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"Who Am I?": The Development of a Male Palestinian Political Identity

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***“Who Am I?”: The Development of a
Male Palestinian Political Identity***

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Master of Arts in International Studies

First and foremost to my mother and father for your endless support.

To my advisor Aaron Hahn Tapper for his counsel.

To my siblings Katia, Andrew and Majid for their cheerleading.

To my grandparents for their watchful gaze from above.

To my friends Lisa, Dylan, Hope, Monica and Olivia for their support and late night adventures.

To my interviewees for their experience and wisdom.

And finally to the Palestinian people, may you one day see peace and a state of your own.

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Terms and Abbreviations

Arabic Terms:

‘Aql- Reasoning

Al Nakba- The catastrophe

Al Naksa- The setback

Intifada- Popular uprising

Qadiyyah- The struggle/cause

Rujulah- Masculinity

Sharaf- Honor

Wajh- Face

Conventions and Legal Abbreviations and Terms:

CAT-Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment

De facto- in fact, whether by law or not.

De jure- According to rightful entitlement, or by right

IDP-Internally Displaced Persons

UDHR- Universal Declaration of Human Rights

UNGA- United Nations General Assembly

Ultra vires- Beyond one’s legal power or capability

Groups, Organizations and Miscellaneous Abbreviations

HRW- Human Rights Watch

ICC- International Criminal Court

IDF- Israeli Defense Forces

IHL- International Humanitarian Law

IHR- International Human Rights Law

IOF- Israeli Occupation Forces

PA- Palestinian Authority

PCHR- Palestinian Centre for Human Rights

PLO- Palestinian Liberation Organization

PTSD- Post Traumatic Stress Disorder

UN- United Nations

UNGA- United Nations General Assembly

Abstract

The Palestinian people have lived under numerous imperial rulers; first, the Ottoman Empire, then later the British. Today they live under the military occupation of the state of Israel as second class citizen millions more living abroad as refugees. Young Palestinian men have become the leaders and the physical manifestation of the struggle against Israel, a political Goliath that has used tactics to repress the Palestinians such as, detentions, beatings, and land confiscation, which many outside of the Israeli state deem as illegal. Scholar Rashid Khalidi states that “the quintessential Palestinian experience, which illustrates some of the most basic issues raised by Palestinian identity, takes place at the border[...] in short, at any one of those many modern barriers where identities are checked and verified”(Khalidi, 1997:1). It is through this process that the battered and bruised body of young Palestinian men represents the political identity of Palestinians to people all over the world. Yet the meaning of this body has transformed generation to generation. This paper analyzes not only this generational shift but also the history of this symbol. In this effort it also addresses related ideas, such as colonialism, nationalism and identity in the context of modern Palestine. Additional elements include issues such as state sanctioned violence and the impact this violence has on the mental development of identity in those Palestinian men who grow up under Israeli military occupation. Above all else, this paper explores Palestinian male identities, and their responses to the question “Who am I?”, and why and how their answers are not as simple as saying “I am a Palestinian man.”

Chapter 1- Introduction

1.1 Introduction to Palestinian Identity

Forming one's identity is an issue centered on the individual level, an internal battle of finding the answer to the question "Who am I?" However, identity is not something that is fully decided by an individual alone, though it exists within individuals. As scholar Edward Said notes in his renowned work *Orientalism*, "the development and maintenance of every culture requires the existence of another, different and competing *alter ego*" (Said, 1994:331-332). This means that a person is not able to establish his own identity without being fully engaged with another. Identity formation also manifests within the context of international conflict.

Take the following scenario for example. Group A has been living in a specific region for centuries and is ruled by Group B. Group B believes that the people of Group A are not capable of governing themselves since they were ruled over by another empire for centuries prior, though members of Group A were politically engaged during this time. For years Group A scrambled to create an identity of their own in order to rule themselves and to show Group B that they can govern themselves. Yet Group A's struggles were to no avail because Group B barred them from representing themselves politically. Finally, it becomes evident that Group B has no intention of letting Group A become autonomous. Group B gives Group C the land that Group A has been living on. War breaks out. Group A is forced from their homes while Group C totally erases any trace of Group A from the land. Hundreds of thousands of people from Group A are forced to leave their homes while others began living under the occupation of Group C.

Normally Group B would be against what Group C was doing to Group A being that Group B was known for publically proclaiming support for human rights; however Group B decides not to get involved. Group A subsequently is victimized by Group C for decades thereafter. As the years went on, Group A is subjected to state-sanctioned violence, land confiscation, and political repression. Group A tries to fight back but Group C makes it difficult. Group C targets young men and boys in order to continue the process of erasing the existence of Group A. Finally, Group A decides to come together and build a political group to combat Group C. However Group A's struggle is not recognized by Group B and others who turn a blind eye to what Group C is doing to Group A. Group A has continues their efforts to establish a local, regional, and global identity. The young men of Group A in particular take the brunt of violence perpetuated by Group C using their bodies. In doing so they become a physical manifestation of Group A in their entirety. This identity becomes one of sacrifice, victimhood, and martyrdom but manifests differently from generation to generation; the overall theme of their collective identity remains constant. Group A, particularly their young men, have fought against the powerful state of Group C for decades. Group A went from having no separate identity, to scrambling to find one, to finding one in the midst of catastrophe.

When reading this scenario one might immediately sympathize with Group A. They are a group of people who were never allowed to govern themselves due to imperial and colonial rulers. Finally, Group C comes into the picture in a way, from Group A's, perspective is illegal. They enter the state violently with the intent to erase any mention of Group A in the history of the new state. Group C accomplishes this by using neo-colonial methods and state sanctioned

violence, which politicizes the young men of Group A. This narrative sounds like a David and Goliath-esque fairytale that is just waiting for a conclusion to be written. However this is not fairytale, this is a reality. This is the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

This narrative not only illustrates the struggle of the Palestinians but also mirrors other movements in history such as the Civil Rights movement in America in the 1960s that has now transformed into the movement for Black Lives. This narrative also echoes in modern day conflicts involving Syrian refugees, ISIS, and the Western world. Despite the similarities the Israeli-Palestinian conflict takes center stage over any other. Though the reasons underlying this are debatable, the facts on the ground and the influences of the media attention, are not.

This paper focuses on the way this conflict is fueled by conflicting identity narratives. More specifically I will examine the political identity of young Palestinian men and how this identity has developed and transformed from 1948 to today. While the collective Israeli identity is also obviously important to the core of this conflict, it will not be a central focus of this paper. Israeli identity will be primarily analyzed within the context that one identity- i.e. the Palestinian identity- cannot be developed without the clashing of an opposing identity (Khalidi, 1997).

The political identity of Palestinian men has developed in a unique fashion due to a three core variables: the history surrounding the conflict, which includes colonialism and imperialism; the fact that this conflict is being fought in and through the bodies of young Palestinian men; and there have been generational shifts in the development of Palestinian political identities. The Palestinian political identity manifests physically from the meaning and importance of this form has morphed from one generation to the next. However the main aspect of the physical

representations of this identity has remained the same: a beaten and battered body of a young Palestinian man who has sacrificed his body on behalf of Palestinian nationalism with its goal to achieve a free Palestine.

Since the events of 1948, which became known as *Al Nakba* (the catastrophe to the Palestinians), Palestinians generally and Palestinian men particularly have only known violence; more often than not, illegally imposed detention and torture carried out by of the Israeli state. Rooted in this violence is a constant tension that pervades any sort of interaction between the two communal groups. While this is largely seen and recognized by the international community as a grave injustice toward the Palestinian people, many global powers have done nothing to formally recognize Palestinian national identity or rights due to the fact it has “at different times [been] perceived [...] as a threat to their interests” (Khalidi, 22: 1997). Without the backing of international superpowers like the United States and the United Kingdom, Palestinians, especially men, have been forced to suffer, lacking much needed international, national, and local aid and support. These violent incidents and detentions are only small examples of what Palestinian men must deal with daily in interacting with Israel and its state actors. Beatings, shootings, arrests, and torture are among the primary actions perpetrated against Palestinian men, defining who they are. Many of what the state of Israel and its collective identity does to define the opposing identity of Palestinian men has been deemed illegal by outside international groups. Torture for example was declared illegal by the international community with the ratification of the *Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment* in December of 1984 and was later entered into force in 1987 (which happened to be during the

time frame of one of the largest civil disobedience demonstrations in the Israeli-Palestinian conflicts history, the *First Intifada*.) According to this convention, torture is defined as:

[...]any act by which severe pain or suffering, whether physical or mental, is intentionally inflicted on a person for such purposes as obtaining from him or a third person information or a confession, punishing him for an act he or a third person has committed or is suspected of having committed, or intimidating or coercing him or a third person, or for any reason based on discrimination of any kind, when such pain or suffering is inflicted by or at the instigation of or with the consent or acquiescence of a public official or other person acting in an official capacity. It does not include pain or suffering arising only from, inherent in or incidental to lawful sanctions (CAT,1984).

Disregarding infractions that occurred prior to the ratification of this convention, in the past thirty years alone Palestinian men in particular have faced cruel and inhumane treatment at the hands of Israel and its state actors. Throughout this time, Palestinians have attempted to establish a political, social, and economic identity for themselves while being constantly emasculated in front of their Arab neighbors. For example in the 1980s, boys as young as 14, such as Sulaiman Khatib, were separated from their parents, arrested, and sent to jail, some for over a decade. Families were constantly reminded of their sons' imprisonment by having their rooms sealed off by Israeli soldiers and being habitually monitored or "checked on" in case the family thought of retaliating against the Israeli state (Khatib & Chen, 2016). Torture was common in prison, as well as in detention spaces located at border crossings, checkpoints, or the airport. Yet it has not been as simple as physical torture alone. Many of those who were incarcerated have found it hard to find an adequate job after their imprisonment due to their criminal record. This detention and even post-incarceration of Palestinian males, especially those ranging from 10-30 years of

age, impacts the community at large, changing the way masculinity and the roles of these young men develop within the community.

Arab masculinity, or *rujulah*, is typically acquired and re-affirmed by males through brave deeds, acts involving risk-taking as well as in expressions of fearlessness and assertiveness. It is through this process that young Arab boys acquire *'aql* (reasoning), which is fully bestowed upon them by the community around the age of forty. They then must be willing to protect and defend their honor (*sharaf*), face (*wajh*), kin, and community (Peteeet, 1994). However, cultures under military occupation have little room to succeed in this capacity. Israeli state actors show Palestinian men that they cannot protect their children, and with this shame they even lose the respect of their children and their valued role in the community.

Due to this loss of value the structure of the community changes. The positions that older men hold in Arab communities are passed down to their sons, in this case to young boys commonly detained and tortured in their stead. These young men become those in the community who mediate disputes, dominate conversation, and run the household in place of their fathers, who are still very much alive but now serve no real social or political purpose. Within the concept of Arab masculinity every detail is important, down to small things such as the seating arrangement in a room demonstrates power and order. In Palestinian communities it is the older men who sit on the periphery indicating their difference to the young men who have taken leadership roles. These young leaders sit more in the center of the room to symbolize their importance to the community as a whole, the position that in most Arab states their fathers would hold.

This role reversal is possible through the fact that the Israeli soldiers skim over the men 35 and older. They detain and beat the younger men and boys as a way to humiliate them, control them, and to hopefully put a stopper in their resistance when in fact they are doing the complete opposite. While these beatings and detentions are supposed to break and humiliate the body and damage the mind, Palestinians view this as a right of passage and view the body that endures this torture as a symbol of making sacrifices for the struggle or cause (*qadiyyah*). Scholar Julie Peteet states in her work *Male Gender and Rituals of Resistance in the Palestinian "Intifada": A Cultural Politics of Violence*, “To Palestinians, the battered body, with its bruises and broken limbs, is the symbolic embodiment of a 20th century history of subordination and powerlessness- of ‘what we have to endure’ - but also of their determination to resist and to struggle for national independence” (Peteet, 1994:38). These beatings, which were predominantly inflicted in private from 1948 through 1987 at the beginning of the *First Intifada*, were designed as a tactic to weaken Palestinians, bring them shame, and enforce Israeli rule. However instead they came to mean honor and became the new symbol of manhood for young Palestinian men. This has not meant that Palestinians take violence upon their young men lightly. On the contrary, Palestinians embrace such punishment in order to make sense of this violence culturally which gives their young men purpose contrary to what the Israeli military is intends.

1.2 History

In order to understand Palestinian men's struggle to define their political identity and the lack of its international recognition one must take a journey through history. Though the Israeli-Palestinian conflict has been brewing since the 1880s, the peak historical importance

began in the midst of World War I with the Hussein-McMahon Correspondence of 1916. This was a series of correspondences between Sherif Hussein ibn Ali of the Hashemites, a generally popular Arab leader at the time and Sir Henry McMahon, the British High Commissioner of Egypt, in which the United Kingdom promised an independent Arab state if the Arab people assisted them in the fight against the Ottoman Empire. The promised kingdom included “the limits and boundaries proposed by the Sherif of Mecca” (Hussein-McMahon Correspondence, 1915). One basic problem was the letters ambiguity. This territory, some argue, did not include Palestine. With the Arabs’ agreement with the United Kingdom, the Arab revolt of 1916 against the Ottomans began. Arab nationalism competed with Ottomanism and Islam in order to establish an Arab kingdom free from the clutches of the imperial Ottomans. Finally by 1918, Arab Revolt forces seized Lebanon, Transjordan, Palestine as well as large parts of Syria and the Arabian peninsula, leaving the remainder of the Arab provinces under the Ottoman Empire who surrendered in 1919.

Yet the promise made to Sherif Hussein was never fulfilled. In 1917, the British and French released the Sykes-Picot agreement an agreement drafted around the same time as the Hussein-McMahon Correspondence. This agreement, instead of giving the promised land to Sherif Hussein and the Arabs, divided the Middle East into economically prosperous colonies for the British and French, with only a small portion of the land given to Sherif Hussein and the Hashemites. This was the beginning of colonialism and its influence in the Middle East with the Arab peninsula and the Greater Levant being divided and distributed by these great European powers. This document was never brought into question during the Arab Revolt due to the

Hogarth Message, sent by Sir Mark Sykes, assuring Sherif Hussein and his fighters that their promise will be honored (Tessler, 1994). However, the Picot-Sykes agreement was later backed up by the British Mandate for Palestine (Palestinian Mandate for short) passed through the League of Nations. The Arabs were further outraged and confused with the release of the Balfour Declaration in 1917. The Balfour Declaration has been viewed largely as the first nail in the proverbial coffin for the Arab people in Palestine. Written by the United Kingdom's Foreign Secretary, Arthur Balfour, to the second Baron Rothschild, Lionel Walter, the leader of the British Jewish community, this 100 word document states that there is a need to establish a "home" for the Jewish people in the land known as Palestine.

His Majesty's Government view with favour the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people, and will use their best endeavours to facilitate the achievement of this object, it being clearly understood that nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine or the rights and political status enjoyed by Jews in any other country (Balfour Declaration, 1917).

The Balfour Declaration was later worked into the 1922 version of the British Mandate of Palestine as an *ultra vires* act beyond their legal authority i.e., an addition to the League of Nations Covenant passed in 1919, which already acknowledged the Palestinian people as an independent nation-state and only deemed the mandate necessary to assist the Palestinians. The agreement was enacted by the League of Nations "stipulating that the British Mandate was a temporary 'custodian' that [would] lead the people who were 'not yet able to stand by themselves' to independence" (Farah, 2013:41; Mallison,1982:23; Tannous,1988:67¹). This heavy colonial influence, coupled with the Palestinian elite's inability to break out of the

¹ As cited by Randa Farah in "Palestinian Refugees, the Nation, and the Shifting Political Landscape".

traditional cultural hierarchies doomed the Palestinian people immediately after the collapse of the Ottoman government.

Before World War II, Jewish Zionists had plans to build a country for the Jewish people who had long suffered in Europe. Theodor Herzl, often cited as the father of political Zionism, had long said that the Jewish state would be part of Europe and it would be a mission civilisatrice to the “crude and barbaric” Asia (Farah, 2013). Words such as “colony” were used commonly in early Zionist literature and discussions. Like colonial powers elsewhere, Zionists were searching for an end to their economical dissatisfaction. Generally colonialism advances economic gain under the guise that the power is “civilizing” a barbaric region (Ceisare, 2000). Political theorist Hannah Arendt similarly explains this economic dissatisfaction when speaking about the concept of imperialism, which many say is a precursor to colonialism. In her own words:

Imperialism was born when the ruling class in capitalist production came up against national limitations to its economic expansion. The bourgeoisie turned into politics out of economic necessity; for if it did not to give up the capitalist system whose inherent law is constant economic growth, it had to impose this law upon its home governments and to proclaim expansion to be an ultimate political goal of foreign policy (Arendt, 1968: 126).

What Arendt means by this is that when western states include states or territories, such as those in the Middle East, in their foreign policies, it is because they consider it an economic necessity. Palestine was put under British rule without the involvement of the Palestinian elite, in fact, they barred from forming political bodies all together. This is largely seen as a form of ethnic cleansing.

In 1947 the British Mandate of Palestine expired and the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), passed *Resolution 181*, more commonly known as the *Partition Plan*. The *Partition Plan* stated that the land known as Palestine would be divided into two independent nation-states, with the city of Jerusalem granted autonomy, to be governed by an international body. Jewish people were to receive roughly 56% of the land and Palestinian Arabs the remaining 44%. Approved by the Jewish leadership in Palestine but rejected by the Palestinian Arabs (Tessler, 1994), who proposed a counter agreement, in which Palestine would be a democratic secular state while allowing the Jewish immigrants who came before the Balfour Declaration and their descendants to stay, which the Jews rejected (Encyclopedia Britannica, 2014). Thus, no agreement was reached.

On May 15, 1948, Israel was officially recognized as an independent nation state. Hours later war broke out and proactive ethnic cleansing of Palestinians began. At the time of *Al Nakba*, there were approximately 1.4 million Palestinians residing in Palestine's villages and cities, where families had lived for generations. Due to the fear of violence and forced removal by the budding Israeli military, 700,000 Palestinians fled in droves to neighboring states like Jordan (still Transjordan), Lebanon, Syria, and more (Farah, 2013). Those 150,000 who avoided expulsion within Israel's soon to be new borders obtained citizenship. Since that time they have over 50 laws that discriminate against them, leaving them in a basic state of second class citizenship, much like African Americans living under Jim Crow laws in the United States. The remaining 750,000 Palestinians became internally displaced persons (IDPs). Many now lived only a few miles from their original homes that now were inhabited by Israeli settlers (Farah,

2013:42). By the end of *Al Nakba*, approximately 78% of what was known to the Arabs as Palestine was under Israeli control, 22% more than what the Jews there would have had under *UN Resolution 181* (Farah, 2013).

Imperialistic wording in Zionist discourse was re-implemented immediately. However, unlike most colonial literature it removed the “natives” and the need to “civilize” them altogether, both physically and historically. One example of explicitly admitting to historical cleansing comes from a speech given by Moshe Dayan, an Israeli military leader and politician, which was expressed to Jewish Israeli students:

We came to this country which was already populated with Arabs, and we are establishing a Hebrew, that is a Jewish State here...Jewish villages were built in place of Arab villages. You do not even know the names of these Arab villages, and I do not blame you, because these geography books no longer exist...There is not one place built in this country that did not have a former Arab population (Farah,2013:42; Said:1980:14)².

Having just survived the Jewish genocide of World War II, many of the same people now began to implement harsh laws and military action against the existing Palestinian Arab population. Some of these actions mimicked the treatment Jews had faced during World War II. Some Jews now became the same abusers they feared in the Nazis. A colonial mirroring had begun in which Jewish Israelis became the oppressors, mirroring the horrors and savagery that they previously faced (Peteet, 1994).

By the end of the Arab-Israeli war of 1967 Israel had obtained control over the final 22% of Palestine, with hundreds of thousands more Palestinians pushed into the overly populated

² As cited by Randa Farah in her piece *Palestinian Refugees, the Nation, and the Shifting Political Landscape*.

West Bank and Gaza Strip, as well as surrounding Arab states. Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip were living under military occupation, while other Arab states such as Jordan and Lebanon, were able to become their own fully recognized nation-states; the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan under King Abdullah and Lebanon with their new president Bechara Al-Khoury. Up until 1983 young Palestinian men in the West Bank and Gaza strip were arrested and detained for things ranging from having illegal molotov cocktails to something as simple and innocent as being in the wrong place at the wrong time. Soon thereafter, the first large-scale demonstrations of civil disobedience in Israel-Palestine was launched: the *Intifada*.

The *Intifada*, or popular uprising, began in the Jabalia refugee camp, where an Israeli Defense Forces (or Occupation Forces depending on one's word choice) truck crashed into a Palestinian civilian vehicle, killing four Palestinian refugees. Rather than the expected short-term violence, a large civil movement was launched which utilized a two prong strategy that, according to some, was trickled down from leaders such as the Palestinian Liberation Organization's (PLO) chairman, Yasir Arafat, to the general population on the ground. This strategy involved resistance and civil disobedience tactics such as strikes and boycotts of Israeli institutions within the Occupied Territories (i.e the West Bank and the Gaza Strip). They also utilized economic methods of protests, such as not showing up to work in Israeli settlements or refusing to pay taxes (Tessler, 2009). Throwing stones and molotov cocktails was also common and later became the standard images the international media used to depict how the Palestinian people fought against tanks with stones. These protests were led predominantly by subgroups of the PLO, or their affiliates such as *Al-Fatah* or the Palestinian Communist Party. Figures such as

Arafat, and community leaders Hanan Ashrawi, Haidar Abdel-Shafi, and Faisal Husseini, were dedicated to a collective commitment to not engage in any form of lethal violence against Israeli state actors, including settlers.

Most Jewish Israelis saw these mass protests and the refusals to show up to work or pay taxes as nothing more than unruly riots. Subsequently, the Israeli military came down hard on the Palestinians. Non-violent protests were met with rubber bullets, water cannons, tear gas, and live ammunition, with the Israeli military firing into the crowds of protesters whom consisted mostly of women and children, resulting in mass casualties. The Israeli military killed hundreds of Palestinians, a high proportion of them youth and civilians due to Minister of Defense Yitzhak Rabin's "Might and Power" Policy, where Israeli soldiers began using mass incarcerations and collective punishments as deterrents (Peteet, 1994). The *Intifada* finally came to an end with the signing of the Oslo Accords in September, 1993 (Dayyat, 2016:5-8).

The Oslo Accords slowly became understood as a betrayal by the majority of Palestinians, and ultimately led to unrest between different political factions of within the Palestinian community (Farah, 2013). By 2000, the *Second Intifada* was launched, which led to more public beatings, detentions, and illegal acts, Palestinians had created a voice for themselves. And yet, their political identity was still commonly viewed internationally as extremely controversial.

1.3 Palestinian Identity Today- Backlashes of Colonial Influence

Political identity is defined as political arguments reflecting perspectives and interests of one or more groups with whom people identify. This includes ways in which people's political nature or participation is defined through loosely correlated social organizations (Hamoudi, 2010). Today, Palestinian political identity has been somewhat established *de jure*, however it is the way that it was established wherein the problem lies. For example, I am one of several million people who calls herself an American citizen, and though as an Arab-American it has been difficult to establish my own political identity growing up in the post 9/11 era, I was able to do it without fear of being attacked physically by the state. I did not have to worry about being barred and violated from creating an identity for myself. I am able to engage in civil disobedience and was not met with forces that were there to quiet me at all costs. This does not hold true for Palestinian men living in the Occupied Territories, refugee camps, or those who live in Israel, as *de facto* second class citizens. I did not have to establish my identity in a post-colonial political environment, whereas Palestinians have never had free reign over the land in which they reside.

The former territory of the Ottoman Empire went almost immediately to the British then to Israelis, all of whom used imperialist tactics during their rule of Palestine and Palestinians (Tessler, 2009). According to postcolonial theorists Aimee Cesaire and Frantz Fanon, colonialism in itself is an indication that there is greed, and colonization demonstrates that the colonizer is sick and uncivilized (Ceisare, 2000). Colonized people almost always retaliate with violence and "...[their] freedom in and through violence"(Fanon, 1961). Violence in terms of decolonization is almost always a reality, particularly when the colonizing power does not want

to give in to demands that the “colonized people” have regarding their freedom. The Palestinian people along, with other Arabs under the banner of the Great Arab Revolt, fought for a total removal of the Ottoman leaders from what they thought was going to be their own land. Their attempts to remove the imperial power was violent, bloody and messy. In many of his works such as *Wretched of the Earth*, Fanon states that the act of decolonization must indeed be a bloody affair due to the establishing an identity for men living under colonial rule. It is messy and violent because those who are ruled over have no choice, they see no other option. This is what the Palestinians have been doing for decades, through daily protests, violent clashes, and revolts carried out against the state of Israel.

As stated previously, early Zionist rhetoric was littered with imperial language in which they expressed the need to civilize the region socio-politically. While Palestinians were trying to break away from European neo-colonial rule in the aftermath of the World War I, early Zionist thinkers were already coming up with ways to dominate the land that became known as Israel. Palestinians, unlike their fellow Arab neighbors, were unable to come together and break down boundaries of clan separation and hierarchy to secure an independent state. Ultimately they were failed by the League of Nations, who did nothing to put a halt to the greed of the European superpowers that divided the region between themselves for economic prosperity. This had a significant negative impact on the Palestinians, who went from living in a British colony, to living in an Israeli one.

The Palestinian elite that ultimately failed to come together before 1948 are largely to blame for the current lack of stable identity for Palestinian men today (Khalidi, 1997). According

to Fanon, who himself identifies as an intellectual, the elites are not the ones who get anything done when it comes to liberating a group from colonial rule. It is in fact the common population that must be responsible for the liberation and establishment of a new identity, separate from their colonizers (Fanon,1961). We have seen this occur in the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict. The disconnect between the older leadership of those such as Yasser Arafat (before his death in 2004) signified a transition of power to the young people. Manhood was forever redefined and it was young men and their bodies that were used to fight this revolution against the neo-colonizers of Israel, not the leadership of the Palestinian Authority (PA) or PLO.

Now these young men are the ones responsible for establishing their political identity to counteract the Israeli identity. They are becoming the leaders of their communities and are dealt the majority of the fighting and violence due to the fact that Israeli soldiers target them for their highly politicized nature and in order to keep families obedient and quiet. In fact their arrests and subsequent beatings and detentions are documented by multitudes of groups that document human rights infractions within the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict. One such group is the Palestinian Centre for Human Rights, who put out weekly, monthly and yearly reports outlining the number of human rights infractions committed by the Israeli military every year. For example, in the week of July 14-20, 2016 alone, 59 civilians were arrested with the majority being young men under the age of 30, and most being students at local universities (PCHR, 2016). Statistics like these demonstrate that these young men are the ones bearing most of the violence as seen in the high levels of torture and arrests among this specific demographic of Palestinians, and as a result the community has no choice but to view them differently. In this thesis while I focus

predominantly on the political identity of young Palestinian men, and how it has been created in highly violent ways via torture and arrest, I also focus on how the method of establishing a political identity during a conflict is what has created spikes of ethnic tension and violence between Israelis and Palestinians.

1.4 Theoretical Framework

The Israeli-Palestinian Conflict has been the focal point of international headlines and agendas since the end of the World War II almost seventy years ago, making this conflict one of the longest ongoing conflicts in today's world, as well as the largest protracted refugee situation in the world (Gifford, 2016). That being said there are copious amounts of literature and research on this subject as well as thousands of reports (both official and via the media) reporting on the day-to-day violence that Palestinians face in the refugee camps, the Occupied Territories, and in Israel itself, where more than one million Palestinians have obtained citizenship.

Some of these works include *A History of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict* by Mark Tessler and *One Land Two States* by Mark LeVine and Mathias Mossberg. Wherein take historical narratives and showing how it is relevant to the political identity of Palestinian men and the construction of that identity. I also focus more on the current social impact that this historical narrative of the conflict has had on the population of Palestinian men today. I will be using reports from organizations such as the Palestinian Centre for Human Rights (PCHR) and Human Rights Watch (HRW) as well as officially documented narratives of arrests and abuses that have been already published in academic sources such as *Occupied Voices: Stories of*

Everyday Life From The Second Intifada, by Wendy Pearlman. Of course, I additionally integrate classic books on the conflict, such as *Palestinian Identity: The Construction of Modern National Consciousness* by Rashid Khalidi and works by Dr. Julie Peteet, one of the leading Middle Eastern studies experts with a particular emphasis on Palestine such as her article "*Male Gender and Rituals of Resistance in the Palestinian "Intifada"*".

I will also analyze international law and humanitarian law along with significant amounts of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) resolutions on the issue itself. Torture and military force being used on civilian populations is illegal by international standards and many state actors have been brought up in front of the United Nation Tribunals to be legally held accountable for their human rights infractions. Some states such as Iraq and others were eventually taken to war over the issue (i.e. the Iraqi Gulf War of 1990). Yet the state of Israel has not been held legally or morally responsible for any of their actions in this conflict. Western media portrays Palestinians as the ones who do not want peace and that they brought their misfortune upon themselves (Pearlman, 2003). I also utilize well known international documents such as the *Convention against Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment* (CAT) as well as all four *Geneva Conventions* and the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (UDHR). These documents along with the analysis of their impact as found in Ilias Bantekas and Lutz Oette's work *International Human Rights: Law and Practice*, is extremely important to understand the lack of political rights and therefore lack of identity that the Palestinian men have. They are not granted the same rights and liberties that an Israeli or myself would have. Instead Palestinian men must establish who they are and their political and

social impacts on society in a world void of the rule of law and liberties that would normally be granted to a human via these international conventions. This is extremely important to consider when fully analyzing the lack of a de facto political identity of these men.

Finally, and arguably, the most importantly I look at several different colonial and postcolonial texts that analyze nationalism and political identity. Theorists such as Fanon, Arendt, Said and their works, among others are extremely important in understanding both how political identity is formed in a postcolonial society and how the violence unfolds frequently due to the violent nature of colonization both within its rhetoric and practice. Also these theorists and their works will help better explain the importance of the violence on the body and how it is the Palestinian men who are the ones using their bodies for this revolution. They are the ones enduring the injustices of their oppressors while trying to fight back, creating this *de jure* identity throughout generations. This very idea that the colonizers are inflicting injustice on the actual bodies of those they colonize is not a new concept. The Israeli military inflicting violence against the Palestinians is explained in Hannah Arendt's *The Origins of Totalitarianism* by way of the "Banality of Evil" concept. She explains this by addressing the crimes perpetrated by Nazi soldiers and high ranking officers who were just following orders. It is in fact the Israeli soldiers who are responsible for perpetuating the evil and making it a social norm (Arendt, 1968). More of this will be discussed in the following Literature Review Chapter.

1.5 Methodological Approach

Since there is plenty of literature on the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict as well as the aforementioned theories, I utilize a literary analysis in approaching this thesis. Also due to the long standing history and the different narratives of this conflict it is important to dissect it from the lens of nationalism, identity, and colonial aftermath. There is also copious amounts of media being produced daily on the issue and I sift through these various depictions of the conflict in order to generate an academic analysis of the issue at hand. I try to create a link between the spike of ethnic tension and the torture done to the bodies of Palestinian men who are trying to establish their political identities in a lawless colonial-like occupation. Simultaneously I analyze generational shifts of what that identity means to Palestinian men. I paid particular attention to works that referenced Palestinian identity theorists such as Khalidi due to his authentic understanding of the Palestinian narrative rather than the largely accepted Western interpretation of the issue. While I did not intend to discredit Western interpretations of the Israeli/ Palestinian conflict, I paid particular attention to Palestinian narratives since these narratives are largely ignored in Western media and are just starting to be explored in today's academic realm.

I recognize the fact that this is indeed an overdone topic in which I hope to bring something new to the table. Therefore I want to put more thought into analyzing colonial and postcolonial theory. I explored the impact that both neo-colonial policies and the failure of the Palestinian elite has had on the young men of Palestine. These two factors have placed the burden on these men and ultimately failed them by not giving them the means to express their identity politically, economically, and socially. I also take the physical representation of Palestinian males' political identity, the beaten body of a young man, and analyzing its meaning

as well as the meaning of these generational shifts. This is why I focused on theorists such as Arendt, Fanon, and Ceisare due to the fact that they are not conventional Western theorists, but rather they expose the greed of Western societies and their cruel and archaic need to “civilize” others. These theories coupled with the history of the conflict will bring light to factors that may have been overlooked by the majority of scholars in this particular field of study.

Last but certainly not least, I also examining personal narratives, those previously documented and via interviews conducted myself. Personal narratives are key to understanding what Palestinian men believe that their identity is. They are the ones that ultimately ask the question “who are we?” Yes, the international community has a say in how Palestinian men answer this question, but how they answer it is what I am interested in for this paper. Their identity is so turbulent and so ingrained in violence that hearing their interpretation is key to truly understanding how things such as history and theory have truly influenced the progression of ethnic tension and prolonged this conflict. Identity and its importance should not be overlooked when talking about colonial occupation. It is for that very reason that men rebel and take arms against their colonizers: they want to give a loud and resounding answer to who they are.

Chapter 2- Literature Review

2.1 Literature Review Introduction

Identity is a complex concept that is difficult to dissect. Yet it is something that is imperative to understand in regards to Israel and Palestine. Many theories have been proposed as to how one's identity is established and its importance to the development of a political environment within a state. Other theories discuss the relationship between identity and the colonial history and ties that have influenced the development of the state and violence within a state. Finally numerous theories have been explored about identity and its formation in terms of colonial and postcolonial violence. While these theories explore the concept of identity in the context of numerous examples, this thesis focuses solely on the formation of Palestinian political, social, and national identities as the Israeli-Palestinian conflict has progressed from 1948 through today.

The dominant trend reflected in this literature review is that the formation of political identity is directly related to peaks in ethnic tensions in ongoing conflicts, namely the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. This literature review will also discuss the formation of political identity in the midst of instances of violence and torture causing the violence to be prolonged and peace talks to be constantly disrupted. Theorists including Cesaire and Fanon have stated that the violence is an inherent side effect of decolonization and revolution. Whereas Peteet and Farah have established certain patterns connecting the unique definition of Arab masculinity to the politicized nature of young Palestinian men. The general consensus among scholars is that state

sanctioned violence and torture on a specific body of individuals changes how their identity is formed, utilized, and viewed on the global political stage.

This literature review predominantly deals with the Israeli-Palestinian conflict generally and levels of violence and torture in this conflict specifically. Because much of the history of this conflict is tied to colonialism, neocolonialism, and subsequent responses, I also analyze colonial and postcolonial theory. This is immediately followed by an analysis of theories regarding identity and nationalism, and how they function in a consistently violent environment. Finally, I review discourses on state violence, and how it impacts the formation of identity in the Middle East, such as one's masculinity.

2.2 Colonial Theory and Decolonization Violence

According to the Oxford Dictionary, colonialism is “the policy or practice of acquiring partial or full control over another country, occupying it with settlers, and exploiting it economically” (Oxford Dictionary, 2016). After the fall of the Ottoman Empire in 1916, Arab countries scrambled to become independent and create their own identities. While some were more successful, like Saudi Arabia and Egypt, Palestine was not. In 1922, the British Mandate for Palestine was ratified by the League of Nations, giving Great Britain full control over Palestine (Tessler, 2009). This was an *ultra vires* act; it was beyond the legal power of the League of Nations to make Great Britain temporary custodians of Palestine. Nonetheless, they maintained that they had to lead people who were not yet able to lead themselves (Mallison, 1982; Tannous, 1988; Farah, 2013).

This was the guise that European powers also used to justify colonialism in places such as Africa, the Americas, and elsewhere in the Middle East. They were trying to “civilize” indigenous populations because, so they argued, they are unable to govern themselves. This not only demonstrates the insatiable greed of “the white man,” according to those like Fanon and other colonial theorists, but also demonstrates a need to show that they are better than other white, colonial empires.

This is echoed in the words of former United Kingdom Prime Minister Winston Churchill, in a statement he made about India during British colonial rule: “We have not entered this war for profit or expansion. Let me, however, make this clear: we mean to hold our own. I have not become the King's First Minister in order to preside over the liquidation of the British Empire” (The Guardian, 1942). While Churchill may have stated that they are not in this for greed, that is exactly what a colony does. The fact that he did not wish to liquidate any British assets demonstrated this. Colonialism, is a strategy many Western states of large economic influence use in order to quench their greed and obtain more power under the guise of spreading their civilized way of life to those who they think need it.

According to Fanon, this type of colonialism works by shattering the psychological mechanism of an indigenous people. European colonial powers believed that their colonization of lands and imposing their economic, political and religious wills on the indigenous people was a way of saving them and in a way justifies what they do to the indigenous population. They are approached as if they are parasitic, brutish savages that must be colonized and made into decent beings because their pre-colonial way of life was immoral (Fanon, 1967). Native peoples are colonized due to the fact that they have a natural need to be dependent; they unconsciously desire

domination (Fanon, 1967; Mannoni, 1956). Others, like Vladimir Lenin, contend that issues such as imperialism and colonialism are implemented by the bourgeoisie in order to further propel their control over those lower socio-economically, thereby allowing the elites to hoard wealth for themselves (Lenin, 1969). Essentially, Lenin says, it all comes down to capital as the root of imperialism and colonialism. The bourgeoisie take whatever road leads to the most capital in the quickest and easiest way. If there happens to be a group of people in the way, then they mold these people to suit the needs of the colonizer.

Europeans knew how to capitalize on the natural resources and land that belonged to the natives. In this light, Cesaire and Fanon claim that colonialism is as an act of war that native populations were unable to fight due to the power structures put in place by colonizers. From a colonizer's perspective native people should be grateful for their interference because it comes with protection and benefits. All they have to do is “act white” and “fit in” with European norms. But this actually causes these populations to be white-washed and their culture and traditions to disappear (Fanon, 1967). Fanon maintains that European civilizations are responsible for the racially and economically driven colonialism that benefitted no one but Europeans, always at the indigenous community's expense.

The impact of colonialism is seen quite clearly in Palestine. Without the concept of colonialism, one could argue that there would not have even been a conflict. When the Ottoman Empire fell after World War I, those who participated in the Great Arab Revolt of 1916 were eager to begin living under a unified Arab kingdom. However due to the Sykes-Picot agreement, made public in 1917, that dream was destroyed before it had a chance to manifest physically. As stated previously the Sykes-Picot agreement was drafted by the British and French to divide the

Middle East into colonial provinces that would be ruled by these two western powers. It stated that the lands were to be divided into spheres of British and French control, in order for the two powers to obtain the spoils from the once great empire. A colonial power was coming to rule over the Palestinian people and would not grant them the sovereignty that the people fought for during the World War I. In the mandate it was stated that the Palestinians would be able to create representative bodies that advocated for their needs politically but that was not implemented either. It was a total and utter eclipse of the Palestinian people's political and social rights and the beginning of turning them into the "other" rather than a collective people (Rotberg, 2006).

Works such as *Orientalism* by Edward Said analyze the ramification of the West "othering" the Middle East and Asia, or the Orient, as it was once known. Palestine is "one of the most obvious and tragic examples of othering in contemporary times" (Ashcroft, 2010:291). As a Palestinian male, Said was able to show that this idea of Orientalizing shaped his own identity as well as the identities of other Palestinian men. In his work Said demonstrates the power of worldliness, or the power of the representer, on the identity of not just Palestinians, but people within the Middle East at large. According to Bill Ashcroft (while referencing Said), "The real issue is whether there can be a true representation of anything, or whether any and all representations, because they *are* representations[...]"(Said, 1978:272, Ashcroft, 2010-291-92)³. That said, while the international community may have already assigned an identity to a group of people or a state, one is still able to self-represent or self-identify. Ultimately it is up to a group to determine what its own identity is, though this is always at risk of being denied.

³ As cited by Bill Ashcroft in *Representation and Liberation: From Orientalism to the Palestinian Crisis*.

The Palestinian people are arguably the prime example of a group denied the right to self identify due to colonialism. In his article *Representation and Liberation: From Orientalism to the Palestinian Crisis*, Ashcroft makes this argument, also asking the question who or what denied them this right to self identify. Ashcroft even goes so far as to ask how much of that denial of self identification can be blamed on Palestinian men. As mentioned previously, the Palestinian upper class were not able to overcome their social and political differences. This from a colonial powers perspective demonstrated that they were unable to represent themselves like other states in the Middle East. This paired with the colonial rule of Western European nations like Great Britain and France created an identity vacuum in which the Palestinian people virtually had to scramble to come up with identity to fill in the hole left by the fall of the Ottoman Empire. The perpetuation of neo-colonialism and military occupation by Israel, its state actors, and its allies is solely based denying the Palestinians their existence (Ashcroft, 2010). Ashcroft goes on to cite Said, by saying it is not only a matter of prejudice or Zionist propaganda, but is rooted in the discourse of Orientalism that according to Said “ [has] entrenched *cultural* attitudes toward Palestinians deriving from age-old Western prejudices about Islam, the Arabs and the Orient” (Said, 1980; xiv)

2.3 State Sanctioned Violence and Human Rights

State-sanctioned violence is an academic phrase that often means something much uglier: torture. Whichever word is used it is a terrible mark on human history that it is used as a tool of contemporary warfare. Under the United Nations many different conventions and declarations have been ratified and passed into law about torture and what constitutes as such,

particularly following the horrors that were uncovered after the end of the World War II. In fact, human rights became a large concern for the international community after the war and with that concern International Human Rights Law (IHR) and International Humanitarian Law (IHL) became key in how states were to be governed and how they would interact with each other.

The founding document that paved way for copious amounts of conventions to be drafted and ratified was the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (UDHR). The UDHR was culminated in 1948, and adopted by the United Nations that December, just seven months after *Al Nakba* (Bantekas & Oette, 2013). It was a document largely based off Western principles of what they believed every person in the world has a right to simply by existing. This was well and good for those in the world who had a state to call their own, as those states were in theory supposed to protect those rights. Palestinians resided in or near the very state that sought to destroy their history from the memory of the land; land that they were given by the United Nations as well as land that was not legally granted to them that they seized in *Al Nakba* (Tessler, 2009). In fact the very first article mentions that all should act towards each other in a spirit of brotherhood. (UDHR, 1948).

This statement of brotherhood clearly did not ring true in this conflict. Instead, it is the polar opposite according to the PCHR, Israeli soldiers arrest and detain scores of Palestinian men predominantly between the ages of 10-30, and beatings and torture are extremely commonplace in the detention centers (Khatib & Chen, 2016). Under article five, section one, of the UDHR “No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment” (UDHR, 1948). Contrary to this document, torture in the prisons are habitual and used as a tactic to destroy the body and mind of the young men that they detain so they are no longer capable of

engaging in political protests and movements against the Zionist regime of Israel. Israeli soldiers and state actors are perpetuating the pain of their fathers and ancestors onto the Palestinian men and boys that they detain because they want to cut away the movements against them straight from the source, and to them that is the body and mind of young Palestinian men.

The UDHR is extremely broad and does not outline any strict guidelines that countries must adhere to. It is not even declared law but instead was presented more like general statements that everyone should follow. The main downside is that the declaration does not lay out consequences to those who break the guidelines. Later on, several other conventions came into being that created a more firm foundation for IHR and IHL going forward. Conventions like the four *Geneva Conventions*, the *Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide* (CPPCG) as well as the *Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees* (The 1951 Convention). One convention in particular is extremely important especially when paired with any of the four *Geneva Conventions*. *The Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment* or CAT was adopted and signed on December 10th, 1984 and later made into law in June of 1987. CAT bluntly defines and outlines what constitutes torture and what states are supposed to do when coming face to face with it. It also outlines what obligations the states have to protect their citizens against torture. CAT being entered into force signaled that those who break this treaty will be punished by the international community for crimes against humanity which up until 1948 did not seem like something the world had the power to do.

Torture is defined under CAT as:

Any act by which severe pain or suffering, whether physical or mental, is intentionally inflicted on a person for such purposes as obtaining from him or a third person information or a confession,

punishing him for an act he or a third person has committed or is suspected of having committed, or intimidating or coercing him or a third person, or for any reason based on discrimination of any kind, when such pain or suffering is inflicted by or at the instigation of or with the consent or acquiescence of a public official or other person acting in an official capacity. It does not include pain or suffering arising only from, inherent in or incidental to lawful sanctions (CAT, 1984).

This mandate means that state actors whom bestow any cruel or unusual punishment onto either their citizens or any foreigners will be tried and held accountable for their actions by the United Nations. Non-state actors are not included under this convention, however due to the fact that this was signed into law states have an obligation to make torture and other forms of inhuman treatment illegal in their own state constitutions.

The year that this convention passed was just three years after the beginning of the *First Intifada*, in Israel-Palestine where regular mass incarcerations and beatings of young protestors began. In full view of media cameras, Palestinian men and youth were seen being beaten and shot at in the streets and the infamous image of Palestinians facing tanks with rocks was shown to the international community for the first time. Yitzhak Rabin, the Minister of Defense at the time, enacted a Might is Right Policy in which he called for “might, power and beatings” against Palestinians’ bodies. Bone-breaking and violence were open and public rather than the private beatings and torture used predominantly before this policy (Peteet, 1994). Prior to the *Intifada*, the Israeli military detention centers commonly used torture as a method to quell any sort of political uprising that was beginning in the Palestinian communities and it is still used to this day. Most Israeli state actors (i.e the military) know nothing but violent and discouraging rhetoric about the Palestinian people and their young men. Due to this they do not expect anything but violent interactions with them, mostly because their superiors and government

perpetuate this narrative through the orders they issue to subordinates. Some call this concept is the “Banality of Evil”.

Coined by Hannah Arendt, the “Banality of Evil” is when one is unaware that they are committing acts of evil, as they are merely engaging in a behavior normal to the society in which they live. They are essentially perpetuating a classical narrative of following the orders of their superiors. They are obeying the orders of their superiors that follow that narrative, which is something that Arendt actually criminalizes more than actually issuing out the orders. She contends that on the whole, the masses are responsible for perpetuating violence and evil (Arendt, 1951). Rabin’s policies and orders during the *First Intifada*, gave way to a more violent way for the Israeli military and other state actors to deal with Palestinian men. And since the 1980s, reports of torture and state sanctioned violence have only increased.

Torture is not only a physical punishment, however. The mental side effects of being arrested and beaten at random is very real and a family’s worst nightmare is having their young son, father, or cousin ripped away from them in the middle of the night and not be seen for weeks, if ever (Tessler, 2009). According to CAT and other international conventions, the state of Israel and its actors should be tried by the international community at the International Criminal Court (ICC) and held accountable for its actions. While Israel has clearly violated these sanctions, it continues to get away with dozens of international human rights daily infractions, more specifically inflicted on the young Palestinian men. This has become almost a ritualized right of passage for Palestinian men whose beaten and broken bodies have become the prideful symbol of the movement in larger communities.

This torture and beating down of the Palestinian community through these young men has caused unimaginable repercussions both politically and economically. Young Palestinian men are unable to work after their detention and if they do it is predominantly in the unofficial market. This causes an extreme example of economic disparity between the struggling Palestinian community and the prosperity of the Israeli economy and therefore, driving a lot of Palestinian men to become desperate and impulsive. By utilizing illegal force on these young men, the Israeli state has created this economic dependency and regression of a whole community (LeVine & Mossberg, 2014). In *Palestine Speaks: Narratives of Life Under Occupation*, by Cate Malek and Mateo Hoke, the authors demonstrate the difficulty of living a normal life in Palestine is demonstrated by the stories that were collected by Malek and Hoke. Palestinian men's lives are constantly complicated unnecessarily by Israeli military checkpoints, patrols, and other security measures. They also explains the difficulty facing the Palestinians in terms of generating income and living economically viable lives. According to Malek and Hoke, "It's difficult for most Palestinians to find jobs, and of those that are available, most are low paying, menial or dangerous (Malek & Hoke, 2014: 13). They continue to illustrate the food, water, and electric restrictions as well as the endless checkpoints and restriction of movement that Palestinians face causing the life of Palestinians to be viewed as "one of forced indignity" (Malek & Hoke 2014: 13).

Among other reasons, this is extremely difficult for young men because they are expected to provide for their families. Due to the the constant arrests and detentions, many are not able to get any sort of sustainable job to help them sustain their families. They become desperate and often take on menial or dangerous work not part of the official economy or even illegal. This

puts these young men further at risk, as they are faced with exploitation and further incarceration. It is also a huge risk for the families. If these young men are arrested or if they die while completing work that may be dangerous, not only will those families lose their young son, brother, or cousin--but they can also lose their sole source of income, moving that family further and further below the poverty line than they already were.

Mental health has been a large issue within Palestinian males and the greater Palestinian community. Torture on the individual body not only permanently scars a young man but creates a devastating ripple effect can make its way through the community at large. For example, Human Rights Watch (HRW) reported in their 2015 World Report that as of October of 2015 over 120 Palestinians were killed and over 11,000 were injured by Israeli state actors versus the 17 civilian and 3 soldier deaths on the Israeli side (HRW, 2016). Israel also detained over 300 Palestinians including young children without charge (HRW, 2016). These detentions usually lead to the beatings and other forms of torture.

In short torture, both physical and mental, leave irreparable damage on the mind of these young men. Many develop Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and some never fully recover enough to be able to function properly in the community. Soldiers began using more extreme methods that were sexually abusive in nature attempting to scar the young men further. The sexual abuse is especially traumatic because Arab culture finds it shameful for a man to be forced into sexual acts against his will because it contradicts the fact that Arab men are strong, masculine, and are able to take care of themselves. This is particularly significant in a culture that reinforces that a man's masculinity can be taken away from them (Peteet, 2013).

Mental health issues and the like are extremely common place in Palestinian communities at large and stories that have been documented by multitudes of scholars. In *Occupied Voices: Stories of Everyday Life From the Second Intifada*, Wendy Pearlman, documents a cluster of stories of those who lived during this second uprising. In one story, for example, a fourteen year old Palestinian named Issam experiences something horrific. A resident of Gaza in the city of Rafah, one day Issam was at his home, near the community market, when a group of Israeli soldiers began conducting on the ground patrols. A group of young Palestinian men decided to throw stones to protect the village; soldiers responded by opening fire. Issam stepped out of his house when hearing the gunshot and was hit.

“I was hit with bullets in my right leg, bullets in my left leg, one bullet in my head, and two bullets in my back. I was knocked unconscious and didn’t wake up again until I was in the hospital in Khan Younis. Later I found out that I was lying in the street for over twenty minutes before the Israelis left and someone was able to come and rescue me” (Pearlman, 2003: 114).

After doctors amputated his leg, he was offered a chance to receive medical treatment in San Francisco. While he was grateful for the assistance and kindness he received from the American people, he stated his anger and almost disappointment with the American government for not being the ones who helped him. But rather Issam believes that they perpetuate the torture and violence that he and others endure in Israel and the Occupied Territories by selling Israel the very weapons that they use against them and not voicing outrage on behalf of Palestinians..

After returning to Gaza, Issam is ashamed of going the beach due to his new leg deformities. In order to see doctors for check ups, Issam has to file a lawsuit every time he wishes to see the doctor in Jerusalem to acquire a security pass. He cannot participate in social movements like other men his age are doing, for fear of being targeted by Israeli soldiers due to

his inability to flee. To him the Israelis “robbed me of everything beautiful in this world” (Pearlman, 2003:117). He lives in a constant state of fear and anxiety due to his injuries, and is not an isolated case. Most who reside in Gaza and the West Bank knows someone who was shot or killed by the Israeli military. This is a very real fear that all Palestinian men face in the context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Torture is practiced worldwide and demonstrates a total absence of the rule of law. According to scholars like Jeremy Waldron, who in his article *Torture and Positive Law* examines this breakdown, states that allowing torture methods to go on within a legal system is not only disturbing and shameful--but also a threat to established legal systems and the sanctity of international law and cooperation (Waldron, 2005). The total disregard of the rule of law creates a hotbed of desperation that people would do anything to get out of. Some Palestinian men, often due to the sheer desperation and terror that they face everyday, turn to radicalized Islamic terror groups. These terrorist organizations offer services to these young men and their families in exchange for their commitment to the group, usually ending in further arrest or death. Torture and its repeated use on Palestinian men and boys continues a vicious cycle. State sanctioned violence leaves little room for the development of education, economic structures, and erases chances for peace talks. Much of this stagnation is due to heavy amounts of mistrust the Palestinian men have against the Israeli officials. These officials deem their torture a legal form of insuring the national security of Israel at the expense of the Palestinian community and at the expense of the young men whose bodies and minds become broken as a result.

2.4 Nationalism and Identity

Nationalism is an unusual concept that can pervade one's identity, and even do strange things to it. Nationalism is debated largely within the context of its positive or negative impact on international political climates as well as its influence on identity. In terms of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict, nationalism played two very different roles: it is able to project the conflict on to the global stage, and at the same time, shrink it into nothing. In regards to the Palestinian struggle nationalism could have been the final nail in the coffin in the 1960s. In fact, one type of nationalism that made an appearance in the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict gave the opposing argument more ammunition than helping the Palestinians develop their identity and that is Pan-Arabism.

Pan-Arabism is a type of nationalism said to have been coined by Gamal Abdel Nasser, President of Egypt from 1956 to 1970, that was intended to unify the Arab people as one nation rather than separating them according to the Arab countries that emerged following World War II. It was also a way to create a unified front against the Jewish settlers and state actors unlike which had never been seen before. The Arab people were finally able to create a unified front against the Israeli state in order to defend the identity and existence of the Palestinian people after decades of struggling. This type of nationalism according to those like Khalidi, lost ground after *Yom An-Naksa* or *Al Naksa* after the terrible loss the Arab army experienced as the hands of the Israeli military, but was actually more popular in the West (Khalidi, 1997).

Nationalism, according to Merriam-Webster, as two different things and both definitions play into how nationalism influences this conflict. The first definition is “ a feeling that people have of being loyal to and proud of their country often with the belief that it is better and more important than other countries” (Merriam-Webster, 2016). Nationalism comes out frequently in

times of tragedy and victory. This became important internationally after the end of World War I and II with the collapse of the last empire and the creation of the modern nation-state.

Nationalism became an outlet for self-determination for the citizens of different states, as a way to demonstrate pride for the area in which they reside. Nationalism would be later utilized by state actors during events including but not limited to elections, war, and other crises to rally citizens together for a common cause.

With Palestinians, this definition of nationalism means something slightly different. After *Al Nakba* in 1948, many if not all Palestinians began feeling a renewed sense of pride in a land that they saw as their own. Many Palestinians today see their occupied land as the heart of the Middle East, stating that any and all issues that come out of this region are centered on this one prolonged issue.⁴ Palestinians worldwide take deep prideful in their origins. Many even hold on to relics that represent them as a people; such as the keys to the houses they were forced to leave, pictures, and to the lucky few, birth certificates that show that they were indeed born in what was known as Palestine.

Merriam-Webster's second definition for nationalism is "a desire by a large group of people (such as people who share the same culture, history, language, etc.) to form a separate and independent nation of their own" (Merriam-Webster, 2016). This definition embodies the core desire of the Palestinian people, whether those living abroad, in refugee camps, in Israel or the Occupied Territories. Palestinians want their own independent nation-state that they can self govern and live with people who share that same connection to the land and the history.

According to scholars like Erika Harris, "Nationalism has a vision of the society whose interests

⁴ This statement in reference to interviews I conducted that will be addressed in the next chapter.

it purports to represent but this vision, unlike other ideologies, is dominated by ‘who’ the participants are rather than by ‘how’ the society should be governed” (Harris, 2009:24).

Nationalism has become a double edged sword for the Palestinian people. It rallies them together in times of hardship, while they are in the street protesting for example. Young Palestinian men utilize nationalist rhetoric when leading the community, using their bodies to defend their *de jure* nation againsts the *de facto* state of Israel. According to Khalidi, the weapon of nationalism has been detrimental and gave more power to the Pro-Israeli allies. The author states that due to the fact that Palestinians were experiencing this nationalism as Arabs in general, there truly were no Palestinians from the beginning. Khalidi states that allies of Israel say that this fight for the land of “Palestine” was an anti-semitic campaign against the Jewish state led by neighboring Arab states. This is not entirely true. While many Palestinian men got caught up in the narratives of Nasser and were rallying around Pan-Arabism, to others Pan-Arabism added a more complex layer to their identity and gave more strength to political groups such as the PLO and Al Fatah.

In an extremely debatable field, some argue that Nationalism is much more of a modern concept than many think. According to Ernest Renan’s *What is a Nation?*, “since the end of the Roman Empire, or rather since the dismemberment of the empire of Charlemagne [in the 12th century], Western Europe appears to us as divided into nations, some of which have, at certain periods, tried to establish a hegemony over others, without ever achieving permanent success” (Renan, 1995). According to this argument, under powerful empires such as the Romans and the Ottomans, one's national identity was not important. You could be Arab, Greek, Jew, or Persian but if you lived within the confines of one of these grand empires that was not the first thing you

were. You first and foremost were Roman, or Ottoman, or any one of the many empires that has been buried by the sands of time. Your nationhood did not matter because it didn't exist. It is superseded by one's citizenship. Renan goes further in explaining that nations are a modern phenomenon and were the offspring of great dynasties of the past.

The confusion surrounding this argument however relates to how a nation is properly derived and made into its own sovereign governing entity. Theorists such as Renan have laid out five things in which a nation, and therefore nationalism, are based on. They include: race, language, religion, geopolitical interests, and geography. However all of these could be very easily disregarded. Language and race, for example, are something constructed by humans, which flatten one's identity. But many states have multitudes of races living within their borders with just as many languages being spoken. While some claim all Arabs are the same race and that there are no subgroups, in actuality there are so many dialects within the Arab language that it is extremely difficult for conversions to carry over with ease.

Renan continues to layout nationalisms fundamental principles with explaining the concept of religion within nationalist thought. Religion is something that supersedes nationhood, with the empires of the ancient world being made up of a plethora of religious groups, it was never used as a way for one to distinguish themselves from their home (at least not until recently according to some scholars). Geopolitical interests are more of a regional focus rather than a national one which finally leads to geography. Geography, specifically the concept of borders for modern states, is something artificially constructed in order for a state to succeed and reaffirm state sovereignty by giving state actors physical boundaries to oversee and protect, this co-existing ownership of land and space. Empires used to expand and conquer land without

always setting borders for centuries. This stopped with the fall of the most recent empire, the Ottomans.

Particularly after the end of World War I, the Middle East was broken up and distributed amongst the European colonial powers. This is truly the origin of the modern problem facing Palestinians today. Many of the states in the Middle East have at least one straight line as a border (where British and French politicians drew their property lines), showing the heavy influence that economic greed had on the division of land. Over time this created countries that people began to feel pride for and they demonstrated that pride through nationalistic movements which included specific group songs, dances, dialects, and other things that further divided Arabs from one another. This was not something that was common during the era of the Ottoman empire. Arabs were divided by their specific geopolitical governantes, but under Ottoman rule, clan and tribal groups were the dominate civil ruling body of the region. A major example of this is the Hashemites, who later became rulers of countries such as Jordan, Iraq, and Saudi Arabia. The idea of state nationalism emerged in the Middle East after these countries were already divided. This forged strained relationships that did not necessarily exist in the Ottoman controlled Middle East. In fact, Nasser tried to rectify the new nationalism of budding Arab states with Pan-Arabism by reminding Arabs of the pre-existent idea of a unified Arab kingdom promised to Sherif Hussein in the Hussein-McMahon Correspondence of 1916. While the phenomenon of a unified Arab people did emerge in the Middle East, the idea of Pan-Arabism never lasted. Arguably, the West were the ones who clung to this idea long after the push for Arab nationalism had already died down.

Palestinian nationalism has been a unique form of Arab nationalism insofar as that most Palestinians do not live inside the current borders of the state of Israel. Some would say that most Palestinians do not even live inside the land mass bordered by the Jordanian River to the east and the Mediterranean Sea to the west. Predominantly Palestinian nationalism largely grew out of communities living in refugee camps where they were influenced by Nasser's call for Arab unity. From 1948 onward Palestinians who live inside the state of Israel, from 1967 onward from those within the Occupied Territories have faced heavy forms of punishment for displays of nationalism. The young men who are arrested for making displays of Palestinian patriotism are often beaten on site, thereafter taken to prisons where they are tortured and beaten further in order for the Israeli military to obtain information about their political enemies. While other states use flags and pictures of their rulers as demonstrations of their national pride, Palestinians most often use the pictures of dead young men, pictures of their leaders (usually those of Al-Fatah or others), and different forms of their flag to show that they are just as nationalistic as those who have a state of their own. The fact that they use the pictures of dead young men illustrates how men are still able to assert their political identity after they are dead. They become the martyrs and symbols of the *qadiyyah* and are therefore able to affirm their political influence, identity, and nationalism while becoming a source of identity and symbolism for the rest of their people.

2.5 Arab Masculinity and Palestinian Identity

“Masculinity” has different meanings. One overall idea is predominantly that: men are protectors and providers. As stated previously, Arab masculinity involves specific cultural

elements that must be adhered to in order for a boy to transform into a man. If these steps are not followed, or the boy shames himself in some way, he will never be able to become fully masculine and be viewed as a man in the community. A boy must obtain '*aql* and *sharaf*' by protecting their *wajh*, family, culture and community as they grow up and learn important lessons of respect and honor from daily life events such as schooling, marriage, and having children. In neighboring Arab states, establishing masculinity is easy and the community is able to establish who their leaders are (Peteet, 2013). These leaders are typically older men, who have acquired '*aql* and *sharaf*' and have defended it well throughout their adult life. They are viewed as men of great wisdom and political importance and their identity is known to them, their family, and the rest of the community.

This is not the case in Palestinian communities across the globe. Whether it be Palestinians who live in Occupied Territories, refugee camps, abroad or in Israel itself, masculinity manifests differently in their reality. Living under military occupation (or under a colonial power) creates a structure in which men are lost and must find themselves (Fanon, 1967). The power structure within the community of Palestinians is turned on its head because the colonizing military power--Israel--targets not the traditional community leaders, but rather younger men. Young men are seen as a greater threat to Jewish Israelis due to their physical vibrancy, as well as the importance that they hold for their family's honor and prosperity (Peteet, 2013). The older men's responsibility of protecting their family and honor is stripped away from them by their oppressors when these young men are harmed. Therefore, according to the common definition of Arab masculinity, these men are robbed of this crucial portion of their identity. Older men are no longer men in the eyes of the Arab community. The role of

masculinity is thrust upon their sons, nephews, and grandchildren because they are the ones who became the targets. The young men protect their relatives from harm by being the ones putting themselves into harm's way.

The young men take on the social and political importance that the older men previously acquired. Instead of acquiring it long term, through life events and proving oneself, Palestinian boys acquire it through physical confrontation. The young men know that their fathers and elder males cannot protect them from violence, as had been their role before. The young men believe that since they are unable to go to school or help their elders, they should instead become active in challenging the Israeli occupation, paying the price with their bodies.

Contrary to Fanon, those such as Renan believe that they do not need to be the ones to engage in physical violence in order to affirm themselves and their identity. They are still able to engage in the formation of their own identity, due to meeting violence head on. Doing this they are able to start a resistance against those who have ruled over them. This creates a new right of passage that occurs outside of one's kinfolk, rendering the community and its older male leaders useless. The trauma to the masculine identity of Palestinian men is passed down generationally, from father to child. Men, who normally when they age become community leaders, see their leadership roles going to their sons and grandsons. They see their worth in the community disappear, they can no longer protect their children like their fathers could not protect them and they are forced to watch helplessly as their son's face the Israeli military, praying that their sons come back in one piece.

2.6 Synopsis

One's identity is built upon several different factors. This is necessary in ensuring that a person's identity not to be flattened by global perceptions. Palestinian identity was established after the forced migration of hundreds of thousands of Palestinian people during *Al-Nakba*, and this identity has transformed into that of a warrior and a leader throughout generations of Palestinian men. The identity of these men is complex yet distorted, and much different than their Arab counterparts due to the vast influences of colonialism in Israel-Palestine. Social injustices and the total disregard of human rights within the state by Israeli state actors such as the military and its politicians are only a few of the things that distort the identity of Palestinian men in this active occupation. Nationalism and Arab masculinity have added more complex layers to the concept of Palestinian male identity. Through the development of young Palestinian leadership and their identities, these young men also figure out how to face their oppressors, Israel, and its state actors.

Chapter 3-Methodology

Chapter 3.1 Outline of Research

In an effort to be more thorough, my research combined several different methods in order to capture the identity of Palestinian men and their narrative in an integrated manner. I used a legal analysis of international documents, which were useful in analyzing the legal issues surrounding the conflict. I also utilized qualitative data retrieval methods by conducting in depth interviews with members of the Palestinian community living in the Greater San Francisco Bay Area. My subjects were Palestinian men of predominantly Christian or Catholic faith that I reached through different community groups such as churches, the Ramallah Club, the Arab Cultural and Community Center directory, as well as through word of mouth.

Compiling research was slightly more difficult than originally thought, particularly due to the controversial nature of this topic. While there are many credible and academically sound sources to reference in regards to the conflict itself, I had to sort through a large number of openly biased work to create an argument that is less skewed. While most academic work does demonstrate the author's opinion to an extent that can be filtered out; however it was still extremely difficult to remain neutral as I wrote. Listening to the narratives of my research subjects while uncovering the history and narratives of both sides of the conflict presented a significant challenge for me to remain unbiased. I had to free myself and my mind from the passion these voices generated within me in order to write something that would honor the sacrifice made by both sides for. This was the only way I could adequately represent the young

men whose lives were cut short without the opportunity to define their own sense of political identity.

3.2 Interview Overview and Setup

I interviewed Palestinian men who lived in Israel-Palestine during key generational shifts. These men were either forced to leave or fled when they came of age or were graduating from their final year of high school. The use of “of age” in this context refers to being eighteen or turning eighteen. They were informed that their actual names would not be used within my research in accordance with IRB protocol at the University of San Francisco. The interviews were all transcribed by hand with no voice recordings and reviewed by the interviewee before being saved on an encrypted external drive that is protected by several passwords. The interviews were conducted equally in Arabic and English due to the fact that many of my subjects switched back and forth between languages when answering my questions. I translated their Arabic to English.

The interviews were done with the intention to identify the changing identity through the generations involved in the conflict. Each generation was broken down and analyzed through key events that broadly defined what it meant to be a Palestinian male at the time. I divided my interviewees into the following four generations: The 1948 or *Al Nakba* generation from 1948-1960, the *Al Naksa* generation from 1961-1981, the *First Intifada* generation from 1982-1999, and the *Second Intifada* generation from 2000 to 2016. I acknowledge that the generational break up is arguably problematic. For example, the *Al Nakba* generation consists of a twelve year time frame while the following generation is twenty years time. I did this

purposely to encompass a group of men together in one group that would have a similar narrative and therefore a similar identity. These events are important in the development of Palestinian identity and changed the perception of Palestinian political identity for young Palestinian men.

3.3 Logistical Issues

In the early stages of my thesis issues arose with my IRB application. After submitting my initial IRB application in early June it was denied with the reviewer stating my research project was outside my capability, suggesting ultimately that I should change the object of my thesis. After receiving an email from the head of the IRB at the University of San Francisco stating that the reviewer's response was inappropriate, a second application was submitted. By the time I received approval to commence with interviews it was well into the end of September and my time was limited. I was able to arrange interviews quickly due to preexisting connections with the Arab community in the Greater San Francisco Bay Area, but it was still challenging.

I originally intended to have two interviews per generation group however the two *Intifada* groups proved challenging for a number of reasons. One of those reasons had to do with the issues I faced with the IRB. Due to my limited timeline it was incredibly challenging to work with their schedules. Ultimately both interviewees and I agreed that they may not be the best options for me due to my limited time. Because of this setback I was unable to find others to substitute for those two interviews and therefore had to change my strategy. Other reasons for this change in strategy will be explained in the next section.

3.4 Interview and Data Analysis

I conducted interviews for several reasons. The first and main reason for the interviews was to show the trend of how the physical representation of the Palestinian political identity has transformed through the community's eyes, using their own words. While compiling and analyzing data and theory is beneficial and necessary, it is in my opinion the most efficient way to examine the impact of my thesis on the community itself. These interviews focused on how Palestinian men defined themselves by using the events that occurred in their youth to understand how their identities developed. By exploring these interviews I was able to establish a linear progression of the identity of Palestinian men. Based on my analysis, I broke up my interviewees into generational groups. Establishing these groups was key in identifying shifts in meaning for the physical body terms of Palestinian identity.

These groups; the *Al Nakba*, the *Al Naksa*, the *First Intifada* and the *Second Intifada* generations all have different self-understandings of their identity distinct from one generation to the next. Due to the extreme shifts in the environment surrounding the conflict, Palestinian men felt they had no choice but to constantly change the meaning of their identity. Palestinian males transformed their identities due to their interactions with the state of Israel changing and becoming increasingly more violent than previous generations. After breaking up the interviewees into their appropriate generation groups, I wrote down my own expectations of what each generation's interpretation of their identity was going to be. While many frowned upon this type of tactic, due to me potentially thrusting my own interpretation on my subjects, I found it extremely helpful to do this. While hypothesizing how each generation was going to summarize their identity, I chronologically ordered events of the conflict and the overall emotion of the

Palestinian people following those major events. By doing this I was able to come up with a generalized idea of what these men were going to relay to me in the interviews. I proposed the following:

Generation Group	Hypothesized Trend
<i>Al Nakba Generation (1948-1960)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Feels more guilt and regret. ● Feels more responsibility for what happened. ● A sense of upset and sorrow. Were not able to prevent “outsiders” from coming into their lands in the first place. ● Deep hurt and sense of loss. More connection to their birth city than the country as a whole.
<i>Al Naksa Generation (1961-1981)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● More anger than sorrow. ● Wording their identity is more rooted overtly in nationalism. ● Not Physically but verbally violent in how they frame their identity in regards to who they see as an enemy, Jewish Israelis. ● Feel a sense of loss and displacement and a fear of being uprooted while always feeling anxious.
<i>First Intifada Generation (1982-1999)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Began to think more about the political environment they live in. ● Began to become more involved. ● The methods used against them were more violent so they are more guarded and prideful of what they went through. ● Assert their identity very aggressively and proudly.
<i>Second Intifada Generation (2000-Present)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● More aware of the tools like Twitter that are at their disposal. ● Prideful of their identity but bitter. ● More understanding of the political climate. ● More global in their understanding of the conflict. ● Put more substance in educating themselves and the community. ● Realize that fighting is not the answer to their struggle.

Chart A. Hypothesized summaries of each generation's identity.

After I generated what I thought would be the basics of what these men would tell me about their identity, began my interviews. I used several community connections to begin interviews with the men from the first two generation groups. I later used word of mouth to connect with the last two generation groups. However these two groups proved more difficult to acquire interviewees than the older two generations.

3.4a-My Problems and Assumptions

I had initially thought that the two older generation groups would prove to be more difficult mostly due to the factor of their age. I felt that particularly the *Al Nakba* generation would either not remember most of what happened, feel unwilling to explain their identity to a young woman, or would be deceased. Yet that was quickly proven false. The *Al Nakba* generation was actually the most eager to speak with me and tell me about how they define what it means to be Palestinian. They wanted to tell me their stories and used the interview as a way to release themselves from their guilt by showing how much they still care about a land that they were forced to leave decades ago by relaying their identity to me in hopes that this thesis can help the younger generations of Palestinian men.

Both *Intifada* generation groups proved the most difficult to acquire interviews from for numerous reasons. The *First Intifada*, in which Rabin implemented his “bone breaking” policies regarding protesters, scarred this particular generation in a way that I did not anticipate. While the men I talked to did not undergo torture or detention at the hands of the state of Israel and its

actors, many did and are not as eager to speak of the events that transpired due to the fear that still lingers in them to this day.

The *Second Intifada* generation posed a different issue altogether. Since I stated in my interview guidelines that I was not going to interview men who did not come of age in Palestine at the time of their leaving, I inherently restricted myself in who I could interview. Many of the men of this generation group have barely reached thirty years old. Some had left Palestine years before they were of age or did not even reside in Israel-Palestine at all. Those who did live there before immigrating were either not of age when they left or not of age currently. I was ultimately able to conduct one interview a piece in each *Intifada* group as well as two interviews for each of the first two groups (i.e. the *Al Nakba* and *Al Naksa* generations). For the first two groups I utilized published accounts on both *Intifadas* from works like *Occupied Voices* by Wendy Pearlman and *Palestine Speaks* by Cate Malek and Mateo Hoke in order to compensate for the lack of a second interview.

3.4b- Hypothesized Patterns Versus Actual Patterns

The pattern that I established in my initial hypothesis rang true with three exceptions. The first exception related to the *Al Naksa* generation, who had two polar opposite sub-groups. While a lot of the wording used by this generation group is rooted in nationalism, violent rhetoric, and anger, there are some within that group who see the idea of nationalism as a tool to aid the state of Israel in their mission to eradicate the history of the Palestinian people. The second point in which my hypothesis did not match up after conducting the interviews was the nature of the *First Intifada* group's sensitivity to the topic of identity as well as their hesitancy to

talk about the issue of identity in terms of Israeli-Palestinian conflict. I thought that due to the political and activist nature of the *First Intifada* this generation group would be more willing to share their interpretation of what Palestinian political identity is. However, while my interviewee, who was given the code 519JifflehDB, was forthcoming regarding information about the conflict itself, it was harder for him to articulate to me what his identity was and what it meant in relation to the conflict. For example he balked at one of my questions in which I asked him to give me the top six words he uses to formulate his Palestinian identity. He eventually was able to formulate an answer but it was strange and not at all what I expected:

Intelligence	Supportive
Fearless	Hardworking
Courage	Hero

Chart B. Six words used by subject 519JifflehDB to describe his identity

Many of these words seemed repetitive, but he then explained their meanings. They were more emotionally rooted than I anticipated. The two that stuck out the most, however were “fearless” and “courage”. These words are synonyms and when he saw my confused expression 519JifflehDB elaborated. He explains that in regards to the word “fearless” he was referring to all Palestinians in general stating, “When you grow up in occupation throwing rocks, you’re not scared of anything” (519JifflehDB, 2016). When elaborating on the word “courage” he stated that it is something that as a Palestinian you must be raised with; it has to be a word that you associate with your identity. I took this to mean that one needs a certain brand of courage to survive as a member of this specific generation, where state sanctioned violence was more common. His answers were hard to hear, though he tried to remain light hearted and relaxed.

Military occupation and its influence on these men's Palestinian identities was very obvious from speaking with them. 519JifflehDB was a teenager at the beginning of the *First Intifada*. He came of age during this uprising but instead of engaging in normal activities and partying with his friends, he was throwing stones, burning tires, and trying to get by without being beaten and arrested by Israeli police. One word I can associate with the Palestinian identity here is "guarded". Palestinians are weary on the issue mostly out of the fear of being arrested and never coming home. In comparison to my subject from the *Second Intifada*, 1419JifflehC* who happened to be related to 519JifflehDB, this guardedness made the *First Intifada* generation look angry and paranoid, though that is truly not the case. 1419JifflehC* has access to tools like social media and education that were not previously available. In fact 519JifflehDB's generation developed these tools for the *Second Intifada* generation group and 1419JifflehC* utilized it to his full advantage, something I'm sure many men from the *Second Intifada* did.

The final piece of information from my interviews that did not match up with my hypothesis was the reaction of the first generation group, the *Al Nakba* group to having an opportunity to be interviewed. While my initial hypothesis of finding those who were still alive and remember the events of 1948 was indeed difficult, their willingness to talk was unexpected. In fact, this generation was the most forthcoming with information not laced with malice or prejudice. They wove a tale but were candid where needed, such as calling those who they view as enemies by the term Zionist. By using this word, those interviewed in this generation were acknowledging the differences between the general population who practice Judaism and those who practice what to them is the colonial power of the Zionist government. In the end, I was able to flesh out the following pattern of identity for each generation group:

Generation Group	Actualized Trend
<i>Al Nakba Generation (1948-1960)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● While wrought with guilt, forth coming with information. ● Upset by the events that transpired, but hopeful for the future. ● Family centered, protective. ● Very specific in who they identify as being their enemy.
<i>Al Naksa Generation (1961-1981)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Two polar opposite views on nationalism and how it affected the Palestinian people. ● More scared and vulnerable in terms of their identity. ● Skittish and extremely cynical when addressing the issues of Palestine and identity.
<i>First Intifada Generation (1982-1999)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Protective of their identity, guarded. ● Prideful and more politically aware. ● Rhetoric used was more political and based in activism. ● Sounding more educated than previous generations when speaking specifically of the issue of Israel-Palestine in relation to their identity.
<i>Second Intifada Generation (2000-Present)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Prideful and educated. ● Education has become a way to connect to their identity ● Open-mindedness that was not present in previous generations. ● More aware of the world and global affairs as a whole.

Chart C. Actualized Summaries of each generation's identity

These observations became the basic definitions of identity for each generation that I was able to synthesize from the interviews. These summaries were much more detailed and layered than I initially hypothesized especially when regarding the *Al Naksa* group. This group in

particular had opposing views on nationalism in comparison to what I originally thought. I hypothesized that due to the growing movement of Arab nationalism led by Nasser in Egypt that this generation would believe more in the idea of defining oneself through nationalist pride. I saw that this is not the case from the interviews I conducted.

3.4c- The “Al Nakba Generation

The generation I was most excited to interview and analyze was the *Al Nakba* generation for a number of reasons. This was the generation where the conflict itself began. These men are the ones who began the journey of redefining what it means to be Palestinian. The beaten physical body of young Palestinian men began with this generation and their fight against Zionist colonialism. I was able to conduct two interviews from this time frame and was able to observe different parts of their identity that took root in later generations. You also get something extremely unique from their perspective. This generation possesses an identity that existed before the beaten body of a Palestinian boy ever entered the public consciousness. The two gentlemen I interviewed also gave me a wider perspective due to their age difference and region of origin, both vastly different than my own. One of my subjects was approximately eight years younger than the other and from what is known as the West Bank, while the older subject was from Jerusalem. These differences gave me a broader perspective on how each region of Israel-Palestine was affected by this abrupt shift of identity.

The subjects from this generation, known as 52JerusalemHD and 1120RamallahGF gave very different, but almost predictable answers for the regions that they were from. 52JerusalemHD was more passionate about his responses. This subject stated multiple times that he was a nationalist and refused to call the West Bank by anything other than the label Palestine,

stating that he would not change the name of the greatest place in the world. There was also fear and guilt that surrounded many of his answers. When describing his initial leaving of Palestine as well as leaving Jordan years later to venture to America, he described a loss that words do not do justice. He looked me in the eye with an almost cynical smile and stated that leaving at those times to come to the United States is similar to dying to your family. His initial leaving was just as painful. Believing that the fighting was going to be short lived, he and his family packed as if for a holiday to visit their family in Bethlehem, only to never be able to return. 1120RamallahGF was different. Much of the fighting did not reach the West Bank and while he felt a lot of the similar pain that 52JerusalemHD felt, it was not as intense. He did not feel that same need to be more politically involved and pass down this identity to his children and the Palestinian-American youth, as my first subject did. Much like my first subject, he pushed for educating the young and encouraged them to embrace their identity as well as welcome questions from those who may not be Palestinian at all. 1120RamallahGF uses his first name as a way to begin discussions with people he meets about the conflict. He fondly states that his name is of unique and of strong Palestinian origin that it gets people to ask him where he is from, from there he is able to begin a conversation.

3.4d- The “Al Naksa” Generation

While one subject did demonstrate a more muted level of nationalism than I expected, the other was totally opposed to the idea of nationalism and connecting it with his identity. The subject in question who was given the code 146JerusalemGA to protect his identity reared back

and began to explain that while he was prideful of his identity, he cannot say that nationalism defines him. He instead used the word patriotism, explaining that it was more appropriate.

The other gentleman in his group, 711JerusalemGA, broke down his identity in a more dissected matter stating that his identity was extremely turbulent even now:

Something about being Palestinian is that we have this deep sense of uprootedness. It is hard to move from one thing to the other, I have a basic need to be permanent somewhere, even if I have to compromise on certain aspects of my life...Our identity did not come ready-made. I remember asking my brother “Am I Jordanian or Palestinian?” “Why is forbidden to say I am Palestinian?”. We were discouraged to mention our identity through the 50s. I remember picking up rations with my mom. We could not say we were Palestinian with full voices (711JerusalemGA,2016).

I expected more violent rhetoric from the *Al Naksa* generation, however their overwhelming depression and sadness was something that was not anticipated. I knew that there would be upset; this is a conflict that is tearing apart families and destroying lives on both sides, but it is still unique to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. One of my subjects, 711JerusalemGA, and his story was even more so saddening as he explained why this fear of violence and being uprooted is totally justifiable to these men. When I asked 711JerusalemGA about his last visit to Palestine he described something horrific that is a genuine fear and reality to these young men. The fact that he was able to recite his ordeal to me was nothing short of a miracle to many. In the summer of 2015, 711JerusalemGA attempted to fly into Tel Aviv accompanied by a priest from the local Arab Catholic Church Community (ACCC) to visit family that he had not seen in decades. He never made it out of the airport and was detained and jailed for several days before showing up in SFO severely dehydrated with only his backpack. He recalls being called names, told that his American passport was not going to help him because he was Palestinian, and that the passport changed nothing.

This is a common phenomenon that Palestinian people faced according to academics such as Rashid Khalidi in his book *Palestinian Identity*. Their identity is a marker for special treatment according to Khalidi. While this treatment can be viewed as an inconvenience to those who have a sense of belonging, this is the reality for those like 711JerusalemGA and is strongly reflected in the overall analysis of this generation.

Overall these interviews provided insight into the heavy effect of military occupation and the fear of violence on one's identity. While each group has a way that they identify themselves, the feeling of anxiety, uprootedness, and anger still lingers. The feelings resulting from this conflict leave Palestinian men with a turbulent and unstable political identity that they have yet to fully establish .

Chapter 4-Conclusion

4.1 Conclusion Summary

At the beginning of this paper I stated my thesis quite clearly. I wrote that the political identity of Palestinian men developed in a peculiar fashion due to factors such as violent interactions with the state of Israel, torture, colonialism, and the concept of masculinity. The identity of Palestinian men stems from these elements due to the fact that they have become highly politicized beings, more so than almost any other group of people in the world. Their very existence is viewed as a threat to an entire group of people to the point that the state of Israel and its actors label all of them as dangerous and does everything in their power to eradicate that threat. The phenomenon of a male Palestinian political identity is seen as a huge danger to the state of Israel for one very simple reason. Israel's enemies are not being erased, instead the people of Palestine are transforming into something stronger and more cohesive than ever before.

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict still remains a hot button issue in the Middle East as well as internationally. The political identity of young Palestinian men is used as a tool for both sides of the conflict. For Israel, their state actors, and their supporters, the Palestinian men and their highly politicized nature is seen as the enemy, one that can be dealt with by means of mass detentions and state sanctioned violence. For the Palestinian people it gives them a physical representation of what they are, and someone to look to for the future of their struggle. While they have been fighting for almost seventy years for their own state and freedom from military occupation, they have unknowingly (or possibly knowingly) created something much more sacred than that--an international political identity.

Analyzing the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, its history and its ramifications on Palestinians, allows one to observe the political identity of these Palestinian men and the lingering damage this conflict has had on their lives, whether it be those who still live in Israel-Palestine or those who immigrated decades before. This identity and its transformation throughout generations has played such a large role in how the conflict has progressed and will continue to progress in the coming years. The Palestinian people as a whole went through years of imperial and colonial rule, not truly having an identity of their own. They were first Ottoman, then British, and finally enemies in a state that wants to erase them. One common misconception about the identity of these young men and Palestinian people in general is that they did not come into an identity of their own until the 1960s, in which Pan-Arab nationalism was rampant in the region. This does two things: it disregards the memories and narratives of those who came before the generation of the sixties, those from the mandate period and those from *Al Nakba*. What it also does is ignore the complex genesis of the identity of these young men, an identity that took decades and decades to form and manifest into a physical representation (Khalidi, 1997).

The very process of how these men formed their identities speaks volumes about how the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is unfolding and how and whether a solution to the issues at hand will be found. These young men, and the generations before them shaped their identities through interacting with the state of Israel and its actors in violent ways. The primary way the state and these men interact is through bullets, stones, illegal detentions, and beatings, which of course creates a political identity centered around apprehension, anxiety, uprootedness, and pain.

However, this also creates a parallel identity filled with pride, power, patriotism, and sacrifice which these young men make for the struggle of their people. This pride has not died down no matter the level of violence and push back that they face from Israel, their state actors, and its international backers. These young Palestinian men have more tools at their disposal than ever before, such as Twitter, blogs, and Youtube. They can reach millions of Palestinians and non-Palestinians internationally in a matter of seconds and explain their political identities through a non-government platform.

Now that the political identity of these young men is starting to be recognized by the international community in a more official way, their identity is more important than ever before. One example of this would be finally obtaining a level of international recognition. On November 29th 2012 Palestine and the Palestinian Authority was finally declared a “non-member observer state” in the United Nations which demonstrates a *de facto* recognition of the state of Palestine, and therefore their political identity (BBC, 2012). This is a huge step forward due simply to the fact that now the international community is moving toward recognizing the identity of Palestinian men and the Palestinian community in general.

They have more power internationally as well as within the state of Israel. Palestinian men no longer just have to rely on their bodies to fight for their identities. They have all of these resources as well as the ear of the international community and their recognition as a tool, something that they did not have in the generations prior to 2012. It will be interesting how the later half of the *Second Intifada* generation and the generations following define their identities in the future. Will they be more educated? Hopeful? Pragmatic? Or will they finally be able to

say that they are Palestinian without the anxiety of previous generations clouding their thoughts and feelings.

4.2 Hopes for the Future

While being recognized as a non-member observer state is a huge step forward for the Palestinian people and the recognition of the identity of these young men in particular, there is still a long way to go. These young men still interact with the state of Israel in a predominantly violent way. With all the checkpoints and security permit issues paired with almost hourly arrests and land confiscations, Palestinians are fearful to leave their homes due to the very real possibility of being arrested for simply being Palestinian. The Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas and others must insist on a ceasefire on both sides in order for those who wish for peace to be able to work on achieving that peace. Coalition groups such as Combatants for Peace (a coalition peace group consisting of both former Israeli military and Palestinian guerrilla combatants) and others have to create safe environments for these young men to express and develop their identities safely without fear of being arrested, tortured, and beaten.

The state of Israel must also be held accountable for its actions against the Palestinian people. This is not to say that illegal actions by Palestinian people and radical groups should be ignored. On the contrary, these groups should also be held accountable for their actions as well. This would demonstrate a sense of equality between the two conflicting identities that will help heal decades of mistrust. The state of Israel is being protected by powerful countries such as the United States because they serve an economic neo-colonial purpose. Israel has disobeyed countless United Nations resolutions and continues to break international law by jailing,

torturing, and restricting the rights of Palestinian communities and are not being held accountable for their actions. This must change in order to fully recognize the identities of not only living Palestinian men, but those who died for the struggle and for those who died not really knowing what their identities meant on the global stage.

I try to remain optimistic in terms of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and a solution being found. There has been tremendous progress made in the past decade with people becoming increasingly aware of the situation. This global awareness has opened many different doors for Palestinian men (and the people as a whole) to develop and share their political identities in more positive and accepting environments. The state of Israel is being held accountable for their actions morally by humankind with every video, tweet, facebook post, and article published that demonstrates the brutality that these young Palestinian men face daily. I believe it is only a matter of time until legal accountability will follow.

The main point however is that now the Palestinian political identity is defined by more than just their post *Al Nakba* victimhood. It is defined by their strength, their patriotism, their endurance, and perseverance through all the hardships they have faced, and because of this Palestinian men have taken center stage in international politics in a way that they never have before. While many of my interviewees have stated that they may not see a Palestinian state in their lifetime, they remain hopeful and optimistic for the future. Their identities will live on and develop into something much stronger than generations before them, and those are the weapons that they will use against the Israeli tanks. They will no longer have to throw stones, instead they will use their passion, their words, and their message of unity and identity as their weapons and one day a state of Palestine will be recognized, even if it takes another seventy years.

Appendix 1-Interview Questions

1. When was the last time you were in Palestine?
2. Where in Palestine is your family traditionally from?
3. How would you describe your leaving Palestine?
4. When I say the words “Palestine”, “nationalism and “identity”, what comes to mind?
5. Can you list the first six words that you associate with your identity?
6. What is the most important word that you would say encompasses your identity as a whole from the list you mentioned?
7. Did you participate in any civil disobedience demonstrations in Palestine when you came of age?
8. How did growing up in an active occupation change your perception of what it means to be Palestinian?
9. Do you believe that you identify more with Palestine than those who have not been to Israel/Palestine? Why or why not?
10. How do you compare your sense of identity to those who did not grow up in Palestine?
11. Name three words that you feel you cannot associate with your identity.
12. Do you have any additional comments that you would like to add?

Appendix 2- Coding System

The coding sequence to create names for my interviewees consisted of three main steps:

1. Their first and last initials were transcribed from letters to their corresponding numbers from the standard English alphabet.
 - a. I.e “A” is equal to the number one, etc.
2. Then comes the area of Israel-Palestine that the interviewee and their families were originally from. This does not necessarily mean that this is the area from which they fled Israel-Palestine from.
3. Their ages were documented and those individual numbers were transcribed to their corresponding numbers.
 - a. I.e. Someone who is 25 years of age would have their age correspond to the code “BE”, due to the fact that “B” is equal to the number two and “E” is equal to the number 5. Anyone whose age ends in zero will have an asterix (*) in place of the number zero.

The following is the number to letter code:

(*)= 0	N= 14
A= 1	O= 15
B= 2	P= 16
C= 3	Q= 17
D= 4	R= 18
E= 5	S= 19
F= 6	T= 20
G= 7	U= 21
H= 8	V= 22
I= 9	W= 23
J= 10	X= 24
K= 11	Y= 25
L= 12	Z= 26
M= 13	

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