In Black & White & Red / بالأبيض وأسود وأحمر
By
Abir Dabbour

A thesis exhibition presented to OCAD University in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of a Master of Fine Arts in Criticism & Curatorial Practice

Ada Slaight Gallery, 100 McCaul Street, March 26-31

Toronto, Ontario, Canada, 2025

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Abstract

From 1982 onwards, Palestinian photographic and film archives have been repeatedly targeted and emptied by the Israeli government, resulting in a significant loss of Palestinian visual culture. The Israeli government continues to hold and censor this material by preventing scholars, Palestinian scholars especially, from accessing the images; citing 'safety and security concerns'. Established research asserts this was done as an act of 'memoricide', commonly defined as the colonial overwriting of history. In this case it would be erasing Palestinian presence to fortify Israeli claims of indigeneity. This paper poses an alternative interpretation: that this censorship is an attempt to weaken or prevent future Palestinian resistance, as well as global Anti-Zionist resistance movements. Ergo, that memory and the archives (both those of the state and the mundane) have acted, and continue to act, as a cornerstone of Arab resistance against the influences of racism, colonialism, imperialism, and Zionism. Drawing on both archival and contemporary Palestinian photography, this research aims to track the qualities of resistance embedded within the images which have persisted. Complementing this will be a case study of South African struggle documentary photography, and Indigenous archival reclamations to observe the decolonial methodologies within photographic practices; through examination and comparison to Palestinian resistance photography, similarities and differences in tactics of resistance will be identified, allowing for specific location of these images' significance within shared memory. Despite all this, it may appear insignificant whether the archives were looted to support a narrative or to prevent resistance. Regardless of the reason, they were, and are, taken. This research asserts that it allows for more focused resistance and a clearer understanding of what may be enfeebling the current resistance.

Keywords: Palestine, Israel, Archive, Photography, Film

Acknowledgement

According to Islamic faith, we are all created from earth: making separation from one's land not only a spiritual injury, but a physical one as well. And I think of the stolen land beneath my feet as I write this, illegally settled and taken from the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation, the Anishinabek, the Haudenosaunee confederacy, the Wendake, and the Mississauga; and although the land had long been settled, it was only in 1923 that ownership was officially given to what is now known as Canada. We must be quiet to learn, but speak out loudly to resist, for the indigenous people of Turtle Island and Palestine, who are overcoming settler-colonialism together.

No words can convey my gratitude to the most selfless parents anyone could ask for, who uprooted and came to this land to ensure I could follow my dreams. Whose presence permeates every step of this project, from helping with translation to the exhibit's installation, because their unwavering belief made anything seem possible. An immense thank you as well to my supervisors whose patience, guidance, and continuous support have been indispensable to seeing this through in the face of censorship. Finally, thank you to the Palestinian Museum Digital Archive and the numerous other organizations and individuals whose steadfast work allows these archives, no matter how scattered, to exist in our communities. We continue to do this work in the hope that one day Palestinians will finally be able to return home insha'allah.

In Arabic, the difference between the words صورة (lit. photograph, pronounced soo-rah) and ثورة (lit. revolution, pronounced thou-rah) is a single letter. Like rhyming couplets in English, these are two words which only happen to share similar sounds, but gain greater meaning in their union. Traditional Arabic is heavily influenced by poetry and music; grammatical rules pertain to the beat of each word based on its syllables, forming a greater lyrical prose which ebbs and flows when read. It speaks to the hybridity inherent to this project as a diasporic Arab: always thinking across dualities. Across art and politics. Across Arabic and English. Across oceans between here and there. Dualities which became increasingly pronounced and uncomfortable since October 2023; like suddenly becoming acutely aware of how your tongue sits inside your mouth – an awkward sensation that had been there all along, but you only just became consciously aware of. Just like in 2001, my presence on this settled land had become conditional on my assimilation, and I could no longer ignore it. This allowed me to find community in resistance: whether it was at protests or concerts, solidarity was a constant theme of any Arab community event.

So if being Arab has become a politicized identity, then let it be known that my name is not Abir, but عبير*.

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* عبير is the native spelling and correct pronunciation of Abir in Arabic, which contains a phonetic that does not exist in English.

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1. <u>Introduction</u>

In 1982, when Beirut was besieged by Israeli forces[1], the Beirut Archives of the Palestinian Research Centre along with the Palestine Cinema Institute, were almost completely emptied of their collections. From the Palestinian Research Centre alone, over 25, 000 books, as well as photographs, film reels, videos, and documents were looted.[2] The photographs and videos were particularly concerned with archiving Palestinian refugees and camps, as well as resistance fighters, important battles, and political events. These collections still remain in the possession of the Israeli government under the name "PLO Archives"; which remain inaccessible by anyone outside of the Israeli government.[3]

Later in 2001, the same pattern would be repeated in the looting of The Orient House (Bayt Al-Sharq/بيت ألشرق) and the Arab Studies Society in Jerusalem, which had the largest photographic collection of Palestine at the time; spanning the Ottoman period to then-present, with a particular focus on family photos from the British Mandate period (1918-1948) and a photographic survey of Palestine conducted from 1980-84. This looting was carried out despite signed agreement between the Israeli government and Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) protecting the archives of The Orient House as part of the Oslo Accords.[4]

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[1] A major event during the Lebanese Civil War, when Beirut was bombed and invaded by Israel and its allied forces for a two-month period beginning in mid-June.

[2] Nur Masalha. 2012. *The Palestine Nakba: Decolonising History, Narrating the Subaltern, Reclaiming Memory*.

[3] Khelil Bouarrouj. 2017. *"Looted & Hidden": Israel's Futile Attempts to Erase Palestinian History.*

[4] Jerusalem Quarterly. Summer 2001 issue. *The Looted Archives of the Orient House.*

More recently, in 2021 was the raid of the Dar Yusuf Nasri Jacir for Art and Research, founded by Palestinian photographer and filmmaker Emily Jacir[5]; during which "the offices were ransacked, and equipment was taken including phones, computers, hard drives, cameras, books and more."[6] As well as setting several fires surrounding the house, in a clear continuation of the same behavior by Israeli occupational forces. Finally, most recently was the raid and closure of the Al Jazeera offices on September 22nd, 2024, when heavily armed Israeli soldiers stormed the Al Jazeera offices in Ramallah. The offices were ordered to shut down for 45 days, based on accusations of "incitement to and support of terrorism", cameras were confiscated, and staff were told to leave all equipment behind. Al Jazeera staff have voiced concerns about the potential destruction or confiscation of their archives which are held in the same location, due to the presence of engineers[7] with the Israeli soldiers. The offices remain closed until now, and entrance is sealed by welded steel plates over the doors. Like the 2001 raid, this was illegal and a massive overstep of jurisdiction since Ramallah is under control of the Palestinian National Authority as per, once again, the Oslo Accords.

So then, why was the Israeli government so intent on ensuring the loss of a visual Palestinian archive? Current research[8] suggests these were carried out in what Palestinian political historian and scholar Nur Masalha has coined 'memoricide', an effort to erase Palestinian presence

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[5] Alex Greenberger. 2021. *Israeli Forces Reportedly Damage Artist Emily Jacir's West Bank Art Center*.
[6] Dar Yusuf Nasri Jacir for Art and Research website. 2021.
[7] Al Jazeera. 2024. *Israel closes Al Jazeera bureau in Ramallah: All you need to know*.
[8] Lila Abou-Lughod. 2018. *Palestine: Doing Things with Archives*.; Nur Masalha. 2012. *The Palestine Nakba: Decolonising History, Narrating the Subaltern, Reclaiming Memory*.; Chandni Desai and Rula Shahwan. 2022. *Preserving Palestine: Visual Archives, Erased Curriculum, and Counter-Archiving amid Archival Violence in the Post-Oslo Period*.

to fortify Israeli claims of indigeneity, which I do not refute. However, I suggest that these were also efforts to erase Palestinian generational memory in an effort to weaken or prevent future resistance due to powerful resistant aesthetic elements within the images themselves, which are capable of politically activating the viewer. An exploration of the historical timelines and qualities of both Orientalist and indigenous Arab photography will provide a foundation, identifying patterns of resistance within Arab photography, their continuation in the modern and contemporary, particularly the active self-expression and legacy building within the lens. This will be supplemented by a discussion of the supporting exhibition to this paper, and how this research was reflected within it. The paper will conclude with a comparison of Palestinian resistance photography to South African struggle documentary and Indigenous archival reclamations to compare their resistant qualities, how they overlap and differ according to the unique circumstances of their colonization. By making this comparison, the importance and ability of the archives to resist can be more clearly identified to direct contemporary resistant practices and photography.

2. <u>Historical and Literature Review</u>

The politics of photography run deeper in the Middle East and North Africa than perhaps anywhere else in the world[9], manifesting from several converging factors; the coinciding of photography's emergence with European invasion of the region, the environmental features of the region which facilitated photo-taking (primarily intense sun exposure[10]), and a desire to experiment with photography as a means to survey the land in the interests of colonization and war. Egypt and Palestine were the experimental grounds of aerial photography carried out via carrier pigeons or airplanes[11], paving the path for the later global debut of drone technology to also take place in the Middle East with the same goals. It was aerial photographic surveying which made it possible for the British General Allenby to capture 1,620 square kilometres of Palestine from the Ottoman Empire by mapping out the geography with a degree of accuracy that was not previously possible.[12]

At the same time that photography was beginning to emerge in the late 19th century and early 20th century, Europe was also expanding its colonial influence towards the Middle East. This meant that both Europeans and Arabs were learning about and experimenting with the camera almost concurrently, rather than the classic understanding of Europeans simply importing photography and European practice being adopted wholly.[13] Photography and its history cannot be assumed to be universal, since such an assumption ignores that photographs are historic products influenced

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[9] Andrew Gayed. 2024. "Trauma and the Single Narrative: Reading Arab Art and Photography." *Queer World Making: Contemporary Middle Eastern Diasporic Art*. 2024.

[10] Ali Behdad and Luke Gartlan. 2013. *Photography's Colonialism: New Essays on Colonial Representation*.

[11] John Hannavy. 2008. *Encyclopedia of Nineteenth-Century Photography*.

[12] Falls; Becke, *Military Operations Egypt & Palestine from June 1917 to the End of the War* Part I, p. 309.

[13] Markus Ritter and Staci Scheiwiller. 2018. *The Indigenous Lens? Early Photography in the Near and Middle East*.

by the photographer's interpretations, social context, and way of seeing through the camera's lens. This is the basis for the idea of the 'indigenous lens', which are the local characteristics of photography in a given area; essentially, it is the way that photography adapted to the local geographic and social environments but is equally inclusive of what is *not* shown in photographs. An example given is that the earliest photographers in the Middle East refused to capture images of living things, such as people or animals due to reasons of faith; the illustrated depiction of anything unseen (since the soul is unseen, anything possessing a soul is understood to be prohibited in Islam), the very same reason that pre-modern Islamic art and architecture feature primarily calligraphy and plant motifs rather than figural depictions. Ergo, when photography was first introduced, there was intense theological debate regarding this new means of image-making and whether it was permissible or not. This can be observed in the photographs taken by Muhammad Sadiq Bey, the first person to photograph the region and introduce photography to the region, whose initial photographs are all landscapes (mainly of the *Ka'aba*[14] and *Al-Medina Al-Munawarrah*[15]). This is just one example of the ways in which photography was being explored

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[14] Literally translates to 'cube', it is a mosque and the holiest site of pilgrimage for Muslims, located in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.
[15] Literally translates to 'the enlightened city', it is a holy site for Muslims, located in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

and   established   by   the   people   native   to   the   region.
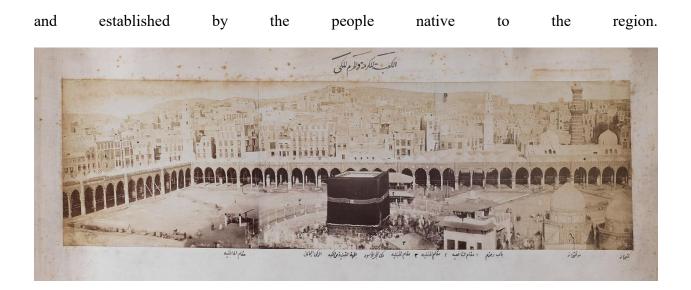
Figure 2.1: Muhammad Sadiq Bey. Panorama of the Ka'bah and the Meccan sanctuary. 1880. Albumen Print. 17.1 x 63.7 cm. Khalili Collection.

Upon the establishing of photo studios, the indigenous lens would become more identifiable. Behdad discusses tourist photography in *Camera Orientalis*[16], observing the shocking consistency across French, English, and German tourist photo albums, which all include the same types of photos in the same order; panoramic views, local monuments such as palaces and mosques, local people dressed in their traditional work clothes, and fetishistic images of local women. These albums were put together by local photo studios aiming to profit from European travelers' desire to take images of the 'exotic' back home. However, these same studios also provided services to local people, whose pictures were radically different. Stephen Sheehi, an Arabic Studies scholar, examines the means in which photography was adopted and understood in the region, primarily as a scientific pursuit and means of documentation rather than anything

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[16] Ali Behdad. 2016. *Camera Orientalis.*

artistic.[17] To that end, portrait photographs were taken to establish or preserve a legacy, particularly within the effendiyah[18] bourgeois. This emphasis on legacy making reveals considerations of the photograph in the future: something that will outlast generations and carry their memories. The integration of legacies into the photograph's taking and handling provide a unique futurism to the development of Arab photographic practices. These pictures differed from the Europeans' gaze in that they were not exaggerated, featured tradition but made no spectacle of it; indicating that self-orientalization had not yet begun.

Figure 2.2 (left): Unknown photographer. Louis Sabounji, black and white portrait. Photograph.

Figure 2.3 (right): Felix Bonfils. Arab Man Smoking Pipe. Late 1800's. Photograph.

Obsessions with the aesthetics of the Orient ultimately set up any subjects as passive props within the scene, whereas means of self-representation engage the subject as an active member of

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[17] Stephen Sheehi. 2021. *The Arab Imago: A Social History of Portrait Photography, 1860 –1910.*
[18] A title used within the Ottoman Empire to denote a man of higher education and/or class.

the process. Sheehi notes that subjects in self-representational photographs strive to appear as intellectual as possible, wearing icons associated with education such as the fez[19], sirwal pants[20], and kubran waistcoats[21]. Additionally, the subject often gazes off to the photograph's right as if reading something beyond the lens. Therefore, self-representational photography is defined by attributing the subject traits colonial photography would otherwise deprive them. It becomes clear then, why Egypt and Palestine have a particularly fraught relationship with the camera, which was historically used as a tool of military conquest and to claim ownership over both geographic and human subjects, as previously discussed. Even contemporarily, despite (or perhaps because of) the high volume of tourism within the Middle East and North Africa, the people of the region are often hostile and distrustful towards the camera, correctly identifying it as an inherently politicized object (and potentially weapon). This makes the reclamation of the camera by the Palestinian resistance all the more significant, a colonial object recontextualized for anti-colonial self representation. Whereas photography was historically used to establish the Arab subject as intelligent and modern, contemporary Palestinian photography and film establish the Palestinian subject as a free agent; an era described by Arabic Literature scholar Nadia Yaqub as Palestinians portraying themselves as liberators in control of their own destiny.[22]

Such self-representation threatens colonial narratives and justifications, as asserted by Masalha, who posits that the Israeli government's claims of indigeneity to the land and desire to erase Palestinian presence motivate their interest in Palestinian archives; this is built on a body of

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[19] A short, red, cylindrical flat-topped hat, often with a black tassel attached to its top. Also known as the tarboosh.
[20] Loose pants cinched at the ankles, originating from Persia.
[21] A type of patterned vest or waistcoat, worn over a thawb or jellabiya (ankle-length, long-sleeved garments traditionally worn by men), often left open rather than buttoned.
[22] Nadia Yaqub. 2018. *Palestinian Cinema in the Days of Revolution.*

prior research which claims and supports the same premise. Most notably, Rona Sela, an Anti-Zionist Israeli curator and historian whose many years of delving into colonial archives, and particularly the Israeli archives, has yielded the same conclusion. Sela posits across several publications that colonial archives exist in a symbiotic relationship with the state[23]; but in the case of Israel, the Palestinian archives must be looted and concealed for this to be a possibility. The state achieves this by imposing "restrictions and obstacles on viewing it [Palestinian archives] even if the censorship period has passed, and put great effort into preventing research that has the potential to rupture the official Israeli narrative"[24] as well as whitewashing the settler colony's violent past which established it[25]. However, Sela also makes several interesting observations. Firstly, that her Palestinian peers were outright denied any access to the same archives she was granted limited access to. Secondly, that some parts of the archive were completely closed indefinitely with the justification that they "might seriously harm state's security, foreign relations or the right to privacy", most notably is state security being listed first and foremost, suggesting something beyond a narrative. Considering these two facts together, one reaches the conclusion that these archives' role in resistance empowerment is a consideration the Israeli government has made, and continues to make. This explains refusals to allow Palestinians to access any part of the archives, and the concerns around state security from a collection of photographs. Lastly, Sela observes that "[Israeli soldiers] took everything indiscriminately without paying any attention to its intelligence importance" during the 1982 siege of Palestinian institutions in Beirut. This is consistent with the looting of family photos in the 2001 siege, and ergo strongly indicates that even the most mundane visual archives pose a threat; simultaneously establishing a Palestinian presence

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[23] Rona Sela. 2017. *The Genealogy of Colonial Plunder and Erasure – Israel's Control over Palestinian Archives.*
[24] Rona Sela. 2017. *Seized in Beirut: The Plundered Archives of the Palestinian Cinema Institution and Cultural Arts Section.*
[25] Rona Sela. 2016. *The Hump of Colonialism, Or the Archive as a Site of Resistance.*

and strengthening future resistance. Curiously, visual archives of Palestine taken by non-Arabs, such as the photographic records of The American Colony[26], experience no censorship[27], which only further establishes the significance of self-representation as a factor in the photographs' censorship.

A slightly different opinion is posited by Norma Musih, who describes photographs as a bridging of locations between Israel and Palestine[28]: a means of 'visiting' locations via imagining. Musih goes on to describe the Zionist imaginary as erasing the past to rewrite it to support their narrative, aligning with both Masalha's definition of memoricide and Sela's conclusions. Musih then goes on to describe how memory activates imagination, and it is through allowing open access to memory that a layered understanding of place can be achieved to create space for both Palestinians and Israelis to occupy. This is an optimistic but impossible reality, no better than suggestions for a two-state solution, which altogether ignore the genocidal reality of the Israeli settler colonial project. The author's suggestions also make the assumption that Israelis are widely unaware of the violence their state has enacted, and need to be informed of this; yet another optimistic but impossible reality, clearer now in the ongoing Nakba[29] than ever before. Finally, the article wholly treats Palestinians as passive subjects, refugees quietly awaiting permission to return and living vicariously through vintage photographs. This aligns with the prior discussion of

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[26] A group of primarily American and Swedish Christian pilgrims, which began settling in Jerusalem in 1881.
[27] Library of Congress. Matson (G. Eric and Edith) Photograph Collection.
[28] Norma Musih. 2023. *Bridging memories: training the imagination to go visiting in Israel/Palestine*.
[29] Originally refers to the 1948 event during which Zionist militia groups violently expelled Palestinians from their land following an imposed UN partitioning plan to establish Israel, resulting in one of the biggest forced displacement events of its century. The word's English translation is 'catastrophe'.

Orientalist approaches to photography in the region, and their treatment of Arab subjects as passive objects to project onto.

Palestinians' role as active subjects within their own visual archives is undeniable, is the reason the archives were stolen, and the reason for our continued mourning of their loss. As eloquently put in *Camera Palaestina*'s introduction:

"In other words, the starting point for this study is rejecting a nostalgic framework that erases social relations within the Palestinian polity and sees Palestinians in photographs as one-dimensional, frozen, lost, and tragic objects of the past. On the contrary, we see in the active presence of Palestinian subjects in the photographs the precedent to the counter-visuality offered by the Palestinian Resistance."[30]

Altogether, *Camera Palaestina*, while mostly acquiescing to the normative view of the archive's significance to the Zionist narrative, also introduces the suggestion that resistance photography is both an expression of citizenship and the deprivation of citizenship under colonial rule. This is a strikingly similar sentiment expressed in *Our Faithfulness to the Past: The Ethics and Politics of Memory*[31], that memory "secures our identities, is at the core of our practices of responsibility, and is the basis of our sense of temporality." This implies that memory itself is resistance, since memory forms identity, and identity becomes currency in resistance. In this vein, the vectors of memory, such as photographic archives, become a form of resistance unto themselves, transforming the Palestinian archive from a repository of memory into a pillar of

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[30] Nassar, Issam, Stephen Sheehi, and Salīm Tamārī. 2022. *Camera Palaestina: Photography and Displaced Histories of Palestine*. 3.
[31] Sue Campbell, Christine M. Koggel, and Rockney Jacobsen. 2014. *Our Faithfulness to the Past: The Ethics and Politics of Memory.*

identity. This quality of resistance photography is shared among other forms of resistance photography, such as South African resistance photography. Newbury writes "Success was not measured primarily in aesthetic terms, but by the impact of the images in condemning the system of apartheid and raising the consciousness of national and international audiences"[32], manifesting in similarities across both movements, which will be later discussed in further detail.

Despite all this, how is it significant whether the archives were looted to support a colonial narrative or to prevent future resistance? Regardless of the reason, they were, and are, taken. The answer would be that it allows for more focused resistance and a clearer understanding of what may be enfeebling the current resistance. Israel has completely broken the ceasefire agreement, killing over 400 people in Gaza on the evening of March 17, 2025, alone, and blocking critical aid to manufacture starvation and disease within the Gaza strip, as well as illegally attacking Palestinian communities within the West Bank. These events have all contributed to a global movement rallying for a liberated Palestine; it is the global resistance which these images' lack has affected. The censorship of the archives disproportionately targets Palestinians in an attempt to interrupt generational memory and the inheritance of the resistance. Ergo, the loss of this visual material weakens everyone within the movement, non-Palestinian and non-Arabs more so; I aim to rectify that through this exhibit. To educate, empower, and reveal.

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[32] Darren Newbury. 2010. *Defiant Images: Photography and Apartheid in South Africa*. 219.

3. <u>Exhibition</u>

The exhibit features artists from Palestine whose photographic works touch on themes of memory and preservation, with the name,

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deriving from the three colors of Arab liberation, visible in nearly every flag in the Southwest Asia and North Africa (SWANA) region. The exhibit is primarily focused on photography but also includes film, necessarily so because both media played equally significant roles in 20th century Palestinian resistance art, as well as often made by the same artists. The exhibit is an attempt to address the archives' loss by platforming it to a public audience, ensuring this visual material exists within collective imaginations. Since these photographs' physicality lend them a generational quality through inheritance (whether from person to person, person to state, or state to public) central to their ability to empower resistance movements, and this project positions itself as the next step in this chain of inheritance, moving the archival material from state to public. Featuring four main bodies of work: a series of archival photographs, an archival film, a series of contemporary photographs, and a collage combining both archival and contemporary. By blending archival and contemporary elements, the exhibit acknowledges the role of the archive and those who contribute to it: simultaneously looking forwards and back, at what they were given and what they will give in return. The archival artworks become the basis for contemporary work, and contemporary artworks eventually enter the archive. It is the aim that the exhibit avoids anchoring itself in specific times, to communicate the continuous and ongoing nature of the struggle, and to make a contemporary connection to historical moments, such as the archive lootings.

In the ongoing Nakba, a continuation of the Nakba in 1948, it is more critical now than ever to hold the Israeli colonial entity accountable through recordkeeping and empower global resistance through such accountability and collective memory. Featuring artists Jude Abu Zaineh, Hani Jawharieh, Rehab Nazzal, and Mustafa Abu Ali, the exhibit exclusively showcases Palestinian artists working with film and photography; these media were selected due to their significance as decolonial reclamations. Classical media, such as paintings and sculptures occupy an aesthetic niche, partly due to challenges surrounding their transportation and dissemination. However, film and digital media are more easily produced and communicated to wider audiences, by being reproduced and transmitted, granting them a political dynamic. A dynamic recognized by colonized people around the world who quickly and effectively deployed the camera as a counter-colonial object to build nation-building visual archives.

As a significant part of the Palestine Research Centre archives that were stolen, it would be remiss to not include the work of Hani Jawharieh (also spelled Hany Jawhariyye), who acted as the head of the PLO's Photography Department until his death in 1976.[33] Jawharieh recorded a great number of subjects during his post, particularly the resistance fighters and their lives, which he felt would be significant to the Palestinians of the future as well as to allow Palestinians to take charge of their own visual narrative. Jawharieh's style can be understood as documentary photography devoid of war photography (images of extreme violence and suffering), which aligns with other resistant photo practices from colonized populations, particularly South Africa.[34] Practicing photography in this way inspires and rallies the target audience, rather than

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[33] Vladimir Tamari. *Remembering my Friend Hani Jawharieh*.
[34] Darren Newbury. 2010. *Defiant Images: Photography and Apartheid in South Africa*.

retraumatizing or causing despair; as well as aestheticizing the struggle against colonization, rather than its horrifying aftermath. The handful of Jawharieh's images now available to us are those posthumously published by the Palestine Cinema Institute, copies of which were donated to the Palestinian Museum Digital Archive and are publicly available on their website as a special collection. These images were selected on the basis of how they effectively portray the diversity in subject matter Hani Jawharieh shot, and in doing so, the numerous facets of Palestinian resistance. Figure 2 in particular, in which a rock has been draped with the first words of a Palestinian revolutionary anthem, reading "I, my brother, have believed in wasted and chained peoples." Whereas Figure 1 is intended to be a powerful visual summary of the exhibit's main themes' intersection: resistance, photography, and Arabness. These images were selected from among the 18 as the only remnants of the Palestine Research Centre collection still accessible to us today, but provide insight into the content of the rest of the collection and what may have been lost. Politically powerful images which deny a passive viewing, inspiring anti-colonial sentiment within the colonized viewer and demanding engagement from the colonizer.
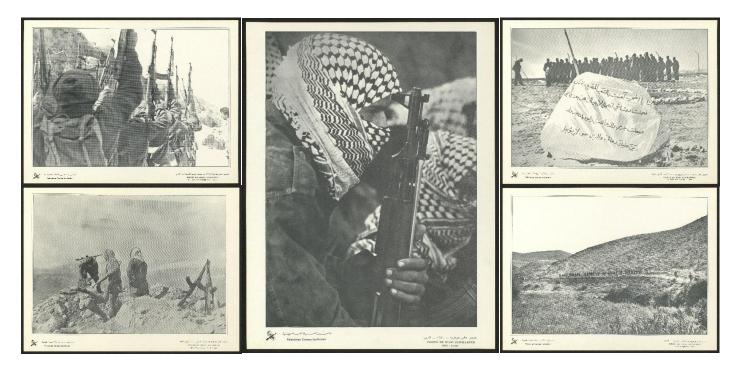
Figure 3.1 (middle): Hani Jawharieh. A Palestinian Fidaʾi. 1970. A photograph from Palestinian Images Magazine. Obtained from the Palestinian Museum Digital Archive.

Figure 3.2 (top-right): Hani Jawharieh. The Palestinian Revolution Anthems at al-Baka Training Camp. 1969. A photograph from Palestinian Images Magazine. Obtained from The Palestinian Museum Digital Archive.

Figure 3.3 (bottom-right): Hani Jawharieh. Palestinian Fedayeen in al-Aghwar, Jordan. 1969. A photograph from Palestinian Images Magazine. Obtained from The Palestinian Museum Digital Archive.

Figure 3.4 (bottom-left): Hani Jawharieh. A Group of Fidayeen on Aintoura Mountains. 1976. A photograph from the Palestinian Images Magazine. Obtained from The Palestinian Museum Digital Archive.

Figure 3.5 (top-left): Hani Jawharieh. A Group of Palestinian Fedayeen at Alsokhnah Camp. 1968. A photograph from the Palestinian Images Magazine. Obtained from The Palestinian Museum Digital Archive.

Jawharieh's work was incredibly influential to post-Nakba Palestinian photography and filmmaking, setting standards for how these media would be used as a formal tool of resistance and a means of furthering the Palestinian cause. Furthermore, Jawharieh's co-founding of the Palestine Cinema Institute and the International Festival for Films and Programs on Palestine (a Palestinian film festival) provided young Palestinian artists both the education of filmmaking and means of disseminating their films. Jawharieh's life, death, practice, and context were all elaborated upon in the short documentary *Palestine in the Eye* (1977), directed by Mustafa Abu Ali and published posthumously by the Palestine Cinema Institute in memory of Hani Jawharieh.

Abu Ali is another key figure in Palestinian cinema, co-founding the Palestine Cinema Institute as a friend of Jawharieh's, a relationship which becomes evident with the grieving overtures of *Palestine in the Eye*, including clips from Jawharieh's funeral and wake. The film strategically employs Modern Standard Arabic and dialectical Arabic to give dimension to Jawharieh's political practice and personal life respectively; despite these frequently blurring due to the nature of activist and resistant work. The formal Arabic is spoken in relation to Jawharieh's work within the PLO, their mission, and political discourses, whereas the vernacular Arabic is spoken by personal relations of Jawharieh's to speak to him as a human being, his life and ethics, which lends the film a unique intimacy[35].

"Palestine in the Eye"

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[35] Nadia Yaqub. 2018. *Palestinian Cinema in the Days of Revolution.*

Figure 3.6: Still from Palestine in the Eye. 1977. Directed by Mustafa Abu Ali. Obtained from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z5gQaoRtxTg&ab_channel=ArabTunes

The film also makes many of the same assertions and connections made within this project, acknowledging the role of photography and filmmaking to resistance and the global relation of resistance movements, as an interviewed Palestinian resistance fighter says,

"Resistance Cinema is a cinema that expresses the aspiration of a people. It records their struggle for freedom. It communicates their experience to the rest of the world. It benefits our liberation struggle and the struggles of all oppressed nations." (8:39)

The inclusion of this film in the exhibit is key as a means of both acknowledging the intersection of photographic and film resistance, and properly honoring the inclusion of a deceased artist in the show. The film also invites visitors to sit down and learn much more about what the exhibit is discussing through a visual medium. Through a retelling of Jawharieh's life and work, the film is driven by a nation-making effort, including the Palestinian national anthem in the background as well as filming built and natural environments of Palestine to visualize the land. The final scenes take place in the first exhibition of Jawharieh's photography in 1977, hosted by the PLO and visited by its head at the time, Yasser Arafat. These final scenes speak to the legacy of Jawharieh's photographs, and their significance to the resistance. To the author's knowledge, *In Black & White & Red* marks the third time Jawharieh's photographs have been exhibited – first exhibited in Palestine in 1977 by the PLO, then in 2019 in London by Azza El Hassan[36], and then finally in 2025 in this exhibit. The film also provides visual and thematic context on many of the inclusions within this exhibit by showing footage taken at the same time as some of Jawharieh's images, and providing discourse on the relationship between photography, film, resistance, and

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[36] Robert Andrews. 2019. *Personal Matters of the Found Archive of Hani Jawherieh*.

memory; six years before the Palestinian archives were first looted. Overall, *Palestine in Eye* is able speak to Hani Jawharieh as a political figure and a friend, acknowledging the tragedy inherent to the cause.

Figures 3.7-3.10: Rehab Nazzal. 2015. Israeli Occupation Forces Uproot Ancient Olive Trees in Beit Jala, near Bethlehem, Palestine.

In an act of accountability, Rehab Nazzal created a series of photographs recording the actions of the Israeli police as they tore out ancient olive trees from the ground around Bethlehem. The images were collaboratively selected by the artist and curator to express a narrative of how these trees existed just prior to their uprooting, the violence of their removal, and then being stolen away to an unknown fate. As an allegory, there are undeniable similarities to the taking of the archives, particularly when both archive and tree are framed as keepers of generational memory.

These images balance the environment and the human subjects within them, making it clear that these photographs are taken to hold the people responsible accountable for this event. The taking of the olive trees is a colonial act, a deprivation of resources and livelihood from Palestinians, as well as exercising domination over the land. Nazzal's photos also express resistance simply by existing: by acting as a new archive in place of what was taken and by creating this archive with the express purpose of holding the occupier accountable. An especially critical act in the West Bank, which the occupation continues to contest and attempt to settle by illegally occupying. Nazzal's style intersects with Jawharieh in being documentary; although it employs more photojournalistic technique and framing by clearly being taken during a spontaneous event, whereas Jawharieh's were more deliberate and aesthetically motivated with strong elements of propaganda photography (which is not inherently negative, all photographs are taken for a subjective reason). Furthermore, both Nazzal and Jawharieh's artworks experienced similar publicity, with Jawharieh's images being widely used on resistance posters at the time, and Nazzal's images displayed on large billboards around Toronto as part of an exhibition. Within the exhibit, Nazzal and Jawharieh's artworks mirror each other by hanging on opposite walls, although Nazzal's images are horizontally oriented from right to left to mimic a camera roll and the direction of reading in Arabic, as well as providing a linear chronological understanding of the work. Such a setup creates a continuous flow of time and understanding across both artists, directly relating their practices to each other. This framing highlights similarities and differences in their practices, which similarly picture the land within the frame; but whereas Jawharieh captures the Palestinian subject, Nazzal captures the Israeli subject.
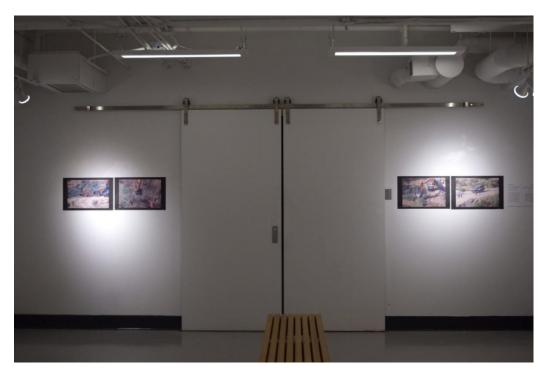
Figure 3.11: In Black & White & Red. 2025. Ada Slaight Gallery.

Jude Abu Zaineh's لو يذكر الزيتون غارسهُ، لصار الزيت دمعاً / *If the Olive Trees knew the hands that planted them…Their Oil would become Tears* (2022) combines vintage and contemporary photography in a large-scale vinyl wall collage; the collage comprises of archival photographs of the port of Jaffa (the hometown of the artist's mother) and the artist's own hands as they hold olive stems. The work also features repeating motifs of oranges, olives, and grape leaves as a reference to the agriculture of Palestine and "the potential of these seeds to germinate, disperse, and thrive in new terrains.".[37] The title of the work is a line from *On Resilience* ('An Alsumud/عن الصمود), a poem by Mahmoud Darwish, and altogether the work is a contemplation of Palestinian resistance through connecting the present land and its inhabitants to its past, invoking archival material as the intersection of grief, memory, and resistance. By characterizing Palestinians as the seeds of the

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[37] Jude Abu Zaineh. Artist website. If the Olive Trees knew…

land, the work complements Nazzal's, and creates a consistent theme of land, identity, and memory across all the exhibited works. The artwork also creates aesthetic cohesion within the exhibit, combining colour and monochrome photography within a brightly coloured composition, which immediately catches the attention of visitors as they enter. The work is large-scale, with the original measuring 34' x 16', and the exhibit reproduction 22' x 8'. The scale of the work pushes viewers to inspect the dream-like collage of color and pattern much closer to see the detail of the image, as well as forcing the viewer to step back to be able understand it in its entirety. The work's interaction with the viewer succeeds in preventing a passive viewing, and by extension, passivity in the face of settler-colonial violence against the people, land, and culture.[38]
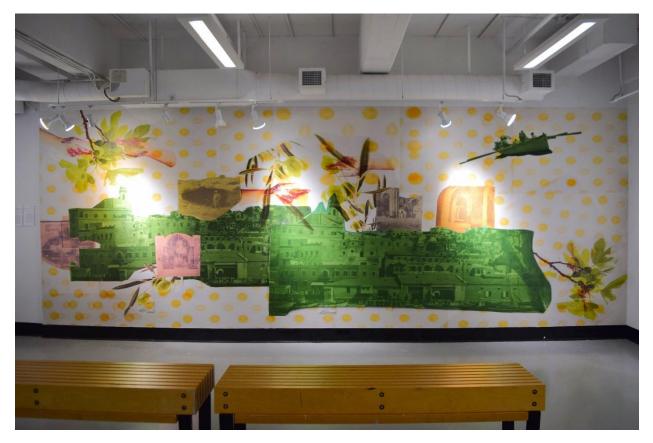
Figure 3.12: Jude Abu Zaineh. If the Olive Trees knew the hands that planted them…Their Oil would become Tears. 2022. Exhibited in In Black & White & Red, 2025.

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[38] Sa'ed Atshan and Katharina Galor. 2021. *Jerusalem, Museums, and Discourses on Settler Colonialism*.

Figure 3.13: In Black & White & Red. 2025. Ada Slaight Gallery.

The exhibit's circulation plan was designed to develop a timeline for visitors: starting with the didactic poster which anchors the show in a case study of the 1982 looting of the Palestine Cinema Institute, then immediately followed by Hani Jawharieh, whose work founded and significantly contributed to the Palestine Cinema Institute's archives. The visitor is encouraged to follow this circulation plan by the film roll emerging from behind the poster and leading to the label for Jawharieh's work, as well as the benches in the middle of the room which create a naturally ambulatory path. The second work is Jude Abu Zaineh's large-scale vinyl, which leads the visitor to walk its length and carefully examine it, part by part, before arriving at its label and description at the end of the wall. Since the vinyl has both monochromatic archival photographs and colored contemporary photographs, it also creates a transition from archival to contemporary

material, which are Rehab Nazzal's photographs. I chose to juxtapose Nazzal's photographs next to Abu Zaineh's vinyl as both being works which feature olive trees: first as a symbol of empowerment in the vinyl, and then being uprooted and destroyed in the photographs. Framing them this way speaks to the incredible damage even these indirect forms of violence enact. Nazzal's photos were also specifically included as contemporary color photos to bring the exhibit into the present-day, and avoid making it historical or separate from current events. Finally, Mustafa Abu Ali's film welcomes visitors to sit down and learn more about Jawharieh's life and the Palestine Cinema Institute, allowing the exhibition to come full-circle by returning to its initial starting point both literally in terms of the physical space and metaphorically in terms of the content. The film was initially intended to be projected on the wall, however technical difficulties made it impossible to do so and the film was instead shown on the tv.

In Black & White & Red continuously aims to connect human and land, with every work including elements of both: Jawharieh's photographs picture resistance fighters among their environment, Abu Zaineh's vinyl combines her hands and agricultural symbols of Palestine, Nazzal's photographs picture Palestinian and Israeli subjects among the olive tree grove, and Abu Ali's film includes shots of the resistance and Palestine's built and natural environments. Before leaving, visitors return to the 'lobby' at the entrance, which has the postcards, curatorial essay, guestbook, and the didactic poster with three QR codes. This is an opportunity for them to engage with the exhibit on a deeper level according to their preference, with several channels of engagement offered.

The exhibit is intentionally designed and planned to maximize public exposure: being set in one of OCAD University's most public-facing and accessible galleries, widespread advertising via multiple channels, and guest lectures. This was done in the hope that it would create space for Palestine to be allowed in mainstream discussions of art, politics, history, and decolonization. Artistic expression is one of the few remaining avenues for Palestinian liberation in the West, but it is quickly disappearing due to Zionist pressure. Cancelled film screenings, artworks taken down, defunding, online smear campaigns, and gallery personnel firings have become commonplace events for anything related to Palestine. However, these did not happen without resistance, and led to the emergence of coalitions and organizations to protect artistic expression. Movements like the Palestinian Campaign for the Academic and Cultural Boycott of Israel (PACBI) and Writers Against the War on Gaza (WAWOG) emerged to rally scholars, artists, writers, and gallery workers for the Palestinian cause. Which this exhibition aligns itself with by adhering to the organizations' guidelines and methodologies to contribute and operate within the existing Palestinian cause. An example of this is by collaborating with SAVAC (South Asian Visual Arts Centre) for their Postcards for Palestine effort, which commissioned artists to create postcards for the Palestinian cause to be distributed and encourage people to mail them to their elected representatives. These postcards were put on a table at the front of the exhibit to ensure visibility to visitors as they enter the space. Overall, the exhibit highlights raising awareness, and having briefly educated visitors, to then direct them to calls to action within the frameworks provided by local chapters of the Palestinian cause. The educational aspect of the exhibition is complemented by the two additional QR codes provided, which lead to *The Palestinian Museum Digital Archive* and *The Interactive Encyclopedia of the Palestine Question* respectively. *The Palestinian Museum Digital Archive* is the source for Jawharieh's images in the exhibit, and also curates a large digitized collection of

Palestinian artworks, posters, newspaper and magazine articles on their website. The goal is to forward visitors to the website to allow them to freely explore the new Palestinian archives being created and see how the exhibit fits into the larger scope of Palestinian aesthetics. *The Interactive Encyclopedia of the Palestine Question* is an Anti-Zionist source for general knowledge relating to Palestinian history, culture, and terminology within the exhibit, such as Nakba and Sumud; it acts as an accessible entry point for visitors who are not as familiar with the cause and its history. Altogether, the research and accompanying exhibit emphasize an alignment with pre-existing global decolonial movements and methodologies to ensure consistency between the research, exhibition, and their activist goals.
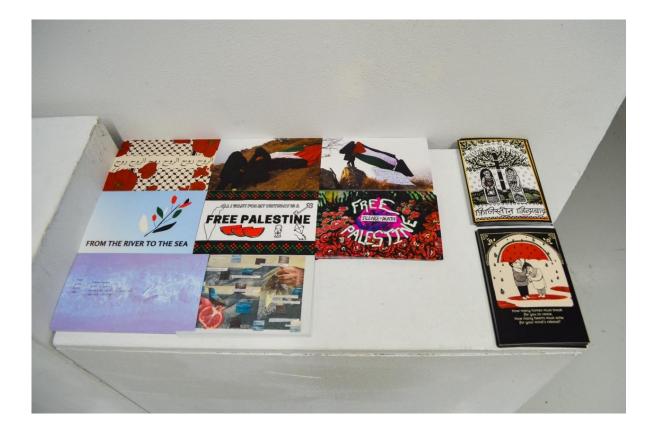

Figure 3.14: In Black & White & Red. 2025. Ada Slaight Gallery.

4. <u>Methodology & Global Connections</u>

Palestinian resistance photography and South African struggle documentary had been emerging concurrently in the 1960's and through the 1980's, due to similar circumstances of land theft, ghettoization, and the colonially imposed hierarchies and systems of citizenship to disenfranchise the indigenous population, which all contribute towards an apartheid system. Struggle documentary not only utilizes similar aesthetics of resistance, but also follows the same directional development as Palestinian resistance photography. Struggle documentary photography, despite the name, not only recorded images of suffering under apartheid, but also included images of resistant acts and Black political activity. The anti-apartheid resistance at the time was led by the ANC (African National Congress) which was the negotiating body of the resistance[39] and the IDAF (International Defence and Aid Fund), a South African legal aid organization which was initially founded in 1956 to legally represent and support anti-apartheid South African activists, especially those associated with the ANC, whom were being targeted by the apartheid government. Following the ANC's 1960 banning in South Africa, and both the United States and United Kingdom labelling it a terrorist organization, the IDAF grew to become the international diplomatic face of the anti-apartheid movement, handling both the political and legal needs of the movement.[40] It was in this context of legal and political turmoil in South Africa which led to the emergence of struggle documentary, which became defined by Ernest Cole's work. Unable to complete his education due to segregationist legislation, Cole began photographing in the 1960's as a means of exposing the horrors of apartheid South Africa to the world by recording

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[39] *Encyclopedia of Politics: The Left and the Right: Volume 1: The Left and Volume 2: The Right*. 2005. Edited by Rodney Carlisle.
[40] International Defense and Aid Fund for Southern Africa Records (MS 1600). Manuscripts and Archives, Yale University Library.

its mundane and daily manifestations[41], utilizing a style of realism and vernacular photography; a style deeply reminiscent of Rehab Nazzal's photography. Eventually, Cole was able to leave South Africa for New York to publish his book, *House of Bondage* (1967), a photobook of the images he took in South Africa.

Figure 4.1: Ernest Cole. Untitled. 1960. Silver gelatin print. Obtained from the Museum of Modern Art online collection (289.2019)

Following the publication of *House of Bondage*, which was swiftly banned in South Africa, the apartheid government began intensely censoring anti-apartheid South African photographers through exiles, work bans, and publication censorships. One such artist was Omar Badsha, whose work was banned, as well as being arrested and detained, and denied travel outside of South Africa

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[41] *Ernest Cole*. Museum of Modern Art.

until 1990.[42] Badsha was a political activist before picking up photography in 1976 to document work-related injuries at a chemical plant as part of a trade union effort. Since then, he continued to use the camera as a freelance photographer, working with banned academics and political prisoners to politically mobilize the public. To coalesce artists and works at the time, Badsha co-founded the Afrapix collective in 1982, an artistic collective dedicated to using photography and documentary as a means of activism and raising awareness of apartheid in South Africa[43]. Meanwhile, the IDAF used its international networks to globally transport these images, even under restrictive censorship from the apartheid government. It was formal resistance groups, such as the IDAF and Afrapix collective, which platformed the emergence of film and photography and oversaw the creation and safekeeping of a national visual archive based on these resistant images.

Figure 4.2: Omar Badsha. Garment worker, Queen Street, Durban. 1986. Photography. Obtained from Omarbadsha.co.za

Figure 4.3: Omar Badsha. Teacher with Class, Inanda. 1983. Photography. Obtained from Omarbadsha.co.za

Jawharieh and Badsha's styles overlap significantly, both employing a documentary style and methodology by associating their work to political figures and groups. Furthermore, they both

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[42] Biography. Omar Badsha.
[43] Afrapix. Tate Modern.

record the movement itself, focusing on picturing the colonized subject and giving them a dignity and active voice within the frame. However, Jawharieh and Badsha differ in that Jawharieh took a much more politicized approach, depicting the resistance fighters, whereas Badsha's images are more social by depicting ordinary civilian subjects within their lives under apartheid. Whether it is Ernest Cole, Omar Badsha, Hani Jawharieh, or Rehab Nazzal, all the artists share their use of aesthetics as a tool of political communication.[44] The pictures emotionally and politically connect with and activate the viewer, lending them a propagandistic dimension as previously discussed within Jawharieh's work. The images also avoid explicitly traumatic depictions, on this Newbury writes "social documentary should not be content with negative portrayal, but must also 'show the hope and determination of all committed to freedom' and 'serve the needs of the struggle'".[45] By deploying photography in this way, an affirming national identity is built around anti-colonial resistance, established independently of imposed colonial identities and violence. This proves a strong alignment with the previously discussed aesthetic qualities of Jawharieh's images, and visual similarities can be observed in the example photo below. Altogether this establishes an observable pattern of resistant methodology to nation building, archive creation, and image-taking. This methodology is primarily characterized by an emphasis on engaging an active voice for the subjects, and rejecting colonial passivity.

Similarly, decolonial methodology suggests that any critically conscious projects should center the land as an active agent within the narrative, rather than simply a site upon which the discourse

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[44] Karam, Beschara Sharlene. *Decolonising Political Communication in Africa : Reframing Ontologies*. Ed. by Bruce Mutsvairo. 2021.

[45] Darren Newbury. 2010. *Defiant Images: Photography and Apartheid in South Africa*. 239.

occurs.[46] Anti-Zionist methodologies suggest a similar approach by centering projects on Palestine, rather than just Palestinians; in both cases, doing so renders the human subject as inseparable from their land, and effectively removes the possibility of colonial attempts to separate the two and make them an arbitrary and landless subject without origin. This is identifiable even within naming: it is significant to note that it was translated to the Palestine Cinema Institute, rather than the Palestinian Cinema Institute. The Palestinian and South African visual archives must also be understood through a similar lens, as a photographic collection of the land and its people. Indeed, this is observable within the selected artworks, which all feature their respective lands to a large extent, whether it is pictured, allegorical through its people, or yearned. Ultimately, anti-colonial efforts will always be rooted in the land as the ultimate goal of reclamation and resistance; efforts which continue in both Palestine and Turtle Island.

Figure 4.4: Dave Hartman. Student-worker uprisings, Athlone, Cape Town. 1985. Courtesy of the UWC-RIM Mayibuye Archives.

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[46] Eve Tuck and Wayne Yang. 2012. "*Decolonization is not a metaphor*." Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education & Society.

In Turtle Island, Indigenous photographic archives are limited due to the timing between its colonization and the camera's emergence and subsequent adoption for European colonial interests. The camera was expensive and extremely technical (requiring bulky equipment and chemical labs) in its early days, making it nearly impossible for it to enter Indigenous communities except through government projects[47]. The majority of extant images of Indigenous people and communities from the 19th and early 20th centuries were taken by anthropologists for documentation and categorization, against the will of the sitter and community at large. These images were taken to exotify Indigenous culture, with photographers selectively capturing icons of tradition such as camps and ceremonial regalia, wholly ignoring the peoples' daily modern lives. Furthermore, the subjects - whether human or object - were unnamed and unacknowledged, and photos were ethnographic or anthropometric in their goals and labelled as such, reducing the sitter into a passive object for consumption; altogether making the existing archives both colonial and violent[48].

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[47] Karen Hughes et al. 2024. *Visualising truth-telling through Indigenous community-specific vernacular photography in Canada and Australia.*
[48] Laura Peers. 2021. *Reclaiming Pasts, Reclaiming Futures: Indigenous Re-workings of Historical Photography in North America.*

Figure 4.5: Beatrice Blackwood. Portrait of Chief and his family of three women and one young girl, posed in front of painted tepee. Film negative. 1925. Obtained from the Pitt Rivers Museum online archive (PRM 1998.442.66.1)

Despite all this, these images continue to be reclaimed by Indigenous people by humanizing the subject: objects are correctly identified and labelled, and people are named as well as their connections to their community (e.g. grandparent, midwife, etc.). Paul Seesequasis, from the Plains Cree First Nation in Turtle Island, has been responsible for one of the biggest projects

surrounding Indigenous photo archives. *The Indigenous Archival Photo Project* first started in 2015 when Seesequasis was searching for Indigenous vernacular photographs from 1900-1980, as a record of resilience during the time of residential schools. While searching through national and provincial archives, Seesequasis began to amass a collection of images that had Indigenous subjects but were taken by non-Indigenous people. Upon posting these images on social media, Seesequasis was surprised by the positive response; people connected to the images in a profound way by identifying the individuals, families, and activities within them[49]. Collecting photos of Indigenous peoples and communities from colonial archives to identify the people and nations within them after having been erased from the impact of colonial record-keeping.

Figure 4.6: Everett Baker. Children Outside Tipi. Qu'Appelle Valley, Saskatchewan. 1957. Obtained from the Indigenous Archival Photo Project.

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[49] Seesequasis, Paul. Turning the Lens: Indigenous Archival Photo Project. 2018.

These reclamations have been contemporarily linked to a type of futurism expressed by the subjects:

"All those historical photographs of Indigenous peoples in archives around the world, gazing at us with expressions ranging from amusement to anger to strength to fear: all of them are also speaking to generations yet to come."[50]

This reframing of resistance through future generations opens new dimensions of consideration for not just Indigenous archives, but the Palestinian and South African archives as well; all of which carry an inherent futurism within them as a means of imagining and empowering a national future through these objects meant to be inherited and carried through time. This not only aligns with the previously discussed practices of early Arab photography in Chapter 2, it also aligns with Hani Jawharieh's own ethos; "Utilizing motion and still images, we can deliver the revolution's concepts to the masses, thus maintaining its continuity."[51], clearly demonstrating his investment in these images' ability to persist in the future and maintain their ability to politically communicate via a visual language, and reminiscent of his dedication to recording the resistance fighters for future Palestinians. Furthermore, this brings back the significance of personal archives within resistance photography, as self-representational objects which reproduce generational knowledge and become memorialized in national visualizations and resistance movements.

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[50] Laura Peers. Reclaiming Pasts, Reclaiming Futures: Indigenous Re-workings of Historical Photography in North America. 104. 2021.
[51] Mustafa Abu Ali. Palestine in the Eye. 27:10.

Wherein the archives of the colonized emerge from a desire to self-represent and establishing a collective movement, colonial archives emerge from nationalist efforts of myth-making by reinforcing ideals of biology, racial purity, historical roots, and blood and soil[52]. North American and Israeli archives are especially effective to compare, which both rely on religious justifications; whether it is manifest destiny claiming Turtle Island is the destined land for Europeans to settle, or Zionism claiming that Palestine is the divinely ordained land for European Jews to reclaim, they cognitively operate and manufacture consent in similar ways. As previously discussed in the context of the Israeli archives in Chapter 2, Sela describes the relationship of colonial archives to the colonial state as a symbiotic relationship; the archives as a product of the state to support the production of the state[53]. Essentially, each requiring the other to continue existing, since the archives produce knowledge to provide the colonizer a "regime of truth", a term proposed by Michel Foucault referring to the government's ability to rewrite, whitewash, and dictate historical narratives as needed[54]. This creates a direct connection between Israeli and Canadian archival practices of memoricide, a need to erase indigenous histories to ensure the construction of colonial justifications through ethnographic archives.

Colonial archives are key to the existence of settler-colonies by reinforcing racial hierarchies to manufacture consent and justifications for land theft, assimilation, and genocide. However, to do so requires the erasure and/or prevention of the indigenous populations' archives, memory, and generational knowledge; this is not only for ease of their overwriting, but also to

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[52] Nur Masalha. 2012. *The Palestine Nakba: Decolonising History, Narrating the Subaltern, Reclaiming Memory.*
[53] Rona Sela. 2018. *The Genealogy of Colonial Plunder and Erasure – Israel's Control over Palestinian Archives. 2018.*
[54] Yvonna Lincoln and Gaile Cannella. 2004. *Dangerous Discourses: Methodological Conservatism and Governmental Regimes of Truth.*

prevent future generations from carrying on the resistance these images embody. Ergo, these resistant archives are not only resisting the colonizer's presence, but the very cognitive foundations of colonialism; challenging notions of biological determinism and categorization. Specifically, by examining archival photographs a certain resistance methodology emerges, defined by three qualities:

- Avoiding depictions of extreme violence and prioritizing empowerment

- Emphasizing emotional impact and political communication over aesthetic quality

- Connections between past, present, and future

These qualities were all derived from observation of the Palestinian, South African, and Indigenous archives, as institutions of anti-colonial resistance which create national memory from personal archives.

However, this requires the interrogation of archive-building as a necessary step in nationalizing efforts – how can the formation of colonial and anti-colonial archives be differentiated? The word 'archive' itself, originating from the Greek word '*arkhē*' (lit. 'government'), speaks to any archive's mission and privilege; it is a collection of records granted federal, legal, and historical significance by a political elite, an act which requires significant interpretation and filtering of countless articles[55]. This is done to tell a narrative of the nation, its founding, and its people; in doing so, cultural and social norms are established, an act with renewed meaning in the context of post-colonial independence. However, doing so also inevitably marginalizes certain identities, which anti-colonial archives have been equally culpable of, as seen

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[55] Michael Lynch. Archives in formation: privileged spaces, popular archives and paper trails. 1999.

in the erasure of queer identities within the South African archives despite a constitutional framework for queer rights[56]. The literature suggests this may be the result of the newly independent nation naturalizing the occupation's colonial archives and archival models by continuing to house them, which dictate the entire archive's future direction[57], producing contradictions and tensions between the nation's current political trajectory and its historical (re)interpretations. This is where the personal archives become much more significant, as a means of countering dominant nationalist narratives and providing a more dynamic history; then platformed through research and exhibits to highlight such erasure and oversight. In regards to the Palestinian archives, there is a consistent theme of non-selective preservations. Objects which did not enter the archives selectively, but rather because their circumstances allowed them to survive generations of theft and bombings. These circumstances were sometimes coincidence, as with the publishing of Hani Jawharieh's 18 images, and sometimes foresight, as with Wasif Jawhariyyeh's (unrelated to Hani Jawharieh) albums which survived because he hid them prior to fleeing[58]. This creates a unique collection, an archive which tells mundane stories and was amassed through survival, rather than intentionally building nostalgic narratives of nation-building.

The resistance of personal archives has emerged continuously throughout this project and once again emerges as the primary characteristic of anti-colonial archives. As previously discussed, the etymology of the word 'archive' is intricately linked to its creation: imposed top-

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[56] Andrew Tucker. 2008. *Political Invisibilities (and Visibilities). In Queer Visibilities.*
[57] Phoebe Kisubi Mbasalaki. 2020. *Through the Lens of Modernity: Reflections on the (Colonial) Cultural Archive of Sexuality and Gender in South Africa.*
[58] Nassar, Issam, Stephen Sheehi, and Salīm Tamārī. 2022. *Camera Palaestina: Photography and Displaced Histories of Palestine.*

down by a society's political elite class to enforce a privileged view. Prior discussions in Chapter 2 mention how early Arab photography was primarily defined by the effendiyah bourgeois who were able to access a camera or studio, however these yet remain personal pieces emerging from an economic class rather than political pieces. Contrary to colonial archives' top-down model, resistant archives are built bottom-up by local resistance organizations and members to express a struggle, as evidenced by Hani Jawharieh, Mustafa Abu Ali, Omar Badsha, Ernest Cole, and Paul Seesequasis who are all of humble origins. This is a fundamental difference in nationalizing approaches – if colonial archives are a product of the state to support the production of the state, then it can be said that anti-colonial archives are a product of the people to support the production of a new state.

Despite colonial attempts to erase and suppress these images, the contemporary works by both Rehab Nazzal and Jude Abu Zaineh also demonstrate an extremely similar methodology by including at least two or more of the aforementioned qualities of resistant photography. This indicates a consistent relationship with the camera and its use as a medium of self-representation for oppressed people. The camera's appeal to the oppressed is primarily a result of the medium's accessibility and usability (more so than painting or sculpting), ease of transportation and transmission, and the photograph's physicality as an intergenerational object which carries memory as it is passed down from parent to child. These archives are critical to the development and endurance of anti-colonial resistance movements, as seen in nearly every single formal resistance adopting some kind of film or photography division; but more relevantly, seen in how every single colonial archive is built upon their erasure. Photographs allow for the direct

inheritance and communication of a movement, it keeps it alive in new generations, ensuring their

longevity for as long as a population is oppressed.

5. <u>Future Directions, Conclusion, and Epilogue</u>

This work is by no means done, and visual archives outside of the West, not just in Palestine, remain widely underexplored. Building on this project by relating it to other colonized populations will likely reveal new insights and vectors for the research to be further refined. One of the identified qualities of resistant photo-taking was an avoidance of extreme violence, which is certainly true for the specific archives and images I explored, particularly when compared to colonial archives which frequently featured colonizers among rubble and bodies, but it was no longer consistent when compared to Black American photographic resistance and archives. It begs the question: what about instances where images of extreme violence were used to garner support for a cause? An immediate example of this is Emmett Till, a young 14-year old Black American boy who was lynched in 1955 and became an icon of the Civil Rights Movement when Till's mother took a photograph of his mangled face in his casket and distributed it to raise awareness of the brutality of racism in the United States[59]. In this case, Till's photo, because of its horror not despite it, became a rallying force for Black liberation by forcing a shocking and violent reconciliation with America's racism. A more recent example is Gazans recording their own annihilation and posting it in real-time, an action which has undoubtedly contributed to the emergence of a global Palestinian cause. These do not necessarily disprove my prior claim but rather invite further investigation to locate the unifying or differing qualities of resistant photographs, how they evolve and continue to evolve to adapt and best respond to colonization and imperialism. It prompts questions of who is taking the photograph, of photo-taking from within a community versus from outside it, and how this positionality is reflected in the camera lens. All

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[59] Davis Houck and Matthew Grindy. *Emmett Till and the Mississippi Press*. 2008.

of these are satellite questions which would have required a significant expansion of the scope of the research and exhibition.

The second direction for this future of this project is the development of a formalized Anti-Zionist framework, which currently does not exist. This framework may include elements of decolonial methodology, but whereas decolonial methodology is primarily rooted in the unique colonial circumstances of Indigenous people in both Turtle Island (now known as the United States and Canada) and Aotearoa (now known as New Zealand), an Anti-Zionist framework would be rooted in the historical context of the colonization of Palestine and the SWANA region at large.

An Anti-Zionist methodology for the arts sector may include:

1. The use of active language and specificity as opposed to passive language

This is because Zionist rhetoric is often hidden within passive language to obfuscate aggressor and victim, either to create a false equivalency between Israel and Palestine, or to whitewash Israel's genocide against Palestinians. Therefore, the use of specific and active language by correctly applying terms such as 'victims' rather than 'casualties', is a necessary step to accurately analyzing, researching, and writing about Palestine.

2. The Integration of visual media as a legitimate tool of political messaging

This is directly related to the prior point of using an active voice: as mentioned in Chapters 2 and 4, these self-representational photographs lend the subject an active voice rather than relegating them a consumable aesthetic. Furthermore, Zionist rhetoric, which aims to shroud and confuse, is

directly countered by the undeniable clarity of photo and film. It is the reason this genocide, commonly called the first livestreamed genocide in history, has resonated with and rallied people in the West.

3. An Institutional critique of funding and administrative structures

This would include Museums, galleries, and universities, who often have investments in Israeli technology and/or weapons, or otherwise secure grants sourcing from these sectors. These holdings are also frequently the result of the institution's board of directors having members involved in these sectors. By correctly identifying the financial structures which uphold apartheid, we can more effectively analyze them to hold them accountable and demand policy changes.

4. Dismantling orientalism, islamophobia

Zionism is inherently dependent upon both Orientalism and Islamophobia, using them as justifications for itself. Depicting Arabs and Muslims as barbaric and violent makes Zionism not only seem like a reasonable response, but a logical one. It positions the Zionist as an ally to the West and the Arab or Muslim as its enemy, an attempt to frame the West and the Middle East as diametric opposites in ideological conflict. Orientalism and Islamophobia also enable Zionist claims of antisemitism, by broadly assuming it to be a trait of all Arabs and Muslims (either biologically, culturally, or religiously), which frequently overlooks and erases the existence of Christian and Jewish Arabs.

5. Resisting separation of human and non-human subjects

This is not only the cognitive foundation for the separation of human and land, which enables land theft, but also contributes to the rhetorical dehumanization of Palestinians as non-human. Creating a category of what is non-human makes it in Zionism's best interests to classify its opponents as such, extending beyond just Palestinians.

Integration of these five qualities are how any research project can most effectively resist and counter Zionism and Zionist rhetoric, which can frequently underpin the fields of archeology and museology especially. These traits also effectively counter Zionist attempts to 'artwash', using art to distract from or downplay Israeli war crimes. These traits emerged from the research, as well as by aligning with global Palestinian movements and their missions. However, this list is not exhaustive and simply some of the most common traits I observed within my own project and other Anti-Zionist projects I examined within the research. The need for a specific Anti-Zionist framework is becoming increasingly clear with the influx of projects examining Palestine and Zionism since 2023, which would be both unified and clarified with the implementation of an Anti-Zionist framework.

I first started my Master's in September 2023, and a month later, in October 2023, the ongoing Nakba in Gaza began and it defined nearly my entire experience in the program. It has become impossible for me to meaningfully separate this degree from the events that were taking place and by extension, impossible to separate art from politics. In committing myself to this research, I experienced firsthand the extent of the censorship imposed on these images. The easiest images to

find were those of Palestine taken by non-Palestinians, which were usually of British presence within major Palestinian cities such as Al-Quds (now known as Jerusalem) and Jaffa (now known as Tel Aviv); this was expected, since these images were never subject to any censorship. Photos taken by Palestinians were much more difficult to locate, with Hani Jawharieh's photos only being found on two platforms: The Palestine Poster Project, and the Palestinian Museum Digital Archive. Furthermore, the only extant images from Jawharieh are the series of 18 photographs which were posthumously published, the rest of his images and all his films are currently impossible to find or access due to Israeli interference. The archives of the Arab Studies Society were even more difficult to locate, having only located two images from within a periodical (The Jerusalem Quarterly); I noticed the name of the article's author, Issam Nassar (who is coincidentally also one of the authors of *Camera Palaestina*) and reached out to him to ask where I could find these images. Nassar was generous enough to direct me to the children of Fisel Husseini, the late founder of the Arab Studies Society; sadly, I was unable to contact them, making the two images from the Jerusalem Quarterly the only currently available images from those archives.

Difficulties in connectivity were a constant theme throughout this project, with constant electrical and signal blackouts perpetrated by Israel to limit communications inside Palestine. Rehab Nazzal, who had been in Palestine at the time of this writing, could not consistently access the internet, and would often go weeks before replying to emails. Similar issues arose with accessing the Palestinian Museum Digital Archive, which is located in Jerusalem, with the website frequently being down, or timing out. These insecurities in accessing materials made me much more careful as well, immediately downloading anything I could find, in case it was later removed. Even the exhibition was subject to censorship and efforts to have it shut down. The original poster

design faced pressure to be changed and limited in its visibility, and a Zionist student group attempted to submit formal complaints about the nature of the exhibit less than a week after the posters went up, likely hoping to change its content or have it entirely cancelled. This is despite intentional opacity regarding the inclusions of the exhibit, meaning these censorship efforts emerged entirely from the poster designs and the premise of the exhibit. Maintaining my curatorial vision and integrity was challenging in the face of these hurdles, and I had to find middle-ground solutions, allowing the project to both continue with institutional support and also preserve my goals. However, I believe these are elements which the project must publicize and embrace, rather than hide. These experiences were integrated into the exhibit and research, augmenting them into a fuller exploration of how censorship persists in the present-day. Evidently, these images are still perceived as a threat by Zionists, once again proving that these images do more than challenge Zionist myth-making. Essentially, the point to take away is that Israeli censorship is everywhere, and it is ongoing; it would be inaccurate to believe that the extent of the censorship was looting archives in 1982, or 2001, or 2021, or 2024. It is those, but it is also the blackouts, the killing of journalists, the historical whitewashing of an almost 80 year long genocide, and so much more than I could write here. Censorship is a cornerstone of the Zionist project, to manufacture consent for murder.

Figure 5.1: Abir Dabbour. Original poster design for the exhibition, In Black & White & Red. Created from on an image by Hani Jawharieh. Digital design. 2024.

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