The London School of Economics and Political Science

Uneven ground: An Ethnographic Study of Palestinian and Settler Mobility in the Occupied Palestinian West Bank

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Declaration

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Abstract

This thesis looks at the experiences of and controls over mobility among Palestinian refugees (in Dheishe refugee camp) and Israeli settlers (in Efrat settlement) in the south-central region of the Occupied West Bank. It explores how road, internet, and human networks serve as infrastructures through which the safe mobility of these groups and their respective states is generated, limited, and manipulated. I emphasise the “slipperiness” (Edwards 2003: 2) of infrastructure to show how the flows of people, goods, and ideas are differentially applied to different groups in a colonial setting.

I begin by exploring the notion of the multi-sited fieldsite, extending the concept across the discontinuous physical spaces of the West Bank. I then extend this notion of discontinuity to the ways I mobilised my positionality as a researcher in order to gain access and establish relationships among settlers and Palestinians. By drawing attention to the ways that positionality can be differentially rendered according to who we work with, I highlight how this impacts the wellbeing of the researcher and therefore informs the anthropological knowledge it generates.

I contextualise the historical mobilities of Jews and consequently Palestinians that have shaped the region, centring each group’s relation to and expression of their right of return. In tracing these histories I highlight the ways that these rights are expressed through visible and invisible means, reflected in the “underneath-ness” and invisibility of infrastructures themselves. I show how Zionist ideologies have informed the occupying Israeli state’s design and use of infrastructures in the West Bank to reflect its aims of expansion, segregation, and erasure.

Infrastructures replicate the political orders from which they emerge. In exploring road infrastructures, I show how separate and shared spaces enable Palestinians and Israelis to impact each other’s mobility. Internet infrastructures offer opportunities for creative resistance and regional mobility. Refugees and settlers themselves function as human infrastructures that perpetuate each group as it challenges the other, while still facilitating individual and group mobility.

Attention to infrastructures and mobility challenges the misconception that life in the West Bank is defined solely by violence and immobility. Studying both Palestinian and settler life in the West Bank enables a dual perspective which – though ethically complex – is useful in understanding the challenges faced by its residents and showing how mobility is a central logic shaping its past, present, and future.

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Introduction: All is not as it seems

Sitting outside the car mechanic's garage at the edge of Dheishe Palestinian refugee camp in Bethlehem in the winter of 2016, my friend Uday said something that stayed with me throughout my fieldwork. As we waited for my car to be repaired, we were facing the camp, with the red roofed houses of the Israeli Efrat settlement just visible behind it. Outlining a circle on the table with his finger, he told me "*ehna laffliffeen fi sijin. Bass hayna, ehna bndal laffliffeen"*; "we're going around in a prison. But here we are, we continue going around". His words summarised perfectly the experiences of Palestinian mobility and indirectly reflected on the conditions that allowed for the mobility of the Israeli settlers we could see in the distance. The mobilities of Palestinian refugees and Israeli settlers are the subject of this thesis.

Drawing on the Palestinian Arabic dialect term *laffliff,* meaning "to wander around aimlessly", Uday articulated something that is often not represented about life with occupation; that while mobility is limited, it is possible and even pervasive. The prison for Palestinians that he described was put in place by the occupying Israeli regime through a series of laws, material architecture, and infrastructures designed to confine and create enclaves in the West Bank for segregated use. This prison was also experienced from the outside by Israeli settlers, for whom these measures and constructions represented necessary security required for their settlement and movement around the West Bank. The prison Uday spoke of referenced these features while emphasising the possibilities for mobility in spite of them. Israel's occupation is often represented through its architectures and laws that limit mobility, obscuring the actual experiences of mobility in everyday life and the creative ways in which it is navigated and achieved.

In the Occupied Palestinian West Bank, Israeli settlers live alongside but separate from Palestinians and Palestinian refugees in a highly discontinuous landscape. In a segregated and heavily militarised environment where two states struggle for control, mobility is an everyday challenge for both Palestinians and Israelis. For Palestinians, Israeli occupation systematically limits and makes dangerous movement in and outside of their enclaves. For settlers, movement between their settlement enclaves and *Israel HaKatanah* (little Israel, He.) [1] is rendered dangerous by occasional Palestinian resistance. The same ground is therefore rendered highly uneven depending on who is using it. The settlement movement itself is an expression of individual and national mobility for

[1] The Hebrew term for Israel inside the Green Line or excluding the West Bank. Palestinians refer to Israel excluding the West Bank as historic Palestine or Palestine '48. I employ both terms throughout this thesis depending on whom I am discussing and their relation to the land and its borders.

Jewish Israelis. The remaining Palestinian presence in the West Bank, however, impedes the mobility of these settlers when they attempt to move between Israeli spaces. When managing these challenges, road, internet, and human infrastructures are used by the region's two sets of residents to make possible and creatively to navigate restrictions and limitations to their mobility. In this thesis I explore these infrastructures and the ways they are used, emphasising the importance of their histories and ideological influences to produce a more accurate portrait of life in the West Bank than is often offered. By using mobility as a lens with which to explore the present, but also the past, I offer a contribution to anthropological thinking about the West Bank that places Israeli settler and Palestinian experiences of the space alongside each other. I do not do this to contrast the differing experiences of settler-colonialism of my Palestinian and Israeli interlocutors, but to understand how mobility carves out different spaces and social relations within the same few square kilometres.

Facts on the ground

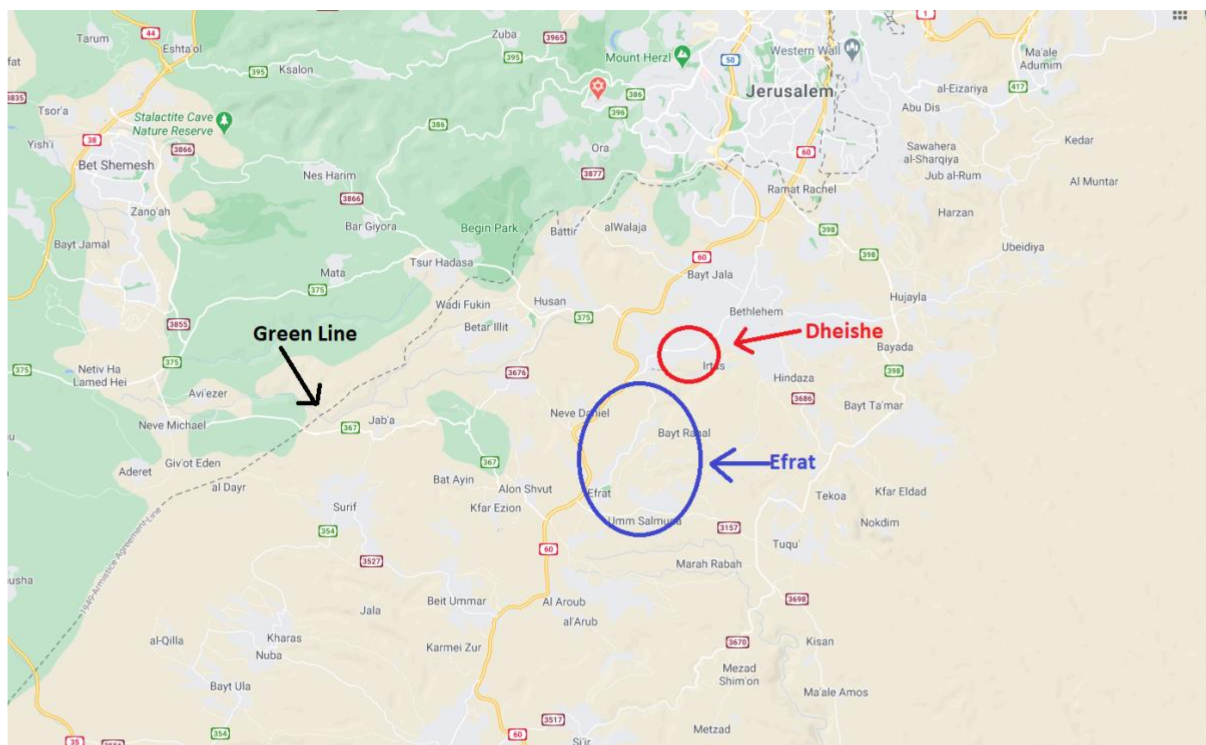

Figure 1: Map showing location of Efrat settlement, the Green Line, and Dheishe Refugee Camp. Credit: Google Maps.

The research for this thesis took place between 2015 and 2018 in the south-central region of the West Bank in Dheishe refugee camp and Efrat settlement (as shown in Figure 1) as well as the spaces in between them. The West Bank, bordered by a Green Line drawn by the United Nations (UN) in 1947, has been occupied by Israel since 1967, shortly after which groups of Israelis began to establish settlements on the Palestinian land within it. Dheishe is home to some 13,000 Muslim Palestinian refugees ethnically cleansed in 1948 from areas now contained within the Israeli state.

Efrat, founded in 1982, has a population of around 10,000 Jewish Israelis, a significant proportion of whom migrated to Israel from North America and western Europe in the 1980s. Despite being less than a kilometre apart, members of each community are denied entry to each other's spaces, speak different languages, practice different religions, and are governed by different legal regimes. Crucially, members of neither group are native to the West Bank but came to live there by virtue of its relations to the ideological forces that led to the creation of the state of Israel.

It is helpful to frame Israel's occupation of Palestine as settler-colonialism because, like colonialism it is defined by unequal relationships, but unlike colonialism it involves an "exogenous collective" that aim "to locally and permanently replace indigenous ones" (Veracini and Cavanagh 2016: 4). Since their migration to Palestine in the late 19th century, Jewish migrants have claimed ownership of the land on the basis of Zionism, the Jewish nationalist movement founded on a "mythico-history" (Peteet 2017: 5) of Jewish exile from it several millennia prior and therefore. This history is then used as the foundation for the Jewish right to inherit the land of Palestine, culminating in the establishment of an Israeli state in 1948. The founding of the Israeli state cemented Jewish domination of Palestine to maximize land holding and economic strength solely for its Jewish citizens while denying the existence of an indigenous Palestinian population (Peteet 2017; Yiftachel 2006). Settlement is, therefore, a central aspect of the history of the Israeli state. The extension of settlement into the West Bank after its occupation in 1967 is similarly framed as a further "return" from exile, and therefore emerges as a continuation of a pre-existing pattern. Those Palestinians remaining in the West Bank now live as occupied subjects with limited rights, including a significant refugee population who fled areas now occupied by Israel during the wars preceding its establishment.

The extreme imbalance of power relations generated by competing claims over territory, indigeneity, and mobility drew me to work with Palestinian refugees and Israeli settlers in the West Bank. Their unique relations to mobility and history have informed their political identities. Refugeehood is defined by the experience of exile, of forced movement from a place of origin. Israeli settlement also implies a recent experience of relocation from place of origin to a new setting. Israel's occupation of Palestine is framed around a Jewish right of return to their imagined homeland while Palestinians expelled in this process are simultaneously denied their own right of return. In a setting in which both Palestinian and Israeli sides claim indigeneity to the same land, it seemed to be most interesting to explore the mobilities of two groups who were unable to establish a birth right to the specific places in which they ended up living. Palestinian refugees and Israeli settlers are also

at the forefront of any potential peace negotiations between the two states. As well as being symbolic of the forces of migration involved in the creation of the Israeli state and its subsequent occupation of Palestine, settlers and refugees are an important part of shaping the future of the region.

The Palestinian National Authority (PNA) governs a small fraction of Palestinian spaces in the West Bank, including the area around Dheishe (but not Dheishe itself).[2] The majority of the West Bank, however, including all Jewish settlements, falls under the control of the Israeli military government of the West Bank, a proxy government of the Israeli state. Refugee camps like Dheishe live in siege-like conditions, although within PNA-governed space they are under regular attack by the Israeli army for their association with Palestinian resistance. While not indigenous to the West Bank, they hold West Bank identity cards that prevent them crossing the Green Line or entering any settlement spaces without difficult-to-obtain permits issued by the Israeli military government. This renders Palestinian refugees doubly immobile; they can neither return to their land of origin as refugees nor can they leave or move freely within the West Bank where they currently reside. Israeli settlers in Efrat, like all settlers, live in a highly securitised gated community under the jurisdiction of the Israeli military administration. These gradually expanding settlements occupy Palestinian-owned land and encroach upon remaining Palestinian space, creating tense relations between their residents and Palestinians. By virtue of holding the same identity cards as all Jewish Israelis, settlers have freedom of movement throughout the country with the exception of those areas under the control of the PNA government. Both the lives of settlers and Palestinian refugees are put in danger by the other's presence, though for Palestinians danger is far more prevalent due to the systematic power imbalances resulting from the occupation. Mobility in this setting therefore becomes centred on practices related to ensuring safe movement for both groups of its residents.

The space of the West Bank is further complicated by the arrangement of settlements and their infrastructures. Settlements are designed to surround and isolate Palestinian areas creating spaces "woven together by lines of infrastructure routed through three-dimensional space" (Weizman 2007: 12). Israeli road and telecommunications infrastructures tunnel under and bridge over Palestinian space, creating a complex environment of segregated but overlapping, visible and invisible spaces. These visibilities and invisibilities are an important aspect of the occupation; Israeli settlement has historically made itself visible while rendering Palestinians invisible from Israeli

[2] As I explore in Chapter Three, like many Palestinian refugees, those in Dheishe refuse resettlement and governance by the PNA, and consider themselves guests of the West Bank until their return.

civilian view. These same infrastructures simultaneously work to render Palestinian users highly visible and legible to the Israeli government. Throughout this thesis I pay specific attention to areas and moments in which both Palestinians and Israelis share road and internet infrastructures, complicating the notion of segregation and resulting in creative practices that allow both Israeli settlers and Palestinian refugees to be mobile.

I also look at a third and important infrastructure in shaping the West Bank: the human infrastructures of settlements and camps. Membership of both groups is predicated on residence within their respective spaces, at least for some part of their lives. To be a settler, one must undertake the act of settling either by relocating to a settlement from inside the Green Line or being born in a settlement to settler parents. Although Palestinian refugeehood is a complex identity, it is broadly defined as those who fled Israeli occupation in 1948 or 1967 and were unable to return, and their descendants[3]. While not all refugees remain in camps and not all settlers live permanently in settlements, for the most part the longevity of either group relies on the facts on the ground created by their human infrastructures. "Facts on the ground" is a politically charged term used to describe the Israeli tactic of settlement first in historic Palestine and later the West Bank (Abu El-Haj 2001). Its underlying principle is that, though illegal, once settlements are established, they cannot be removed, and therefore the process of land appropriation is irreversible. Despite the fact that settlements have in the past sometimes been evacuated, the filling of settlements with human infrastructures nevertheless creates these "facts". Palestinian responses to occupation and settlement also create their own "facts on the ground"; the growing Palestinian and particularly refugee population, the creation of permanence in the liminal space of the refugee camp, and Palestinian resistance all amount to a durable human infrastructure. In this thesis I look at such "facts" to understand how both settlers and Palestinian refugees use their human infrastructures to increase their capacities to be mobile.

Mobility of people and place

Palestinian mobility and indeed immobility has been a much-studied phenomenon among both academics (Baumann 2019; Bishara 2015; Griffin 2020; Harker 2009; Kelly 2006, 2008; Peteet 2017; Selwyn 2001; Weizman 2007) and human rights organisations (B'Tselem, Machsom Watch, Peace Now, Middle East Monitor). The majority of work on this subject seeks to document and explore the ways Israel's occupation of the West Bank reduces and criminalises Palestinian mobility through law, architecture, and physical violence. In this context, mobility is concerned with both the ability and

[3] This is further elaborated upon in Chapter Three.

the freedom to move (Salazar 2017) and linked to territory, identity, and the governance thereof. While valuable, scholarship of Palestinian mobility and immobility tend to either omit Israeli settler mobility or implicitly frame it as the “flip side of Palestinian immobilisation”; a “far less encumbered, high-speed mobility…through a contiguous and seemingly secured space” (Peteet 2017: 2). In fact, there is very little (English-language) scholarly work on settler mobility within the West Bank. Most studies instead focus on the absorption of international migrants to Israel into the state’s fringe regions (Harel 2017; Weiss 2011) and therefore frames settler mobility as transnational.

By paying attention to both Israeli settler and Palestinian refugee experiences of *local* mobility within the West Bank I therefore problematise their treatment as binaries, though not as an attempt to deny the imbalances of power and mobility between the two. Instead, it is to shine a much-needed light on the ways that settlers themselves experience immobility and insecurity at the hands of both Palestinians and the Israeli state. Attention to these limitations for settlers paints a more accurate and complex picture of everyday life in the West Bank while demonstrating how the Israeli state uses limitations to settler mobility as a justification for its occupation and further expansion. In the West Bank mobility is weaponised as both a political strategy to govern and discipline Palestinian subjects (Lelievre and Marshall 2015) and a means by which Palestinians in turn resist this control. For Israeli settlers, mobility is a social strategy used to challenge both the Israeli state and the Palestinian population whom they encounter when doing so. For the Israeli state which implicitly supports settlement while explicitly attempting to distance itself from it, mobility is framed as an existential necessity that justifies its control over Palestinians. As I show throughout this thesis, each group conceives of their mobility in different ways, making it an interesting object of study that includes the practices, perceptions, and imaginations associated with it (ibid.). These aspects of mobility are particularly salient in the West Bank, where the histories of its inhabitants shape different visions for its imagined futures.

I approach settler and refugee life in the West Bank through the lens of mobility as a multi-layered, polysemic and even paradoxical term. Contrary to both my expectations and common representations of the West Bank, I was constantly in motion throughout my research. This mobility, however, was frequently mediated by my being rendered immobile. Often the motion I experienced felt like stasis; journeys alone and with my friends and interlocutors were defined by restrictions, long waits, or having to manipulate routes, appearances, and methods. These manipulations were the formative experiences both of my own fieldwork and the lives of the people I worked with.

Throughout my fieldwork I began to pay more attention to the myriad ways in which mobility was both controlled and yet central to everyday life despite or around these controls.

This attention revealed differences in the ways mobility is conceptualised by Palestinian refugees and Israeli settlers in relation to their nationalistic causes and histories that highlight the fact that it is not just people but also states that are mobile. The settlers I met understood the creation and expansion of the Israeli state as a necessary consequence of their right of return from millennia of exile. Their return necessitated the expulsion or "return" of Palestinian Arabs to other Arab locales, Palestinians have since sought their own return, and in the meantime attempted to retain their presence and resistance to occupation by remaining mobile and refusing erasure and further expulsion. Mobility therefore appears as an existential as well as a practical need for both Israeli settlers and Palestinians.

These conceptions of mobility informed my methodology throughout my time in the West Bank. To do this research I had to be physically mobile, which in a space as discontinuous as the West Bank relies upon physiology and identity as well as time, money, and chance. In order to access and gain acceptance by Palestinian refugees and Israeli settlers I had to mobilise different aspects of my identity, rendering my own sense of self fairly discontinuous at times. I elaborate on these difficulties further in Chapter Two; as I *laffliffed* in and out of the prison, to borrow Uday's words, mobility became the mediating principle by which I experienced and understood local forms of movement. For Palestinians, these forms reflected their ways of being mobile *despite* the limitations in place. For settlers, experiences of mobility evoked more ideological and historicised ways of conceiving of their ability to move as limited *because of* the occupation. Throughout this thesis I draw on these forms and conceptions of mobility as both the methods through which I conducted this research and the outcomes of the work itself.

Paying attention to the paradoxes of movement and motion can challenge several misconceptions about the nature of occupation, life in the West Bank, and the ways that Palestinians and Israeli settlers are represented. The first and most obvious is that, as Uday pointed out, stasis is not the defining feature of occupied life as is often assumed by the centring of limitations of Palestinian mobility in scholarly work (Peteet 2017; Selwyn 2001). Unable to return to their land, leave the West Bank, or even easily exit the crowded confines of the refugee camp, the refugees I met experienced feelings of existential and everyday claustrophobia (Kelly 2006). This was often expressed in the common idiom of a need to "*ataghayer al jow",* or "change one's atmosphere". A response both to

the wider condition of occupation and the poor air quality and lack of public space inside the camp, the importance of changing one's atmosphere was heavily emphasised as a regular necessity. This need shaped my fieldwork among Palestinians, whom I would frequently accompany in changing their atmosphere, an event that drew attention to the importance of mobility – or limited freedom – amongst an imprisoned population. Indeed, the cultural importance of mobility is reflected in Palestinian culture; popular films like Hani Abu-Asad's *Ford Transit,* Amber Fares' *Speed Sisters,* and Muayad Alayan's *Love, Theft, and Other Entanglements* all reference and depict the importance of being able to move, albeit in restricted ways, throughout Palestine and the West Bank.

Living in spacious but highly securitised environments, settlers expressed no such need to change their environment since, by taking part in the settlement movement, they were already complicit in a process of changing their own environment. Recent migrants to the West Bank, settlers cited its wide expanses of countryside and a freedom to use it as a significant 'pull factor' in their decision to settle away from metropolitan areas and into the more rural West Bank. Despite their relative freedom of movement, settlers saw the remaining Palestinian population as limiting their mobility. The physical presence of Palestinians and the West Bank zoning policies introduced in the 1994 Oslo Accords were seen as constant reminders of an incomplete occupation that restricted their movement and placed their entire group at existential risk.

Palestinian mobility, however, is rendered more complex. While settlers hold and regularly exercise the right to move in and out of the West Bank for the purposes of leisure, labour, religious worship, and other daily activities, Palestinian mobility is more restricted. Many Palestinians in the West Bank are able to exit the region through the *tasreeh* (permit, Ar.) regime, through which the Israeli military government of the West Bank offer permits for Palestinians employed through Israeli organisations or brokers. These Palestinians cannot exit with their own vehicles, but must queue for and walk-through checkpoints. An estimated 133,000 Palestinians work legally and illegally in Israel through these permits, often as manual labourers or in the service industry (ITUC 2021: 4). In this thesis, however, I focus on local mobility within the West Bank. These forms of mobility are also conducted for labour purposes – for those Palestinians working in construction or service industries inside settlements, a common practice. Others, and the majority of mobility I focus on in this thesis, are denied this experience, likely by virtue of being refugees who are less likely to receive permits due to refugees and their camps being associated by the Israeli government with resistance. As a result, the mobilities of the Palestinian refugees I worked with are primarily within Palestinian spaces in the West Bank and occur for as a result of labour, leisure, or worship.

Within these different framings of mobility came different social practices. For Palestinians, the need to change one's atmosphere was expressed in the *laffliff*. Because of the limitations on Palestinian movement and the enclavisation of the space of the West Bank, this wandering movement no longer occurs by foot as it is unsafe (Shehadeh 2007). As a result, *laffliffs* now take place by car, so to *laffliff* has come to mean to go out for a drive on an aimless route. Because I had my own car and was keen to be useful to my friends in Palestine, as well as because I had internalised the need regularly to "change my atmosphere", my fieldwork was shaped by numerous invaluable *laffliffs*.

Settlers framed their relation to movement and space differently in ways that challenge common misconceptions about their reasons for settling. Settlement is ideologically motivated by Zionist notions of the redemptive qualities of reclaiming land and the consequent right to Jewish mobility both to and within Israel. The act of settling thus provided settlers with the means to change their atmosphere and be part of a new phase in Jewish history. Despite this being a motivational factor for many to move across the Green Line, the Israeli government's intention to turn settlements from religious enclaves to suburbs has changed the reasons these settings continue to be populated. Although many are driven by ideological goals, the suburbanisation process has forced many Israelis and potential migrants to settle when they may not share the same religious-political motives as others. The increasing and intentional scarcity of affordable housing inside the Green Line has pushed its Jewish population into West Bank settlements in order to maintain or achieve their own social mobility. Suburbanisation also necessitates daily commuting and movement between urban centres inside the Green Line and the more rural environment of the West Bank. The creation of a context in which settlers expressed their freedom of movement, however, also produced Palestinian resistance to their presence, creating an unsafe environment for settler mobility. Settlement was therefore rendered a dangerous as well as controversial choice towards which many are being pushed by the state. Although settlement does represent an ideological commitment to Zionist values, it is often also an individual decision influenced by economic factors deliberately put in place by the Israeli state looking to achieve its expansionist goals.

These dangers in being mobile speak to another common misconception of life in the West Bank for both Palestinians and Israeli settlers; that segregation is a complete project. Attention to mobility highlights the ways that the Israeli state enforces segregation but with notable exceptions that serve its occupation. These exceptions, commonly found in infrastructural spaces like roads or the internet, emerge as both frontiers and zones of potential engagement in which segregation is both

reinforced and rendered complex. Attention to such spaces reveals the impossibility of segregation in an occupation designed to create enclaves. It could also be seen to reveal the intentionality behind this logic. As Lavie suggests, the Israeli internal security service occasionally allow Palestinian resistance actors to "slip through" (2014: 165) in order to generate a distraction from internal Jewish Israeli unrest. I apply this logic to the shared spaces of the West Bank, which create space for Palestinians to resist Israel's occupation, targeting the Israeli army and Israeli settlers. As the Israeli state appears capitalises on Palestinian resistance in order to distract from internal discord, so it may also be able to use the danger Palestinian resistance poses to Israelis to pursue more violent and comprehensive control over Palestinians. This control is also expressed in the state's creation of infrastructures that serve the expanding settler population of the West Bank, rendering the Israeli state mobile as it uses infrastructure to represent the encroachment of its borders into Palestinian space. Segregation may therefore be left intentionally incomplete to serve the occupation's expansionist aims. This mobility and immobility takes place primarily in road, internet, and human infrastructures, the central focuses of analysis in this thesis.

Infrastructures

Anthropological thinking about infrastructures centres on their capacities to render things mobile. Infrastructures are "built networks that facilitate the flow of goods, people, or ideas and allow for their exchange over space" (Larkin 2013: 328), a definition I adopt throughout this thesis. In contexts of occupation, flows are both exploitatively engineered for the occupiers' gain and restrictively limited for that of the occupied. A dual perspective – on both Palestinian and Israeli use of the same infrastructures with different relations to power and mobility – emphasises the different ways that people, goods, and ideas can be moved around. This emphasis also highlights the blockages, closures, and the diversions of the things that flow through them. In the West Bank, only settler-occupiers are intended to receive the full effects and flows of infrastructure. Despite this, they often feel that their needs are not being met by the Israeli state and use their own human infrastructure to circumvent or override restrictions on their mobility that the Israeli state puts in place. Palestinian refugee infrastructure users, meanwhile, establish practices that mediate Israel's restrictions to their physical mobility to obtain what they need. They also rely on their human infrastructure in a manner similar to that used by settlers, namely to consolidate and expand their group's access to resources. An infrastructural approach is useful to identify both groups' experiences of mobility through these networks.

The recent infrastructural turn in the social sciences made advances in anthropological theory that were influenced by attention to reflexivity and integration of practices around science and technology into their analysis (Niewöhner 2015). Drawing on these advancements, there is a novel emphasis on infrastructures as relational (Star 1999). Following this body of work, I approach infrastructures less through their materiality and technicality and more by paying attention to the relations and practices their use creates. It is these practices related to achieving, controlling, and rerouting mobility that are useful in the setting of the West Bank.

To locate the analytic value of infrastructures, it is helpful to first dissect the word 'infrastructure' into its composite parts. 'Infra', meaning 'underneath' or 'below', brings attention to both its mundane and invisible qualities in mediating and shaping social life. Attention to the mundane serves several purposes. Initially, this research contributes to an expanding body of work that focuses on the everyday and the mundane in Palestinian life under occupation (Baumann 2019; Calis 2011; Kelly 2008; Stamatopoulou-Robbins 2019). This moves analysis away from its more spectacular aspects including violence and the partisan politics through which the region is often represented (Allen 2008; Jean-Klein 2001; Peteet 1994). By centring my analysis on the mundane use of infrastructure, its 'underneath-ness' necessitates thinking about what is 'above', directing, or shaping it, and therefore the power relations between those who conceived and built it, on the one hand, and those who use it, on the other. In structuralist-Marxist terms, this could be seen as equivalent to the superstructure, or the level of ideology justifying and legitimating the design and implementation of the technical-material structures of the everyday. In its occupation of Palestine, the Israeli government's adherence to Zionism influences the design, construction, and governance of infrastructure that enables its Jewish citizens' mobility. Because Zionism has come to mean the negation of a pre-existing Palestinian population in Israel, these infrastructures further erase them from Jewish civilian view while rendering them highly visible to its military. Understanding these ideological bases of infrastructural development exposes what Larkin calls their "aftereffect of expectation" (2018: 182); that infrastructures cannot be theorised outside of the political orders that bring them into existence.

Marxist-structuralist accounts of infrastructure, however, are limited by a somewhat ahistorical approach (Ortner 1984). Infrastructural approaches instead present these kinds of set-ups as "archaeologies of differential provisioning" (Anand, Gupta, and Appel 2018: 3) by decentring abstract political rationalities and instead highlighting immediate practices around the material realities of social life. Attention to Zionism is therefore necessary in understanding the ways that

infrastructures are designed by the Israeli government to exclude Palestinians from equal use. In Chapter Three I explore this in greater depth, tracing Zionism's relation to Jewish and Palestinian histories of mobility, without which it is difficult to contextualise the way the region's infrastructures work today.

In much of the anthropological literature on the subject, infrastructural flow that is blocked or diverted is framed as the result of a failing or weak state, particularly in the wake of political change or structural readjustment (Anand, Gupta, and Appel 2018; Fredericks 2018; Harvey, Jensen, and Morita 2017; von Schnitzler 2018). These studies of "dys-appearing" infrastructure (Akrich and Pasveer 2004 cf. Niewöhner 2015) emphasise its simultaneous dysfunction and disappearance, often resulting in the (re)production of social exclusion. Anand, Gupta, and Appel's edited volume on infrastructure, for example, notably opens with an exploration of how a failure in Michigan's water infrastructure came to exclude its predominantly black American residents from clean water supplies (2018: 1). The logic of state failure producing "dys-appearing" infrastructure, however, is less applicable to the West Bank where the situation is more complex. In supporting and facilitating settlement – and rendering Palestinians threatening and therefore necessarily surveilled – the Israeli state achieves its aims. The PNA governs a quasi-state under the control of the Israeli state and was likely never intended to 'succeed' as a government. Instead, the PNA is a temporary administration designed to cover a seemingly unending interim period and is limited by Israel in its capacities to build its own infrastructures. By actively seeking to leave out its Palestinian subjects from access to such organisational services, Israeli-designed infrastructure in the West Bank functions as a means of social exclusion by definition or by design.

In the same ways that research on mobility has framed immobile Palestinians as opposed to fully mobile Israelis, so too does regional research frame Palestinians as excluded from Jewish Israelis' free use of the state's infrastructure. These works of research document the numerous ways that the Israeli state enacts its occupation through infrastructure that directly damages and excludes Palestinian life in different ways. Meiton (2019) traces the Israeli electrification of Palestine from the pre-state era to show how infrastructural development was intentionally exclusionary of Palestine's Arab population. Stamatopoulou-Robbins (2019) similarly demonstrates how Palestinians in the West Bank today are not only excluded from Israel's waste infrastructures but also "sieged" (2019: 2) by Israeli waste dumped on their land. Miryam Aouragh and Helga Tawil-Souri's work on the co-option of Palestinian telecommunications infrastructures explore the simultaneous exclusion and surveillance of Palestinian internet use under occupation. Israel's use of road and public transport

infrastructures have been studied by many (Baumann 2019; Bishara 2015; Griffin 2020; Salamanca 2014; Selwyn 2001) to demonstrate how Israel erases and excises Palestinians from the landscape of Jerusalem and the West Bank. What unites almost all of this valuable and important work, however, is its assumption or exclusion of Jewish Israeli experiences of the same West Bank infrastructure. These experiences are not homogenous; ethnic, racial, and geographic divisions within Jewish Israeli society also distribute infrastructure in an exclusionary fashion, including between *Israel HaKatanah* and the West Bank (Allegra, Handel, and Maggor 2017; Dalsheim and Harel 2016). In fact, and as I argue in this thesis, Jewish Israelis' own experiences of infrastructure are necessary to understand how the Israeli state justifies and expands its occupation of Palestine.

The exclusionary nature of Israel's infrastructures also draws attention to how human relationships and connections may perform the work of infrastructure when the latter has failed, emphasising "collaboration among residents seemingly marginalized from and immiserated by urban life" as Simone has pointed out in his work on African cities (2004: 407). It is therefore not necessarily only failed states but also colonial and apartheid states that experience blockages of infrastructural flows. Von Schnitzler's work on apartheid technopolitics in South Africa examines such a case, noting that "apartheid was...made functional via its infrastructures…to channel and police mobility" (2018: 138). My approach seeks to advance on von Schnitzler's work by examining apartheid infrastructures in their use in a context of ongoing colonial occupation from the perspectives of both colonising and colonised groups.

The concept of "dys-appearing" infrastructure also invites critique of the ways that states use sophisticated service provision to present themselves as modern, and therefore as inherently positive (Mcfarlane and Rutherford 2008). Throughout my analysis of roads, internet, and human infrastructures, I highlight how they are constitutive of state-building and the creation of nationalised space. The Israeli state was founded on ideas of redemption through settlement and creating autochthony on land believed to be inherited from God (Yiftachel 2006). Its infrastructural development became an integral part of the Zionist project of redemption for Jews to transform the land as they transformed themselves into a successful and modern national project (Selwyn 2001). In this way the Israeli core, its Zionist government which holds the monopoly on infrastructural design and implementation, must simultaneously govern two peripheries. The first is that of the Jewish settlers whose mobility is desired for strategic purposes. The second periphery, Palestinians, are the undesired minority encouraged to leave or otherwise rendered invisible and whose reduced mobility is equally important from a security standpoint. Those infrastructures used by both

peripheral groups therefore become problematic when Palestinians try to use them for their own aims. Though it is "through infrastructure people test their relationships with the state" (Bishara 2015: 34), greater attention is needed here to whom those people are and to which state they relate.

Over the course of its occupation of Palestine, organisations of global governance like the UN as well as international media have paid increasing scrutiny to the Israeli government for its poor treatment of Palestinians. Attention to both the core and the periphery can be highlighted using ethnographic research to reveal the nuanced ways that the core is able to achieve its aims by appearing as if its infrastructural developments serve both its periphery populations. Often this is achieved temporally; by gradually reducing access to new roads or gradually increasing (but crucially still limiting) access to telecommunications infrastructures. These nuances are made visible through ethnographic research, which allowed me to collect histories of how infrastructural access for Palestinians and Israeli settlers changed over time and how both sets of interlocutors have adapted to them.

These adaptations draw attention to the 'structure' aspect of infrastructure and the work of the infrastructural turn. Structuralist thinking of the 1960s, seeking to improve on previous theoretical approaches to structure, were interested in factors informing and shaping the lives of those they studied. This work, however, paid little attention to human agency and therefore emerged as overly deterministic. Infrastructural approaches, however, create space for human creativity in adapting their uses of infrastructure to local need, a particularly useful approach in the West Bank where the two peripheral groups use infrastructures in different ways. The region is one of rapid change, both due to the expansion of settlements and the fluctuating policing of infrastructural use by the Israeli authorities. In addition, both Palestinian refugees and Israeli settlers must respond to the paradoxical denial of the other's right to inhabit the land as they continue to inhabit it. These factors make a dual study all the more useful for thinking critically about how different groups respond to the same material-technical provisions of infrastructure based on their relations to power and access to mobility.

A shortcoming of the infrastructural turn for this research, however, is in the difficulties encountered in the methodological approaches to locating and studying a seemingly expansive fieldsite for the study of infrastructure, and particularly in this case, of multiple infrastructures. With sites linking core and peripheries and two culturally and linguistically different user groups, designating a zone of analysis becomes complicated. Adding to this the need to move safely through

a discontinuous, highly militarised, and often dangerous set of spaces, the West Bank proves a particularly difficult setting in which to demarcate a fieldsite. Often studies have overcome aspects of these challenges by focusing on one single infrastructure (Anand 2015; Harvey and Knox 2015; Stamatopoulou-Robbins 2019) or one user group (Elyachar 2012; Salamanca 2010; von Schnitzler 2018) as their object of study. I approached this challenge by using network analysis as a supplementary analytical instrument to organise my fieldsite, as I elaborate upon in Chapter One. I therefore structured my approach by locating different users of infrastructure as points connected by their social relations, first amongst Palestinian refugees and then amongst Israeli settlers in the West Bank. This allowed me to trace discrete networks that overlapped where infrastructural spaces became shared. By either moving physically with them as they were mobile throughout the same space, or learning how experiences of the same infrastructures differed, I was able to trace everyday experiences of mobility through three specific infrastructures. This became particularly useful in Chapter Six, in which I propose that the Palestinian refugee and Israeli settler families I worked with themselves operate as human infrastructures. This use remained supplementary, however, as unlike infrastructural approaches, it could not account for the underlying social forces that have placed settlers and refugees in their current settings. Particularly in a study in which mobility needs to be understood in relation to wider trends that have led to settlement and its inverse, refugee displacement, network analysis cannot offer an explanation of the *how*, but simply the where and what.

Actor network theory may too have been a useful approach for those engaging with the more technical aspects of infrastructure, and certainly in understanding their more affective dimensions. However, the purpose of this study was to focus primarily on the social relationships between the humans involved in infrastructures and less the infrastructures themselves. In this sense I pay less attention to the material aspects that control the mobility of actors in the West Bank themselves, such as the checkpoints, identity cards, or signage that controls much of the movement around the West Bank. Instead, I pay more attention to the relations between the authorities regulating them and those using them.

The growth of infrastructure studies in the social sciences means that the boundaries of what can constitute an infrastructure have been widened to the extent that “now almost anything can be called an infrastructure from social housing…to internet communications” (Venkatesan et al. 2018: 5). This “widening” signals a shift of focus from traditional ‘hard’ infrastructures, notably the more visible road (Harvey and Knox 2015; Dalakoglou 2012; Masquelier 2002), oil pipelines (Appel 2012;

Limbert 2010), railway (Fisch 2018) and water infrastructures (Carse 2012; McKee 2019; von Schnitzler 2018). Perhaps more difficult to define and delimit ethnographically, and also presumably due to technological advancements, approaches to 'soft' – or perhaps less materially visible – infrastructures have also begun to emerge in social media studies (Juris 2012) and human infrastructures (Simone 2004)**.** With these new and creative ways of thinking about infrastructure, they have become "slippery" (Edwards 2003: 2); the more creative the interpretations of infrastructure the less defined they become. In this thesis I embrace this slipperiness, ordering my analyses of the three infrastructures of mobility I engage with from most concrete and material to most slippery. This ordering intentionally coincides with the visibility and materiality of each infrastructure in question.

I begin in Chapter Four by looking at roads as a classic 'hard' infrastructure with its visible and traversable networks for vehicular mobility. Road infrastructures shaped the majority of my fieldwork in that they determined the routes available for and quotidian experiences related to mobility according to with whom I was travelling. Their different ways of using roads reveal distinctive ways that Palestinians and Israelis conceived of mobility and they experience space. The materiality of roads, perhaps one of the most studied aspects of occupation infrastructure in Palestine, present stark and symbolically rich settings for understanding occupation. Settlements and camps produced their own kinds of roads that reflect the histories of those building and using them. In places where Israeli-built roads for settlers allowed Palestinian traffic, these roads became a frontier in which Zionism's attempt to erase Palestinians and Palestinian presence on the roads collided, uniting the discontinuities of the space and Zionism. A dual Israeli and Palestinian study of shared roads thus revealed that they created spaces shaped by the mobilities of their conceivers and are therefore symbolic of a central paradox of Zionist governance. Shared roads such as those that connect Dheishe and Efrat reflected the ways Israeli settlers and Palestinians and their respective states related to each other. In this way roads also revealed numerous invisible relations, particularly in the ways that physical spaces were provided for limited interactions between an otherwise segregated population.

I then move on in Chapter Five to examine internet infrastructures, centring my analysis on social media and uses of mobile internet. Unlike roads, these infrastructures were partially visible through their technological aspects but rendered simultaneously invisible by their reliance on wireless transmissions. Despite their wireless capacities they are arguably an example of a 'hard' infrastructure with visible technological elements. In this chapter, however, I focus on the specific

(and separate) social media groups used by settlers and Palestinian refugees that rapidly transmit information about safe movement through the region in relation to local events as they occur. A more modern iteration of a communications infrastructure, these groups are nevertheless reliant on telecommunications networks but function through social media platforms for networking and messaging. Such groups allow their users to navigate the often-dangerous environment of the West Bank by updating their subscribers faster than local news or traditional media forms are able to, giving them the tools to navigate road infrastructures safely.

I use these networks to contribute to anthropologies of the internet that have predominantly focused on the internet's capacity to allow its users to be mobile across regional and national boundaries. Within anthropology, the internet has received much attention in its capacity to reunite fragmented and diasporic groups across transnational distances. In this chapter, however, I approach the internet as an infrastructure that facilitates local mobility in culturally specific ways for both Palestinian refugees and Israeli settlers. In doing this I show how the internet, often hailed as a means by which those rendered physically immobile can be virtually mobile, was used in the West Bank not only to become engage in virtual movement but also to *inform* users about the issues related to their material mobility across its immediate and discontinuous space. By using social media as a space to become citizen journalists and citizen surveillors, Israeli settlers and Palestinian refugees used the internet to produce their own news about the region as it happened, evidenced by pictures and videos. The internet therefore provided a virtual infrastructure through which ideas and information could be rapidly transmitted that then enabled people to be safely mobile in the material realm.

Despite this facilitation of mobility, local uses of the internet also reflected political dynamics playing out offline. At the same time that the internet offered a way for its users to circumvent restrictions, the internet reflected the ways that the Israeli government attempted to render its Palestinian subject population immobile. The internet for Palestinians therefore became an additional way in which Palestinian mobility could be controlled and surveilled for the benefit of Israeli settlers and therefore of the Israeli state's occupation. In paying attention to local uses of the internet it becomes clear that the internet is not, as is often interpreted (Aouragh 2007; Khoury-Machool 2007), as inherently liberating for Palestinians under occupation. Rather, it creates a space in which local power dynamics in the material realm are simply recreated in online space.

Finally, in Chapter Six, I embrace the "slipperiness" (Edwards 2003: 2) of infrastructure to propose thinking of settler and refugees as human infrastructures, having noticed that both Israeli settler and Palestinian refugee families functioned to facilitate flows of people, goods, and ideas, similar in some ways to roads and the internet. This marks a shift from thinking of infrastructures as inherently material, technical, and visible to instead entirely emphasise their socio-relational qualities, drawing on the histories of mobility that brought these groups to the region. Settlers used their families as networks with which to fill the settlements; Efrat itself was founded by the mass migration of 500 families from New York to the newly built settlement in the 1980s. Once populated, settlements became established on the basis of their relational networks and linkages in the first instance, with roads, telecommunications, and electricity being added retrospectively. Among Palestinians, extensive and expansive kinship networks provided opportunities to be mobile, structuring everyday journeys and enabling safe movement between nodal points. Palestinian refugees constitute a self-perpetuating human infrastructure; while the number of refugees expelled from Israel since 1967 has shrunk dramatically, the refugee population has increased exponentially as refugeehood is inherited by their children. As they expand, their human relationships provided the majority of the nodal points along the networks directing movement of people, goods otherwise unattainable, and politically urgent ideologies and convictions. Settler movements and relationalities, like their more concrete equivalents such as road and telecommunications, were formed with little initial economic assistance from the Israeli state but were underpinned by the Zionism that inspired historic and more recent patterns of mobility. To put it in terms of a crude reversal of Marxist historical materialist theory, they comprised the "substructure" that came into being following the deep "superstructural" convictions of Zionist thought. Similarly, Palestinian refugee relationalities and movements reflect their refusal to be made invisible. Yet they create "facts on the ground" and therefore respond to similar superstructural convictions of a Palestinian nationalist cause that refuses expulsion and erasure (Khalidi 2010).

My time spent in and around these human infrastructures revealed the existential relations to mobility experienced by each group. Palestinians share a wealth of Levantine Arabic[4] idiom about movement with the Lebanese migrants described by Hage (2005). These include *ataghayer al jow* (to change one's atmosphere)*, al hayah yimshee* (literally "life is walking", meaning "things go on")*, mashi al haal* (literally "my situation is walking", meaning "everything is ok")*,* and *qaadah* ("sitting" or "staying" – a response to "how are things?" holding a negative connotation). These phrases "denote a close association between the viability of life and a sense of existential mobility" (Hage

[4] A dialect shared by both Palestinian and Lebanese Arabic speakers.

2005: 471). For settlers, this mobility was expressed in the harnessing of families to further the settlement project. New settlers were sourced directly from existing kinship networks, and new settlers were created in the marital unions, and later children, of those wishing to settle.

In both settler and refugee settings human infrastructures performed the work of the state where both groups felt it was lacking. Simone (2009), Lugo (2013), and De Boeck and Plissart (2004) propose that humans become infrastructure when the state fails to provide working infrastructures. Following my earlier argument, however, I problematise the notion that such processes do not need *necessarily* be linked to state failure. Rather, they are linked in this instance to the phenomenon of separate states with sharply demarcated boundaries. The Israeli and Palestinian states cannot serve both groups simultaneously, and were not intended to do so. Among both groups, human infrastructures draw on expansive and transnational family networks. Each utilises relations across the Green Line (and sometimes elsewhere) to transport people, goods, and ideas across geopolitical boundaries. For Palestinians the work of human infrastructure involved politicised marriages that added different identity cards, landowners, and wealth to their networks. For settlers this meant choosing partners based on their desire to settle and continue contributing to the settlement project. For both groups, family infrastructures were weaponised to participate in their demographic races, creating more settlers and more refugees with each marriage. The expansion of their respective human infrastructures simultaneously expanded each group's capacity to be mobile, giving them both increased access to resources and more places to go.

In the following chapters of this thesis I highlight that regulation of and control over infrastructures is part of modern governance, and that resistance to it often takes the form of attempts at wresting that control from those who hold it. By focusing on multiple infrastructures as channels for mobility, and their governance as directly informing the paths of mobility for different users, I show how an infrastructural approach offers a unique way of understanding the everyday in the West Bank. In historicising mobility to demonstrate its influence on both the core and the periphery populations using infrastructures, I offer an approach to Palestinian and Israeli settler lives that problematises misconceptions around the nature of occupation. Without downplaying the violence, injustices, and complexities of Israel's occupation, an infrastructural approach emphasises individual agencies in relation to their histories. Through this thesis I show that infrastructures are rendered not only a material-technical object, but a socio-technical phenomenon that connects political orders and the spaces they create to their users.

Motivation

On an early visit to Palestine as a tourist, the majority of Israelis I met informed me that no one could know their experience and as such had no right to critique Israel's occupation of Palestine. The task I therefore set myself in this work was to use anthropological methods to gain as close an understanding of both Israeli and Palestinian lives as possible. In understanding the experiences of both sides through ethnographic research, I believe I am able to contribute insights that alter common representations of Palestinian refugees. My representations highlight their agency, often denied to them by centring analysis of their situation on violence, immobilisation, and oppression by the occupation. I also contribute to a small but growing body of ethnographic work on Israeli settlers, similarly to challenge common misrepresentations. While I did not undertake this work with the intention of being politically neutral, I conducted it with the understanding that any potential improvement to the situation cannot occur without witnessing the ways in which occupation impacts the lives of those on both Palestinian and Israeli sides.

Likewise, this research was not conducted with the notion that peaceful coexistence between Israeli settlers and Palestinians will be part of a fair and just peace agreement, if it ever occurs. Neither do I believe any research oriented towards this goal is likely to be productive. I do, however, propose that a greater understanding of the motivations for Israeli settlers to settle and Palestinian refugees to resist can only come with an understanding of the settlements and displacements that have dominated the West Bank region, their impact on the way life is lived, and the deep-seated convictions experienced in the everyday. This study offers these understandings by sharing the motivations of populations at the front lines of the occupation. In doing this I hope to show how forces of mobility have shaped these processes of displacement and settlement. Following Boyden and Berry, "even with the difficulties, enquiry into human misfortunes like war [or other contexts of on-going violence] is an important precursor to the development of theories of societal transformation, value formation, social and cultural reproduction" (2004: 255). Such inquiries can be useful for developing a more compassionate understanding of the historical and ideological forces that brought about the occupation and settlement of Palestine.

A unique opportunity was presented to me since I possessed the positionality and personal politics that enabled me to conduct simultaneous research among both Israelis and Palestinians, which I explore further in Chapter Two. While such research is unusual and ethically complex and problematic, I conducted this work as sensitively as possible. I used this research as an opportunity to work with and alongside my Palestinian friends and interlocutors who trusted me to represent

them as I saw them. The issue of representation became more complex among Israeli settlers, who asked me to try to alter the ways their actions are conceived internationally, believing themselves misrepresented. Ultimately, however, they often contributed to these negative representations through their replication of the racist and violent qualities they sought to obscure. Where I might be able to offer settlers instead is in demonstrating the ways that the Israeli state and Zionism created and capitalises on Palestinian resistance to occupation. In this thesis I demonstrate how this exploitative process contributes to the lack of safety in settler lives and to the situation of settlers as often manipulated and put at risk by the state which encourages them to settle.

As Nancy Scheper-Hughes wrote, activist research relies on witnessing rather than observing (1994). Any kind of research or time spent in Palestine means exposure to the violent material features of occupied life; boundaries, blockades, checkpoints, and the heavy military presence. Spending time with Palestinians, however, and travelling with them through the space they were able to use, allowed me to witness and share their experiences. Though Scheper-Hughes's notion of a militant anthropology comes with problematic aspects in this context,[5] witnessing in occupation serves wider aims than simply hoping to change the perception of the region in popular media. The issue of Israel and Palestine has become politicised far away from the lives of those I studied, as scholarship and free speech concerning the issues of Zionism and the Palestinian cause are increasingly policed and silenced by western governments (Winegar and Deeb 2015). While far more pervasive in the United States than in Europe and the United Kingdom, the conflation of pro-Palestinianism and anti-Semitism has entered mainstream politics, perhaps most notably with the accusations made against British Labour Party leader Jeremy Corbyn in 2019. In addressing misconceptions around the nature of occupation and the representations of Palestinians and Israeli settlers, I aim to disrupt narratives that reduce the experiences of the West Bank's residents to religious difference and conflations of anti-Zionism with anti-Semitism and Palestinian resistance with terrorism.

I also use this thesis to draw attention to a disciplinary shortcoming within anthropology relevant to the process of conducting ethnography. Since the 1980s, anthropologists have responded to the notion that our identities and subjectivities shape the knowledge we produce. What I propose, drawing on my work with The New Ethnographer project,[6] is that our experiences of wellbeing are

[5] Her paper on the subject was first delivered at the Israeli Anthropological Association conference in 1994 in Tel Aviv, less than a year after the end of the First *Intifada* and Israel's brutal suppression of Palestinian resistance.

[6] A blog, series of training workshops, and consultancy responding to methodological challenges in ethnographic research I co-founded in 2015.

equally constitutive of our methodologies and the knowledge we produce as our identities and subjectivities. In this work I further a proposal for the necessity of compassionate anthropological practice that responds to the need to practice compassion towards those with whom we conduct research and ourselves as researchers in the academic community. I do not explore the ramifications of conducting research in a highly discontinuous and violent context to contribute to the subgenre of anthropological literature dedicated to 'dangerous' fieldwork. This analysis serves, rather, to further the notion that all fieldwork places researchers at risk, and yet insufficient space is made to explore these experiences as formative in the production of knowledge.

The framing of some research as inherently 'dangerous' can also place these themes centrally in the text. A large body of work conducted during the Second *Intifada* focuses on Palestinian resistance (Allen 2008; Kelly 2008; Jean-Klein 2001), perhaps inadvertently representing Palestinians as primarily occupied subjects. While such work offers valuable contributions to understandings of resistance, more holistic studies of Palestinian life are needed that do not make violence the centre of representations of Palestinian life. A more recent body of anthropological work on Palestine and Israel (Abu-Hatoum 2018; Buch-Segal 2016; Calis 2011; Procter 2019; Wahbe 2020; Wright 2018) focus instead on the everyday. This work allows the daily violence Palestinians face to emerge as a feature of, but not the sole way in which to represent Palestinian life. As my own work is a dual study of both Israelis and Palestinians, it was important to me to make everydayness the centre of the work rather than violence. This allowed me to avoid representing each side as equally vulnerable to occupation related violence and thus contributing to Islamophobic and anti-Palestinian narratives that centre the occupied Palestinian as an equal threat to the colonising Israeli. This approach also aids a representation of the region that unpacks the ways in which the conflict plays out away from both organised politics and resistance.

This thesis explores mobility through road, internet, and human infrastructures. At first, I first detail in Chapter One how I established a fieldsite for this research in relation to conducting ethnographic research on uneven ground. I outline my use of network analysis and mobile methods to locate and study both visible and invisible aspects of infrastructures. In Chapter Two I analyse the impacts this research took on my health and the ways this informed the knowledge it produced. In Chapter Three I then offer a contextualisation of the regional setting, tracing the origins of the ideological forces that shape the infrastructures in use today. In this chapter I pay specific attention to the histories of mobility of the core that designs and those peripheries that use the infrastructures, emphasising their different relations to power and mobility that reinforce the ground's unevenness. In the

following three chapters I look at road, internet, and human infrastructures in turn. The chapters are ordered in this manner intentionally, moving from 'hard' and visible road infrastructures to 'softer' and less visible internet and human infrastructures. Throughout each chapter I emphasise the significance of the mundane and everyday uses of infrastructure as important for both challenging misconceptions about the region and demonstrating the ways the study of the mundane can reveal more extraordinary aspects of human sociality and behaviour. Finally, I conclude by offering a review of my findings in relation to the work of the infrastructural turn and their implications for future research.

Chapter One: The multiple sites of a discontinuous field

Introduction

Conducting fieldwork among Israeli settlers and Palestinian refugees as two culturally and linguistically different groups necessitates a consideration of one's fieldwork as discontinuous and therefore multi-sited. The setting in which these groups live is informed by segregation and regular outbreaks of violence, informing the mobilities of both its residents and myself as a researcher. Access and safety emerge as central and interrelated needs where mobility in the West Bank is concerned and in the underlying logics with which I structured my fieldwork. In a colonial setting in which the Israeli state controls and limits access to the West Bank, gaining entrance to the region alone requires some methodological creativity. Once in the West Bank, the heavy guarding of Israeli spaces reframed access to Israeli rather than Palestinian groups as similarly challenging. In this chapter I outline how I access the different spaces of my fieldsite across the uneven ground in which they were situated, and how it required a mobility that went beyond physical movement.

Regardless of one's location in the region, mobility emerged as both the challenge and the subject; "where can we go?", "why can't we go?", "how can we get there?", and "is it safe?" were questions asked daily by all residents of the West Bank. The answers to these questions required the use of the road, internet, and human infrastructures I explore in the rest of this thesis that therefore shaped my movement through the region. The design and uses of these infrastructures allowed people to be mobile, revealing the ways that the occupying Israeli state is concerned with both the facilitating and limiting of the movement of things, people, and ideas. Workarounds to the limitations of mobility in the West Bank often used the virtual spaces created for refugees and settlers that both informed their residents about the everyday goings-on of the region and recreated physical places in virtual space. In this chapter I explore the ways I delineated a fieldsite through material and virtual infrastructures and moved safely around it.

The fieldsite for this research therefore became a complex and often invisible space layered across material and virtual space in which movement cannot always be seen and is heavily controlled. In this chapter I first contextualise the ways I came to work in both Dheishe and Efrat. I then explore the ways I was able to be mobile through the region through physical space using both road and human infrastructures. In this section I highlight how the Palestinian concepts of *ataghayer al jow,* or changing one's environment, and the *laffliff,* or aimless movement, informed both my interactions with and access to Palestinians. Their framing of mobility as both a leisure activity and existential need, as I go on to show, in turn aided my understanding of different forms through

which settlers experienced and needed mobility. In the final section of this chapter, I then explore how both the dangers of physical mobility in the West Bank and the guarding of settlement's physical spaces inspired my use of digital methods, adding a virtual aspect to the fieldsite.

Identifying sites

As I articulated in the introductory chapter, the research for this thesis took place in and between Dheishe refugee camp, just outside of the Palestinian city of Bethlehem, and Efrat, a city settlement in the Gush Etzion settlement bloc. Their residents are denied entry into each other's spaces, and their languages, cultures, political subjectivities, and accesses to mobility are also dramatically different. Both Dheishe and Efrat are situated along Road 60, a large traffic artery spanning the length of the West Bank and connecting both Bethlehem and Gush Etzion to Jerusalem to the north and Hebron to the south. Even though Efrat and Dheishe border each other, the only way to move from one to the other was on Road 60, so it too became part of my fieldsite. My research also took me on numerous journeys around and outside of the settlement and camp, both alone and with my interlocutors by necessity, coincidence, or plan.

I arrived at Dheishe camp quite by chance. While studying Arabic in Ramallah in the early months of my fieldwork I was invited to Dheishe camp by a friend and became interested in the space of the camp as well as its proximity to Gush Etzion. I found Bethlehem to be a comfortable city to live in and was able to safely navigate between the Palestinian and Israeli areas of the region. The settlements around Bethlehem have a relatively less hostile relationship with their Palestinian neighbours than other Palestinian cities of Hebron, a conservative city to the south, and the northern cities of Nablus and Jenin. In these latter settings, settlers often initiate conflicts with their Palestinian neighbours by patrolling their land, harassing Palestinian farmers, and otherwise undertaking deliberate provocations.[7] As I go on to show in Chapter Three, Jerusalem-area settlements (in which Gush Etzion is included) are generally populated by commuter settlers rather than the more religiously and ideologically driven settlers of the northern West Bank region. While the relationships between Palestinians and settlers in the Bethlehem region are by no means peaceful, there are relatively fewer attacks by settlers and are therefore a safer place to conduct research.

[7] Between 2005 and 2015 over one thousand complaints were filed by Palestinians in the West Bank against Israeli civilians for offences against them or their property (Yesh Din 2015). 91.6% of these cases were not investigated by the Israeli authorities (ibid.).

After moving to Beit Jala, a large Christian village bordering Dheishe, I was offered a volunteer position teaching English at the *Ibdaa* Centre, a large cultural and educational non-governmental organisation (NGO) in the centre of Dheishe. I was quickly integrated into the everyday goings-on of the camp by my kind students, many of whom became close friends and, with their families, formed the majority of my interlocutors. For three days a week I taught a group of 20 women aged between 25 and 80 in lessons that often evolved into joking and gossip. They invited me to visit them in their homes, attend the women's network meetings at *Ibdaa*, and encouraged me to move into the camp. With their help I was able to secure a private apartment in Dheishe in 2017. I later moved into a friend's compound in Doha, a suburb of Bethlehem bordering Dheishe and populated almost entirely by its refugee overspill. I spent the final year of my fieldwork living in Bethlehem's Old City.

Prior to starting my fieldwork I had studied the *shaami* dialect of Arabic[8] in both Lebanon and London. I continued studying Arabic for the first two years of my fieldwork, learning first Palestinian dialect then Modern Standard Arabic (MSA)[9] at Bir Zeit University and then working with private teachers in Bethlehem in both dialect and MSA. While my everyday language was the Palestinian Arabic dialect, MSA is a standardised written form of Arabic used in radio and television news and written texts on and offline. Following the adoption of texting and social media, Arabic dialects have begun to be transcribed, and the social media news broadcasts I refer to in this thesis were written in both dialect and MSA.

In my third year of fieldwork, I began working with settlers in Efrat. Because of its proximity to Dheishe camp and as a mixed secular and orthodox settlement, Efrat offered more accessibility to me as a non-Jewish outsider than other settlements in the Gush Etzion bloc. The settlement property market, however, is primarily designed for Jewish nuclear families. As a non-Jewish unmarried woman, renting either a private apartment or a room in a settler household was not an option. As a result, I remained living in Bethlehem and commuted to Efrat and to Hebrew lessons at an ulpan[10] in south-west Jerusalem by car each day.

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[8] The dialect of Arabic spoken across *Balad As-Sham* (Country of the Sun, Ar.), the Arab name for the region encompassing Syria, Jordan, Lebanon, and Palestine. Regional variations and accents are wide, and each country within this region has its own dialect, though they can understand each other well.
[9] Considerably different from local dialects, Modern Standard Arabic is the standardised form used for reading, writing, and broadcasting across the Arabic-speaking world.
[10] An institute for the study of Hebrew for incoming Jewish migrants provided either by the Israeli state or private centres and universities.

The process of integration into the settler community was far less smooth than in Dheishe. I began my research through cold-calling, interviewing local municipal employees and politicians, and spending time in the limited secular social spaces of the settlement bloc; its supermarkets, cafes, and mall. As I detail later in this chapter, I also used social media to make contacts for interviews, and through this method gradually became more integrated into the fabric of settler life. In this part of my fieldwork I worked in both Hebrew and English, as a significant majority of my interlocutors in Efrat preferred to speak in their native English. Using English also helped me to cement my status as a non-native, a useful tool in gaining the trust of settlers. Because of the large English-speaking population of Efrat, much of social media use related to it took place in both English and Hebrew.

Despite the ethnographically neat-seeming locations of my fieldwork as adjacent communities connected by a single road, moving between Efrat and Dheishe was never simply a matter of driving from one to the other. Necessarily multi-sited, my research was “designed around chains, paths, threads, conjunctions, or juxtapositions of locations” (Marcus 1995: 105). A study of mobility, however, required more than just the conception of two culturally different locales connected by strands and juxtapositions. Instead, I drew on Burrell’s notion of fieldwork as “a network composed of fixed and moving points including spaces, people, and objects” (2009: 189) as more useful to conceive of the ways mobility is required of the researcher in order to locate and move between these points. As Burrell notes, “in a ‘field site as network’, the point of origin, the destination(s), the space between, and what moves or is carried along these paths is of interest” (2009: 190). This framing allowed me to place infrastructures as both an object of study and generative of relations between their designers, implementers, and users. In this way I also centre mobility between and through infrastructures as both the method and subject of this research.

The study of mobility is often situated in sites of passage where actors are waiting to be in transit (Elliot, Norum, and Salazar 2017). Attention to mobility (and, necessarily, moments of immobility), however, also benefit from the framing of a networked fieldsite where mobility can be approached as an aspect of everyday life. In Palestine, where mobility is often conceived of in its opposite form, immobility, I deliberately did not limit my study to the architectural forms that cause this condition, including the Separation Wall, checkpoints, and the walls, fences, and roadblocks put in place by the occupying Israeli regime. I instead drew on border and immobility studies (Alvarez 1995; Cresswell 2006; Pelkmans 2006) which place their focus on the ways people are mobile *despite* and *because of* restrictions.

George Marcus identified the technique of “following” (1995: 109) for multi-sited ethnography, which proved useful for the purposes of studying movement and non-movement. In studying mobility, the objects and subjects I followed included my interlocutors as they made everyday journeys in and outside of their enclaves, as well as further afield when possible. Following, however, was not an activity limited to people. Working with displaced and migrant groups I also followed their life stories around the region that included other towns, villages, and settlements. As I show throughout this thesis and particularly in Chapter Six, many of the Palestinian refugees I worked with expanded their families across the West Bank and into Jerusalem. While often unable to make the journeys to visit their families themselves, as a foreigner I had freedom of movement that allowed me to move through their networks. Settlers, too, were not confined to single settlements but moved between them for work, leisure, and familial purposes, expanding my fieldsite beyond the borders of Efrat. In Chapter Three I demonstrate how Israel’s occupation of Palestine has moved the Israeli border gradually into the West Bank, so this research also necessitated the tracing of infrastructural and national histories. Marcus’s following technique, however, implies constant movement, and in the region in question mobility as much as immobility structured my research activities. Following, therefore, did not lead me only to sites of exchange or passage, but also to the many moments in which my interlocutors and friends were or were not mobile, using them to unpack the forces in place that rendered them so.

Crucially, mobility in the West Bank is primarily organised in relation to relative conceptions of safety. In this sense, the following technique emerges foremost as a practicality; following is necessary in the West Bank to ensure your personal safety. These kinds of followings have different meanings and forms. The following of interlocutors and friends as they go about their daily lives is necessary to learn local safety practices and safe routes for travel. Following directions and orders from Israeli soldiers often dictate how movement is or is not made in the West Bank. As the majority of signs on the roads of the West Bank direct road users only to Israeli spaces, these signs reposition and reorient the road user in unmapped terrain, and are followed or not followed depending on who is navigating. Finally, with the inclusion of social media in my research, following social media accounts and news updates that shared much needed information on how to stay safe in the region emerged as a more passive form of the technique. Mobility is therefore a need differently met according to one’s positionality and, while I go into this subject in further depth later in the following chapter, it is significant that, in the West Bank, it is related to both the existential and immediate safety needs of all the region’s residents.

Physical mobility

The ways that infrastructures generated mobility and immobility for their users in different ways also affected me as a researcher. As I explored briefly in the Introduction to this thesis, sociotechnical infrastructures have been harnessed by the Israeli state to expand mobility for both itself and its Jewish citizens and reduce that of its Palestinian subject populations. By working with both Israeli settlers and Palestinian refugees I came to understand the intricacies of how these infrastructures enabled and restricted mobilities in different ways, as well as the local workarounds and practices generated to challenge these restrictions. In this section I look at the ways I was and was not able to be physically mobile and therefore delineate the material aspects of my fieldsite.

Travel with a vehicle along the road infrastructures of the West Bank emerged as the dominant method for movement, though not without its challenges. I arrived in Palestine during a period of unrest in 2015 that saw already limited public transport further impacted by regular sealing off of Palestinian regions, army raids, and internal road closures. Palestinian public transport stopped at sundown and Israeli public transport was at the time particularly unsafe as a common target of Palestinian resistance. Journey time by public transport is also lengthy as Palestinians are often routed around the occupation's blockages and segregated road systems, while Israeli settler buses experience long wait times and limited connections between settlements. While settlers use hitchhiking to overcome this, taking part in this practice would have exposed me to Palestinians as working with Israelis if I was seen waiting at their *trempiadas* (hitchhiking stops, He.) on shared main roads. Ultimately, because of the segregation of both transport and space, neither buses nor hitchhiking could safely deliver me between my Palestinian home and the settlements.

I quickly found that the safest way to move myself around the region was by private car. Like many aspects of daily life under occupation, the process of purchasing a car in the West Bank is complex. As a foreigner registered as living in Tel Aviv,[11] I bought a car with a (yellow) numberplate licensed to the Israeli government. Palestinians living in the West Bank must buy *numra bayda* (white numberplate, Ar.) cars licensed to the PNA, which cannot exit the West Bank.[12] While my yellow-plated car therefore allowed me a relatively safe way of moving seamlessly between Israeli and Palestinian space, it also visually marked me as an Israeli, which – as I explore in the next chapter – complicated the ways I was perceived in Palestinian space.

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[11] Permanent residence in the West Bank for foreigners usually results in deportation, and without sponsorship by a Palestinian organisation, common practice is to register oneself as living within *Israel HaKatanah*.

[12] With the exception of those with extremely hard to obtain special permission from the Israeli authorities.

Driving and activities related to driving therefore came to shape the ways in which I conducted my fieldwork and understood Palestinian and settler life. As I began to integrate myself into Dheishe camp I was able to offer myself as a driver to those who needed it. As an impoverished community, refugees tend to have less access to cars, particularly at the prices which Palestinians have to pay for PNA-licensed vehicles.[13] It was also far less common for women to drive or take private taxis without male guardians. As a woman with a private car, I had a rare opportunity to serve as a safe option for women needing to go shopping, run errands, or visit family members in other towns and villages. These journeys became invaluable both as a way to contribute to the lives of the people I worked with as I accepted their hospitality and as a way to experience how they moved through Palestinian space. By further virtue of being a foreigner, I offered a safer passage through checkpoints and along the Area C roads policed by Israel, and I quickly earned the reputation of *al choffera* (the chauffeur, Ar.) among my Palestinian friends.

A car and money for petrol allowed me to conduct my own *laffliffs* either directed or driven by Palestinian friends. These leisurely journeys formed the majority of my engagement with road infrastructures with Palestinians. While many of my male interlocutors drove to work, local codes of modesty dictated that it was inappropriate for me to travel in their cars, and my female friends were less likely to work outside of the camp and therefore did not require cars for their journeys. The *laffliff,* a term with the root in *luf* (to turn, Ar.), means "to wander around", and an important part of Palestinian life as I saw it. Not necessarily limited to driving, but popularly preferred due to the dangers of walking, *laffliffs* have gradually come to replace the *sarha,* an aimless wander more commonly taken by foot and linked to enjoyment of the now largely forbidden countryside (Shehadeh 2007). As well as a safe transport option for errands and longer journeys through Area C, my car became a leisure opportunity; a way for my passengers to briefly escape their everyday lives, or an opportunity to invite me to take part in their lives outside of their homes. *Laffliffs* are associated with the need to change one's atmosphere (*ataghayer al jow*, Ar.), but are perhaps best understood as "getting some fresh air", "moving around", or "getting a change of scenery". A *laffliff* is perhaps best described as a way of being mobile that is less defined by destination than by the journey itself.

[13] These vehicles are charged road taxes by both the PNA and Israeli state, essentially doubling the cost of a car for a West Bank Palestinian.

The evenings and weekends of my fieldwork were dominated by *laffliffs* either in my car or those of others, aimlessly driving around to ‘change our atmosphere’, go for ice cream, or sometimes make a public display of being friends with a foreigner*. Laffliffs* were also taken on the hot evenings after *iftar* (the fast-breaking meal) during Ramadan, bored teenagers and young adults, and parents needing to entertain their children. For refugees, spaces for socialising outside the home are limited and gendered as camps are not designed with public space in mind and Bethlehem’s few parks are privatised with entry fees. In the camps, where the air quality is poor, there are no places for children to play, and the crowded living conditions create a sense of claustrophobia, the need to change one’s atmosphere is particularly strongly felt. While the regularity of my *choffera* duties placed the *laffliff* as more central to my life than those of my participants, it certainly became a regular part of my fieldwork.

The *laffliff* emerged as an activity with numerous psychological and social benefits. They offered a rare private space in which to talk without fear of being overheard, and the conversations held on these journeys included explanations of local environments as we drove through them, the mapping of family networks across the region, and explaining the personal impacts of their reduced mobility as a result of Israel’s occupation. *Laffliffs* also became a space of decompression, of venting grievances away from relatives and friends, as well as of simply catching up, listening to music, and gossip. As well as an opportunity to contribute to the lives of my friends and interlocutors, the *laffliffs* I took with Palestinians demonstrated the importance of mobility even in the face of its limitations. A *laffliff* with Palestinians is limited by the number of roads in the West Bank available for their use (as explored by Shehadeh 2007), and even in the relatively large city of Bethlehem I quickly discovered the finite number of routes available to us. Often during these *laffliffs* my friends would reflect on how, when land was unsafe to walk on due to the appropriation and settlement by their Israeli occupiers, the car could still provide a sense of movement and atmospheric release from the claustrophobia of the camp.

As I explore further in Chapter Four, Israeli settlers did not share the same culture of *laffliffs,* and therefore my experiences of road infrastructures in their company differed significantly. While motor transport along the West Bank’s roads still played a significant role in their everyday lives, driving held less significance as an act of movement. Where my Palestinian friends enjoyed rare experiences of mobility and escape from their immediate surroundings for pleasure, driving outside of settlements for Israelis was more of a functional than enjoyable form of transport. Designed as

commuter communities, the Gush Etzion settlements were built with regular road use in mind. The need to change one's atmosphere therefore seemed less urgent for settlers as their experiences of mobility were far less limited and road use a regular and more negatively framed part of their everyday lives than those of Palestinians. A desire to *laffliff* was also inhibited by the relative dangers of road use for Israelis, more regulated policing of transport, and experience of high volumes of car traffic on the roads connecting settlements to Jerusalem. As settlement is itself an expression of freedom of movement, Efrat's residents spoke more of the importance of being able to walk, rather than drive in the surrounding countryside – an option relatively unavailable to Palestinian refugees.

In contrast to experiences of mobility in the *laffliff,* the *machsom* (checkpoint, He. and Ar.)[14] is a symbol of the discontinuity of West Bank space relative to who is able to use them. Approximately 100 permanent and temporary checkpoints (B'Tselem 2019) dominate experiences of mobility in the West Bank (Bishara 2015; Kelly 2006; Rijke 2020; Tawil-Souri 2011) and are designed to inhibit and regulate the mobility of Palestinians for the benefit of Jewish Israeli citizens. They are also designed with fear in mind; their presence turns a journey into an ordeal, with the potential of delay or arrest for Palestinians, or as potential sites of Palestinian violence in Israeli eyes.[15] Despite their ubiquity, permanent checkpoints are not a regular feature in the everyday lives of most West Bank Palestinians as they cannot pass them. They do, however, interrupt settler mobility as their presence causes large traffic delays during rush hour. Temporary or flying checkpoints, as I show in Chapter Four, reduce and interrupt Palestinian mobility far more on an everyday basis, though as they are usually placed on roads on which only Palestinians travel and therefore have little impact on settlers. Driving with Palestinians, with settlers, or alone placed me in different relations to the Israeli soldiers manning these checkpoints, recasting the power relations between the same geophysical spaces depending on who was in the car.

Physical mobility for Palestinians is also controlled through an intended side-effect of the segregation of road infrastructures; car damage. The often-dilapidated roads Palestinians are forced to use as roads take a toll on cars already stretched by the hilly environment of the West Bank. The

[14] Due to the proximity of Arabic and Hebrew speakers in Israel and Palestine there is much borrowing from each other's languages. However, some borrowing is politicised, particularly aspects of the occupation that are deemed objects of Israeli origin. The use of the Hebrew term for checkpoint by Palestinians replaces the Arabic term (*hajiz*) to indicate that it is an Israeli invention and imposition on the landscape.
[15] Checkpoints were targeted by Palestinian resistance actors during the Second *Intifada,* and in more recent years the Israeli army has killed Palestinians suspected of terrorist acts at checkpoints who have usually been retrospectively found to be innocent (Euro-Med Monitor 2015).

control over Palestinian use of the West Bank's road infrastructures therefore has the structural effect of increasing wear on their cars. Though a more temporal form of immobilisation (as opposed to the spatial blockages of the checkpoints system), it tends to result in more regular accidents and breakdowns. Limits on the import of new cars and car parts, as well as West Bank residents being forced to pay road taxes to both the PNA and Israeli state increase the costs of private car ownership and safe movement through the West Bank for Palestinians. A further insight into Palestinian physical mobility and immobility was therefore gained through regular experiences of car failure as well as numerous hours spent with *mekaniki* (mechanics, Ar.), who service the dilapidated cars. In this way, even when attempting to be mobile through the West Bank's road infrastructures, it often results in reduced or interrupted mobility for Palestinian road users.

There were, however, other means of organising movement through the West Bank's space. Far more than any other organisational framework in Palestinian and Israeli settler life, the human infrastructures and particularly kinship networks informed my access to each community. Both Dheishe and Efrat are settings with limited public space in different ways. Dheishe has no public space for mixed-gender socialising as the majority of its structures are family homes and compounds or private businesses. The spaces in which people might congregate are limited to its streets and the entrance to the camp which are regulated by local codes of modesty that require women to limit their interactions with men. My time in the camp was therefore structured by spending time with families in their homes or visiting their extended families inside and outside of the camp, networking my fieldsite through kin relations.

In Dheishe the majority of my time was spent with the Abu Qamar family who adopted me as one of their own and incorporated me into their expansive network of relatives around the Bethlehem region. I supplemented my time there with visits to other friends' family homes and spent time participating in their everyday lives. When not offering lifts or visiting friends and family members, this centred on cooking, eating, childcare, and talking to visitors and guests who were often invited to meet me as a somewhat unusual presence in the camp. As a result, much of my time within these homes was spent in the women's sphere, with modesty dictating that adult men and husbands should not be in the same room as an unrelated and unmarried woman. However, as my relationships developed with these families I began to eat and sit with the whole family, and passing greetings grew into friendships with both the male and female members.

I was granted a particularly close relationship with the Abu Qamar family by virtue of my friendship with Ahmad and his mother, Leila. Through their friendship I was elevated from guest to *sahbet al dar* (friend of the house, Ar.), a more intimate relation that allowed me to come and go as I pleased. This privilege was all the greater given that the family's conservatism made them a "closed house", meaning that non-relatives were not welcome to pass by without appointment to protect the modesty of the women. My friendship with Ahmad allowed me even greater access to the male sphere, and I came to know his brothers and male cousins well both through time spent socialising and on *laffliffs* with them. I passed countless days in their house, learning to cook and clean to a Palestinian woman's standards, helping the children with their English homework, and attending the family's weddings, funerals, and birthday parties. I also shared these experiences as a guest of the Abu Shams and Ibrahim families, with whom I enjoyed similar levels of intimacy.

The ease of integration into the everyday life of Dheishe was not replicated when I began working in Efrat. The majority of the settlement's social life was structured around its religious institutions, which I had been advised to avoid as a non-Jew. Though Efrat has several cafes and parks, social attitudes towards outsiders are conservative and therefore were not a space in which I was able to strike up conversation. Despite persevering through attending sports classes, local events, and meeting with local municipal employees, the settlers I approached were hesitant and often hostile to further conversation. Although I was able to conduct interviews with the municipal employees and politicians of Efrat, they provided me with almost identical and highly idyllic representations of life in the settlement, indicative of a sense of mistrust of outsiders. My lack of social access to their community was further complicated by the fact I was not a resident of the settlement. Not only was my presence particularly unusual, but limited the time I could be physically present in the settlement.

Initially I supplemented this lack of inclusion with the aforementioned use of online methods and taking part in whatever aspects of settlement life available to me. It was through accessing the settlement's virtual space that I was able to locate a private Hebrew teacher, Shoshana, and be invited into a settler's home. As our friendship developed over several months, Shoshana confirmed to me that, despite the municipality and mayor's protestations, settlers were suspicious of outsiders as potential journalists or leftists attempting to label them as fundamentalists. Once Shoshana and I became friends and I was able to explain my research as "wanting to represent settlers in a fair light", I was quickly granted access to other settlers. With her help I conducted 36 interviews with settlers in the final months of my fieldwork. Even with this development and despite establishing

friendly relations with almost all my interviewees, I was invited back to only four of their homes for follow-up meetings or *shabbat* dinners[16] as is a hospitality custom. Most interviews lasted between one and three hours, with time curtailed because the interviewees had other things to do.

Despite gaining some inclusion into Efrat's community, my access continued to be limited by what felt like a lingering sense of mistrust of my presence or intentions. It is probable that, because I was not Jewish or married, concerns over modesty limited my inclusion into the fabric of everyday life in Efrat. Shoshana and her friend Rachel were the only two settlers to repeatedly invite me into their homes – likely because they were both divorced and therefore my presence did not complicate the regulation of their home environments according to Jewish custom. My access was also limited by the different ways that settlers and refugees organised their time. I spent far less time with settlers as their schedules were dominated by movement around the settlement and to and from Jerusalem. Their relative wealth and relations to mobility in the West Bank occupied their time in different ways as they were simply able to be more mobile than the Palestinian refugees I worked with. This is not to present Palestinian refugees as static in comparison, but rather to make the point that settlers were less available to me. It also indicates a key reversal of the dynamic established in Chapter Three, in which I noted that far more historical and archival resources are available for understanding the Israeli Zionist past, its present is harder to access. Palestinians, conversely, who have lost many of their material historical resources to destruction by the Israeli occupation, tend to make their present widely accessible by virtue of their desire to share their experience and culture of hospitality.

Virtual mobility

As I have shown, while my physical access to Efrat and Dheishe as a foreigner was – for the most part – navigable, it was not the only way of being present among the communities in either setting. I came to rely on supplementing face-to-face ethnographic methods with digital ethnography to serve three different and interrelated purposes. In this section I outline the three purposes integrating digital methods and spaces into my fieldwork served; as an information resource, as a means of making meaningful social contact, and as a fieldsite itself.

I first began using the internet as an information resource by mirroring local practices of using the internet to inform myself of local news and events that impacted safe physical movement in the

[16] A weekly Jewish ritual meal.

West Bank. My initial introduction to these online spaces came through joining commonly used local Palestinian and Israeli Facebook and WhatsApp groups that update their subscribers with minute-by-minute accounts of the political conditions in their immediate environment, including outbreaks of violence, checkpoints and road closures, or other occupation-related news. By taking part in these practices, I was made privy to the extensive range of potential dangers of the region and the tools to navigate them according to the information these social media disseminated.

I then began to incorporate these virtual spaces into my fieldsite, studying their use itself as well as relying on them to inform my own ability. The use of the internet and social media as a fieldsite is neither novel in anthropology nor the context of Palestine. In fact, early ethnographer of the Palestinian internet Miriyam Aouragh pointed out that “the harsh [Palestinian] offline conditions sometimes make online research techniques attractive alternatives” (2011: 32). For many it is the only method as, like Aouragh notes (2011: 13), foreign and Palestinian national scholars are often deported or denied re-entry to Palestine once the Israeli regime discovers the nature of their work. Working with Palestinians online (or working with refugee Palestinians in the diaspora) can become the main research method for researchers denied entry to Palestine itself (Aouragh 2011; Feldman 2018; Knudsen and Hanafi 2014; Perdigon 2018). In my own experiences the inverse was true as I was fortunate enough to obtain a visa granting me access to the West Bank for the duration of my work, and it was, in fact, when attempting to gain access to settlers when the use of digital methods became necessary.

Through these introductory uses of the internet necessary for establishing safe movement and building a network of interlocutors, I began to also use the internet as a supplementary infrastructure for mobility during my initial months of attempting to make contacts in Efrat. With limited spaces for secular socialising, and a population initially hostile to outsiders, I first turned to Facebook. Amongst settlers I found active groups operating in both English and Hebrew that put me in virtual networks with settlers resident in the region. By joining these groups I was initially able to solicit local paid services like Hebrew tuition, as well as eventually locating local historians and archivists to meet for interview. In this way I was able to use Facebook to make contacts I could meet offline, but still observe social media spaces and discuss them with people in interviews.

The contacts I made through these methods, however, were predominantly middle-aged women. Wanting to mirror the conditions of research conducted around a wider range of demographics, I also experimented with Tinder as a platform for conducting research. Tinder, an app for “meeting

new people" according to its developers but widely understood to be used for dating purposes, is a geosocial networking app oriented towards matching users for meet ups and dates. The app functions through smartphone GPS technology by presenting users with a seemingly endless supply of other users, with profiles made up of pictures and a space for a short biographical text. Users can be viewed through Tinder's innovative 'swipe' function; by swiping either left or right, users can 'like' or discard profiles as they appear according to the selection of criteria they choose, including gender, age, and distance from the user. Tinder's algorithm is bilateral in that users will not be able to communicate until they have both 'swiped right' and formed a match (Timmermans and Courtois 2018). Once a match is made, the two users can chat and arrange a meeting if desired.

Conducting distanced ethnographic research through internet infrastructures necessitates a discussion of the authenticity of the researcher's presence. Walton, whose research was conducted remotely while in exile from Iran, argues that "the anthropological notion that 'being there' in a fixed, physical dwelling confers the ability to produce 'authentic' social research has long been debunked by multi-sited approaches in the discipline" (2017: 148). The development of technologies that allow us to conduct research remotely have expanded anthropologists' capacity to be mobile in conducting their research. Fieldsites therefore become both the physical place where the internet is being used, and the social place where people form relationships online (Walton 2018). In contrast to Walton and Aouragh, however, the internet served as a supplementary method in my own work; where Walton was unable to be physically present in Iran at all, the limiting of access to my fieldsite was circumstantial rather than total. Using the internet to conduct research emerged, then, not as "a discrete form of experience, but…an extension of other embodied ways of being and acting in the world" (Hine 2015: 41).

I created a researcher profile on Tinder with pictures of myself, a nickname, and a comment in the bio section that stated I was a researcher looking to meet new people in the region to learn about everyday life. I placed the limitations on age of other users from eighteen to one hundred, though the majority of the users I saw were aged between eighteen and thirty. While I selected my interests in both male and female users, I was mostly met with men. I set my distance settings to within 14 kilometres of the settlement[17] and was met with hundreds if not thousands of potential research participants. I struck up conversations with each match and invited those who I felt comfortable

[17] The approximate distance from the settlement to the Green Line so as to only match with others moving within the West Bank.

understood the nature of my intentions as a research to meet locally for an interview. I used information from these conversations and their profiles only with the consent of the users.

In using Tinder to expand my network of research participants, I was often offered immediate meetings a short drive from my home, which I chose to accept or turn down based on my feelings related to the safety of the meeting and a confirmation from users that they understood the nature of our interaction as non-romantic. While the limitations of using Tinder as an app are obvious in that one can only be put in contact with other app users (who tend to be young, single, and secular) the platform extended my network of contacts and therefore my mobility as a researcher. Crucially, I was able to use Tinder to access areas I could not physically be present in, as the settlements offer few secular spaces for socialising, and a mobile younger population who are only semi-resident (as I go on to explain in Chapter Five) are difficult to access. I therefore supplemented my face-to-face interactions with settlers met through more traditional means with conversation and interviews with the people I met through this more unorthodox method.

In the interim period between attempting to integrate myself into Efrat and making contacts through social media, I began to use its virtual space as an extension of my fieldsite. Without interviews or means of making friends, I relied on Efrat's Facebook page to learn about the region, extending to several cognate groups and pages relevant to the wider Gush Etzion region. Internet ethnographer Christine Hine has proposed "lurking" (2005) or "a form of latent online activity that enables a passive form of 'being there'" (Walton 2018: 129) as an appropriate method for conducting research on the internet and social media. Lurking fits well conceptually with a tactic proposed by Skeggs and Yuill (2015), namely that research online requires a methodology that is carried out in the same terms as the object of research itself employs. In other words, to research Facebook one must be an active Facebook user, or as Condie, Lean, and James (2018) argue, researchers using Tinder *are* Tinder in that the platform cannot exist without its users. This form of online participant observation facilitated my involvement in the settler community while allowing me as an anthropologist to both understand the practicalities of participating in the environment while observing a place or space analytically. In the same ways that I "lurked" on Dheishe's Facebook page to learn about important events and follow conversations about local issues of importance, so too did the settlement's virtual space provide a similar function. It was, therefore, through lurking I was able to gradually ground myself as a regular visitor to the settlement, collecting Facebook friends on the way to build some legitimacy around my unattached virtual presence.

In these ways internet infrastructures became a substantive element of my research methodology, both facilitating and supplementing my knowledge of and access to everyday lives of those residing in Efrat and Dheishe. Using the internet allowed me to navigate mobility across different planes; when I could not be physically in either the settlement or the camp, I was able to maintain a virtual presence through social media. Conducting research in such a discontinuous environment, as I noted at the beginning of this chapter, requires some methodological ingenuity, drawing attention to the ways in which internet use is locally constituted. When safety and mobility are as intertwined as they are in the West Bank, however, the harnessing of new technologies for research further enhances the ways one can be mobile in unexpected ways. Supplementing face-to-face ethnographic practices with digital methods also highlights the ways in which mobility is visibly and invisibly rendered. By being mobile virtually, I was able to navigate around both security restrictions occasionally inhibiting physical movement to the settlement, and cultural restrictions that prevented me from using secular social space.

Conclusion

In this chapter I have attempted to show how the discontinuities in the setting of the research are reflected in its methods, and how these discontinuities in turn rendered my fieldsite a space networked across physical and virtual terrains, over and around physical boundaries. Studying mobility necessitates paying equal attention to moments of immobility for both my interlocutors and myself, rendering mobility in the West Bank as circumstantial. Throughout my fieldwork I was constantly waiting for it to “happen” around the interruptions, blockages, and discontinuities occurring in trying to access certain places, people, or things in the name of conducting ethnography. Mobility therefore emerged first as a method and later as a lens with which to retrospectively view my experiences in the region. The time I spent using road and internet infrastructures as my interlocutors eventually became my objects of study, gradually morphing from the method into the theoretical substance of my research. As a result, my fieldsite traversed visible and invisible sites and multiple boundaries to incorporate both physical and virtual spaces.

My access to Palestinians and Israelis was also shaped by infrastructures and the relative mobility of actors. I was easily integrated among Palestinian refugees and readily offered advice, particularly concerning safety and workarounds to limitations to their mobility. My experiences among settlers, however, were almost the inverse and required much more methodological flexibility than I expected, despite being a more mobile and less persecuted group. It was only by building offline networks through online methods that I was able to gain access to settlers, relying on internet

infrastructures that allowed me to move invisibly and around boundaries. The discontinuities I experienced in accessing the spaces of my fieldsite were consequently reflected in the discontinuities in the thickness of my ethnographic knowledge of Palestinians and settlers respectively. As Faubion and Marcus point out, “in multi-sited fieldwork, both thickness and thinness are variably expected, and accounting for the differences in quality and intensity of fieldwork material becomes one of the key and insight-producing functions of ethnographic analysis” (2009: 196). On the whole, refugee Palestinian family life centres on the home as a safe space and the centre of women’s lives, and the Palestinian families I worked with gave me free and unrestricted access to their homes. Amongst Israeli settlers, however, my access was limited by their comparative mobility that structured their time and perception of my presence.

By paying attention to first the mundane and only then the more dramatic aspects of life in the West Bank through the eyes and experiences of my interlocutors, I was able to organise my fieldsite around the three more significant infrastructures I saw structuring their lives. My methods were undoubtably also shaped by what I felt able to do as an individual in the setting; I was hyper-mobile in comparison to those living in the region by virtue of citizenship but simultaneously often rendered immobile by the means designed to control the mobility of Palestinians. A focus on the everyday produces knowledge of the West Bank both from its lesser-known population, the settlers, and its most vulnerable, the refugees. This moves understandings and discussions of the region away from representations of the West Bank as defined solely by immobility for its Palestinian residents and homogeneity of settler experience. Instead, I attempt to show through the lens of mobility in its myriad forms the ways in which lives are lived out in extraordinary circumstances across uneven ground.

Chapter Two: Discontinuous subjectivity

Introduction

The discontinuities in the fieldsite outlined in the previous chapter also extended to my own subjectivities as an ethnographer. Moving between and navigating my access to road, internet, and human infrastructures required the constant manipulation of my own identity. This mobilisation occurred through the strategic front- and back-staging (Sehgal 2007: 168) of my subjectivity, political views, and biography according to whether I was communicating with Israeli state authorities, settlers, or Palestinian refugees. A study of both Palestinian refugees and Israeli settlers can only be conducted by someone with both the legal ability and the political motivations to enter both Israeli- and PNA-governed areas of the West Bank. Having now completed the study, the reasons for a lack of similar dual research become clear, as the practical and ethical questions it raises as well as the physical and psychological tolls it took are numerous and complex. In this chapter I explore these complexities and the impact they took on my wellbeing as I was regularly placed in danger, navigated visible and invisible risks, and negotiated personal and ethical boundaries.

Following the reflexive turn of the 1980s, anthropologists drew much-needed attention to the interrelation of researcher positionality and knowledge production. This turn, influenced by the growth of post-modernist, feminist, queer, and gender studies saw anthropologists beginning to question the objectivity of their work when informed by their own biases and epistemologies (Behar and Gordon 1995; Clifford and Marcus 1986; Nordstrom and Robben 1995; Rosaldo 1989; Tedlock 1991). Despite this emphasis on ethnographic subjectivity and positionality, little attention has been paid to researcher wellbeing (Berry et al. 2017; Cearns 2018; Enria 2018; Kovats-Bernat 2002). When commenting on the reflexive turn, Marcus appears confident that "virtually all ethnographies themselves are interesting sources of such [self-]reflection" (2002: 1). It would appear that often to simply reference to one's positionality and reflect briefly on its relation to wider power dynamics in the field is a sufficient exercise in considering the ethnographer's lens without considering their condition. Perhaps one of the reasons anthropology is unwilling to consider the condition of the ethnographer relates to the continuous "strong shared images of ideal practice [of ethnographers as]… 'young Malinowskis'" (Marcus 2009: 3). Able-bodied, white, heterosexual Malinowski is routinely celebrated for having conducted lengthy, thorough, and rigorous fieldwork in a distant and remote location.

However, and as Kovats-Bernat notes, "little mention…[is] made of how the reality of lived violence affects or is edited out of anthropological theory, method, ethics, and text" (2002: 208), even in

Malinowski's work. Discussions of how experiences during fieldwork shape methodologies highlight the fact that "what the ethnographer finds out is inherently connected with how she finds it out" (Emerson, Fretz, Shaw 1995: 11). Uniting these scholars' arguments is a sense that, if one only reads ethnographies and dissertations that are the end products of ethnographic fieldwork, one could conclude that "ethnographers easily set aside their own emotional states in the pursuit of ethnographic data" (Gardner and Hoffman 2006:70). This chapter aims to challenge the silence on these emotional states and the overall wellbeing of researchers by demonstrating how they are analytically productive.

In making this challenge I draw on work conducted by The New Ethnographer (TNE), a project I co-founded[18] while in the field, that called for a "compassionate turn" in anthropology. This turn "makes explicit and transparent both the way our fieldwork impacts the places in which we work, but also the ways in which fieldwork impacts researchers. When we use the term wellbeing, we refer to health, mental health, attention to power dynamics of gender, sexual identity, class, race, ethnicity, and other markers of subjective identities. However, we also draw attention to additional themes that emerge for many ethnographers, including risk, deception, and perhaps most importantly a sense of compassionate care. With these factors in mind, we return to the literal meaning of wellbeing: are we as researchers and those we work with *being well* as a result of our work?" (Spector and Procter 2018, emphasis in original). As this argument shows, a compassionate turn frames wellbeing as inseparable from the positionality of the researcher and the production of anthropological knowledge.

The aim of this chapter, then, is to create a space to discuss the uses of my positionality across a discontinuous and dangerous environment to productively discuss their impact on my "emotional states" (Gardner and Hoffman 2006: 70) and wellbeing. In doing this I first offer two short vignettes from my fieldwork that capture the different ways I front- and back-staged my subjectivities in order to conduct this fieldwork across a discontinuous environment. The first vignette offers a quotidian reflection on daily journeys I made, and the second a rather more exceptional moment of danger. I then draw on these experiences in the remainder of the chapter, first discussing the ways I front- and back-staged my positionality to gain access to, and achieve rapport with settlers and refugees. Following this, I explore the notion of safety and risk in fieldwork, highlighting both material and physical dangers and immaterial and invisible risks involved in this work. I subsequently explore the ethical ramifications of this kind of dual-sited fieldwork among groups with different relations to the

[18] With Dr Caitlin Procter of Oxford University, also an anthropologist working in the West Bank.

occupying Israeli state. Finally, I conclude by reminding the reader of the centrality of researcher positionality in the production of anthropological knowledge and the necessity of compassionate practice in all kinds of fieldwork. Through this discussion, I highlight how the central themes of this thesis – mobility, discontinuity, visibility, and invisibility – dominate the ways knowledge is produced about the people living in the West Bank.

January 21, 2018

I woke up at 5.45am and got dressed in the dark in my house in Bethlehem. I put on jeans, a tunic, and an abaya under my coat. I greeted the neighbourhood baker on the way to my car, the only other person on the street up as early as me. He asked what I was doing up so early, and I told him I was going to work; not untrue. I checked WhatsApp but there were no reports of anything on the road, so I planned to take the usual route, thankful that the six-kilometre journey would only take the 45 minutes I had allowed for it. There was no traffic at this hour in Bethlehem and I got to the Nafaq checkpoint quickly, but as I descended down the hill, I could see a long queue of settlers' cars. I turned the car down a bypass road for Palestinians that went underneath Road 60. Exactly under the tunnel there was a flying checkpoint with spikes in the road and three soldiers. I passed one soldier my passport while another searched through the bags in the boot of my car. He asked where I was going, and I replied in Hebrew: "to Gush Etzion, I got lost", as if to explain why I was on a Palestinian road. He waved me through but instructed me not to take this road again as it was dangerous. I pulled onto Road 60 and drove to the entrance of Elazar settlement, half a kilometre down the road. I parked in my usual secluded corner and got changed into a calf-length skirt, tucking my tunic in. I bundled my jeans and abaya into a bag and put them under my seat, then pulled back onto the 60 to get to Efrat's women's centre just in time for the 7am Zumba class, where I changed from my Jewish orthodox garb into sports clothes in the changing room with the other women. I greeted the ones I recognised, they nodded at me briefly before continuing with their own conversations. "Is she a journalist or something?" one of them said about me to the other in Hebrew, assuming I couldn't understand. "I'm not sure. She's British", the other said. They continued to ignore me and carried on their conversation into the other room.

After a long day of meetings with employees at the Efrat municipality, I was driving back when a bright light in the sky coming over the hill on the western side of the road caught my eye. It arced gracefully, and only as it landed on the other side of the road did, I realise what it was. An Israeli-plated car driving towards me on the other side of the road flashed its lights at me and I accelerated rapidly, realising almost too late that the shining light was a Molotov cocktail. Noticing there were

no other cars on the road, I panicked and quickly pulled into Elazar, finding safety inside the gates of the settlement. I parked the car and got changed quickly back into my jeans and abaya as my phone lit up with WhatsApp reports of the Molotov, confirmed by nearby soldiers. I waited until the road became populated again before driving quickly back home to Bethlehem.

July 4, 2016

While driving back from my Hebrew class in Jerusalem my dilapidated car started acting up, so I called Yusuf, a local mechanic. He told me to bring it back to Bethlehem and he'd wait for me inside the checkpoint. By the time I got to the queue to enter the West Bank through the checkpoint, the engine was lightly smoking. It was a hot day and I had wound down the windows as I didn't want to run the air conditioning and further overload the engine. I took off my abaya and threw it on the back seat, lighting a cigarette to pass the time. When I finally got to the front of the queue the soldiers were gesturing at my car and told me not to approach. They began shouting on megaphones for other cars to retreat, and I noticed more and more soldiers getting involved. The engine spluttered and wouldn't restart, so I shouted in English that the car was broken down and I needed to push it through. By then there must have been ten soldiers with their weapons pointed at me. One shouted through a megaphone to drop the keys and my papers on the ground and get out of the car. A female soldier approached me and patted me down, humiliatingly in full view of all the other cars at the checkpoint and staring at the commotion, then leafed through my passport curiously. "She's clear" the soldier radioed to her colleagues in Hebrew and then told me to move the car forward. Unable to drive it, the only option was to put the car in neutral and summon all my strength in the midday heat to push it.

"What happened?!" Yusuf asked when he saw me clear the checkpoint and came running over. "The engine won't start" I explained. "No, they cleared the whole checkpoint" he exclaimed, gesturing to the unusual expanse of empty road around the usually traffic-clogged area. He managed to start the engine and saw the smoke rising from the bonnet. "They thought you were doing a car bomb!" he laughed, shaking his head. He called his colleague to send a tow truck for my mangled car. "This foreign female terrorist just tried to blow up the checkpoint!", he laughed down the phone. I had been so focused on trying to stay calm and push the car that I hadn't realised what had been going on; the soldiers, trained to be on high alert for suicide attacks, had mistaken my broken-down car for an attempt to drive a car bomb into the checkpoint. After frisking me and realising I was a foreigner, not to mention further confusing the matter by driving away from Jerusalem into Area A of the West Bank, simply made me push the car through unaided and let me go. "Alhamdullallah (praise god, Ar.)

you are a foreigner," Yusuf said, sighing and gesturing at my uncovered arms and stress cigarette. "If that was me? Done. Finished.", and he mimed shooting a gun.

Mobilising positionalities

My ability to conduct this research, and to conduct it safely, was hinged on being a white foreigner with a Jewish surname,[19] which as these vignettes show, served me in different ways. As Yusuf noted, my whiteness safeguarded my freedom of movement in the face of the numerous obstacles to Palestinian safety and mobility. If I had been Palestinian, visibly Muslim, or Arab-looking in any way, I would not have made it out alive from the checkpoint, and there are numerous instances of Palestinians being killed at checkpoints for far less.[20] My Jewish surname and physiology that appeared similar to Ashkenazi Jews further lent themselves to gaining access to settlements on the assumption I was a member of their group. At the same time, however, my whiteness also exposed me to the same dangers faced by settlers as evidenced in the first vignette. If I had been driving a car with a Palestinian license plate, visibly Muslim, or Arab-looking in any way, I would not have had a Molotov cocktail aimed at my car driving along a settler road. Constantly moving between settler and Palestinian spaces in the West Bank therefore placed me in numerous different relations to danger and safety depending on where I was and who I was interacting with.

While my outsider position was undoubtedly beneficial to being able to conduct my research, it also placed me in categories met with mixed emotions. In Palestine, the numerous "internationals" who arrive, stay briefly, and ultimately leave are received with mixed feelings. On one hand, their presence is interpreted as good for the local economy and for raising awareness of the Palestinian cause internationally. They are also, however, met critically as those who may not fully understand the political situation, are free to come and go, and not subject to the stringent measures of occupied life. Within Dheishe, tourists often visit as volunteers and stay for a maximum of three months (due to visa restrictions) with the exception of a small minority of women who marry locally and stay permanently. As a long-term visitor and able to communicate in Arabic, I was lucky to be accepted by most people I met, but often the juxtapositions of my freedom of movement were remarked upon critically. "Internationals" can, however, mediate their reputations in the camp by being *mukhtaramah* (respectful, Ar.). This included participating in and contributing to camp life by

[19] Spector, my surname inherited from my paternal grandfather, is an anglicised version of the Ukrainian Spektorov, a Jewish family with significant presence in Israel. As Jewishness is inherited matrilineally and I am estranged from the paternal side of my family, I do not identify as Jewish.

[20] The Israeli army's shoot to kill policy has resulted in hundreds of extrajudicial killings of Palestinians at checkpoints, disputed by the Israeli state as defensive measures (B'Tselem 2020).

volunteering, visiting families, and respecting local traditions and modesty codes, which I adhered to as much as possible. Being *mukhtarama* also applied to my online presence, and the Facebook profile I used with Palestinians was similarly cleared of all activity that might offend local sensibilities.

My lack of religious affiliation also served to both confuse and benefit the ways in which I was received as a foreigner. Although I was raised without religion, like most white foreigners in Palestine, I was assumed to be Christian. My presence in the settlements and adherence to Orthodox women's codes of modesty, in combination with my physiology and surname, led most settlers to assume I was Jewish. To settlers I neither advertised nor hid my secular identity, and, when questioned, most settlers were satisfied that my Jewish paternal grandfather was sufficient qualification for acceptance in their community and it was often assumed that I was looking to rekindle my faith. It is likely my foreign and secular identity also benefitted my inclusion in their community as it moved interpretations of my presence away from that of an Israeli leftist, who often appear as journalists or researchers and are negatively received by settlers. As a result of the ambiguous ways that white foreigners in the West Bank can be perceived, I was interpolated differently by communities dependent on their own perspectives on the nature of my presence.

Being both an outsider and unmarried woman working in religiously conservative groups, I made great efforts to maintain respectful of local dress codes for women of a similar status. Without a male guardian or connections to vouch for my modesty, being *mukhtaramah* contributed to the formation of trusting relationships with refugees and assuaged my concerns that my physiological similarity to Israelis would place my presence under suspicion (as discussed later in this chapter). Palestinian camp culture is conservative and behaving respectfully requires women of my generation to cover their legs and arms with a long skirt or trousers and an *abaya*, a long robe worn open or closed that hides the shape of their body. Orthodox Jewish culture, however, instead dictates that women should wear skirts that fall below the knee and may show their lower arms. When I began moving from Bethlehem to Efrat every day, behaving modestly in both settings became more complicated, resulting in the process of changing my clothes between fieldsites as described above. It was only in the final months of my fieldwork, when I was reassured that I was sufficiently modest and understood not to be a practicing Jew that I felt more comfortable eschewing the rapid roadside outfit-change, saving it only for my invitations to Shabbat meals.

Working in an online context provided the opportunity to further manipulate the ways I presented myself modestly and in accordance with the views of each group I worked with. One of the reasons anthropology may have been slow to take up digital methods is perhaps related to the assumption that the ethnographer's physical absence from the fieldsite "negates the researcher's presence, and thereby negates the authenticity of her research" (Walton 2018: 117). However, and as Taylor has argued, we cannot take this questionable authenticity too seriously as "these possibilities are part of social life, not just part of online life" (1999: 437 cf. Garcia, Standlee, Bechkoff and Cui 2012). As I have written elsewhere (Evans 2017),[21] gender, class, sexuality, and the other positionalities of researchers influence how we are received in online contexts. The presentation of my identity, then, relied on creating an online persona that was amenable to the replication of the political environment in Israeli and Palestinian uses of the internet. Throughout my research I used separate social media accounts for working with Palestinians and Israelis, tailored to these respective etiquettes. This became a far neater way of segregating the different aspects of my positionality than in face-to-face interactions in which my work among each group was concealed from the other. I worked to ground my newer 'Israeli' accounts by adding photos from my home country and life in London and asked various friends and contacts in the UK to add my new account to make it look convincing.

As Berry et al. note, "the field in anthropology…is a physical place as well as an epistemological space of investigation shaped by histories of European and U.S. imperialism and colonialism" (2017: 537). The constant employment of my subjectivity to keep myself safe in the West Bank was, as I showed in Chapter One, a consequence of the ways imperialism and colonialism have shaped the current environment of the West Bank to privilege white foreignness over its Palestinian (Zureik 2003) and non-white Jewish populations (Lavie 2014). A near constant consideration of and oscillation between the fore- and back-grounding of different aspects of my identity granted me a safety Palestinians cannot experience under occupation. However, in the presence of Israelis, I found it helpful to downplay even the most superficial allegiances to Palestine and highlight a touristic naivety towards the political situation. Among Palestinians, the presentation of a more authentic version of myself that highlighted my political persuasions while behaving modestly allowed me to ingratiate myself towards my hosts and foster trusting relationships. Ultimately, however, the privileging of the rights of foreigners over those of Palestinians safeguarded my presence through numerous encounters and experiences in the field.

[21] Published under a pseudonym to protect my status in the field at the time.

Safety and risk

In this section I explore the different ways in which safety and danger are features that shape life in and mobility through the West Bank alluded to in the previous section. To begin, it is important to clarify that it is impossible to draw a distinction between what is safe and what is unsafe. One does not have to be staring down the barrel of a gun or running against the wind away from teargas in order to feel in danger. Nevertheless, an "institutionalised notion of fieldwork as a masculinist rite of passage or an exercise of one's endurance" (Berry et al. 2017: 538) often continues to shape conceptions of fieldwork as necessarily unsafe. These conceptions of danger speak to the ways that anthropology has not yet decolonised itself from the notion of fieldwork as conceived of through the lens of able-bodied and heterosexual white men, ignoring the numerous dangers those with other positionalities may face. This issue is not limited to anthropology; across disciplines, university risk assessments for fieldwork are usually not sufficient to explore the diverse range of safety concerns facing ethnographers. Activist anthropologists in particular are expected to engage in risky behaviour "in order to shed light on the struggles of others with less relative privilege" (Berry et al. 2017: 547). This expectation belies an underlying belief that pre-existing cultural dynamics within these struggles cannot place the researcher in danger, and are necessarily silenced to protect the struggles we aim to represent.

I divide the dangers and risks I faced into two categories; the visible and material dangers of living in a militarised environment, and the invisible and existential risks encountered by moving between Palestinians and settlers and the bureaucratic and surveillance aspects of Israel's occupation. The distinction between these dangers and risks highlights the structural as well as physical forms of violence to which West Bank residents are exposed. I begin by exploring the physical dangers that being mobile in the West Bank exposed me to, and relate these critically to the notion of certain kinds of fieldwork as inherently dangerous. The risks involved in this research included deception of both interlocutors and the Israeli state, being subject to intensive state surveillance, and navigating the extremist views of settlers. Throughout this section I explore my exposure to and navigation of these dangers and risks in relation to my deteriorating mental health throughout my fieldwork, reminding the reader that researcher wellbeing and knowledge production are interlinked.

At the time of application, the risk assessment for this research did not consider psychological as well as physical risks and therefore neither I nor the review board who approved considered the impact of working with settlers. Despite a growing body of anthropological research on extremist groups and the potential of harm this work generates (Cammelli 2017; Gusterson 2017; Kalb 2009;

Pasieka 2019; Shoshan 2014), more concern was taken over working with Palestinians, often framed as the source of violence in the region (Winegar and Deeb 2015). This framing is something this thesis problematises, by debunking the notion that Arabs and Muslims are inherently irrational and dangerous, while (white) Israelis are rational and safe (Abu-Lughod 2002; Said 1979).

Thinking about the differing natures of danger and risk in the West Bank necessitates the reiteration that safety for Palestinians, Israelis, and foreigners is inherently linked to mobility. Conducting fieldwork on mobility therefore exposed me to a number of the same physical dangers facing its Palestinian residents designed to impede mobility, including the Israeli militarys systematic use of physical violence to control its Palestinian population. All those residing in Palestinian spaces of the West Bank may be exposed to the use of tear gas, live ammunition, rubber bullets, detainments, and beatings. The misunderstanding at the checkpoint I detailed above was a one-off event in my fieldwork and ultimately resolved by my whiteness and foreign status. Exposures to other dangers directed at Palestinians, however, were more frequent. The Israeli army's regular raids on Dheishe necessitated the use of social media to avoid crossing their path as detailed in Chapter Five. The impact of these raids on my mental health caused me to eventually choose to live outside of the camp, a difficult decision also faced by many of its residents. On one hand, life in the camp for refugees (and for myself as a researcher) is valued for its close-knit community and strong sense of solidarity. On the other, it is acknowledged that life in the camp is *sa'abeh* (difficult, Ar.), and it can be preferable to live elsewhere.

As the first vignette in this chapter showed, moving through the space of the West Bank while resembling an Israeli also comes with its dangers, all of which could be navigated through the infrastructures I studied. Road infrastructures came to represent both safety and danger; on one hand their use alleviated the claustrophobia of camp life and enabled my freedom of movement. On the other, they rendered me a target for Palestinian resistance. Integration into settler and refugee human infrastructures offered additional safety and security, providing advice and ports of safe call when the region's shared road infrastructures proved too dangerous. By mirroring local uses of the internet to update myself on the safety of roads in real time, I was mostly able to navigate obstacles. There were, however, times when simply the potential of danger of mobility became overwhelming, a structural effect of the region's violence. As a response, I came to rely on the virtual representations of Efrat's space through its social media that allowed me to conduct research remotely from my home in Bethlehem.

For Palestinians more than for Israelis or foreigners, life in the West Bank is shaped by the effects of occupation. People can suddenly be caught up in violent clashes, accidents, or raids; friends and relatives can be injured, detained, and incarcerated; mobility can be restricted, work and education missed, and journeys cut short. These constant challenges take a psychological toll, a result of what Baumann calls "occupation time" (2019: 595). Because of the limits placed on their mobility, Palestinians "must continually try to foresee changes and adapt to new circumstances in an effort to minimise exhaustion, risk and uncertainty" (ibid). Despite these efforts, events and meetings are often rescheduled as journeys are delayed by unexpected obstacles, a need to assist relatives or friends, or simply an overwhelming fatigue with the situation in general. I experienced this strain through friends and interlocutors, as well as personally; there were days when I felt overwhelmed and unable to witness more examples of occupied life than I was able to protect myself from. As much as being in the West Bank increases one's exposure to physical violence, life is also shaped and governed by less visible threats and risks arising from navigating access to the region, subjection to surveillance, and remaining impervious to the extremist views of settlers.

Even the process of gaining permission to enter and achieving residence in the West Bank is fraught with complex risks as the Israeli state discourages and attempts to limit foreign involvement in Palestinian life. Without proving residency in Israel (or its settlements), visitors are usually unable to extend the standard three-month tourist visa.[22] Extensions are usually denied and foreigners can be deported. As noted in Chapter One, this insecurity often results in methodological creativity for researchers, such as Aouragh's (2011) focus on the use of the internet to connect Palestinian diasporas, or the study of Palestinian refugees in the diaspora (Feldman 2018; Knusen and Hanafi 2014; Perdigon 2018).

For those working with Palestinians, deception and manipulation are necessary in order to gain and maintain access to the West Bank. When working among settlers while living and working with Palestinians, different kinds of deceptions were used to reframe my presence as legitimate in the eyes of both settlers and their state. These manipulations rely on researcher positionality, which had to be differently deployed in relation to danger and risk depending on where I was, how I was dressed, and what language I was speaking. In this way the invisible risks and physical dangers of everyday life in the West Bank emerge as both dramatic and exceptional but also structural and mundane, embedded into the practice of simply living and moving through the space. Invisible

[22] While available, West Bank visas are issued only by the PNA, its institutions, and some international NGOs. These visas are usually issued for the West Bank only and exit and entry are permitted through the land border with Jordan.

dangers related to existential insecurity were therefore omnipresent in Palestinian society, and creep "into the most intimate realms of everyday life, invading the home, relationships between families, and the bodies and psyches of Palestinian natives" (Berry et al. 2017: 549).

I was able to partially circumvent the rigidity of Israel's immigration bureaucracy by manipulating the way I presented my research, foregrounding my work among Israeli settlers and obtaining false documents placing my residence inside Israel, allowing some stability for my research. Despite the privilege of holding a renewable and long-term visa, however, I was still subject to regular interrogations by the Israeli intelligence operatives. Throughout these interrogations I maintained a presentation of myself as someone who worked solely with Israelis and was otherwise unconnected to Palestine. Because my phone and laptop were often searched when entering or leaving the country, I routinely cleared my phone and laptop of all Palestinian contacts, personal social media accounts, and PhD related work. I maintained a false set of documents on my laptop giving the appearance of work conducted only in Israel to show security agents.

Once in the West Bank, the lasting impact of Israeli state surveillance over Palestinians shapes the way foreigners can be perceived, particularly in refugee camps which are commonly associated with resistance and therefore particularly surveilled. While difficult, it is far easier for non-Palestinians to gain entry to Palestine than ethnic Palestinians, resulting in a strong sense of inequality between foreign researchers and Palestinians living outside of their homeland. Two decades prior to my own fieldwork Maya Rosenfeld, an Israeli-American anthropologist, had conducted a study of resistance in Dheishe camp. Although she was accepted by some families, her presence was remembered and she was regarded as a potential intelligence operative by many. Being a white foreigner who looked Israeli and carried a Jewish name, I could easily be placed in the category of *jassousah* (spy, Ar.). As Bornstein, an American Jew conducting fieldwork amongst Palestinians notes, it is not always Palestinians who pose a threat to researchers, but foreign researchers "who presented the greater potential danger and [it was] my hosts who were taking a chance" (2002: 21). As a result, I was careful, especially as part of my work was around the use of social media,[23] to never ask explicit questions about the political allegiances, resistance work, or activities during the *Intifadas* (uprisings) of any of my friends and interlocutors.

[23] As I explain further in Chapter Five, following the period of unrest in 2015, Palestinian social media became a key intelligence gathering site for Israeli intelligence operatives, and its use became increasingly sensitive throughout my fieldwork.

The omnipresence of surveillance also informed the ways I documented and stored my fieldnotes. I used careful methods of documentation to keep my data on Palestinians secure. I found that, when I presented myself as a formal researcher with a voice recorder and notebook, the content of what was shared with me tended to replicate accounts of Palestinian life already produced in journalistic and NGO reports. This knowledge detailed the losses, human rights abuses, and difficulties of occupied life and while important to document, was not the insight into a more holistic portrait of Palestinian mobility I sought to collect. The intimacy of the everyday was better collected, I found, by visiting homes informally and taking notes at the end of the day, kept on a private USB drive that stayed hidden in my home and was eventually smuggled out in the suitcase of an Israeli contact who would not be subject to the same methods of surveillance. This method also protected anything written from being found on my person in the event I crossed a checkpoint and was searched or when leaving and entering the country.

Working with settlers produced its own forms of insecurity. The first of these was in the sudden rearrangement of my positionality to favour gaining access to Efrat and its community. Once I had established relationships with settlers, the regular exposure to their political views was difficult, particularly those which reflected the ways the Israeli state attempted to label them as extremist. As a result, I did not enjoy spending time with settlers. The documentation of their anti-Palestinian sentiments was not the intention of my research, but nevertheless shaped the content of my interviews and time spent with them. While I found the information they shared with me fascinating, it was morally abhorrent to me. When discussing my work with Palestinian friends, I came to know exactly which Palestinian families owned the land I was standing on while in the different neighbourhoods of Efrat. Most of the male settlers were armed specifically to defend themselves from Palestinians and can do so with relative impunity from Israeli law. Hearing the numerous justifications for violence towards Palestinians, assessments of Islam as a religion of violence and terror, and generally a demonstration of prejudice towards Palestinian life often left me exhausted.

The ways I documented my work among settlers was in a manner almost opposite of that to Palestinians. In order to present myself as an ‘official’ researcher, and therefore a less threatening presence, I recorded each interview on my phone and took detailed and extensive notes throughout. The prop of pen and paper and voice note became useful as my research continued and occasionally took place in the public setting of the settlement’s café, as other settlers began to take an interest in my project and requested to take part. I also made extensive voice notes after interviews, struggling

to remember things they had asked me to keep off the record so as not to mistakenly use them at later date. All of these notes were kept openly on my computer, and I carried my notebooks on me at all times to support the impression I presented to the Israeli state that I was conducting research inside Israel.

During this period of my research I grappled with my authenticity as a researcher, both online and offline. My fieldwork identity when working with settlers was often based on partial disclosure and partial secrecy, in which I had to front- and back-stage different aspects of my identity several times daily. This amounted to more than the sartorial changes I described in the excerpt from my fieldnotes, but extended to my background, politics, daily activities outside of my time in the settlement, and place of residence. My presence in the camp became potentially more threatening when I began working in Efrat and switching between speaking Arabic and Hebrew several times a day. Both are Semitic languages and similarly structured and therefore easily confused. It was often remarked upon by my Hebrew teachers that, much to their amusement due to my appearance, I spoke Hebrew with an Arabic accent. To speak the wrong language in the wrong place would have been highly detrimental to my status as a neutral outsider to Israelis or empathetic to Palestinians. Accidentally misrepresenting myself as an Israeli to Palestinians placed their trust in me at risk. Accidentally misrepresenting myself as Palestinian or Arab to Israeli settlers could generate the same mistrust and potentially result in interrogation by Israeli security forces and deportation.

Exposure to the dangers and risks of living in a militarised and dangerous environment generated "shared experiences of the embodiment of terror and its wounding effects" that seemed to "bind us together across time and space…making us available to each other as ethical-political subjects who can choose to sustain reality" (Berry et al. 2017: 551). However, in the same ways that categorising certain fieldsites as 'dangerous' can be detrimental to the safety of the researcher, shared embodied experiences of mental illness can also emphasise the importance of achieving greater ethnographic understanding over their own wellbeing. By absorbing tension and trauma and continuing with my fieldwork despite growing symptoms of poor health including exhaustion, panic attacks, paranoia, hyperarousal, depression, and anxiety, I persevered at considerable personal expense.

Research conducted in settings such as the West Bank has in the past few decades become grouped in a category of fieldwork referred to as 'dangerous'. This category has generated both its own subgenre of literature on the subject (see Lee-Treweek 2000; Nordstrom and Robben 1995; Grimm et al. 2020) and conferences across social science disciplines. In this literature and at these events,

those who have conducted 'dangerous' fieldwork offer recommendations and reflections on their experiences for those who are going on to conduct it. Despite this recent boom in the classification of certain kinds of fieldwork as 'dangerous' and the discourses and subgenres it has produced, however, two interrelated concerns emerge.

The first of these is that, despite the rise of discourses around 'dangerous' fieldwork, universities hosting such work have not commonly been inspired to respond by adjusting their methodological training. It is therefore the researcher who appears as solely responsible for taking on certain challenges (Berry et al. 2017; Spector and Procter 2018). Without providing safety training in the navigation of physical and structural violence, researchers are potentially interpreted by their universities as an 'ideal type' of anthropologist; inherently white, able-bodied, and male, and therefore impervious to numerous types of danger. The second concern is that 'dangerous' fieldwork seems to implicitly concern only those kinds of fieldsites marked by conflict, political instability, high crime rates, and so on. In my fieldwork, however, it was the *experience* of physical danger, and the *potential* for danger, that took an equal toll on the ways I was able to conduct research. This classification therefore negates the potential of danger in non-dangerous contexts, potentially silencing the fact that researcher subjectivity frames their relations to safety differently.

The culmination of these visible dangers and invisible risks impacted my mental health through and following the 36 months I spent in the West Bank. Initially, mental illness has a direct impact on the mobility of the researcher, and conducting research among settlers became to me as dangerous as the physical violences I was exposed to when working and being mobile with Palestinians. The act of attempting to foster ethnographic intimacy with settlers while maintaining a protective distance from them shaped the affective dimensions of my fieldwork. Once I established connections with settlers, I found myself limiting my activities with them to give myself time to rest in between and supplement my research with phone calls or social media work from my home. I often felt unable to get up and go to Efrat, or justify the impact my work with them took on my health on my return. On my return to London I was diagnosed with complex PTSD, a result of having experienced not a single traumatic event but having lived in a state of ongoing trauma for years. Unsurprisingly, complex PTSD is a common diagnosis among both Palestinians (Marie, SaadAdeen, and Battat 2020) and those who have lived in the region for long periods of time. As a result of these experiences, I conclude that the values of a compassionate anthropology, one that reminds the researcher that if they are not well, they often cannot work well or treat others well, must be normalised. It also

reminds the anthropological community that danger is located in all fieldsites, and therefore attention to researcher wellbeing must be considered universally.

The culmination of these concerns is not to argue that the West Bank is not a dangerous place to conduct fieldwork. Instead, I aim to highlight that the presentation of certain fieldsites as inherently dangerous and others as not appears to specifically locate danger in specific places and place the responsibility of managing danger onto the researcher. Drawing on subjective experiences of all researchers in all fieldsites, and making space for them in anthropological writing allows us to normalise the impacts of experiencing danger. This normalisation in turn links the effects of experiencing danger to researcher wellbeing, which is often neglected in methodological training. Compassion in research should, therefore, not be applied as proportional to the type of fieldsite, especially when the kinds dangers occurring in places like the West Bank are increasingly replicated in places we do not consider dangerous. Over a decade ago, Amy Pollard's (2009) survey of ethnographers returned from fieldwork highlighted that experiences of trauma were emerging as ubiquitous rather than exceptional, with no distinction made that such traumas were emerging from fieldsites categorised as dangerous. As long as these discussions remain absent from discussion it replicates "a silence implying that such concerns fall outside the politics of research" (Berry et al. 2017: 558), when anthropologists often know that research outcomes are shaped by the processes that facilitate them.

Ethical decision making

Activist research in general is often rife with ethical concerns. Activist research like my own, split across two opposing sides of an occupation, living in close proximity to each other, and engaged in active oppression and resistance, becomes ethically complex to say the least. In this section I address the various ethical challenges and my approach to ethical decision making that shaped my methodologies. It is notable that the British Association of Social Anthropologists' (ASA) Ethical Guidelines, to which I referred throughout this research, emphasise the importance of protecting the wellbeing of research participants yet makes no consideration of researcher wellbeing in the face of ethical challenges. In this section I therefore reiterate that, in the same ways that mental health, positionality, and exposure to risks are constitutive of a researcher's wellbeing, so too are ethical challenges.

I begin with what felt like the most obvious ethical issue in the nature of fieldwork conducted among both Israelis and Palestinians. For many Palestinians, it is inherently unethical to work with Israelis,

especially settlers. Similarly, for most settlers, it is unethical and considered unsafe to work with Palestinians. Although my research was approved by the LSE Research Ethics Committee and was undertaken in consultation with my supervisors throughout, the dilemma of how to ethically manage this dual study therefore troubled me throughout my fieldwork. The ASA Ethical Guidelines are vague on the subject of deception and simply hold that “anthropologists should endeavour to protect the physical, social and psychological well-being of those with whom they conduct their study” (2011). Given that these guidelines neglect to define wellbeing, its application is devolved to individual anthropologists to define it according to their needs. Ultimately this vagueness lent itself to my research, and I considered any limited deceptions as necessary in the pursuit of an activist work. The ASA’s Ethical Guidelines also state that “anthropologists should be honest and candid in their relations with their own and host governments,” though this seems unlikely for many researchers. As I showed above, such concealment was necessary in gaining access to the West Bank, and to avoid this on the basis of maintaining honest and candid relations with state structures would have perhaps been ethically problematic in itself. While I regret that I have deceived some of my interlocutors in this process, I have been careful to represent them in a way I see as compliant with ethical regulations for anthropologists as I discuss below.

As surveillance is a form of structural violence readily used against Palestinians, I was cautious not to recreate its conditions among those who I worked with. In thinking about how to ensure the well-being of my interlocutors I sought advice from Palestinian friends and research participants who understood the full nature of my research. Our conclusion was that I would not advertise the fact that I was conducting fieldwork with Israeli settlers to Palestinians, however I also did not hide it if asked. For the most part, while they were against settlement, my Palestinian friends were interested in the lives of the settlers they had seen populate the landscape. Among settlers, to whom I could not divulge any part of my work with Palestinians, I made decisions regarding ethical practices unadvised but drawing on my understanding of settlement life and security. The only overt deception I made was on the subject of my place of residence, as revealing I lived in Bethlehem would have likely reduced my access to settlers. Among settlers, I was rarely explicitly asked about my political allegiances, which were implicitly assumed by my presence in the settlement and interest in their lives.

The colonial power structures that enabled my access to Palestine are received critically by Palestinians unable to leave or those Palestinians unable to return to their homeland. Talal Asad observed that “the colonial power structure made the object of anthropological study accessible and

safe…made possible the kind of human intimacy on which anthropological fieldwork is based, but ensured that intimacy should be one-sided and provisional" (1973: 17). His words are particularly evocative in the context of Palestine, where foreigners are granted entry when exiled Palestinians are not. Asad continues that, as western anthropologists, we must explore the power relationship between the west and non-west by examining "the ways in which it has been dialectically linked to the practical conditions, the working assumptions and the intellectual product of all disciplines representing the European understanding of non-European humanity" (1973: 18-19). His point underpins my motivations to place in context the ways a colonial project initiated in the late 19th century continues to impact the lives of both Palestinians and settlers today. As a multi-sited project conducted among non-western Palestinians and often western-born settlers in a non-western context, my fieldsite provided a fruitful setting for exploring the ways in which western and non-western understandings of humanity played out in the everyday.

With my privileges as a western anthropologist in mind, I was also careful to ensure that the knowledge produced in this thesis would primarily serve to protect those who shared it with me. While the majority of the Palestinians I worked with were happy to be represented as I saw them and by their real names (in fact many specifically requested it) I have not done so in order to avoid complicating their status with the Israeli government. My research activities among Palestinians did not often resemble what they might have recognised as 'official' or 'formal' research activities to which they are often subject by UNRWA and other NGOs. Because I simply took part in their everyday lives, I was careful to remind them of my presence as a researcher as well as friend, and often returned to items disclosed to me to seek consent for their use in my work. The refugees I worked with understood the politics of their own representation and throughout my research I was implored to show that they were not *irhabeen* (terrorists, Ar.), but normal people living in difficult circumstances. Throughout my research a number of my interlocutors were arrested and detained by the Israeli army, homes were raided, and weighty fines were placed on others for breaches of various aspects of Israeli military law. I have chosen not to foreground these events unless they are analytically useful so as to avoid contributing to representations of Palestinians that centre their resistance to occupation as violent.

The settlers I met also consented to my reproduction of the knowledge they shared with me, with the exception of information shared off the record. Like Palestinians, many welcomed my research as an opportunity to challenge the ways they felt they were misrepresented nationally and internationally. Almost every interview I conducted with settlers included information related to

politics and the situation of Palestinians that they asked me not to record or reproduce. In asking me to discount these sentiments, those who spoke them demonstrated an implicit understanding of the ways they were represented that they wished to correct. While I have respected their wishes regarding comments made off the record, similar sentiments were expressed more implicitly in general conversation. I have therefore anonymised the people I worked with as best I am able to, while unable to anonymise the location of my research. Despite these efforts I have requested to place this thesis under embargo to protect their privacy.

Given these potential ramifications, the ethical concerns of conducting research amongst groups associated with extremism are also worthy of examination. On one hand, such work can serve to increase public understanding of the causes of extremism in the context of wider socio-historical trends. On the other, it can often glamourise notions of extremism, playing into the hands of states who set definitions on what behaviours or groups are constituted as extreme (McNeil-Wilson 2020). Researchers working with extremist groups hold a responsibility to avoid romanticising such work as dangerous or representing it as a form of infiltration. Such romanticisations can frame this work as complicit in the "securitised 'counter-extremism industry' that is so often guilty of replicating structural racism" (McNeil-Wilson 2020) by wielding the power to define who or what is extreme, and locating the power to prevent and curb extremism in the hands of the state.

Work conducted amongst such groups also necessitates a duty of care to future researchers. While I have opted to place this thesis under embargo, "'burning' participants through deception not only makes your own work largely unverifiable, it also makes the field more difficult" (McNeil-Wilson 2020). As well as making such groups less amenable to further research it can, on publication, place other researchers in danger. The death of Giulio Regeni and the current imprisonment of Patrick George Zaky in Egypt, the arrest of Matthew Hedges in the UEA, the imprisonment of Fariba Adelkhah, Roland Marchal, Kameel Ahmady and Kylie Moore-Gilbert in Iran demonstrate the dangers of associating with or conducting this kind of research. Ethical decision making in research, once again, can have direct and potentially fatal consequences for researchers. It therefore does not serve anthropology or anthropologists to consider it as unrelated to the wellbeing of researchers as well as those we work with.

Conclusion

Throughout my fieldwork I mobilised different aspects of my positionality at different moments to maintain entry, access, and trust to different parts of my field network, often in the same day or

even hour. In carefully balancing these mobilisations, I have been able to conduct what I believe is a unique study of a region dominated by the logics of segregation, immobilisation, and colonial expansion. Throughout this chapter I have outlined the ways I used my positionality to work with Palestinian refugees and settlers, and have considered the ethical ramifications of such an approach. I conclude by considering the impact this research took on my health and return to the significance of a "compassionate turn".

Like Calis, on my return to London the culture shock and the need to 're-wire' (2011) my body and brain to cope outside of contexts under occupation took a great toll on my mental health. Returning to field notes and to the affective and emotional responses they generated in the process of writing my thesis collapsed a boundary between fieldsite and home. This was even further complicated by social media which facilitated the remote continuation of intimate relationships forged in the field. In this sense my fieldwork continued long after I left the field. The culture shock of return was greater than that of arriving; as my body had been used as an instrument to absorb trauma and shock, it was only when it was permanently removed from this setting that it began to process the effects. This was further complicated by the moral responsibilities I felt towards my interlocutors. Once extracted from my fieldsite that others did not have the freedom to leave or enter at will, the existing power dynamics between researcher and researched became even further complicated.

A compassionate anthropological practice draws on the vulnerabilities generated by long-term fieldwork in Palestine, and its effects on the mind and body can be analytically productive when considered as a means of enabling empathy. These vulnerabilities can force us to reject our personal senses of fragility and instead embody those of others, eschewing the need to integrate or mimic the lives of our interlocutors (Enria 2018). Instead, it can create a levelling mechanism that allows us to experience fear and instability in relation to everyday life. This mechanism should not serve to push researchers beyond their personal capacities to conduct research. Instead, and as Enria notes, it is important to "re-position fragility as a way to think reflexively about multidirectional power relations, helping us break out of monolithic ways of understanding how identity interacts with power in the field" (2018). Following Enria, then, it is logical for accounts of ethnographic hardship to be considered as inextricable in both methodological and theoretical discussions of fieldwork.

In conducting research in any setting, the wellbeing of the researcher must be factored into the ways in which they undertake their research and this must be discussed openly. Working in a discontinuous fieldsite generates important questions about the nature of how ethnography can be

conducted through numerous physical and existential discontinuities. These questions not only relate to practical concerns of entry and access, but also how the researcher can manage their wellbeing through discontinuities, whatever their level of extremity. The analytical development of a compassionate practice can help us answer these questions.

To conclude, I return to the words of Gardner and Hoffman, who noted that – despite the influence of the work of the reflexive turn – the "end products" (2006: 7) of ethnographic fieldwork often omit the "emotional states" (ibid.) of the researchers conducting such work. Returning to the idealisation of a Malinowskian practice, it is worth considering the posthumous publication of his fieldwork diaries in 1967. These diaries revealed certain truths in his work that indicated not only was he unhappy throughout his fieldwork but also, we might presume, quite unwell. Struggling between desire to return but unwilling to do so "without first assuring himself of the wherewithal for achieving notoriety once he lands" (Rapport 1990: 81), Malinowski embodied many of the challenges that continue to face researchers today. The fact, then, that Malinowski is still revered as the ideal type ethnographer reveals important decolonising work anthropology has yet to do.

In creating space to discuss the wellbeing of researchers in relation to their capacities to both be personally well and do their work well, the purpose of reflection must be to place as central the ways in which our methods are shaped by our fieldsites and our subjectivities, and acknowledge the contested space of the academy (Berry et al. 2017). Ethnographic depth such as that achieved by Malinowski is often "easily confused with an exoticized search for authenticity, which in turn can frequently become synonymous with emotional or physical hardship" (Cearns 2018). An attention to compassionate practice for researchers and researched draws attention to the fact that differing thicknesses of ethnographic work can account for the "quality and intensity of fieldwork material" and become "one of the key and insight-producing functions of ethnographic analysis" (Marcus 2002: 196). As I have shown in this chapter, the varying levels of ethnographic thickness relate directly to my personal capacities to conduct this work, hinged on both my positionality and the discontinuous nature of my fieldsite.

Chapter Three: Uneven ground

Introduction

One evening in the car on a *laffliff*, Ahmad told me about the best day of his life. A Palestinian refugee from Deir al Sheikh (a village west of Jerusalem) but born in Dheishe refugee camp, Ahmad was raised between East Jerusalem and Dheishe but eventually settled in the camp following the restrictions on movement introduced during the Second *Intifada*. The best day of his life, he told me, was when he was caught illegally working as a day labourer on a building site in Efrat. On our *laffliff*, Ahmad drove me to the place on Road 60 where he had been arrested, just outside where the northern entrance to Efrat settlement was being built. He laughed as he showed me the Israeli army's CCTV cameras pointing towards the open space on the edge of the settlement where he had been caught entering the settlement, rolling his eyes at how he had not noticed them. Ahmad then recounted the events of this day, describing how he was handcuffed and taken on a prisoner transport van to a holding prison outside Jerusalem. His eyes lit up as he remembered being driven through Jerusalem, able to crane his neck and see out the narrow window of the van, watching the sights of the city where he was raised but now forbidden to go pass by. He went on to spend 18 months in administrative detention in Ramon,[24] a period longer than required but extended as his family were unable to afford the high legal fees needed to secure his release. Ahmad recounted to me his time in Ramon as one of calm and stability away from the chaos and poverty of the camp; he had never before seen the desert, had air conditioning, or known the security of three meals a day, with fish and meat. Despite this, he desperately missed his family, his freedom, and the rolling hills of his West Bank home. "I like to *laffliff* now", he grinned, "because I couldn't then. I can't sit still now".

Shoshana, a middle-aged Ashkenazi Jewish settler, and I were driving down Road 60 one afternoon when we passed Al Aroub, a Palestinian refugee camp. The camp lay a few kilometres south of Efrat, where Shoshana lived with her teenage son. Born in the United States, she had moved to Gush Etzion when her family emigrated in the early 1980s. She settled in Efrat with her husband who, like her, believed in the Jewish people's right to repopulate the West Bank despite resistance from its Palestinian population. Al Aroub was identifiable as a Palestinian area by the mosque in the centre of the cluster of buildings climbing up the hillside and the gated entry-road with Israeli soldiers posted outside, their guns trained permanently on its entrance. As we passed it, Shoshana became agitated. She pointed at the camp as we passed, tutting and rolling her eyes. Her displeasure, I

[24] An Israeli prison in the Naqab Desert.

learned, was at the hypocrisies she saw of the Palestinian cause. "They're all rich," she said to me, pointing again at the camp's houses and a black car with Palestinian plates emerging from the camp on a dirt path that connected it to the 60. The Arabs who lived in them, she explained, came in 1948 after Israel was established, looking for work in the new Israeli state. According to Shoshana, the camp's residents were Syrian or Iraqi, and it was only because of "international aid from anti-Semitic organisations" that they were able to stay there. The idea of Palestinians at all, let alone their dispossession, was a myth, she said, and only Israeli Jews held the right to live there, especially with their democratic values as opposed to the Palestinians' "militant Islamism". Shoshana was fed up of "settlers being the bad guys" and the world having sympathy for these people who threw stones at Israeli soldiers and settlers. The Palestinians, she believed, were "trying to kill us while whining in the meantime that they don't have anything." "Look at what they have!" she said, gesturing again to the same black car now driving in front of us, "a terrorist driving freely, and I can't even go in there. We fought for this land, it's ours now."

These accounts of road use in the West Bank, according to two of the people I met between 2015 and 2018, highlights and juxtaposes two central features by which it is defined; segregation and limited mobility. The segregation between Palestinians like Ahmad and Israeli settlers like Shoshana is not limited to where they live but also the ways they move around it. Shoshana's story depicts free movement interrupted by Palestinians who unjustly impede it. Ahmad's story highlights the criminalisation of his mobility by the occupying Israel regime's authorities. It is not just the spaces of the West Bank that Shoshana and Ahmad inhabit that set them apart, but the ways they came to live in it and the rights they hold to move around it.

In the West Bank Shoshana and Ahmad live just kilometres apart on ground rendered uneven by their relations to return and exile. Neither can visit each other's home, speak each other's language, nor believes in each other's right to live in the West Bank. Shoshana believes that she has returned from exile in North America to her rightful home while Ahmad waits in the West Bank to return to his, out of reach just kilometres away. Their claims to indigeneity of the same land are further complicated by their belief that the other is invested in trying to evict them from it. Ahmad was arrested by Israeli soldiers for illegally trespassing on Israeli soil, despite the West Bank having only been relatively recently occupied by Israel. Shoshana, meanwhile, interprets this act as synonymous with terrorist intent, symbolic of a pervasive global anti-Semitism.

To understand how this unevenness came about, it is helpful to first place their experiences of mobility in context with wider historical movements of people and ideas to and from the area now known as Israel and Palestine. Situated between Europe and Asia and home to significant sites of pilgrimage for global Muslim, Christian, and Jewish populations, the region has historically attracted international migration and conquest. The past hundred years, however, have been shaped by the emergence of Zionism, the nationalist movement calling for a Jewish state as a homeland for its global Jewish population (Yiftachel 2006: 54). Placing Zionism – itself originating outside of Palestine – in historical context draws attention to the fact that it is not just people, but identities, borders, states, and ideas that have been mobile in the creation of the current and complicated situation in the West Bank.

In tracing these histories, I locate Dheishe refugee camp and Efrat settlement as spaces founded on the grounds of de- and re-population caused by these mobilities of both people and place. I also explore how these complex relations to mobility inform their residents' national identities. The Israeli settler claim to the West Bank is predicated on their right of return to their homeland from *galut* (exile, He.) in the diaspora, centring return and settlement as intrinsic to Zionism (Yiftachel 2006: 61). The Palestinian refugees forced from their land by this narrative of return are in turn denied their own right of *'awda* (return, Ar.) as well as the fact of their pre-existence to the majority of the Israeli Jewish population (Khalidi 2010). The settler and refugee human infrastructures generated by these processes of return and exile create facts on the ground that problematise each other's existence.

I then show how this problematisation is expressed through the Israeli state's policies of rendering Palestinians in the West Bank invisible and dangerous to its Jewish settler population while highly visible and legible to its government (Peteet 2017; Weizman 2007). These policies are expressed in the way that the Israeli state designs and implements its infrastructures in the West Bank where settlers and Palestinians live in close proximity. As the intended recipients of these infrastructures, Jewish settlers are made a physically visible demographic minority with relative freedom of movement. Through the same infrastructures, Palestinians are excised from settlers' view while rendered visible and surveyable to the Israeli state. The histories of how these infrastructures have been designed and repurposed to serve these aims therefore reflect the wider logics of Zionism, colonisation, and resistance that I explore in this chapter.

It is important to note that in exploring the interrelated histories of mobility, ideology, and identity that have shaped the West Bank today, I rely on two contesting historical narratives according to the settlers and refugees I worked with to collect them. I do not present the histories I tell in this chapter as indisputable facts, but politically motivated narratives constructed around territory and identity. As I go on to show, Israeli history is complicated by the Zionist imperative to retrospectively produce evidence the support Jewish claims to the land (Abu El-Haj 2001), while many Palestinian historical resources and texts have been destroyed. I therefore ground these narratives in scholarly work written by either Israeli or Palestinian historians and theorists where it is possible while remaining mindful of the narratives these works contribute to.

Zionism has been employed by Israeli leaders as both a cause and justification for the pull and push of its Jewish and Palestinian populations to, from, and around the region. It has also been used to justify attempts to control the remaining Palestinian populations and punish their resistance, resulting in struggles by both sides to render themselves visible to the other. In the final section of this chapter, I explore how these resistances often play out in infrastructural spaces, and are met with increased – but incomplete – segregation. The ground of the West Bank thus remains uneven because its logics are often in contradiction for those who live in it. In what follows, I show how an understanding of infrastructures in the West Bank in relation to the flows of ideas and people that have moved to and from it in the 20th century has created and continues to create uneven ground.

Return from exile

With an extensive coastline between Europe, Asia, and Africa, Palestine holds strategic defensive and trading potential as it is situated between the Suez Canal and Mediterranean Sea. Furthermore, as the birthplace of Judaism and Christianity, the region has a tumultuous history as an intersection of global religious and political interests (Yiftachel 2006; Abu El-Haj 2001). The area now known as Israel and Palestine has therefore regularly been a place that colonial powers found reason to dominate (Said 1979) and historically been subject to in- and out-migration. Current Jewish interests in the region, however, are not simply framed around its religious and geopolitical significance, but also their historic sense of connection to the land as an exiled population. In this section I explore how narratives of exile, return and repopulation have shaped the mobilities of settlers like Shoshana and refugees like Ahmad living in the region today.

As well as being geopolitically significant, Palestine holds religious and political importance for the world's Jewish, Christian, and Muslim populations. Shoshana justifies her family's immigration to the

region on the basis of Zionist narrations of Jewish history. These narratives hold that, according to Biblical texts, early Jewish Israelite communities established the Israelite Kingdom in the region known as Palestine as early as 1020 BC (Abu El Haj 2001). The Israelites, it is told, built the First Temple in what would become the Holy City of Jerusalem, which was then promptly destroyed by the occupying Neo-Babylonian Empire in 627 BC who then proceeded to expel the Jews from the land (ibid.). Returning in 539 BC, the Israelites rebuilt the Temple, only to be expelled again by the Roman Empire in 70 BC, who destroyed the temple once more. It is on these grounds that the Jewish right to the land of Palestine is predicated in Zionist thought. Zionism holds that Jewish identity is predicated on the rightful inheritance of the land of Palestine based on divine promises in an ancient Jewish text, the reign of Jewish kingdoms over this territory, and a myth of forced eviction (Yiftachel 2006: 53).[25]

Zionism's emergence in the 19th century is largely credited to Austro-Hungarian Jewish political activist Josef Herzl who began to organise around the idea of establishing a Jewish state to which the global Jewish community could return from *galut* (exile, He.). Following historic but rapidly increasing persecution of European Jews and the rise of nationalism in Europe, Zionism gained rapid popularity by encouraging migration to Palestine as a form of collective Jewish survival (Yiftachel 2006: 54). By distinguishing between those Jews living in the diaspora and those returning to their own land in a Jewish state, the Zionist Congress began to put in motion a plan to base this state in either Argentina, Uganda, or Palestine (Herzl 1988). Notably, each of these plans was made without a full consideration of any potential pre-existing communities in any of these locations. Palestine, known in Zionist idiom as *Eretz Israel* (the Land of Israel, He.), was eventually chosen because of its religious significance to Jews based on the aforementioned Biblical references to the early Israelite community there.

Zionist claims to this land, however, are contested by its Palestinian Arab population on the basis of their own history in the region. Since the expulsion of the Israelite community, Christian and Islamic groups rivalled for control over the region, particularly Jerusalem, from the seventh century when it was conquered by Muslim armies from Byzantium (Khalidi 2010). Following subsequent conquests by Islamic and Crusader forces, the region of Palestine was eventually occupied by the Ottoman Empire in 1516 and remained under Islamic control until the early 20th century. Ahmad sees his history as a Palestinian as beginning in 705 AD when construction of the Al Aqsa Mosque was

[25] Archaeological evidence has later been produced to demonstrate that Jews were not forcefully evicted and many chose to remain (Yiftachel 2006: 53; Abu El-Haj 2001).

completed near the remains of the destroyed Temple, marking the final point in what is believed to be the Prophet Mohammad's journey from Mecca to Jerusalem (Nusseibeh and Ma'oz 2000). The mosque is the third holiest site in Islam after Mecca and Medina in Saudi Arabia, and Palestinian Muslims believe they are responsible for its protection and therefore the guardians of the land.

Following the fall of the Ottoman Empire in 1915, the 1916 Sykes-Picot Agreement divided the former Ottoman territories between French and British rule, marking the introduction of regional borders drawn according to the distribution of natural resources and Christian populations.[26] When Britain gained a mandate to occupy Palestine in 1922, it was the first to define and enforce the boundaries of a Palestinian nation (Yiftachel 2006). Although there has never been an independent state of *Filistin* (Palestine, Ar.), the people now known as Palestinians claim a continuous presence in the region ever since Al Aqsa's construction (Hadawi 1990). As a result of lengthy foreign occupations and the rise of Arab nationalisms in the early 20th century, it was at the point of British occupation that Palestinians began to fashion a nationalist movement and a political identity for themselves (Khalidi 2010).

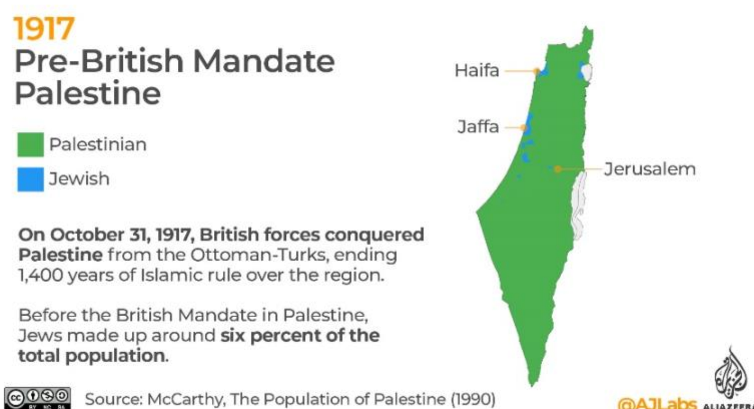

Figure 2: Map showing the distribution of Jewish populations in Palestine by 1947. Credit: Al Jazeera

Building on a history of mobility of the Jewish people traced through the Old Testament, by the end of the 19th century Zionists had successfully encouraged a growing number of European Jews to immigrate to Palestine. This process of return was named *Aliyah,* literally translating from Hebrew as "to ascend" and is imbued with spiritual notions of redemption, promised by Zionists through the union of return, physical labour, settlement, and military service (Shafir and Peled 2002). These redemptive aspects had gained popularity among Jews socially and politically excluded from the European nation-states in which they resided (Raz-Krakotzkin 2013). The Jewish Agency, an arm of the World Zionist Organisation concerned with Jewish migration, began to develop an infrastructure for the process of returning to Palestine and by

[26] With Lebanon and Palestine particularly carved out according to their larger Christian populations, dividing them between British and French ruled Christian enclaves in the Middle East.

1922 the Jewish population of Palestine had increased from around 25,000 to approximately 83,000, some 12% of the total population (Hadawi 1990: 49). The distribution of this population is shown to be primarily in coastal regions as shown in Figure 2.

Following the rapid increase in anti-Semitism in Europe rose after the rise to power of the German Nazi party, Jewish migration rapidly swelled through the 1930s and 40s as European Jews sought refuge from Nazi persecution and impending genocide. Most of these early immigrants lived in *kibbutzim* (collective agricultural settlements) in the coastal regions, though some settled in areas of religious importance in the West Bank, including Gush Etzion (the settlement bloc containing Efrat). Despite their limited distribution around the country as shown in Figure 3, by 1940 Jews owned 20% of cultivable land (Hourani 1991: 323). Most of this land was held by the Jewish National Fund (JNF), which purchased land to be resided in and worked on only by the growing Jewish population. Although the JNF held all land in its possession to be "the inalienable property of the Jewish people, on which no non-Jew could be employed" (Hourani 1991: 289), Palestinians were commonly hired as labourers until hostilities became more frequent after 1936 (Hadawi 1990). In this manner the new Jewish communities of Palestine consolidated large amounts of land in Palestine for Jewish cultivation and infrastructural development while restricting Palestinian use and access.

By the 1940s plans to establish the first Jewish state were being put into execution. Tensions had risen over this organising between Palestinian Arabs and the incoming Jewish population, complicated further by British Mandate authorities crushing Arab dissent and promising to support the creation of a Jewish state in Palestine in the 1917 Balfour Declaration (Hadawi 1990). It was in this period that Palestinian identity, previously established in line with the wider region's growing Arab nationalist movement, began to be framed as oppositional to Zionist Israeli identities as both groups struggled to control the same territories (Khalidi 2010). It was consequently at this time that Ahmad and Shoshana's stories began to overlap.

As Palestinians and Jews began organising against both each other and the British Mandate, regular outbreaks of violence between both sides culminated in the war of 1948, referred to the *Nakba* (catastrophe, Ar.) by Palestinians and the *Milkhemet ha'Atzma'ut* (War of Independence, He.) by Israelis. This war was ultimately won by Jewish militias which later unified to form the Israeli Defence Forces (IDF).[27] The UN produced a plan for the division of land, drawing the borders of Israel on approximately 75% of land belonging to Palestinians (Hourani 1991: 360), declaring

[27] Palestinians refer to the IDF as the Israeli Occupation Forces (IOF).

Jerusalem its capital. Israel's new border with the West Bank, occupied at the time by Jordan, was referred to as to as the 1949 Armistice Line, also commonly known as the Green Line, dividing Jerusalem between Israeli and Palestinian sides.

After declaring their independent state, Israeli political consciousness came into its fullest expression. The successful mobilisations of Jews from Europe and North America to Palestine established to Zionists the territory as inextricably linked to Jewish identity (Yiftachel 2006: 54). Israeli Jewish identity also became framed as oppositional to (Palestinian) Arabs, who were seen as "primitive" in comparison to the incoming Jewish population who brought "civilisation", indicative of Zionism's influence by 19th century Darwinist and Orientalist thought. As I show in the coming chapters, this narrative has continued to be used by successive Israeli governments to justify its encouragement of mass Jewish emigration and its occupation of the West Bank as providing development and democracy to an 'uncivilised' Palestinian population.

The first Israeli government focused itself on developing human and technical infrastructures to support its Jewish population by developing the territories under its control, framed as neglected by the Palestinians and poorly adapted to the growing population of the region. It also continued to encourage the return of the world's Jewish population to Israel, providing much needed labour, investment, and ensuring the new Jewish state maintained its Jewish majority. The demographics of the region shifted dramatically; by 1956, Palestinians made up just 12.5% of a population of 1.6 million (Hourani 1991: 360).

Depopulating Palestine

Notions of the Jewish right to occupy and colonise Palestinian lands for themselves are still pervasive among West Bank settlers. Shoshana's understanding of the Palestinians we passed in Al Aroub camp as foreign Arab labour migrants who arrived following the creation of the Israeli state was common among settlers. This belief emerged as a result of successive Zionist governments' perpetrations of the notion of Palestine as "a land without a people for a people without a land",[28] relying on "environmental imaginaries" (Davis 2011: 3) of Palestine as otherwise uninhabited or neglected. Adopting European colonial logics of the lands they occupied as *tabula rasa,* early Zionists presented Palestine as a blank slate ripe for development in service of its new and growing Jewish

[28] This phrase is attributed to early Zionist Israel Zangwill. It has been widely adopted as justification for the Jewish occupation of Palestine as an otherwise uninhabited place (Abu El-Haj 2001; Khalidi 2010; Yiftachel 2006).

population (Stamatopoulou-Robbins 2020: 11). These colonial logics are also evident in the redemptive aspects of Zionism, which posit that the Jewish people can remake and rebuild themselves by returning to *Eretz Israel* from persecution in the diaspora (Shafir 1989). Zionist Jews therefore created a physical and spiritual union between people and land though its labour, development, and protection, qualities that were identified as central characteristics of the so-called early generations of Jewish *chalutziyut* (pioneers, He.) (Yiftachel 2006). Many Israelis simply saw the Palestinians as *necharim* (foreigners, He.) and seized their land by force, believing themselves to be its true owners (Pappe 2014: 29).

Rapid Jewish settlement of the empty land they were promised swiftly became complicated by the reality of a population of some 700,000 Palestinians in 1922 (Unispal 1921). This demographic fact was and continues to be obscured by Zionism and the generations of Israelis it influenced, framing Israeli identity as exclusionary of the Palestinians they encountered on arrival (Yiftachel 2006: 54). The combination of Jewish claims to the land of Palestine and their desire to maintain exclusive Jewish control over it came to a head in the years preceding the 1948 *Nakba* (ibid.). The unrest following the militarisation of the Jewish immigrants forced hundreds of thousands of Palestinians from their homes (Hadawi 1990). Following the Israeli Declaration of Independence in 1948, hundreds of thousands more fled as neighbouring Arab armies marched on the newly declared Israeli state to support the Palestinians, but were ultimately defeated. By 1949 it was estimated that over 80% of the Palestinian Arab population had been displaced outside of the borders of the new Israeli state.[29] This exodus generated some 700,000 refugees (Masalha 1992) living in *manfah* (dispersion, Ar.) across Gaza, the West Bank, the neighbouring Arab states of Jordan, Syria, and Lebanon, and further afield. Within this group were Ahmad's grandparents, fleeing their village of Deir al Sheikh in Jerusalem to Dheishe camp.

Most Zionist accounts of this period hold that Palestinians were not forced or told to leave but did so voluntarily, encouraged to settle in other Arab states by their respective governments (Pappe 2014: 34). This narrative and consequently much of Zionist historiography are "driven by a wish to rewrite the history of Palestine and that of the Jewish people, in a way that proved scientifically the Jewish claim to 'the land of Israel'" (Pappe 2014: 18). This framing demonstrates some of the contradictions of Zionist approaches to the region; Zionists retrospectively created the *tabula rasa* image of Palestine as an empty land ripe for Jewish colonisation while also framing its Palestinian population as primitive and in need of colonisation. Zionists therefore deny both the Palestinian counter-

[29] Or historic Palestine as it is known by Palestinians.

narrative that they did not leave voluntarily during the *Nakba*, and that Palestinians have ever lived in what is now Israel.

The mass migration of Jews to Palestine in the years preceding the creation of the Israeli state was a highly visible affair and widely documented by the European nations from which Jews fled. Less visible, and since obscured, however, have been the histories of those Palestinians forced to flee. The histories of Palestinians and Israelis are, therefore, defined in part by their relation to mobility. For Israelis, this was a mobility made possible by the creation of the Israeli state, the need to flee European persecution, and the Zionist framing of emigration to Israel as a return from exile. Palestinians, on the other hand, had little experience with mobility as a largely sedentary agricultural population (Khalidi 2010). Their expulsion at the expense of Jewish immigration has become symbolic of a wider logic used by the Israeli government to justify settlement and preventing the return of refugees to this day. The first and all successive Israeli governments have refused to allow the return of any Palestinian refugees and subsequently absorbed their land and property into the JNF (Peteet 2017). The validity of Palestinian claims to their land, therefore, are popularly questioned among Israelis and particularly among settlers who live on land more recently appropriated in this way.

In order to bolster its claims to the land, the new Israeli state was quick to create a wealth of archival sources documenting the history of the establishment and making of places for Israelis (Abu El-Haj 2001). As well as homes, villages, and other evidence for their historic presence on the land, Palestinian historical resources and scholars too have been routinely destroyed by the Israeli army since 1948. The ad-hoc nature of spaces such as refugee camps has also meant that archives and official historical records have not been rendered as important as accommodating refugees and attempting to support them and are therefore limited. Palestinian refugee history is primarily preserved in oral tradition, considered illegitimate by the Israeli government. The imbalance of historical resources between settlers and refugees contributes to a wider unevenness of ground between Palestinians and Israelis that Israel uses to delegitimise Palestinian claims to a right of return.

In 1967 a further 460,000 Palestinian refugees were created when Israel invaded the West Bank, Gaza, Jerusalem, and the Syrian *Jawlan* (Golan, Ar.), doubling the size of the Jewish state (Hadawi 1989). The majority of these refugees fled to existing refugee camps, including those in the West Bank and Gaza (ibid.). The *Milhemet Sheshet HaYam*, (The Six Day War, He.) as it is known to Israelis,

or the *Naksa* (Setback, Ar.) to Palestinians, erased the internationally recognised 1949 Armistice Line and the Israeli army assumed legislative, executive, and judicial powers over the West Bank.[30] This war served two purposes for the Israeli state. Initially, it was felt that the war of 1948 was unfinished as the entire land of Palestine had not yet been occupied for Jewish settlement. Its second motivation was in preventing the return of refugees exiled in 1948 whose neighbouring host states were keen to return. In this way the Israeli state continued practices initiated in the 1940s by forcing out a sizeable portion of its Palestinian population and preventing their return while appropriating their land for further Jewish settlement.

While Palestinian exile is contested and largely obscured by Israel, refugees' lives are made legible by their own histories, demographic presence in and outside of Palestine, and the involvement of the international community. Refugeehood among Palestinians is a complex political identity, fraught with conferring both a recognition of loss that can be used to claim the right of return and a potentially degrading label of victimhood (Feldman 2012). The category of refugee necessarily includes those displaced in both 1948 and 1967 and their descendants, though crucially not the descendants of those women who marry non-refugees (ibid.). As over half the entire global Palestinian population, Palestinian refugees and their experience of exile also form a significant part of Palestinian identity (Khalidi 2010). As their number increases, so too does the significance of their need for an independent Palestinian state (Feldman 2012). Because both his parents are the children of refugees, Ahmad identifies as such even though he has never been to their village of origin less than ten kilometres from Dheishe camp. His refugee identity is made further legible through his Israeli government-issued identity card and his UN-issued refugee camp residency card.

After their expulsion from Israel in 1949, the UN established an agency to manage the fate of the Palestinian refugees across the West Bank, Gaza, Jerusalem, and in Lebanon, Jordan, and Syria. The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) continues to operate refugee camps across the Levant for Palestinians, providing healthcare, social assistance, and education to refugees across the region. An estimated 1.5 million of a global total of 5.6 million Palestinian refugees live in refugee camps operated by UNRWA (UNRWA 2015b), the majority of whom are in the West Bank. As they are provided for by an international organisation, Palestinian refugees continue to remain invisible to Israelis, living outside the state's borders and jurisdiction.

[30] Known as Judea and Samaria (the biblical terms for the West Bank) by Israeli Jews and Al Duffah Al Gharbiya (the Arabic translation of West Bank) by Palestinians.

The Palestinian refugees I met tend to both refuse resettlement and consider the current PNA government of the West Bank a 'host' government, rejecting naturalisation on the basis of their right of return from exile (Rabinowitz 2010). Palestinians and Israelis' relations to mobility are differentiated by rights of return; while Israel permits any Jewish person in the world to return from exile to Israel, Palestinians exiled by the Israeli state have no such right. The imbalance of permissions for exiled communities of Palestine and Israel to return adds to the uneven ground for negotiations between the two sides and is a main reason why a peace deal has never been achieved.

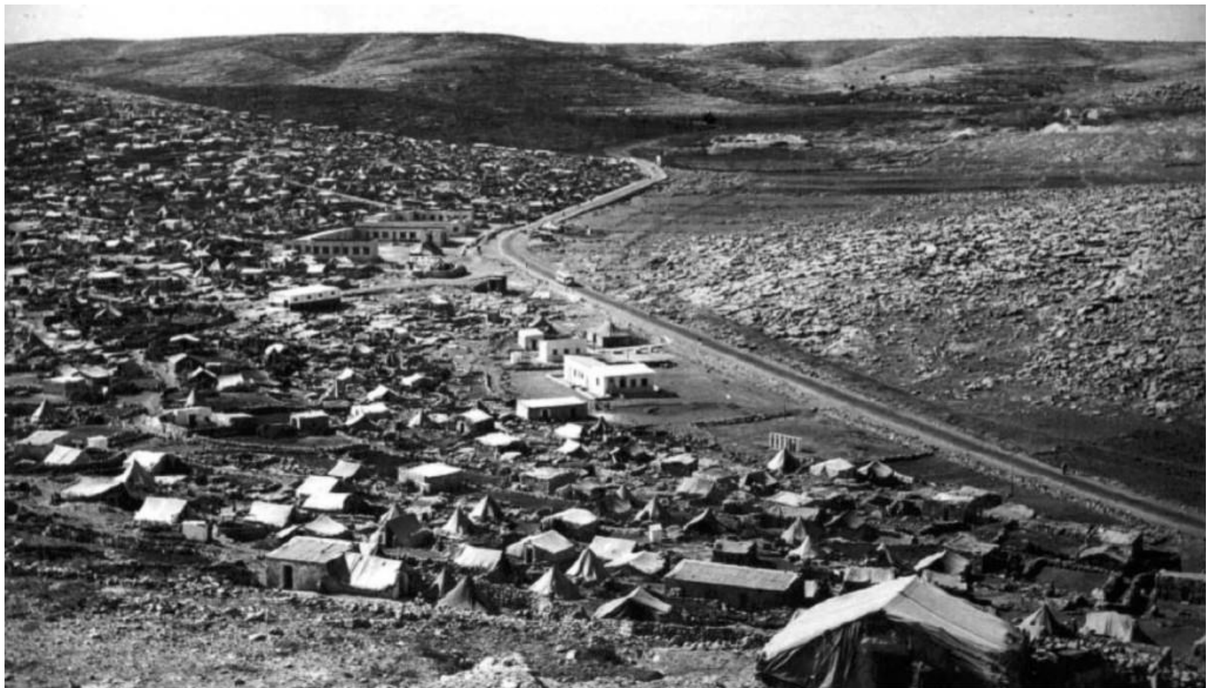

Figure 3: Dheishe Camp in 1952. Credit: UNRWA Archive

Dheishe Refugee Camp, where Ahmad has lived most of his life, opened in 1949 on the outskirts of Bethlehem, a Palestinian town on the outskirts of Jerusalem on the original Road 60 route. The camp was established to house 2,400 Palestinians expelled from 45 villages in the Jerusalem and Hebron areas after the *Nakba* (Petti 2017). It is the second largest of 19 refugee camps in the West Bank, and today home to an estimated 13,000 refugees living in approximately two square kilometres of space. Like most Palestinian refugees, they live a liminal life both waiting for their right of return and making accommodations for the fact that it is not likely to be secured in their lifetimes, if at all.

In the early years of the camp's existence, families were only permitted to live in tents provided by UNRWA as shown in Figure 3. As it became clear they would not be able to return quickly, refugees began to build more permanent cement structures with increased urgency following the further

influx of refugees following the 1967 *Naksa.* Unable to expand laterally due to the limited land available to them leased by UNRWA, Dheishe now resembles a densely populated slum crowded by its vertical expansion (see Figure 4). Ahmad's family live, like most others, in an apartment building built and populated by his paternal family members, with floors added above for their sons' future marital homes. As the land is leased by UNRWA, its residents are prevented from legally owning or renting their homes, rendering their lives even more liminal.

Dheishe's original residents come from predominantly agricultural backgrounds, and, having lost their primary source of income, many opened small businesses in the camp to make a living, including factories, bakeries, butchers, and grocery shops. Despite the poverty and difficulties of camp life, Dheishe's residents tend to be highly educated, with often at least one member of the third generation of residents a university graduate. The camp is seen as socially and religiously conservative, relative even to Palestine's general social and religious conservatism.

Figure 4: Dheishe Camp in 2017. Credit: Branwen Spector

Ahmad lives in Dheishe with his large family who are symbolic of how Palestinian refugee human infrastructures consolidate themselves to pool resources while expanding themselves to incorporate more. His mother, Leila, is the 56-year-old mother of 11 born in ‘Azzeh camp (a smaller refugee camp in the centre of Bethlehem) to parents who had fled in the *Nakba*. She was married at the age of 15 to her husband Asaf, ten years her senior. Palestinians practice *mahr,* an Islamic marital exchange in which the groom’s family must provide gifts and an agreed cash sum to the bride as part of their marriage agreement. As a result, some refugees marry at a young age to generate income for their families. Asaf, the son of a refugee from Deir al Sheikh, grew up in Dheishe camp and in the late 1980s built the apartment complex for themselves where they still reside today. Although Asaf’s extended family own an apartment in Jerusalem in which they briefly lived, the introduction of the identity card system and the Separation Wall forced them to return to Dheishe in 2005.

Five of Leila’s seven daughters are married and moved to live in their husband’s locales. Like Leila, they were married young in order to reduce household expenses for their family. Miryam, Leila’s oldest daughter, however, was married to a Jerusalemite at 17 specifically so she could take on his Jerusalem residence permit and keep the family’s property in the city in their hands. Her remaining daughters live in villages around the Bethlehem region. Each daughter had (at the time of research) at least five children, the oldest of whom was 17 and herself recently married. Leila’s oldest son Mahmoud lives in the family building with his wife Fatima and their two children. Her three other sons including Ahmad all live in the family apartment with her youngest daughter. Unusually, most of her daughters did not finish high school and more usually, her sons left school early to work, mostly in manual labour and informal car mechanics. The family also sustain themselves through a car wash they run from their home and use their family connections in Jerusalem to import car parts difficult for Palestinians inside the Green Line to obtain.

The six members of the nuclear family living in their parents’ home live in poverty, often without enough money to feed themselves. All family income, including donations from Leila’s married children, is pooled to help cover the family’s costs. Any savings the family have been able to accrue have been spent on legal fees and fines related to the incarcerations of the family’s male members. Asaf, Mahmoud, and Ahmad all have spent time in Israeli jails for either acts of resistance or crossing into Israel to work without permits. While the family are not affiliated to any political party, like many others they believe in their right to protect themselves from the regular Israeli army raids on the camp and resist the occupation and how it has impacted their living and financial situation.

Repopulating the West Bank

Following the 1967 war and its occupation of new Palestinian and Syrian territories, Israel began to receive widespread international criticism of its expansionist policies creating unrest in the Middle East (Peteet 2017). The Israeli government began to conceal its involvement in settling Jewish communities in its new territories while still defending the "facts on the ground" once they were created. In doing this, it also began to frame settlers themselves as fringe or extremist groups acting against the state while simultaneously supporting their endeavours and using them as a tactic to gradually normalise the annexation of the newly occupied spaces (Harel 2017). This process was initiated by framing settlement as a necessary exercise in fortifying the nation's new borders (as shown in Figure 5 below) (Kimmerling 1983). It created attractive financial incentives to tempt its existing Jewish citizens to relocate to border regions as well as diverting incoming Jewish immigrants directly to these areas (Lavie 2014; Thorleifsson 2015). By creating a highly visible human infrastructure in these regions, the Israeli government aimed to give the impression to Palestinian refugees on the other sides of the borders that the nation was 'full', discouraging their return (Lavie 2014).

Figure 5: A map showing the gradual territorial gains of Israel's occupation. Credit: Visualising Palestine

Figure 6: Jewish settlers in Gush Etzion in 1947. Credit: Zoltan Kluger - Israeli National Photo Archive

Those crossing the Green Line to settle the new border regions were also motivated by a will to repopulate areas of the West Bank that had been previously inhabited by Jewish settlers in the early 20th century (Yiftachel 2006). Religious settlements were established from 1973 onwards in "ascents"[31] led by religious and political groups for those settlers seeking to reclaim holy sites in the West Bank. Despite the relative newness of these pre-state settlements, their expulsion is remembered as traumatic event in the Zionist imaginary, and the occupation of the West Bank was therefore framed as an opportunity to re-settle the area. Inspired by these religious and political motives, by 1977 there were already 4,500 settlers in 28 settlements across the West Bank (Weizman 2007).

Gush Etzion, the settlement bloc in which Efrat is incorporated, is one such site of repopulation. Numerous attempts to settle the region (as shown in Figure 6) all resulted in expulsion by the British Mandate government of the period or by Arab armies defending Palestinian land (Zertal and Eldar 2007). A national day of remembrance was established to commemorate their expulsion and the memory of Gush Etzion became a force of popular Israeli and diasporic Jewish mobilisation. Shoshana, like many settlers I met, remembered being taught about the significance of Gush Etzion throughout her schooling, inspiring her desire to aid the repopulation efforts later in her life. As I show in following chapters, settlers often spoke to me of wanting to "prove" the presence and endurance of Israeli Jews to their Arab neighbours. Their settlement therefore capitalises on several mobilities; the voluntary mobility of settlers, the recent mobility of Israelis in returning to Palestine from exile, and the mobility of the young Israeli state itself. The visibility of their human infrastructures was, for settlers, a way for them to express their participation in validating Israel's right to exist by existing even in its fringe regions.

To conceal its involvement in West Bank settlement initiatives, however, the Israeli government has often framed settlers like Shoshana as extremists acting against the state (Weizman 2007). These early settler "ascents" were resisted by both the Israeli military and Israeli leftist groups opposed to

[31] Or *aliyot* (derived from the same root as *aliyah*) meaning "the act of ascending" to Israel in returning from exile, emphasising a religious and redemptive aspect to settlement.

settlement. Settlers used civil disobedience tactics including resisting the army and chaining themselves to trees to remain, a tradition that Shoshana continued as I discuss later in this section. Their rebelliousness allowed the Israeli government to represent settlers as irrational and acting against the state, while simultaneously benefitting from their mobilisation to form the early human infrastructure of the settlement movement. Settlement therefore took a deliberately "anti-planning" ethos of "'operators' on the ground, and the facts they managed to establish, rather than the master-planners, dictated the larger political priorities and agendas" (Weizman 2007: 93).

Following the first election of a right-wing majority in 1977, Israeli government support for settlement increased. In the 1980s rising global trends of middle-class segregation into ethnically and religiously homogenous communities in the US and South Africa (both countries to which Israel looked for influence) brought a change in direction in which Israel was able to use the West Bank (Newman 2017). While simultaneously dismantling its welfare state (Lavie 2014), Israel also denationalised its settlement process and for the first time (Jewish) individuals were able to purchase land in the occupied territories. The segregated Jewish enclaves built in the West Bank were justified by the continuous portrayal of Palestinian resistance to occupation as a threat to Jewish Israeli safety. At the same time, it was able to remarket settlement normalised by the early religiously-motivated settlers to middle class and upwardly mobile Israelis, encouraging them to relocate to the settlements from their homes within the Green Line (Weiss 2017). Attractive mortgages rates, cheaper land prices, and newer infrastructure were highlighted in the development of Israel's first commuter towns in the West Bank, advertised on the basis of their proximity to Jerusalem and other metropolitan areas (ibid.).

By 1981 there were 16,200 settlers in 68 settlements outside of the Green Line (Weizman 2007). Because early settlements were primarily *kibbutzim*[32] or *moshavim,*[33] new settlements were designed as y*ishuv kehilat* (community settlements, He.) and oriented towards commuters to attract the educated middle-classes. These settlements established admission committees that created homogenous spaces within the settlement's human infrastructure by regulating their residents on the basis of religious observance, ideological rigour, linguistic community, and form and appearance of homes. By devolving the process of segregation to these committees, the Israeli government allowed settlement to appear as not exclusively for Jewish use and therefore potentially serving

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[32] Egalitarian agricultural communities established in the early years of Jewish settlement of Palestine, governed by the principles of collective ownership and volunteerism, with profits reinvested into the community.

[33] Similar to a kibbutz, but with the possibility for families to own their property.

Palestinian interests. In reality, however, no settlement admission committee would permit any potential Palestinian applicant to live in the settlement. In this way the West Bank began to be carved into Jewish and Palestinian enclaves, with settlements built provocatively close to but ultimately segregated from Palestinian areas, creating and normalising the apartheid-like conditions that Shoshana and Ahmad live in today.

Settlements are constructed using both militarily strategic principles and to replicate the North American suburban experience. They are designed as part of a system of fortification to keep danger at bay, including invasions from Arab armies and an imagined return of Palestinian refugees to their villages (Weizman 2007). All settlements are built on hilltops, partly to allow for the ease of predicting attack and partly to maximise the visibility of settler presence in the hilly West Bank. Limited to one or two heavily guarded entry gates, settlements are fortified to prevent potential Palestinian entrance while centralising access from Israeli bypass roads. Even with these securitised features, settlements are aesthetically pleasant places, with large villas, wide streets, and ample green space. Their uniformity and signature red roofs are in keeping with American suburban architectural trends but also serve a security function in that they can be identified from afar as distinctly Israeli spaces. Despite security recommendations, settlement governance committees often refuse to fence or wall themselves in on the basis that it would then limit the territorial claims available to the settlement in future. This allows settlements to expand laterally across land, unlike refugee camps which may only expand vertically.

The locations of new settlements are strategically chosen by the Israeli government and military but ultimately facilitated and established through the individual mobilisation of settlers acting in coordination with the West Bank's military government. These new settlements are termed 'illegal outposts' and perhaps best exemplified by the development of one such outpost, Migron, into a full-fledged settlement, as told by Weizman (2007). In 1999 settlers complained of poor cell phone signal as they drove from Jerusalem to northern West Bank settlements. Keen to establish a settlement between Jerusalem and the north, the Israeli state employed a series of tactics typical to settlement establishment that worked around and outside of the optical politics of the law. A hilltop owned by Palestinian farmers from nearby villages was chosen as the site on which a mobile phone mast could be built. Deemed a security issue under the emergency powers granted to the military government of the West Bank, the mast could be built without obtaining the landowner's consent. Orange, the telecommunications network responsible for the region at the time, requested connection to the national electricity grid and water supply, supposedly to aid the construction work. Over time the

construction of the mast was delayed, so a fake mast was erected by the Israeli military in 2001, along with a 24-hour private guard to watch over it. Soon after, the guard's children and wife moved with him and other families followed. The Israeli Ministry for Construction and Housing then built a nursery and foreign donations funded a synagogue. By 2006 over 42 families lived in some 60 trailers and containers on the hill known to Israelis as Migron. The establishment of Migron demonstrates the importance of infrastructure in establishing and legitimising settlement. Human infrastructures initiate the process, followed by legitimisation through connection to technical infrastructures, which require government permission to connect to new settlements. In this way settlement creates the "facts on the ground" that the Israeli government uses as irrefutable evidence that settlement cannot be avoided.

As a settler colony, Israelis and their descendants are settlers[34], but the term "settler" commonly and in this thesis refers only to those Israelis living outside the borders of the Green Line. As I showed earlier in this chapter, settlement of the land is intrinsic to Zionism, and West Bank settlers see themselves as acting in a continuation of the earlier pioneering work of pre-state Israel. Despite its popularity, settling in the West Bank is still a divisive issue for Israelis, reflected in the use of two separate terms for those who cross the Green Line in the Hebrew language. The first of these is *mityashev,* which originates from the verb *yishuv,* meaning "to settle". *Yishuv* is a generic term used to denote any Jewish community setting in Palestine in the pre-state era and holds an implied neutrality. The second term, *hitnachalut,* is derived from the verb *nahal,* meaning "to take possession". This term is politicised, used to denote a form of illegitimacy, and widely applied to settlers living over the Green Line by leftist Israelis opposed to settlement.

The settlers I met all identified as *mityashev*, and many recognise and reject the inferred negative connotations of the English 'settler' and the *hitnachalu*t labels. In some respects, their reputation as extremists is truthful as, relative to the rest of the Israeli population, settlers tend to be on the political far right, extremely nationalist, and religiously conservative. Settlers' sense of neutrality around their actions in the West Bank, however, reflect their complicated relationship with the Israeli government. They are typically represented by Israeli and international media as armed, violent, and dangerous fundamentalists (Lustick 1988; Sivan 1995) who blindly follow religious authority figures (Dalsheim and Harel 2016). In reality, they are provided with military protection and support for the establishment of new settlements and the development of existing ones. On the

[34] With the exception of the community of Jews living in Palestine prior to mass Jewish immigration to the region.

other hand, they often feel restricted by government limits on settlement expansion and betrayed by their government's willingness to frame them as acting against its will.

In order to attract new settlers perhaps unaware of or unbothered by this framing, support was sought support from the North American Jewry in populating the West Bank. Previously represented as a fledgling leftist Jewish state suffering at the hands of inexplicably hostile Arab neighbours, Israel was seen by the US's Jewry as unattractive for migration, still embroiled in local wars and therefore dangerous, as well as underdeveloped compared to the United States (Hirschhorn 2017). The success of the 1967 war transformed their perspectives, demonstrating that Israel was able to easily defeat its Arab neighbours and offer new opportunities for diasporic Jews to take part in a second wave of repopulation following the initial efforts of 1948 (ibid.). North American Jewish participation in West Bank settlement helped reshape its demographics and politics. The majority of US immigrants were young, with over two-thirds under thirty-five at age of migration (ibid.), for whom the bulk of which was during or immediately after the 1967 war. Today, fifteen percent of the settler population (around 60,000 people) is estimated to be Jewish-American (Hirschhorn 2017: 15), cementing an association between settlement and international immigration (Weiss 2011). Many of the American settlers emigrating to Israel were upwardly mobile, highly educated young professionals from Jewish families on the east coast of the United States. Often visiting first as volunteers, tourists, and students, many joined the nascent settler movement through formal and informal channels for emigration, establishing groups with other similarly-motivated families. North American involvement in settlement has also led to its rapid expansion in recent decades, with approximately 13% of the Israeli population living in 200 settlements over the Green Line (B'Tselem 2019). In 2017 the United States' President Donald Trump's recognition of Jerusalem as the Israeli capital effectively lifted freezes on settlement expansion put in place by earlier US governments, inspiring further growth. The success of the initial years of settlement and the attraction of North American interest and investment paved the way for the re-settling of Gush Etzion and the creation of its informal capital, Efrat.

Efrat was strategically designed as a city settlement, marking the intersection of religious and politico-economic motivations for the settlement of the West Bank and cementing Jewish presence in it (Zertal and Eldar 2007). Its location was further justified by its mention in the Book of Genesis as where the matriarch Shoshana died, a reference used as justification for its numerous repopulation efforts throughout the 20th century. Its strategic location between the two holy cities of Jerusalem and Hebron was no coincidence, bolstering support of the project from the Israeli government.

The Biblical reference to Efrat's location as justification for its placement, however, is disputed by the land's Palestinian owners. As is often the case in Palestinian contestations of land ownership in the West Bank, these owners were either resident outside of Israel and Palestine or determined by Israeli courts as lacking sufficient evidence of ownership. As a result, their claims are contested by the Israeli state, which considers its settlements as built on land legally purchased by the JNF. In an early brochure for Efrat, no mention is made of surrounding Palestinian villages. It was claimed that the 1,200 dunam[35] plot was owned by the state and an additional 1,000 dunams were "relinquished from the hands of their owners"[36] (Moshkowitz pamphlet cf. Hirschhorn 2017:106). Many Efrat residents only contemplated the consequence of living on contested land during the First *Intifada*, but continue to refute Palestinian claims as they understand their land as legally obtained through the Israeli state.

In 1975 an English-language version of the Efrat brochure was distributed to American Jewish communities. It highlighted the high quality of life and community, luxury housing, and special rates on mortgages for new immigrants were heavily emphasised. In order to attract residents to emigrate en-masse, the American Rabbi Shlomo Riskin was solicited to promote the idea of Gush Etzion and Efrat to his New York congregation. Through his efforts, he was able to encourage some 500 families to emigrate from New York to Efrat in 1982, creating the initial human infrastructure the settlement needed to justify its plans.

Figure 7: Efrat settlement today. Credit: Wikipedia

[35] An Ottoman Empire-era measurement of land still used in Israel and the Levant region, equal to approximately 900 square metres.
[36] Palestinian landowners have filed suit in the Israeli High Court but the case, as is common for contestations of settlement land appropriation, has not met any success.

Efrat today, shown in Figure 7, is a large and affluent upper-middle class city settlement with prohibitively high land prices, often higher than those of Jerusalem for which Efrat serves as a commuter hub. It is now home to approximately 10,000 Jewish residents spread across approximately 5,000 dunams over seven hilltops, over double the size earmarked for it in the 1975 plan (Hirschhorn 2017). The majority of its residents are commuters, but several opened local shops and services in its earlier years when travel to Jerusalem was more dangerous. Efrat's affluence is reflected in its integration of educational, health, and state services; it is home to some of the highest-ranking schools in Israel, a state-of-the-art health centre, and regional branches of the interior ministry. Its integration of these infrastructures cements its reputation as a desirable place to live, and there are plans underway to expand by a further 60% in the coming years.

Efrat's expansion will move its borders to within 500 metres of Dheishe camp, placing one of the highest standards of living in the West Bank (Hirschhorn 2017) directly against one of the lowest. Its border with Dheishe will not be marked by a wall or fence, which Efrat's municipality refuse to build as a "peaceful settlement".[37] Efrat's leaders instead see it as part of a self-conscious movement to reframe the stereotypical representation of a settler as defensive and violent. Instead, Efrat is protected by an almost-invisible system of roving and stationary cameras manned 24 hours a day, a nightly patrol by local volunteers, and a local Israeli military base. Despite these efforts, like most of its residents Shoshana carries a firearm and believes in her right to protect herself from what she sees as a constant Arab threat.

Shoshana has lived in Efrat since 1992. Her family emigrated to Israel when she was three, residing in the north of the country among working class conservative religious households like their own. After attending a religious high school, Shoshana did not complete her two years of mandatory conscription in the Israeli military, serving instead as a teacher in *Sherut Leumi* (National Service, He.) as is custom among religious women. During her service she was stationed as a teacher in Kfar Etzion, a settlement initiated by the early Gush Etzion repopulation efforts, where she got to know the region and decided to return as a settler. Even though her family were politically conservative, her decision to cross the Green Line caused problems with her close relatives, many of whom she is no longer in touch with.

[37] As decreed by Rabbi Riskin, Efrat's chief rabbi, in interview with JWeekly Magazine, July 28, 1995.

Through friends in Kfar Etzion, Shoshana found a like-minded spouse who also wished to be part of Gush Etzion's repopulation. Following their marriage and with the help of the government's attractive mortgage rates on offer they were able to buy a small house in Kfar Eldad across the road form Efrat. After separating from her husband, Shoshana relocated to Efrat as the admission committee of Kfar Eldad did not permit single parents to live in the small and conservative village-settlement. Without an admissions committee, Efrat offered a solution to her housing problems while allowing her to fulfil her desire to remain a settler. She worked both as a Hebrew teacher in one of Efrat's many schools and as a consultant, helping newly arriving settlers find the right schools for their children, believing it was part of her civic and religious duty to support incoming settlers.

While she is not a member of any political party, she supports the current conservative government, though she believes they do not do enough to control the Palestinians. She dislikes the local Palestinians around the settlement, labelling them as violent and greedy, and believes that Efrat's peaceful approach to settlement should encourage them to reduce their violence against Israelis. Despite her fear of Arabs, she has previously worked as a Hebrew teacher for Palestinians and was taken illegally on trips into Palestinian West Bank cities by her pupils. Though she enjoyed being mistaken for a foreign tourist and able to buy up cheaper goods for her children, she felt it unjust that Palestinians had a lower cost of living and that, as an Israeli Jew, she was not legally allowed into these spaces. Though she is able to afford living in Efrat, she laments the high cost of living in Israel and resents Palestinians for their lower cost of living, believing it to be caused by lower tax contributions by Palestinians.

Shoshana's belief in her right to repopulate Gush Etzion and her complicated relationship with Palestinians and non-settling Israelis demonstrate the unevenness of the ground West Bank settlement has created. While profiting from attractive financial benefits, the opportunity for social mobility, and Efrat's high standard of living, she feels ostracised from other Israelis. Like many other settlers, Shoshana believes that inequality between Palestinians and neighbouring settlements is a result of Palestinian tax corruption, and they should accept settler presence as permanent and beneficial. She understands her residence in Efrat as a religious duty of repopulation, though she resents the lack of sufficient protection provided by the Israeli army for her and her friends' efforts.

In the summer of 1995 this resentment came to a head when Efrat became a symbol of a larger struggle over the potential evacuation of Israeli settlers from the entire Gush Etzion region. By way of rebellion against the possibility of evacuation, Shoshana and other settlement activists occupied

the Dekel Hill[38] and began unauthorised construction themselves. Though the Israeli army attempted to remove them several times, their occupation proved successful and Dekel was incorporated into Efrat, where it is now home to a large neighbourhood of settlers. Continuing methods of settlement establishment from their earliest iterations, settlers are still able to mobilise and shift the borders of their own communities, first acting alone but in coordination with the military government.

While the expansion of settlements gives the impression of stability, the possibility of settlement evacuation has continuously featured in peace negotiations between Palestine and Israel. Major evacuations have occurred before, most notably those in the Sinai Peninsula in 1982 and a following 21 in the Gaza Strip and four in the West Bank in 2005. Although evacuations are infrequent and those evacuated are compensated by the state for their property and land, like the evacuations of Gush Etzion in the 1930s and 40s, they are still regarded by settlers as a traumatic loss (Zertal and Eldar 2007). Following a successful tribunal outcome between Israeli anti-settlement organisation Peace Now and the Palestinian landowners, a small section of land home to 15 settler families was evacuated from Elazar settlement across the road from Efrat. Shoshana was particularly involved in supporting the families being evacuated, and saw the evacuation as an act of anti-Semitism perpetrated by Palestinians and supported by secular left-wing Israelis. The evacuation drew the support of the entire settlement movement the event was regarded as both horrific and unnecessary by the wider settlement community. Despite this, it was also considered a symbol of the successes of their repopulation efforts; with the support of a development company, construction had already begun on over 300 new homes on land close to the site of evacuation. It is perhaps notable that, while the Israeli state and its military have been able to remove and erase hundreds of thousands of Palestinians, it struggles to evacuate small groups of settlers from the hills of the West Bank.

The development and construction of Efrat symbolises the ways the Israeli government is able to mobilise both Israeli borders and populations. At the same time, it devolves the initiation of new settlements and the process of segregation between Palestinians and Israelis to individual settler activists. Through the use of the Zionist conflation of return with redemption and the promise of social mobility, settlers are drawn across the Green Line from within Israel and further afield. These religious and economic incentives have allowed settlements like Efrat to flourish, first providing a

[38] Efrat is comprised of seven hilltops named for species native to the region. Its present-day borders include seven settled hills with a further eighth, Eitan, earmarked for future expansion.

human infrastructure before settlements are further legitimised through their integration into technical infrastructures. Through this process, settlements have come to visually dominate the landscape of the West Bank while the Israeli government retains a minimally visible role. Since my period of research, settlement is set to expand further, increasing its human and technical infrastructure to claim even more of the West Bank for Israeli Jewish use.

Segregation and the struggle for visibility

Although settlement became a normalised part of life in the West Bank in the 1980s, Palestinians and Israeli settlers did not live in the near-total segregation that governs the West Bank today. After occupying the West Bank in 1967, Israeli restrictions on the Palestinian economy resulted in Palestinian labourers becoming reliant on Israeli employment. An estimated four to six per cent of Palestinians in the West Bank are thought to be working in settlements (Paz-Fuchs and Ronen 2017). Ahmad and his brothers had all at various points worked on the construction of Efrat's newer neighbourhoods, tempted to work illegally and risk jail time by the opportunity to earn much higher wages than those offered by Palestinian employers. Like many settlers, Shoshana had employed Palestinians in the construction of her house, preferring to pay locals cheaply through a broker rather than employ expensive Israeli labourers. Israel's reliance on Palestinian labour marks another way in which its policy of segregation contradicts itself as it relies on their labour while attempting to erase their presence.

In response to the unfortunate paradox of being forced to contribute to Israeli expansionism as well as repeated failures in peace negotiations, Palestinian resistance became more organised. Their resistance and Israeli state responses to it emerged as a struggle of visibility. Palestinians, seeking to reverse and challenge Israel's erasure of their presence, engaged in resistance tactics designed to increase their visibility in two different ways. The First *Intifada* (uprising, Ar.) of 1988 brought five years of Palestinian labour strikes designed to target the Israeli economy through its reliance on cheap Palestinian labour. The Second *Intifada* of 2000 to 2005 saw a different and more violent approach, with Palestinian resistance fighters using suicide bombs, snipers, and organised militias to resist Israel's occupation. In 2015, during the period of my research in the West Bank, a third wave of resistance emerged, though unlike the earlier *Intifadas,* this series of attacks was not a coordinated response by Palestinian political parties, militias, or labour unions. Instead, it was the work of individually motivated acts of Palestinian resistance against the visual symbols of occupation; settlers and the Israeli military. Throughout and between these uprisings, Palestinian resistance also took the form of *sumud* (steadfastness, Ar.), a political strategy of "existence as

resistance" (Khalidi 2010). *Sumud*, though less explosive than other approaches, is also a visible politics of refusing erasure, a challenge to years of Israeli state attempts to render Palestinian history and residence in its occupied territories.

Israeli government responses to Palestinian resistance have relied on the same tactics of suppression in increasing measures; mass arrests, violent raids on Palestinian spaces, and mobility restrictions. These responses render the state highly visible, responding to both Israeli civilians demand for protection and as a show of strength to its occupied Palestinian subjects. By the end of the Second *Intifada, hafrada* (segregation, He.) had become the Israeli government's approach to managing the Palestinian 'problem' in the West Bank, further removing Palestinians from Israeli view. The passing of the Oslo Accords in 1994, though intended as a peace treaty following the First *Intifada,* in fact emerged as a further institutionalisation of segregation. The Accords resulted in a plan to divide the space of the West Bank into three zones (as shown in Figure 8).[39] The parts of the West Bank most densely populated by Palestinians were allocated to control by the newly-formed Palestinian National Authority (PNA) government. This area, known as Area A, made up around 18% of the West Bank at the time. Area B was divided between small and often industrial areas under joint Israeli and PNA control. Area C, including all settlements and some 300,000 Palestinians, at the time around 60% of the West Bank, came under full control of the Israeli military government (Newman 2017). Israeli citizens were barred from entering Area A, enshrining segregation in law.

[39] Estimations of areas zoned as Area C are in constant fluctuation as Israel annexes more land and therefore figures are quickly outdated.

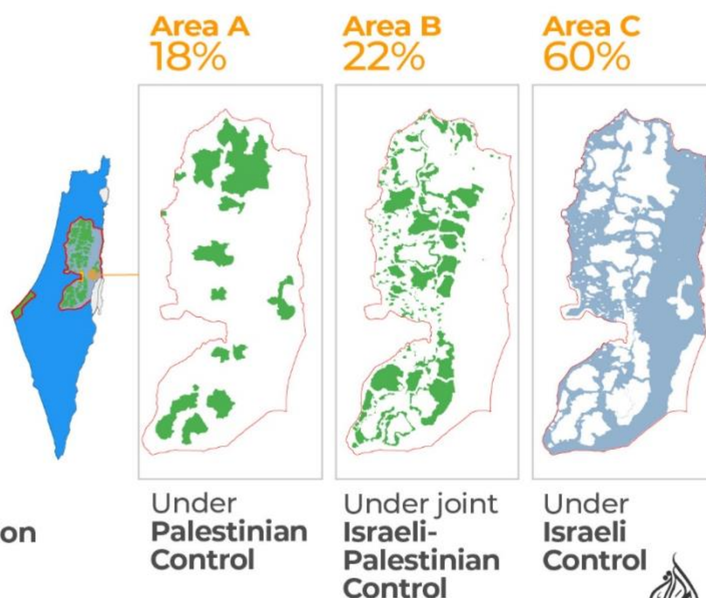


Figure 8: Map showing the distribution of Areas A, B, and C in the West Bank. Credit: Al Jazeera

The introduction of an identity-card system that determined access based on place of residence was used to regulate segregation and further remove Palestinians from Israeli view while increasing their legibility to the Israeli state. Cards were issued according to place of residence, differentiating between those living in Israel, Jerusalem, Gaza, and the West Bank and further complicating the notion of a unified Palestinian identity. Palestinians holding West Bank identity cards could not leave without difficult-to-obtain permits from the Israeli military government, turning the West Bank into the prison Uday described in the introduction to this thesis. The identity card regime allows the Israeli government to monitor the location of Palestinians, using army-manned checkpoints to police their movement. This legibility, however, led to the emergence of a political economy of identity-card manipulation by Palestinians, who – like Ahmad's sister who was swiftly married to a Jerusalemite – began to marry and move to obtain access to different identity cards.

In 2002 the Israeli government began construction of the Separation Wall, a dramatic symbol of Israeli control over its occupied Palestinian population and a further contribution to its politics of visibility. As shown below in Figure 9, the wall segregates the West Bank from Israel and the rest of the occupied territories while enabling further land appropriation. Construction of the Wall also rendered Palestinians living inside it even more invisible by simply excising them from the view of both settlers and Israelis living on the other side of the Green Line. The Israeli state's Separation Wall, checkpoint regime, and increased militarisation of the West Bank make clear visual symbols of its control over the region. By intentionally concealing Palestinians from Israeli civilian view, these

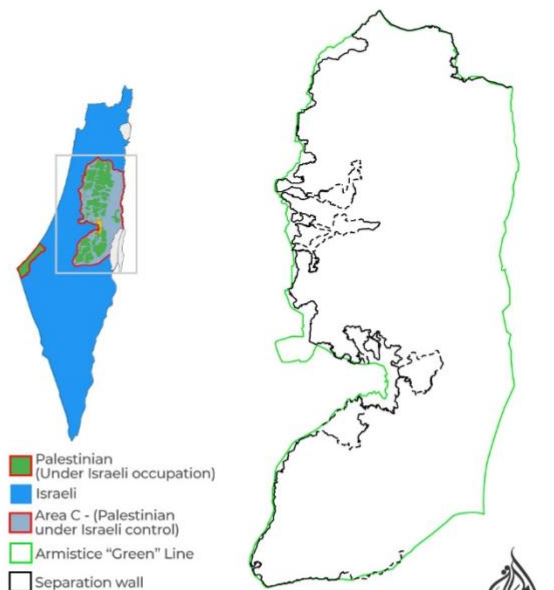
symbols make up what Yang calls an “infrastructure of unseeing” (2018) that replicates the dynamics of erasure initiated by early settlers and the first Israeli government in 1948.

By criminalising Palestinian mobility, the Israeli government were able to enact an additional kind of erasure on Palestinians in the West Bank. Any Palestinians found to be in breach of the Israeli military’s fluctuating laws restricting their mobility in and outside of the West Bank are incarcerated, removing them further from Israeli view. Israeli incarceration rates of Palestinians are high, with over 90,000 Palestinians arrested and detained in Israeli jails since 2005 (Al Araby 2016). Ahmad’s teenage arrest for working in Efrat without a permit resulted in a 12-month sentence in Rimon prison in the Negev desert. Once freed, Palestinians with criminal records experience enhanced mobility restrictions in routine denials of military-issed permits to work inside Israel or even move around the West Bank.

2020
Separation wall

Since 2002, Israel has been constructing a wall that stretches for **more than 700 kilometres.**

85 percent of the wall falls within the West Bank rather than running along the internationally-recognised 1967 boundary, known as the Green Line.



Source: B'Tselem (2019)

@AJLabs ALJAZEERA

Figure 9: Map showing the placement of Israel’s Separation Wall. Credit: Al Jazeera/B’Tselem

The intentionality behind the erasure of Palestinians in the West Bank and the creation of a highly visible Israeli occupational presence informs infrastructural development of the region for settlement. Herzl himself highlighted the importance of infrastructure in the Israeli state-building project, decreeing that “they will construct roads, bridges, railways, and telegraph installation; relate rivers; and build their own dwellings; their labour will create trade, trade will create markets and markets will attract new sellers” (1988: 26). The Israeli government has followed suit, presenting its rapid development of infrastructures in the West Bank as a necessary development of the region

that its Palestinian population was incapable of (Khalidi 2010). Israel has, according to Zionist narratives, ‘made the desert bloom’, rebuilt ruined cities, and introduced modern agriculture, electricity, telecommunications, and roads, modernising both Palestine and Palestinians. The fact that it was able to do this despite its hostile Arab population and neighbours and through several wars is used to justify Jews as the rightful inheritors of the land and Palestinians are its ungrateful beneficiaries (Khalidi 2010).

Like the early Israeli state, settlements are both created by and legitimised through their infrastructure. The initial human infrastructures generated through the presence of individual settlers necessitates their integration into existing infrastructures. As exemplified in the case of Migron, once the human infrastructure of the settlement is in place, connection to electricity, telephone, and water grids is necessitated, followed by the provision of a paved road to connect the settlement to a main traffic artery, and finally the arrival of the state’s welfare infrastructure in health and child care. While defended as intended for shared Palestinian and Israeli use, these infrastructures are rarely evenly distributed. Israeli infrastructure in the West Bank follows Zionist logics in that it most often creates flows between settlements and *Israel HaKatanah* (Israel inside the Green Line) for its Jewish peripheral users. Palestinian users, however experience blockages and diversions as their use of these infrastructures is either illegalised or limited. As the logic of segregation came to dominate the way in which the West Bank is governed and developed, segregated infrastructures have become a visible and invisible means by which the occupation shapes it.

Conclusion: The ground remains uneven

Figure 10: Dheishe Camp visible between the hills of Efrat's new neighbourhoods. Credit: Branwen Spector

Figure 10 shows Dheishe camp visible through the hills of Efrat's newest neighbourhoods. The densely populated and small size of the camp is juxtaposed against the wide streets and abundant spacious buildings of the settlement. Barely visible against the rolling expanse of the settlement, uneven ground takes on its intended multifaceted meaning; dominating the physical environment of the West Bank, settlements surround, segregate, and expand at the expense of Palestine and Palestinians. Less than a kilometre apart, generations of families rendered homeless in 1948 live in partial view of Israelis arriving from inside Israel and abroad to new and purpose-built homes. This picture also demonstrates, however, that after over 50 years of Israel's occupation of the West Bank, its bid to cleanse the environment of Palestinians through segregation, violence, and erasure has not yet been successful.

By offering a contextualisation of the flows of people, borders, and ideas in and out of Israel and Palestine in its modern history, this chapter has attempted to demonstrate the historical significance of mobility in shaping the West Bank today. Successive Israeli governments influenced by Zionism have redesigned the region in its image, de- and re-populating areas according to the principle of a Jewish right of return while denying expelled Palestinians their own such right. The success of the

Israeli Zionist project has drawn from its capacities to act in contradiction with its public face, using invisible strategies to achieve its ideological goals. Without effective governance of their own, Palestinian refugees have been forced to adapt the new material conditions created by Israeli settlement, including their own roles in its construction while resisting its restrictions on their lives.

In this discontinuous and uneven setting, the creation of infrastructures becomes particularly politicised. Designed with the flow of people, ideas, and goods in mind, in settings of occupation these flows are frequently interrupted and blocked, complicating the mobility of its different users. In the remainder of this thesis I go on to focus on road, internet, and human infrastructures individually to demonstrate the ways in which they facilitate the mobility of people and the state in visible and invisible ways. Roads and the internet provide particularly useful examples of visible and invisible infrastructures that Israel has capitalised on to increase its surveillance and control of Palestinians. A focus on these infrastructures, however, necessitates first an understanding of the Zionist logics that dictate its design and implementation, which this chapter has outlined. As I have shown, creating ease of movement for Israelis and settlers has been a historic priority of the Israeli state while limiting mobility for its Palestinian subjects. The use and introduction of new infrastructures has served to enable this, while also tactically creating spaces in which the state is aware of the creative uses and potentials for resistance that reinforce the defensive capacities of the Israeli state.

The histories of Palestine and Israel are histories of mass migration and mobility of peoples, rooted in ethnic cleansing, settlement and re-settlement, and mobility restrictions. These histories are not limited to movements of people but also of borders; as Israel has grown Palestine has shrunk, and the placement of the Israeli state's borders has been deliberately complicated by settlement. Palestinian refugee and Israeli settlers are defined by their relations to mobility; while settlers live having voluntarily returned from exile, Palestinian refugees wait out their own exile in the same region. Settlers in this sense have double mobility, the inverse of Palestinian refugee double immobility. While Palestinian refugees in the West Bank are denied a right of return and freedom of movement, settlers are mobilised first to Israel as part of a process of Jewish return from exile and then across the Green Line as part of repopulation efforts. Both groups depend on their human infrastructures to shape their political identities, preserving and expanding themselves as politically significant playing chips in peace negotiations between the two states.

Chapter Four: Mobilities on the road

Introduction

Figure 12: A Palestinian goatherd moving his flock outside Efrat. Photo credit: Branwen Spector

In the West Bank there are over two thousand kilometres of roads, a third of which Palestinians are not permitted to use (Handel 2014). Since settlement of the West Bank began after 1967, the Israeli government has built road infrastructures to connect its settlements to *Israel HaKatanah*. Palestinian use of these roads is restricted, often diverting them onto old roads or blocking their journeys entirely. Restrictions on their road use are enforced by the Israeli military, placing Palestinians in daily danger but also inspiring creative practices to enable their mobility and resist settlement expansion. These diversions

create a topographically complex three-dimensional road infrastructure in the West Bank that limit Palestinian and Israeli settler mobility in different ways. Roads are sites reflecting the highly uneven political and topographical ground between settlers and Palestinians in which settler visibility and Palestinian invisibility become the key features of the landscape while moving through it by car (Weizman 2007).

Understanding roads as an infrastructure through which different mobilities are formed and experienced requires a grounding in the regional histories of mobility as well as attention to the unique practices and relations formed by using them. Anthropological approaches to infrastructure, as I showed in the Introduction to this thesis, are well equipped to highlight these histories and practices. Despite their analytical richness, however, anthropologists did not initially favour roads as a site of research. Early scholars using functionalist or structural-functionalist frameworks presented their fieldsites as bounded and uninfluenced by outside communities or historical processes. Roads complicated these representations as channels through which external factors influencing their models of kinship, political, or economic life. Gradually, attention to process came with Gluckman (1940), whose work seeking to emphasise the numerous processes of historical and political change impacting political organisation found its most appropriate setting on a road.

Over time, roads have come to be seen as productive sites for analysis that reveal the relations between things (Larkin 2013). Road infrastructures arose as rich metaphors for studies of mobility; driving, connecting and disconnecting, bringers of "processes of change" (Harvey and Knox 2015: 1), especially those related to the state, modernity, and development. While this is a useful framework with which to consider vehicular mobility, it is problematised when applied to colonial contexts. As discussed in the Introduction to this thesis, infrastructural failure is often captured at moments when the state in charge of infrastructure is deemed to be weak or failing, both categories into which colonial states such as Israel do not comfortably fit.

Early Israeli road building "was accompanied by a whole culture of songs and stories about the brigades which forged the transport infrastructure that made possible the establishment of the state itself" (Selwyn 2001: 230). Like many colonial states, Zionists saw

road infrastructure as "crucial to facilitating and sustaining the making of Jewish settler space and simultaneously the unmaking of Palestinian native space" (Salamanca 2014: 120). Roads became a primary way through which Israel's colonial enterprise could expand its axes of control over a colonised population while also controlling the resources and strategic potential for its military (Dalakoglou 2017). At the same time, roads achieved the state's ideological aims of connecting its Jewish citizens to expand its reach and influence while simultaneously immobilising and rendering legible its Palestinian occupied subjects.

The modernising and developing aspects of road infrastructures were therefore only partially delivered to one of the Israeli state core's two peripheral user groups. Roads in the West Bank specifically serve to fragment Palestinian spaces while connecting settlements (Bishara 2015; Salamanca 2014; Selwyn 2001), simultaneously making Palestinians invisible and reinforcing the visibility of its settlement human infrastructure. These roads therefore bring processes of change to different groups in uneven ways, resulting in uneven mobilities. If road infrastructures are designed to enable flows, colonial road infrastructures are about interrupting and segregating these flows to direct their movements in ways that serve their exploitative aims. In this chapter I draw on journeys taken with Palestinian refugees and Israeli settlers on different types of roads in the West Bank to explore what roads mean for the segregation, visibility, and mobility of each group.

Roads in the West Bank are particularly worthy of attention because they are a rare example of a space in which both Palestinians and Israeli settlers can be both in the same space and mobile. Thinking about different kinds of movement and the relations they evoke, both to roads and to authorities controlling these roads, allows for the critique of academic representations of Palestine and the West Bank that highlight stasis and immobility through segregation (Bishara 2015; Salamanca 2014; Selwyn 2001). Often represented through their immobility, this thesis aims to use infrastructures as a site in which this can be challenged. As Ahmad pointed out in the vignette in the Introduction to this thesis, Palestinians continue to *laffliff*. In fact, most movement for both Palestinians and Israelis in the West Bank can only take place on roads. As a small and highly militarised area, the West Bank possesses no civilian airport. Though bordered by the Dead Sea, boat travel is not permitted and the West Bank is otherwise landlocked. Train lines put in place by

earlier Ottoman governments are no longer in operation, and although movement on foot is possible and given cultural importance by both groups, Israel's occupation has rendered this unsafe for both Palestinians and settlers for different reasons. Driving by vehicle is, therefore, the only remaining way to move between spaces in the West Bank.

Looking at both settler and Palestinian experiences of the West Bank's roads also contributes a new approach to the study of the wider region. The limitations on Palestinian use of roads are a much-documented phenomenon within anthropology (Bishara 2015; Griffin 2020; Kelly 2006; Salamanca 2014; Selwyn 2001). The ways that roads are used to expand Israel's colonisation of the West Bank has also been studied from the perspectives of architecture, history, and urban studies (Weizman 2007; Zertal and Elder 2007). These works, however, do not include the experiences of road use framed alongside those of Palestinians. By centring both settler and Palestinian experiences of the West Bank's roads, I show how their mobilities are interrelated to limit each other's mobility, and in turn how the Israeli state uses this limiting to its advantage. In addition, by spending time with both Israeli and Palestinian road users, I came to understand how the ways that road infrastructures are designed, used, and governed. These roads in their different forms not only controls the destination and orientation of journeys taken, but the affective dimensions of travel and the socialities around them.

Throughout this chapter I draw on two different journeys I took during my fieldwork that highlight the everyday experiences of mobility for the majority of my interlocutors. The first of these journeys took place with a group of settlers beginning in the south of Efrat and ended in Jerusalem, some ten kilometres in total. The second journey, taken with a Palestinian refugee from Dheishe, started in the camp and circled around the Bethlehem region as we attempted to gain access to a village less than eight kilometres away before returning. Both of these journeys used the same part of Road 60 as well as its surrounding network of older roads. As I will show, the region's road infrastructures are rendered complex webs by policies of zoning and segregation, requiring Palestinians to reroute themselves under and around Israeli-controlled areas. Settlers, on the other hand, have relatively unimpeded movement throughout the region, but the ways that these spaces have been created serves to constantly remind them their mobility is still limited.

In order to frame the differences between segregated and shared infrastructural space, I first look at settlement and refugee camp roads separately. Infrastructures often evoke images of central planning informed by the ideologies held by their designers. While this is true of settlement roads designed for Israeli use, the roads in Palestinian refugee camps tend to follow different logics. These roads mimic the ad-hoc and liminal nature of the camp's space, sharply juxtaposed to the identical, new, and domineering roads of Israeli settlements. As I will go on to show, both roads reflect their users' different relations to mobility in different ways, creating a multitude of kinds of roads with different purposes.

After establishing how refugee camps and settlements have their own kinds of roads used only by their respective residents, I then shift my focus to Palestinian refugee and Israeli settler experiences of the same stretch of shared road. For settlers, Road 60 is simply a logically planned conduit to connect settlements in Gush Etzion to Jerusalem and *Israel HaKatanah*. The road also, however, represents the limiting of Israeli mobility in the West Bank; though it skirts around Bethlehem city and Dheishe camp, reminding settlers of an unfinished occupation and an ever-present potential Palestinian threat. For Palestinians, however, the same stretch of road is imbued with different meaning. Differentiated from Israeli settlers both physiologically and through their car's license plates,[40] Palestinians are reminded that they are occupied subjects through the punitive policing of the roads under the control of Israeli authorities. The road's route further cements their occupied identity through the diversions and overlaps they are forced to make in order to access their own spaces, most of which Road 60 does not connect to. In a rare space where Palestinians and Israeli settlers are placed alongside each other, on Road 60 the logics of segregation become confused.

In contexts of occupation, roads are colonial technologies that exert control over both their users and the land they are built on. Roads quite literally drive the reach of the state and its capacities for control while also claiming the land they are built on as its own. Through its

[40] As explained in Chapter Two, Palestinian residents of the West Bank largely drive cars with green and white license plates registered to the PNA. Israelis and Israeli settlers, however, register their cars with the Israeli government, which issues yellow and black license plates.

roads the Israeli state has attempted to reshape the West Bank in a Zionist image of Palestine as *tabula rasa,* a blank and empty slate for solely Jewish use. Shared roads, however, highlight the inconsistencies in this image. The dual approach to both settler and Palestinian mobility that I use in this thesis brings attention to how roads reflect and create different relations between the road's peripheral users and the aims of the Israeli state core directing their design. These relations result in practices informed by each group's histories of migration that both speak to their visions for the future of the West Bank and highlight the politics of visibility and invisibility involved in the expansion of the Israeli state and its treatment of Palestinians.

Segregated roads

Most anthropological engagement with roads has focused on highways as conduits of the state and their association with modernity, speed, and facilitating connectivity to urban centres (Campbell 2012; Dalakoglou 2010; Harvey and Knox 2015; Klaeger 2012; Pedersen and Bunkenborg 2012; Roseman 1996). Much of this thinking has been influenced by Lefebvre who saw highways as the archetypal spaces produced for the domination of society (1991: 124). This section builds on his idea but pays attention to multiple types of roads, including by-roads, avenues, alleyways, and backstreets to explore their meanings and the ways they impact mobility for their users.

Lefebvre identified space as both a social product and a tool that can be used to frame relations; a means of control (1991). Roads constructed by the Israeli authorities appear to be built with this control in mind, using militaristic principles and visibility to enhance its occupation, and are sharply juxtaposed to pre-existing Palestinian roads (Weizman 2007). Where Palestinian roads reflect the topography of the region, with sharp turns and often meandering routes through the mountains and valleys of the West Bank, Israeli roads reflect its attempts to dominate it. Its roads are wide – allowing more space for military vehicles – and straight – preventing potential sites for surprise ambush by the Palestinian resistance. These roads mimic the Israeli state's surveillance practices, creating conditions in which their civilian and military users can visualise oncoming traffic and potential attack. As I will go on to show, it also uses the features of Palestinian roads against Palestinians; their sharp

bends and lack of street lighting provide concealed points in which to place flying checkpoints.

Figure 12: Rachel's street in Efrat. Photo credit: Branwen Spector

On a hot morning in July 2017, Rachel and her friends Leah and Esther took me on a day out to Jerusalem. We met outside Rachel's house in Efrat early in the morning. Driving along Rachel's *cul de sac* (Figure 12) to Efrat's main avenue, Rachel and her friends told me about how the neighbourhood had changed since they'd moved in while it was still being built. Once dirt paths, the roads were now tarmacked, clean, and had wide pavements. In the middle of the hot day the settlement was almost empty and there was no traffic; most of the men were at work in Jerusalem or Tel Aviv, their wives either also at work or indoors with their children. We passed endless identical villas above and below the road, their pretty gardens filled with plants. Efrat, like many other settlements, seemed idyllic, the picture of a perfect suburb; quiet, clean, and affluent.

Despite appearances, however, and like roads, settlements are designed according to militaristic principles informed by Zionist logics. Settlement roads prioritise mobility for its Jewish citizens and the "prevention of infiltration or return" of Palestinians (Weizman 2007),

responding to the drive to fortify its border regions discussed in Chapter Three. Settlements are typically planned according to a few blueprints rolled out across a range of West Bank locations, rendering the space easily navigable and visually almost identical. Rachel's street, shown in Figure 12, could be any street in any settlement, something she often laughed about when she had first moved in and couldn't find her home amongst hundreds of other identical buildings. All roads in settlements form star shapes to allow settlers, if attacked, to retreat to a central point in the heart of the settlement (Weizman 2007). The *cul de sacs* also created feelings of security; Leah and Rachel were happy that, although Efrat was not fenced in, the dead-end roads provided a safe place for their children to play away from traffic and the edges of the settlement where it bordered Palestinian areas.

As we approached Efrat's southern exit, we passed groups of hitchhikers waiting inside the gate at a shaded *trempiada* (hitchhiker's stop, He.), sticking their thumbs out as we approached, but with a full car we sailed past them. Rachel slowed the car down for the double rows of spikes designed to prevent cars entering through the exit channel and waved at the guard in his small white cubicle as he lifted the barrier for us. When we turned onto a short road connecting Efrat to Road 60, Rachel and Leah talked about the time before the settlement had been connected to the 60 by a road and they had to climb or drive over a muddy and often flooded path. There has been a celebration when the connection was finally tarmacked, a symbol of the settlement's recognition from and integration into the Israeli state that reinforced its permanence and reduced fears of evacuation.

Six months earlier, my Palestinian friend Asad and I took my car to pick up his younger sister Maysun to bring her to the camp to visit her family for the evening, a journey he made at least once a week. When she married, Maysun moved to Husan, a village a few kilometres away from Bethlehem, to live in her husband's family compound there. Living away from her family, with her husband working long hours as a day labourer in Tel Aviv, Maysun was alone in the house all day. She would often call me begging to come and pick her up and

Figure 13: The main road in Dheishe camp. Photo credit: Branwen Spector

take her to her mother's house in Dheishe. When I came, she would always get in my car sighing heavily, lighting an illicit cigarette and telling me about how she hated the village and considered it backwards compared to the more urban refugee camp.

It was a cold December evening as Asad drove my car along Dheishe's main road (Figure 13). Unlike the centrally planned settlement roads, camp roads appeared more organically over time as paths between tents, through use rather by plan. The main and only tarmacked road that we drove on snaked around the outside of the camp then carved out a narrow path between the tall apartment buildings, mini markets, mosques, small businesses, and schools crammed into the two square kilometre space. Confined to small areas of land leased by UNRWA, narrow roads are definitive features of the camps, as have become their traffic jams. As we drove, we stopped several times to let others squeeze past us, greeting them with the customary *salamaat* (greetings, Ar.). We slowed to a crawl at the bottom of the hill, where three *hajjat* (old women, Ar.) walked slowly in the middle of the road.

Unbothered by the mounting traffic behind them, the *hajjat* dictated our pace. Eventually we reached the crowded entrance to the camp where young men mingled around a coffee kiosk and taxi office, gossiping and watching who was coming and going.

Figure 14: An alleyway temporarily blocked in Dheishe. Photo credit: Branwen Spector

The liminality of the camp is imbued in its space as the Palestinian state and its residents have uncertain relations towards its permanence (Picker and Pasquetti 2015). Although permanent structures have replaced tents out of necessity, they co-exist uncomfortably with refugees' intention of one day returning to their own land. During my time in Dheishe the main road through the camp was repaved, a big event as infrastructural improvements were rare and much needed. Organising infrastructural improvements was difficult, as, without a municipality, repair work was either left to international aid organisations or UNRWA. "The money came from Saudi," said a range of friends when I asked who was responsible for the cost of the repaving, accompanied by shrugs; it didn't matter who did it, it simply mattered that it was finally happening as the road was peppered with potholes. "*Al share' zift,"* Asad always complained, *"*the road is shit, it breaks the car" – a common observation from Palestinians about their damaged roads as further impeding their mobility. Though the tarmacking of the road did little to change the mobility of the camp's residents, it did instil in them a sense of pride, as camps are in much worse states of repair than areas with municipalities to fund updates to infrastructure.

The camp's roads are complicated webs of narrow passageways that come into being by necessity or accident, some just wide enough for two cars to pass, others barely wide enough for two people. Knowledge of these roads can only be acquired by long periods of time spent in the camp; only life-long residents like Asad truly know how to navigate using its networks of alleyways. Some of its streets are passable by car, others are temporarily or

permanently blocked off by rubble, disused cars, or building materials, such as that in Figure 14. Without streetlights, at night the camp is particularly maze-like and difficult to navigate. Regularly invaded by the Israeli military, knowledge of Dheishe's streets is of primary importance to the camp's young men, who are able to quickly navigate away from invading soldiers and their jeeps and disappear invisibly down its backstreets. Dheishe's space is therefore not only shaped by the camp's temporal transition from a temporary to semi-permanent space, but also by its defensive needs. The immediate mobility and the existential immobility of its residents are embedded in its roads, with concealment as well as access formative dynamics that influence their routes.

Within segregated spaces roads reflect the mobilities and the defensive needs of the people living in them. Palestinian camp roads mimic the ad-hoc and liminal nature of the space of the refugee camp and their refugee existence. They are informal, carved out by use instead of design, and create ideal conditions for the guerrilla-war style tactics used by those taking part in resistance against the Israeli army's raids. Settlement roads are almost the inverse; wide, meticulously planned according to a standardised format for all settlements and built with military strategy and visibility of their users in mind. In this way it becomes clear that road infrastructures, when used by only settlers or refugees, reflect the political logics of those using them.

Shared roads

Figure 15: Road 60 in the West Bank. Photo credit: Louis Imbert for Le Monde.

The shared road I draw on in this chapter is a section of Road 60 between Hebron and Jerusalem, passing around Bethlehem and through Gush Etzion. Road 60 is, according to the Book of Genesis, an ancient road that followed the route of the Way of the Patriarchs, the path that Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob are said to have travelled from Nazareth to Hebron, stopping in Bethlehem on the way (Balfour 2018: 229). For Palestinians the road has served to connect Nazareth in the north of historic Palestine to Be'er Saba'a in the south, routing through the major cities of the West Bank on its way (see Figure 15). As the longest and most travelled road in the West Bank (Harel 2011), over time its route has been altered and it now resembled an intercity highway, connecting Israeli cities and settlements while excising Palestinian towns and villages.

Road 60 has become a site in which its users have struggled over the control of each other's mobility, complicating the logics of segregation and becoming a place in which Israel's occupation both reinforced and contradicted itself. After its occupation of the West Bank in 1967, Israel claimed a monopoly on the construction of road infrastructures, preventing Palestinians from building any new roads. In the early years of West Bank settlement, roads were built according to military need, defined as creating roads used by the Israeli military between bases to both protect the small communities of settlers and surveil Palestinian population centres. Following the rapid expansion of settlements in the 1980s, however, the meaning of military need shifted. Instead of settlers being interspersed between a fragmented military presence, military need now necessitated the provision of roads that were safe – bypassing Palestinian areas – and "sterile" – decontaminated of Palestinians (Petti 2008: 88).

Responding to this new need during the Second *Intifada,* Israeli authorities authorised changes to the route of Road 60, as shown in Figure 16. Following the specific targeting of settler and Israeli military use of West Bank's roads with snipers and Molotov attacks by Palestinian militias, the Israeli military rerouted the road along a newly constructed bypass road that, though still named Road 60, bridged over Bethlehem's valleys and burrowed into its hills, excising the city from it entirely. The road's entire length in the West Bank became zoned as part of Area C and therefore under Israeli control. Rather than taking settlers through Bethlehem city and past Dheishe camp, it rerouted Israeli settler traffic to speed around the outside of the city, rendering it a blur in the distance. This practice was repeated in several other areas of the West Bank, allowing settlers and the Israeli army to avoid passing through Palestinian cities. Through this practice the Israeli authorities not only impeded Palestinian mobility by restricting access to these roads, but also targeted the Palestinian economy, taking preventing Israeli settlers from using Palestinian markets and shops. At the same time, settlements expanded to include their own shopping centres and resources for settlers to replace their now blocked access to these markets.

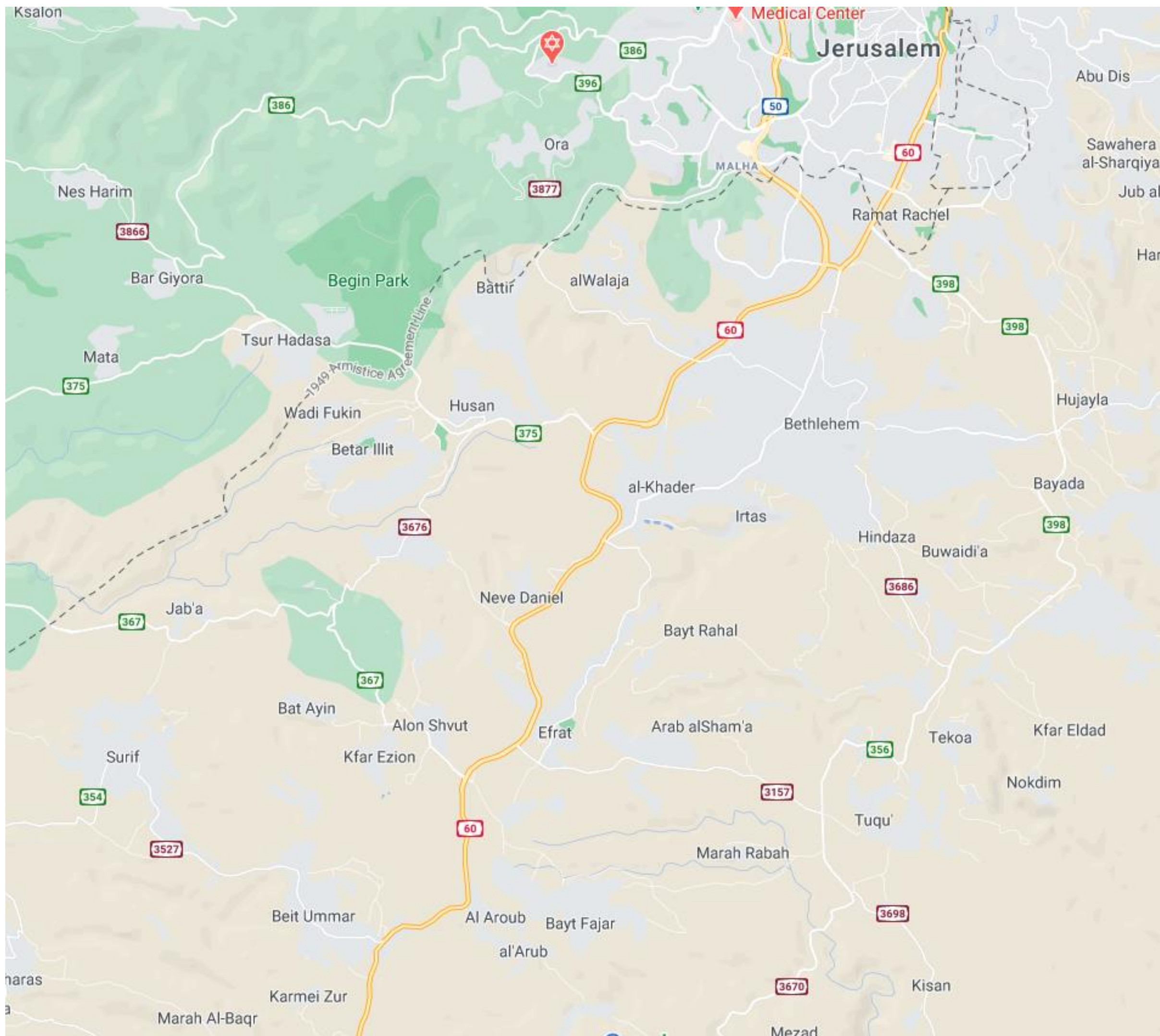


Figure 16: The new route of Road 60 excising Bethlehem. Credit: Google Maps

The rerouting of roads was further justified under the guise of settlement providing much-needed infrastructural advancements to the West Bank for both its Palestinian and Israeli populations. Access to these new roads for Palestinian users, however, was often denied on security grounds, limited, or gradually revoked over time (Kelly 2006; Selwyn 2001). This allowed the Israeli state to obscure the fact that their road infrastructures effectively immobilised the Palestinian populations living along them (Weizman 2007) while expanding its control over the land. Gush Etzion's settlements were designed to surround and isolate Bethlehem, and as a result its mixture of road infrastructures have become a particularly dense network of overlapping road infrastructures in a complex three-dimensional network. The changes to Road 60's route reflect the ways Israel's borders themselves are mobile and "dynamic, constantly shifting, ebbing and flowing…stealthily surrounding Palestinian villages and roads" (Weizman 2007: 7). The use of Road 60, like other shared roads in the West

Bank, is therefore not equally distributed, but instead portioned according to the identity of the person using it.

Israel's infrastructures in the West Bank are designed to "enhance the territorial contiguity of the occupied areas with Israel proper" (Selwyn 2001: 228), normalising settlement by rendering it visually and materially similar to *Israel HaKatanah.* This visual annexation is a way by which the Israeli state uses modern infrastructure to the West Bank to contribute to their erasure, claiming the land for roads as Israeli restricting Palestinian access, forcing them to work around or outside of them. Like land for settlements, land for roads is requisitioned using the justification of military need, and Palestinian construction is forbidden within one kilometre on either side of it (B'Tselem 2004). Road 60 became littered with architecture designed to further exert the space as definitively Israeli; permanent and temporary checkpoints, watchtowers, and electronic fences are now quotidian features along its many kilometres. Even streetlights reassert Israeli dominance over the landscape; by day, the irregular patterns of Palestinian building, both modern and antiquated are visible across the hills and valleys of the region as one drives along Road 60. By night, however, a lack of street lighting plunges Palestinian areas into darkness and invisibility. The newly built, evenly spaced, and continuously functional streetlights marking the channels of Israeli roads, however, light up the hills of the West Bank, making settlement its primary visual feature. These material differences also re-entrench dynamics of inequality; Palestinians often comment on the superiority of Road 60 to their own roads, citing the safety and visibility brought by the streetlights, new tarmac, and straightness of the road.

Figure 17: A watchtower and Israeli military jeep driving along Road 60. Photo credit: Branwen Spector

In the section of Road 60 I present in this chapter (shown above in Figure 17), it is at its widest, busy with both Israeli and Palestinian private cars, Israeli coaches, Palestinian *servis* minibuses, and Israeli military and police vehicles all racing along much faster than the speed limit of 90 kilometres. The road is dotted with crowded bus stops for Israeli hitchhikers and bus passengers, heavily guarded by armed soldiers with their large guns strapped across their chests. The Israeli state's exertion of control is also evident through less visible means; by excising Bethlehem and serving only to connect settlements to large Israeli cities, Palestinian users are often forced off it, instead repurposing old roads or forge dirt paths between Palestinian spaces. Once a main artery for Bethlehem and its surrounding villages, Palestinians now must go under or around it in a thoroughly anti-modernising process of change that also removes them from view of settlers driving along it.

The sharing of the road might imply interaction between users; Gluckman (1940) identified roads as a space "where diverse social and cultural groups move, meet and interact" (Dalakoglou and Harvey 2012: 461). In the West Bank, however, interaction on shared roads is limited as users are still isolated inside of their vehicles, in transit, and to different locations. Shared roads therefore emerge as a place where different worlds co-exist in the same space uncomfortably without much communication between individual users. Most of the communication is instead managed by the Israeli state that reasserts its messages of

erasure; along Road 60 it is only its Jewish settlements that are signposted, further erasing the Palestinian villages, cities, and towns along its route.

The narrative Road 60 seems to create, then, is one of reduced Palestinian mobility at the expense of the expansion of Israeli settler mobility, the demonstration of a strong Israeli security presence, and a space in which blockages as well as flows are created. In what follows, however, I challenge this representation of road infrastructures and their use in the West Bank to highlight how the road is both a site in which segregation is rendered complex and one over which both sides struggle to exert control over each other's mobility.

Controlling Palestinian mobility

After we left Dheishe camp, Asad and I tried several routes to get to his sister in Husan village on the other side of the new Road 60 bypass. The first and most efficient approach should have been a 20-minute journey using the old Palestinian roads of Al Khader village, itself now bordered on two sides by Road 60. At the edge of a village was a dark and potholed road over which the new Road 60 bypass section was built, connecting to the road leading to the villages on the other side of the new highway. As we approached the tunnel under Road 60, however, we saw the tell-tale queue of cars in front of a group of soldiers indicating a flying Israeli army checkpoint had been established. Not wanting to wait or deal with soldiers while Asad was driving my car – an illegal but common practice – we turned back and considered our options.

The second most efficient route was also the riskiest. Just outside of Bethlehem, the bypass stretch of Road 60 was interrupted by a large and permanent checkpoint designed to prevent Palestinians travelling north and out of the West Bank into Jerusalem. If driving alone, I often passed through the checkpoint and immediately made a U-turn to orient myself in the other direction and gain access to Husan using a settlement slip road. However, as Asad was a West Bank identity-card holder without a permit to leave, this option involved relying on the soldiers at the checkpoint misinterpreting me as a settler and not taking an interest in my passengers. If stopped, however, we could be arrested for attempting to illegally transport Asad outside the West Bank. We drove up a hill overlooking

the checkpoint, and on seeing a long queue of evening traffic being thoroughly searched by the soldiers, decided against it.

Though not as risky than the checkpoint approach, our third option was still less than preferable. Now almost an hour into our journey and nowhere nearer to our destination, we drove back towards Dheishe and along the route of the old Road 60 to Bethlehem’s southern exit where it joined the new Road 60. After stopping just before the exit to top up the car’s now almost empty petrol tank, we passed several Israeli military watchtowers before turning off the mismatched tarmac of the old Road 60 onto the freshly paved new one. This route was less than preferable for Asad because leaving the confines of Area A shifted his subjectivity. While inside Area A he was a working-class refugee driving a foreigner’s car, outside he was recast as an occupied subject and at the whims of the Israeli police or military. Were we to get into a collision or otherwise attract the attention of the authorities, his charges for stone throwing and working illegally inside Israel would be brought up, risking further detention. Away from his family network who inside Area A would see to the resolution of conflicts and insurance matters in the event of an accident, he was vulnerable to being charged punitive fines by Israeli police. And, if nothing else, entering Area C meant wearing a seat belt, an uncommon practice for Palestinians, and used as a tell-tale way to catch and fine Palestinian drivers on shared roads.

Aware of the risks Asad took in order to achieve a simple, legal, and everyday task, we fell silent and dutifully put on our seatbelts. An air of tension came over the car as we sped down Road 60 around the outside of Bethlehem, essentially doubling back on ourselves. The generous speed limit and well-paved road meant we quickly reached the turning for Husan marked only by signs to the Israeli settlements surrounding it and therefore relying on our local knowledge of the region. This new and heavily fenced road had one unmarked exit to an older and parallel Palestinian road alongside it, onto which Asad gently eased the car for the final stretch of our journey. The road hugged the hill’s edge and he navigated its curves carefully in the dark. When we eventually reached Husan village he swore. Another flying checkpoint had been put in place in the middle of the Area C village, comprised of a row of sharp spikes in the road preventing traffic passing, manned by three soldiers. They wore heavy bulletproof vests and helmets, two holding large assault rifles pointed at the

oncoming traffic while one checked passenger ID cards of the passing cars. After eventually passing the checkpoint without incident and rolling down the hill to his sister's home, almost two hours late, Asad was agitated. The numerous attempts we had to make in order to reach her village and the navigation of numerous and unnecessary risks involved had exhausted us both. "See? Two hours just to get 8 kilometres. Fuck the occupation", Asad exclaimed in frustration, punching the steering wheel.

Attention to Palestinian mobility in the West Bank therefore reveals an important way in which Palestinians are misrepresented as wholly immobile (Peteet 2017). As Bishara notes in her ethnography of driving while Palestinian, "Israel's security strategies are more effective at perpetuating a logic of separation and *criminalisation* of Palestinians than at actually preventing Palestinians in the West Bank from entering Israel" (2015: 48, emphasis added). The journey I took with Asad was one of many of its kind that sought to avoid areas where Palestinian mobility was criminalised, confining our regular *laffliffs* to Area A. Even though *laffliffs* are a popular pastime, and particularly enjoyable on roads like the 60 where their width and generous speed limits allow for rare moments of smooth and fast driving, the risks and reminders of Israel's encroachment on the West Bank deter Palestinian drivers away.

My journey with Asad also draws attention to the three-dimensionality of road infrastructures. The segregated road networks for Palestinian and Israeli settler users weave over and under each other, requiring drivers to map multiple routes and alternatives as their paths can unexpectedly be blocked at any moment by checkpoints, changes in policy, or determined by who is in the car and which identity cards they carry. Because settlements were designed to surround Palestinian areas, Palestinian drivers are often forced onto Area C roads as much as they are forced off it, causing them to engage with Israeli space and potentially Israeli authorities even on short and quotidian journeys. Finally, Palestinian use of shared roads also complicates common representations of the West Bank as entirely segregated. Much ethnographic attention has been paid to its apartheid road infrastructures (Bishara 2015; Salamanca 2014; Selwyn 2001) and how they limit Palestinian mobility. Like Ahmad pointed out in the introduction to this thesis, however, although Palestinians are in a prison, they continue to *laffliff* within it.

Resisting settler mobility

Figure 18: A sign denoting entrance to Area A. Photo credit: Getty Images.

Where the limits to Palestinian mobility are caused by blockages enforced by Israeli authorities as well as the design of its infrastructures, the limits Israeli settlers face on road infrastructures are slightly different in form. These limits come in two forms. The first, more blockages than diversions, emerge as a result of the zoning of the West Bank. The second relate to Palestinian acts of resistance that shape road use, recasting shared roads as sites where both sides struggle over the control of each other's mobility. Both of these limits are worthy of attention not only because they highlight Israeli as well as Palestinian experiences of immobility, but also because they point to underlying logics that the Israeli state uses to justify its expansionism.

The first control over Israeli mobility experienced on shared roads is similar to a limit on Palestinian mobility enforced by the zoning of the West Bank. Where Palestinians cannot enter settlements without permits, Israeli citizens cannot enter Area A. Returning to my journey with Rachel and her friends, the limits on their mobility became a discussion point as we drove down Road 60. The Palestinian villages we passed on the way were made evident not by signposts bearing their names, but with a universal demarcation now ubiquitous on Israeli road infrastructures in the West Bank. These demarcations take the form of large red signs denoting the area's inclusion in Area A, like that pictured in Figure 18, and read in Hebrew, Arabic, and English: "Entrance for Israeli citizens is forbidden, dangerous to your lives, and illegal by Israeli law". Passing one such sign, the conversation in

the car turned to how driving outside of the settlements reminded the settler women of how much of the West Bank they could not access. “After Oslo we can’t go anywhere, and they can go where they want”, Leah said, gesturing to the Palestinian village the red sign indicated and an imagined expanse of land available for solely Palestinian use. “They don’t understand we are here, and this is all ours. They can go somewhere else, they can hit the road”, Esther added.

Her words imposed a desired mobility of Palestinians; a view that they have somewhere else to go and that the remaining enclaves of Palestinian Area A space had limited futures. Israel’s expanding road infrastructure represents to Esther and those fighting for settlement expansion that Israel’s border can and will move, with roads the conduit through which Israelis will enter and Palestinians will ultimately leave. Settlement as a future-oriented project reveals its logic here. Esther and Leah’s words reinforced the feeling of many settlers that their mobility is currently restricted by Palestinian presence on the land. Despite the fact that we did not experience any restrictions to our movement on our journey – unlike those numerous blocks Asad and I encountered – the segmentation of the West Bank’s space by the Oslo Accords and their securitisation by the Israeli military to settlers represents space yet unconquered that they would ultimately wish to be able to use.

The second infringement on settler mobility is less to do with zoning and more to do with Palestinian reactions to it. As outlined both in Chapter Three and in the historical context for the rerouting of Road 60 detailed above, “many of the expressions of Palestinian resistance and Israeli response to it involved mobility and regulation of movement” (Selwyn 2001: 233). Resistance to segregation and occupation on the roads occurs in both violent and nonviolent forms (see Griffin 2020), however it is in its violent forms that it impacts settler mobility directly. Shared roads are a rare exception to the otherwise segregated space of the West Bank in which Palestinians are not immediately searched, guarded, or otherwise regulated, allowing for resistance without passing a checkpoint into historic Palestine. Settlers are easily identifiable by distinctions made between Israeli and Palestinian license plates, religious attire, and physiology, and therefore rendered targets for those wishing to protest the unevenness with which rights to mobility are applied in the West Bank.

The checkpoints Asad and I encountered on our multiple attempts to access Husan village, we later learned, had been put in place as a response after a group of Palestinians throwing Molotovs and stones at settler traffic on Road 60 had been caught. On our return journey Maysun explained; her neighbour's son had been one of the throwers and had made it back to the village before Israeli soldiers had raided their home and he was taken away. Two of the group had not yet been caught and the checkpoint had been put in place as part of the army's search for them and cars entering Husan village were being stopped and checked. The boys from Husan were throwing stones as a resistance tactic to demonstrate their opposition to the occupation. Asad, like many others, agreed that the target should be the Israeli military rather than civilians, but simultaneously he pointed out that the settlers were there illegally and that Palestinians have a right of resistance as long as the occupation continues.

When speaking to both parents and those convicted of stone-throwing about this practice, there were always several unspoken elements of the conversation. All parents locked the front doors of their homes at night and kept the keys on their person; children were not allowed out at night. Those raised in camps were well educated in the dangers of being caught by the army, having grown up with fathers, brothers, uncles, and cousins disappearing for months when caught and incarcerated by the Israeli military. No parents of refugee children, however, told me that stone throwing was forbidden; it was understood that their children had the right to take part in resistance to occupation, and therefore that it was not something that should be actively discouraged. Groups of teenage boys often went together under the cover of dark to the shared roads to assert their ownership of their land and homes. Asad himself had served six months in Israeli prisons for stone throwing. When I asked about his motivation, he shrugged and looked away. "*Ana ibn mukhayem"* he would say, "I'm a son of the camp, I lost everything. We have to resist." His sister nodded from the back seat.

Stone throwing has a highly symbolic meaning in Palestinian resistance (Hallward 2013; Peteet 1994). It is not necessarily considered a violent act, instead a symbolic gesture of resistance by an unarmed and stateless people against one of the world's most powerful

armies.[41] Its symbolic potential is even more meaningful when it is considered that, without weapons, Palestinians resort to throwing pieces of their own land at those who appropriate it. When stone throwing targets settlers, however, it is recast as an attempt to exert their own regime of control over Israelis, attempting to immobilise them as they move through occupied space. The use of roads as sites of protest is not unique to Palestine; Campbell (2012) describes Amazonian settlers in Brazil as using sections of highways as sites for protest against the Brazilian state in order to get further sections of the road paved. "The road was the only tool they had" (2012: 495) writes Campbell, a logic that also applies to the Palestinian situation. While Palestinian use of roads as a site of resistance responds to a desire for lesser rather than greater state intervention as in the Brazilian case, it does draw attention to the symbolic potential of shared road infrastructures and the unique relations they evoke. As a site in which their mobility restrictions were perhaps most clearly and visually rendered, the use of the shared roads of the West Bank as primary locations for resistance against occupation took on even more symbolic meaning for the stone throwers.

The insecurity this expression of control over settlers informed the ways they used the roads. Despite being entitled to free movement in the Area C region, having access to public transport at night, and enjoying higher rate of private car ownership, Israeli settlers took journeys that were direct, with no meandering, and as short as possible. During the early years of settlement, an Israeli army checkpoint at the entrance to the West Bank from Jerusalem required each settler vehicle to carry a weapon before they were permitted to drive any further into the region. Settlers lacking a weapon were required to wait for a miliary escort to proceed. During the Second *Intifada,* settlers were required by law to wear bulletproof vests and helmets to drive to Jerusalem from the settlements and parents were advised not to travel together.

Settler mobility was therefore not reduced, but limited by its affective dimension linked to its potential for danger. This potential informed their relations with both Palestinians and their state. As I noted in Chapter Three, settlers often felt misrepresented as extremists by the Israeli government for arming themselves and resisting a state they saw as failing to

[41] According to the Global Fire Power Index (2018), Israel has the world's 16th most powerful military.

support them sufficiently. Despite the widespread presence of the Israeli military and its checkpoints, watchtowers, and Separation Wall, settlers still felt compelled to arm themselves against Palestinians. On our journey to Jerusalem, Rachel had offered to drive my car on our journey, joking that we would be safe because she was carrying her handgun. When I asked if guns were necessary, she replied: “you never know what can happen out here. I’ve seen things get pretty unpleasant, and we don’t want to be out here alone with some Arab”. Roads like Road 60, where segregation could not be enforced unlike inside the fortified confines of settlements, were clearly associated by Rachel with danger.

When considered in relation to the highly visible signalling of Palestinian spaces as linked to danger made by the large red signs denoting Area A spaces, and as Bishara notes, shared road infrastructures “inculcate those on the road…with a fear of Palestinian[s]” (2015: 34). While settlers experience far greater ease and legality of movement than Palestinians and particularly Palestinian refugees in the West Bank, its zoning and signage seek to remind them that they are still in danger and immobilised by the remaining Palestinian presence. Despite attempts to inculcate these fears, many of the settlers I interviewed were reluctant to discuss objective dangers or the idea that the settlements were not a safe place to live. When I raised the issue of stone throwing directly, all of my interlocutors recounted a memory of being targeted by stone or Molotov at some point. When asked if the risk was a deterrent to living in the region, however, most of my interlocutors made a similar, deflective statement similar to Esther’s earlier words; that Palestinians had to leave because settlers would not. Settlers had created their own facts on the ground that necessitated a new mobility of Palestinians, directed away from Israel’s borders.

Israeli settlers, by contrast, see their migration trajectories as concluding in the settlements and were not willing to become mobile again by leaving. Those few settlers who had left the settlements after the violence of the Second *Intifada* were rarely spoken of, and it seemed to me as if they were regarded as having failed the community. A subject more open for discussion among settlers related to the ways in which settlers drew on their perseverance to differentiate themselves from non-settling Israelis. Israelis within the Green Line did not “have what it took” to cope with the dangers of the West Bank, particularly the dangers of using its roads. Palestinian attempts to resist occupation by targeting settler mobility

therefore simply seem to be a part of life in the region. Even though they did not use the roads to *laffliff,* Rachel, Leah, and Esther all responded to the dangers they faced with their own form of perseverance. They linked their resolution to remain living in the settlements to the pioneering challenge they believed they were tasked with as Jewish Zionists; a necessary and redemptive hardship for which they would be rewarded.

In this sense their "Jewish stubbornness", as they called it, appears to resemble the much remarked-upon Palestinian concept of *sumud,* or "steadfastness" (Allen 2008; Ryan 2015; Swedenburg 1990). Both are forms of nonviolent resistance that hold connotations of both immobility – a refusal to leave the land on which they reside – and mobility, "a daily resistance of simply getting there" (Hammami 2000: 27). Though without knowledge or reference to *sumud*, settlers too seemed to practice a form of resistance premised on perseverance with everyday life in the face of adversity, restrictions and harshness. Their frequent references to this stubbornness indicated settlers, as new migrants to the region, were willing to risk their lives for their political cause and take part in this moment of Jewish history.

Conclusion: why is segregation incomplete?

By looking at Israeli settler and Palestinian refugee design and use of the different kinds of roads in the West Bank, this chapter has shown how infrastructures can be used to complicate both representations of everyday life and understandings of segregation. Attention to roads created within segregated space show how controlling mobility is an underlying logic that shapes the Palestinian and Israeli spaces of the West Bank mediated by defence and resistance. Attention to shared roads diverts analyses away from the more dramatic architectures of segregation like checkpoints and the Separation Wall. Instead, it moves attention towards the practices emerging around road use that create different mobilities and immobilities for those using them. These differences and the affective responses and practices they create can then be used to think critically about the logics of segregation and the future of the West Bank as well as what can be learned from road infrastructures in a colonial setting.

Initially, this chapter has shown that immobility and stasis are not the default condition created by occupation. Among both Palestinians and settlers, for the duration of my three years in the West Bank, cars, driving, and mobility were the main activities, topics of discussion, and experiences that shaped my research. As well as highlighting how road infrastructures create spaces that allow for control, ethnographic research on road use also reveals different culturally and politically informed ways of being mobile. A dual study therefore draws attention to the impact of one group's mobility over the other.

Analysis of road use in the West Bank also highlights the ways that visibility and invisibility play out in their design. Attention to how Palestinians and Israelis build and use roads differently in segregation reveals how roads are shaped by their designers' relation to mobility. Israeli roads express a need for defence against a Palestinian threat through centring the visibility of the roads and their users. Palestinian roads, conversely, create spaces for invisibility and concealment in their own defensive strategy that resists the attempts of Israeli governments to render them legible. The fact that shared roads are usually highways is also significant. Initially, the speed of their users reduces potential interaction between Palestinian and Israeli users while reducing Palestinian visibility. Simultaneously, as the Israeli state's infrastructural development of the West Bank is informed by Zionist narratives of Palestine as an empty land prior to mass Jewish migration in the 20th century, redesigning roads in this image by building to erase Palestinians from settler view. Palestinian resistance on shared roads responds to this erasure, demanding visibility. Roads become both the vessels and the symbols of this message in lieu of any other kind of space both populations can exist in together. Finally, attention to the practices that emerge in relation to mobility also reveal the dynamics of visibility and invisibility at play in their effects. Settlers armed themselves physically, as does the Israeli state with visually dramatic expressions of armoured control that Palestinians respond to with visually dramatic resistance tactics. As well as arming themselves physically, however, Israeli settlers arm themselves psychologically with "Jewish stubbornness" while avoiding using shared roads unless necessary. The unseen effects of occupation for Palestinians expressed themselves invisibly through ways more easily discernible through ethnographic research; extended journey times, damaging to cars, increased costs related to increased petrol use.

Reflecting on the experiences of shared roads by both settlers and Palestinians, one might wonder why shared spaces are still in use when they create difficulties for both groups. The first reason may be related to Israel's critical reception in doing so by an international audience.[42] By way of response, the Israeli state has both devolved the responsibility of segregation to individual settlers through settlement selection committees as discussed in Chapter Three. It has also introduced segregation spatially and temporally, as Asad and I found on our journey where road access was limited by flying checkpoints. Much like Israel's gradual annexation of Palestinian land, the segregation it enforces appears as not a short-term project, but created over time. As it builds new roads, the Israeli state frames itself as restricted by the zoning laws of the West Bank just as settlers like Rachel felt limited by Area A spaces that they could not enter. This allows the Israeli state to design infrastructures that isolate Palestinian enclaves, making life increasingly uninhabitable within them and criminalising Palestinian mobility when they are forced outside of them.

The second and perhaps more sinister reason that segregation is incomplete may be because it is self-serving. As one of the only spaces in which settlers and Palestinians are not segregated, and as a site in which the control of their mobility is most explicitly and visually expressed, roads offer a site of resistance against the occupation. These resistance acts render movement between settler enclaves dangerous for settlers while also making clear a Palestinian challenge to their presence. While they cannot remove the measures the Israeli occupation puts in place, Palestinians can use channels of mobility to resist them in their own idiom. Much like the roadblocks erected by Brazilian settlers in protest of a lack of infrastructural development by the Brazilian government (Campbell 2012), Palestinians are able to express some political and spatial agency by continuously preventing the Israeli military and state from achieving their goals of fully conquering the West Bank.

However, and as the logic behind the creation of the numerous checkpoints on my journey with Asad shows, when Palestinians resist Israeli mobility on shared roads the Israeli state responds by placing greater controls on Palestinian mobility. These increased controls

[42] The United Nations Human Rights Council, for example, has condemned Israel in 45 resolutions related to infringement on Palestinian rights – the most resolutions issued against any country.

demonstrate to the Jewish settler population of the West Bank that the Israeli state is invested in their security and acting in their interests. It also reminds Palestinians of their legibility to the Israeli state and that on shared roads they are recast as occupied subjects who can be controlled while settlers may move freely. By providing spaces in which segregation is not enforced, the Israeli state therefore uses Palestinian resistance in these spaces against itself. A dual focus on settler and Palestinian use of shared roads therefore highlights the more ominous ways that Israeli expansionism and Palestinian resistance are deliberately played off against each other to recreate the unevenness of ground on which they reside.

The increased policing of Palestinian mobility also serves the Israeli economy. Initially, it is no coincidence that security and defence are two of the largest industries within Israel (Ochs 2011) and a significant source of employment. Settlers have also used their experiences of insecurity on the roads to call for their further expansion to create space for facilities that reduce their need to put themselves in danger on the road. Since their construction in the late 1970s, the settlements of Gush Etzion have built local healthcare centres, malls, and cafes, with plans to build a local cinema and second mall underway. These businesses often employ local Hebrew-speaking Palestinians, bolstering the Israeli state's claims that it does not enforce segregation but creates opportunities for Palestinian employment. As these spaces are included in Area C and therefore governed by the Israeli military, however, Palestinians are unable to own or operate their own businesses inside of them, recasting them as employees in Israel's expansion into the West Bank and not equal shareholders. Creating the need for maintaining and increasing its controls on Palestinian mobility, therefore, relies on Palestinians remaining a continuous threat to Israeli settlers. As Lavie (2014) implies in her work on the use of Palestinian violence to offset divisions within Jewish Israeli society, the capitalisation of Israeli authorities on Palestinian resistance can be used as a justification of its control over them. In the case of infrastructural space and roads, it emerges, this control also fuels the Israeli economy and dependence on cheap Palestinian labour.

Shared roads in the West Bank are therefore not the "technologies of integration" that they are often marketed as by their builders (Harvey and Knox 2012: 529), neither are they a "no man's land", as they are clearly governed by Israel. As Pedersn and Bunkenborg (2012) suggest, roads in the West Bank instead more closely resemble "distinct technologies of distantiation", reinforcing their strategic potential in segregated and shared space. Rachel, like many settlers, carried a gun for no other reason than to protect herself from the ever-present perceived Palestinian threat, even though we had no plans to engage with any Palestinians along the road. As a result, there is little sharing going on, and the ever-encroaching movement of the Israeli border does not come with the promise of Palestinian inclusion in the Israeli state project, but the ominous threat of the expansion of its control over their lives.

By limiting and diverting Palestinian movement at the expense of Israeli settler mobility, the occupying Israeli state is able to increase its control over the Palestinian population it seeks to fundamentally expel as part of its occupation project. This serves Israel's dual interests of rendering the West Bank increasingly inhospitable for Palestinians while increasingly hospitable for its Israeli settler population – but crucially, perhaps not fully secure. In creating more roads for settlers, the Israeli state is also able to further its aim of establishing autochthony, using these roads as spaces to establish and assert its occupational presence reinforced by a historic sense of nativity to the land. While closure is a much-documented phenomenon in the West Bank, an approach that addresses the mobilities of both groups in the same region draws new attention to the ways that settlers and Palestinians inform and influence each other's lives and mobilities through segregation and its exceptions.

Chapter Five: Mediated Mobility

Introduction

Like the shared roads described in the previous chapter, the internet in the West Bank creates a space where Israeli settlers and Palestinians are both users of an infrastructure put in place by the Israeli government that allows them to be mobile. In this chapter I discuss uses of the internet and the social media it facilitates that allow both Israeli settlers and Palestinian refugees to navigate the region safely. Although the space the internet creates is virtual rather than material, like roads it relies on the technical elements of pre-existing telecommunications infrastructures and more recently built phone masts and fibreoptic cabling. The internet also relies on the invisible transmissions of wireless signals, complicating both its visibility and its capacities for surveillance. In the West Bank where everyday mobility is limited, the internet both recreates these limitations while highlighting the ways that space can be rendered visible online. In this chapter I explore the local ways that Palestinian refugees and Israeli settlers use the internet and social media to learn about and navigate restrictions on mobility.

In the West Bank where mobility is interlinked with safety, the internet acts as an infrastructure that provides an “architecture for circulation” (Larkin 2013: 328-9) of information to inform its users’ movement. Because of their interactive nature, social media transform many of its users into both citizen journalists and what I call ‘citizen surveillors’ through place-specific groups to update each other on and police the mobility of others. Like roads, then, internet infrastructures evoke dynamics of surveillance and asymmetric control as well as generating new practices that inform the mobility of both individuals and state borders across the uneven ground of the West Bank. These dynamics complicate the notion of the internet as facilitating a form of virtual mobility for its users, as the online space created for West Bank residents appears to replicate the political orders of the offline. In this way internet infrastructures can reveal aspects of everyday life in occupation that are as significant as the physical markers of occupation such as segregated transport, checkpoints, and the Separation Wall, but they tend to receive less attention.

In the introduction to this thesis, I emphasised the ‘infra’ or ‘underneath-ness’ of infrastructure that draws attention to its invisible and mundane qualities as well as its visible technical elements. The technical elements of internet infrastructures complicate this understanding. Domestic internet connections rely on the cables of telecommunications infrastructures which, though visible and material, often lie under the ground. Mobile internet is transmitted through masts, placed at high points around the West Bank’s hilly landscape. These masts, like the modems receiving domestic

internet connections, are visible, but transmit invisible wireless signals to computer and mobile phone receivers. The social elements of internet infrastructures are similarly complex. While each receiver has a unique ISP address that locates its user, the same user can conceal their identity on social media through using different names or even multiple accounts. The internet infrastructure therefore complicates the distinction between hard and soft infrastructures, contributing to its "slipperiness" (Edwards 2003: 2). In this chapter I embrace this slipperiness through both methodological and theoretical approaches to reveal what is less visible.

The uses of the internet I explore in this chapter are based in social media, or "web applications that process, store, and retrieve user-generated content" (Lang and Benbunan-Fich 2010 cf. Postill and Pink 2012: 123). These applications are themselves an information infrastructure overlaying internet infrastructures. I focus specifically on local internet use through Facebook place pages and place groups on WhatsApp that recreate virtually the material spaces of Dheishe and Efrat. Facebook place pages were originally intended to be used for local business marketing purposes, with users encouraged to 'like' or 'check in' through their statuses, effectively marketing the place to other users in their networks. Place pages also emerged for cities and towns, established either by municipalities or independent users and often came to function as local community groups and message boards. Among both Israeli settlers and Palestinian refugees in the West Bank, however, such pages have been mobilised by their members who post information about local events, providing news far faster than regional media outlets can provide. The interactive aspect of Web 2.0 on which social media rely allows Facebook users to comment on each post with confirmations, further updates, and photo and video evidence of the news event. In the West Bank, place page members are able to map and follow local events as they unfold, to navigate the region safely around the regular obstructions to mobility generated by the Israeli army or Palestinian resistance. These pages and groups therefore emerge as both an archive of life in the place they represent as well as ways of socially mapping space in relation to limits on mobility.

These local uses of the internet become more interesting when placed in context with the history of the infrastructures that underpin them. While the study of virtual representations of material space in social media by anthropologists is not unusual (Bonilla and Rosa 2015; Dalsgaard 2016; Miller 2016), little attention is generally paid to their underlying technical infrastructures. The internet relies on telecommunications infrastructures built and controlled by the Israeli state core, distributed to two peripheral groups with different accesses to rights. Like roads, the internet is designed and built in accordance with Zionist principles of expanding Jewish mobility and erasing

Palestinian visibility to Jewish citizens, while rendering them legible to the state. As explained later, while the Palestinian and Israeli states have their own separate telecommunications providers, Palestinian providers rely on the same underlying technical infrastructures controlled by Israel, making Palestinian users vulnerable to surveillance by the Israeli state. When Palestinian reliance on the internet to move safely through the region around Israeli-orchestrated limits to their mobility is put in context with the Israeli state's use of the same internet infrastructure to surveil and limit their mobility, it makes their use quite remarkable.

The invisible aspects of internet infrastructures and their control by the Israeli state is also indicative of the ways Israeli governments have used infrastructure to expand the state in both physical and virtual space, creating uneven ground under and above the surface of the West Bank. During the period of this research Palestinian providers were blocked by Israel from broadcasting 3G mobile internet from their networks.[43] This forced Palestinian users in the West Bank to illegally rely on weak signal from Israeli networks for settlers, extending Israeli annexation of the West Bank through invisible means. An infrastructural approach to internet use, therefore, highlights the agency of its users in the face of blockages to mobility and shows how infrastructures create spaces in which new forms of social life "spin off in wholly unexpected directions, generating intended and unintended outcomes" (Larkin 2008: 3).

One of these unexpected directions is in the role of 'citizen surveillors' that local internet use generates. A more obvious dynamic generated by internet is the surveillance *of* Palestinians *by* both settlers and Israeli authorities. A different dynamic is established, however, in the surveillance of both settler and refugee groups by their own members. These localised uses of the internet by both groups speak to the surveilling nature of social media in general and, as Palestinian scholar of social media Nadera Shalhoub-Kevorian (2012) points out, the way they embody Giddens' "dialectic of control" (1985). The virtual spaces used by refugees and settlers that I discuss in this chapter are used to monitor invasions into their own communities and are therefore self-surveilling. Social media consequently play a dual role as both a system of power used for surveillance and a system of power used for protection. These features render them an interesting way in which to understand the ways the mobility of both groups is impacted by the occupation at both local and national levels. This chapter, then, marks a shift along a spectrum of infrastructural visibility and materiality from the visible road infrastructures of the previous chapter. Whereas roads are visible infrastructures but

[43] 2G wireless technologies allow for the transmission of voice, text, and data services. 3G, however, transmits these data at faster speeds, allowing for the transmission of video, web browsing, and social media use on mobile technologies.

invoke invisible relations, the internet is largely invisible but evokes similar dynamics; surveillance, safety practices, and the mobilisation of nationalised discourses and boundaries.

The reliance of social media on Israeli-designed and built internet infrastructure also complicates the notion of "dys-appearing" infrastructure as a result of a weak or failing state. The uses of the internet to work around limits on settler and refugee mobility indicate their states' inability to ensure their citizens' safety while moving through the contested spaces of the West Bank. As the infrastructure is controlled by Israel, the PNA is unable to influence its design or use and therefore is unable to secure Palestinians' safety in its use, forcing them to establish their own security practices independent of their state. On the other hand, settler reliance on social media to supplement an insufficient – or perhaps unwilling, as explored in the previous chapter – Israeli military security presence in the West Bank compliments wider Israeli narratives of itself as a 'start-up nation' with technological advancement at its core (Senor and Singer 2009). As I go on to show, the complexities and interrelation of surveillance, security, and infrastructure in colonial settings complicate the notion of infrastructural failure as arising only in weak states.

Paying attention to local uses of the internet in the West Bank also contributes to anthropologies of the internet and social media in new ways. Initially, looking at the internet as an infrastructure moves attention away from approaches that centre the representation and authenticity of its users (Archambault 2017; Boellstorff 2008; Curlew 2019). Thinking of social media and the internet as infrastructures also allows for a decentring of technology, highlighting "all sorts of nontechnological elements" (Larkin 2013: 330) of internet use. This moves my analysis away from a materiality-centred approach which many, particularly Miller (2011) and his various collaborators (Horst and Miller 2012; Miller and Slater 2000; Miller et al. 2016) have prioritised. Instead, I pay more attention to the interrelation between the internet infrastructures' virtual and material aspects. This helps to contribute to anthropological conclusions that a distinction between digital and material worlds is, as Boellstorff puts it, a "false opposition" (2016: 387). This false opposition is made particularly clear in the West Bank where early ethnographer of the Palestinian internet Miriyam Aouragh argues "the internet has a reputation of being analysed as a virtual, placeless phenomenon" (2011: 377). Amongst both Israeli settlers and Palestinian refugees, activity conducted online often centres around navigating and mapping the offline blockages to movement, helping users avoid injury, arrest, and even death (Aouragh and Tawl-Souri 2014; Nashif 2017).

The entanglement of virtual and material realms becomes particularly significant when considering local uses of the internet. Scholarship of internet use, particularly among displaced or immigrant groups, often focuses on the internet's capacity to connect members across great distance (Bernal 2005; Axel 2004; Whitaker 2004). Such studies, particularly those that work with minorities facing forms of oppression (boyd 2009; Coleman 2010; Whitaker 2004) centre the internet's provision of "unfiltered and affordable access" (Coleman 2010: 491) for communication across space and boundaries. As a fragmented population divided between Gaza, Israel, East Jerusalem, the West Bank, and refugee communities around the Middle East and beyond, the internet has been instrumental in facilitating communication between Palestinians (Aouragh 2011; Fincham 2012). However, while the internet does provide an infrastructure of communication, in the West Bank access for Palestinians is not "unfiltered" as their use of virtual space is policed in the same ways as physical space. Highlighting the relation between the virtual and physical therefore avoids potentially romanticising the potential of the internet as "the only true boundary breaker under siege conditions in the occupied territories" (Khoury-Machool 2007: 31). Instead, in this chapter I argue that internet use in the West Bank only mediates and does not dissolve boundaries to Israeli, and particularly Palestinian mobility.

Attention to local internet use also challenges dominant approaches to Palestinian internet use that focus on resistance (Aouragh and Tawil Souri 2014; Aouragh 2008; Khoury-Machool 2007; Shalhoub-Kevorkian 2012). The majority of these works look specifically at how Palestinians resist Israeli mobility restrictions by coordinating with the diaspora rather than at their experiences under occupation. Similarly, these works only begin to look at the phenomenon of place pages and are limited, as is most ethnographic research on the internet, by the rapidly changing nature of internet use that quickly dates research on the subject. These works also perhaps unintentionally recreate representations of Palestinian mobility as potentially liberated by the internet. While this is important, focusing on resistance obscures other, more everyday uses of the internet related to security and safety. In her work on Palestinian uses of social media, Shalhoub-Kevorkian (2012) makes the case for further research into this issue, asking what options the internet as a communication tool allows for facilitating coping with the everydayness of occupation. An additional aim of this chapter, then, is to address this everydayness directly while de-centring technology from its analysis.

As von Schnitzler (2015) has shown, attention to infrastructures "provides a frame to defamiliarize and rethink the political" (cited in Anand, Gupta, and Appel 2018: 4). Because they are routed

through telecommunications infrastructures, internet use and social media are a new way to explore relationships between core designers and peripheral users, as I show in the next section. I then look in closer depth at the local uses of the internet to facilitate the mediation of the limitations of Israeli settler and Palestinian refugee mobility, focusing on local practices of mapping and navigation using social media. In the penultimate section I explore how these practices emerge as a form of surveillance of both outsiders and each community itself, emphasising the paradoxical ways in which infrastructures are weaponised to challenge and resist their designers' intentions. Finally, I conclude by showing how local uses of the internet demonstrate that social media, navigation, surveillance, and resistance are not discrete categories of use and all contribute to reinforcing the unevenness of ground in the West Bank.

Under and above the ground: Internet infrastructures in historical context

Like the history of roads in the West Bank, so too does the history of internet infrastructures demonstrate how infrastructures reflect wider Zionist ideas that use invisibility, erasure, and segregation to enact Israel's occupation of Palestine. There is certainly a need for a comprehensive history of telecommunications in Israel and Palestine that includes the pre-internet era. For the purposes of this chapter, however, I offer a brief outline of the ways that mobile and landline internet services were introduced to the region. There are, however, some significant details from the pre-mobile era worth dwelling on. As a young nation, Israel was relatively quick to develop its telecommunications networks up to international standards, managed by the Israeli Ministry of Communications that took control of existing infrastructures built by the British and Palestinians. After 1948 meither domestic telephone lines were laid nor post exchanged between Israel and Lebanon or Syria, and when Israel occupied the West Bank in 1967 it took ownership of all Palestinian telecommunications infrastructures, imposing the same restrictions of international communication on their use. Because all telephone exchanges are based in Israeli cities beyond the Green Line, the West Bank was prevented from having its own international gateway. All international landline traffic, cellular and internet services are therefore routed through Israel (Aouragh and Tawil-Souri 2014), leaving all Palestinian users vulnerable to surveillance by Israeli state intelligence.

In its earliest years Efrat relied on a single telephone booth serving its two neighbourhoods. Domestic phone lines were introduced in the mid-1990s only after significant delays. Similarly, connection to the internet occurred in the early 2000s, several years after connections were established in more densely populated metropolitan areas. As I showed in Chapters Three and Four,

connection to Israeli infrastructural grids marks a point of legitimation of a settlement. The fact that internet infrastructures were rolled out in the settlements only after their implementation in *Israel HaKatanah* added to ways that some settlers felt classed as “second class citizens”. Adding to this sentiment was the fact that, while equal service provisions for *Israel HaKatanah* and the settlements are advertised, internet speeds in the West Bank settlements are noticeably slower. There were, however, fewer issues with the rollout of 3G mobile internet frequencies in 2004, as masts are evenly placed around the settlements with full coverage extending to all areas of Israeli inhabitation. Service was extended to 4G capacities in 2015, and 5G was rolled out in 2020.

Telecommunication infrastructure rollouts for Palestinians in the West Bank, however, were not provided with any promise of evenness. Israeli control over Palestinian telecommunications providers theoretically ended in 1994 and the Palestinian telecommunications company PalTel was revived, allowing Palestinians to build and operate their own infrastructures for the first time since 1948 (Aouragh and Tawil-Souri 2014). The zoning of the West Bank introduced in the same year, however, limited PalTel (and Jawwal*,* its subsidiary mobile network) as it could only operate and build masts in Areas A and B, or 18% of the West Bank (B’Tselem 2017a). The Israeli state also limited PalTel’s imports of equipment, including broadcasting towers and telephone exchanges. As a result, Paltel is one of Israel's largest dependent clients, functioning as a “subcontractor of occupation” (Aouragh and Tawil-Souri 2014: 113) and costs for its users are higher than those using Israeli networks (ibid., 114).

During the period of this research, some 74% of Palestinians living in the West Bank or Gaza had a mobile cellular subscription, a rate on a par with neighbouring Arab countries (O’Brien and York 2015). However, because these networks are routed through Israeli exchanges, the Israeli state can sever and monitor connections, as it frequently did during the First and Second *Intifada*s. Because Palestinian networks were only licensed to provide 3G as late as January 2018, most Palestinians relied on Israeli networks for mobile internet, from which weak signal is available in most Palestinian areas of the West Bank. Although the PNA outlawed this practice, it was common for Palestinians to have at least two phone numbers in operation at any time, using a Palestinian network for calling and Israeli networks for internet. A phone with an Israeli sim card was also preferable for many as, unlike with Palestinian networks, it did not need to be registered with the user’s identity card and therefore afforded them greater privacy. Israel greatly benefitted from this illegal competition both financially as they were able to market their products to Palestinians without paying license fees or

taxes to the PNA,[44] and in terms of having easy access to Palestinian phone users for surveillance purposes.

The provision of domestic internet connections to Palestinian and Israeli users in the West Bank evoked similar logics to mobile internet rollouts. Delayed rollouts of broadband and later fibreoptic cables internet to the West Bank added to settlers' sense of second-class citizenship, especially when placed in context with Israel's association with high-tech industry. As a country with limited national resources and a growing population dependent on human capital, the Israeli state has since focused its economic development on high-tech and internet-based industries, fashioning itself as a "start-up nation".[45] It is highly notable that, given its relative newness as a nation and commitment to technology, Israel was the third country in the world to secure its Country Code Top Level Domain (.il) after connecting to global networks in 1991 (John 2011). These achievements feed into a nationalist narrative as well as attempts to attract tourism, business development, and investment. Broadband internet penetration in Israel is currently at 82%, ranked 43rd in the world (International Telecoms Union 2015), though it is hard to determine whether this figure includes the Occupied West Bank.[46]

Despite uneven provision, internet communications have become a normalised part of everyday life in the settlements, with many Efrat residents telecommuting to the United States. Like other settlements, Efrat's security infrastructure also relies on these telecommunications networks, comprised of a system of cameras, sensors, and patrols coordinated by radio and telephone networks between settlers and the Israeli army. If *mestenan* (infiltrators, He., read: Palestinians) are detected in the settlement, an automatic call to each home and text message to each head of household is sent out instructing residents to stay in their homes. Efrat settlement also has its own smartphone application through which residents can, among other things, report such infiltrations and contact security services.

The integration of the internet into the Palestinian everyday has been a slower and somewhat paradoxical process. The provision of internet for Palestinians in the West Bank was delayed until 1995, prior to which any use by Palestinians was illegal. Although uptake was initially slow, internet

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[44] Israeli providers were able to claim as much as 30% of potential Palestinian customer bases and cost the Palestinian phone sector over US$1 billion in potential earnings (Associated Press 2018).
[45] A reference to Israel being able to list more companies on the NASDAQ than any other foreign country in 2009 (Senor and Singer 2009).
[46] The collection of statistics in Israel and its occupied territories do not distinguish between settlers or residents of *Israel HaKatanah,* presumably to add to a sense of continuity between areas under its control.

use grew exponentially in the early and mid-2000s, largely funded by international aid efforts (Aouragh and Tawil-Souri 2014). Although PalTel and its internet service provider Hadara present themselves as autonomous, they depend on connection through Israeli infrastructures, and both rent from Israeli service providers at higher costs while receiving lower bandwidths. Despite the high cost for consumers and the clear potential for Israeli surveillance, Palestinian internet use has been substantially higher than elsewhere in the Arab world. By 2012 it was estimated that over 55% of the Palestinian population had access to landline internet (Aouragh and Tawil-Souri 2014).

Within Dheishe progress was somewhat slower as, without any municipal governance for camps, it falls to the residents of refugee camps themselves to organise infrastructural development. The first internet connection In Dheishe was established in 1999 at local NGO Ibdaa until private internet cafes began to appear (Aouragh 2011). In keeping with the religious conservatism of the camp, these cafes provided gendered hours and focused on teaching IT skills to women and young people. Today there are a few internet cafes left, predominantly used by students without home internet or mobile connections. Despite the shift to home internet provision, however, internet service in Dheishe is weak and often severed by PalTel. Like other services such as water, telephones, and electricity, Dheishe camp residents are connected to local grids but often cut off because they do not pay their bills. The decision to strike on bill payment is a collective political decision by the camp's residents who feel that the PNA should grant them free services as temporary residents. As a result, services are often severed until negotiations are made between political leaders of the camp, UNRWA representatives, and suppliers. Supplies are also often shared and illegally expropriated; wireless connections are commonly split between residents' homes and nearby businesses and are often overloaded with users.

The emergence of the internet in the West Bank reflects the same ideological conditions in which road infrastructures have shifted since Israel's occupation of the region. Zionist logics of segregation, erasure, and limiting mobility for Palestinians is expressed through its design of telecommunications infrastructures which mirror the ways that mobile and domestic internet connections have been provided in the West Bank. Initially relying on infrastructures established by the British and the Palestinians, the Israeli state has since redirected and redesigned their use for its Jewish Israeli citizens in the West Bank. This simultaneously made their use more difficult and expensive for Palestinians while also rendered them legible for Israeli surveillance. In the next section I describe the uses of the internet by Israeli settlers and Palestinian refugees to inform their mobility that directly relate to the ways in which these infrastructures have emerged.

Mapping, navigating, and citizen journalists

In the West Bank where the risks of being mobile in – and especially outside of – either Palestinian or Israeli enclaves are high, mobility and safety are intertwined. Obstacles to mobility are often dangerous and occur frequently and unpredictably, making social media "the number-one source of news in recent years" (Abu Zayyad 2015: 40). The Facebook and WhatsApp groups used to disseminate information about local events as they occur transform their users into citizen journalists, reporting on instances of resistance or Israeli military raids and checkpoints in lieu of more traditional media outlets. The internet infrastructures underpinning these social media have therefore become instrumental in providing a centralised distribution mechanism for these journalists who can influence the ways users decide or make journeys. Mapping, navigation, and news are therefore interlinked, as local updates on place pages or groups inform strategies for journey routes or the decision to make a journey at all as well as facilitating new forms of sociality around the information they share.

Dheishe's Facebook page, *Dheishe al Hurrah* (Free Dheishe, Ar.), was a central source of information about goings on of the camp. Like other place pages across Palestine, the Dheishe page includes acknowledgements of deaths of camp residents, relevant national and international news stories; it advertises various events, workshops, and protests, supporting the families of martyrs or political prisoners; and it posts religious ideas, memes, and historic images of the camp. The majority of the content, however, is related to notifications of the entrance of the Israeli military into camp space and reporting on their movements. The page is open to subscription by any (Arabic-reading) Facebook account holder, and though only the group's administrators can make posts, any user can respond to them. Even though the page largely only details events relevant to Dheishe camp and its surrounding area, at the time of my research *Dheishe al Hurrah* had over 120,000 subscribers, over ten times the camp's population.

Settlers use WhatsApp groups for similar purposes with different intentions. Unlike Dheishe's Facebook page, which allows anyone to follow its content, WhatsApp groups host up to 256 members for private communications that can only be joined with a link provided by their administrators. Israeli settlers have harnessed the privacy of these groups to create purpose-specific channels for rapid communication about information related to traffic on shared roads in the region. The administrator of the group acted in coordination with local Israeli army generals, confirming and corroborating information as it was supplied. Updates provided by this WhatsApp group included car

crashes or holiday-related traffic as well as "security incidents" as they are coded in Hebrew. These "incidents" referred to acts of Palestinian resistance including stone throwing, shootings, Molotov cocktails, and any subsequent flying checkpoints and accidents that occur in relation to them, creating traffic jams for settlers. Both Palestinian resistance acts and Israeli army flying checkpoints and raids are designed in order to avoid detection, meaning they cannot or should not be revealed on GPS navigation software. The WhatsApp group therefore served a similar structure and function to Dheishe's Facebook page, but without the capacity to broadcast the information to a wider public. These social media provide ways of 'socially mapping' space, or the identification and location of impermanent and non-architectural obstacles and threats.

Although technological mapping software is widely used by Israelis and Israeli settlers, it is often corroborated with social mapping through the aforementioned WhatsApp groups. When events occur, they are located according to both formal street names and local architectural features of the roads, for example *"Arabs threw 2 Molotov cocktails at vehicles on the bridge between the tunnels, without casualties."* This message, received one day in the summer of 2017, was followed by a flurry of similar ones, interrupting the end of an interview I was conducting with Rivkah at the time. We both stopped our discussion to review the messages coming through to our phones. "Something's going on", said Rivkah after another message popped up on both our phones: *"terrorists hurled stones at a bus on the Gush Etzion Road by Efrat junction"*. As a result, we decided to continue our interview as the settlement would likely be temporarily sealed while the Israeli army patrols searched for the stone throwers. "*Baruch haShem*" (thank god, He.), said Rivkah some 30 minutes later, when an update sent to the group confirmed the settlement was safe to leave again, "you would have been sat in your car for hours". It is often through social rather than technological mapping, then, that Palestinian refugees and Israeli settlers are able to navigate safely around the region. As Rivkah noted during our interview, the flurry of messages on the WhatsApp group revealed that "something was going on", to be interpreted as an inopportune moment to leave the settlement – information that GPS mapping software could not provide.

Unlike Israelis, Palestinians do not tend to use GPS mapping services.[47] Socially mapping obstacles to their mobility is therefore the predominant form of mapping made available to them. The information about Israeli army raids posted on Dheishe's Facebook page is therefore not mapped

[47] The Israeli state limits the GPS mapping of Palestinian space in the West Bank for defensive purposes. Recent initiatives have challenged this blockage, with several projects using 'counter-mapping' practices on independent mapping software to represent Palestinian spaces cartographically (Agha 2020). At the time of research, however, Palestinian space was not mappable on either Waze or Google Maps.

according to a geophysical representation of space or even street names, but located according to traditional navigation practices and known places. During raids the location of the Israeli soldiers was shared according to the *dar* (house, Ar.) by which they occurred. When, late one night in 2017 as I was preparing to return from Fatima's house to my apartment on the other side of the camp, a sound bomb echoed across the camp. We returned quickly to her living room, gathering with her older children in the corner of the room that received the best Cellcom signal as their home internet connection wasn't working. We loaded the *Dheishe al Hurrah* page on our phones to find a post had been made a few minutes earlier, noting the sound bomb and locating the soldiers who threw it. Several comments followed the post confirming its location and tracking the movement of the soldiers through the camp. Without street names, the camp was navigated by *dar* (house, Ar.), and the soldiers throwing the sound bomb had been located to *Dar Shams* and *Dar Abu Ghosh*. As I was unfamiliar with the houses of the camp, Fatima's oldest daughter informed me that the soldiers were in the north of Dheishe and then began discussing a route with her older brother to escort me home. In this way the camp's Facebook page allowed its residents to navigate according to their proximity to raids as they occurred. The next day I went to visit Reem on the other side of the camp and she asked me if I'd heard the *dosha* (noise, Ar.) the previous night. She showed me new pictures of the raid on the *Dheishe al Hurrah* page that her son Jafar, a regular citizen journalist contributor to the page, had shot from their balcony of the clashes between refugees and soldiers that ensued as they left the camp.

In Chapters Three and Four I explored the logics of visibility in Israeli settlements of the West Bank, highlighting the tendency of settlements to make themselves as visible as possible to both visually dominate the landscape and challenge the remaining Palestinian presence in the region. This same legibility of settlement spaces, however, increases their exposure to potential threat from Palestinian resistance actors. In the rendering of information about their mobility privately through WhatsApp groups, settlers seem to indirectly respond to the fact that their legibility places them in danger, especially in situations when they are mobile. The Facebook page of Efrat is similarly guarded, and requires a password to obtain membership that is only distributed by the settlement's municipality.

This mix of visible and invisible practices also occurs in Palestinian social media use where mobility is concerned. On one hand, the openness of Palestinian Facebook pages that socially map army incursions renders the information easily accessible for any (Arabic reading) Facebook user. On the other, this openness is countered by the careful way these pages are run. The administrators of

Dheishe al Hurrah who corroborate and post details of army incursions are wanted by the Israeli authorities for "incitement" against Israel (a concept I explore further in the following section) and therefore operate anonymously. By posting information privately sent to the page by citizen journalists as anonymous administrators, all parties are protected from charges of incitement. However, and despite this anonymity, the identities of citizen journalists must be privately verified to the page's administrators before their contributions can be published. This decision was made following several occasions in which military surveillance agents sent in false tips to the camp's page, diverting those resisting army raids to locations where undercover soldiers were waiting to arrest them. Since then, the page's administrators have taken to relying on a verified small number of reliable contacts, such as Jafar who regularly submitted footage.

The use of social media by Palestinian refugees to inform each other about occupation-related threats and blockages to their mobility becomes all the more remarkable when placed in context with the telecommunications infrastructures on which they operate. As shown above, all Palestinian internet services are rented from and therefore are routed through Israeli providers' infrastructure, making users vulnerable to surveillance. As a result, pages like *Dheishe al Hurrah* are often shut down by the Facebook Corporation at the request of the Israeli government. The advent of landline internet and mobile internet in Palestine has, then, simultaneously democratised access to information in ways that Palestinians have not been able to rely on previously while also placing them in increased danger.

This democratisation relies on the invisibility of internet infrastructures that create the opportunity for its users to visualise space even when the infrastructures cannot be seen. By relying on Israeli mobile internet networks who allow them to purchase sim cards anonymously, Palestinian users avoid their internet use being traceable to their identity cards. Similarly, the sharing of internet connections in Dheishe reduces individual risk of those with home internet connections. Reliance on Israeli networks also means that service cannot be cut without also impacting its provision for settlers. In this way Palestinians are able to render the Israeli army raids visible by transmitting and broadcasting information about them far faster than journalists and TV news networks are able to (and who are themselves often targeted by the army). Social mapping therefore replicates and even improves upon the speed and networked connectivity of the internet itself, as well as its invisibility, to distribute vital knowledge adding to the ways it can be manipulated for either group's use.

Social forms of mapping therefore draw attention away from the technology used and towards the locally creative ways in which social media and the internet are appropriated for a similar and more efficient function. For settlers, while protected by a highly militarised state with an economic focus on defensive technology, individual action is still needed in maintaining their mobility. For Palestinians, socially mapping obstacles to social media reveals an interesting paradox of the intentions of infrastructures versus their actual use. The fact that Palestinian networks were limited to 2G transmission until 2018 gave the Israeli state easier means to intercept communications, as encryption used to protect over-the-air transmissions on 2G networks has long been broken (O'Brien and York 2015). Decoding Palestinian transmissions is made possible by technology developed and sold by Israeli companies, who are one of the world leaders in manufacturing of surveillance technologies (Gordon 2010). It also relies on surveillors being able to read Arabic (which is not easily translated by translation software in dialect form) and to have a knowledge of colloquial navigational techniques. In this way internet infrastructures are creatively weaponised by Palestinians against their occupiers by using the invisibility of wireless internet connections while placing themselves at risk. As my experiences of both settler WhatsApp groups and Palestinian Facebook pages further demonstrated, activities occurring online often dictate offline activity, collapsing any sense of the internet in the West Bank as liberating its users from the political environment in which it was used.

Surveilling mobility

In the previous section, I drew on the invisible aspects of internet infrastructures and considered this invisibility in relation to making *space* visible. I now turn my attention to the ways in which internet renders *people* visible. As in the previous chapter in which I looked at experiences of mobility on both segregated and shared roads, here I pay attention to segregated and shared virtual spaces and how they generate unique forms of online surveillance. This surveillance takes two forms, embodying Giddens' "dialectic of control" (1985: 198). The first is that surveillance is conducted by the Israeli state core over Palestinians. The second is in the surveillance of settler and refugee peripheral users over their own communities as a system of protection against intrusion. The agents of this latter system of protection are what I term citizen surveillors who, like citizen journalists, use internet infrastructures to share information relevant to the mobility of both themselves and those they surveil. Citizen surveillance is structured around the observations and tracking of the movements of who enters settlements and camps. Unexpected Palestinian presence in settlements is seen as threatening by Israelis, and likewise any Israeli presence in Palestinian enclaves is seen as threatening to Palestinians. Social media place groups and pages like *Dheishe al Hurrah* and Efrat's

Facebook page provide a space in which these surveillances are posted for dissemination and discussion.

Like the citizen journalists I discussed in the previous section, social media also facilitates a space for citizen surveillors to emerge. In the West Bank, where invasions and infiltrations of protected enclaves are commonplace and dangerous, both settlers and Palestinian refugees use place pages on social media to report on these anomalies and invasions. As spaces far less likely to experience large scale enemy incursions, settlement pages interact with different demographics, reflecting different community needs, and ultimately paint a startlingly different picture of a place. Social media platforms such as Facebook encourage and capitalise upon this kind of surveillance by providing an unending stream of content by users in one's network, turning users into both content-producers and surveillors of their own friends and family (Cohen 2008). The forms of surveillance I discuss in this section, however, centre on the specific mobility of foreign or unfamiliar actors that are documented on social media.

While Efrat's Facebook page does not explicitly function as a news page in the same way as the Dheishe page, it has a comparable reach and serves as a central function for goings-on in the settlement, with around 5,000 members of a total population of 9,000 residents. The community surveillance on the page concerned mostly local issues; illegal parking, local crime, and local political news. It also, however, hosted posts attempting to identify perceived Palestinian infiltrators, warnings about stone throwers at entrances to the settlement, and the occasional political debate regarding the presence of Palestinians in Efrat as contracted labourers. Access to the settlement's virtual space mirrored the ways it was guarded physically (with security architecture) and socially (its residents' wariness of outsiders as discussed in Chapters One and Two). Like its WhatsApp groups, Efrat's Facebook page also screened its membership with a password distributed only to its residents. This was justified to me as a necessary security measure to prevent Palestinian or "left-winger'" infiltration.

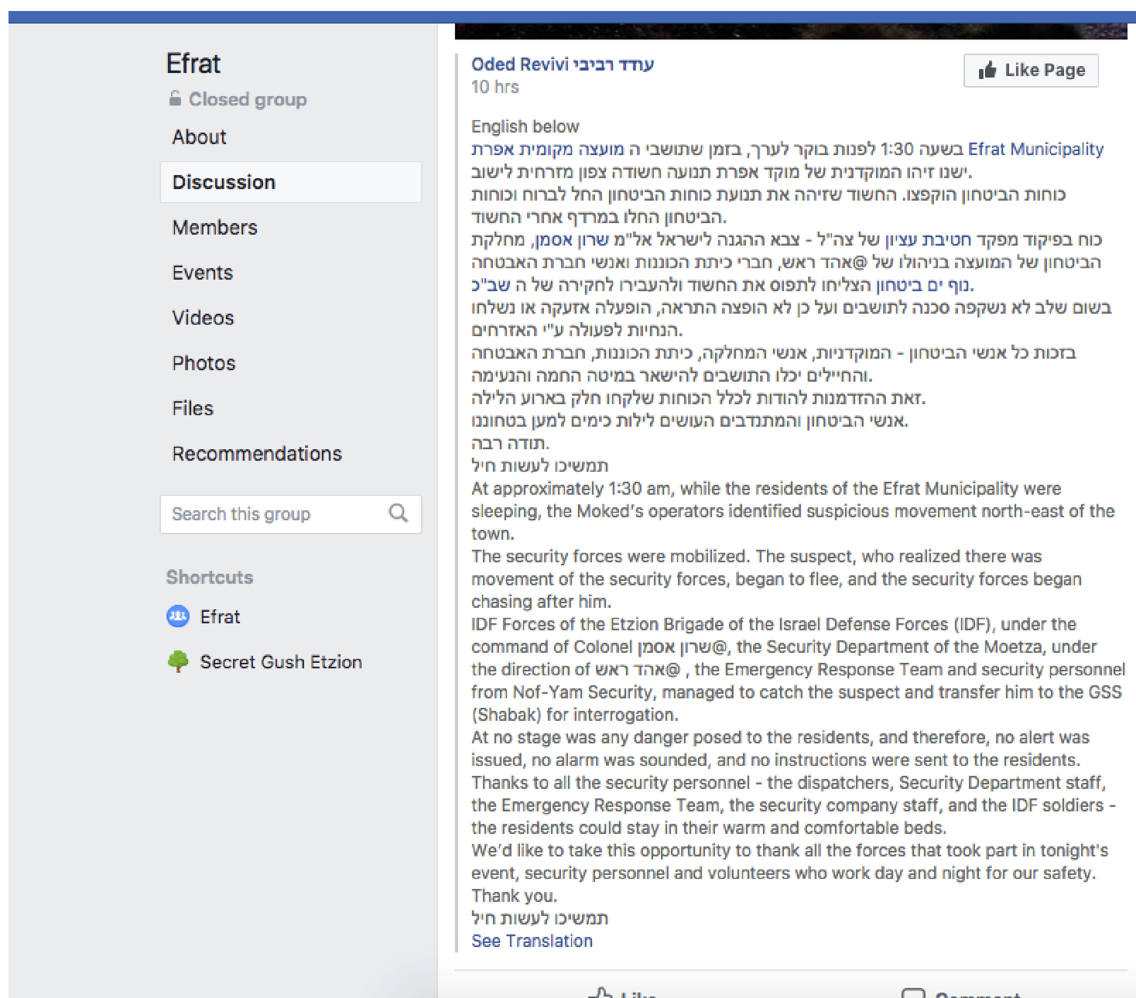

Figure 19: A post from Efrat's Facebook group detailing an attempted 'infiltration'. Credit: Branwen Spector

Though rare, the settlement and its online space are on high alert for an "infiltration" by a Palestinian. One such event occurred in Efrat during the unrest of 2015, in which a Palestinian man entered the settlement and stabbed a settler before being shot by a local resident. Fearful of a repeat incident, citizen surveillors appear drawn to Efrat's Facebook page to report presences in the settlement they deem suspicious so other members can confirm or speculate upon the matter. Sometimes these presences are simply other settlers who walk instead of drive through the fields surrounding the settlement, triggering the settlement's alarm systems. Others, like that shown in Figure 19 above, detail a response to a Palestinian entering the space and account for the responses of local and national security forces.

"It was really useful in 2014" Yona told me, "because we didn't know what was going on, after those boys, we didn't know who to trust. We had Arabs working in our basement at the time and we had to send them away. And *baruch haShem* (thank god, He.) nothing ever happened to us." Yona, an elderly original settler in Efrat with several local businesses, was referencing the kidnapping of three

Israeli teenage boys by Palestinians in the summer of 2014, an event which triggered widespread raids of the West Bank by the Israeli military and several retaliatory acts by Palestinians. “Everybody feels comfortable with their Arabs, until they don’t”, Yona added. This concept was often reiterated to me by settlers, who felt comfortable with local “known” Palestinians and their ready supply of cheap labour to build and extend their homes in Efrat. Settlers could vouch for their presence in the settlement as non-threatening. These periods of comfort lasted until pockets of unrest, such as the unrest of 2015, and Palestinians suddenly became untrustworthy and were removed from the settlements and increasingly surveilled by both security forces and settlers themselves.

The work of citizen surveillors extends to the behaviour and politics of settlers themselves. Devorah, a local archivist, kept a low online profile and limited her contributions to the page to content about the settlement’s history. She limited her participation in the virtual space of Efrat and its citizen surveillors due to her involvement in a ‘coexistence organisation’ that put Palestinians and settlers in contact. Through this group, she was gradually made aware of the difficulties her country’s occupation of the West Bank created for local Palestinians. She had, she told me, occasionally questioned the Facebook page’s policing of Palestinian presences inside the settlement, but found herself the recipient of both online abuse and hate mail delivered to her home. As these groups are heavily opposed by right-wing Israelis and most settlers, her involvement in the coexistence organisation put her at risk of further harassment. While settler involvement in such groups is minimal (and concealed within the community), her experiences demonstrate that the settlement’s online space is used to surveil potential breaches to their segregated existence, even among members of their own community.

Citizen surveillance also occurs in Dheishe’s virtual space. As many of the camps’ young men congregate at the *bab al mukhayem* (the entrance of the camp, Ar.) and observe the comings and goings of its residents, so does the camp’s Facebook page recreate this dynamic online. This informal community surveillance included posting photos of unfamiliar cars and people entering the camp as well as politicised attempts to regulate Palestinian behaviours, particularly in relation to solidarity actions such as general strikes. These strikes, often held in the wake of the killing of refugees by Israeli soldiers, were frequent during my fieldwork, often posted by Jafar and his friends. In the same way that some of Jafar’s posts were the work of a citizen journalist sharing footage of army incursions, others were the work of citizen surveillance, including photos of businesses breaching these strikes and unfamiliar cars. After meeting Reem and striking up a friendship with her, her son

Jafar sheepishly showed me a post made on the camp's Facebook page enquiring about the nature of my presence, dated to the first time I entered Dheishe in my Israeli-plated car.

Proving that "reality is not an exclusive property of the online or offline" (Boellstorff 2016: 395), these local uses of social media show how use of technology and security devices are "all embedded in socio-political, spatial and economic circumstances" (Carey 2005: 445 cf. Aouragh 2011: 51). Israeli settlers' uses of Facebook supplement an already expansive surveillance and security infrastructure provided by their state. Palestinian uses of Facebook respond to the surveillance that the PNA fails to provide. Both forms of surveillance rely on rendering the potential and invisible movement of the other to become visible through their documentation on social media. On one hand, therefore, the use of social media to document and crowd-source security through citizen surveillance in a way democratises access to security, perhaps an unexpected direction in which local uses of internet infrastructure has developed. On the other, it singles out and punishes those not adhering to the *status quo* ideologies of the communities under surveillance, further informing the mobility of each community's own residents and reinforcing ideas used to enforce segregation between communities.

These forms of surveillance do not only concern the mobility of individuals, but the mobility of states themselves. As I showed earlier in this chapter, Palestinian telecommunications infrastructures have been susceptible to Israeli state surveillance since its occupation of the region in 1967. Israeli governments, in rendering Palestinians legible through this same infrastructure, has expanded its capacities to surveil their mobility and locate those associated with "incitement" for arrest. This form of surveillance is, in the West Bank, about creating as much free movement for Israeli settlers and the military at the expense of the mobility of Palestinians. A lasting impact of this surveillance has resulted in practices of online concealment among Palestinian Facebook users. As a group particularly associated with resistance by the Israeli state, Palestinian refugees live under increasing scrutiny. Paradoxically, then, while incredibly popular among Palestinians (and often synonymous with the internet itself) on Facebook many Palestinians commonly mask or distort their identities. Although this distortion is not the focus of this section, it is significant that the anonymity afforded to internet users can be used to manipulate the instability of Israel's bureaucratic attempts to render them legible (as discussed in Kelly 2006 and in Chapter Three).

This manipulation is undertaken particularly by those who hold criminal records in Israel and therefore are under enhanced surveillance. Asad and his brothers, who had all spent time in Israeli

prisons for various acts of resistance, recounted to me that on the event of their arrest and during interrogations their login information for their social media accounts were demanded. Since his release from Israeli jail Asad has used Facebook sporadically, regularly closing and opening new accounts, a common practice among ex-prisoners. Account holders often used metaphors, wrote their names in English instead of Arabic,[48] or used their teknonyms[49] to disguise their identities. The shielding of users behind the privacy of anonymous administrators on the *Dheishe al Hurrah* page, as mentioned in the previous section, also protects Facebook users from association with activity made illegal by the Israeli government. These manipulations of online identity have further increased in the wake of an Israeli-state orchestrated "crackdown" on Palestinian internet use, having declared the period of unrest in 2015 as originating from the organisation of young people on social media (Khalaf et al. 2017). Palestinian Facebook users quickly responded to the idea that Facebook was not a safe or secure communications platform as the expression of political beliefs online was criminalised.

However, not all distortions of online identities relate to the surveillance of Palestinian online behaviour by Israeli intelligence. Such practices are gendered, and many Palestinian women conceal their identities online in accordance with local modesty practices. Reem, like many other Palestinian women, used her teknonym as her Facebook name. In this way she identified herself only to those who knew her through her son Jafar, and only used pictures of her grandchildren to accessorise her profile. Other women share accounts under their husbands' names or name their profiles after their children. Regardless of gender, it is accepted that Facebook is a means by which Palestinians can resist legibility in accordance with local and occupation-related dynamics that challenge their safety and modesty.

These creative uses of the internet by Palestinians complicate the notion of one Facebook profile equating to one user. They also render Palestinian social media use difficult to navigate for both the purposes of surveillance and research. Through practices of concealment, Palestinians challenge their forced legibility by both Israeli surveillance and research, especially the collection of statistical data on Palestinian internet use in general. The criminalisation of the poorly defined "incitement", as Palestinian internet use is often labelled, has resulted in creative responses. These responses allow

[48] A lack of standardised transliteration between English, Arabic, and Hebrew means that if names are written in a different alphabet their spellings can be varied and therefore hard to find through Facebook's search function.
[49] Known locally as *kunya,* this is a common practice among Arab-speakers of renaming oneself after one's firstborn son, e.g., *Abu Asad* (father of Asad) or *Um Ali* (mother of Ali).

the internet to continue to serve as a tool for mediating otherwise limited mobility, subverting Israeli state attempts to control their uses of internet infrastructures.

The manipulation of Palestinian identities online responds to Israeli surveillance while acknowledging that they are in some respects dependent on the internet for communicative and safety purposes. The criminalisation of Palestinian political activity online holds serious offline consequences; between 2015 and 2017 over 400 Palestinians were arrested due to posting or even liking content deemed “inflammatory” (Middle East Monitor 2017). At one point during this period, even the ruling PLO party’s Facebook page was taken down over a picture of the Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat holding a rifle (Nashif 2017). This criminalisation has also resulted in local initiatives to teach safe internet use to Palestinians.[50] After the crackdown of 2015, several NGOs launched workshops for schools and youth groups, particularly in refugee camps, to teach safe online activity to young Palestinians. Unsurprisingly, Israeli surveillance over its own Jewish citizens does not extend to the criminalisation of incitement against occupation. In 2016, for example, the number of inflammatory Israeli Facebook posts against Palestinians reached 675,000, with no cases of incitement opened (Khalaf et al. 2017). Similarly, the hate mail targeting Devorah’s pro-Palestinian sentiments went unpunished by the Israeli legal system.

These forms of surveillance over Palestinian online activity use internet infrastructures to facilitate the mobility of its borders as well as its occupied subjects. The internet’s wireless and invisible signals breach the physical zoning of the West Bank and the material architectural structures put in place to enforce segregation and enclavisation. The panoptic gaze of the Israeli state through virtual surveillance enables a new form of encroachment not only with its technology but in the practices related to its proliferation. Palestinian reliance on Israeli mobile internet networks became an everyday reminder of the limitations of the PNA at the hands of the occupation. As Weizman notes, Israel’s borders are dynamic, and internet infrastructures allow it to “even erupt into Palestinian living rooms, bursting in through the house walls” (2007: 7). In this way the internet infrastructure’s expansion, like roads, can be portrayed as a form of development and modernisation provided by a benevolent Israeli occupier. This modernisation, however, is also received as an ominous threat of its continuous incorporation of Palestine into its colonial project. The invisible nature of telecommunications, then, allows us to understand mobility as not just physical and material, but conceptual and linked to space.

[50] The Palestinian NGO Hamleh, for example, documents the increased arrests, surveillance, and human rights infringements conducted by the Israeli state of Palestinians.

Conclusion

In this chapter I have looked at local uses of the internet that use social media as an information infrastructure to navigate the often-dangerous environment of the West Bank. This same information infrastructure has also generated a virtual space for surveillance over local physical spaces, both by their own communities and by the Israeli state. In exploring these dual journalistic and surveilling capacities of internet use, I have shown how the internet is both "continuous with and embedded in other social spaces" (Miller & Slater 2000: 5). At the same time, however, these functions of the internet ultimately serve to remind its users, particularly Palestinians, that despite using virtual and not physical space, they are embedded in the "mundane social structures and relations that they may transform but that they cannot escape" (Miller & Slater 2000: 5).

Although, as I have shown throughout this chapter, the internet is used to mediate restrictions on mobility for both Israeli settlers and Palestinian refugees, the virtual space of the internet continues to replicate the segregated conditions of the material world in which they reside. A focus on local rather than transnational uses of the internet necessarily does not propose that Palestinian refugees and settlers are able to move around and across physical boundaries through its communicative capacities. In fact, attention paid to the layering and interrelation of social media, internet, and telecommunications infrastructures, reveals the ways that Israeli restrictions on Palestinian mobility in material space are recreated virtually. Local uses of the internet do, however, highlight the ways that infrastructures can mediate these limits on mobility. The replications of the policing and surveillance of Palestinians by both Israeli settlers and the Israeli state in virtual space also serve to remind us that the internet is not a placeless phenomenon. This is made particularly clear by framing its use in relation to the histories of the infrastructures on which it is overlaid.

Anthropologies of local or even the hyperlocal digital and physical spaces can reveal new and creative uses of the internet that respond to regionally specific needs. The *Dheishe al Hurrah* page, for example, not only serves to update its followers, but also functions as an archive of daily life in the camp, providing a much-needed record of the numerous human rights infringements taking place on the lives of its residents, as well as a celebration of the wider social life of this difficult place. Similarly, Efrat’s settlers, through their WhatsApp groups and their Facebook page, respond to their own security needs in creative ways, harnessing social media for both protection and as a means of exerting power over their setting.

Attention to local uses of internet infrastructures in the West Bank also complicate ideas about infrastructural space when two peripheral groups with different relations to infrastructural designers and implementers are concerned. In theory, the internet is a shared and universally accessible space in which any user with the necessary technology and subscription can be put in contact with other users. In the physically segregated space of the West Bank, one might think the internet would provide a space in which to overcome physical boundaries and put its resident and segregated Palestinian and Israeli communities in contact. In reality, however, it is not only the language barrier between these two communities that maintains this segregation, as well as the fact that conversation across boundaries was not, at least for the majority of interlocutors in this research, a common goal. Instead, because virtual space continues to be guarded in ways that mirror material divisions of space, the two communities remain in segregation. Palestinian place pages are free to be followed by any Facebook user, but these same users often hide their identities. Settlers, meanwhile, are free to represent themselves openly within their virtual spaces, but hide the information they share behind passwords. As in the material realm, mixing on the internet is dangerous for Palestinians, especially because their presence online is documented and archived and therefore made available to Israeli surveillance operatives. While social media does therefore create a platform for shared space between Palestinians and Israelis, essentially the same rules of segregation and censorship that apply offline are replicated online. As the lack of popularity of coexistence groups such as that attended by Devorah shows, the creation of shared space is inherently threatening and not, as often marketed, a solution or strategy for peace.

Highlighting the uses of Israeli surveillance over Palestinians, especially in the wake of the unrest of 2015, also draws attention to new forms of policing and curbing of virtual as well as physical mobilities. The Israeli government's fear of a new form of resistance imagined to be organising invisibly on social media (Baker 2011; Trottier and Fuchs 2015) is mirrored by other governments – particularly in the wake of the so-called Arab Spring revolutions of the 2010s. Where the earlier Palestinian *intifadas* were largely led by political parties and their paramilitary organisations, the 2015 unrest was enacted through uncoordinated resistance acts by predominantly younger and non-politically affiliated Palestinians expressing a sense of futility of their lives under occupation. Like Asad and his brothers who threw stones, the unrest of 2015 were unlikely to have been organised through or linked to social media, but simply a reaction to the limitations placed on everyday life under occupation. Perhaps embodying a fear of the invisible new uses of modern technology, a fear of the quiet organising of the young, or a combination of the two, youth and technology appears threatening to those powerholders concerned with surveillance and security. De-centring both the

technology involved and resistance discourses shed light on the everyday practices and relationships linked to regional uses of telecommunications.

As Shalhoub-Kevorkian notes, the internet plays “a dual role in areas of conflict”, in that it is “simultaneously oppressive and progressive, enabling both domination and resistance” (2012: 56). On one hand, Palestinian refugees and Israeli settlers use the internet to protect and surveil themselves where their states are not able or willing to, with citizen journalists and surveillors providing much-needed resources to inform their safe movement through the region. On the other, the collaborations (or co-options) of the Facebook Corporation with the Israeli state directly result in the internet offering “less political agency as corporate algorithms and Facebook monopolism increasingly filter and define the digital world” (Aouragh and Tawil-Souri 2014: 126) for its users. Yet despite this reduced political agency, the internet continues to be used in unexpected directions, with presumably unintended outcomes, that do not “solve problems of injustice and spatial confinement, but…offers a different way of ordering life” (Shalhoub-Kevorkian 2012: 68). In addition, and through this dialectic, attention is drawn to the diversity of forms of surveillance for protection. This in turn points much needed attention to the heterogeneity of Palestinian refugees and Israeli settlers in their political beliefs and gendered practices, offering a more holistic picture of life in the West Bank.

This chapter has not intended to frame the internet as a tool solely used for surveillance in response to violence; in addition to connecting fragmented populations, facilitating education, business, and social networking on regional and global scales, it also serves specific regional functions. In tandem with Boellstorff’s observation that activity occurring online is not escapism, but augmentation (2008) local internet uses in the West Bank help us understand further how infrastructures are always politically situated. Similarly, while the case has been made that use of the internet can provide relief for those limited by forced immobility, such as Palestinians under strict closure laws in the West Bank (Khoury-Machool 2007: 27), attention to local uses demonstrate that it also can mediate these immobilities. Blocking Palestinian telecoms providers from rolling out mobile internet services did not prevent Palestinians from using mobile internet, but forced them to act illegally to do so, with the added effect of bolstering the Israeli economy on the way. The value of a study of the everyday mundanities of occupation, then, reveals its impact beyond physical barriers to movement but the creation of Palestinians as economically dependent on Israel, and Israel’s capacity to profit from its occupation.

Chapter Six: Humans as Infrastructure

Introduction

As I have shown throughout this thesis, human mobility has been formative in the arrangement of space, infrastructure, and governance of the West Bank. Like road and internet infrastructures, the locations and flows of settlers and Palestinians throughout the region have had the effect of moving borders, populations, and ideas into and around the West Bank despite the numerous restrictions to mobility. In this chapter I therefore propose considering Israeli settlers and Palestinian refugees themselves as human infrastructures. Like road and internet infrastructures, in this setting humans facilitate the flow of people, goods, and ideas into the region, informed by each group's relation to territory, identity, and ideology. In considering this, I show why an infrastructural approach complicates conceptions about immobility, invisibility, and the nature of occupation. I also use this approach to emphasise the role of human agency in the navigation of mobility in a region where it is strictly controlled.

Human infrastructures have been defined, broadly, as groups of individuals united by a common goal whose "selves, situations, and bodies bear the responsibility for articulating different locations, resources, and stories into viable opportunities for everyday survival" (Simone 2009: 124). The 'common goal' is a significant feature of human infrastructures, with those who are thus united often referred to as a "critical mass" in the scholarship of human geographers (Lugo 2013; Nello-Deakin and Nikolaeva 2020). It is this notion of a critical mass that is especially useful in thinking of settlers and refugees as human infrastructures rather than merely as kin groups, migrant networks, or ethno-national communities.

The concept of human infrastructures has not been popularly used in anthropology, likely for two reasons. The first is due to the way it overlaps with the aforementioned and more commonly used categories of social organisation. In the West Bank, however, the unique relations to and uses of mobility of settlers and Palestinians are informed by highly structured arrangements including segregation, occupation, and the presence of two states struggling for control over the same region, making the classification of settlers and refugees as human infrastructures more useful than 'kinship', 'community', and the like. A second reason is that human infrastructures are "slippery" (Edwards 2003: 2); as socio-material rather than socio-technical, they are less visible and therefore more difficult to locate, define, and isolate for the purposes of ethnographic research.

While both Israeli Jewish settlers and Palestinian refugees are groups defined on ethno-national terms, it is each group's specific relation to mobility on which membership in its human infrastructures is predicated. In order to be part of the settlement human infrastructure, one must reside in a settlement in the West Bank (Zertal and Eldar 2007). In order to be a Palestinian refugee, one must have been expelled from one's home or be a descendant of those with this experience (Feldman 2012). However, although descent plays a role in membership of both infrastructures, it is not the sole means by which participation is possible. In other words, kinship is a central but not definitive aspect of both settlement and refugeehood. Instead, the definitive aspect emerges in each group's relation to their right of return and how it is achieved. For settlers, return is predicated on the sovereign power of a nation state that determines citizenship on ethnic and religious grounds (Yiftachel 2006), structuring their human infrastructure along lines of Zionist redemption and self-determination. For Palestinians, return is denied on ethnic and religious grounds (Feldman 2012), structuring their human infrastructure instead on a critical mass premised on human rights.

Given the importance of these forms of mobility, resettlement and displacement, it may seem logical to think of these groups as migrant networks, especially for the purpose of tracing their activity over geophysical space. The specific relations to mobility of both settlers and refugees, however, are informed by the actions of early Zionist settlers, who strove to erase the presence of Palestinians while appropriating land for their own use. As I have described in Chapter Three, these early settlers put in place the institutions and dominant ideological frameworks that presaged and shaped, the expansion of *material* infrastructure into the West Bank by the Israeli authorities. Settler and refugee human infrastructures are therefore interlinked. The establishment of early Jewish settlement in both historic Palestine and the West Bank led to the creation of Palestinian refugee populations and their confinement to the West Bank, and later the construction of new settlements after 1967. Both of these groups developed as separate human infrastructures that function either to continue Jewish settlement or to resist the erasure of Palestinians respectively. To frame these groups as infrastructures is to recognise the determining role of their relations to the wider history of the region. It is also to examine the agency of settlers and refugees, respectively, in partially forming their identities in relation to their common goal of achieving return (Feldman 2012; Khalidi 2010; Peteet 2017).

The 'common goal' or "critical mass" around which human infrastructures are formed reveals the logics by which they conduct the work of infrastructure – in facilitating the flow of goods, people, or ideas (Larkin 2013: 328). In the limited anthropological engagement with the idea of "human

infrastructure", scholars have tended to identify these critical masses as economic in nature. Simone identifies migrant communities in Johannesburg, South Africa, as acting as "an extensive transactional economy … that emerge[s] to increase access to information, destinations, and support" (2004: 423). Elyachar similarly points to the economic potential of the "phatic connectivity" (2012: 120) between migrant labourers moving between points of origin and locations of employment abroad. Both approaches emphasise the centrality of mobility in the formation of human infrastructures, but both also see their function as centred on economic activity. Based on their historical relations and asymmetric access to mobility, however, I propose instead that the definitive characteristic of settler and refugee human infrastructures in the West Bank is political rather than economic (Weiss 2011).

As both are formed of experiences of exile, each group's common goal is based on the expression of their right of return. The way this goal is enacted is primarily through the creation of "facts on the ground". This translates as their demographic expansion, through settlement or procreation, which is encouraged by leadership on both sides to (re)populate each state (Peteet 2017). The expansion of Palestinian refugees' human infrastructure challenges the Israeli state's attempts to erase them while perpetuating themselves, a rare way in which Palestinian refugees are able to increase their visibility. This is made evident by the growth of the refugee population from an estimated 700,000 in 1948 to over 5.7 million today, approximately 775,000 of whom live in the West Bank (UNRWA 2015a). The "facts on the ground" of their persistence and presence forces the issue of their right of return into public consciousness and preserves their relevance and influence in peace negotiations with Israel. Settlers, meanwhile, create their own "facts on the ground" by expanding their presence in the West Bank where, since 1967, their population has grown from zero to over 620,000, (B'Tselem 2017a) rendering them a highly visible feature in the environment.

The way these facts are established bureaucratically is also significant. Palestinian refugees are made legible by their UNRWA-issued refugee cards, allowing their number and therefore influence to be measured – but only by an outsider institution (Feldman 2012). The Israeli state, on the other hand, does not bureaucratically distinguish between refugees and West Bank Palestinians. This has the effect of misrecognising their expulsion from Israel and reducing their visibility in the eyes of Israelis. The Israeli state does also not distinguish between settlers and other Jewish Israelis, likely an intentional decision that contributes to a sense of continuity between *Israeli HaKatanah* and its occupied territories in the West Bank.

The visibility generated by refugees and settlers draws attention to the spatiotemporal nature of infrastructures (Anand, Gupta, and Appel 2018: 14). Palestinian refugees live in exile in camps, often possessing neither the capital to buy their own land nor the capacity to own the property in which they reside.[51] The presence of them, as human infrastructure, can be seen as an attempt to create permanence despite decades of political upheaval and loss of land. For settlers, it is new arrivals – a kind of human infrastructure – that are the foundations for the creation of settlements, which are then followed by the establishment of socio-technical infrastructures as shown in Chapters Three, Four, and Five. As each group considers itself under constant existential threat at the hands of the other, their human infrastructures become a means through which permanence and transcendence are established. As Peteet noted, a "demographic time bomb" (2017: 28) emerged after Israel's occupation of the West Bank in 1967, threatening the Jewish majority of the Israeli state as it absorbed (but did not grant citizenship to) its Palestinian population. It is therefore through the creation of indisputable "facts on the ground" in demographic expansion that humans can be seen as infrastructures that "signal the desires, hopes, and aspirations of a society" (Larkin 2013 cf. Anand, Gupta, and Appel 2018: 19), but also that establish their physical presence with concrete immediacy.

The ways that infrastructures signal these societal aspirations links them to their relationships with the states in which they are built. In the Introduction to this thesis, I problematised the notion of "dys-appearing" or infrastructure failing as a result of a failing or weak state. Human infrastructures in fact seem to suggest the opposite. Simone (2004, 2009), Elyachar (2012), and Lugo (2013) all appear to agree that human infrastructures emerged "where physical infrastructure was lacking" (Lugo 2013: 206) because they are doing the work the state cannot. In the West Bank, both the Palestinian and Israeli states attempt to make themselves hyper-visible while simultaneously attempting to render their opposing state invisible. As a result, refugee and settler human infrastructures can be seen as powerful tools that represent their states while also performing work that it is difficult, unpalatable, or impossible for those states to achieve.

According to both my Palestinian and Israeli interlocutors, the state should provide employment, security, justice, and satisfy their right to self-determination, and yet both sides see it as failing to protect these interests. Palestinian refugees hosted by the PNA, itself an interim government, have formed a functional human infrastructure in spite of the PNA's failure to negotiate their return or

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[51] As the land of the camp is leased by UNRWA, Palestinians may build property on it but are not its legal owners.

provide sufficient support in the meantime. They use their human infrastructure as both a means and an end, to direct the flow of people, goods, and ideas *around* the blockages created for them by the Israeli state and *despite* the lack of Palestinian state which they feel ought to meet their political aims. Settlers, meanwhile, often feel both misrepresented and insufficiently supported by the Israeli state in their need to create more settlements. Their human infrastructures function similarly to those of Palestinian refugees by performing much of the work of settlement themselves while the state appears either to restrict them or to assist them only retrospectively. It is therefore in their capacities to be mobile as and through human infrastructures that each group is able to meet its needs and self-reproduce. Framing both of these groups as utilising human infrastructures highlights the agency its individual members use in facilitating not only the flows of people, goods, and ideas, but also the movement and fluidity of borders and states themselves.

With all of these points in mind we can begin to think of infrastructures not only as roads, rails, wires, and so on, but also as socio-material assemblages made up of "selves, situations, and bodies" (Simone 2004: 124) that bridge a gap between social and material aspects of the everyday (Nello-Deakin and Nikolaev 2020: 3). In the remainder of this chapter I first explore the emergence of these infrastructures in historical context. I then go on to look at the ways infrastructures are built by settlers and refugees to consolidate and expand both their physical presence and their political causes. I then look at the work these infrastructures do to achieve and maintain the common goals or critical masses around which they are formed. This approach highlights the agency of members of human infrastructures to create "highly mobile and provisional possibilities for how people live and make things" (Simone 2004: 410).

Human infrastructures in historical context

Human infrastructures, as noted above, are outcomes of and continue to facilitate mobility. The relationships of both Palestinian refugees and Israeli settlers to migration, diaspora and belonging is relevant for thinking about the way this happens. As I showed in Chapter Three, Jews have historically been mobile in various forms. Modern migration to Israel and particularly to the settlements is framed in Zionism as a return to their ancestral homeland in Palestine from exile in the diaspora. The Zionist framing of Jewish in-migration to Israel as a return sees a negation of earlier national identities (despite many retaining dual citizenship), and recasts them as members of the Jewish nation. Despite this recent migration, however, Palestinians often ironically refer to Israeli Jews as *awlad 'am* (paternal cousins, Ar.), recognising Jews and Arabs as Semitic relatives and evoking a sense of shared regional history. Many of the Palestinians I met often said to me that

“*e7na kulna ibna’ adam”,* (we are all sons of Adam, Ar.) in reference to their Jewish neighbours. This sentiment is not replicated on the Israeli Jewish side, which instead emphasises racial and religious difference between Jewish and Arab populations.

As I showed in Chapter Three, settlers began to initiate new communities in parts of the West Bank following Israel’s occupation of the region in 1967. When Efrat and other settlements were established by early settlers, groups of families and even whole parishes were attracted to emigrate *en masse*. Efrat itself was established with the mass migration of some 500 families from Rabbi Riskin’s Lincoln Square Synagogue congregation in New York City (Hirschhorn 2017). Like other settlements, Efrat was then gradually filled through the immigration of the relatives and friends of the original residents. As a result of this mass migration and continuous use of American connections to attract wealthy members of the American Jewish diaspora to its cause, Efrat has come to be known colloquially in the region as the “Upper West Bank”.

Although unified by the common political goal of settlement, settlers are not a homogenous group. Despite the regulating features of selection committees and the use of family connections to encourage settlement, settlements in general tend to attract immigrants or become places to which they are directed. Ariel, a large city settlement in the centre of the West Bank, for example, is typified by its population of immigrants from the former Soviet Union (Weiss 2011). Closer to Efrat is Kiryat Arba, a settlement adjacent to the Palestinian city of Hebron that holds a reputation for harbouring criminals and ‘undesirable’ Jewish migrants. These include black African and Latin American Jews, incoming migrants from less wealthy socioeconomic backgrounds, and those otherwise wanting to live in the fringe regions of the Israeli state.

Despite its reputation as the “Upper West Bank”, a play on its large American population, Efrat is not solely populated by international migrants. A significant portion of its settlers are in-migrants from other settlements or Israeli Jews moving across the Green Line. The Israeli state makes incentives for its Jewish citizens to move to settlements to achieve or maintain social mobility; the land is cheaper and more spacious, the infrastructures are newer, the schools are better, and the healthcare is cheaper (Newman 2017). The space of the settlement reflects its orientation towards Ashkenazi (Jews of European origin) family life; properties are designed for nuclear families in villas and apartments, discouraging single occupants or the larger families of Mizrahi (those of Middle Eastern origin) Jews. These factors and the increased availability of newly built homes draw thousands of Israeli migrants to the settlements each year, forging new communities with foreign migrants

through the shared experience of settlement. Despite the actions of the state, however, many settlers feel that support for settlements is not made clearly enough, particularly due to the numerous building freezes put in place as part of peace negotiations between Palestine and Israel. These feelings often manifest around the creation of additional settlements, such as Shoshana's work in occupying the Dekel Hill of Efrat (as noted in Chapter Three). They are also generated in the (very rare) event of settlement evacuation, which I go on to discuss later in this chapter. The uniting "critical mass" of settlers, therefore, is perhaps best located in the freedom to enact their return from exile at their own pace.

Figure 20: View of Jerusalem from Dheishe Camp. Credit: Branwen Spector

Mobility for Palestinians, in contrast, is framed – at least for the moment – in terms of exile awaiting return. They had been a largely settled and agricultural people until their expulsion by Jewish militias in the 1930s and 40s. Most of Dheishe's residents originate from 45 villages to the west of Jerusalem and Hebron, now part of the Israeli state and, unusually, a small number of Iraqis residing in Palestine prior to 1948. The camps in which they now reside host four generations of refugees. Without land from which to generate an income, Palestinian refugees are particularly dependent on labour opportunities inside Israel but due to their association with resistance, unlikely to receive permits to enter. Despite this, as I have shown, they are not a group entirely defined by immobility.

Refugee camps reflect Palestinian and wider Arab traditions in that they are architecturally organised by family life (Ata 1986). Their dwellings have expanded from single family tents to apartment buildings and compounds built by familial networks known as *dur* (family houses, Ar.). These compounds continue to expand as refugees practice patrilocality and add on rooms and

apartments for newly married sons and brothers. As shown in Chapter Four, these *dur* are used as ways to navigate and map the camp's space. They also dictate the place of residence for younger refugees, who typically remain at their natal homes until they marry. It is unusual for Palestinians to live alone without their families, with a few exceptions in those who migrate to Ramallah[52] and students temporarily resident at university campuses in other cities.

In the remainder of this chapter I look at the everyday activities of human infrastructures to facilitate the mobility of people, goods, and ideas, and at how they respond to existing blockages or lack of infrastructure while also generating their own flows and blockages. In accordance with the aforementioned ideas about the demographic race, I first explore how the work of human infrastructures in the West Bank is organised around consolidation and expansion.

Consolidation and expansion

In previous chapters I have explored the material and social practices that go into establishing road and telecommunications infrastructures. The work of building human infrastructures, however, is of course of a very different character. Both refugees and settlers make decisions about who they marry that reflect their values, political identities, social status, and place of residence. Because human infrastructure membership is predicated for settlers on location of home and for refugees on identity of spouse, marriages influence whether they are able to remain part of their respective human infrastructures.

As relational systems that respond to lack of provision by the state in meeting their needs, human infrastructures are able to be built and expanded through marriage and childrearing. Marriage has traditionally been a way for the state to formalise people's rights by consolidating individuals into nuclear family units. Palestinian refugees, lacking a state to safeguard them, use marriage as a tool by which they can extend their networks of resources to work around this deficiency. Although settlers have a state that protects most of their rights, it is in respect of their need to settle safely and expand their territory at will that they feel the state is lacking. They therefore use marriage as a strategy to expand their hold on the terrain, generating a need for more housing and resources in the West Bank and forcing a government response.

[52] As home to the majority of international organisations operating in Palestine as well as the PNA government, Ramallah has recently become a site of labour migration for Palestinians.

Because in both camps and settlements do not accommodate or value single people living alone, forming a nuclear family unit is a common strategy by those in each group to consolidate and perpetuate themselves while remaining in these environments. Settlers, or those wishing to become settlers, must choose partners who share the same ideological commitment to settling in order to remain or become settlers. Because refugeehood is transmitted only through patrilineal descent, when female Palestinian refugees marry, their choice of spouse is informed – among other things – by their desire to transfer their refugee identity. When female Palestinian refugees choose refugee spouses, they are able to perpetuate their presence as refugees. When marrying outside the refugee human infrastructure, however, their children will not be identified bureaucratically as refugees (Feldman 2012), but they are able to increase their family's access to resources, including non-West Bank identity cards.

Settlers can join the human infrastructure of settlement voluntarily through marriage to someone else who wishes to settle, making their marriages a political act of consolidation of the ideologically aligned. As described in Chapter Three, Shoshana specifically sought a partner who – in tandem with shared ideological beliefs – wished to emigrate specifically to settlements in which they had relatives or connections. Her strategy was common among many of the settlers I met. Rachel, however, emigrated to Gush Etzion with her family as a child. She wished to stay living in the Gush Etzion region and used her family network to locate a spouse who would agree to build a home with her in the West Bank. Devorah, a settler born in Canada, met her husband through *Bnei Akiva*,[53] having wanted to marry someone who was similarly inclined to emigrate to Israel and take part in the settlement initiative.

Devorah lived in a modest apartment with her South African-born husband in the Rimon neighbourhood of Efrat. Like many others in Gush Etzion, she had relocated from Gilo, an older settlement on the outskirts of Jerusalem. Devorah described their situation as common among young and religious married couples in Israel; "we were limited to an 84 square-metre apartment on a state mortgage, so after the third child you had to move". Raised attending *Bnei Akiva* groups in Canada, she was taught the historic and strategic importance of the Gush Etzion region to Israel[54] from a young age. Both Devorah and her husband agreed they should be participants in the repopulation of Gush Etzion as well as take advantage of the more spacious housing available. Once

[53] A religious Zionist youth movement with a global presence that most North American settlers I met had attended as children.

[54] As explained in Chapter Three, the settlement of Gush Etzion is framed as a re-settlement initiative after early settlers were expelled from the area in the 1930s and 40s.

they had established their familial home in Efrat, Devorah's parents also purchased a house in the same neighbourhood and joined them from Canada.

Yael, an Efrat resident born and raised in the United States, had a similar background. She met her husband on a summer volunteering programme in Israel for Jewish teenagers, then returned to the United States to work for *Bnei Akiva* "to help give back to the organisation that had helped us come to Israel in the first place". After marrying, they immigrated first to Herzliya, a small town outside of Tel Aviv, before choosing to eventually settle in Gush Etzion. "I made sure my husband wanted the same things as me" Yael laughed, "because otherwise it would have been a no-good marriage." In order to build the settlements, then, aspiring settlers must be located and form nuclear families before embarking on emigration or land purchases across the Green Line. These acts of consolidation effectively require all parties to be willing to become or continue being settlers, investing in their ideological beliefs in the face of potential danger.

Once foreign-born Israeli settlers have established themselves in the settlements, they tend to draw their relatives in the diaspora to follow them to Israel, further expanding their human infrastructures. Ruth, the wife of one of Efrat's rabbis, took part in the movement to settle the Dekel hill of Efrat with Shoshana (as described in Chapter Three). When discussing her motivations for taking part in the months-long standoff with the Israeli army over the issue, Ruth gestured to the window, where the houses of the new Dekel neighbourhood were visible, and informed me that her children would always "live on the hilltops of Judea and Samaria". All of her children lived in settlements, which, she added proudly, was in many ways her doing. Through strategic choices of spouses, the human infrastructure of the settlement movement draws on the continuous mobility of those diasporic Jews willing to "return from exile" to Israel. It also inspires regional mobility from within *Israel HaKatanah* across the Green Line in order to consolidate the ideologically like-minded. The results of these marriages demonstrate the impact of migration versus family-building in human infrastructural expansion. In 1991, some 9,000 Jews immigrated to the West Bank and just 2,600 were born there. By 2012, however, over 3,600 Jews had immigrated and over 10,800 were born in the West Bank (Gordon and Cohen 2012).

Marriages for Palestinian refugees are less straightforward and must be decided in relation to whether they wish to consolidate or expand their refugee human infrastructure. These processes are also gendered, as – following Arab custom – women take on the national or in this case regional identity of their husbands in marriage as determined by their identity card. As well as a cultural

tradition of marrying young, Palestinian men are further influenced towards getting married by the policies of the Israeli military government of the West Bank. Married men are seen as having more responsibilities to their families and less likely to take part in acts of terrorism against Israel, and are therefore more likely than their bachelor counterparts to receive permits to work inside Israel. In either case, spouses are not often chosen on an individual basis but are commonly arranged between families based on access to resources as well as match of character.

Most of my Palestinian friends met their spouses at the *yom al talbah* (the day of request, Ar.) in which potential spouses and their male relatives visit brides-to-be in their familial home. Potential spouses are commonly drawn from familial networks, trusted friends, and contemporaries of the same social class, all to be vetted by the bride-to-be's parents and close relatives. Miryam,[55] had herself been married to the son of a Jerusalemite family friend with a view to taking on his Jerusalem identity card and retaining access to the family's property in East Jerusalem. Since the construction of the Separation Wall and the mobility restrictions imposed with it, her family in Dheishe were unable to visit her in her home – with the exception of her mother that I explain later in this chapter. As Jerusalem identity card-holders, however, Miryam and her children were able to pass the checkpoints into the West Bank in order to come to their family home in the camp. Ahmad, Leila's son, and Aseel, Miryam's oldest daughter, came to hold a particularly close relationship over the course of these visits.

On the day of Aseel's *yom al talbah,* however, Ahmad was unable to join as it was held in Aseel's family home in Jerusalem. Often these blockages to movement are navigated by hosting such ceremonies within the West Bank so both Jerusalemites and West Bank identity card holders will be able to attend. In this instance, however, Aseel's father sought to marry her specifically to a Jerusalemite Palestinian in order to avoid risking her losing her Jerusalem identity card, and the ceremony was held at their home in Jerusalem. Ahmad was upset by this as it threatened his position of responsibility as her closest male relative. He later took the problems that emerged between Aseel's husband's family and his own as further cause for the necessity of his presence at such events. Even though Aseel was engaged to a fellow Jerusalemite, they eventually took residence in the town of Al Ram, a suburb of Jerusalem zoned as such but excised from the city by the Separation Wall. Their decision to live in Al Ram reflects a common strategy among Jerusalemite Palestinians, where cheaper property prices and access to family inside the Separation Wall are

[55] Introduced in Chapter Three as the oldest of Leila's children.

balanced against the daily negotiation of checkpoints in order to access Jerusalem (Abu Hattoum 2018).

Other refugee martial strategies are conducted not to expand a family's access to resources but to consolidate resources closer to home. Fatima, a refugee raised in Halhoul city (and therefore outside of a refugee camp) was married to a third cousin raised in Dheishe camp. After marrying, she moved from Halhoul into the camp where she lived in a small apartment under her husband's family's house. Her marriage had been one based less on practical and more on ideological bases; she was unwilling to give up her refugee status by marrying and sought to choose a spouse from within the refugee community. Though her decision may have also been influenced by the perception of Palestinian refugees in the West Bank as lower-class and therefore an unsuitable spouse for someone outside of their community, she was adamant it was made for political reasons. Even though this meant leaving her life in the city and exposing her children to the potential stigma of the refugee label in wider Palestinian society (Feldman 2012), Fatima was happy with her choices. Having grown up in a relatively more liberal environment, Fatima – unlike Leila,[56] who largely stayed indoors – worked as a volunteer at a local cultural centre in the camp. She was a regular attendee at local events celebrating refugee traditions, and was insistent that her six children attended classes and seminars on the importance of the refugee issue and also marry refugees themselves.

In this way, marriage can be a potential strategy of consolidation and expansion of settler and refugee human infrastructures in the West Bank that has both visible and invisible aspects. While human infrastructures are made up of the bodies that constitute them, they also come with material aspects including property, ceremonies, and identity cards. As one of the main means by which Israel enacts its occupation of Palestine is by rendering Palestinians invisible, the unseen and immaterial aspects of human infrastructure allow Palestinians to challenge Israel's "infrastructure of unseeing" (Yang 2018). Palestinian refugees, as I show throughout this chapter, are able to move invisibly around the Israeli state's mobility restrictions, shifting people, things, and even ideas between the various material nodes on their networks. At the same time, the simple physical presence and enduring character of Palestinian families challenges Israel's practices of erasure of refuges, creating "facts on the ground" that serve as a reminder of their capacities to navigate and manipulate occupation policy based on segregation and expulsion. Thinking about human infrastructures in this vein allows us to understand Palestinian life from a new perspective. It shows

[56] Introduced in Chapter Three as Ahmad's mother.

how Palestinian subjectivity is influenced but not wholly defined by destruction, trauma, and immobility.

These acts of consolidation and expansion also draw attention to the material and visual aspects of human infrastructures. As well as the bodies that create “facts on the ground”, human infrastructures include houses, land, and shared property such as cars, wealth, and businesses traditionally inherited from generation to generation. In the context of the West Bank, human infrastructures are particularly expressed through the acquisition, ownership, and transmission of land and property. For settlers, settlement is expressed through the construction of property on land appropriated for Jewish settlement. For Palestinian refugees, lives are defined by a loss of land and property that can occasionally lead to the manipulation of relations through refugee human infrastructures, as in the case of Miryam’s marriage.

These material and visual aspects of human infrastructures inform the Israeli state’s approach to expansion and erasure. Because marriages among both Jewish Israelis and Palestinians necessitate the creation of a new family home. Efrat, like other settlements, is designed as primarily residential, with each new nuclear family requiring their own home and therefore justifying settlement expansion. These homes are built at the expense of those Palestinians whom it has displaced from elsewhere, further limiting the confines of the camp as Efrat’s border gradually moves closer to it. Aware of its ability to impact the building work of families, the fact that “Israel simultaneously demolishes and builds” (Amrov 2017) is expressed particularly clearly in Dheishe’s adjacency to Efrat where the spatial oppositions between the two are extremely stark, given that they have similar population sizes. The Israeli authorities have continued to express the occupation through the destruction of Palestinian property in home demolitions[57] and land appropriation. At the same time, they have striven to render the Jewish population highly visible. The work of building and expanding human infrastructures is therefore particularly salient for both groups in order to maintain their existence and challenge their erasure. Consolidation and expansion through spousal choice, then, impacts the ways that settler and refugee human infrastructures are able to challenge the politics of visibility that shapes the West Bank.

[57] As a response to Palestinian resistance, the Israeli state began a practice of demolishing the homes of Palestinians associated with resistance. Since 2014 the Israeli state has demolished 261 houses in the Palestinian territories, the majority in East Jerusalem (B’Tselem 2017b).

Community building

The “critical mass” that unites settler and refugee human infrastructures is maintained through work done to establish settler and refugee groups as communities with political identities. As Lugo (2013) argues, human infrastructures arise where physical infrastructures are lacking. Referencing the work of Williams (2005) and Joseph (2009) on the Black Power movement, Simone echoes this sentiment, noting that “the most depleted of infrastructures and dire social conditions are not simply compensated for through a stitching together of mutual concern and assistance, but are also lived through with deeply embedded practices of paying attention and tending to fellow inhabitants” (2015: 381) in the formation of their own human infrastructures. As activist communities, settlers and refugees mirror these logics, and these “deeply embedded practices” are often formed around shared experiences of hardship, particularly in the case of refugees who live under siege-like conditions in refugee camps with high unemployment rates. Settlers, however, also form community bonds over the dangers faced by living in the West Bank and through shared feelings of isolation from *Israel HaKatanah* and its government.

The settlers I met worked hard to foster a community spirit, with activities, volunteering initiatives, and an emphasis on community care encouraged among all residents. While the Israeli state made efforts to foster bonds between new immigrants in organisations set up to work alongside the Ministry of Immigrant Absorption, they were strongly supplemented by local efforts. *Nefesh’b’Nefesh*, one of the largest of these organisations, is often deemed inadequate at dealing with anything other than the bureaucratic challenges of immigration. The social aspects of immigration are therefore more commonly organised by the volunteer efforts of settlers. Rivkah, a middle-aged homemaker in Efrat, was particularly passionate about this project. She regularly stressed to me the importance of creating a “homey environment for the new immigrants” in the face of wider hostilities from Arab neighbours, the international community, and the absence of support from relatives.

Aware of these difficulties, Efrat’s planners and community marketed themselves as a substitute for incoming settlers’ own families, a point that was frequently raised when settlers explained their reasons for choosing to reside in Efrat. “We were like one big family here”, Yael impressed upon me several times during interviews held at her second-hand clothing processing unit in the basement of her Efrat home. “Everyone knows each other and helps them out”, she continued, as two other volunteers folded donated clothes for distribution among less well-off settlers. Many settlers downplayed to me their ideological beliefs, instead stressing that their choice to move to Efrat was

one driven by their attraction to the greater community spirit of settlers than of people in other urban environments. This favouring of community-mindedness appeared to supersede and somewhat depoliticise the nature of settlement by negating the conditions of hardship around which such bonds were formed.

This depoliticising aspect of settlement also masked settlers' experiences of its more controversial nature. While the settlement movement continues to expand both physically and in terms of its political influence in Israel, this does not mean it is not still a controversial choice that can limit, rather than enable, the mobility of those who live in Efrat. Community-building initiatives emerged as a response to the shared experiences of hardship for settlers, particularly during the Second *Intifada*. Judah, the owner of Efrat's first shop and a member of the volunteer planning committee of the settlement, spoke of a shared sense of obligation and struggle through the early years of the life in Efrat. He remembered sharing a single phone line, doctors and pharmacists providing care to the residents in lieu of a health centre, and sharing cars and childcare. "These days", Judah told me, "you don't know your neighbours, it's too big." This was a common complaint among many of the original settlers of Efrat. Despite the fact that it was planned to become a city eventually, many of its early residents felt that the settlement was losing its close-knit community feel as it expanded, and that their formative years of hardship during the violence of the Second *Intifada* was not shared among newer settlers.

The sense of community among settlers was a response to the fact that crossing the Green Line can be an isolating experience. Jewish culture places strong emphasis on the importance of family reunions, particularly in the weekly *shabbat* dinners that should be attended by at least close kin. For those immigrating from abroad, being unable to bring their extended families in the Jewish diaspora to Israel generated a sense of loss during this weekly ritual, but settlements often organised *shabbat* meals specifically for incoming settlers. Settler human infrastructures also conceal or substitute for another form of familial loss; ostracization over their political views. While settlement has become normalised by the Israeli government's legalisation and the duration of the project since the 1970s, it is still a controversial choice to become a settler. Some residents of Efrat had lost connections with relatives over their decisions to live outside the area demarcated by the Green Line. These stories were difficult to obtain and validate as those who had lost relatives in this way would not share these stories voluntarily, but were rather told by others as gossip.

After several meetings and careful discussions, Devorah told me the story of her neighbour Adam, an Efrat resident originally from Britain, whose adult son had severed contact with him over the issue of his participation in the settlement movement. While Adam did not divulge the matter to me when we met, Devorah recounted to me the sense of loss he felt at his son's decision to break with his family over the issue of their settlement, but ultimately was unwilling to relocate to repair their relationship. Rachel's brothers, I learned, who remained in the north of Israel where they were born, had also severed ties with her over her decision to live in the West Bank. This impacted not only her and her children's lives, but also her disabled mother's; without a trusted male relative to carry her down the stairs to Rachel's apartment, she was unable to visit Rachel in her home. Similar stories of ostracization, severing of familial ties, or the cutting of contact between relatives over the decision to settle were reinforced by visiting relatives I spoke with on Tinder. These people returned only sporadically to their parents' homes, preferring to stay inside the Green Line for political reasons. The community-building aspect of settlement life, therefore, takes on a heightened meaning in the face of the controversial nature of their actions. While serving to generate a sense of community among new residents, it also works to reinforce bonds within the human infrastructure of the settlement movement around its members' sacrifices for their ideological beliefs.

A moment in which the community-mindedness of settlers and their political convictions converged occurred quite by chance during the final months of my fieldwork in the West Bank. Following the outcome of a court case lodged by Peace Now, an Israeli anti-settlement organisation, and Palestinian landowners in the Israeli High Courts, a small neighbourhood of Gush Etzion was to be evacuated. The neighbourhood in question, Netiv Ha'Avot, was part of Elazar settlement across the road from Efrat. Though occupied by just 15 settler families, the evacuation provoked an impassioned response among settlers across the West Bank. The evacuation was popularly framed as "another depopulation of Gush Etzion" by Ruth who accompanied me to the protests during the week of the evacuation. The removal of the 15 families threatened the permanence of the entire settlement movement, particularly in Gush Etzion where (as elaborated upon in Chapter Three) Jewish settlers had repeatedly been expelled over the first half of the 20th century.

The protests attracted thousands of settlers from across the West Bank, including a sizeable representation from the Gush Etzion community as well as members of the Hilltop Youth movement. This movement was largely made up of the first generation of settler children who, heavily armed, establish new settlements, often provocatively close to Palestinian towns and villages, and who violently resist Israeli army efforts to remove them. They are typified by their militaristic patrols of the land and their religious and political conservatism, and by the hippy-like aesthetic they adopt – one reminiscent of earlier Kibbutz and labour movements of Israel's earlier years (Tzfadia 2017). Functioning as a military wing of the settlement movement's human infrastructure, the Hilltop Youth are an expression of the movement's resistance to the Israeli state.

Figure 21: Armed Hilltop Youth protestors at the evacuation of Netiv Ha'Avot. Credit: Branwen Spector

During the evacuation of Netiv Ha'Avot, the Hilltop Youth attended the vigils marking the loss of property, arriving heavily armed and ready to resist the soldiers tasked with conducting the evacuation (as shown in Figure 21). Many were hosted by local families in Gush Etzion, who also provided catering and the use of their homes for vigils and organising resistance. Shoshana herself hosted two teenage girls who arrived from the more politically radical northern West Bank settlement of Ofer, stressing to me that "we are all one family in Judea and Samaria". Despite their reputation for violence, then, the Hilltop Youth are generally supported by the settlement movement and implicitly by the Israeli state as they perform the work of establishing and building settlements in which the state cannot be seen to be complicit. Their existence also points to the heterogeneity of the movement. Within the framework of shared ideological beliefs, and of efforts at homogenisation by settlement selection committees, the Hilltop Youth demonstrate the movement's internal political divisions, particularly over the use of violence. This violence notwithstanding, they are tolerated by settlers as their work is seen as concordant with the wider uniting political aim of the settlement movement overall and an expression of its defensive spirit against anti-settlement forces.

The fostering of community spirit among Palestinian refugees is an endeavour with some similarities, besides the obvious differences. Living in close quarters through decades of exile without a government or political representation, and regularly under attack by the Israeli army, has aided in the generation of a common sense of solidarity among refugees. This is expressed through mutual dependence, perhaps made most clear in how economic, social, and political interests overlap in different and gendered ways. Where Fatima's volunteer work at a local cultural organisation promoted events and services celebrating and aiding the camp community, others expressed their solidarity in a more everyday fashion.

Figure 22: Ahmad and his brothers working at their family car wash. Credit: Branwen Spector

Ahmad, like many men in Dheishe, was not formally employed,[58] but that didn't mean he wasn't constantly working. Part of his time was spent running a small and largely unprofitable car wash from below his parent's house, though he was often called away from this work to tend to the needs of his many contacts who called him for services or help. As he was well connected in the world of car services and parts, good in a crisis, and liked helping people, he was often the first point of call in a car accident, crisis, or conflict. Despite his unemployment and family's impoverishment Ahmad never charged for these services or help, instead embedding himself in a system of favours and barters carefully balanced with familial obligation. His busy-ness kept him occupied and mobile which helped ease off the depression he felt about the *malal* (boredom, Ar.) of unemployment. As Kelly (2008) notes, this *malal* often left men his age sitting around the house or in the street outside, with no money, waiting for something to do.

[58] Unemployment in Dheishe sits at 18.2% in 2018 according to the International Labour Organisation, though statistics are likely to be underestimated.

Often on our *laffliffs* to visit relatives, Ahmad would receive a call requiring his presence at the other end of the city, perhaps to consult on the price of a car part, assist someone who had been in a traffic accident, or help resolve a dispute, and we would suddenly turn the car around and speed across the city in the opposite direction. Even sitting at home in the salon, Ahmad was often summoned from his cigarette and coffee to some favour or other, sometimes returning with bags of rice, a cash loan, or a lead on casual employment.

In this way Ahmad's days were shaped by the needs of his refugee neighbours, family members, and friends. These needs took him across Dheishe camp and beyond to Bethlehem and its surrounding villages and camps where his contacts were dispersed. More importantly, however, the interruption to his boredom or our *laffliffs* provided Ahmad with a means of livelihood. On one memorable evening he seemed particularly stressed after we had waited for two hours outside a checkpoint to Jerusalem for Miryam's Jerusalemite husband to deliver an engine part available only in Israel for his neighbour's car. I asked him why he was working so hard. "*Lazim*" ("I must", Ar.), he replied, "I'm a refugee, I can't get a job, what else can I do?" Without work and income that the Palestinian state had failed to provide, and without a sovereign state or police force to provide security, refugees solved their own problems through connections and shared resources, such as those mobilized by Ahmad.

Ahmad's dynamism, to the untrained eye, appeared as being in sharp contrast to the apparently sedentary behaviour of his mother Leila. Due to her family's religious conservatism, its women remained inside unless accompanied by male guardians, and even then did not go to markets or public events. Apart from occasional visits to her married daughters, Leila never left the house. In fact, she once proudly informed me, in her entire married life she had never been to the local vegetable market or even the mini market seconds from her front door. Leila instead managed the household from indoors, including cleaning, cooking, conflict resolution, and childcare, sometimes for up to 30 of her children and grandchildren at once. Like many refugee grandmothers, Leila's home was the social centre of a large and widely distributed family, where money, childcare services, clothes, and advice were traded and refuge from angry husbands or village boredom was provided.

An occasional exception to Leila's confinement, however, was a striking instance of independence afforded to her by the occupation. By virtue of being a woman aged over 50, Leila was permitted to enter Jerusalem. Younger Palestinian men and women were not allowed to pass the checkpoints and

her husband was banned from entering Israel due to his criminal record with the Israeli authorities. Leila used this opportunity to travel alone from the Bethlehem checkpoint to visit her daughter Miryam at their family's home in East Jerusalem. Having failed to finish school, Leila was illiterate, and neither able to read the Arabic nor the more dominant Hebrew signage of occupied Jerusalem. Despite this, every few months she would readily catch the Palestinian passenger bus from the Jerusalem side of the checkpoint to her daughter's home. When I accompanied her on these journeys, she joked that she deliberately married her daughters outside of the camp so that, as well as enabling them to move into a higher-status area, she would be able to *ataghayer al jow* (change her atmosphere, Ar.). This sentiment was echoed by other refugee women, even the more liberal and ever-busy Fatima with her volunteer work, who often asked me to drive her to visit her sisters in other cities and villages in the West Bank.

The ways in which Ahmad and Leila moved through the human infrastructure of the refugee community meant that, counterintuitively, they were mobile despite being hemmed in by restrictions. Ahmad was constantly in motion providing informal services to his friends, family, and neighbours otherwise inhibited by local and existential restrictions. Leila, meanwhile, exploited the rare moments afforded to her by the marriage of her daughter to a Jerusalemite to make journeys unavailable to most refugees. Though her family was more conservative than most and Leila did not socialise outside of it, her livelihood relied upon her male children's readiness to utilise a wider group of contacts across the refugee human infrastructure for favours and support.

Although refugee ways of producing and enacting solidarity were underpinned by a more obviously economic motivation than those of settlers, they worked in similar ways. For settlers, a sense of communal solidarity around the replacement of lost familial ties and feelings of ostracization over the decision to cross the Green Line encouraged them to join the movement. For Palestinians, with less agency to change their status (except through women's marriage), solidarity was performed as an economic and political survival strategy. Particularly in the rare moments where opportunities to resist the state arose, settlers and refugees drew on their infrastructures in different ways that highlighted their states' respective failures to care for them.

The generation and protection of a unifying political logic in order to consolidate and expand settler and refugee human infrastructures can therefore be seen as a "deeply embedded practice" through which the most depleted of infrastructures and dire social conditions" are compensated for (Simone 2015: 381). Among settlers, work is done to replicate a sense of kinship across internal political and

economic cleavages. These efforts stress shared experience in the hardship of settlement and in the face of a sense of rejection by the Israeli state. Palestinian refugees use existing kinship networks and other relationships almost interchangeably to manage the affective dimensions of their limited mobility and impoverishment. Their human infrastructure provides opportunities to alter the boredom of confinement and poverty, and to be mobile in the process. In this way these systems of human interconnection really do facilitate the flows of people, goods, and things, despite the lack of provision (and circumventing the impediments actively put in place) by state systems that fail to enable these flows.

Conclusion

This chapter has shown why it may be useful to think of settlers and refugees as human infrastructures. By focusing on the relational aspects of human infrastructure used to both build and retain the "facts on the ground" they create, attention is drawn to the agency of interconnected individuals in shaping the West Bank as it exists today. Although both infrastructures rely on kinship, their membership spans across wider categories of identification, drawing attention to the heterogeneity of each group. Focusing on the mobilities of actors involved makes it clear that the flows generated by human infrastructures do not simply involve people, goods, and ideas; borders are also shifted because of and through them.

As von Schnitzler points out, one of the contributions that the study of infrastructure can offer is to "complicate accounts of 'free' circulation" (2018: 135) and examine how mobilities are politicised. Given great cultural significance among both Jews and Muslims, human infrastructures and their material elements are both visible and invisible in relation to the wider political context of occupation. Human infrastructures are defined by their invisible and immaterial qualities as much as their material and visible ones. They include childcare, wealth, employment opportunities, security, and emotional support. These aspects are reliant on their capacities to enable flow between the bodies that constitute them. These same bodies generate the indisputable "facts on the ground" that represent the contested presence of each group as the other attempts to deny it. This in turn directs thinking towards different kinds of infrastructure and shifts attention from technical to social infrastructures, as intended in the deliberate sequencing of the chapters of this thesis. Human infrastructures have been described as particularly "slippery" (Edwards 2003: 2). This can be productive in problematising assumptions about what constitutes a "real" infrastructure and where this classification is useful.

For settlers, individual agency does not only occur in establishing new settlements and therefore obtaining more territory to house their growing populations, but also in the way they, by themselves, move the borders of the Israeli state. For Palestinians, agency as a human infrastructure is expressed in resisting erasure and challenging Israeli expansionism. This approach therefore helps unpack an understanding of Palestinian refugee and Israeli settler lives that highlights the ways in which these groups *make up* an infrastructure, or the material aspects, as well as *perform* the *work* of infrastructure, or the flows of people, goods, and ideas.

This agency is expressed in the manipulation of the fragility and precariousness of the categories of settler and refugee. Both groups activate their systems of relationship to generate permanence and transcendence in response to states that neglect them. Once established, settler and Palestinian human infrastructures serve to fill in gaps left by the states that are unable or unwilling to do so. As I showed in Chapter Three, the Israeli state allows settlers to settle "illegally", retrospectively legalising settlements after radical settlers have established them. Settlers thus become framed as outside of the state's control, simultaneously advancing the state's interests in settlement of the West Bank while absolving it of responsibility. Palestinian refugees are similarly deliberately neglected as, if they were to be naturalised as West Bank citizens, their presence would cease to be a political issue which might neutralise the call for their right of return. Because of this intentional neglect, settlers and refugees are rendered dependent on their human infrastructures kinship networks to further their own ideological causes. At the same time, they are relied upon by their states to continue their work in the absence of formal or visible support and move or challenge national borders.

Finally, by framing refugees and settlers as human infrastructures, I highlight how both groups have different and specific relations to the region and mobility that inform their identities. As Lugo notes, "people are part of the infrastructure enabling or disabling certain mobilities" (2013: 206); in an environment in which mobility is restricted for both settlers and refugees in different ways, individuals (and their friends and relations) exert their own control over themselves and each other. This draws attention to the geographic and political proximity of Efrat and Dheishe, highlighting why attention to the West Bank and Israeli and Palestine more widely is benefitted by an approach that centres on and historicises mobility. It also speaks to the significance, specifically, of Palestinian refugees and Israeli settlers. As both a means and an end, refugee and settler infrastructures serve to instantiate political "facts on the ground" and are therefore imbued with political meaning. They also create and embody a political urgency that can essentially only be resolved by return in the case

of the Palestinians, and settlement expansion for Israelis, two central political issues in the conflict between the two sides.

Conclusion: (Im)mobile futures

In May of 2020 I caught up with Leila and her family on a Facebook call. We exchanged the usual pleasantries and celebrated the safe birth of several new grandchildren and the marriage of Ahmad several months earlier. The conversation quickly turned to the Covid-19 pandemic and a comparison of our situations. She laughed down the phone at me, telling me nothing much was new; she didn't leave the house often anyway and she was just glad her children were at home more. She bemoaned the fact that she couldn't visit her daughter in Jerusalem due to the closure of the checkpoints, but generally life in the camp stayed the same. In fact, she said, it was even enjoyable; they had more food on the table than usual due to charitable donations pouring in from the wealthier Gulf states, and the army raids occurred less often due to the health risks involved. While they were anxious about whether they would be able to visit family members for Eid, and about the future of their income after the pandemic, for the time being life carried on much as it had. Ahmad snatched the phone and proudly informed me that even though the Palestinian Security Forces had placed boulders in the camp's entrance to enforce the lockdown on Dheishe camp, he had found several new exit routes and was able to *laffliff* around the city, preferring it without its usual traffic. "*Lazim ataghayer al jow",* "I have to change my atmosphere", he laughed, displaying his usual disdain for the numerous restrictions the authorities imposed on him in his life as a Palestinian refugee in the face of his need to be mobile.

Leila and Ahmad were shocked when I explained that the situation in Britain was similar; we could not travel or leave our houses except to go to the supermarket, unemployment was rising and the state would punish by law anyone disobeying its new rules around mobility. I could not fly home to see my mother as our home country had blocked any incoming visitors from the United Kingdom. "So your good passport is useless and you're not allowed to leave your city?" Ahmad asked incredulously. "You can't go anywhere or do anything? It's dangerous outside? Wasn't that what you were writing about us?!" he cried in glee.

A kilometre away in Efrat, Shoshana and Rachel told me that they found the experience of forced immobility new and disconcerting. Used to daily commutes between their homes and Jerusalem, they were now restricted to the confines of Efrat. They were grateful for the increased community support initiatives, countryside settings in which to isolate, and their furloughed salaries being provided by the state. They also, however, bemoaned the lack of local facilities that made lockdowns and isolations easier on the population of *Israel HaKatanah*, such as the more limited food delivery services, entertainment options for children, and healthcare provisions. Palestinian labourers'

permits were revoked, so they had been forced to let their cleaning staff go, and services across the settlements were reduced without Palestinian labourers in supermarkets and local services.

This thesis has sought to complicate understandings of the West Bank as neither definitively immobilised nor segregated. The forced immobilisations of the lockdowns and quarantines enforced by governments in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic further complicate representations of Palestinians as immobilised and Israeli settlers as hyper mobile. What I hope to have shown in this work is that mobility is at best understood as relative for both groups. Where Palestinians are often represented as rendered wholly immobile, I have shown that not only is their mobility gendered but occurs with specific relation to the nature of occupation. Unable to make the journey to Jerusalem afforded to her by her age and gender, Leila otherwise shrugged off the new conditions of a public health lockdown as no different to her everyday life. Ahmad, unable to ever go to Jerusalem by virtue of his criminal record and identity card, remained otherwise highly mobile as the family's driver, mechanic, and conflict-resolution expert. He found the new life imposed on him as another opportunity to be mobile with increasing creativity. I was unsurprised by his need and ability to change his atmosphere even in the face of new restrictions. His prison had become even smaller, but he continued to *laffliff* as an expression of existential need, apparently undisturbed by the large stone boulders blocking the road into the camp.

Shoshana and Rachel, who already felt their mobility was impinged upon by both the zoning laws and the Palestinian population and their resistance activity in the West Bank, now knew something of the prison Uday described in the Introduction to this thesis. They used their confinement to centre on the ways they felt that the expected continuity between *Israel HaKatanah* and the West Bank had not been fully cemented. These feelings fuelled further calls for settlement expansion to expand their self-sufficiency as communities, with discussions already underway to build a local mall and increase the number of outdoor entertainment facilities. These increases would necessitate further land annexation for the settlements, now framed in the interest of public health as well as security and religious right.

Perhaps now more than ever, mobility can be understood as an existential need. In this thesis I have shown how Palestinian refugees and Israeli settlers express this need in different ways, using different infrastructures to enable and adapt their mobility to be safe, effective, and meaningful. In the remainder of this chapter, I reflect on these infrastructures, their uses, and adaptations to offer some conclusions about the central role mobility plays in a region in which it is tightly controlled. I

also use this section to revisit the misconceptions about life in the West Bank and how a dual study of the experience of both Palestinian refugee and Israeli settler problematises these misconceptions. Finally, I reflect on the ways that mobility research impacts the anthropologist themself, suggesting both implications for future research and future methods for research.

Challenging representations

In the Introduction to this thesis, I suggested that research conducted on the Israeli occupation of the West Bank typically generates three different but interrelated misrepresentations about the nature of life in the region. In this section I reflect on these misrepresentations, beginning with challenging the notions that the West Bank is wholly segregated and that its Palestinian refugee population is immobilised as a result. This thesis does not attempt to disprove that the West Bank is segregated or that Palestinian mobility is not limited. It does, however, aim to problematise the application of a binary of Israelis as mobile and Palestinians as immobile. The spaces in which their mobilities overlap reveal some of the less visible logics of Israeli state's occupation of Palestine. Finally, I draw on these conclusions to challenge a third common misconception of life in the West Bank; that Israeli settlers are both a unified group and homogenously motivated to cross the Green Line. Throughout this section I emphasise the value of a dual approach considering both Palestinian and Israeli experiences of mobility that add nuance to existing research on the subject.

While immobility is a condition forced upon Palestinians in the West Bank, particularly with respect to refugees who are denied the right to return and live under Israeli occupation, they do not live wholly immobile lives. Research on Palestinian mobility often focuses on the Israeli state's segregated road networks as generative of both erasure and exclusion of the Palestinians who are unable to use them. In Chapter Five I first explored segregated road infrastructures, showing show how roads emerged for settlers and Palestinians as conduits for mobility that reflected their defensive needs. In this chapter I showed that, while settlements are designed and used as a reflection of the "return" of those Jewish Israelis occupying them, their defensive design and use is limited by the potential of Palestinian resistance. For Palestinian refugees in Dheishe, roads emerged as reflective of their history of mobility; the impermanence and poor maintenance of the camp's roads reflected their own liminal position and lack of political representation as refugees unable to return. These same roads emerge to support their own defensive potential against attack by Israel's army. While reinforcing a limited mobility, paying attention to the roads used solely by Palestinians reminds the reader that they are still a group able to be mobile, reinforced by the cultural importance of "changing one's atmosphere" and the *laffliff.*

I then looked at experiences of shared roads, initially indicative of the fact that, though enshrined in law, segregation is not fully enforced in physical space by both a Palestinian vehicular presence and through Palestinian practices of resistance. It is perhaps in these shared road spaces of the West Bank that the differing mobilities of refugees and settlers are most greatly contrasted while still challenging the misconception of Palestinians as totally immobilised. Through checkpoints and the punitive policing by Israeli authorities, Palestinians are reminded, that their mobility is criminalised, but not wholly impeded. At the same time, however, settlers are reminded through the zoning and signage of the zoning of the West Bank that their own mobility and security is at risk from the segregated allocation of space. The apparent danger of the Palestinian potential for resistance against settlers in turn limits settlers' mobility, placing boundaries on their movement through the West Bank framed by the Israeli state authorities as for their own protection. For Palestinians, who experience far greater mobility restrictions on the West Bank's roads, mobility is still a valued and central, if encumbered, aspect of daily life within and outside of refugee camps.

As I suggested at the end of Chapter Five, the use of these shared infrastructural spaces for resistance is perhaps an intentional exception to segregation precisely because of the spaces' potential for resistance. As Palestinians are placed in danger in shared infrastructural space, they are reminded of their occupied subjectivity and criminalisation by the Israeli government. At the same time, however, this space allows them in turn to limit the mobility of settlers, rendering settlers the targets of mobility-centred resistance. In this environment, settlers are in turn recast from empowered pioneers extending and defending the borderlands of the Israeli state into endangered and unprotected subjects. In shared infrastructural space Israeli settlers are reminded of the incompleteness of occupation, perhaps allowing their insecurity to be framed as a justification for a need for further segregation.

In Chapter Five I explore how regionally specific social media use has emerged to mediate the restrictions to Palestinian and Israeli mobility I outlined in Chapter Three. Where transnational use of the internet is often heralded for its capacities to liberate users from their immediate environments, I showed how this may not be the case in the West Bank. Local social media uses that create virtual representations of physical space to inform and mediate physical mobility do not alleviate the user from restrictions to their mobility. They do, however, provide a user-generated information infrastructure that aids the safe movement of Palestinian refugees and Israeli settlers around the obstacles that each create to free movement for the other. These virtual representations

of space also, however, reinforce the need to police intrusions into camp and settlement space, recasting citizen journalists as citizen surveillors. This recasting recreates the need for surveillance as both a defensive and protective force that constrains and mediates the mobility of its users in physical space, ultimately informing the mobilities of both groups while policing the maintenance of segregation. In making these observations I first direct attention away from the transnational capacities of the internet to facilitate virtual mobility across physical space. Through a local focus I also show how the internet is policed in the same ways that the material space of the West Bank is policed, and in fact recreates segregation by criminalising Palestinian political views expressed online.

Finally, in Chapter Six, I showed how framing the different groups of Palestinian refugees and Israeli settlers as human infrastructure is useful for understanding their relative mobilities and immobilities while problematising the notion of the West Bank as wholly segregated. As I argue in the first part of the chapter, settler human infrastructures expand themselves rapidly through both migration and a high birth rate. This rapid expansion is used tactically to justify further settlement expansion and increased provision of infrastructures serving only the West Bank's Jewish Israeli citizens. Through their human infrastructures, then, settlers enact a double mobility. They first relocate themselves across geophysical space into the West Bank, drawing on the relational aspect of human infrastructures and particularly its kin groups to populate settlements. Through these migrations they then use their demographic presence or the "facts on the ground" that settlement creates to justify calls for further settlement expansion and land appropriation, mobilising the borders of the Israeli state itself.

The expansion of Palestinian refugee human infrastructures, however, challenges both the presence of these settlers and the erasure of Palestinians that the Israeli state attempts to create. By expanding themselves demographically, Palestinian refugees retain their significance in wider political negotiations by demanding their right of return. This demographic expansion across the physical space of the West Bank and into Jerusalem and historic Palestine laterally expands the influence and resources of Palestinian refugees across boundaries to their mobility. Their lateral expansion in this way challenges the ways that the Israeli state can enforce segregation, allowing Palestinians to move invisibly around obstacles designed to impede their mobility. The lasting demographic presence of Palestinian refugees in the West Bank further demonstrates that segregation is neither a practical nor fully enforceable solution to the segregation of space.

Ultimately in this research I have problematised the representation of the West Bank as defined by strict and rigid laws that segregate and impede mobility. I first highlight the fact that Palestinian refugees' and Israeli settlers' histories inform their political identities and experiences of mobility in different ways. Both groups believe in their right of return, enacted for settlers and denied for Palestinian refugees, situating them as doubly mobile and doubly immobile respectively. This observation draws attention to the importance of considering local mobility; Palestinians are mobile *despite* the restrictions placed on them, and settlers demand increased mobility *because of* understandings of their own situation as limited. These latter limitations are worthy not to paint Palestinians and Israelis as equals, but because they are used by both settlers and successive Israeli governments as a justification for the expansion of Israel's occupation. This observation adds to existing studies of Palestinian immobility that perhaps unintentionally or uncritically cast Israeli mobility as its opposite. As I have shown, attention to settler mobility makes central their own experiences of immobility at the hands of both Palestinians and their own state in its agreement to zone the West Bank into enclaves. In demonstrating Israeli settler resistance to their state in its complicity in limiting their mobility, I contribute to understandings of settlers as uniquely situated as both agents of and opposed to their state's expansionist aims.

The segregation policies employed by Israeli governance also demonstrate the need for a nuanced understanding of the way that space is divided in the West Bank. Initially, presenting the region as segregated erases the presence of shared infrastructural space, particularly those generated by road infrastructures. Unsegregated spaces serve as an additional reminder for Israeli settlers of a remaining Palestinian presence not yet fully erased or expelled from the region. Beyond this presence, the casting of Palestinians as dangerous, both through Israeli signage reinforcing this message and the use of such spaces as sites of Palestinian resistance reinforces desires for further segregation. Attention to such exceptions to segregation therefore allows us to perhaps cynically consider the potential whether this policy is deliberately only partially enforced, following Lavie's own argument (2014) that exceptions are used to re-unify Jewish Israeli dissent by reminding them of the dangerous potential of their common imagined Palestinian enemy. By allowing for un-segregated spaces, the Israeli state could be seen as intentionally placing Jewish Israeli life in the West Bank at risk to justify the need for further expansion, demonstrating the ways that settlers may be used as a tool in a larger political game.

The use of Israel's West Bank settlers in a politically strategic manner draws attention to the necessity of recognising them as a heterogenous group, as scholars of Israeli culture have done but

is often omitted or not addressed by scholars of Palestinians. The settlers of Efrat are primarily Ashkenazi, wealthy, and bound by a unified political logic regarding their right to "return" to the West Bank as part of Jewish repopulation efforts. Within this critical mass, however, important distinctions arise over both the nature of their settlement and their relation to the Israeli state. As I have shown throughout this thesis, many settlers downplayed their ideological convictions over settlement, instead citing their decision to cross the Green Line as informed by their desire to maintain or achieve social mobility. Particularly related to availability and quality of housing, many reside in the West Bank and particularly Gush Etzion as a result of suburbanisation processes put in place by the Israeli government in the 1980s. These processes served to specifically encourage the migration of more liberal and middle-class Israelis to the settlements and forcing individual Israelis to financially invest in the settlement movement. This expansion of the settlement enterprise contributed to the "facts on the ground" its human infrastructures generated, an attempt to make permanent the presence of Israeli Jews in the West Bank. This in turn generated increased resistance by Palestinians to attempts to evacuate or reverse the processes of settlement as shown in Chapter Six.

A further importance in recognising settlers as a heterogenous group is in the ways this heterogeneity is both policed and used to generate community support. As I showed in Chapter Five, political differences between settlers, particularly those that promote the potential of witnessing Palestinian experiences of settlement, are often silenced internally. Instead, the shared experiences of hardship among settlers are prioritised to generate community bonds that strengthen the human infrastructure of the movement. These bonds themselves become a pull factor in encouraging migration to settlements and a form of compensation for the dangers involved in living in the West Bank.

Infrastructure

In the Introduction to this thesis, I explored how an infrastructural approach, including a historical contextualisation of infrastructures, might be a productive way of conceiving of everyday life in the West Bank for both its Israeli settler and Palestinian refugee populations. As mobility is the subject of this thesis, the exploration of how mobility is both achieved and limited through different infrastructures allowed me to both problematise misrepresentations, as shown above, and demonstrate the usefulness of a focus on mobility as I do in this section.

Initially, I showed how the work of infrastructure is to generate flows of people, goods, and ideas (Larkin 2013). In applying this logic to a setting in which a colonial government uses infrastructure to strategically flow and limit people, goods, and ideas, I problematise the role of infrastructure as delivering both the state and the modernity promised by the state to its peripheral populations. In the West Bank, where infrastructures are primarily controlled by the Israeli state which aims to deliver to its Jewish population while excluding its Palestinian users, infrastructures take on multiple meanings and roles. In Chapter Three I outlined the ways that the Israeli "core" controller of socio-technical infrastructures influences their design and implementation, which I show throughout the following chapters is necessary to understand both their use and their adaptation.

By analysing road, internet, and human infrastructures in this thesis I have shown how infrastructures are used and adapted for the flow of people, goods, and ideas entirely dependent on who is using them and to what aim. By also considering Palestinian refugees and Israeli settlers themselves as an infrastructure I demonstrate how these uses and adaptations of infrastructure reveal the human agency involved in their use, often subverting their designer's intention. Where roads have been used to erase and excise Palestinians in the West Bank from settler view, Palestinians resist by making themselves hyper-visible through violent resistance directly targeting the mobility of settlers. Through internet infrastructures, Palestinians risk exposure to Israeli state surveillance to surveil their own physical environments in virtual space and inform themselves about safe movement through the networks of obstacles put in place by the occupation. Finally, through their human infrastructure, Palestinian refugees directly challenge the "facts on the ground" put in place by the settlement movement by generating their own irreversible facts through demographic expansion across temporal and geophysical space, refusing erasure and demanding recognition.

Due to the colonial nature of the setting, in all of these approaches I problematise the notion of "dys-functional" infrastructure as necessarily indicative of the failure of state to provide infrastructures to its citizens. As I have shown, in the West Bank where Israeli Jews are the intended users of infrastructure and Palestinians, particularly refugees, are an undesirable population to be excluded from the Israeli state, infrastructures must simultaneously serve one group as they fail another. The creation of uneven ground is therefore the intention for infrastructure designed and implemented by the Israeli state. The Palestinian state is also unable to provide fully functional infrastructures to its citizens and particularly to refugees, with whom it has a complicated relationship of governance. Weak or failing infrastructure is not always a diagnostic of a failing or weak state. The Israeli state does not seek to include or provide fully-functional infrastructures to its

Palestinian subject population, and the Palestinian state is at best a quasi-state unable to act with full sovereignty. Throughout this study I therefore show that not only are understandings of infrastructural use important in a colonial setting, but it is also through infrastructures that individuals can make and challenge their relationships with the state(s) in question. Ultimately, governance of and control over infrastructures is part of modern governance by the state and resistance to it challenges and attempts to undermine this control.

Finally, in this thesis I have also experimented with how we conceive of infrastructures, moving along a spectrum of 'hard', traditional, and visible socio-technical infrastructures in roads, to 'soft' semi-visible and socio-material human infrastructures. In the centre of this spectrum sit internet infrastructures which, as I showed in Chapter Five, have both technical and visible as well as social and less visible elements. By highlighting the different qualities infrastructures can possess, I embraced their "slipperiness" (Edwards 2003: 2) to show how the expansion of definitions of infrastructures can be analytically productive. I draw on this productivity particularly in the penultimate chapter, in which I explore how classifying human groups as infrastructure is useful for framing their relations to mobility. By linking the relational aspects of infrastructure to the ways that Israeli settlers and Palestinian refugees function as structures of relationality, I draw on infrastructural thinking to show how these groups are built like and perform the work of infrastructures. The invisibility of this relationality, I propose, lends itself to flexible thinking about both what constitutes infrastructures and contributes to experimental anthropological work on the subject. Centring the relational nature of road, internet, and human infrastructures speaks to their invisibility, and highlights the importance of social scientific and particularly ethnographic research that pays attention to the relations they evoke depending on who is using them.

Activist anthropology

With these conclusions in mind, it is an interesting moment to think about the nature of activist anthropology, particularly the process of witnessing. One wonders what purpose the witnessing of the difficulties of life under occupation may serve, especially when placed under embargo as this thesis will be. When anthropology conducted with activist intentions is discovered to produce no positive outcomes for the people it is conducted with and in support of, in what ways is it activist? Sanford and Angel-Ajani argue that perhaps our obligation is simply to "speak out publicly", an inclusion in early American Association of Anthropologists Codes of Ethics that have since been rendered optional (2006: 3). As Warren writes, the goal of ethnography is "to capture the heterogeneity of experience so that our interpretations are more than a reflection of our politics"

(2006: 222). In problematising and undoing certain misrepresentations of the nature of Israel's occupation of Palestine, I hope that this work has captured the heterogeneity of experiences of those living in the West Bank. The power of ethnographic storytelling could certainly serve to humanise the experiences and lives of Palestinians to the Israelis who have been educated to receive them as inherently threatening, subverting the historic processes of othering (Abu-Lughod 1991) that Zionism has been successful in institutionalising. However, it is difficult to know where this information can be made useful outside of the sphere of coexistence organisations, which tend to normalise the presence of Israeli settlers in the West Bank and are consequently rejected by many Palestinians.

I did not go into this research project with any delusions of producing a resolution to the situation in Israel and Palestine. Having completed this research, I am now convinced that a peaceful and mutually beneficial solution is not only unlikely but impossible. The situation in fact worsened during my time there, partly due to the United States' President Trump's recognition of Jerusalem as the capital of Israel, a move that empowered Israelis to see their occupation of the city as legitimised, further silencing Palestinian claims to the land, and saw the effective lift on decades of settlement freezes. The Covid-19 pandemic will likely be used to exploit pre-existing controls on Palestinian mobility and livelihoods and result in increased segregation and damage to the Palestinian economy and poorly-equipped health service. A purpose this work might serve, however, is in contributions to understandings of mobility that "elucidate the causal chains and gendered linkages in the continuum of violence that buttresses inequality in the Post-Cold War era" (Bourgois 2001: 5). Mobilities research is particularly important for exploring the ways that control over mobility is part of modern governance, and increasingly controlled through infrastructures. As I have shown throughout this thesis, infrastructures are used to maintain social exclusions of undesired groups. As infrastructural studies of the West Bank grow in number, this body of work bears increasing similarity to the exclusions made of black Americans (as mentioned in the case of Michigan in the Introduction to this thesis) in a democratic setting.

Implications for future research

In this work I offer both a small contribution to and a call for more research needed in the field of unorganised youth politics. Both Palestinian resistance and the Hilltop Youth movement represent, on both sides, political action taken against Israel as an expression of agency in the face of a state that does not support them. While the Israeli state has been keen to paint the emergence of Palestinian violence in 2015 as an organised and calculated affair as a response to a need to locate

and prevent such resistance, it is in fact not so. Similarly, while the Hilltop Youth movement has a name, it is neither an organised political group – simply a collective term for the actions of a series of young and radicalised settlers seeking to take the fate of their nation into their own hands. Both groups are framed as dangerous in different ways but share a commonality in that they neither represent nor report to organised party politics.

This seems to point to a larger trend in global resistance movements. Fearing a "suddenly emerging" and "dangerous" youth (Aouragh and Tawil-Souri 2014), governments have sought to respond to and control an organised representative of recent protest movements believed to be organised and circulated on social media. The Black Lives Matter movement that rose again in the summer of 2020 in response to the violent policing of black citizens of the United States might serve as a useful comparison. While the Black Lives Matter organisation was targeted by the governing President Trump as the organiser and instigator of the mass protests between May and July, this was in fact untrue. The Black Lives Matter organisation simply bore the name of the popular slogan uniting resistance to police brutality, and in fact the widespread protests were not organised by any single group. Likewise, the Arab Spring protests of 2011 are widely associated with the use of social media to distribute and share information about protests, resulting in widespread crackdowns on internet use across Egypt, Bahrain, and Syria. Similarly, protests in London in the summer of 2011 erupted not as a result of centralised organising frameworks, but simply as a response to police brutality and feelings of futility for those who took part, largely using Blackberry Messenger. The common theme in all these instances of rebellion seems to be in the expression of futility by the young, resistance against structural violence in an unorganised fashion and popularly distributed across social media. Social media has therefore come to represent an invisible and difficult to surveil broadcasting infrastructure that disrupts understandings of organised rebellion as well as a departure from party politics among many of those rebelling.

While this thesis does not centre resistance, it acknowledges and describes it as a feature of life in the West Bank that shapes mobilities of people, goods, and ideas. What is visible in the setting reflects resistance dynamics elsewhere in the world; that resistance emerges when (social and physical) mobilities are restricted, resulting in feelings of futility. Police brutality, often racialised, emerges as a key cause of unorganised mass political action. In Palestine it is simply part of everyday life to protect oneself from the numerous dangers that emerge from the situation of occupation. While this resistance is not a new phenomenon, it has previously been dominated by formal political organisations, including the governing PNA. This interim government itself evolved from the

Palestine Liberation Organisation, a former resistance campaign with a military wing previously classed as a terrorist organisation by the United States. The growth in popularity of the Hilltop Youth movement, however, is a newer movement that embraces the framing of settlement as rebellious. The Hilltop Youth, however, demonstrate a continuation of the settlement movement's anti-state tendencies, seeing the Israeli state as a limiting factor in the continuation of settlement activity. It shows its more rebellious qualities in its actions against settlement evacuation, in which armed struggles often emerge.

Rebellion is therefore also about the expression of agency and mobility in the face of futility. This has never been clearer than in the occurrences of mass protests during a pandemic; the potential cost of transmission of the Covid-19 virus should not outweigh the necessity of rebelling and expressing this futility. The cost of not protesting and continuing to experience structural violence became balanced with the cost of protesting and experiencing violence or illness. Further ethnographic research can contribute to understandings of the causes that lead to these unorganised rebellions, often fuelled by widening inequalities in wealth and power. Also necessary is further research into the ways states respond to these rebellions, particularly in the ways they target social media as the infrastructure through which they believe them to be organised. This targeting, as in the case of Israel, sees increased surveillance of social media, co-opting social media organisations into compliance with surveillance and the provision of personal data.

The ground remains uneven

The importance of everyday approaches to life under occupation are invaluable in exploring the invisible effects of occupation. Occupation is often represented in Palestine through experiences of physical violence, the more dramatic and extreme instances of material architecture of the occupation – the Separation Wall, the permanent checkpoints marking an illegal border between Israel and the West Bank, and the actions of the Israeli military. What became clear in my fieldwork, however, was that these features played a minimal role in the everyday lives of either my Israeli or Palestinian interlocutors. These features are designed to intentionally play minimal roles in Israeli settlers lives in order to both render the Palestinian presence invisible and create a continuity of space between Israel *HaKatanah* and the settlements. While these features are designed to impact the mobility of Palestinians, however, they are not something that marks their everyday life. Attention to mobility and the 'underneath-ness' of infrastructure use reveals the more invisible aspects of occupation which are necessary in understanding the ways it contributes to the uneven rendering of Israeli and Palestinian lives. Settlers, in particular, have neither a view nor way of

understanding Palestinian life and the impact they personally make on it, as explained by Devorah. A rare example of a settler interested in creating peaceful relations with Palestinians who was engaged in coexistence work, she divulged to me (along with other, non-settler Israelis I met) that she had no idea that military raids, flying checkpoints, and wider economic impacts of mobility restrictions had a negative impact on Palestinian life.

The enforcement of segregation and erasure has resulted in a situation where Israelis know little about Palestinians, and Palestinians through their limited access to Israel through employment relations or incarceration know something of Israeli life, but in a limited fashion shaped by power imbalances. The importance of dual approaches, then, is tripartite. Firstly, Israeli and Palestinian scholars have limited access to each other, and the majority of work is conducted within Israel and therefore in a significantly different political and economic setting. While Palestinians and Israelis living inside Israel also live in relative segregation, they are often literate in the same language (Hebrew) and able to communicate and placed in the same settings, often shared workplaces. Palestinian scholars in the West Bank have few opportunities to leave the West Bank and would not be able to enter settlements as anything other than manual labourers or service industry employees.

Secondly, and as is made clear by a recent early English-language collection of work on settlement (Allegra, Handel, and Maggor 2017), the majority of scholars conducting work on settlements are Israeli. While their contributions are valuable, the framing of settlement as a colonial endeavour negates the notion that Israeli scholars must understand their status as Israelis as colonisers. This work draws a distinction between settlers of the West Bank and Israeli in general, when in fact, West Bank settlement is simply an extension of existing Israeli settlement. Because of their lack of access to Palestinian spaces, the Palestinian experience of settlement is silenced in this volume, replicating a wider Zionist silencing of Palestinian narratives. It therefore falls to foreign researchers to negotiate access to both spaces, and to be able to do so in ways sensitive to the power dynamics at play. This creates an important space for anthropological research, though also invites critique of the colonial nature of anthropologists' expectation to conduct research at will, highlighting the importance of activist and ethically sensitive research. What I hope to have shown in this thesis is that while this kind of research is ethically complex and politically controversial, when done sensitively and with these power imbalances in mind, it is able to challenge misconceptions and reveal ethnographic truths about heterogeneities of experience in the West Bank.

A third significance of dual studies is in that they should also not only be oriented towards co-existence between Palestinians and Israelis. My work does not propose coexistence strategies or imploring Israelis to respect the human rights of Palestinians under occupation as potential outcomes from this kind of research. It also recognises that coexistence efforts represent to many Palestinians the normalisation of the occupation, something they reject as silencing their experiences to date. However, an understanding of the everyday lives of the region's residents in relation to mobility does hold several uses. Initially, it highlights a need for mutual education as Devorah's efforts showed. Both settlers and Palestinians demonstrated little knowledge of each other's cultures, and particularly for settlers who seek to occupy and remove Palestinians from the West Bank were unable to separate the categories of 'Palestinian', 'terrorist', 'Muslim,' and 'Arab' analytically, and used them interchangeably. Many of the settlers I met also repeated to me confidently that the Palestinians they had encountered wished to live under Israeli and democratic rule.

The framing of Palestinians as foreigners and migrants to the region particularly demonstrated the ways that Zionism has permeated their understandings of the region's migration history, and the ways that a Palestinian narrative of indigeneity has been silenced in their culture. Zionist histories of migration and the notion of Jews as living in either the diaspora outside Israel or at home in Israel draws attention to the ways in which they frame the mobility of Palestinians; because Israelis and settlers have recently been mobile, this agency in migration is projected onto Palestinians; because Israelis have recently migrated, so too can Palestinians, for a better life elsewhere. This narrative reflects wider anti-immigrant rhetoric also found in in the west, perhaps empowered by the recent successes of right-wing governments drawing on anti-immigrant rhetoric to encourage 'foreigners' to 'go elsewhere' or 'back' to their homelands. These western governments ignore or obscure, like Israel, their colonial pasts and their histories of occupation of countries that deliberately impoverished the occupied populations and rendered them economically dependent on their occupying powers or migration to the seats of their former colonial occupiers. It also challenges notions of living in a post-colonial era; Israel's ongoing and rapidly changing colonisation of Palestine demonstrates a modern-day repetition of colonial economic policies as impacting notions of mobility and migration.

The study of the mobility of two groups claiming the same territory, considered in historical and infrastructural perspective, offers us myriad ways of thinking about the present day and the future, in Palestine and elsewhere. What I offer in this research is ethnographic knowledge around the

experiences of mobility and immobility that now bear sudden relevance to the experiences of many during the pandemic. What we as individuals and anthropologists can make of these findings depends on our capacities to practice compassion, both to those with whom we conduct fieldwork, those about whom we know very little, and ourselves as researchers. Explorations of futility, of existential dread, and of immobility are necessary avenues for further research, but within this work, space must be made for our own accounts of these emotions and experiences. A compassionate turn draws on these experiences while framing them as neither a necessity nor superfluous to anthropological analysis, but simply a reminder that our work can serve to produce and share empathy.

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