called for a rethink of strategy at the national level. Some considered the Palestinian-Israeli conflict as the main struggle for Palestinians in Israel and sought the "Palestinianization of politics",[76] an approach that was first called for in the 1980s. Others wanted greater concentration on internal civic demands to improve the living standards of Palestinian citizens in Israel. Another reason for the increase in critical awareness among young Palestinians can be related to the development of Palestinian civil society. Young Palestinians found alternative channels for political and social participation, which can also be described as additional platforms of resistance, mainly through civil society organizations. The main question in this sense is "resistance to whom?" If resistance in principle was directed against the Israeli power structures, the development of internal platforms encouraged internal resistance which increased the degree of inter-social criticism.

In the shadow of this disappointment and enduring political and economic marginalization, Palestinians in Israel constructed alternative channels through which to articulate and promote their demands. Civil society organizations with international funds offered one platform, particularly for young Palestinians. Political movements and parties have also played a central role, especially after the *Nakba*, in mobilizing the new generation of educated young Palestinians in Israel through the formation of grassroots organizations. Known as *al hezb*, the Israeli Communist Party was the main source of organized political leadership in the critical years after 1948. Its leadership in the protests and political activity that took place under military rule, which focused on the daily needs of the Palestinians, contributed to its wide popularity. Through its newspaper and magazines, the party provided a platform for political expression and critical thinking.[77] As well as establishing active political debate that led to the construction of political awareness, the party established many Palestinian organizations, such as kindergartens, scholarship foundations, and workers' unions, that served not just its members but also the rest of the community.

However, Shany Payes has examined the development of Palestinian non-governmental organizations (PNGOs) in Israel and identified four distinct periods in their evolution: the initial period of formation and growth (1976-1982); a second period of consolidation and institutionalization (1983-1993); a third period characterized by growing impatience at the failure of the Arab-Israeli peace process to yield an improvement in Palestinian civil rights on the one hand, combined with an increasing number of political opportunities for PNGOs in Israel on the other (1993-2000); and a fourth period that followed the outbreak of the second Intifada during which demands grew for the protection of human rights and recognition of Palestinians in Israel as a national minority.[78] These civil society organizations provided job opportunities for young Palestinians and gave them a platform to present their ideas, raise their voices, and potentially accomplish their demands.

Non-governmental organizations tend to be more flexible and less bureaucratic than political party structures, and they also focus on immediate outcomes. They proved attractive to young Palestinians who were looking for job opportunities as well as self-satisfaction and political involvement. Still, it is important to emphasize that the struggle of the Palestinians in Israel is about recognizing and changing policy, goals that cannot be achieved through funded projects for two reasons. PNGO activism is dependent on each fund's resources and its political agenda, and these restrictions mean that they are unable to generate genuinely progressive and cumulative activism or struggle that can bring about policy change. Despite these limitations, civil society development deserves attention for the contribution it has made to efforts to empower resistance from the "inside".

Resistance from "inside" has contributed to the construction of the political behaviour of Palestinians in Israel and it has added another understanding of *Sumud* by enabling the reinvestigation and questioning of internal power structures and taboos. This questioning exists in parallel with, and might be a necessary prerequisite for, efforts to resist Israeli power structures. The definition of *Sumud* expands here, so that the term refers not only to a series of reactionary actions, such as remaining in the land, but also includes a constructivist aspect which contributes to the transformation of power relations. In order to establish a robust understanding of this observation and to locate young Palestinians in this debate, it is necessary to introduce the idea of neopatriarchy as a social structure in Arab society.

Neopatriarchy and resistance from "inside"

Like members of any Arab society, Palestinians in Israel are subject to their own power structure, something that adds another network of power relations in addition to the Israeli one. Halim Barakat points out that Arab society is a mirror image of the family.[79] This observation about familial social structure has emerged as an analytical category for Arab society which Alaa Alazzeh considers to be "applicable on macro and microstructure".[80]

Hisham Sharabi's work on neopatriarchy, which focuses on familial social structures, points out that neopatriarchy is a theoretical formulation that "occupies the space between traditional patriarchy and modernity".[81] It refers to the link between patriarchal values and social relations that exists within the "modern" institutions in Arab society. This link is useful for identifying the analogy between family and society, where relations between ruler and ruled are understood as being based on the familiar patriarchal relations between father and child. According to this understanding, young Arab people, including Palestinians, are restricted by their "patriarchal loyalty" to leaders and hierarchical systems within Arab society, which are structured by factors such as age and rank. To create change, it is therefore necessary to challenge these elements and release young Palestinians from this kind of loyalty. This release can be achieved by adopting forms of resistance that challenge internal power relations. The power of this kind of resistance lies in its emphasis on the legitimacy of questioning, investigating, and criticizing existing hierarchies and systems of power.

Neopatriarchy is an important concept that can be used to unmask the internal power structures of generational conflict and to illustrate that resistance does not go in one direction. A famous saying suggests that "freedom cannot be divided", but we might add that "resistance also cannot be divided" because social and political struggle cannot be separated. Political resistance is associated with resistance to neopatriarchal structures too, and this has led to an ongoing redefinition of private and public spheres. The first Palestinian *Intifada* targeted not just the Israeli occupation but also the Palestinian traditional leadership and the parents' generation which had been accused of accepting the reality of the occupation instead of resisting it. Neopatriarchy can offer an explanation as to why young Palestinian are "stuck" and cannot climb up to a level where they become political decision makers. In other words, young Palestinians are subjugated like all other Palestinians to the Israeli power system, but they are further subjugated by their junior role in Palestinians' own internal social system. This situation reflects the complexity of Palestinian resistance in Israel but it also highlights the potential for young people to escape from the passive definition of *Sumud*, and its reactionary actions, if they view *Sumud* as an active form of resistance that can initiate change.

Transformative resistance – young Palestinians between neopatriarchy and Israel

The Palestinian population in Israel in 2015 numbers nearly 1.7 million people, or 20.7 per cent of the total population of Israel, with age groups under the age of 30 years making up 62 per cent of the total Palestinian population. The 15-29 age group forms nearly 25 per cent of the whole society. Accordingly, we cannot talk about political mobilization of the Palestinians in Israel without including the reality of young people and their needs and aspirations.

The history of the Palestinian minority is rich with examples of resistance led by young people, particularly at schools and universities. Israel imposed strong control over Palestinian students and teachers, and, as a result, student councils in secondary schools worked on politicizing schools by introducing political debate that challenged the Israeli Ministry of Education. The student movement at universities introduced most of the political leadership of the Palestinian minority today, which is made up of committees for the defence of the land; local coalitions against the injustices of military rule; neighbourhood committees, and other groupings. These experiences, always accompanied by partisan political action, mobilized the masses by ensuring the participation of members from all segments of society, including the youth.

The events of the Arab spring and youth-led rebellions in a number of Arab countries affected young Palestinian people in Israel. It gave them a "push" both to revolt against their own traditional political parties and to demand involvement in the decision-making circle. Before exploring this idea further, I want to pause to reflect on the concept of "leadership". In fact,

many young men and women now lead demonstrations and stand in the forefront during the clashes against authorities; but while they are known as the "field command", they have no influence on the senior leadership level or presence at the level of the first political leaders who speak in the name of the Palestinian minority. Some of the reasons for this reflect the neopatriarchal structure which traditionally shapes the structures of political parties, yet it is very important to distinguish between two types of politics: those developed before and after the *Nakba*. Prior to 1948, the Palestinian leadership was led by a small number of principal families. Two families based in Jerusalem, *Al Husseini*, and *Al Nashashibi* competed with each other for Palestinian leadership during the British mandate, and the British used this competition to promote their interests. As a result of the *Nakba* and the collapse of the political social order, a new politics emerged among Palestinians in general but particularly among Palestinians in Israel, who were mostly peasants and subject to the same oppression as they had endured before. Israel tried to keep the old local political structure that had mainly operated in the villages – the *Al Moukhtar* system – as a tool for controlling the Palestinians, and so Israeli authorities encouraged the persistence of traditional and segmented structures among Palestinian citizens to facilitate the State's policies.[82] However the new form of political activism, which was represented both by the Israeli Communist Party and by changes in socio-economic structures and social values, succeeded in replacing the *Moukhtar* system with one based on political parties and elections, rather than on familial origins or relations with the Israeli authorities.

The switch from familial politics to party politics, as a result of the collapse of the classic and traditional social structure, opened up opportunities for young and ordinary Palestinians to form another concept of leadership. Workers, students, the poor, women, Christians, Druze, and left-wing Jews, side by side with the Muslim majority, constructed a leadership for the Palestinian minority through an election. This activism changed the internal political structure of Palestinian society and led to greater political participation, but it did not change the fact that the influence of Palestinian members on the Israeli parliament, the Knesset, has always been limited. This limitation has led to disappointment that can be registered in the increase in voices that call for boycotting participation in Israeli elections. The move from traditional to participatory politics seems not to be enough. Still, it is not easy for young Palestinians in Israel to be part of the political leadership. One explanation may lie in the neopatriarchal structure that needs to be challenged in order to bring real change. This answers the question as to why a 30-year-old activist is not a political representative.

Conclusion

In this paper, I have explored the potential role of young Palestinians in Israel in constructing their *Sumud* by applying the theory of resistance, which leads to an understanding of the dynamics of *Sumud* beyond the conventional assumptions that it can only take the form of people remaining in their homeland. The link between everyday resistance carried out by Palestinians in Israel and social change at the internal and external level introduces us to another aspect of Palestinian's political behaviour by identifying their *Sumud* as a lifestyle of resistance.

A lifestyle of resistance works in a transformative way when resistance is understood as a set of behaviours that undermine existing power structures. On those terms, a lifestyle of resistance can contribute to the development of confident and critical young Palestinians who adopt "resistance" as a tool for change in relation to Palestinian as well as Israeli power structures. This expanded definition of *Sumud* also emphasizes the significance of understanding "particularity" as context, something that would open the door for examining the heterogenic character of the Palestinian people. As Sayigh points out, "after many decades of exile and separation, there is actually little that links Palestinians together beyond the fact that they all live and share the consequences of the Nakba".[83] This particularity of every Palestinian community opens up a variety of understandings and forms of *Sumud* in a

process that creates space for the experience of diverse Palestinians to be included. More than this, it opens the door for research into *Sumud* as an ongoing developmental process that would help to explore its dynamics and its potential for transforming power relations. For Palestinians in Israel, *Sumud* exists as more than a set of oppositional reactive acts; instead, it is understood as a very active and critical way of life. Young Palestinians have the potential to lead an internal rebellion against what they consider to be obstacles to their use of *Sumud* to challenge Israeli policies, believing that this may make their resistance more effective and productively enable criticism, questioning, and a reinvestigation of Palestinian power structures in ways that may help to free Palestinian politics from its deadlock. Internal resistance might well be a necessary step towards generating sufficient energy, hope, and motivation for continued resistance to the Israeli oppression of Palestinians both in and beyond Israel.

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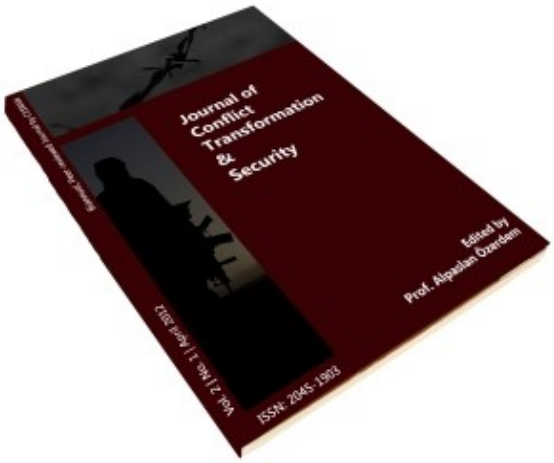

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