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ORIGINAL PAPER

‘Othering’ the archive—from exile to inclusion and heritage dignity: the case of Palestinian archival memory

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Abstract This paper seeks to address, from the critical perspectives of cultural heritage discourse, the issues at stake in critically apprehending the archive as both a technology of disinheritance and one of potential inclusion and re-inheritance. The first section draws on the work of Jacques Derrida, Edward Said and other critics whose work has sought to address the marginalizing capacity of dominant European/North American archival and cultural–museological institutions. The remainder of the paper grounds these conceptual–ethical issues in the context of Palestinian cultural politics and memory-work. This critical framework is used not only to draw out the absences and silences in archives and cultural institutions, and the epistemological and ‘real’ violences at play in what Derrida characterises as ‘archive trauma’, but responds to Said’s call to ‘re-read’ the colonial archive ‘contrapuntally’ in order to create an ‘othering’ of dominant archival discourse. What is needed to provoke such an ‘othering’ is a commitment to rethink the archive in terms of alternative understandings of ‘hospitality’, ‘memory-work’ and what Derrida has referred to as ‘heritage dignity’. This strategy is capable of apprehending in greater depth the moral-ethical ‘debts’ and ‘duties’ and the operational ‘responses’ and ‘responsibilities’ towards ‘inclusion’ and towards full recognition of those constituencies which have been disenfranchised or exiled outside the realms of dominant cultural–institutional discourse.

Keywords Palestinian · Cultural politics · Archives · Cultural heritage · Memory

> *‘Here, remembrance, Mnemosyne, the mother of the muses, is directly transformed into memory… “memorability” will inevitably determine its durability, that is, its chance to be permanently fixed in the recollection of humanity’* (Arendt 1998:170).
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> *‘Perhaps the greatest battle Palestinians have waged as a people has been the right to a remembered presence, and with that presence, the right to possess and reclaim a*

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collective historical reality… A similar battle has been fought by all colonised people whose past and present were dominated by outside powers who had first conquered the land and then re-wrote history so as to appear in that history as the true owners of that land' (Said 2000:184).

'What is at issue here… is the violence of the archive itself, as archive, as archival violence' (Derrida 1996:7)

Introduction

This paper seeks to address, from the critical perspectives of cultural heritage discourse, the issues at stake in critically apprehending the archive as both a technology of disinheritance and one of potential inclusion and re-inheritance. My text grounds these conceptual–ethical issues in the context of Palestinian cultural politics and memory-work. I use this critical framework not only to draw out the absences and silences in archives and cultural institutions, and the epistemological and 'real' violences at play in what Derrida characterises as 'archive trauma', but also to respond to Said's call to 're-read' the colonial archive 'contrapuntally' in order to create an 'othering' of dominant archival discourse. Similarly, I deploy Said's vision of a 'right to a remembered presence' in order to capture the 'healing mode' of thought and aspiration, that is neither naive or uncritical, but bound up in a belief in the capacity of archival memory, heritage and certain modes of representation to bring comfort, cure and healing to situations of conflict, containment, displacement and exile. The urgent need to restore and reconstitute a collective Palestinian archival memory through acts of archival restoration and reconstruction was understood by Said as a necessary basis upon which to restitute an historical Palestinian presence—typically erased or 'disremembered' in depictions of a pre-1948 Palestine as 'a land without a people' and in statements asserting that 'there is no such thing as a Palestinian'[1] and also due to on-going relentlessly destructive forces of human displacement, violence and occupation—and to restore a positive, affirming sense of Palestinian cultural memory and identity within both contemporary Palestine and global diasporic contexts.

What is needed to provoke such an 'othering' and a 'remembered presence' is a commitment to rethink the archive in terms of alternative understandings of the 'archival impulse', 'hospitality', 'memory-work' and what Derrida has referred to as 'heritage dignity'. I shall be extending the notion of 'archive' beyond its routinised definition and understanding as a repository for paper documentary evidence and towards a broader 'heritage' paradigm re-conceptualised as 'archival memory' which offers a means to give access and recognition to tangible and intangible heritage resources as crucial to collective and individual identity-work. This then opens us up to considering museum, heritage sites and cultural performances and cultural knowledge as part of this domain.

My claim is that this strategy is capable of apprehending in greater depth the moral-ethical 'debts' and 'duties' and the operational 'responses' and 'responsibilities' towards 'inclusion' and towards full recognition of those constituencies who, historically and in the contemporary moment, have been disenfranchised or exiled outside the realms of dominant cultural–institutional discourse.

[1] i.e. The infamous declaration made in 1967 by Golda Meir.

Constructing the 'oriental archive': the archival impulse

> *'Under the general heading of knowledge about the Orient, and within the umbrella of Western hegemony over the Orient during the period from the end of the eighteenth century, there emerged a complex Orient suitable for study in the academy, for display in the museum, for reconstruction in the colonial office, for theoretical illustration in anthropological, biological, linguistic, racial, and historical theses about mankind and the universe …' (Said 1984:7).*

> *'Said's primary concern was with the ways in which European and American imaginative geographies of "the Orient" had combined over time to produce an internally structured archive…'(Gregory 2004:18).*

Said's ground-breaking critique of the Western archival imagination in his book *Orientalism* clearly exposes the appropriative tropes of the 'archival impulse' and the accompanying desire to establish inventories of knowledge and to exercise moral legitimacy via the 'new' sciences of colonial administration, cartography, mapping, surveying, excavation, which together are used as the resource to frame landscape and to claim ancestry, authority and possession. As colonising technologies of memory and of its representation, the archive, library, museum display, the disciplines of anthropology, archaeology and Egyptology, amongst many others, are all exposed as complicit in the conceptualisation of the 'Orient' within the project of the representation of the 'other' as either absent or degenerate and, crucially too, are complicit in the operationalisation and territorialisation of this 'idea' or 'narrative' of colonialism as 'facts on the ground'. The 'performance' by European nations of a return to (what they lay claim to as) their ancient ancestors/ancient 'self-group' is given authenticity and legitimation by the simultaneous 'rediscovery' of monumental and archaeology evidence as 'scientific fact' (see Said 1993).

Said argues that writ large the 'scene setting for Orientalism' and for the colonisation of 'other Islamic lands' and what can be critically cast as the template for the archival impulse as a tool of appropriation, was the encyclopaedic work *The Description of Egypt* that strategically accompanied the Napoleonic invasion of Egypt in 1798[2] (Said 1993:43). In the specifically Palestinian context, it is true to say that it was the Palestine Exploration Fund's [PEF] own 'archival impulse', and the fund's desire for cultural appropriation and claims to have identified a 'homeland-origin' (i.e. of 'Christendom') that provided the 'scene setting'. Again the intimacies are exposed between culture, memory, conflict and colonial militarism: while Napoleon's savants worked alongside the military in Egypt, what is notable in the Palestinian context is the strategic importance of the Ordinance Survey of Western Palestine 1871[3] which is not only bound up in the 'desire to recover the

[2] The *Description*, a compendium of images that range from monumental structures and depictions of everyday life to flora and fauna complied by Napoleon's savants is critically recast as 'the very scientific model of a truly scientific appropriation of one culture by another, apparently stronger one' (El-Haj 2001:43).

[3] In May 1865, the Palestinian Exploration Fund (PEF) was founded in London with the purpose of 'investigating the archaeology, geography, geology and natural history of Palestine' (El-Haj 2001:22). The Fund launched a Reconnaissance Survey to produce a preliminary map of the region: 'So long as a square mile in Palestine remains unsurveyed, so long as a mound of ruins in any part, especially in any part consecrated by the Biblical history, remains unexcavated, the call of scientific investigation and we may add, the curiosity of Christendom, remains unsatisfied' (Watson quoted in El-Haj 2001:22).

historical roots and truths of Christendom' but executed with the 'cooperation of the British war office' (El-Haj 2001:24). The violent act of disinheritance underpinning this archival impulse and the accompanying acts of disremembering are once again achieved through the complicities of archaeology. For example, Whitlam's account of how the 'Orientalists' 'silenced Palestinian history and obstructed alternative claims to the past' references, amongst many other examples, the renaming of Palestine via the recovery of biblical place-names. As El-Haj has it: 'Palestine was not simply "baptized" with Euro-Christian names but Biblical names were understood to belong to the land itself and to be eminently present'. She further argues that this redemptive act of 'territorial self-fashioning' was bound up in the acquisition of the authentic, and thus the assertion that what mattered was not that this was 'one more new Jerusalem' but that '*This was Jerusalem'* (El-Haj 2001:35).

Archive trauma and memory-in-exile

> *'The concept of the archive shelters in itself, of course, this memory of the* arkhe. *But it also shelters itself from this memory which it shelters; which comes down to saying also that one forgets it… from the Greek* arkheion*: initially a house, a domicile, the residence of the superior magistrates, the archons, those who commanded… this institutional passage from the private to the public…'* (Derrida 1996:2–3).

> *'Exiles are cut off from their roots, their land, their past… Exiles feel, therefore, an urgent need to reconstitute their broken lives, usually by choosing to see themselves as part of a triumphant ideology or restored people'* (Said 2001:163)

Said's strategy of 'reading' the archive 'contrapuntally' in order to uncover the 'dead silence' of the present about the past is one of a number of critiques of archival culture (2000:184). Derrida's 'Freudian impression' of archival dramas and repressions, for example, begins with a resume of the 'Greek' claim to the archive and a demonstration of the intimacy of the Greek archon's home as archive. His purpose is to draw out the originary 'diasporic character' of the archive and the founding archival impulse: to give shelter to 'memory-in-exile' (Derrida 1996:2–3). A related intellectual engagement argues that the wider modernist turn to the archive—and the creation of libraries and museums—is characterised in terms of modernity's philosophical preoccupation with its 'own loss of origin', its 'feelings of ontological homelessness' and with projects to redeem and re-house modernity's memory-in-exile (Maleuvre 1999; Castillo 1984; Derrida 1996). The archive is thus strategically positioned as modernity's metaphysical mirror. It is here that modernity and the archive/museum are credited with metaphysical attachments to redemptive qualities (Butler 2007; Huyssen 1995:13–36; Maleuvre 1999:22). These critiques also give more depth to the intellectual odyssey which invests the archive as the West's privileged medium for reflecting upon the human condition and to address the core question: what it is to be human? (Bazin 1967; Maleuvre 1999).[4]

[4] The on-going 'legacy' of this 'Greco-European memory' is uncovered by Derrida when he describes UNESCO as an 'archive of this heritage.' UNESCO as archive and as 'philosopheme' emerges as the core technology of memory 'on the ruins' of the second world war. Derrida argues that the fixing of UNESCO's foundational identity within a 'Greek origin' and 'Greek memory' has 'displaced', 'amongst others' 'Egyptian, Jewish, Arabic' memory' and 'Chinese and Japanese philosophical traditions' (Derrida 2002:40). It is here that Derrida proposes 'another model' of institutional hospitality which acknowledges that 'the concept of origins is never simple but subject to the phenomenon of hybridisation and translation from the

The Orientalist's empathetic identification with ancestor as ancient or historical-sacred 'self' is bound up in the ability to feel 'at home/origin' and the sense of well-being inherent in gaining protection from the close proximity of ancestors. This exposes a crucial aspect of archival memory dramas, and the psychodynamics by which those desiring the archive are defining themselves in the position of exiles: the cure for which is return. This archival thesis of salvation and cure also highlights a tension between 'mythos' and 'logos' which marks this domain and which brings an 'overdetermined' quality to the empathetic identifications at play. The archive is further invested as a place where the individuated can inscribe traces of such separations and glimpse a return to essential unity which can only be achieved as a mythical return. There is also a tension here between metaphysical and literal worlds: the objectification of the quest for home, origin, refuge as memory and as 'facts on the ground' providing the literalisation and territorialisation of these desires in the homeland. Or, as Said has it, modernity's 'exiles' are required to engage in the reclamation of a 'triumphant ideology', and, by these means to locate a template to work through the alienations of exile. It is, however, the Zionist identification with the 'proverbial people of exile' that has dominated archival discourse (Said 1984:164).

'Old-new-land' and cultural rights and wrongs

> 'Orientalism *is written out of an extremely concrete history of personal loss and national disintegration—only a few years before I wrote* Orientalism *Golda Meir made her notorious and deeply Orientalist comment about there being no Palestinian people…'.*
>
> *'In the case of Israel, the narrative's main-point was that Zionism's goal was to restore re-establish, re-patriate, and re-connect a people with its original homeland. It was the genius of Herzl and Weizmann to draft thinkers like Einstein and Buber, as well as financiers like Lord Rothschild and Moses Montefiore into giving of their time and effort in support of so important, and historically justified a scheme'* (Said 2000:184–185).

Herzl, the founder of political Zionism and the creator of the World Zionist Organisation in 1893, believed that only by establishing a Jewish state for the Jewish nation as 'refuge' and 'shelter' would 'anti-semitism cease' and the Jewish people would cure their exilic fate by joining history and entering modernity (Gregory 2004:79).[5] To consolidate what was to become the state of Israel, once again the 'archival impulse' was required to

Footnote 4 continued
very beginning' (Derrida 2002:40). He sums up this strategy in terms of a moral-ethical 'debt', 'duty', 'response' and 'responsibility' towards 'the archive of another', to 'difference' and to the simultaneous 'opening-up the self-validating aspect of the institution to the voice of the other' (Derrida 2002: 23) and to a remodelled future institutional cosmopolitics.

[5] 'In *Der Judenstaat*, a pamphlet published in 1896, Theodor Herzl argued that it was only through the birth of their own nation state that Jews would emerge into the world of modernity until then, they would live at best provisionally, so to speak, enduring a double exile from their land and from their destiny. Their "return"—in Hebrew, *aliyah* (ascent)—to the Land of Israel would thus signify their re-entry into history (or rather History)' (Gregory 2004:79).

secure and legitimate Zionism's self-territorialisation.[6] As El-Haj argues, 'the historical grammar of recovery was to be increasingly recast in terms of Jewish national revival and return' and was secured in the archival legal-framing in which Britain 'promised Palestine to the Jews as their "national home" in the Balfour Declaration of 1917' and simultaneously this 'promise inscribed in the Mandate for Palestine [was] agreed upon by [the UN/UNESCO'S precursor] the League of Nations' (El-Haj 2001:44).

For Ben Gurion, Israel's first Prime-minister, this was a means for Jewish people to be 'masters of our own fate' (Rose 2005:49) and a 'collective dream' underpinned by a 'Law of Return' that 'stipulates any Jew, but only any Jew, throughout the world has the right to settle in Israel' (Rose 2005:51). Again it is Said who has highlighted the 'archival memory-work' underpinning this 'too-perfect' act of literal 'return' to 'origin' notably as sanctioned by international law and Israeli archaeological science: 'a huge number of commentators on and practitioners of archaeology—from William Albright and Edmund Wilson to Yigal Yadin, Moshe Dayan, and even Ariel Sharon—have noted that archaeology is *the* privileged Israeli science *par excellence'* (Said 2003:44). The Jewish Palestine Exploration Society, for example, took the view that 'for the people of Israel in the Land of Israel there are no antiquities, everything is alive' (El-Haj 2001:38). With this came acts of displacement, traumatic loss, separation and the impossibility of 'return' and of 'secular justice' for those displaced. Said states how 'Palestinians who lived in pre-1948 Palestine can never return (in the case of refugees) nor have access to land as Jews can' (Said 2003:44).

Zionist memory, and its literalisation and territorialisation in tangible and intangible heritage, has led to a national political–cultural landscape which combines events such as the 'rediscovery' of the Dead Sea Scrolls with the excavation of sites such as Massada—currently the 'site of Israeli army ceremonies, a commemoration of Jewish heroism as well as a commitment to present and future military skill' (Said 2000:186). The Holocaust is the particular trauma that after the Second World War gave renewed support and renewed urgency to the Zionist redemptive formula: 'as the horrors of the Shoah started to become known, the Zionist case for a permanent sanctuary in Palestine achieved a new and desperate momentum' (Rose 2005:84). It is here too that Zionism became powerfully centred as a 'single action of lifesaving, of snatching great masses of people out of the path of sure extinction' (Rose 2005:84). It is here within the Zionist vision of refuge, home and care that Holocaust survivors were to find recuperation. As Ben Gurion put it, 'We will bring them here and turn them into human beings' (Rose 2005:84). In practical terms, the archival impulse and on-going memorialisation of the Holocaust at sites such as Yad Vashem bears testimony to an archival imagination active in recovering the names and identities of those whose fate was bound up in pogroms, suffering and murder. Critics such as Rose do, however, argue that the motif of the 'sacralisation' of the Holocaust is nevertheless double-edged and 'can lead', she argues, 'to a no less violent desacralisation, or downplaying of the holocaust' (Rose 2005: 216).

[6] In terms of the alternative paths Zionism might have taken, Herzl in *Der Judenstaat* while referring to the 'homeland' in terms of 'our ever-memorable historic home' of Palestine also considers other destinations like Argentina and Uganda as potential settlements. What is clear here and also in the dynamic of the 'new Jerusalem' is that both the 'idea-dream' of Zion and its modern territorialisation did not have a fixed geography (Gregory 2004:79).

Re-constructing the archive: rights to a 'remembered presence'

> *'…if you look in every Palestinian household, into the third generation after 1948, you'll find such objects as house keys, letters, titles, deeds, photographs, newspaper clippings, kept to preserve the memory of a period when our existence was relatively whole. … [it is a strategy] against historical erasure. It is a means of resistance'* (Said 1999:182–3).

> *'To the Palestinians this was a compound catastrophe of destruction, dispossession, and dispersal—what they called al-Nakba ("the disaster"[of 1948])- which has proved to be an ever-present horizon of meaning within which in Mahmoud Darwish's haunting phrase, the Palestinian people have been cast into "redundant shadows exiled from space and time". "The Nakba", Darwish wrote over 50 years later, "is an extended present that promises to continue into the future"'* (Gregory 2004:86).

Said illustrates the fragmented nature of attempts by Palestinians to re-constitute a 'remembered presence' in which the household is transformed into a space of archival memory with objects that are 'kept to preserve the memory of a period when our existence was relatively whole', and as a strategy 'against historical erasure' and 'a means of resistance' (Said 1999:182–3). Many other critics and activist-groups are similarly reconstructing the archive in more public terms—i.e. repossessing and redeploying the 'archival impulse'—in a context where Palestinians as victims of Zionism are confronted with the need to refute Meir's fundamentalist denial of the existence of Palestinian people, and to give representation and 'authorship' or 'voice' to their own suffering and to create strategies for the care, curation, archival hospitality and restoration of a 'just' identity.

A critical examination of the contemporary Palestinian context provides a challenge to canonical and routinised archival discourse, and illustrates how creative—and at times unorthodox-interventions have opened up and transformed preconceived ideas of what an archive is and offered up what Said has defined as new 'webs of affiliations' (Said 1986:14) for articulating more relevant, responsive and 'just' archival futures. The need here is for both theorists and practitioners in the global context to similarly open up the traditional archival mindset, including re-assessing its genealogies and technologies to new frameworks of possibilities. The definition of archival memory has been extended in the contemporary Palestinian context not only to include repositories for paper documentary evidence but to go beyond this and embrace a 'heritage' paradigm which gives recognition to tangible and intangible heritage resources, and to collective and individual strategies of representation. It also leads to a consideration of museum, heritage sites and cultural performances as an essentialised part of a 'just' archival domain. This shift also reiterates the simultaneous need to reinvest in the aspirations and realities of an archival language and practice committed to a complex understanding of healing, recovery and rehousing memory-in-exile.

Having already discussed the archival imperatives of 'Orientalism' and 'Zionism', it would be highly problematic—if not downright crass—to repeat the violences and colonising impulses implicit in these terms by introducing 'Palestinianism' as a third archival terminology. Attempts to articulate 'Palestinianism' need to be understood as deeply felt and contested issues which have too easily been lost to negative stereotyping in both the public arena (notably in the 'Western' media) and the academic world. As Said argues: 'To be sure, no single Palestinian can be said to feel what most other Palestinians feels: Ours has been too various and scattered a fate for that sort of correspondence. But there is no

doubt that we do in fact form a community, if at heart a community built on suffering exile. How, though, to convey it? The thing about our exile is that much of it is invisible and entirely special to us' (Said 1986:5–6). He goes on to claim that 'no clear and simple narrative is adequate to the complexity of our experience', and to assert that 'essentially unconventional, hybrid and fragmentary forms of expression should be used to represent us'. He concludes that a 'multifaceted vision is essential to any representation of us'. In this challenge to the traditional archival paradigms created by those in power with their colonising agendas, Said reiterates 'it is only through a recognition of these complexities that we approach the elusive nature of identity, or integrate public and private realities or apprehend that variety of individuals and activities called Palestine' (Said 1986:7).

In order to move beyond the sameness and repetition implied in the language of 'isms' the critic Sayigh has offered a more resonant 'third space' for the articulation of archival terminology in coining the term 'Palestinianness'. This aims to recover and represent a Palestinian identity, heritage and cultural ancestry in relationship to the common experience of diaspora and exile. It is also one that takes on the transnational aspects of Palestinianness. Here Sayigh argues, 'The experience of Al-Nakba made for a distinct Palestinianness, but not necessarily Palestinianism' (Sayigh quoted in Lindholm-Schulz 2003:119). Lindholm-Schulz takes forward this motif of 'Palestinianness' to express the overarching traumatising 'diasporisation' which she argues is *the* crucial commonality underpinning the Saidian 'webs of affiliation', thereby linking Palestinians in the West Bank, the Gaza Strip and Israel with those in Jordan, Lebanon and Syria and other broader global locations of Palestinian 'diasporic lives'. She pursues the common motif of the 'diasporisation' synonymous with the '48 Nakba and '67 Naksa along with on-going 'external' and 'internal dispersal' which has resulted in those within and outside 'historic Palestine' leading 'to some extent and in many regards… diasporic lives' (Lindholm-Schulz 2003:21).[7] Mahmoud Darwish, dubbed by many as the 'National Poet of Palestine', put this succinctly in his popular poetic narratives, 'Whatever we Palestinians are, we are not in our Palestine, which no longer exists' (quoted in Said 1986:11).

This use of a critical Palestinianness underlines the importance of memory-work and self-identification and emphasises how 'in exile Palestine is the centre of social relations' (Lindholm-Schulz 2003:119). Said has also argued that it is through intangible means (such as speech, cooking, and storytelling) and the creative repetition of tangible 'national icons'—from models and pictures of the Dome of the Rock and Al Aqsa mosque to embroidered dresses—that practices and objects 'heavy with memory… form the web of affiliations that we Palestinians use to tie ourselves to our identity and to each other' (Said 1986:14). As Lindholm-Schulz adds, not only do 'people build little Palestine's in their homes', but in refugee camps an archival memory-work and impulse operates in terms of how 'home' is partly recreated 'by naming clinics, streets and neighbourhoods after places in Palestine; and by reconstituting village, clan and family ties' (2003:114).

Archival re-construction projects 'on the ground' have similarly featured creative interventions operating on many different levels of the archival imagination, and continue to be active in the creation of diverse archival constituencies. Significant interventions

[7] Lindholm-Schulz (2003:21–22) goes on to argue: 'The claim I make is that displacement, dispersal, forced movement and constraints on movement have a much wider significance in this case. The predicament of alienation defines the lives of most Palestinians—although in different regards. This is not to say that Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza (or in Israel) live *in* the diaspora. Rather that they are defined by a diasporic condition. Certain features important to the term are indeed applicable also to West Bank, Gazan and Israeli Palestinians'.

have come in the form of 'contrapuntal readings' of the Imperialist–Orientalist–Zionist archive (notably Mandate, Israeli-state, military archives and related photographic collections) by activists and revisionist historians (including Palestinians and Israelis). Chief amongst the many outcomes of these new narrative histories is that this scholar-activism has provided an alternative critical discourse which the Israeli historian Ilan Pape has defined in terms of a shared redemptive–therapeutic discourse: 'we should not be slaves of our history and memory… in order to perform this liberation act in Israel and Palestine we, you need first to rewrite, indeed salvage, a history that was erased and forgotten. The violent symbolic and real exclusion of people from the hegemonic narrative of the past is the source of violence in the present (Pappe 2004:xx). These 'New Historians' have re-read archival material, particularly the decommissioned and declassified Zionist and Haganah archives. These have been instrumental in approaching the topic of the Nakba from a critical perspective and for problematising official Israeli terminology of the Zionist 'transfer' policy. These alternative—often called post-Zionist-narratives have also offered a means to articulate an alternative vocabulary capable of recasting Israel's defensive, militarised Zionist policies as part of more pro-active acts which commentators such as Pappe have couched in terms of 'ethnic cleansing', 'apartheid' and 'racism' organised under the banner of 'tanks and torah'. These 'academic-archival' narratives have extended their influence beyond the academy to become accessible at popular level, while also becoming a key force in transforming public history and media debates.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, the archival impulse is nowhere stronger than in projects to re-constitute archives that seek to address the 'Nakba'—the Palestinian experience of traumatic loss of lives, homes land and collective memory. A number of such 'Nakba' archives are Web-based (www.palestineremembered.com and www.nakba-archive.org). By uploading source material like maps and collections of images, users are able to electronically and digitally reconstitute maps of pre-1948 Palestinian villages and landscapes. The testimonies of displaced persons world-wide and their oral histories continue to be collected, with those now living in refugee camps and with displaced Palestinians inside and outside Israel and within the occupied Palestinian territories. The sentiments informing these archival impulses are part of the politics of recognition and the project of memorialising the 'Nakba'. This focus on Web-based archival reconstruction within Palestine and in the diaspora is a crucial means by which communities can gain a sense of cohesion and maintain communication. The 1948 'Nakba' is also being increasingly positioned alongside what is increasingly being termed as the on-going 'Nakba' i.e. the on-going 'disaster' of the Palestinian experience of occupation and displacement.

Recent projects have included plans to erect physical memorials to the 'Nakba'[8] within and outside the Palestinian territories. Larger plans have been developed to address the re-interpretation and re-presentation of Palestinian cultural heritage sites and collections and to re-position these as iconic archival spaces. A central aspect of this process has been the nomination of Palestinian heritage sites for listing on the UNESCO World Heritage List, including the town of Bethlehem. A traditional form of Palestinian storytelling, the 'Hikaye', has also been inscribed as part of UNESCO's intangible heritage programme. These initiatives have been fundamental to the recognition of the diversity and prestige of

[8] The former Palestinian village of Deir Yasin which has become synonymous with Nakba violence and destruction lies within the same area as the Yad Vashem Holocaust Museum in West Jerusalem. This site is one for which many Palestinians and their supporters are campaigning to see some form of recognition and commemoration.

Palestinian cultural legacies both 'nationally' and within the international community. This sense of a pro-active networking aimed at promoting and preserving Palestine's cultural resources and cultural identity is also present in a further initiative by the Palestinian Authority, supported by UNESCO, to create a national museums strategy for Palestine. This includes the aim of putting international pressure on the 'return' (virtual or otherwise) of historical artefacts/collections/archives now 'exiled' internationally and within the state of Israel (see www.unesco.org).

Also taking up the archival impulse have been some very imaginative, creative and effective cultural NGOs. Projects orchestrated by NGOs active in the West Bank—including RIWAQ, PACE (the Palestinian Association for Cultural Exchange), Open Bethlehem and the Hebron Rehabilitation Committee—are actively creating their own 'heritage archives' in order to highlight the cultural identity of Palestinians (past and present) and the massive cultural destruction wrought both historically and in the present day (www.riwaq.org; www.hebronrc.org; www.openbethlehem.org). A key cause of contemporary heritage destruction and suffering is the diverse technologies of occupation: including checkpoints, the 'Separation-Apartheid' Wall, on-going conflict, the creation of settlements and the uncontrollable nature of illicit trade in antiquities. PACE, RIWAQ and the Hebron Rehabilitation Committee are organisations active in addressing these issues in combination with strategies for preservation, cultural revivalism and creating a more peaceful future for Palestinians. In similar fashion, Open Bethlehem's approach to the increasingly besieged situation in Bethlehem has been to create a Web-based campaign offering honorary citizenship and thereby creating a constituency of virtual Bethlehemites. This motif of the passport in turn problematises the Palestinian identity card situation (a key part of the apparatus of occupation) and the restrictions and suffering this brings.

Just as the motif of the identity card and the symbolism of Palestinian refugees holding the keys of former homes are an important part of Palestinian cultural identity, they have also been used subversively by scholars, activists and artists and others to recoup a sense of resistance and the intense preoccupation of Palestinians with a 'return to heritage'. Running alongside the documentary archival re-constitution is an increasingly pro-active reclamation and recasting of Palestinian identity through the media of film-making, photography, literature and arts. Included here is the graffiti artist Banksy's creation of 'Santa's Ghetto' in Bethlehem which encompasses the Separation Wall as part of its canvas. This ironic and subversive use of archival memory can also be found in an initiative by RIWAQ to create an inventory of Palestinian villages. This has since become an art installation entitled '50320 Names' in which these village names are recounted by the artist. The performance recently toured internationally as part of a wider installation-initiative known as the 'Palestinian Museum of Natural History' (PMNH). This conceptual museum has been employed by artist-archivists to communicate the sense of loss and extinction that pervades Palestinian heritage and identity. More recently, still the PMNH and the '50320 Names' installations were performed and exhibited at the Brunei Gallery at the School of Oriental and African Studies in London. The exhibition was placed alongside an exhibition of Palestinian archaeology excavated by Sir Flinders Petrie which is currently held at University College London. Part of the installation was a subversive claim that the PMNH had acquired the Petrie Palestinian Collection for its own 'collection'.

The motif of collaboration can be identified too in attempts by Israeli archivists to reconstruct and to create an awareness of Palestinian culture and heritage through some similarly inspired projects. Notable here is Zochrot (the title of which is the Hebrew feminine form of 'remembering' or 'those who remember') which consists of a group of Israelis 'working to raise awareness of the Nakba, the Palestinian catastrophe of 1948' and

to publicly ‘engage Jews and Palestinians in an open recounting of our painful common history. … [and to assert]… equal rights for all the peoples of this land, including the right of Palestinians to return to their homes’ (www.zochrot.org). The placing of original Palestinian town names in Israeli territory is just one part of the strategies used by Zochrot to draw out the ever-present Palestinian culture and heritage.

Conclusion: re-constructing the archive and being human

> *‘Memory for Cicero was something organised and structured. If you wanted to remember a speech you were about to give, you imagined a building with all sorts of rooms and corners, and in your mind’s eye you subdivided the parts of memory you wished to recall and placed them in various sections of the building; as you spoke you walked though the building in your head, so to speak, noting the places and the objects and the phrases as you went along. That way order was maintained in the memory. The modern art of memory is much more subjective to inventive re-ordering and re-deploying than that…’* (Said 2000:179–180).

> *‘Imagine it—you’re sitting in your living room, which you know so well; this is the room where the family watches television together after the evening meal…And, suddenly, that wall disappears with a deafening roar, the room fills with dust and debris, and through the wall pours one soldier after another, screaming orders. You have no idea if they are after you, if they’ve come to take over your home, or if your house just lies on their route to somewhere else. The children are screaming and panicking… Is it possible to even imagine the horror experienced by a five-year-old as four, six, eight, twelve soldiers, their faces painted black, submachine guns pointed everywhere, antennas protruding from their backpacks, making them look like giant alien bugs, blast their way through the wall?’ Pointing to another wall now covered by a bookcase, she added: ‘And this is where they left. They blew up the wall and continued to our neighbour’s house’* (Aisha quoted in Weizman 2007:195).

Arendt’s musings on the Muses as the mythical mistresses of the ancient art of memory-work and Said’s commentary on Cicero’s ‘Greco-Roman’ model of memory-work (the art of memory based upon the imaginary schema of the building with rooms, corners with objects and places as prompts for recollection) both illustrate the on-going search for an ‘organised and structured’ archival memory model. By way of contrast, in trying to comprehend the profound disturbance to memory and the splintering and shattering of memory-models in contexts of conflict the Israeli architect-academic Weizman’s depiction of the shattering event of the ‘unexpected penetration of war into the private domain of the home… experienced by civilians in Palestine’ provides an alternative model. In repeating the words of Aisha, a Palestinian woman interviewed in the *Palestine Monitor* in the aftermath of the attack on November 2002, and the experiences of ‘trauma’ and ‘humiliation’ that accompanied this juxtaposing of the building as metaphor for memory and the description of witnessing the literal and purposeful destruction of the ‘home’ exposes the cavernous gaps between imaginary and real, the metaphorical and the literal but also the trauma and humiliation that disrupts the refuge of the ‘everyday’ synonymous with ‘home’. With this loss of care and shelter also comes the violence of a threatening, contemporary ‘worldliness’.

A disruption of the profoundest kind to the home—the private archive—communicates both the psychological loss and the literal destruction of human life. It makes clear that apprehending memory-in-conflict and the 'right to a remembered presence' requires further archival modelling and alternative modes of representation. Strategies for giving voice to the silence that surrounds suffering have to confront the heritage of archival discourse. Questions of conflict and violence also raise question of the 'limits of the capacity to represent' (Das 2004:79). Here, the motif of temporality and the need to build a conflict-free present recurs. Das comments that conflict, violence, catastrophe 'doesn't stay in the past' but brings with it the annihilation of real and psychic worlds and fear of social suffering and becomes a recurrent possibility for the future.

What emerges in this paper, and more specifically in the recent transformations and appropriations of the archival impulse, is a call for the dominant (Orientalist, Zionist) archival grand narratives to be relinquished in terms of a more humane therapeutics. The task of caring for suffering human beings needs to be prioritised within a reconceptualised archival imagination which not only can address the psychic, metaphysical and existential need for refuge, asylum and home but the need for an operational practice committed to human well-being. The need to create spaces of recognition, commemoration, mourning, transition and hospitality is paramount. The archives of the past provide 'contrapuntal' resources for this kind of alternative memory-work and for an 'archival impulse' founded upon the acquisition and sustenance of both a 'heritage dignity' and the 'right to a remembered presence'.

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