Living Palestine

Family Survival, Resistance, and Mobility under Occupation

EDITED BY LISA TARAKI

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INTRODUCTION

Lisa Taraki

No study of Palestine and the Palestinians can ignore the momentous impact, significance, and consequences of the two defining moments in modern Palestinian political history, the *Nakba* (literally, disaster) of 1948 and the military occupation of the rest of Palestine in 1967. Understandably, the bulk of scholarship on Palestine in the decades since 1948 has been devoted to documenting and analyzing the impact of wars, dispossession, and military occupation on Palestinian society. Dominated by a macro-level political-economy approach, much of this scholarship, especially that produced since 1967, has been notable for its preoccupation with structural transformations at the level of the economy, the class structure, and the polity. In the 1980s, and spurred by the widening of mass resistance to the occupation, a body of more anthropologically oriented works began to appear alongside the ever-expanding corpus of political studies. Much of this later scholarship, while attempting to understand Palestinians as they lived their lives, focused on Palestinian political agency and was more interested in understanding Palestinians as political actors who organized, resisted, and otherwise challenged the occupation.

The political-economy and political-agency approaches share a common shortcoming in that they do not render Palestinian lives very approachable or accessible. Even the voluminous literature on the first intifada (1987 to the early 1990s), with a few exceptions, treats Palestinians as one-dimensional political subjects. The internal dynamics, stresses, and contradictions of the social groups and communities within which people live out their lives, or the sensibilities and subjectivities of individuals as they negotiate their mundane existence away from the barricades have not received much serious attention from most researchers.

This volume is one product of a multifaceted research project launched

unit of social analysis, it is also clear that the lone household cannot be examined in a social void; the latter is firmly anchored in a larger universe of family *('a'ila)*, a construct that has significance and concrete resonance in the everyday experiences of individuals and households as they fashion their present realities and strategize for their futures. It is equally clear that survey data about the household, however rich or painstakingly collected, cannot answer all our questions about households and families, because the data capture phenomena at one moment in time and abstract from the dynamic relationships over time between individuals and their households and between households and their kin. Furthermore, because these relationships are shaped, in part, by prevailing political conditions, it is very important to contextualize our study of family and household dynamics. We can now say with the benefit of hindsight that the survey was conducted at what transpired to be the end of the short-lived era of optimism; prospects for "peace" were quickly receding, but more important, it was becoming evident that the Oslo process had ushered in a new social and political regime marked by tensions, fissures, and contradictions within the social order. Tales of rampant corruption in the Palestinian bureaucracy and the abuse of power circulated widely among the public. The strike of public school teachers in 1999 can be seen as one indicator of dissatisfaction with the Palestinian Authority, especially on the part of a sector widely recognized as being one of the most underprivileged segments of the burgeoning public sector.

Family and Household in a Colonial Context

Just as it is important to consider the intersections of the household with wider kin groups, so is it imperative that we ponder the larger political and social context, the most salient aspect of which is the reality of colonial rule with all its dynamics—not only of dispossession and repression but also of resistance, resilience, and survival. Indeed, as Johnson notes in her chapter, "it would be hard to argue that the dynamics of one of the most prolonged occupations in modern history have not affected most Palestinian households and families, including their internal dynamics, processes, and economies" (p. 60).

The overwhelming reality of dispossession and occupation looms large in the analyses contained in the chapters here. The consequences of the *Nakba* in 1948 and the military occupation in 1967 have been far-reaching and must

munities as a result of Israeli policies should help illuminate some of these questions.[3]

Everyday Resistance

Resistance expressed in organized parties and movements has left a deep imprint on the household and family. Very few Palestinian families have escaped the experience of imprisonment of at least one of their members at some point in the long history of struggle against the Israeli colonial system. As an everyday reality, the political activities of members have kept families on constant alert in anticipation of nighttime raids, beatings, arrests, interrogations, imprisonment, and house demolitions, which are only some of the punitive measures devised by the Israeli occupiers. The immense amounts of time and energy that household members, and especially mothers and wives, invest in visiting lawyers and the Red Cross, attending trials, and keeping in regular contact with sons and husbands in prison and catering to their needs for basic supplies and food are other ways in which resistance activities have left their mark on family dynamics such as the division of labor within the household. Family practices such as selection of marriage partners; decisions concerning emigration, employment, and education; and residential choices are also at times strategies to accommodate the social and economic consequences of resistance. For example, the uprooting of wives and children of prisoners who are often forced to live in other households for the duration of the imprisonment of the husband and father is one aspect of the dynamics behind the constitution and reconstitution of the household in Palestine and is directly a consequence of resistance activities. The creation of "female-headed households" as a result of the imprisonment of male members is another obvious example.

But the domestic group is not only acted upon; it is often an active agent in reproducing the ethos of national resistance. Some works emerging from ethnographic fieldwork during the first intifada of the late 1980s and early 1990s have explored how families have been implicated in the construction of a nationalist ethos and the nationalist subject through the transformation or

3. The research, conducted at the Institute of Women's Studies at Birzeit University, centers on three communities in the twin cities of Ramallah and al-Bira.

are part of the strategies of social reproduction. Such decisions are rarely made by lone individuals; rather, they are taken collectively by families as they consider their present and contemplate their future. Thus, decisions concerning migration (who migrates, with whom, and to where and for how long), marriage (who marries, to whom, and when) and education (for whom, what level, and where) are usually household or family affairs and are conceived and perceived as decisions bearing upon the continuation of the family and the enhancement of its material, social, and symbolic capital. The levels of risk and uncertainty faced by Palestinians are relevant here and thus constitute the larger backdrop to the decisions.

On another level, social reproduction is also about the task of fashioning identities; forging conceptions of personhood, family life, and family futures; setting horizons; and defining what kinds of sociality are desirable. While the family is not the sole and privileged site of identity-formation or the elaboration of social imaginaries, it is where many of the practices crucial to the outcome of this process are executed, as discussed earlier.

It is inconceivable, once again, that nearly a century's worth of Palestinian encounters with the colonial system would not be relevant to the task of social reproduction or the elaboration of the social imagination. Nor is it possible to ignore the inexorable force of the global circulation of symbols and goods, in whose interstices many of the ideas of personhood, family life, and family futures are made and remade. Appadurai has argued that today's world is characterized by an entirely new role for the imagination in social life; what is new about global cultural processes is the imagination as a social practice, as an organized field of social practices, a "form of work," and a form of negotiation between sites of agency (individuals) and globally defined fields of possibility (1997, 31). He notes that electronic mediation and mass migration have been of signal importance in the work of the imagination as a constitutive feature of the modern subjectivity of ordinary people; the media offer new resources and new disciplines for the construction of imagined selves and imagined worlds, and migration means that "more people than ever before seem to imagine routinely the possibility that they or their children will live and work in places other than where they were born" (7).

It is indeed important to keep in mind that subjectivities and the imagination are today, more than ever before, influenced by global forces, as Appadurai has noted. But it is equally important to recognize that global currents are

milial preferences are concerned, in the context of "economies of symbolic goods" where different forms of symbolic capital have different values. The value of symbolic capital through kin work, she argues, may be higher in some regions than others and may help to explain differences in certain kinds of kin practices and ideologies among regions.

Taraki and Giacaman's chapter also attempts to tackle the thorny issue of regional difference, as well as that of variation among urban centers in terms of their demographic profiles and other attributes, particularly those relating to lifestyles, life pursuits, and the construction of lifeworlds. The differences among the cities are also reflected in representations of these cities in the local imagination as distinct characters, flavors, and ambiences. The historical approach adopted in the chapter aims at explaining the uniqueness of three cities (Nablus, Hebron, and Ramallah) in terms of their pasts and presents and their place within their larger regional contexts. Ruptures and continuities in the relationship of each city with its region, the character of its hegemonic groups, and the diversity of the population seemed particularly relevant to understanding the uniqueness of the three cities. This chapter, together with those of Johnson, Kuttab, and Hilal, can be read as exercises in breathing meaning into statistical "facts." The main difficulty we encountered is the paucity of social and historical evidence at our disposal, because vast areas of Palestinian social history remain unexcavated. A preoccupation with Palestinian political economy and political institutions has precluded a serious study of social and cultural issues. We hope that this volume will be a step in the direction of tipping the balance in recent scholarly work on Palestinian society toward a study of other aspects of Palestinian life, particularly those that pertain to everyday practice and discourse.

Dispossession, Occupation, and Resistance

It is hardly necessary to show that wars, dispossession, exile, military occupation, repression, and resistance are highly salient to the understanding of Palestinian society in all its complexities and contradictions. The contributions to this volume assume this saliency, and each seeks to draw out the consequences and relevance of this turbulent legacy for the issue at hand.

It may be useful to highlight some of the more significant features of the occupied Palestinian territories, particularly in the period since the early

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means, that not only cities, but the larger regions within which they were located, have had distinctive identities and social characteristics. That is not to say that cities were not differentiated from villages, but to stress the point that some cities in some regions set the tone for life within the region, or as it were, stamped the villages in their hinterlands with their unique signatures. On the other hand, we also have the case of cities or towns that were not significantly differentiated from their rural hinterlands, producing a situation where a whole region was characterized by the lack of a stark contrast between urban and rural economies and social practices. Given the evidence to be discussed in this chapter, we can make only tentative suggestions about the significance of regionality, leaving the more definitive statement to further exploration (see Johnson's chapter in this volume).

Our main thesis is that Nablus, Hebron, and Ramallah represent three distinct modes of urban life in Palestine. In the case of Hebron and Nablus, the distinctiveness of each city is not only a product of more recent transformations in society and economy, but also an expression of continuity with the more distant past. This continuity with the past is expressed in the composition of the population; the nature and character of dominant groups; the extent of disruption wrought by the *Nakba* of 1948 and the occupation of 1967; the nature of the encounter with modernity, Zionist colonization, and globalization; and their relation to their rural hinterlands. But despite the shared legacy of the weight of past history, each city represents a different paradigm of Palestinian urban life not only in the present but also in the past; it is possible to say that the more "urban" Nablus can be contrasted with the more "rural" Hebron. Ramallah, on the other hand, is a new city, a product of the turbulent developments ushered in by the dispossession of 1948 and its aftermath. In many ways, Ramallah is reproducing, at the dawn of the twenty-first century, some of the same processes that led to the dynamic, hybrid modernity of Jerusalem and some of the coastal cities at the beginning of the twentieth century. It is doing so under vastly changed circumstances, but some of the same processes are at work in the making of the first Palestinian metropolis after the loss of a good part of "modern" Jerusalem and the coastal cities in 1948.

Our discussion of history and regionality begins with the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. In this first part of the chapter, we discuss the significance of historical continuity and rupture for the understanding of the present lives and identities of our three cities. In the second part, we consider some

earlier whether we can be justified in viewing them as reflections of or a continuation of historical trends. We are encouraged in pursuing this line of inquiry by the work of several scholars whose works, taken together, point to the importance of placing individual cities within the context of the regions of which they were a part. The most comprehensive work in this regard is Beshara Doumani's 1995 work on Jabal Nablus. He was the first social historian of Palestine to draw explicit attention to region as a social and economic organizing principle in eighteenth and nineteenth century Palestine, suggesting that it continues to the present day, at least in regards to some aspects of the social life of Jabal Nablus.

David Harvey (2001, 224–25), while warning against essentialist tendencies in geography that reify the concept of "region," notes that region is an important attribute of social organization in space: "regions are made or constructed both in material form and in imagination, and crystallize out as a distinctive form from some mix of material, social and mental processes. . . . Regionality becomes central to consciousness and identity formation and to political subjectivity." More generally, it has become widely recognized by critical geographers and anthropologists that regions are not "objective" categories but rather constructs, the outcome of processes that are performed, limited, symbolized, and institutionalized through diverse practices and discourses (Paasi 2002, 805).

There could hardly be a better fit between Harvey's conceptualization of region and Doumani's concept of "social space" in reference to Palestine in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. It is worth reproducing at length a most significant observation with which Doumani opens his social history of Ottoman Jabal Nablus:

Ever since its origins as a Canaanite settlement, the city of Nablus has been locked into a permanent embrace with its hinterland. Over the centuries the multilayered and complex interactions between these two organically linked but distinct parts generated a cohesive and dynamic social space: Jabal Nablus. The material foundations of the autonomy of Jabal Nablus were the deeply rooted economic networks between the city and its surrounding villages; and the cultural foundations of its identity were the social and political dynamics of urban-rural relations, especially between merchants and peas-

farmers. Because much of the land in Jabal al-Khalil was *waqf* land and thus not subject to taxation, a "feudal" landlord class was not allowed to develop in this area (2003, 216). Furthermore, the dearth of fertile land in the region also meant that agriculture was not the primary activity in this area; animal husbandry, herding, and production were also important. Another unique feature of Hebron noted by Amiry was related to its economic activity and is of signal importance. Whereas in Jabal Nablus and Jabal al-Quds there was a more or less complete separation between agriculture in the villages and trade in the cities, in Hebron this did not hold true. The most fertile lands of the whole region, in fact, were located within the city. Thus Hebron was the only city in Palestine that combined agriculture, trade, herding, and the administration of holy places (216). Scholch confirms this character when he notes that Hebron was a town where different economic pursuits coexisted side by side: agriculture, livestock herding, trade, and the processing of hides and the manufacture of glassware (1993, 162).

A Jerusalem-based Hebronite's recollection of his childhood in the early 1960s is instructive; he recalls that his family in Jerusalem would spend the entire summer out in the vineyards and fig groves in Hebron and its environs, staying there until late fall when the harvesting and processing of grapes had been completed. Families would resist sending their children back to school in the fall, especially if this entailed the long trip to Jerusalem from the fields. Even landless families in Hebron would rent a piece of land for the season, move the entire family there, and return the land to its owner at the end of the season. These "semi-peasant" practices continued until the mid-1960s but have almost completely disappeared today, the result of the loss of agricultural land in the city environs to building expansion and the availability of good roads obviating the need to spend weeks away from home in the city (Ju'beh 2003).

The picture that emerges from these shards of evidence suggests that the "regionness" of Jabal al-Khalil was more a result of the sameness between Hebron and its hinterland than it was a result of the presence of a hegemonic urban center serving as the trading center for the countryside and with an elite ruling (and perhaps serving as a "unifying force" for) the countryside through relations of economic domination and patronage. Amiry's observations about the architecture of Hebron are very significant here: while the palaces of wealthy merchants constituted the basic element in the architecture of

ian Authority institutions are headed by "outsiders," mostly returnees or members of the new elite that does not have historic roots in the city. In Nablus, on the other hand, the Nabulsi elite have managed to integrate themselves into the PA hierarchy; the governorate and the municipality are in the hands of prominent Nablus families.[4]

Gender is a significant marker of the character of places, whether they are cities, regions, or indeed nations. In Palestine, the deportment, dress, and pursuits of women in particular are highly significant markers of regional identities. One of the more enduring features of Nablus's social and cultural life has been the lifestyles and political and cultural activities of its elite women. While the history of middle-class and elite women in Nablus in the twentieth century awaits an author, there is enough evidence to support the argument that the dispositions and practices of this class of women are important markers of the ethos of the city's ruling groups. In the twentieth century, we have ample evidence of Nabulsi middle- and upper-middle-class women's activism within the nationalist movement and later in charitable work. Many scholars and diarists have recorded the lives and accomplishments of Nablus's middle-class and elite women (Fleischmann 2003; Moors 1995; Mogannam 1937; Sayigh 1989; Salah n.d.). These women ranged from the "Florence Nightingale of Nablus," 'Andalib al-'Amad, the founder of the Arab Women's Union in 1921 (Tawil 1979), to businesswomen of acumen (Moors 1995). The late Fadwa Tuqan (d. 2003) was a writer of renown throughout the Arab world, and it is in Nablus that she grew up in the family's home (Tuqan n.d.). In her book on the Palestinian women's movement during the Mandate period, Fleischmann notes that while all the cities and towns had fairly active chapters of the Arab Women's Association/Arab Women's Union, the chapters that received the most publicity were those in Jerusalem, Haifa, Jaffa, 'Akka, and Nablus. She notes the paucity of information about the branch in Hebron, which apparently participated infrequently in nationalist activities such as demonstrations and relief work (2003, 151). The weak evidence for women's activism in Hebron is in itself a good indicator of the likely dearth of such ac-

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4. An incident that occurred in Nablus in the early months of the second intifada is very instructive: demonstrations in the city against policemen brought in from Gaza (viewed as "outsiders," even if they were part of the national police) succeeded in driving out the police force.

has been left behind by Hebron notables or public personalities in the course of the nineteenth or twentieth centuries. Compared with the wealth of memoirs, diaries, and chronicles bequeathed to the social historian by public figures and intellectuals in Nablus, Jerusalem, Haifa, and Jaffa, the offerings of Hebron have been indeed meager. This can be taken as a reflection of Hebron's peripherality in national life on the one hand, and the lack of interest or desire on the part of its elite to memorialize in writing their accomplishments and contributions on the other.

To recapitulate, it may be appropriate to return to the two interrelated questions we raised at the start of this chapter. First, how much of the past is embodied in the present, and to what extent are the "characters" of the two cities, Nablus and Hebron, a reflection of their social identities and histories in past decades? How much continuity has there been, and what significance have the ruptures of the past four decades had? The second broad problem continues to confound: is there still such a place as a "social space" as conceived by Doumani for eighteenth and twentieth centuries Jabal Nablus and Jabal al-Khalil? For instance, Johnson (in this volume) argues that the southern area of the West Bank (primarily the region around Hebron) may have denser webs of kin and community relations. The question remains, however, as to what accounts for this persistent difference, as reflected in census and survey data.

Historical Rupture and the New City: Ramallah

The history of Ramallah as recorded by historians and its own "native sons" (and some daughters) in the early twentieth century is not the history of a cosmopolitan city such as Jerusalem, Haifa, or Jaffa. Nor is it the history of an established inland city such as Nablus or Hebron. Until the end of the nineteenth century, Ramallah was a village like many others in its environs. An architectural history of Ramallah has shown that its architecture was not distinguishable from that of other villages in the hilly district, and the building styles reflected the lifestyle and needs of peasants (Ju'beh and Bishara 2002, 22). Its population was small, and agriculture was the main economic pursuit. Families spent much of the summer months tending their orchards and vineyards (Shaheen 1982, 46), much in the manner of Hebronites noted earlier. The winds of change, however, began to prevail by the mid-nineteenth cen-

One of the keys to understanding the transformation of Ramallah from a sleepy village to a vibrant small town and later a city on its way to becoming the primary urban center in the West Bank has to do with its Christian identity. It has been decades since Ramallah lost its Christian majority,[12] yet the original Christian identity continues to figure in representations of the city, both in terms of its self-image and its place in the national imagination. We would argue that over the years, different social groups—professional and other white collar migrants from other towns, students coming to study at nearby Birzeit University, political activists, Christian refugees, and the dwindling population of natives—had a common interest in furthering the notion of Ramallah as a Christian town, and by association and extension, as a town tolerant of openness, difference, and diversity. Today, under the rule of the Palestinian Authority, whose major seat Ramallah has become, the Christian identity of Ramallah endures and is embodied in its relatively lax and free social atmosphere enabling the mixing of men and women, leisure activities, and a restaurant and café culture where men and women can feel comfortable in public and where alcohol can be served.[13]

Ramallah is unique among our three cities in that it does not have a hegemonic social group with historic roots in the city. This, we believe, is one of the keys to understanding its urban modernity, in sharp contrast with the more conservative cast of Nablus and the entrenched conservatism of Hebron. A good part of Ramallah's "original" families emigrated throughout the twentieth century, making Ramallah a town that belonged to no one and thus to everyone. Because there was no hegemonic, entrenched group of town "elders" or notables in place, "strangers" and "outsiders" came to assume positions of influence in the town, especially after the 1970s and with the growing power of the hegemonic national movement. A good number of political activists of rural origins or from other towns took up residence in Ramallah and began to wield effective political power through the growing network of national institutions such as universities, political parties, mass organizations,

12. Figures from the 1997 census indicate that 32 percent of the city's population are Christian (PCBS 2000a).

13. Jerusalem, Ramallah, and Bethlehem are the only cities in the West Bank where alcohol is served in restaurants and sold in shops. Even in Ramallah's twin city of al-Bira, a stone's throw away, municipal regulations prohibit the sale of alcohol.

ethos finds expression and is reflected in lifestyle indicators related to consumption but also to education, employment, and women's visibility and participation in the public sphere.

The Production of Difference

We now examine some of the contemporary features of our three cities as reflected in data from the census, our survey of households, and some recent studies. We attempt to draw out the uniqueness of each city from these seemingly dry statistics; we suggest that the sharp contrasts in terms of demographic, socioeconomic, and lifestyle indicators reflect differences in the ambience and ethos of these cities. We came to realize these important differences among cities as we were analyzing our household survey data, focusing specifically on Nablus and Hebron.[14] Hebron consistently appeared to be more caught up in an insular and conservative way of life compared to Nablus as evidenced by the early marriage of its women, the high proportion of children within the household, large family sizes, lesser educational levels for both men and women, the type of work people do to earn a living, housing arrangements, and the lower level of modern amenities in homes. Utilizing the PCBS 1997 census and the labor force survey 1999 data sets,[15] as well as selected indicators derived from the household survey, the comparison expanded to include Ramallah city. Our aim has been to establish the coexistence of different modes of urban life in one national space, from the unabashed globalizing urbanity of Ramallah to the intermediate "traditional-urban" of Nablus and the generally "traditional-peasant" way of life in Hebron.

This typology not only has local historical resonance, as we have seen in our examination of the forces of continuity and rupture in Palestine, but also reflects the reality of contemporary urban formations in the Arab world as a whole. Arab cities today can be placed along a continuum ranging from the

14. The household sample survey size was too small to yield comprehensive meaningful analyses for Ramallah City.

15. The 1997 census data set (PCBS 2000a) for districts as well as the 1999 Labor Force survey data set (PCBS 2000c) are sample data sets representing different districts and locales (urban, rural, and camp) but not individual cities. City-specific census data were also kindly released by PCBS for use by the Institute of Women's Studies in this analysis.

location in Palestine. Under the stifling regime of closure, separation, and fragmentation (especially in the West Bank), Palestinians have lost their mobility, the one dynamic factor in urban transformation in the Arab region. If these Israeli policies continue, Palestinian society will be locked into localisms of a kind not observed anywhere else in the region today; we will find ourselves with the curious case of a "cosmopolitan" localism in Ramallah, as insulated from the rest of Palestine as the "localized" localisms of insular Hebron or Nablus. Palestinians' social worlds are contracting, ironically at a time when the internet and satellite television have accelerated access to the globe (Giacaman et al. 2004a).

Education: How Much, and For What Purpose?

Educational levels of the three cities' inhabitants conform to the patterns noted earlier. With the highest percentages of lower levels of education scored by Hebron city (26 percent having had no more than six years of schooling), we find that Nablus city is in between and Ramallah has the lowest levels (table 1.2). In comparison, Ramallah residents have higher postsecondary educational levels, compared to Nablus and Hebron. Consistent with our main arguments, the demographic characteristics and educational levels of these city's inhabitants are understandably interlinked, with higher levels of education corresponding to lower household sizes, smaller percentages of children in the community, higher levels of singlehood among women, and lower rates of early marriage.

Table 1.2
Educational Attainment by City
and District Rural Area (DRA), 1997 Census (%)

Educational level	Nablus		Ramallah		Hebron	
Population over 15	City	DRA	City	DRA	City	DRA
Up to 6 years	21	39	13	33	26	50
7–9 years	25	27	17	25	33	29
10–12 years	29	16	33	21	28	12
Postsecondary	25	18	37	21	13	9
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100

Source: PCBS 1999a

Table 1.3
Employment by City and Sex, 1997 Census (%)

Employment status[a]	Nablus		Ramallah		Hebron	
	M	F	M	F	M	F
Working	74	13	69	21	74	7
Unemployed, seeking work	8	4	9	3	8	1
Students	13	15	17	24	12	14
Other	5	68	5	52	6	78
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100

Source: PCBS 1999a
[a]For persons fifteen years old or older

These differences can be explained by the higher proportion of students living in Ramallah. That is, Ramallah is unusual in that it has significantly more working and educated women and significantly more male and female students as well. Given that both Nablus and Hebron house universities within the city, these results suggest that Ramallawis tend to pursue educating their children to a larger extent than either Nablusis or Khalilis. Once again, we speculate that these data not only reflect the different economies and employment opportunities of the three cities, but also different notions of social mobility and the avenues available for pursuing it.

Indeed, support for this argument is further found when examining data on children six to seventeen years old. Table 1.4 reveals that about 6.5 percent of children who should be attending school in both Nablus and Hebron work, mostly fifteen hours or more, compared to 3.3 percent for children in Ramal-

Table 1.4
Child Labor and Schooling by City, 1997 Census (%)

Status[a]	Nablus			Ramallah			Hebron		
	T	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F
Works 1–14 hours	0.5	1.0	0.0	0.3	0.7	0.0	0.4	0.8	0.0
Works 15 hours or more	6.0	12.0	0.1	3.0	6.0	0.1	6.2	12.0	0.2
Student full time	87.0	83.0	91.0	92.0	89.0	95.0	85.0	81.0	89.0
Other	6.0	4.0	9.0	5.0	4.0	5.0	8.0	6.0	11.0

Source: PCBS 1999a
[a]For children six through seventeen years of age

Table 2.5
Ever-Married Women, Degree of Consanguinity by District, 1995 (%)

District	First cousin	Other relative (same *hamula*)	Other relative (other *hamula*)	No relation
Hebron	30.6	25.6	30.6	13.2
Bethlehem	27.4	22.2	15.6	34.7
Jerusalem	27.1	16.2	9.8	47.0
Ramallah/al-Bira	24.4	24.7	16.5	34.4
Nablus	24.3	15.8	17.2	42.7
Tulkarm/Qalqilya	26.2	15.0	17.2	42.7
Jenin	29.9	17.2	15.6	37.3
Gaza: north	32.1	16.5	7.7	43.7
Gaza: south and central	31.0	24.2	16.1	28.7

Source: PCBS 1997c, tables 25, 59

riage among the seven administrative districts in the West Bank and two in Gaza were not large, although they were slightly higher in Hebron and Gaza than in other districts. Differences among districts in other forms of kin and stranger marriage were more significant: the survey, using categories of marriage to first cousin, same *hamula*, other *hamula*, and no relation, found only 13.2 percent of ever-married women (aged fifteen through forty-nine) from the Hebron district reporting that they were married to a spouse who was no relation, while over a third of women in other districts (with the exception of south and central Gaza) reported being married to nonrelatives. The differences in Gaza are interesting, with highs in both first-cousin and stranger marriage in northern Gaza. Patterns in the Hebron region (southern West Bank) may help clarify the logic of kin-based marriage arrangements and their relationship to place, local economies, and cultures.

Logics of Land and Dower: Material Explanations

Are the two standard economic reasons given for kin marriage—avoiding land alienation and avoiding dower payment—valid in the Palestinian context? In the IWS survey, 24 percent of heads of households in the southern West Bank owned land in addition to their own dwelling, as opposed to a 15 percent rate of ownership for household heads in the northern and central West Bank (table 2.6). However, while land as a factor in marriage patterns cannot be dis-

(Geertz 1979, 376). In Moors's view, marriage dynamics are based not simply on sharing blood, but, class, culture, and space (or place). In his ethnographic study of the Ramallah-area village of Baytin in the 1960s, Lutfiyya also notes the idiomatic use of kinship: " 'We are all cousins' is a remark often made to a stranger who may ask a villager if he were related to someone in the village who is not a close relative" (Lutfiyya 1961, 175). More recently, Palestinian migrants to the United States call each other *ya qaraba* (O relatives!), even when they share neither kin relations nor the same specific village or town origin, but simply come from the same region of Palestine.[22] In both the Palestinian territory and the Diaspora, Palestinians employ the vocabulary of kinship to establish social relationships and social worlds, whether an older man is addressed with the respectful term of *'ammo* (paternal uncle), or women evoke shared experiences with the vocabulary of sisterhood. This is particularly striking in shared public spaces, whether public transportation or the endless lines in which women wait for bureaucratic "favors" (e.g., residency permits, prison visits, or food rations).

When villagers become refugees, "sameness" may be affirmed and reconstituted in marriage practices. A particularly telling example of these dynamics is found in a study of marriage patterns since 1948 in Burayj refugee camp in the Dayr al-Balah district of Gaza. After constructing genealogical maps of six "patrilineal lineages,"[23] founded either by individual males or groups of brothers exiled to Gaza in 1948, Tuastad found that two-thirds of 538 married individuals had married a refugee descended from the same village in Palestine; about one-half (of the 538) married from the same lineage as well (Tuastad 1997, 112). He observes that the larger category of *hamula* has been fragmented by refugee life and believes that it is no longer an operative category. After 1948, reorganizing kinship networks was one of the few options for Palestinian refugees for social and political organization: Tuastad notes that kinship organization located "refugees in space and time" and reproduced "home as a social and cultural state" in a new physical environment (1997,

22. Information supplied by Rita Giacaman from personal experience.

23. Tuastad (1997, 110) calculated the average lineage size as seven households, although a majority was from lineages of 10 or more households, ranging from 50 to 500 relatives living in the same camp. Nonetheless, there were a substantial number of households (248) were single households without other relatives.

riage preferences, parents generally supported much higher levels of education for sons, daughters, and potential spouses than their own educational attainment, and they also supported to a significant extent daughters and daughters-in-law working outside the home, an expectation often quite different from their own lives and the environment around them (Abu Nahleh 2002b). These findings inevitably raise a series of questions about how to interpret the meaning of stated preferences. These preferences may best be taken as normative statements: as Holy notes, preference is a "phenomenon that clearly belongs to the notional, cognitive or cultural level of social reality" (1989, 9). There is also the obvious fact that preferences may be difficult to translate into practice. People marry kin for reasons other than a normative ideology: working in Morocco where marriages with first cousins were relatively common, Hildred Geertz observed that a "normative preference for marriage with the father's brother's daughter . . . was rarely, if ever, expressed to me unsolicited" (1979, 372), adding that reciprocated marriage among kinsmen over generations had produced a "ramifying thicket of ties" that defy simple classification. Inside this "thicket," kinship may be more idiomatic than strictly biological.

These notes of caution, however, do not mean that the survey data are meaningless; it is significant that women and men in the IWS survey expressed marital preferences for their children that were substantially different from their own experience. However, an interpretation of this significance must be situated in the context of married women and men being asked in a formal interview to express a marriage preference for their children: their responses may not only reflect their experience in a particular social world or community of dispositions (habitus) and the constraints and opportunities therein, and their preferences for change, but also how they might wish to project or communicate that world to outsiders.

The Freedom to "Decide": Closeness and Choice

Consider the quarter of respondents in the IWS survey who did not express a preference for either relative or nonrelative marriage for their son, instead affirming that it was up to their son to decide on whether his marriage partner was a relative or not, and the 10 percent who gave the same response for their

This was the first violent night Umm Saleh's family experienced, but it was not the only one. Feeling unsafe in her home, Umm Saleh and her children slept for several days in the basement of a neighbor's house or at her family's home in Qalandia camp and had to come back to their house in the mornings to pursue their daily activities, housework, and school, until one day she decided no more of the moving in and out. The effects of this crisis reflected heavily on the children: one of the younger girls started bed-wetting again; two of them had paralysis fits and loss of appetite for which they had to undergo treatment at the Center for the Victims of Torture and at a private psychiatrist. Sawsan, fifteen at the time, describes her experience:

> I would get up. My sides would be aching. I couldn't move. It would make me cry. I had to take tranquilizers to go to sleep. I almost had a total nervous breakdown. I used to read the Qur'an at night. Then sometimes the shooting would stop. . . . All night I would not get a wink of sleep. How were you supposed to function in school? When the shooting would begin, Tala would turn pale yellow and be paralyzed. . . . Fadwa would totally break down. It was so bad for her; she needed to get see a counselor. . . . I hope to God that those days are never repeated.

Although Jamil died of a heart attack, Umm Saleh and the children strongly believe that it was precipitated by his fear of losing his only son to an Israeli bullet. News about Saleh's going to the checkpoint to engage in rock throwing at the soldiers traveled around among relatives until it reached his parents. About this incident, which she believed caused her husband's death Umm Saleh says:

> Jamil died on the 31st of October. There was nothing wrong with him, he was working normally—he had projects he was working on. The boy, our only son, went to the *mahsoum* [checkpoint]. Usually Saleh doesn't go out. My sister called me and said "while my husband was coming home from work he saw Saleh at the City Inn." I told Jamil and he said, *"Khalas hada al walad rah*—The boy is gone—we will find him in some hospital."

Umm Saleh and her husband rushed to the *mahsoum*,[7] as she calls it, looking for their son. They spent two hours there under the threat of heavy shooting from jeeps and tanks before they could came back home with the son. According to Saleh, he was there because he wanted to write an essay about "stone throwing at the City Inn checkpoint." (These are the excuses some children give to their parents, if their parents think they are too young to confront the soldiers.) That night Jamil had a heart attack, and he died the next day. After his father's death, Saleh had to take a summer job at such an early age to help provide for the family. Umm Saleh's real motivation, however, was not the income but rather to keep him off the streets and away from confrontations with the Israeli army.

The experience of fear that one will lose one's child is not unique to Umm Saleh and her husband because their son is an only son. On the contrary, it is a common worry among Palestinian parents, so contrary to the mythical image that is propagated by Israeli and western media, namely that Palestinian mothers send their children to be killed by Israeli soldiers. In general, Palestinian parents, and particularly mothers, live in constant fear of losing their children. They often cannot prevent their children from engaging in unarmed clashes with the Israeli soldiers, but they are always on the alert, ready to rush to the confrontation site to bring their children back home. It has been well-documented that 85 percent of Palestinian children who have been killed by the Israeli army have not been engaged in clashes.[8]

What is significant about Umm Saleh's family is the way they coped with

7. The word *mahsoum* is the Hebrew word for checkpoint, which has become part of people's daily language. This checkpoint was located in al-Bira near the City Inn; in an area close by, there is an Israeli settlement illegally constructed on Palestinian land and the Israeli military and civil administration headquarters, both known as Beit El. When Palestinians (young and old, males and females) go on demonstrations protesting the Israeli occupation and its measures, they usually head toward the closest checkpoint in their area, the City Inn checkpoint in the case of Ramallah and al-Bira. There Palestinian young men engage in rock throwing, and the Israeli armed soldiers shoot back at them with live and rubber bullets, tear gas grenades, and tank grenades. However, most often the Israeli army initiates the confrontation by shooting at the unarmed demonstrators long before they get close to the checkpoint. A few kilometers to the east lies the Israeli settlement of Psagot.

8. See Cook, Hanieh, and Kay 2004.

gave me the keys to the house in the morning.[11] At around four in the after-
noon, I heard them trying to break down the garage door. I ran out and told
them to stop because I had the keys. He [the soldier] told me to open the
garage door and the other door and I did. Then the soldier put an M-16 to my
head. He asked me if I was scared. I told him that I wasn't scared. He pulled
me by the arm and went to my mother and took her ID. They told my
mother that they wanted to take me with them. My mother told him, no, he
is my only son. . . . They took me from house to house to get people's ID and
they kept asking me about specific people. I made like I didn't know any-
thing. When they asked about one particular guy over and over again, I told
them that everyone knew that there was something mentally wrong with
him, although there really isn't. They took me inside the jeep and showed
me a map of the houses in the neighborhood. They said "this is your house,
this is so and so's house . . ." I saw that all the houses had numbers on them
and next to each one they had put the ID numbers of the household mem-
bers and their telephone numbers. I told him that I was tired and I wanted to
go home. I had been with them for almost two hours. He told me to go. I just
went home.

In this adventure, not only did Saleh risk going around with the Israeli sol-
diers with an M-16 pointed to his head, but he also risked giving them wrong
information to their inquiries. If by chance the soldiers had discovered that he
had lied to them, he would not have escaped being arrested, seriously injured,
or possibly even killed. But that is how a "real man" would behave.

*Umm Nathem's Household: Three Sons and Loss of Work (originally written
by Nida' Abu Awwad)*

Like many Palestinian families, Umm Nathem's family had been hard hit by
the current intifada conditions, particularly those resulting from the Israeli
policy of closures. After the family picked up the pieces following the death of
the head of the household, Abu Nathem, which coincided with the first in-

11. A common practice of the Israeli army is breaking into houses using explosives to open
the outside door when the residents are away. To avoid damage to their houses, Palestinian leave
the house key with the neighbors when they plan to be away overnight.

tifada (late 1980s), accumulated resources, and started investment in construction and marriage arrangements, three of the sons lost their jobs in Israel and joined the ranks of the unemployed. The eldest son suffered the male-breadwinner's crisis while the eldest daughter had to bear the ramifications of the sharp decline in the household income while keeping up with providing for two households.

Umm Nathem lives with her family in a small town eight kilometers to the north of Ramallah. Her husband died in 1990, leaving her with nine children, the eldest nineteen and the youngest less than a year. During his sickness, which coincided with the first intifada, Abu Nathem had to sell his business partly because of the difficult economic conditions of the intifada and partly because of his ill health. Selling the business was necessary in order to provide for the family and to pay for medical expenses (although they were partly covered by UNRWA). When he died, Nathem, the eldest son, nineteen at the time, had already withdrawn from school to work to help his sick father. The eldest daughter, Suhaila, seventeen at the time, had to quit school, because even the free UNRWA education was beyond the family's means. Her labor was needed, so she had to seek low-paying work at a sewing workshop; she was unskilled and was hired as a trainee. Umm Nathem justifies withdrawing Suhaila from school: "then, we had no provider and all the income we earned was insufficient to meet the household needs." She herself was both unskilled and burdened with care for the children and the housework, which did not allow her to work for pay. However, she carried out different kinds of home production, baking *taboun* bread, cultivating the house garden, and raising some chickens and a goat. The family thus had to make ends meet depending on multiple resources: Nathem's income, Suhaila's low pay, home subsistence, and irregular assistance in cash and produce from Umm Nathem's natal family, who lives in Jericho. In addition, as a registered refugee family, they were entitled to UNRWA rations, free education for the girls, and some medical coverage. As the mother of orphans, Umm Nathem received a monthly allowance from the *zakat* committee, but only for the youngest of her children. However, although her family can be classified as a hardship case, she was denied assistance from the PNA Ministry of Social Affairs because she had "an able-bodied male." In the meantime, two of her daughters got married after completing two years of college education at an UNRWA institution. Benefiting from UNRWA free education, the girls were

able to continue their schooling, while the boys, having work opportunities in Israel and doing poorly at school, quit and joined the labor force.

Between 1995 and 2000, Umm Nathem's household had five members working. Two of the sons, Zaidan and Hamdan, quit school and joined their older brother, Nathem, in work in Israel. Suhaila got a better-paying job in a factory, and Umm Nathem started a home-based child-care service for neighborhood families and pursued vegetable gardening and home production. The combined income enabled the family to live comfortably. The younger girls were more advantaged than Suhaila. Two of them got married after graduating from a two-year college. Today, the three youngest girls are all enrolled in UNRWA schools. Umm Nathem's intention is to get them to finish their education like her other daughters.

> I like it that all my children, boys and girls, get educated. I do not discriminate between a boy and a girl. It is true that our economic conditions did not allow Suhaila to stay at school. I try my best to give all my children education as long as they want it.

None of her sons completed school because they had no interest in education and had access to well-paying jobs. Except for Suhaila, all the other daughters got more education than their brothers. Although Umm Nathem believes in girls' education, she thinks that marriage provides them future security, while work becomes important for them only in case of need: "Education is important especially for girls. Even if she does not work after graduation, an educated girl would not need anyone if her living conditions turn bad. She can go out to work." However, would the youngest three girls continue their education if the household resources get more limited? Or would practical reality force them to quit school and seek work, like Suhaila?

Nathem built a career as a Caterpillar driver and was able to earn a good income and to be the primary provider for Umm Nathem's family. He got married and stayed in the family house until he had four children. He explains why he did not start his own household:

> My father died before I got married and I had to provide for the family. I could not afford to build my own house, and also I could not leave my mother and my siblings; I have to be a father to them. I broke up with my fi-

up all night to avoid seeing people. I am used to working and having plenty of money and to buy whatever I need or desire, but now . . .

This crisis was reflected in the internal gender dynamics of the family and was heavily felt by Kifaya, his wife. Because of her young age at marriage and low level of education, she occupied a low status in the patriarchal family system and could neither negotiate nor defy the system. Before and during the crisis Kifaya was marginalized in her in-laws' family by her husband, even in matters most relevant to her. Aware of her weak position, she states:

> My husband did not consult with me on going into business partnership [keeping the two cows]. He did not discuss with me anything or tell me what my role in the business was. . . . He decided everything when we built the house. . . . He consulted his mother because he thinks she is more experienced than me and has better understanding and better taste. Although I would have liked to participate in selecting things and furniture for my house, when he told me to stay aside and not to interfere, I just kept aside. I did not even have the chance to name my children.

Her status got worse after the crisis, and she had to suffer the psychological burden of her husband's loss of work and was controlled rather than supported by his mother or sister:

> He [Nathem] changed a lot after he lost his work and income. He became very tense. He would not want to see the children or have them around him. . . . Staying continuously at home he became more demanding and began to interfere in everything and object to everything. . . . This increased my work burden and put more pressure on me. He even got to beat me one time and I wanted to leave the house, but his mother and sister followed me to the street and brought me back home.

Suhaila justifies Nathem's behavior:

> With the intifada, my brothers became more nervous. I do not blame them for that especially since they became penniless after they had earned high income that was more than we needed. When we ask them to buy anything for

the house they get nervous, they scream and curse. They have no money to provide for us and to go out with their friends; so they stay alone around the house.

At the same time, she had to be more practical and more reasonable than Nathem, because she bore the responsibility for both families' well-being and could not afford to suffer a psychological trauma. Although she took two loans in advance on her paycheck, she refused to borrow from relatives, friends, or shopkeepers because no one has money to lend and because she would not be able to pay them back.

Umm Nathem's case as outlined above represents an average Palestinian household that does not plan for the long-term future. The family underwent enormous changes in three life cycles between the first and second intifadas; however, they were responding to conditions as they came. This is consistent with the IWS survey finding that when economic conditions were more relaxed and Palestinians had relatively more hope for the future, households in general neither planned nor saved for the future.[12] Instead of planning or saving for the future, Umm Nathem's household reacted and interacted with the conditions surrounding it, like the death of the head of the household, access to work and accumulation of resources, and the loss of the male breadwinner's work. Family and gender dynamics reflect how household members accommodate and even reinforce the patriarchal family system in crisis and even in more relaxed situations. Umm Nathem gained her status after the death of her husband and through creating a bond with her eldest son, and she is actively involved in reinforcing patriarchal norms and codes. This attitude apparently accommodates her needs and is rewarding for her to cope and survive or attain social mobility. She was an agent in Nathem's marriage and housing arrange-

12. Examining parents' aspirations for the education of 1,036 female and 1,010 male children revealed that though the majority of parents intend to give their children higher education, they do not have plans for how to finance it: 87 percent of interviewed mothers and fathers claimed that they would draw on the household income; only 8 percent reported using personal savings (for both girls and boys), which may or may have not existed at the time; only 3 percent saw the possibility for a loan or borrowing from relatives to educate girls and 2 percent to educate boys; only 2 percent saw that boys could work and study; and none saw that possibility for girls (Abu Nahleh and Johnson 2002).

ment to keep him close to her. So, for similar reasons, she could not abandon him and his family when he was out of work. To sustain her ties with her natal family, upon whom she relied for social and financial support, she could not afford to defy them and claim her inheritance. It was her decision to take in Nathem and his family although Suhaila was the provider.

Nathem also had to accommodate his mother's requests and needs, as he was the eldest son and was still young when his father died. Although he assumed the role of the family patriarch, his authority did not go beyond the boundaries set by his mother. Facing the crisis of losing his job and status as a provider, he continued to occupy the head of the household, trying to maintain his masculine authority with his wife and children, and in this, he was supported by his mother and sister. Suhaila, on her part, could not avoid accommodating the needs of the new family structure and seemed to have no choice other than observing duty and obligation toward her family, especially because she is unmarried and lives in the family house. Like her mother, she is probably interested in strengthening her kin ties to secure her future. Kifaya is the weakest link in the whole system because of her age, lack of education, early marriage, and gender status in the family. She recognizes she had to contribute and compromise, without having the right to be rewarded.

Abu Khaled's Household: Three Daughters and Marriage Arrangements (originally written by Yasser Shalabi)

Abu Khaled, forty-seven years old, provides for a family of ten: Umm Khaled his wife, thirty-eight; four daughters between the ages of twelve and eighteen; three sons between the ages of nine and thirteen; and a ninety-five-year-old father. The family lives in a small town twenty kilometers from Ramallah. Although the town is considered an agricultural rural locale, its inhabitants rely primarily on labor in Israel and remittances from abroad, because a large number of families emigrated to the United States and Latin America. Before the current intifada, Abu Khaled was a construction contractor in the Israeli labor market. However, as he explained, mobility restrictions, the rising cost of building materials, as well the difficulty incurred in transporting the material and the financial and psychological cost of transportation through unpaved, lengthy, and dangerous roads, all contributed to a reduction of market demand on the skills of workers like him. He lost his job as a building con-

At present, I count my money before I go into the butcher's shop and buy with what I have. I used to buy the best quality vegetables. Now I consider the price not the quality. I don't buy fruit, period. We have to save [on everything] . . . to make ends meet.

But even reducing expenditure and consumption was not sufficient to sustain the family. They had no alternative but to depend on assistance and borrowing. Abu Khaled accepted kin assistance and borrowed from friends and acquaintances. Abu Khaled's family had no option but to depend partly on semiregular and one-time assistance from his brothers, sisters, relatives, and friends and from Umm Khaled's natal family, all living abroad, to keep a line of credit at the shops.

Abu Khaled borrowed to avoid social embarrassment.

When my daughter got engaged to a relative, I had to buy her a gold bracelet on loan from a friend to present to her in public. I cannot afford getting embarrassed in front of people. But when my other daughter got engaged to my brother's son, my brother took care of all the expenses including the gift I had to give her.

Abu Khaled's and Umm Khaled's coping mechanisms went beyond material saving of reducing expenditure and consumption to affect the children's education and marriage opportunities. Salma, their eldest daughter, was deprived of secondary education. The reason, from her parents' perspective, was mobility and cost. To continue school she would have had to travel to another town because their town does not have a secondary school; this was costly when her father had no income. Her parents regret having to withdraw her from school but see no other alternative. Salma says:

I would like to continue my education but my parents did not favor it. It is true that my grades are not so good, but I am interested in finishing my education. I had to accommodate my parents' desire and quit school.

Abu Khaled's justification for withdrawing his daughter from school contradicts the general and common attitude toward withdrawing girls from school, referred to earlier in this study. He states:

If her academic status had been good we wouldn't have withdrawn her from school. Frankly speaking, if our financial status had been better we would have kept her at school, and she might have improved.

She understood this and expressed the belief that it was her "obligation to feel with him especially that I am the eldest of his children and can have an influence on my younger sisters and brothers." Both parents were aware she had needs that she was denied because she felt the responsibility for not burdening them. Umm Khaled comments:

We know my daughter does not burden us with her needs like clothes and other personal stuff because she feels with us. This attitude bothers us! Not only were Salma's education and other needs compromised, but also her opportunity to get married was affected.

Living in a community with most families dependent on strong kin relations and on emigration to the United States and remittances from emigrant relatives, Abu Khaled and Umm Khaled saw in strengthening kin relations through their daughters' marriage a mechanism for coping and securing their living and the future of their children, primarily the sons. The parents compromised their aspirations for their girls' future in favor of kin ties and access to emigration. Although they were not on good terms with Abu Khaled's brother living in the United States, Umm Khaled encouraged reconciliation through approving the engagement of her daughter Maryam, who was only fourteen years old, to his son.

Abu Khaled and I thought we would not accept to have our daughters marry before they turn eighteen. But sometimes life conditions impose things on you. When family reconciliation can help us improve our conditions, with Abu Khaled without an income and with a large family requiring a great deal of expenses, I convinced him to accept because I felt this engagement will lift us from our present situation. We wanted to have Salma, our eldest daughter, get married first, because marriage of the younger girls would affect her future chances and people's perception of her. But the suitors asked for her sister's hand, and everything in the end is decided by one's fate.

Abu Khaled:

I was hesitant to agree to Maryam's engagement. She is only fourteen. My wife convinced me; she felt it would improve our kin relations and give us and give our sons better future opportunities. My nephew has American citizenship, and through him my daughter can get citizenship; then I will have the chance to have it through her.

Having approved of Maryam's marriage at such a young age meant that they had no reason to object to the marriage of Hind, sixteen years old, to a distant relative in the town, although they had previously refused the suitor. Umm Khaled explains:

I was not convinced of the marriage arrangement for my daughter. But sometimes one falls under social pressure. Earlier, my relatives asked for Hind's hand, and I refused, saying she was too young and should not marry before her older sister. Now that I agreed to let her younger sister get married I have no excuse. Refusing their offer can create problems and we do not need such problems these days. Besides, my relatives are well off and my daughter would have a good life with them. If I refuse their request, they would look for another girl.

The strategies undertaken by Abu Khaled and Umm Khaled have affected the future of the girls and were also an attempt to secure the boys' future. Marriage at an early age will deprive them of their education and other future options. "Finishing school after marriage will be difficult. One will have a husband and children and it will not be easy to study," Hind says. Maryam believes, "When I get married, I will travel with my husband to America. Definitely, I will have to quit school." However, Abu Khaled sees their responsibility will be transferred to their husbands. "Others [husbands] will bear responsibility for my daughters but my sons I am responsible for."

The family narratives of Umm Nathem and Abu Khaled are similar in that both households were prosperous in the pre-intifada period but became nearly impoverished following the second intifada. In both households the male breadwinners lost their work in Israel as a result of the Israeli policy of closures and restriction of mobility. Moreover, the process household members went through to reorganize their priorities and reallocate household resources entailed similar gender consequences for members of both

business and made his decisions totally independently and was able to accumulate material resources. Until his death he was the main source of social and economic support for the members of his household and other extended kin. According to family members, his character played a major role in his success. Munira, his daughter-in-law, fondly describes his character saying, "My aunt was engaged to him and waited ten years to get married. No one dared to break up their engagement. Known to be bold, determined, and never to compromise or give up, no one could say no to him."

At the household level, Abdel-Qader was the sole decision maker and the primary actor who defined the boundaries within which the household members could move and act without disrupting the patriarchal system he set. Accordingly, their roles and responsibilities were defined, and so were the children's opportunities in education, marriage, and work. Endogamous marriage formed a fundamental strategy to sustain continuity of the family line, which got ruptured by the Israeli war and occupation, and to maintain and strengthen kin relations and contacts. Kin marriage started with his own marriage in 1956 and was followed in 1971 by the marriage of his eldest daughter, Huda, who had not yet turned fifteen at the time, to his sister's son, who was a refugee in Jordan. Safiyya said, "The girl cried when she heard the news of her engagement because she was too young and understood nothing. I did not interfere. The decision was her father's and my uncle's." They saw in Huda's marriage her only future opportunity, since she had already quit school, and a way to avoid conflict with her aunt. Her husband was then taken in by Abdel-Qader's family; he joined his wife in the West Bank by family reunion procedures, worked with his uncle, and was treated as a son. Huda's sisters and brother all finished their postsecondary studies before they got married. Safiyya, their illiterate mother, encouraged their education "I have no objection to any field they chose to study. Nothing is better than education; it's a weapon. Do you want them to be illiterate like me? Is this better? Of course, it is not." And Abdel-Qader did not object because that did not seem to defy his familial system. In addition, university education grew and spread in the Palestinian occupied lands in the 1970s, and getting higher education became a common practice for that generation.

Salem's marriage in 1988 strengthened Abdel-Qader's patriarchal family system. His marriage to his cousin, Munira, also a refugee in Jordan, was arranged by his father and her father. On this matter, Safiyya did not interfere:

He was staying with his uncle while completing his college education. They [his father and uncle] told him, "here is your cousin; she is better than a stranger [a non-kin]." Salem himself accommodated the marriage arrangement saying, *"ibn-il-ʿamm la bint il-ʿam"* [the cousin is for his cousin in marriage]; it's our tradition, and our families encouraged it.

Munira, though seventeen at the time, was against the arranged marriage: "I wanted to refuse Salem, not for any deficiency in him. I was against kin marriage. . . . But my father said, 'do you want to kill me?' " Salem's and Munira's marriage happened as arranged.

With their marriage, the nuclear household was transformed into an extended household. Abdel-Qader insisted that Salem and Munira live with the family although he rented an apartment attached to his own and furnished it for them. In addition to keeping Salem within the extended family, he kept him economically dependent on him. He gave him a job in his private business and treated him like any other worker; although Salem had a degree in business administration, his father did not give him the opportunity to use his education and marginalized him in running the business and the decision-making process.

Abdel-Qader defined for Salem and Munira the spatial and material confines of living within an extended family that would guarantee their inability to seek separation from his household. The apartment he rented and furnished for them had no proper kitchen but only had appliances enough to make a cup of coffee or tea for themselves or to serve their guests. Living with the extended family meant having all their meals and major social events in Abdel-Qader's house and leaving for Abdel-Qader enough space to pursue his lifestyle away from noise and interference. Salem, as an only son, accepted and believed in the idea of being part of the extended family and marginal in his father's business; as a worker, he received a fixed monthly salary from his father, which he and Munira were free to spend as they wished. He did not attempt to launch battles with his father but simply and peacefully lived with the household rules and norms he set. Munira, on the other hand, made a few unsuccessful attempts to defy his control. Regarding living with the extended family, she said, "We had no choice but to respect my uncle's desire and decision." Although she knew that separating from the family was not negotiable, she still tried twice:

business with, he sometimes used physical force to stop her activism and get her "off the path she chose," as she put it. Upon completing secondary school, Siham was offered a scholarship to study abroad, which aggravated the conflict with her father. The mother, Safiyya, claims she stayed out of this matter. In this endeavor, Siham said she was supported by Salem. Salem analyzed his father's position:

> My father never consulted with anybody on any decision he took except when he doubted the consequences of his decision. He wanted someone to blame in case the decision turned out to be wrong. That was the first time he consulted with me, but I know [now], in practice the decision was his and his orders were to be obeyed.

Siham went abroad without the explicit approval of her father.

> It is true he paid the fees for my scholarship but did not accompany me to Jordan to put me on the plane and wish me farewell like fathers do. . . . In his mind, my political activism did not ruin my social reputation so he can depend on me living abroad. . . . Later I understood that he was forced to approve thinking that he would avoid political dangers by sending me away.

To her father's surprise, Siham came back with the outbreak of the first intifada and rejoined the ranks of the national struggle. She had also chosen a marriage partner while abroad. When she refused all other suitors, her father gave up: "My daughter made it easy for me; she brought her future husband with her." Siham remembers him saying: "my daughter is a hopeless case; no way can I convince her to change her mind."

Only in the last year of his life did Abdel-Qader's children defy him and his decisions. In the last stage of his life, he made a number of decisions that alienated the entire family: he sold the land he owned for a cheap price, he was planning to start a business abroad, and there were rumors about him planning a second marriage. Laila describes her father's last days:

> Though he never consulted with us, this time we went nuts. All of us, Siham, Salem and myself, stood together and succeeded in preventing him from going abroad. That period was miserable for us. . . . In the last few days he

ering the worsening of the economic situation and the tightening of mobility restrictions.

Being job-holders, Laila and Munira became the main providers for the family, and they also occupied the status of the decision makers regarding almost all decisions concerning allocation of household resources. Although they all agree that the three consult before a decision is made, in practice Laila is the main decision maker, and Salem and Munira accommodate her decision and appreciate her financial and managerial assistance, without which they would have not managed. Munira confirmed that she and Laila often make the decision and then ask Salem for his opinion, "although we know he would agree but only to maintain respect for his status." The relations of the household members also showed conflicts on various matters such as the household division of labor, Munira's work outside, kin interference, and so forth. The conflict that Munira and Laila constantly had to deal with was creating a balance between the benefits of living within an extended family and the longing for separation and privacy. However, both are conscious of the force of the patriarchal family norm. Munira stresses, "Even if we were financially well-off we cannot leave my aunt [Salem's mother]; we feel she is our responsibility." Munira feels that Safiyya is not a mother-in-law but a mother to her and says, "I promised myself that if she got sick—God forbid—I shall cooperate with Laila to take care of her, even if that meant leaving my work." Laila, who always complains about the burden of housework and accuses her brother's family of causing this burden, says, "I sometimes tell them jokingly, you are settlers, occupiers, go home. But I won't leave my elderly mother alone, and I cannot deprive her of her only son. I understand her need for him to be close to her."

The socioeconomic and political conditions that prevailed during Abdel-Qader's lifetime differed from those that prevailed after his death. Toward the end of the 1990s, economic conditions started worsening and deteriorated with the disruption of the peace process and the eruption of the intifada. The leftist, progressive, and secular political forces that prevailed in the 1980s retreated from the political public arena, while the religious and Islamic forces spread and expanded. In the process, as is the case in other societies under conflict and economic hardships, the current living conditions in Palestine, characterized by deteriorating economic conditions, unpredictability, insecurity, and constant tension, along with the rise and expansion of Islamic radical

movements that have been actively involved in mobilization and service provision both in Palestine and the whole region, led to a rigid, ritualistic, and politicized religiosity.

This new trend created constant overt disputes between Munira and Salem and covert negotiations between Munira and Laila, which were enacted on their dynamics with the children, particularly the eldest of the daughters, Nawal, who was thirteen. Winning the battle over issues related to Nawal meant winning the battles with the three younger girls. In 1997, following the death of her father, and like the majority of women relatives and friends, Laila donned *shar'i* dress and started observing all the duties of a Muslim. The young generation was affected earlier by the spread of political Islam. Young men joined the Islamic movements and young girls started wearing the *hijab* (head cover). Men and women from the community also increasingly became religious and adopted an Islamist outlook that guided their interaction with others. One year before the current intifada, Salem quit drinking alcohol, he started praying and fasting, and he also joined the crowd of men in the mosque every evening to attend religious sessions after prayers. At present he is socially conservative and tries to influence Nawal's (and his younger daughters') outlook. Most were highly affected by the Islamist surge, except for Munira and Siham (and Siham's husband), both of whom are among the very few women in the extended family and the local community who do not observe Islamic dress. The conflicts in Dar Salem emerge mostly on issues related to thirteen-year-old Nawal: should she wear the *hijab*? Should she quit dancing with the *dabkeh* (folklore dance) group? Should she travel abroad with the *dabkeh* group? Should she continue higher education? Should it be here or abroad?

Now that Salem has turned into a "real Muslim believer" as he identifies himself, he holds a different social outlook than Munira does regarding Nawal's education, work, and marriage. He does not mind her education to any level she desires, as long as she stays home. Referring to his earlier position regarding his sister Siham's education, he clarifies, "This is my daughter. I am worried about her and cannot ensure she'll be safe abroad." According to him, she can choose any field of study, except "what is not acceptable in our Islamic society, like acting. This I will firmly oppose." As for her marriage, he encourages marriage at the age of eighteen for girls and boys and does not mind if

Nawal chooses to get married before finishing her education. As for her wearing the *hijab* and leaving the *dabkeh* group, he states:

> Nawal wants to wear the *hijab,* and this is my desire too. I do not approve of her dancing with the *dabkeh* group. I want her to quit but she should be convinced and should approve of that. I do insist and nag her on that. . . . That a girl dances hand in hand with a boy is not only wrong but *haram.* It is *haram* both by the *shari'a* and religion.

Laila has a similar perspective but claims that she does not interfere:

> I know that Nawal is an outstanding performer in the *dabkeh.* Believe me, I cried from joy when I saw her on the stage that I even made my daughter join a *dabkeh* group. . . . I agree that she should quit, but if her mother and her father approve of her staying in the group I don't interfere. We try. . . . I try but the decision is her parents' decision.

Nawal's mother has a totally different view of Nawal's opportunities and outlook. She insists on higher education for all three girls; she wants them to get at least their BA before they get married and will not compromise on that; she also encourages her daughters to work. Regarding her position on religious beliefs and practices, Munira stresses that she is a believer but that religious beliefs should not lead people to become blindly conservative; to her, people should make decisions out of free will, but first they have to be aware and well-informed. Her view reflected in bringing up Nawal:

> I suffer a lot in raising my daughter [Nawal]. I cannot reach her. This religiosity trend cropped up all of a sudden, and she accommodates to it without reasoning. She is so confused. One time it's her father, another the school. . . . One day she wants the *dabkeh* and another she doesn't. Her cousin wears the *hijab,* she wants to wear it, too. This idea of religion, that everything is

haram, haram, haram. I tell her you should not hold on to the idea without being informed.

Concerning Nawal's wearing the *hijab,* Munira is determined that she should not make a decision before she is eighteen. After that she cannot force her to do anything one way or the other.

Nawal herself reflects all the contradictions and conflicts in Dar Salem, the school, and the neighborhood. She is internalizing nationalist, religious, secular, and modern values all at the same time. Nawal aspires to become an astronomer; however, she would compromise and study sociology, a field of interest to her, if the Palestinian universities do not offer astronomy. She justifies her compromise with a nationalist argument, "If we study abroad, we are tempted not to return to our country. Our country needs all the educated Palestinians to develop it." Although she is ambitious enough to finish university education, she does not seem to mind getting married earlier; she says: "If I had a good chance for marriage, I don't know, my ambition might change." Regarding work, she would want to work because she doesn't like staying at home. But she is ready to compromise because, as she says, "I don't want work to stand between me and my husband. I can always engage in activities in the house." She goes on and repeats her mother's view: "Sometimes a woman works for her self-worth, and when she is determined to work she will decide to do that when she turns eighteen." On the issue of *hijab,* Nawal says, "I wanted to wear it. My father approved, but I knew my mother was against it before I turn eighteen." The teachers at school seem to encourage it, and some scold and punish those girls who don't wear it. Nawal said that at school she learned that "the *hijab* gives a girl self-confidence and protects her from being harassed on the street." She adds that several girls wear the *hijab* out of jealousy and not "as our religion instructs us," as she put it. Then she adds: "as my mother says, some girls wear the *hijab* but do not have morals." She is willing to stay in the *dabkeh* group until she turns sixteen and her "body matures and looks like a grown-up woman."

Munira thinks her guidance and education will help Nawal sort out her conflicts as she grows up. She states:

I try to instill in my daughter that she should learn to be able to decide on her own. Not to imitate others . . . to live her life as it comes. . . . In my opinion,

back to the camp. The strong ties that connect former refugee camp residents to camp life are the topic of ongoing research.[13]

In general, and particularly for poor families, life in a refugee camp is confining because camps are crowded and restricted in physical and social space and mobility. UNRWA provides educational, medical, and social service facilities inside the camp; these services paradoxically improve the lives of camp residents and at the same time restrict their mobility, particularly for girls and women. Poor camp families are left to struggle for survival and mobility without proper support or protection, which is one reason for their loyalty and commitment to the community in which they are located. The community in a refugee camp consists of subcommunities formed of families tied by kinship and place of origin from before the 1948 *Nakba*. Camp families and individuals obtain community support and engage in collective and solidarity activities, most apparent among women. However, at the same time they are highly constrained by community norms and codes that they rarely can defy and thus make no attempt to exit the community. If they do they would not only be socially isolated but also lose their identity because they have no option to leave the camp or join another community. Although most camp families live in nuclear households, the housing arrangements, restricted by physical space, bring public space into close proximity with private space. In their own houses, camp families hear and see and are heard and seen by the neighboring families, who may or may not be kin.

The importance of the refugee camp community for individuals and families has been reinforced by living under the Israeli occupation for decades, in the absence of a state. Furthermore, the establishment of the PNA under the terms of the Oslo accords and its limited jurisdiction in issuing legal codes and laws contributed to the dependence of individuals on extended families, kin relations and networks, and communities. In addition, the PNA did not invest in establishing the rule of law. Instead, it tended to revive social norms and social traditions of tribalism, patriarchal family system, and religious identities, which was most apparent in the quotas defined in the first Palestinian election

13. Some colleagues and I are at present conducting an ethnographic study in three communities in the Ramallah area, one of which is a refugee camp. These preliminary remarks come from the initial ethnographic data collected for the purpose of that study.

law of 1994 and in the appointment of municipalities and village councils. To gain legitimacy and support and to promote its authority, the PNA encouraged the use of and dependence on customary law to manage communities and to provide social order.[14] In such a political socioeconomic context, how are poor camp families expected to lead their lives?

The al-Ayyoubi family lives in an urban refugee camp. It is a large family of ten: Saber (42 years old), the head of the household; Maryam, his wife, 40; and four girls and four boys (Muhammad, 21; Amal, 19; Mahmoud, 17; Maysa', 14; the twins Ahmad and Sana', 12; Wafa', 8; and Amjad, 3). Both Saber and Maryam originally came from the Palestinian town of al-Lidd before their families were forced out of their homes and town in the course of the 1948 war and became residents of a refugee camp. Saber recalls his family history, which expresses how refugee communities were formed:

> In 1948 my father, along with several other people, was forced out of al-Lidd and fled to Gaza, when the Jewish *'isabat* [gangs] invaded the town and started killing people. He was newly married to my mother, and they went to live in a refugee camp in Gaza. The living conditions there were very difficult, so his brother decided to move to the West Bank. For the same reason, my father also moved there. At that time a lot of people from al-Lidd also came to the West Bank. My father settled in this camp, and I was born here. Since then I have been living with some of my brothers and sisters in the same neighborhood. My wife is from the same camp but we are not related.

Both Maryam and Saber were born in the refugee camp where they currently live and have not left it since then. Neither completed elementary school, and they married at an early age. Maryam has felt the burden of the political situation since the day she was married.

> I got married on the day of the Sabra and Shatila massacre in 1982, a day I can never forget. Even in our weddings politics is present. I quit school at fourteen to get engaged. I was too young and could not read the alphabet. I

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14. See Hillel Frisch 1997 for a more detailed discussion of the PNA's relation with extended families and its involvement in customary reconciliation, the application of customary law, the motives behind it, and its consequences and implications for state building.

at the vegetable market and as a house cleaner. His daily wage ranges from NIS20–50 (US$5–10) depending on the market demand. Saber complains:

> There are no work opportunities. These days I work one day and ten days I go without work. My daily income is very low, much lower than before the intifada; we can barely survive. Our debt increased and with the new scholastic year and now during the feast [*al-Fitr*], I am unable to cope with the expenses.

Amal, the nineteen-year-old daughter, was not allowed to continue her secondary education outside the camp; instead, she was instructed to do a one-year vocational training course in hairdressing. However, upon completing the training, her parents did not allow her to work outside the house, nor could she attract clients to her home. Saber justifies his decision: "I do not mind if she works, but now she has to help her mother at home especially after she got sick. She has to do the housework in place of her mother." Maryam agrees and adds, "In our culture, it is disgraceful to let a girl work; people would ridicule us and would say you cannot afford to buy a meal so you send your daughter to work."

Although Maryam and Saber are destitute, and Amal and Muhammad could increase the household income if both are encouraged to engage in paid work, they are anxious about getting their children married. To ensure Amal's marriage, both parents, particularly her father, do not let her leave the boundaries of the camp. Her mother is concerned about buying her a few items of bridal clothing and saving them for her marriage even if that means borrowing money. Here is how she sees her daughter's future:

> A girl should marry at an early age, and it is better if she marries someone from the camp, then we would know more about him. And now with the closures during the intifada, it will be difficult to visit her and check on her if she marries outside the camp.

On the other hand, Maryam and Saber perceive of their sons' education and work as a path to marriage, rather than as a path to future security and social mobility. Amal's brother Muhammad has an irregular job at a restaurant; he is paid on a daily basis and is deprived of his meager daily pay in the case of

ply. If they want to do so, they can go ahead. I couldn't care less. We'll go back to the oil lamp." Before the second intifada, they took a loan from the bank to maintain the house; since then they have been unable to pay it back. Maryam's father, their guarantor for the loan, had to repay it. "My father had no choice but to pay back the loan. The bank deducts the amount from his salary every month. Every day, he comes to the house and screams at us. What can I do? Where can I get the money to pay it back?"

Increasing dependence on assistance was their second primary alternative. Because they are refugees, they are entitled to receive assistance in cash, monthly food rations, and basic medical insurance from UNRWA. Maryam usually sells the UNRWA monthly rations in order to meet other necessary needs. She had to undergo surgery that had been postponed for several years. Although her medical expenses are covered by UNRWA, she needed to buy a supporting belt at her own expense, which she could not afford: "I had to sell the food ration we received from UNRWA to buy the belt. I had to do the surgery a long time ago but we had no money." Apparently, the belt was not as much a problem as the expenses that followed the surgery. Maryam complains, "After the surgery our expenses rose. Every day I had to spend money on buying fruit, snacks, and juice to entertain the guests, my neighbors and relatives [who visited her after the surgery], and sometimes I had to cook meals."

As a destitute household, the al-Ayyoubi family gets on every formal and informal list for assistance. Characterized as a "social case" family, they are entitled to about US$70 per month from the Ministry of Social Affairs; however, they have been receiving it intermittently because the ministry was short of finances. In addition, they receive irregular emergency humanitarian aid donated by groups or NGOs, which are distributed by the camp's Popular Committee to all the families regardless of their need. They always get Ramadan *futra* [alms]. Both Saber and Maryam mentioned, "any person or any organization who has Ramadan *futra* to donate to the needy goes to the mosque, and there they always refer them to us." Saber's family also depends on informal assistance and loans from neighbors or acquaintances and from relatives, particularly Saber's father and Maryam's brothers. During Ramadan and special occasions, Saber borrows from his father to give his sisters money gifts for the *'id* (feast). Maryam's several brothers, who are, relatively speaking,

well-off, give her and her children money for the *'id*. Although Saber sees Ramadan as a burden, Maryam sees it an opportunity to pay back her debts.

Although Palestinian society has relatively positive attitudes toward women's work outside the house, Maryam's interpretation of her own situation and that of her daughter blames cultural traditions and norms that she does not believe she can defy. However, as her family gets more and more destitute, she realizes the need for paid work. All her married life, Maryam has been a housewife in charge of caring for the family. Her attempts to earn some income are in her view impeded by cultural traditions; her words express her lack of skills. While Saber was in prison, Maryam and her children lived on his allowance as a prisoner. Maryam justifies not seeking paid work by referring to cultural traditions: "I was a prisoner's wife and all people had their eyes on me. According to our traditions, it is shameful for a woman to go out to work when her husband is away." However, the reality is that several women from Maryam's neighborhood engaged in home-based informal small enterprise, which they promoted through the all-women network in the neighborhood and local community. Small enterprise is one of the several aspects of the camp women's social relations and network.

The women's social relations and networks in Maryam's neighborhood are similar to those described by Shami in her study of two urban, refugee, and low-income communities in Jordan. In these communities, social integration or separation among households sharing the same courtyard is recognized by an imaginary line that is crossed only by children without impunity; household boundaries and private and public space distinctions are defined by family networks and mutual help, as well as the social relations women create on the basis of cooperation and division of reproductive and productive responsibilities in the household, the neighborhood, or the city. These, rather than kinship or physical parameters, are the basis that shape their social identity and give meaning to their relationship and sustenance in times of hardship and insecurity (1996, 17–18). Rula Abu Duhou, the researcher who worked with Saber and Maryam to write their narrative, provides insightful commentaries on camp women's networking and relations through her observations of camp life during her repeated visits to Maryam. Overwhelmed by the fact that Maryam's house was in constant motion, she describes it as "more like a popular club or a coffeehouse accommodating women's gatherings of as many as

ten women at a time of various ages and marital statuses, despite its small size and run-down condition."[18] During the women's gatherings, their conversations encompass all sorts of themes, ranging from those socially accepted to those banned, starting with sexual issues and ending with politics. Their conversations may include news about who got married, who got divorced, who visited whom, what the Israelis did that day or what might happen on the political scene, and what the latest developments in Abu 'Ammar's [Arafat's] siege are, and so on; at that point, they were not reluctant to discuss the private matters of a public figure, such as Abu 'Ammar's wife and the mysterious reason behind her staying abroad. Another important issue that gets into the exchanges is who bought what, what the prices of goods are and where the best deals are found, where to get food or cash assistance and how to do that, and who got UNRWA assistance while she is not entitled to it. The most recurrent subject in their gatherings is discussions of their sexual life and an examination of who has sexual problems with her husband and why, and how they can be solved; who went out bare-headed and without a scarf; who stays long on the roof of the house or sitting on the balcony. The theme of girls' reputation and security and how the Tanzim follows up on these issues in the camp overwhelms their conversations and is associated with the subject of getting their daughters married. All this takes place in the presence of girls of various ages, who are banned from leaving the boundaries of the camp and sometimes the house. These discussions may be seen as a kind of orientation for the girls in preparation for future marriage.

Women neighbors' visits to Maryam's house are never made on notice; they may stop by on their way to or back from the market to share that day's adventures or experience. A neighbor may stop by to borrow a cooking pot or a scarf to wear on her way to visit someone in the camp or her trip to the town, and visit with Maryam; the visit may be long depending on whether other neighborhood women are there. In one of my visits to Maryam, I had to wait for hours to meet with her because of these social and networking visits; Maryam commented, "this is how we live here. You want to visit us, you have to bear with us." Exchange and borrowing among women may extend to boil-

18. The rest of the description of the social relations and networking Maryam and her women neighbors engaged in is based on Abu Dahou's commentaries written in Arabic, which I extracted, translated into English, and composed into one text.

and seems to be ready to negotiate and defy in the face of severe need and hopelessness.

Maryam's perception of women's work, which may sound contradictory or confused, is in line with some research findings on attitudes toward Palestinian women's work. Public opinion polls show that support for women's work outside the home rises in periods of relative security (Hammami 2004) and support is strongest for "respectable" employment in white-collar and professional positions (teaching in particular), work which is largely inaccessible to most poor women. Male conservative attitudes may well play a part—and indeed may harden with the humiliation of unemployment. However, opposition to women's outside work may be real fear at the dangers and insecurities of public spaces, particularly for young women. This fear may vary in different localities: refugee camp women and girls seem particularly vulnerable to both fears and community sanctions, yet are in most need of income (Abu Nahleh and Johnson 2003).

The complex and inevitable constant interaction of households and individuals with the larger local community, the neighborhood in particular and the camp in general, is reflected in the al-Ayyoubis' familial and social dynamics and relations. The importance of the community in the Palestinian context supports Agarwal's argument regarding individual choice, that the ability to exit the community is constrained by social and economic factors and that noncooperation or conflict with the community can be over shared economic resources, political status, and norms for social behavior. Individuals can more easily exit the community than the family because the harm (loss of economic support or social sanctions) in exiting the community would be less. In this case, the individual can emigrate or join another community because communities, unlike families, are not based on strong consumption and production relations; a community is not a unit for consumption, production, and investment, and the individual's relation with it is not based on day-to-day contact as is the case with the family (Agarwal 1997, 29–30). This may be true if relations within a community are based on economic relations only. However, the camp context here provides a challenge to the part of Agarwal's argument regarding the critical differences between the household and the community in relation to the individual: first, that the community is larger and the cost of individual noncooperation can be minimal; and second, that the community is not necessarily a joint economic unit. Both of these points are

not supported here. In the case of refugee camps, the role of the community is more fundamental in both economic and social relations to individuals' social and national identity and their sense of belonging. Individuals and families are highly integrated in their own community, which provides social cohesion, economic support, and a sense of national belonging, which makes it almost impossible to be defied. Exiting it means suffering a total loss in a context that provides no other alternatives.

In particular, the case of the al-Ayyoubi family shows how the Israeli occupation and the community and family patriarchal system militate against all attempts by the couple to break out of the circle of poverty or to improve the life opportunities of their children. Plagued by lack of a decent and regular income, unable to cope with the daily demands of a large family, and torn between cultural constraints, lack of the rule of law and formal state support and the restrictions of the Israeli occupation, the family goes deeper and deeper into poverty and debt, which jeopardizes the children's education and marriage opportunities. The impact on Saber's masculinity and social status is so immense that he hopelessly struggles to maintain the minimum level of human dignity. His individual acts and negotiations with the family and the community codes and norms are based on his perceptions of what qualifies him to stay integrated in his community and gain some social status. According to his idiosyncratic judgment, these are expressed in supporting the national struggle and protecting family honor. On the other hand, Maryam, his wife, though she also seeks community integration and respect and attempts not to cross its boundaries, is overwhelmed by her struggle on more practical matters such as managing the household and guaranteeing the children's education and marriage.

The Maqdisi Household: Prison and Privileges in Jerusalem
(originally written by Lina Mi'ari)

This family history considers a Jerusalemite family whose residency and legal status [19] are different from those of West Bank families but whose experience of

19. Following the Israeli occupation of the West Bank (including East Jerusalem) and the Gaza Strip in 1967, Israel annexed East Jerusalem to the state of Israel in violation of the Fourth Geneva Convention. In 1970 the Israeli Knesset issued administrative laws to define the status of

did not develop normally. Farha had to cope as a single mother and the wife of a prisoner during her husband's absence from home; by age thirteen her eldest daughter was assuming the role of caregiver. Later she and the children had to adjust to Kan'an's return. Kan'an, on the other hand, had to struggle to regain his status as family head, husband, and father in control of his wife and children.

The interaction between family dynamics and political affiliation and national struggle was crucial in the life of Farha and Kan'an, but more significantly in Farha's outlook and practices, particularly during her husband's imprisonment. Farha and Kan'an got married the traditional way after two months of engagement in 1977. In this period, the mid-1970s, Palestinian political parties and factions were actively recruiting youth to the national struggle and gradually assumed a role (and sometime supplanted the family's role) in children's upbringing, social and educational support, and even marriage arrangements. This encouraged youth to challenge and achieve some degree of separation from their families and largely their extended kin. Farha's reflection on her marriage choice exemplifies the attitude of the youth then:

> In my extended family, I was known to be a rebel. I was among the first few girls who obtained a diploma. I worked and had a strong independent personality. I had open-minded friends from well-known families in the village. My parents allowed me the space to be open, although my uncles were very traditional. I did not want to marry within the family, and that is why I agreed to marry Kan'an. All my uncles and relatives strongly opposed this marriage. Getting married to a nonrelative was a challenge to them as this was not a family tradition . . .

In some instances, young men's and women's choice of marriage partners is politically induced. For women, getting married to a patriotic nationalist leader or a political activist represents a strong national belief and ethos; for men, looking for a partner who is politically committed or has a nationalistic bent improves the likelihood that she will be able to cope with their imprisonment or going underground. However, when faced with practical realities, women sometimes are shocked, particularly when they discover that their husbands' progressive political beliefs conflict with their conservative social outlook. Farha expresses her disappointment:

In the early days of our marriage, I realized that Kan'an was always tense and nervous. This was because of his secret political activism, which he informed me of three days after our marriage. Then I was fascinated by the idea that he was patriotic, especially since I, myself, participated as a student in the demonstrations without my parents' knowledge. . . . My husband's family is a traditional conservative family with tribal heritage. It is closed onto itself. They believed that the role of the daughter-in-law is to serve them. . . . I suffered a lot but I could not complain to my family because I decided to marry outside the family. Kan'an had the same social attitude as his family. In general, Kan'an does not like to have a modern wife; he wants a wife like his mother, a housewife who does the housework and raises the children. He was against my college education. He did not see a need for it. I insisted and explained to him that I should have an income to depend on in case he got arrested. He kept silent though he disapproved, and I continued my education. But whenever he met me on the street near the college, he would pretend he did not see me so that people would not know that his wife studied there.

Like many newlywed Palestinian couples unable to afford a home of their own, Farha and Kan'an started their life with the extended family. For Farha, who had a different social outlook than that of Kan'an and his family, living with her in-laws was burdensome. However, the extended family formed her major social and economic support system, particularly in the first round of Kan'an's imprisonment. Family support, coming from the natal family or the in-laws or both, was a common practice for the majority of prisoners' wives and children. As Kan'an explains:

While [I was] in prison, my wife was living with my family, and my father provided for the household. He was well-off. Also, there were many other prisoners like me who had families, and I was not any different. I was not worried about Farha and Tahrir [his daughter]. They visited me every two weeks.

During this period, Farha describes the change in her relations with her in-laws as positive.

Before Kan'an was arrested, his mother tried to control my movement. After he was arrested she changed and said it was none of her business. None of

who was twenty-five years old at the time of the interviews. Between his first release and his second arrest, they had two boys and a girl (19, 18, and 17 years respectively). After his second release in 1991, they had three girls (10, 9, and 8). This forced spacing between the children created a generation gap among them and affected their relations with their parents. The first four children feel that they are closer to their mother and are distant from their father. Farha had to manage the household and the children and thus established her own system of household relations and responsibilities. Owing to years of forceful separation from his family and the impact of spending years in prison, Kan'an became more and more withdrawn and grew further and further away from his family, yet he tried to maintain his status as the head of the household.

The eldest daughter, Tahrir, was the most affected of all the children and had to assume responsibility for her siblings and share worries and concerns with her mother at a young age. She describes her experience and her relation with her parents:

> I have a very close relationship with my mother since I am the eldest daughter in the family. There is an age gap between me and the rest of my brothers and sisters. For several years I was an only child. While my father was in prison, and when my two brothers and sister were born, I had to grow up early. I did not live my childhood. My relation with my younger brothers and sisters is that of a caregiver. . . . At home we [my mother and I] were two "heads." There was always conflict between us over who could impose her opinion. . . . My relation with my father was limited to the one-hour visit at prison. After his first release, I could not get used to referring to him when I needed something. I continued asking my mother for permission or advice. My mother is very attached to me, and I can gain her on my side when there is an argument or a conflict at home. . . . This caused problems with my father. We [my father and I] always fight over matters that concern me, like going out and wearing makeup; even simple things like using the hair dryer, he considers them to be shameful. My father boycotts anyone who disagrees with him. . . . When I wanted to go to Egypt, he was against it. I prepared all my travel papers and left. Unwillingly, though, he kept silent.

The other three younger children have similar feelings toward their parents; among them they have established strong sister-brother relationships.

They do not understand why their father is distant from them or why he struggles to control them. Samer (eighteen years old) says:

> I developed good relations with my brother Nathem and wanted to go with him to Egypt to continue my studies. I also have good relations with my sister Sama, who is one year younger than me. The three of us are close in age and we spent a lot of time together at home during the holidays. When my mother was at work, each of us was responsible for caring for one of our three small sisters. My relation with my mother is close and special. I share with her my private matters. I am not on good terms with my father. I spend most of the time with him at the shop but we do not get along well. I wanted to work to earn some pocket money and help my mother, who supports my brother's education. My father says, "Why do you want to work? I take care of your expenses." He does not agree and does not discuss the matter with me.

Sama (seventeen years old):

> I almost have no relations with my father. He is not close to us. He does not allow me to do things, like going out with my friends. I stopped asking him. I feel my mother is responsible for deciding for me and my siblings. When I need permission or advice I go to my mother and she tells my father. . . . We are not used to consulting with my father, and he does not interfere much. He also does not communicate with other people. My relations with my mother are not so good. I feel she is closer to my older sister and brothers. They share with her their private matters. I don't. I have a good relation with my older brother, Samer; we think alike. Tahrir and I got closer only when we moved to this house and started sharing a room. My three small sisters get along well together. They go to the same school and play together. I have a special relationship with my small sister Sireen. I took care of her [during the holidays when my mother was at work].

Kan'an denies that his imprisonment was primarily responsible for this unhealthy relationship with his children and wife. He also does not explicitly blame the Israeli occupation because then he would also have to blame himself for struggling against it. Instead, he throws the blame on Farha, whom he feels has drawn his "natural" role and status away from him.

The prison did not affect my relations with my children. Their visits with me while I was in prison created a basic understanding between us. The problem I see is that they were spoiled while I was in prison, which is usually the case when the father who represents firmness is away from the house. I am not satisfied with how Farha raised the children while I was away, especially in spoiling them, and I think that the upbringing of the children by the mother alone remains insufficient. The mother and the father complement each other.

On the issue of the children's education and marriage he holds a conservative opinion, which reflects his negative reaction to the conflict he has with his eldest daughter, Tahrir. He thinks that she is a negative influence on her younger sister.

God willing, I would like to educate all my children, boys and girls. But this does not prevent the girls from getting married if they get the right chance before they finish their education. Early marriage and settling down is better for the girls in the difficult conditions we live under, especially because we feel insecure because of the Israeli occupation measures. [Referring to his eldest daughter Tahrir] I believe it is important for the girl to get married first and then finish her higher education because when the girl is educated she becomes condescending and would not accept those men who ask for her hand, and then she regrets when it is too late. I prefer for Sama to get married now if a suitable man proposes to marry her.

Kan'an's fears are confirmed by Sama's outlook for her future

I hope that I can finish my studies and then get a job and be self-dependent like my sister Tahrir. I like the way my sister lives. She is independent; she bought a car and can buy anything she wants because she has an income.

As a result of his imprisonment, Kan'an suffers the crisis of the male head of a household and struggles with keeping his patriarchal image. This is the case not only because he was deprived of sharing in the upbringing of the children, most of whom grew up while he was confined in prison, but also because he is unable to assume the status of the main provider for his family. After he was released from prison the second time he was weak and could not

find regular well-paying work. He was hired by the PNA for a relatively low salary, and in the afternoons he works for his brother in a grocery shop. He tried to run an independent business but failed because he needed the seed money to complete building the family house. One of the projects he started and thought was a potential success was hindered by the Israeli policies against Palestinian house construction in East Jerusalem and the suburbs inside its municipal borders. Kan'an explains why he could not start a business that would bring him a relatively good income:

> When I bought the land in Abu Dis, I was thinking of investment. Since the land is located near the university, I thought I would build an apartment building to rent apartments to university students. I never planned to settle in Abu Dis. I wanted to build my own house on the half acre that my father gave us in Jabal al-Mukabbir [the same residential area where his parents lived and that is within the borders of East Jerusalem]. But the complex and intricate difficulties involved in obtaining a building license from the Israeli authorities, the extremely high fees we were required to pay, and the complicated regulations that restricted house construction and expansion in Jerusalem forced me to change my plans. I decided to build my house in Abu Dis. At that time several families moved to Abu Dis for the same reason.

Where imprisonment created a male crisis for Kan'an, it helped Farha develop independence and self-worth. Negotiating kinship relations within a family patriarchal system, which she refers to as "tribal," she was successful to a certain extent, particularly in matters relevant to the family's living, well-being, and social status as a prisoner's family. However, in matters that are gender-specific, she failed to win her battle. On the personal level, Farha perceives herself as not being rewarded although she has contributed a lot to the well-being of the family. She has tried to fight for some of her rights; she won her dispute with her husband but not those with her in-laws.

> All my life I have been working but I never felt that my income is my own or that I have a personal bank account. Since I started earning an income, I have been spending it on the needs of the household and the children. When we were building the house, I used to get my salary and hand it directly to the contractor. After that I spent all my income to meet the household needs until I took charge of paying for my son's education. Now I keep

with keeping his patriarchal image. On the other hand, it allowed Farha space to develop independence and self-worth. In the absence of Kanʻan from the household, she set up her own household management system and division of roles, and thus created a network of relations between her and the children and among the children themselves. Tahrir, the eldest daughter, assumed a caring role and shared with her mother in decision making at an early age, contributing to her developing a strong and independent character. Furthermore, she gained status because for the past few years she has been a major income earner in the family and has helped support her siblings' education and cover the family's expenses. Not having grown up under the authority of her father and having established a sisterly and friendly relationship with her mother allowed her to challenge her father's role as the decision maker. Kanʻan was not an integral part of this whole network, nor did he have the chance to contribute to forming it. When he returned to join the family, he was not well accommodated. Kanʻan denies that his imprisonment has affected his relationship with his children and wife. And he does not blame the Israeli occupation, to avoid blaming himself for struggling against it. In the case of the children, who could not recognize his "intrusion" in their family system, their behavior with him was not unusual for prisoners' children. In general, it is unclear why children like Tahrir and her siblings behave negatively toward parents who are politically active. Is it their feeling of being neglected and deserted? Are they blaming their father because they were too young to blame the Israeli occupation?

Conclusion

"The family is a big heart that holds and accommodates everybody" (Munira).

But how long can the Palestinian family sustain its function and role as a "big heart"?

Palestinian families live under conditions characterized by increasing insecurity, vulnerability, and cantonization. The consequences of this sustained crisis are not only represented in loss of jobs and a sharp decline in household income, but also in placing more and more families at risk of losing their lives and of suffering serious physical and psychological ill effects; basic services and systems (like sanitation, medical care, education, labor market) have been fragmented, and the whole social and cultural fabric of Palestinian soci-

and an ongoing renewal or reconstruction of family relations. Both in fact have been decisive in forming strategies aimed at enhancing life chances in highly risky and precarious socioeconomic and political conditions.

Improving life chances means attempting to secure or advance income, employment, savings, or the accumulation of wealth; higher status; access to health, education, and better living conditions; general welfare; and freedom from repression. It also means minimizing risk that ranges from guarding against unemployment to escaping being jailed, to guarding against injury, to reducing the risk of one's property being destroyed or confiscated. Kinship solidarity or identity of the kind referred to locally as *hamula* or *'a'ila* solidarity acquired new relevance for Palestinian households as their communities faced major political shifts, social dislocations, and economic uncertainties and as land ownership was privatized and wage labor became the dominant source of income.[3]

These two features—discontinuity with the past (leaving home and crossing borders to new places and cultural spaces) and continuity, real or imagined, with the past (reinvesting in kinship solidarities as a form of social capital)—must be viewed against the background of major socioeconomic and political processes that have reshaped the various Palestinian communities since the *Nakba,* particularly those in the West Bank and Gaza Strip since their coming under military occupation in 1967. An anthropologist studying a refugee camp in the West Bank (Dahayasha camp) has observed that while labor migration of professionals to the Gulf enhanced their economic position, the fact of their being denied rights and freedoms in the countries of migration prevented the translation of this gain into social independence and mobility. The contradictory situation of the professional migrant in the Gulf state "fostered a twofold dependency: on the one hand, that of the family on

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noted that 40 percent of families in the West Bank and 39 percent in the Gaza Strip reported having emigrant members; 65 percent were sons or daughters and another 17 percent were brothers and sisters of the household head. Nearly two thirds (65.5 percent) of emigrants were between twenty-one and thirty-five years of age (Abu Shukr 1990, 53, 56, 57). See also Salim Tamari's review (1983, 185–92) of other studies on out-migration from the West Bank during the 1960s and 1970s.

3. For a review of literature on the role kinship in Palestinian society, see Rothenberg 1998/1999.

the economic support of their migrant sons and daughters; on the other that of migrants on the familial social ties and connections in the household. One of the results of this is the prolonged preservation of traditional patriarchal relations within the family despite the physical separation of young family members and despite the latter's economic advantages" (Rosenfeld 2004, 163).

Since the middle of the last century, the West Bank and Gaza Strip have been undergoing a process of rapid marginalization of agriculture and the increasing dominance of wage labor as the source of income for the majority of households. The two areas have had increasing access to Palestinian secular education, including education at the university level. High rates of emigration and the redefining of kinship solidarity have been taking place within the political context of imposed external rule and colonial occupation, together with the absence of statehood. The beginning of Israeli occupation coincided with the emergence of the PLO as institutions and as a political discourse defining (in secular terms) the Palestinian national political field and mobilizing Palestinians for independent statehood.

In the 1980s, the Palestinian national political field saw the appearance, from outside the ranks of the PLO, of political Islam represented by Islamic Jihad and Hamas. Both these movements stood in opposition to the secularism that prevailed within the PLO. Political Islam did advocate and observe a strict code regarding gender relations, and this is part of the agenda of the Islamization of society. Social conservatism, although it covers the field of gender relations, is not confined to it nor does it position it within a political agenda as political Islam does.[4]

The second Gulf war in 1991 placed the PLO in political and financial isolation as Arab and regional support was diverted to organizations of political Islam, including Hamas and Islamic Jihad. Such organizations were investing much of their efforts in redefining political culture and building up their constituencies.[5] Thus they succeeded to a large extent, particularly in the second

4. It may be worth mentioning that the Arabic term for conservatism does not have the political connotations of the English term. It stresses social conduct and behavior in the public space and sphere.

5. See for example, poll no. 6 conducted by the Development Studies Programme at Birzeit University in February 2002 (DSP 2002). Hamas and Islamic Jihad showed higher popular support than Fatah, the ruling party in the Palestinian National Authority (PNA); more than

nexed by Israel soon after its occupation; there, some space for cultural activities and for the publication of newspapers and journals was allowed). The scope of the public sphere was reduced further during periods of tension and militant resistance, as happened in the first and second intifadas (with curfews, blockades, sieges, and other restrictions). Israel, as a colonial power, outlawed political organizations and imposed censorship on the Palestinian press. This restriction, it has been argued, gave more prominence to private space and the private sphere.[9] The suffering and repression that were intensified during both intifadas have reinforced a kind of puritanical ethic, which frowned on some public activities, especially in the cultural sphere.

Palestinian migrants who went to the oil-producing Gulf states in the 1950s soon formed a community that was identified by its national origin, and to which new emigrants were drawn. Lacking the protection of their own state, Palestinians felt, probably more than other migrant communities, that they were under the political and social scrutiny of the host state. Like other immigrants to these states, Palestinians were excluded from the usual forms of social integration with host societies (close friendship, marriage, home visiting, and so on).

The socioeconomic, cultural, and political boundaries that immigrant communities map for themselves are expressions of a heavily tilted balance of forces within the state in favor of the locals as against the immigrants. Similarly, a skewed balance of forces exists in the case of Palestinian commuters who work in Israel: residence is not permitted, integration is not accepted, and equal status with Israeli workers is not acknowledged.[10] Thus most Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip know Israelis simply as occupiers, and a minority knows them as bosses. In the Gulf states Palestinians experienced their residence in the host country mainly as foreign employees working for an indigenous stratum of state and private employers.

9. This phenomenon was noted by Marianne Heiberg with emphasis on the Palestinian housing unit as a private domain signaling the prominence of the nuclear family in Palestinian society (Heiberg and Ovensen 1993, chap. 3).

10. Wages earned by Palestinians were considerably lower than those earned by Israelis doing the same jobs. West Bank and Gaza Strip workers in Israel were barred from becoming members of the Histadrut (the general trade union of Israeli workers) and from residing in Israel.

their home communities and disseminate attitudes and norms acquired in the host countries. This has been especially true of West Bankers and their emigrant relatives in Jordan, with whom they had regular contact.

The continual loss, through emigration, of skilled and educated individuals from the West Bank and Gaza Strip communities has deprived these communities "of their more innovative members" (Ammons 1979, 224), or more accurately, of those who possess what Bourdieu calls cultural capital (Bourdieu 1994). In addition, hundreds of highly qualified individuals with political affiliations were prevented by the Israeli military authorities from returning to their homes in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. This, too, has deprived Palestinian society of "social capital" (organizational and mobilizing abilities). Some scholars have suggested that this Israeli measure was part of a policy aimed at preventing the emergence of an effective oppositional Palestinian leadership (Migdal 1980, 67).

Extent, Patterns and Features of Palestinian Emigration

Dimensions of class, gender, and "diaspora space" (Brah 1996, 208–10) are all relevant for understanding processes of emigration. Since the second Gulf war and the Oslo accords (i.e., in the 1990s), emigration has become more and more constrained by limited resources as well as the destinations available. Social class is therefore an important determinant of the reasons for and destination of emigration. Daily commuting to the Israeli labor market and emigration, in earlier decades, to Jordan were forms of action that poorer households could afford, although the poorest often could not migrate at all. Communities that come under sustained repression and live under high risk, such as the Palestinian community in Lebanon before 1969 and after 1982,[16] had to seek either collective strategies (as happened between 1969 and 1982, when Palestinians in camps joined the various factions of the PLO) or had to develop their own household strategies such as seeking political asylum in countries that offered it. The latter alternative became the more common strategy after the forced exit of the PLO from Lebanon in 1982. The mass exodus of Palestinians from Kuwait following the Gulf war has had a traumatic ef-

16. For a description of the life of Palestinians in camps in Lebanon before and after the arrival of the PLO, see Sayigh 1979.

fect on thousands of Palestinian families who lost their source of livelihood and in many cases their savings.

Levels and Variations

All the communities included in the household survey showed a substantial rate of emigration. As expected, emigration rates varied by type of community and region. However, all nineteen communities in the sample had a significant percentage of households that had one or more emigrants, and this was equally true of towns, villages, and refugee camps across regions (table 4.1). The rates expressed in the survey do not reflect the actual volume of migration that these communities have witnessed within the last five decades; questions were confined to existing households and did not include those that had no members left behind. Hence the survey underestimates the flow of emigration. Emigrants were defined by the survey as "family members who reside outside the West Bank and Gaza Strip and East Jerusalem and who are related to the household head in one of the following ways: father, mother, son, daughter, wife, husband." For the purposes of the survey, to qualify as an emigrant the person had to have spent at least six months outside the West Bank (including East Jerusalem) and Gaza Strip prior to the survey; in other words, to qualify as an emigrant, one had to have crossed an international border and stayed outside for at least six months.[17] That the greatest majority of reported emigrants were married and fell within certain age group ranges is a function of the questions asked. Household heads were asked to name close kin abroad (as defined above), and that meant, in effect, naming mostly emigrants above a certain age; hence the high percentage of those who were reported to be married.

Nearly half of the households surveyed reported having one or more emigrant kin. This is probably an underestimate because the community sample under-represented villages in the West Bank as the task envisaged for the sample was comparative. A Fafo survey conducted in 1995 put the rate of households with emigrants at 57 percent (Pedersen et al. 2001a). Another study

17. This is the definition that was adopted in the survey mentioned above. For a detailed discussion of definitions and measurements of migration, see Boyle, Halfacree, and Robinson 1998, chap. 2.

Table 4.1

Community Profile: Households with Emigrants by Community, Sex, Academic Qualifications, and Endogamous Marriages, 1999

Community	Households with emigrants (%)	Emigrants who are males (%)	Emigrants with middle diploma+ (%)	Endogamous marriages[a] (%)	Households surveyed (N)
Jenin (town)	48	50	18	59	65
Jenin (refugee camp)	62	49	21	55.5	66
Tammoun (village)	54	53	20	87.5	70
Zayta (village)	58	58.5	58	75	69
Nablus (town)	65	48	40	79	246
Balata (refugee camp)	65	45	26	70	71
Turmus 'Ayy (village)	88	64	15	76	60
Al-Mazra'a al-Sharqiyya (village)	70	66	8	80	67
Ramallah (town)	65	54	32	57.5	60
Am'ari (refugee camp)	56	53	22	64	68
Husan (village)	48.5	51	16	79	68
Bayt Ummar (village)	35	57	26.5	87	71
Hebron (town)	43	48	27	88	258
Al-Fawwar (refugee camp)	63	45	32	43	70
Bayt Hanoun (village, Gaza)	28	85	58	89	71
Gaza (town)	35.5	59	38	71	599
Nusayrat (camp, Gaza)	39	56	51	66	94
Khuza'a (village, Gaza)	43	59	25	73	67
East Jerusalem	54	53	29	58.5	113
Total	49	54.5	30	72	2253

Source: IWS household survey, 1999

[a]Defined by kinship and community; calculated from marriage partners of females aged fifteen through forty-nine

Table 4.2
Households With and Without Emigrants by Wealth Index, 1999

| Wealth | Households (%) | | Total |
	With emigrants	Without emigrants	Number
Very poor	51	49	306
Poor	43	57	359
Medium	48	52	745
Upper medium	51.5	48.5	509
Wealthy	51	49	333
Ns	1102	1150	2252

Source: IWS household survey, 1999

holds or those in medium socioeconomic situations, but slightly less than those classified as upper middle class and wealthy (table 4.2). It is likely that more of the very poor have close relatives who have become refugees and displaced persons as a result of the 1948 and 1967 wars, and are thus camp residents.[19] This finding does not support the hypothesis that ecological factors determine rates of emigration (Migdal 1980, 58). Although ecological differences exist between the central region of the West Bank with its arid and marginal land and the northern region with its more favorable agricultural conditions, these differences cannot explain the lower rates of emigration in the southern region or, for that matter, in the overcrowded Gaza Strip.

Households whose heads are employers or self-employed are more likely to have emigrants than households whose heads are employees in the private sector. The level of education of household head seems to be relevant to the level of emigration (table 4.3). Households with emigrants tend to have heads with either very high levels of formal education or no education at all.[20]

19. The distribution of wealth by type of community shows (at the time of the survey in 1999) that camps have the highest percentage of the very poor and poor; 44 percent compared to 38 percent in villages, and 22 percent in towns. This is line with the Palestine Poverty Report (NCPA 1998).

20. Data from the survey show the following: 50 percent of the illiterates, 46 percent of those with elementary schooling and preparatory schooling respectively, 48 percent of those with secondary schooling, and 58 percent of those with postsecondary schooling reported one or more migrants in their households. The very uneducated and the well educated have very similar levels of reports of migration (one or more persons in the family).

Table 4.3
**Level of Household Head's Education
by the Presence of Emigrants, 1999**

Level of education	Households (%)		Total
	With emigrants	Without emigrants	Number
Illiterate	26	26	585
Elementary[a]	20	23	480
Preparatory[b]	18	21	436
Secondary	15	16	347
Higher than secondary	21	15	405
Total	100	100	2253

Source: Data are from the IWS household survey, 1999
[a]Up to grade 6
[b]Up to grade 9

This is more likely to be related to other factors such as the place chosen for emigration and the motive for emigrating, an aspect that I will return to later.

No relationship was revealed between emigration and the refugee or nonrefugee status of the head of the household (defined in coresidential terms), or type of household (nuclear or extended). But female-headed households were found to be more likely to have emigrants than male-headed households. This finding confirms the commonsense observation that emigration is a significant factor (though not the only factor) in the generation of households headed by females. The relationship between female-headed households and significantly higher reports of one or more emigrant abroad remained uniform also by locale (i.e., remained valid for cities, villages, and camps separately) and by region (north, middle, south West Bank, and Gaza Strip).

More than half (56 percent) of emigrants' occupations can be classified as middle-class occupations. These included directors, professionals, teachers, accountants, technicians, and office workers. Fifteen percent of emigrants were in trade, 15.5 percent could be classified as skilled workers, 10 percent were unskilled workers, and the remainder were distributed in various other occupations such as personal services and agriculture.

The percentage of emigrants who acquired middle-class occupations

varies according to the country of destination. The Gulf states had the highest percentage employed in such occupations (about 73 percent). The United States and Canada had the lowest ratio (44 percent) in new middle-class occupations. Jordan had a more even spread of occupations, but still a relatively high percentage in middle class occupations (51 percent).

Apart from the almost total absence of employment in agriculture among adult employed emigrants (only six cases of employment in agriculture were registered out of a total of 1,144 cases), the communities studied differed a great deal in the occupational patterns of their emigrants. Thus while an average of 23.5 percent of all emigrants were reported to be employed in jobs as directors or professionals (that is, in upper-middle-class occupations), the percentage varied from one community to another.[21] These variations were found to apply to all middle-class occupations.[22] Employment in trade also showed wide variations among emigrants of the communities studied.[23]

In all major destinations emigrants show a different pattern of occupational structure and stratification than resident nonemigrants. This indicates that emigration has provided an important channel for occupational and social mobility.

What the data on the occupational structure of emigrants show is that emigration has been one of the main mechanisms for Palestinian middle-class formation in general. Some emigrants returned eventually to form part of the Palestinian middle class in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. The fact that "middle class" is a sponge term that includes those who are not employed in "manual" occupations or unskilled or semiskilled jobs or businessmen with sizeable capital explains the wide variations in "middle-class" jobs held according to region and type of community, as well as by period of emigration and country of destination, which determines the contours of opportunities available to immigrants and the cultural space available to them.

21. The variation (in upper-middle-class occupations) starts from hardly any (as in the case of two communities) to rates of over 30 percent (as in the case of three communities, all of which are in the West Bank).

22. Seven of the nineteen communities surveyed reported a high rate (more than 30 percent) of emigrants who engaged in middle-class occupations.

23. Three communities reported a high rate of employment in trade (more than 25 percent of their emigrant employed in trade). Employment of emigrants in skilled and unskilled manual occupations also shows significant variations.

Table 4.5
Emigrants by Destination and Type of Community (%)

Destination	Town	Camp	Village	Total
Jordan (East Bank)	48	73	37	50
Gulf and other Arab states[a]	35	16	18	26
North America	9	3	34	15
Other	8	8	11	9
Total	100	100	100	100

Source: IWS household survey, 1999
[a]Including North Africa

drawn more to North America. Very few village emigrants are found in Latin America, with hardly any recorded from towns and camps.[26] This is related to a generational pattern of village migration, which paved the way for relatives to be "pulled" out to countries like Chile, Colombia, and Brazil, as well as to North America. The use of the Arabic term *sahaba*—meaning to pull out—to describe the process of individuals abroad providing the necessary documentation and work opportunities for the emigration of a relative—is significant. When work opportunities are available through help provided by kinship networks, then the readiness to work hard rather than to have good qualifications becomes the deciding criterion.

The role of kinship in "pulling out" resident relatives is reflected, often, in "chain emigration," as the following data indicate: the majority of reported emigrants from Jenin town live in Jordan, and only a small number live in the oil-producing states, a pattern similar to that found in Jenin camp, Am'ari camp (near Ramallah), Husan village (near Bethlehem), Bayt Ummar (Hebron district), Hebron city (where a very large majority of emigrants live in Jordan), and the old city of Jerusalem. In Ramallah town only about a quarter of reported emigrants live in Jordan while over a half live in North America; this pattern is similar to that found in the village of Turmus 'Ayya (which lies on

26. More than half of the camp emigrants to Asia (recorded by the household survey designed by the Institute of Women's Studies at Birzeit University) came from one camp (Jenin camp), and more than half of all the town emigrants to Asia come from the adjacent Jenin town and nearly three quarters of village emigrants to Asia come from one village (Zayta). This suggests a selective kin network type of migration. Jenin, Jenin camp, and Zayta are all in the northern part of the West Bank.

the road between Ramallah and Nablus), where three-quarters of its emigrants live in North America, and al-Mazra'a al-Sharqiyya where two-thirds of its emigrants live in North America. In Gaza city nearly two-thirds of emigrants reside in oil-producing Arab countries (including North Africa), a pattern similar to Nusayrat refugee camp in Gaza Strip, where most of its emigrants live in oil-producing countries, and to that of Khuza'a, a village in the southern Gaza Strip.

Looking at emigrants through the lens of level of education and place of residence brings out another feature of Palestinian emigration (table 4.6). Rates of illiteracy and high education vary according to place of residence of emigrants. The highest rates of immigrants with elementary education and less were found in Jordan, followed by the United States, with the lowest rate in the oil-producing Arab states.

Employment opportunities and family networks are major factors in the choice of place of emigration. Jordan could sustain a large percentage of illiterate or barely literate emigrants because of the strength and breadth of family connections, availability of opportunities for semiskilled employment, lack of documentary requirements by West bank residents, and ease of movement to Jordan. Besides, emigration to Jordan was considered, up to 1988 (when Jordan severed its administrative connection with the West Bank), as movement within the same state. That explains why half the emigrants from the West Bank and Gaza Strip in the IWS survey reside in Jordan and constitute two-thirds of those reported as having no more than an elementary education. On the other hand, the oil-producing Arab states attracted a quarter of the emigrants in the IWS survey sample but had a third of those with postgraduate university education.

Certain villages tended to direct some of their emigrants to Latin America where earlier emigrants had managed to establish a foothold; for the same reasons, other villages dispatched their emigrants to North America. This process produced the village or small town emigrant who, with little initial knowledge of the language of the country of destination, invested his energy in hard work in a grocery store or some trade to return later to build a villa in his West Bank village or town (Giacaman and Johnson 2002a, 29–38).

The choice of Jordan for emigration is regionally differentiated; just over 75 percent of emigrants from the southern West Bank went to Jordan, compared to 66 percent from the north and less than 33 percent from the center of

the West Bank, whereas only 15 percent of emigrants from the Gaza Strip found their way there. Gazans had much less access to Jordan than West Bankers. Nearly half of Gaza households reported having emigrants in the Gulf, in contrast to 19 percent from the north, 12 percent from the south, 6 percent from the central West Bank, and 17 percent from the Old City of Jerusalem. The United States and Canada attracted emigrants from half of the households in the central West Bank, compared to only 12 percent from Jerusalem, 5 percent from the north, and 3 percent from the southern part of the West Bank and Gaza. This finding confirms the importance of kinship in channeling emigration. However, the scope of employment opportunities and the degree of ease of border crossing into the host countries are also relevant to the type of qualifications needed to maximize chance of stable employment.

The fact that the bulk of emigrants went to places where they have kin and community connections (often stretching two or more generations) is relevant to the explanation of why emigration tended to generate social conservatism. Similarly, the fact that most Palestinian emigrants moved to countries that maintain a strong control over all manifestations of civil society is also relevant to the explanation. Thus the formation of the bulk of the Palestinian middle class through emigration took place within such a political field, regardless of the forces propelling emigration.

Motives, Moments, and Family Networks

Three main motives appear to be associated with emigration from the West Bank and Gaza Strip: work, marriage, and expulsion. Expulsion (as a result of war, invasion, or occupation) is not emigration but could result in the emigration of members of the expellee's household. Less than 11 percent of those interviewed reported pursuit of higher education as a motivator for emigration (table 4.7). Work and marriage alone account for most of all emigrants' motives for crossing the borders of Palestine, and the ratio rises to nearly two-third if those who were born abroad are excluded. If we add expulsion as the reason for being outside Palestine, the percentage jumps to 75 percent (and rises to 81 percent when foreign-born Palestinians are excluded). Work and marriage had equal weight as the reasons for emigration. If we leave out the category of "born abroad," then 54 percent of male emigrants moved outside Palestine for work reasons, compared with only 5 percent of female emigrants. Two-thirds

Table 4.7
Reasons Given by Household Head for Emigration of Close Relative by Community Type and Sex

Reason for emigration	Town (%)	Camp (%)	Village (%)	Total n (%)	Male (%)	Female(%)
Work	28	19	40	800 (30)	50	5
Study	12	7	10	287 (11)	18.5	1
Marriage	30	29	27.5	785 (29)	2.5	61
Accompanying another emigrant	8	10	4.5	200 (7)	2.5	13.5
Expulsion	15	29	11	437 (16)	19.5	12.5
Born abroad	7	6	7	188 (7)	7	7
Total	100	100	100	2697 (100)	100	100

Source: IWS household survey, 1999
Note: Data exclude answers of "don't know" and "no answer"

of females (66 percent) left for reasons of marriage. That means that women's emigration from the West Bank and Gaza Strip is mostly "associational" emigration. Only 2.5 percent of males emigrated for reasons of marriage (i.e., their spouses were already emigrants). Similarly, more males than females left the West Bank and Gaza Strip to study (18.5 percent and 1 percent respectively).

Different types of communities narrated somewhat different clusters of reasons for the emigration of their members. Villages seem to have the highest percentage of emigrants who leave for work or marriage. Towns and camps come second. While the dominant reasons for emigration in all communities surveyed were reported to be work and marriage, each community had its own distinctive emigration profile. This profile relates to its socioeconomic structure, the genealogy of emigrants, the degree of dependence on agriculture, the strength of kinship solidarities,[27] main sources of income, and levels of education, because level of education seems to influence the motive for emigration (table 4.8).

Reasons for living outside the borders of Palestine also varied according to time period. Expulsion was reported as the main reason for the departure of 22 percent of all individuals during the 1948–66 period, 61 percent during the war year of 1967, 5 percent during the period 1968–87, and less than 3 percent during 1988–99. A different pattern emerges for those reported to have emigrated for reasons of marriage. Marriage was responsible for 26 percent of all the emigration during 1948–66, 14 percent for the year 1967, 38 percent for the period 1968–87, and 39.5 percent for the 1988–99 period. If the year 1967 is excluded, the rise in the ratio of emigration for reasons of marriage (i.e., "associational") probably reflects increased arrangements for family reunion or the emigration of nuclear families en masse. The rise in the percentage of those who left for study during the period 1988–99 could be due to the dis-

27. For example, 70 percent of emigrants from Jenin town are outside Palestine for reasons of work and marriage; the rate does not exceed 64 percent for Jenin camp and 60 percent for the village of Tammoun (a village between Nablus and Jenin). All are in the northern region of the West Bank. Tammoun had twice the rate of forced emigrants (expelled) than that of the Jenin camp (20 percent and 10 percent). In al-Mazra'a al-Sharqiyya, near Ramallah town, the percentage of emigrants for reasons of work and marriage amounted to 75 percent, compared to 32 percent in the Am'ari camp (on the outskirts of Ramallah), and to 70 percent in Ramallah town. Reported forced emigration (i.e., expulsion) in the last three mentioned communities, on the other hand, amounted to 4 percent, 58 percent and 14 percent respectively.

ity of emigrants from the Gaza Strip village of Khuza'a (the third village with a high rate of regular assistance to relatives at home) were in the Gulf states and other Arab states (mostly in North African oil-producing states).[30] Khuza'a also had a high percentage of emigrants working in trade with high financial transfers to resident close relatives. The linkage between trade and regular money transfers to close relatives in the West Bank and Gaza Strip is possibly due to the better opportunities for accumulating wealth provided by trade.

Not much should be read into the regular assistance made by emigrants to their relatives in Palestine. Where it exists it is almost confined to fairly recent emigrants to rich states (North America and the Gulf states) and to specific localities with high rates of immigrants to these states. After emigrants establish their own families, their financial responsibilities to their relatives staying at home diminish. That does not mean that less regular assistance is not made or that social ties and links are severed. Annual visits and gifts on social and religious occasions remain significant, as does support in times of crisis. Visiting and gift exchanges are maintained, particularly between families in the West Bank and emigrants in Jordan, the Gulf states, and to a lesser degree between those in North America. The celebration of kinship is one way in which Palestinians assert their national belonging (i.e., their connectedness to Palestine as a place and to other Palestinians) in the face of statelessness, dispersion, and colonial occupation.

The Home Communities: Continuity and Change

Social "conservatism" is not simply a consequence of emigration from the West Bank and Gaza Strip. It is also related to Palestinians' subjection to a prolonged colonial-settler occupation. Israeli settler-occupation has been instrumental in the demise of Palestinian agriculture, the dependence of a large percentage of the labor force on employment in Israel, the penetration of the market economy into all aspects of community life in Palestinian areas, and the transformation of these areas into a captive market for Israeli goods. That

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30. Two West Bank villages reported a high percentage of emigrants for work and marriage (75 percent for Turmus 'Ayya, and 82 percent al-Mazra'a al-Sharqiyya), whereas Khuza'a reported 49 percent of its emigrant leaving for work and marriage. (However, 21 percent of emigrants were born abroad.)

is in addition to restrictions on the activities and scope of the public sphere. These changes were accompanied by a renewal of the Palestinian national movement in the form of the PLO, which gave priority to liberating the occupied territories and to the establishment of an independent Palestinian state. These developments had a significant impact on the cultural and social life of these areas.

Both the IWS survey and PCBS data reveal the insignificance that agriculture has come to occupy as a source of income for Palestinian households. Less than 2.5 percent of the total labor force of the nineteen communities surveyed was employed in agriculture and fishing (compared to 6 percent as a national average revealed by the PCBS 1997 population census data). The proximity of most villages to towns (almost all within a commuting distance) ensures access to employment in these towns. This, and the limited work opportunities in towns, explain why internal migration has been very small in scale and largely confined to women (who moved into towns for marriage reasons); it has not been unidirectional (that is confined to village-to-town migration) but has also taken place between towns, as the 1997 population census of the West Bank and Gaza Strip has revealed (Malki and Shalabi 2000, 25–27, 49). The pattern of internal migration did not show a pattern of a primate city dominating internal migration. Only after the establishment of the PNA did the twin towns of Ramallah and al-Bira and their district acquire a significant pull, possibly reflecting the increasing prominence of the twin towns as the administrative seat of the PNA government and large NGOs.

The IWS survey results point to a fairly rapid process of integration of camps and villages within the newly established structures of the PNA. In all, a fifth of the labor force in the communities studied was employed by PNA institutions. The figure is in line with the Palestinian national average recorded by national surveys.[31]

In the 1970s and 1980s, Israel provided employment for about a third of the total active labor force of the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Because the

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31. Ten of the communities recorded a medium range employment in the governmental public sector (i.e., a ration of 10 percent–20 percent of their total active labor force employed by the PNA). Six communities recorded high employment in the governmental public sector (i.e., more than 20 percent of their labor force employed by the PNA). The remaining three communities recorded a rate of less than 10 percent.

been and continues to be, since 1948, a significant and persistent feature of all the types of Palestinian communities, particularly in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Emigration from Palestine was known before 1948, but it never acquired the scale and significance it did after that. Emigrant labor abroad has entailed processes of deconstruction of households in the communities of the West Bank and Gaza Strip and the construction of new households in the country of destination. Labor commuting to Israel—which started in 1968 and continued until the beginning of the second intifada in September 2000—did not entail such deconstruction and reconstruction of households, but it nevertheless had an impact on household arrangements by promoting, through the supremacy of wage labor, the primacy of the conjugal bond emphasized by the increased dependence of women on men's wage income particularly with the marginalization of agriculture since the beginning of the Israeli occupation in 1967 (Moors 1995).

Emigration and labor commuting went hand in hand with other processes that affected Palestinian communities. These processes included the spread of secular education (both at the basic and higher levels), the marginalization of agriculture as a source of employment and livelihood, and the dominance of wage labor as the sole or main source of income.

Differences between communities are reflected in where migrants went, the kind of relations they kept with resident relatives, the types of occupations they found, and the degree to which they depended on relatives in the country of destination to facilitate their entry, residence, and work. An important part of the variations between the communities can be explained in terms of the history of emigration itself, as earlier successful emigrants tended to draw others from home communities to where they happened to settle. Other variations can be explained in terms of the economy of the community itself, the role of agriculture in its economy, and the impact of wider processes (such as the spread of education) on the resources that each household could mobilize. The limitations imposed by arid agriculture, the confiscation of land for building Israeli colonial settlements, the restrictions imposed on industrial and economic growth, the high rates of unemployment (including among college and university students), the accessibility (or lack thereof) of commuting labor in Israel and the kind of labor available there are all factors that explain overall high rates of emigration and differential rates among communities.

1969 was just over 28 percent (Pedersen et al. 2001a, 82). Our survey (based on a sample of communities rather than a national sample and confined to marriages of women between the ages of fifteen and forty-nine in the year 1999) found that 27 percent of women in the nineteen communities were married to their male cousins, and nearly 18 percent were married to other relatives. In all about 44.5 percent of marriages were to relatives of various degrees. The rates remained high in all three types of communities, including towns.[37]

Communities that reported high rates of households with emigrants did not have lower or higher rates of endogamous marriages than found in other communities.[38] In other words emigration and endogamous marriages are not alternative mechanisms for managing risk and highly precarious situations. They have been going hand in hand for decades, and given the specifics of the political economy of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, social conservatism was one of the major unintended consequences.

The low participation of women in the formal sector of the West Bank and Gaza Strip economy, and the existence of the same conditions in many of the countries chosen as destinations for Palestinian emigrants (Jordan and the Gulf states, all with strong patriarchal culture that had also developed strong radical Islamic movements), could only help to enforce conservative attitudes. Women's emigration has remained dependent on their menfolk as fathers or husbands.

Emigration has, objectively speaking, helped to reproduce social conservatism in more than one way, apart from the exclusion of most women from

37. Villages recorded the highest rate of cousin marriages (28.5 percent) and camps the lowest (24 percent); towns fell in the middle position (27 percent). However, households with no emigrants show a higher rate of marriages to relatives in all three types of communities and overall than households with emigrants. Twenty-four percent of women reported having married their first cousins in households with emigrants, compared to 30 percent among those who reported no migrants from the household. Villages showed a higher rate of community endogamy (other than marriages to kin) than camps and towns (28 percent for city, 20 percent for camp, and 30 percent for village). The rates remain high in all three types of communities, including towns.

38. Seventy-two percent of all female marriages (of women between the ages of fifteen and forty-nine) in the communities surveyed were endogamous (kinship and community).

participation in paid employment and their segregation from the public sphere. First, emigration deprived Palestinian communities of social and cultural capital (i.e., from whose with high education and skills who had to emigrate) and put many of them in places where they were marginalized socially, culturally and politically and subjected them, along with other labor emigrants, to strict social control. This dynamic involved, at some stages, leaving wives and children behind for a while with a consequence of reinforcing patriarchal relations for those remaining at home.

Second, the fact that a large percentage of emigrants found work and residence in Jordan and the Gulf states (particularly in the Emirates, Kuwait, and Saudi Arabia, where large numbers of Palestinians found work) required most emigrants and their families to adjust to the largely "conservative" culture of the host countries. The state in these countries controlled the mass media and civil society organizations (where they attempted to exist), and some financed regional Arabic newspapers and television stations that propagated a (politically, culturally, and socially) conservative ideology and financed movements that oppose liberal, secular, and socialist movements and outlooks. Most of these countries witnessed, in the 1980s and 1990s, the emergence of political movements with ideologies phrased in religious language and symbols, which made them difficult to challenge. This religious ideology was transmitted back home through regular visits or upon final return.

Third, Palestinian employment in Israel created commuters who met Israelis simply as employers (without any formal contract), and Palestinian contact with Israelis in the West Bank and Gaza Strip was restricted to contact between the occupied and the occupiers and colonial settlers. That is, Palestinians were excluded from the liberal-democratic aspect of Israeli life, which has been largely reserved for Jews. In fact, this face-to-face contact with the culture of an occupying, repressive, and in many aspects racist force may well have given conservatism a nationalistic or religious dimension.

Fourth, there is the absence of an independent Palestinian state and the continued Israeli domination and colonial presence that has kept a tight control over all trends that might lead to urban construction, cultural dynamism, and an active public sphere. This domination was achieved through control of urban planning, land allocation, political repression, and the blocking of economic activity and investment by Palestinians. It is no accident that the over-

whelming majority of privately owned economic enterprises in the West Bank and Gaza Strip are made up of tiny (employing less than five individuals) family-owned and run businesses.[39]

This should not lead to the conclusion that Palestinian society in the West Bank and Gaza Strip is static or stagnant. It is a society where different social forces with different agendas (liberal, secular, Islamist, populist, nationalist, socialist) are at work. It is also a society that is fighting to overthrow a colonial-settler occupation, and is undergoing various processes, some of which are outlined in this chapter. There is, however, a need to study processes that have been triggered by education, expatriate capital investment, changes in both the national and Islamist movement, the establishment of a central territorial authority represented by the PNA, and many other forces. These trends and processes need to be observed and their ramifications studied.

39. The results of the December 1997 census showed that 76,962 establishments in the West Bank and Gaza Strip employed 191,361 persons, that is, an average of 2.5 persons per establishment (PCBS 1997a, table 34).

5

THE PARADOX OF WOMEN'S WORK

Coping, Crisis, and Family Survival

Eileen Kuttab

The Israeli-Palestinian Declaration of Principles (Oslo agreement) of September 1993, signed by the Palestine Liberation Organization and Israel, resulted in a peace agreement that committed both parties to a series of actions and interim measures including partial Israeli territorial withdrawal and limited Palestinian self-government. This agreement created a political environment of euphoria and optimism among the Palestinian people, who had suffered a long colonial occupation by Israeli forces of more than thirty-five years. Moreover, a new mind-set was promoted whereby people felt less pressured by the daily presence of the occupiers and more responsible for their own affairs. The Palestinian National Authority (PNA) was expected to have the power and will to control the future of the country under the assumption that there would be more opportunities for self-reliance through expansion of the labor market and that the Palestinian economy would be liberated from full dependence on the Israeli economy, especially the Israeli labor market.

This state of euphoria did not last long, as the situation changed drastically after a period of about seven years. The al-Aqsa intifada erupted in September 2000 as an expression of protest against Palestinian acceptance of a political agreement with no viability and against Israeli intransigence in the implementation of agreed-upon measures.

The post-Oslo optimism was reflected in the way social movements and nongovernmental organizations altered their agendas by defining the period as a stage in state building or as a postconflict situation, as though the major conflict with Israel had been resolved. The pending issues (withdrawal from the settlements, status of Jerusalem, and right to return) were postponed or left to the final stage negotiations. In this context, social and developmental issues

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conflict. I argue that the unusually low formal labor force participation of Palestinian women constitutes a paradox when compared to the historic legacy of women's activism combined with flexible and creative adaptation to various roles and pressures through the prolonged conflict. Such a paradox can only be explained by understanding how "other" economic activities—what I term "resistance economies" located in the household—function as means of steadfastness. Income-generating projects developed by mass-based organizations, and "coping strategies" for survival in the second intifada, have enhanced and prolonged the life of the Palestinian household and absorbed the different levels of conflict and pressure.

One should be reminded that during the 1970s and 1980s, the democratic, mass-based organizations enhanced the developmental process in order to support resistance strategies more creatively and dynamically. Although these organizations were political expressions, they became developmental tools, basing their authority on popular accountability and legitimacy through the services they promoted.

These organizations were more inclined to express the priorities of low-income groups in general and adopted income-generating projects, especially in the mid-1980s, when the strategy of resistance also integrated the idea of "liberation." Their objectives were twofold: to integrate women into the development process and to activate their role in the national economy following the Women in Development (WID) approach promoted by the donor community. The second objective was to create a new kind of social organization, more productive and efficient in nature as well as responsive to people's needs and a tool for social and political mobilization. This was a goal that responded to the new political agenda of "democratization" that aimed at expanding the base of these institutions by reaching the villages and refugee camps. At that time, and in a parallel approach, the national movement emphasized economic independence as a necessary dimension of the political and national struggle. Nationalist groups encouraged the mushrooming of these projects especially during the first intifada, when slogans such as self-reliance and boycotts of the Israeli market were promoted as national goals.

Palestinian women's low formal labor force participation—averaging around 10 percent since 1967—constitutes another dimension of the paradox in light of relatively high levels of female education and relatively high levels of support for women's work outside the home (see Johnson's essay in this vol-

ume) and also in light of increased need. Although participation did rise in the more stable environment of the Oslo years, I will examine structural constraints both in labor markets and in the overarching dynamic of colonial rule to which everyday practices of resistance respond. Some of these constraints are located in women's work in the informal economy, but it is also true that most female labor remains firmly anchored in household economies. In a 2000 time-use survey, the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS) found that while women aged twenty-five to forty-four worked over eight hours per day (every day of the week), only 6 percent of women's work was paid (PCBS 2001, 17). Likewise, in this chapter I explore the features of this paid work. Nevertheless, it is essential to keep in mind the wider canvas of women's work and the salience of household economies, to which I return in my discussion of household production and coping strategies during the second intifada. Abu Nahleh's ethnographic look at Palestinian families during this period complements my contextual review.

Post-Oslo Dynamics

The political environment after the Oslo agreement elevated the expectations of women in relation to economic opportunities, access to education, and political representation. Examining the implication of these expectations for the labor markets, which is one focus of this chapter, I argue that although the political changes affected women's employment opportunities to some extent through the expansion of the public sector (mainly the health and education sectors) and the service sector (PCBS 2002b), this expansion did not dramatically change the structurally segregated labor market. Most of the jobs that the PNA generated were related to the building of institutions—ministries, security services, infrastructure, and construction. These new jobs were mainly male-oriented and did not accommodate women except in clerical jobs and in the services sector, where employment generation was limited. Some token positions were also intended for women in policy-making positions within the PNA.

In this chapter, I will also analyze how women, whose participation rate in the labor market has never exceeded 12 percent since the Israeli occupation of 1967 (Pedersen et al. 2001b; PCBS 2000d), have played an important role in the survival of the Palestinian family in times of crisis. The first part of

degree of tolerance will decrease. This inevitably will have negative repercussions on families and on women's physical and mental health. Moreover, ties of solidarity that are forged in times of crisis among the community members and relatives may fray and disintegrate. Women play an important role in creating and maintaining such ties, and losing the capacity to do so can affect the whole community.

Methodological Issues: Occupation, Gender, and Labor Markets

Defining labor trends in a unique setting such as the Palestinian one calls for a nuanced approach that is often lacking in mainstream economic analysis. An analysis of labor trends in Palestine must take into account the conditions wrought by the thirty-five-year history of Israeli colonial aggression and occupation, accompanied by continuous political instability. It must also take into account not only the ongoing and prolonged relation of dependence between the Israeli and Palestinian economies, but also, and more significantly, the volatile fluctuations and changes that have characterized this dependent relationship over time. Volatility has not only been caused by political and economic factors affecting Israel and the region (such as recessions, wars, and changes in Gulf labor markets) concerning their ability or willingness to absorb Palestinian labor, but is also very much tied in with the dynamics of the structural relationship between colonizer and colonized. More specifically, not only broad labor trends and, in particular, gender imbalances and occupational segregation must be understood within this colonial framework. The gendered nature of labor markets where women are mostly active in the domestic domain cannot be explained only by reference to issues of choice, cultural practices and preferences, or features of the economy. Nor can they be understood without looking at the global and regional context where labor trends have undergone drastic changes through globalization.

After the Oslo accords, Israel remained in control of most natural resources and borders and roads: those connecting villages and cities and those linking the West Bank with the Gaza Strip and the occupied territories with surrounding regions (MOPIC, UNDP, and DFID 2002). Hence, because of dependency on Israel's goodwill, the opportunity to stabilize the economy and make it functional in order to generate employment opportunities re-

and women have been pushed to more informal and subsistence activities that have further cemented the patriarchal nature of the labor market and the division of labor within the household.

Labor Market Trends: Global and Regional

Globalization has coincided with higher unemployment among less skilled workers, widening income inequality. One of the important trends in labor markets in the advanced economies has been a steady shift in demand away from less skilled toward more skilled occupations (Anker 1998). This trend has produced dramatic rises in wage and income inequality between the more and the less skilled in some countries and has increased unemployment among the less skilled in other countries. It is important to bear in mind that these changes are not devoid of gender implications. Differences in wages and employment across countries can be explained by the differences in labor market structures (Lechner and Coli 2000, 177–79). Economic restructuring has led to an increase in flexibility and insecurity in labor markets, informalization and downsizing of the industrial workforce, and income polarization, all of which have affected both high- and low-income countries. These changes have resulted in social polarization and increased poverty for those who become unemployed and lack the necessary skills required by labor markets. Again these processes have specific gender dimensions, including higher levels of female as opposed to male unemployment, informalization of work often performed by women, and increased participation of women in the informal sector (Beneria and Bisnath 2001, 172). Labor markets are gender segregated; most women are employed in only a few areas, such as light manufacturing or services industries, unskilled or clerical occupations, and informal activities. The patterns of female employment such as household work indicate that women continue to be less active in the industrial sector, away from agriculture and into the service sector (World Bank 2004).

Available data on the Arab region, however, indicate that female labor force participation rates have generally been on the increase particularly during the last two decades, a growth that is linked to globalization (UNDESA 1999). Yet by 2000 the average female labor force participation in the Arab region was still the lowest among developing regions (ILO 2000). These rates are lower than expected when considering the region's fertility rates, its edu-

cational levels, and the age structure of the female population (World Bank 2004). Some economists have indicated that women in the Arab region have been entering the labor force in record numbers, but much of the increase has come from the informal sector. The significance of this sector for women's employment is widely cited but difficult to document and analyze in the absence of relevant statistics. When data are available they suggest that many new female entrants to the informal sector tend to be less educated, young, and belong to households that have migrated from rural areas (Zafiris et al. 2003, 66). Informal sector employment has traditionally been widespread in agriculture, although that is changing with increasing urbanization in most countries of the Arab region. On the other hand, the urban informal sector is a significant employer of women, especially for the self-employed, unpaid family laborers, part-time workers, and domestic workers (Zafiris et al. 2003, 67).

For instance, 85.6 percent of women in Gulf states worked in the service sector in 1990, compared to 9 percent in industry and 5.4 percent in agriculture. The question that must be raised here is whether these workers are migrant female workers or locals. In contrast, in the least developed countries such as Yemen or Sudan, 82.5 percent of employed women worked in the agriculture sector in 1990, compared to 13.3 percent in the service sector and 4.2 percent in industry. Were these differences due to considerably fewer female migrant workers in Yemen and Sudan? Between these two extremes, 37 percent of working women in the Maghrib and 46.7 percent in the Mashriq were economically active in the service sector in 1990, compared to 47.4 percent for the Maghrib and 40.3 percent for the Mashriq in agriculture, and 15.5 percent for the Maghrib and 13 percent for the Mashriq in industry (UN-WISTAT 1999; CAWTAR 2001). Thus, patterns and sectors of women's employment in the Arab world vary significantly.

Some researchers have assumed that Arab culture and traditions have been mainly responsible for the gender gap in the labor market. Moghadam explains this gap as being caused by the "patriarchal gender contract," where a set of relationships between men and women are based upon the male breadwinner/female homemaker roles in which the male has direct access to wage employment, or control over the means of production, and the female is largely economically dependent upon male members of her family. The result of this division of labor is occupational segregation (2000, 242).

the expansion of the service sector that is in turn and in varying degrees apparently dependent on the stage of incorporation into the global market.

Context: Uniqueness or Similarity?

Has the Palestinian occupied territory experienced similar changes in the labor market, or has the Israeli occupation prevented even the adoption and replication of these global and regional trends? The prolonged Israeli domination over the West Bank and Gaza Strip and the systematic policy to change the social-economic structure of the occupied areas to meet Israeli political and economic goals have continued to have drastic and destabilizing effects on Palestinian society. The highly industrialized and technologically advanced Israeli economy still possesses the power to deprive Palestinians of the efficient use of their economic resources by restructuring the local economy for its political goals. It has also expanded its sovereignty through prioritizing integration over separation and dispossession over exploitation (Roy 1995, 117). Even with the Oslo-Cairo agreements concluded in 1993, Palestinians still have no control over economic resources, sectoral development, and political expression. The term "dependent development," often used to characterize the dependency of developing countries' economies on the global market, cannot fully explain the unique economy of the occupied territories. One cannot talk about normal economic viability or stable labor markets when over 60 percent of Palestinian households have fallen under the poverty line, when over 50 percent of the labor force were unemployed in 2002 (World Bank 2003), and when the material infrastructure and political, social, and cultural institutions that managed the everyday life of the Palestinian people have been destroyed.

Sara Roy has remarked on the inadequacy of prevailing theories of dependency and underdevelopment in understanding the uniqueness of the Palestinian situation:

> How would existing theories explain the political repression of the Palestinians, the harassment of educational institutions, the discriminatory application of economic policy, the denial of legal protections, the destruction of personal property, the deportation of the Palestinian leadership, the arbitrary

This groundbreaking volume takes an in-depth look at how individuals, families, and entire households "cope," negotiate their lives, and achieve personal and collective goals in Occupied Palestine. Contributors raise critical questions about tradition vs. modernity and the sociocultural consequences of emigration. *Living Palestine* establishes that household dynamics (i.e., kin-based marriage, fertility decisions, children's education, and living arrangements) cannot be fully grasped unless linked to the traumas of the past and worries of the present. Likewise, family strategies for survival and social mobility under occupation are swept up in the tide of history that engulfs the world in which Palestinians live and struggle. *Living Palestine* is drawn from an expansive research project of the Institute for Women's Studies at Birzeit University which sought to examine the Palestinian household from multiple perspectives through a survey of two thousand households in nineteen communities.

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Front: A Palestinian bride and her family pass at Howara Israeli checkpoint near the West Bank of Nablus. Abed Omar Qusini/Reuters.

Gender, Culture, and Politics in the Middle East

مادة محمية بموجب حقوق النشر