

PALESTINIAN AMERICAN RESEARCH CENTER

PARC and George Washington University Conference on Palestine

By Nathan Brown



Panel entitled 'Palestinian History: Sources, Concepts and Methods' (left to right) Awad Halabi, Shira Robinson, Michelle Campos, Rochelle Davis

Palestine—the place, even the word, and certainly the inhabitants of its territory—engenders no end of political controversy. The Palestinian American Research Center was established in 1998 because of a belief on the part of the founders that scholarship on Palestinian society and politics is possible, and very much worth supporting, despite (and sometimes because of) the contested political terrain and the innumerable obstacles generated by the political contests and controversies.

PARC has now been in existence for nearly a dozen years, and it has supported the research of scores of scholars. On October 16, 2009, PARC and the Institute for Middle East Studies at

George Washington University jointly organized a one-day conference to allow those interested in Palestinian society and politics to reflect on what scholarship has accomplished as well as what still needs to be done. Presenters from various scholarly disciplines—most of them PARC grantees—viewed Palestine from the vantage point of their discipline and explored what we have learned, what we still need to learn, and how we learn (or fail to). The conference was attended by about 80 students, faculty members, officials, and members of the public with an interest in Palestinian affairs.

The first panel focused on political sci-
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PARC Panelists Talk About Their Experiences at MESA

PARC had two superb panels at the Middle East Studies Association (MESA) annual meeting in Boston in November: "Health in the Occupied Palestinian Territories: A Growing Crisis" and "60 Years On: A Critical Revisiting of UNRWA for Palestine Refugees." Each panel was well attended with engaged and thoughtful audiences. Thanks to grants from the U.S. Department of Education and the Educational and Cultural Affairs Bureau of the U.S. Department of State, we were able to bring six panelists who were joined by other distinguished speakers, chairs, and discussants. Since the panels were both described in detail in the Fall newsletter, we thought our readers would be interested in the impressions of the panelists about their participation at MESA. PARC is committed to bringing a variety of voices to MESA to speak about the Palestinian experience and to interact with U.S. colleagues with the hope of not only enlightening audiences but also forging connections. Below are comments from some of the panelists about their experiences at MESA.

"Health in the Occupied Palestinian Territories: A Growing Crisis"

Honoring the March 2009 Lancet series on "Health in the Occupied Palestinian Territories," this panel brought several distinguished authors of the series to
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Please RENEW your PARC membership today and consider a donation to support scholarship on Palestine. (See back page for details.)

Around the PARC

By Penelope Mitchell, Executive Director

DONORS & MEMBERSHIP:

In keeping with our annual tradition, this newsletter contains a list of this year's PARC members and donors. PARC is exceptionally grateful for the continuing support of so many stalwart members and delighted with all the new members who have joined over the last year. Sincere thanks go to those of you who have helped to spread the word about the work that



Hadeel Qazzaz and Penelope Mitchell

PARC is doing. If you have not yet renewed your membership, please do so using the coupon on the back page or by visiting our Web site: <http://parc-us-pal.org/>. We are deeply appreciative to those of you able to consider an additional donation to help fund fellowships for Palestinian scholars.

FELLOWSHIPS & AWARDS: We are pleased to bring you the profiles of the remaining six fellows from our 2009-10 cohort. Their research topics treat a range of salient issues that ought to be of keen interest to scholars, educators, and policy-makers alike. This group of fellowships addresses the complex subjects of health-care, the proliferation of NGOs, the development of the private sector, and issues of governance and human rights. In addition to these activities in the West Bank, we also have a researcher in Israel looking at the negotiation of Druze community identity as it is evolving over time and changing circumstances.

At our PARC board meeting in March, we finalized the recommendations of our U.S. and Palestinian review committee, selecting six Palestinians and nine Americans for fellowships. This new group of fellows brings exciting new research to PARC. For the first time, PARC had several U.S. applications submitted by geographers, and a number of research proposals focusing on children. In addition to U.S. researchers in departments of History, Near East Studies, and Anthropology, we are delighted to welcome fellows from departments of Geography, Ethnomusicology, Communications, and Art. These encouraging trends indicate that scholars from more diverse fields of study are taking an interest in Palestine and that researchers are more aware of PARC's role in funding fellowships. (The Educational and Cultural Affairs Bureau (ECA) at the Department of State funds these fellowships for U.S. citizens.) Our Palestinian fellows are tackling topics of economic development, folk tales and national identity, religion's role with respect to the environment, remedial measures for medical solid waste management, changing trajectories of youth engagement in Palestine, and intestinal parasite contamination of vegetables. As with most years, we have Palestinian fellows engaged in researching and finding solutions to pressing problems. Our Fall 2010 newsletter will profile these forthcoming research projects.

PARC was pleased to confer the third Gerner Award—this year for the first time in Gaza. This award goes to an exemplary graduate student in international studies

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Palestinian American Research Center Newsletter Spring 2010

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Around the PARC

or political science and honors former PARC board member Deborah “Misty” Gerner who passed away in 2006. We are delighted that next year, thanks to Phil Schrodts’ generosity, we will confer two awards: one at a university in Gaza and another at a university in the West Bank.

FACULTY DEVELOPMENT SEMINAR:

In late May, 10 U.S. faculty members gathered in Jerusalem for PARC’s inaugural Faculty Development Seminar (FDS). PARC developed this new program with generous funding from ECA. The aim of the FDS is to provide an opportunity to visit the West Bank for U.S. professors who have little experience with research on Palestine or travel to the occupied Palestinian territories (oPt). We will devote much of the Fall newsletter to a chronicle of this enormously successful trip, and will include photos and stories that will also be available on PARC’s Web site soon. For now, let me say that after traveling to the West Bank for 27 years, seeing the oPt through these “new eyes” was an extraordinary, if at times disturbing, expe-



PARC/GW Conference attendees

rience. Traversing the separation Wall and many checkpoints, the faculty members were profoundly affected by their visits to West Bank universities and Palestinian NGOs, and enriched by many long discussions with Palestinian colleagues. The FDS is already bearing fruits: several participants are writing articles about their trip for different publications, others are working to develop joint research projects with their Palestinian colleagues. We hope to be able to offer this opportunity again next year.

PARC/GW CONFERENCE & MESA:

Thanks to the generosity of George Washington University (GW) and the hard work of PARC board member Nathan Brown and his staff, PARC and GW co-sponsored a one-day conference in October on “Palestine: What We Know.” Nathan’s article on the conference will give you a clear picture of this exceptionally informative day thanks to the wonderful speakers and session chairs. It was an especially proud moment for PARC to have so many former PARC fellows present their thoughts on the state of their particular disciplines with respect to Palestine and their research. We extend special gratitude to Omar Kader whose generosity made possible a wonderful reception following the conference.

As you have seen from the cover page of the newsletter, we believe our readers will value feedback and reflections from our MESA 2009 panelists. PARC has organized panels at MESA almost since our inception. In the last few years however, with funding from ECA and the U.S. Department of Education, we have made a concerted effort to bring more voices from Palestine to U.S. academic audiences. Our hope is that these opportunities do not end with the panel presentation, but rather develop into

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FDS Participants at An-Najah University

PARC TO SPONSOR DOUBLE PANEL ON ISLAM AND POLITICS IN PALESTINE FOR MESA 2010

By Nathan Brown

PARC will sponsor a two-part panel on “Perspectives on Islam and Politics in Palestine” with two purposes in mind: to showcase recent, on-the-ground research on Palestine and to integrate the study of Palestinian society and politics more effectively in the broader interdisciplinary study of the Middle East. Participants will come from the disciplines of political science, religious studies, anthropology, and law and bring their empirical research, disciplinary expertise, and comparative perspectives to the study of Islam and politics in Palestine.

Discussions of Palestinian politics—and of Islam and politics—frequently generate far more heat than light; when the two topics intersect, the results can be particularly sensitive and incendiary. This two-part panel is predicated on the idea that scholarship has a critical contribution to make to understanding the issues and advancing debates—first by empirically rich study on the ground and second by situating the issues in comparative regional perspective.

The first part of the panel will focus specifically on those who have recently completed intensive fieldwork on Palestine. Papers will cover the evolution of Hamas, the contest between Hamas and Fatah, and the nature and operation of Islamic institutions in Israel.

The second part of the panel will turn the focus in a comparative direction. It will be devoted to papers that attempt to understand the relationship between Islam and politics in Palestine by tracing contrasts and comparisons with other cases in the region. Among the topics covered will be the role of the Muslim Brotherhood, the nature of Islamic institutions in mediating and channeling Diaspora-homeland relations, Islamic

legal institutions, and the rivalry between Fatah and Hamas.

In addition to bringing four participants from Palestine, PARC will partner with George Washington University to bring the Palestinian participants through Washington, DC on their way to San Diego in order to participate in events that speak to a general public as well as a policy audience on issues involving Islam and politics in Palestine.

Specific panel information is as follows:

Chairs:

Nubar Hovsepian, Chapman University, and Nathan Brown, George Washington University

Discussants:

Glenn E. Robinson, Naval Postgraduate School, and Laurie Brand, University of Southern California

Papers and Panelists:

“Fatah, Hamas and the Struggle for the Palestinian Soul” - Mouin Rabbani, independent scholar and International Crisis Group

“Ruling Gaza: A critical look at the performance in government of the Islamic Resistance Movement Hamas, 2006-2010” - Helga Baumgarten, Birzeit University

“Shari ‘a and Politics in Israel” - Moussa Abou Ramadan, Birzeit University and Haifa University

“The subject of opposition: lessons from the ‘repressive accommodation’ of Hamas in 2006-2007” - Ghada AlMadbouh, University of Maryland and Birzeit University

“Islamist Movement in an Authoritarian Proxy-State: Hamas between Governance, Opposition and Resistance” - Holger Albrecht, American University in Cairo

“‘Deterritorialization’ and the Politics of Islam among Palestinians and Somalis in the United States” - Loren Lybarger, Ohio University

“Hamas as a Muslim Brotherhood Movement” - Nathan Brown, George Washington University

SAVE THE DATE

Tuesday, November 16, 2010

PARC and George Washington University (GW) will host PARC's 2010 MESA panelists for a one-day seminar and discussion at GW.

PARC and George Washington University Conference on Palestine
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ence and economics. Mouin Rabbani, a former Palestine director of PARC, focused on the current political situation in Palestine and the obstacles it poses. Leila Farkash, an economist at the University of Massachusetts, explored the nature of the Palestinian economy and its relationship to the Israeli and international economies. She argued that despite the political sensitivity of the term, “colonialism” probably provides the best analytic framework for understanding the relationship between the Israeli and Palestinian economies. Wendy Pearlman (PARC fellow 2004) of Northwestern University explained where research on Palestine fits into broader disciplinary concerns of political science. She explained where scholars have contributed to knowledge about Palestinian politics, but also identified areas where they have avoided the subject.



Keynote speaker Rashid Khalidi

The second panel focused on anthropological and cultural studies of Palestine, especially on issues of gender and conflict. Ilana Feldman (PARC fellow 2003) of George Washington University noted that anthropology has become more central to Middle Eastern studies generally and that anthropological re-



Panel entitled 'Palestinian Politics and Economics: What Can Scholars Know?' (left to right) Nathan Brown, Mouin Rabbani, Wendy Pearlman, Leila Farsakh, Charles Butterworth

search on Palestine is becoming a particularly rich field. She also provided some insights from her own work on Palestinian governance and on humanitarianism. Julie Norman (PARC fellow 2007) of Concordia University explored the evolution of popular resistance in Palestinian society as well as its limitations. Finally, Isis Nusair (PARC fellow 2008) of Denison University reviewed her work on four generations of Palestinian women in Israel and how they interpret the past and explain the present.

Members of the third panel reviewed historical scholarship on Palestine. Shira Robinson (PARC fellow 2002) of George Washington University noted the particularly severe problems of dealing with the post-1948 period. Michelle Campos (PARC fellow 2001) of the University of Florida focused on Ottoman Palestine, reviewing the existing documentary record as well as the practical and conceptual problems for historians focusing on the period. Awad Halabi (PARC fellow 2001) of Wright State University covered the Mandate period, noting particular sources that historians should still exploit more fully. All three historians explored not only the sources, but also presented some of the conceptual debates about Palestinian

exceptionalism and the use of various contested national and geographical categories and terms.

At the close of the workshop, Rashid Khalidi of Columbia University provided an overview of the state of Palestine studies to approximately 130 guests. His portrait pointed to some real accomplishments—there is great interest in the field, and scholarship on Palestine has become prominent in several academic disciplines. The political sensitivities associated with Palestine studies have not deterred younger scholars from carrying out innovative projects. But Khalidi also discussed the problems that politics pose for the study of Palestine and the political risks attendant on its study. He explored the reasons for the relative weakness of Palestinian studies, mentioning the absence of a Palestinian state, weak Palestinian institutions, and the greater attraction of other fields for promising students. He noted some areas, such as archeology, where significant gaps in scholarship remain. But he insisted that scholars in their work have an important contribution to make. He encouraged those interested in Palestine to be active in public life but also urged a healthy separation between public activities and scholarship.

PARC Panelists Talk About Their Experiences at MESA

(continued from page 1)

MESA. Presenters included Rita Giacaman (Institute of Community and Public Health - Birzeit University), Marwan Khawaja (UN-ESCWA), Graham Watt (University of Glasgow), and Awad Mataria (Institute of Community and Public Health- Birzeit). Sara M. Roy (Harvard University) chaired the panel and Jay Schnitzer (Boston Scientific Corporation) was the discussant.

Rita Giacaman

Unlike the medical and public health community in the United States and perhaps elsewhere, the MESA meetings draw participants who are well informed about politics in the Middle East in general, and the occupied Palestinian territory (oPt) in particular. These meetings are an important platform for Palestinian scholars who attend and present their research findings on the various aspects of life under Israeli military occupation. However, this was the first MESA meeting which included a special session on Palestinian health. The session provided us with the opportunity to present findings on the health status and health services of Palestinians under Israeli military occupation framed as a matter of human rights and justice, and helped us reach a wider audience than usual. It also helped situate health into the domains of politics and society.

Based on our experience conducting research in the oPt, and the overwhelming influence of the political context on health, we had been gradually reframing health as a broader social construction, not only based on the perspective of the biomedical framework that focuses on death and disease. Our presentations focused on the consequences of war on the living, which are often omitted by media outlets with their emphasis on the shocking and the gory details. Such a reframing also allowed for the devel-

opment of a common language and understanding between us and the audience as we avoided medical terminology and focused instead on life quality, well being, social suffering and human insecurities, which are important but insufficiently used measures of health.

We met many people who have an interest in health, seen from within this broader perspective. We hope to forge the needed collaborative links with some of the participants we met so that health can be studied, assessed and understood from a multidisciplinary perspective, as it should be. Although the conference was enjoyable and fruitful in terms of networking, evidence dissemination, and advocacy, I must say that MESA was also a bit overwhelming because I met so many people I had not seen for a while, others whom I have corresponded with but never met, as well as many friends.

Awad Mataria

Following the launch of The Lancet series on Health in the occupied Palestinian territory, I had the chance to present the findings of the fifth article in the series, addressing building a Palestinian health care system under conditions of occupation, at a few academic conferences. This was one of the steps that we, the authors of the series, felt a duty and obligation to undertake in order to advocate for the health and wellbeing of a population that continues to suffer the dire conditions of occupation. I have to admit that passing the messages embedded in the paper, which I was honored to contribute to, was not always as easy and as smooth as was the case with the respectful audience at MESA. The type of discussion that followed the presentation was completely different. Indeed, it made me feel proud to have succeeded, along with my colleagues, in passing the message that we aspire for: effective health system building requires a political resolution to the Palestine question ending the occupation. I was very pleased to hear people discussing

social, political and historical events of my region, in a robust and scientific manner, and was indeed amazed by the number of international scholars and Diaspora colleagues engaged in raising the question of population rights in my region. I would like to thank PARC for giving me the chance to take part in this lively conference by organizing the session and funding my participation. The experience that I gained will always be part of my future development.

Graham Watt

I had not been to MESA before, and enjoyed what was more of a cultural than scientific meeting. It was great to catch up with the documentary on Norman Finkelstein, and the book festival was a joy. I only realized afterwards what big names were at the meeting (not sure how the new attendee can find out that sort of information). A kind member of our audience gave me a brilliant edition of the Journal of Palestine Studies dedicated to Operation Cast Lead and its effects, which I had not seen before. MESA felt like home ground compared to the conference of the American Public Health Association, at which two of us also spoke at about ten days before MESA. However, the major reflection on having spoken several times in the last year in the United States and Canada about health in the occupied Palestine territory is that the mood is shifting; people were shocked by what the Israeli army did in Gaza, increasingly skeptical of media coverage, and hungry for information. Despite the horror of Gaza, it is essentially a distraction from what is going on in the oPt, the unbridled application of Israel's power and advantage to acquire territory and resources, to punish Palestinians for being "in the wrong place," and to strangle economic development. I use a quote from Studs Terkel, who remained confident in the inherent fairness and decency of the American people, "providing they have the necessary information." There is still much to do, not only in spreading such information, but also in recognizing and

supporting the work of Palestinian academics in the health sector. The recent Lancet series celebrated this important aspect of Palestinian civil society, confounding the stereotypes portrayed in the media. Normalizing and building on our relationships with Palestinian universities is an important, “steadfast” step in these abnormal times.

“60 Years On: A Critical Revisiting of UNRWA for Palestine Refugees”

Marking 60 years since the creation of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency, this panel was organized by Linda Tabar (SOAS) and Mezna Qato (Oxford), both former PARC fellows. The panel brought together a group of scholars to dissect critically the complex dynamics that have structured UNRWA and analyze the layered nature of UNRWA’s relationship to the Palestinian refugees. Additional presenters included Ilana Feldman (George Washington University), Rochelle Davis (Georgetown University), and Ala Alazzeah (Rice University). Penny Johnson (Birzeit University) chaired the panel and Randa Farah (University of Western Ontario) served as discussant. Among the participants were three PARC alumni fellows, one PARC board member, and a former director of the PARC Palestine office.

Mezna Qato and Linda Tabar

Putting this panel together was an important opportunity for us, as younger scholars, to intervene directly in an academic debate and help shift the terms of discussion on UNRWA by creating a space to raise critical questions. Our intervention sought to re-situate UNRWA’s location within the overlapping sites of power, and re-examine its status as a bureaucracy tied to a humanitarian aid regime exercising forms of governmentality over refugee lives. It sought to pry open some of the language of “protection” and “camp improvement,” and engage the material practices of UNRWA, both within the agency itself, and in relation to the Palestinians it is mandated

to serve. At the same time, our intervention was cognizant of the external pressures and political constraints UNRWA faces, as well as its strong role as an agency for Palestine refugees, and as an address for their struggle to assert their sovereign rights

PARC’s support is invaluable. PARC not only sponsored our panel, but more importantly, with its endorsement of our independent initiative, expressed its support for a rise of new critical and politically engaged scholarship by young Palestinian scholars. It empowered us to seek and carve out a more dynamic and cohesive kind of work on UNRWA—one that seeks not only to study it as a humanitarian agency, but as part of the lived experience of Palestinians.

PARC’s sponsorship undoubtedly raised the profile of our panel at MESA. Our session on UNRWA was extremely well-attended and the audience reached maximum capacity. The lively discussion that followed, and the critical dialogue with UNRWA officials who attended our session, proved to be a challenging exercise that ultimately confirmed the interest in our topic and the questions and themes we have raised.

Organizing this panel also provided us with a unique opportunity to collaborate with senior scholars in our field. In addition to our fellow panelists, each of whom continues to make important interventions on UNRWA, the opportunity to work with Randa Farah and Penny Johnson was particularly rewarding. Be-

yond their own expansive work on UNRWA and Palestine, each has since acted as mentoring support: challenging our thinking and premises and opening up spaces for further work and collaboration.

In the coming year, we hope to develop and expand a network of collaboration on UNRWA, one that will further engage multiple levels of scholars, organizers, agents, leaders, and policy-makers. In this way, we hope to create spaces for serious, critical, and independent engagement of the practices and policies that have come to define the Palestinian experience with this most central of institutions.

Ala Alazzeah

This was my first participation in a MESA conference. The importance of the UNRWA panel made such participation fruitful and challenging. Indeed the panel was a rare space for the possible impact of academic knowledge on policies that might positively affect hundreds of thousands of Palestinians. The presence of distinguished scholars created a productive environment of intellectual exchange for me. Randa Farah’s presence was particularly rewarding for me because of her great support for young scholars and her joyful spirit. My overall experience at MESA was very important because of the opportunity to meet established scholars in the field of Middle East studies and to learn about the latest research projects and interests in the field.

Don't miss PARC's double-panel at MESA 2010, "Perspectives on Islam and Politics in Palestine" on Friday, November 19 at 2:00pm and 4:30pm.

2009-2010 FELLOWSHIPS



TAISEER KHATIB

Tradition, Minority, and State: Negotiating Druze Identity in Israel

Taiseer Khatib's work seeks to elucidate issues of Druze identity within the context of the Arab-Israeli conflict. Khatib will focus on the process of Druze identity construction and negotiation, particularly in relation to the "Other." The "Other" comprises the Jewish majority and Arab minority with whom the Druze coexist, in addition to the Israeli state and the increasingly evident incongruities in that relationship. Khatib's research also aims to shed light on Druze self-perception within the context of community conflicts such as generational rifts, the place and perception of women, and internal political disputes. In addressing these issues of Druze identity in Israel from a critical ethnographic perspective, Khatib will be addressing questions hitherto studied only cursorily.

To achieve the aims of his research, Khatib will pursue several methods of information gathering. He intends to conduct a thorough analysis of relevant social transcripts that include accounts of service in the Israeli army, communal discourses regarding this service, and daily rituals of interaction with the

Jewish majority and the Palestinian minority. Additionally, he will undertake participant observation to interrogate the social interaction and daily life experiences of Druze community members. Furthermore, Khatib will interview Druze women, soldiers, politicians, religious figures, students, and local activists. Finally, he will analyze the official documents of various government ministries, state archives, schoolbooks, texts of Druze Heritage, newspapers, and other relevant sources.

The significance of Khatib's research is amplified by several recent developments that have complicated the experience of the Druze community in Israel. The Israeli Supreme Court recently banned Druze sheikhs and public figures from visiting the community's holy places and their relatives in Syria and Lebanon. Israel also has plans to confiscate thousands of *dunams* of land from the villages of Isyfia and Daliyat al-Karmel in Mount Carmel. In addition, an October 2007 clash between Druze inhabitants and Israeli police forces in the Galilee village of Buqei'a has been coined by some observers a 'Druze *Intifada*.'

Reacting to these developments, some voices in the Druze community are calling for a reassessment of their relationship to the Jewish state, questioning such practices as their army service. They are also asking about their identity's Arab and Palestinian dimensions. Somewhere between and outside the Arab-Israeli conflict and an Arab/Muslim genealogy, the Druze are struggling to articulate their identity in complex and, perhaps, contradictory ways.

Taiseer Khatib is a PhD candidate in the Department of Sociology and Anthropology at Haifa University in Israel. He may be reached at taiseerk@gmail.com.



KHITAM ABU HAMAD

Determinants of Contraceptive Use and the Impact of Maternal and Child Health Service Utilization on Subsequent Use of Contraceptives in the Gaza Strip

The current total fertility rate among Palestinians, particularly in the Gaza Strip, is one of the highest in the world, contributing to a population growth rate of 3.35 percent, also one of the highest in the world. This increase in population poses

challenges for developing a sustained economy because the occupied Palestinian territories are already desperately poor, and a continued increase in population poses a serious threat to economic viability. Moreover, continued population growth may make it impossible for the Palestinian National Authority to supply social services, including health services and infrastructure, to this congested population, most of which lives on the edge of poverty.

The Gaza Strip's exceptionally high fertility rate drives Khitam Abu Hamad's research on maternal and child health (MCH) services utilized by Palestinian women in the Gaza Strip. To address the high fertility rate, the Palestinian Ministry of Health, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees, and some non-governmental organizations offer maternal and child health services and family planning

services free of charge. However, the utilization of family planning services is far below that of other maternal and child services such as antenatal care and child immunization.

Previous research reveals that utilization of health services varies systematically among individuals and communities based on their availability, perceived quality, cost, and other socio-cultural factors. Abu Hamad will use Anderson and Newman's (2005) behavioral model of health services utilization to identify the main determinants of family planning services and contraceptive use in the Gaza strip. Additionally, her research aims to assess the impact of the intensity of maternal and child health services utilization on the subsequent utilization of family planning services.

Abu Hamad's study is a qualitative/quantitative mixed method study that involves both primary data collection and secondary data analysis. Primary data will be collected through focus groups with current contraceptive users and non-users age 15-49 who have at least one child under the age of five. Open coding content categorization and analysis will be used to analyze the focus group data. The quantitative study will analyze the first wave of the Palestinian Family

Health Survey 2006, particularly the Multiple Indicators Cluster Survey dataset (MICS), for which data was collected from 6,182 households (2,172 households from the Gaza Strip and 4,010 from the West Bank). According to the survey, 1,138 of the survey's female respondents from Gaza had at least one child less than five years of age. Abu Hamad will use logistic regression analysis and two stage least squares regression analysis to analyze the survey data.

This study will provide a better understanding of fertility behavior and the determinants of contraceptive use among women in the Gaza Strip. Therefore, depending on the study results, Abu Hamad will propose policy interventions that may help in overcoming the problem of the high total fertility rate. One such policy intervention may be to integrate family planning services with other MCH services such as antenatal care or early childhood immunization.

Khitam Abu Hamad is a doctoral candidate at the Heller School for Social Policy and Management at Brandeis University. She may be reached at khamad@brandeis.edu or khitam_hamad@yahoo.com.



SUHA HINDIYEH
**Relations of Power in
Palestinian Non-governmental
Organizations**

The proliferation of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in the West Bank, forming what has come to be called 'civil society,' is one manifestation of contemporary changes in the international arena reflecting neoliberal ideas that also include the expansion of market economies and global structural adjustment policies. In the course of their work, these NGOs in Palestine have borne relations of power both among themselves and between funders and local communities. Suha Hindiye's work seeks to elucidate these power relations.

An important characteristic of the NGO experience is a dependence on external funding to maintain projects as well as status in the community. The latter is acquired through sym-

bolic power, comprising cultural and economic capital. The base for this capital may reflect a space in which members of a group or class, who are products of similar objective conditions, share the same practices when offering their support. What determines the composition of this stratum/class? In examining NGOs as discursive fields, Hindiye will apply Foucault's concept of ubiquitous power relations to examine the negative reflection of these organizations on the community.

Hindiye's research will consist of in-depth interviews with 30 to 40 NGO directors and staffers in major cities in the West Bank (namely Ramallah, Nablus, and Hebron). Additionally, Hindiye will conduct interviews with staff members from five to ten international NGOs that have local offices in the West Bank. She will compliment the interviews with analysis of various documents produced by these NGOs, such as reports, research, etc.

Hindiye's work strives to fill a gap in academic sociological literature by contributing an understanding of how relations of power develop in the NGOs of a society under occupation. Such research can be useful in formulating policies that may transcend the negative impacts of such power relations on the community in question.

Suha Hindiye is an Assistant Professor at Birzeit University. She may be reached at shindiye@birzeit.edu.

2009-2010 FELLOWSHIPS



KAREEM RABIE

An Occupied Economy: Development, Privatization, and Statelessness in the West Bank

Kareem Rabie's research analyzes the economic development of the Palestinian private sector. Foreign donors have been flooding the West Bank with billions of dollars, seeking to encourage the development of the private sector with the goal of establishing a foundation for liberal governance. Rabie investigates West Bank entrepreneurs as they are constituted as local and global subjects under occupation and through their relationship to development aid.

Ethnographic research among Palestinian recipients of donor aid and those entrepreneurs who are not recipients of such aid will allow Rabie to explore and measure the impact of funding on the trajectory of the economy, and in particular on the relationships between the state-like apparatus and non-governmental organizations (NGOs). Through an examination of development materials and interviews with aid workers, Rabie's research will also show the extent to which visions of the economic and political development of the West Bank overlap and contradict.

Ultimately, Rabie will supplement social scientific literature on the state and on Palestine in the contemporary era by asking these questions: What does it mean for international developers to seek to build a state-like apparatus through the private sector? What does this strategy signify for Palestinians and their economic and political development? What kind of development is possible in the absence of a state? And, what does it mean to develop an occupied economy? The project will demonstrate the ways in which international development and global economic processes actively shape the conditions of daily life for entrepreneurs. Those same entrepreneurs in turn shape the conditions for economic development, the possibilities for the West Bank's integration into the global economy, and the types of politics and governance possible for Palestine.

The project seeks to understand the relationships that individual Palestinians have with Israel, Palestinian state-like political institutions, and NGOs. Understanding these relationships requires an inquiry into the broader forces that influence and shape them. Consequently, this project is not about Palestinians as subjects to monolithic outside actors, but rather about the relationship of individual Palestinian entrepreneurs to global, national, and local political and economic circumstances. This combination of theoretical and methodological approaches will provide new material for discussing global development in the Palestinian-Israeli context.

Kareem Rabie is a doctoral candidate in the Department of Anthropology at the City University of New York Graduate Center. He may be reached at krabie@gc.cuny.edu.



LORI A. ALLEN

Victims of Politics: Human Rights and Palestinian Nationalism

Human rights discourse infuses the ways in which Palestinians from all walks of life speak and relate to foreigners and to each other. The human rights system informs how Palestinians see themselves, how they create solidarities internationally, and how they provide national pedagogy at

home. For her book, entitled *The Rise and Fall of Human Rights: The Production of Cynicism in the Occupied Palestinian Territories*, Lori Allen will be conducting ethnographic fieldwork in the West Bank that focuses on the Palestinian Independent Commission for Human Rights and other human rights NGOs. She will provide an historical account that explores the social, political, and economic work of human rights in the occupied Palestinian territories over the last 30 years. Allen will examine the role of human rights in protesting Israeli occupation, in producing modes of governance in both the West Bank and Gaza, and in shaping political subjects. Her study seeks to analyze a variety of rights practices, including "evidence"-gathering and reportage, visual culture and representational battles, and human rights educational activities. She will also investigate the ways in which the legacy of human rights practices that were developed to fight the Israeli occupation have become implicated in contemporary Palestinian political bat-

ties. She will look at Palestinians' own critiques of the human rights industry to determine if they have left open a space in which they produce their own meanings and political projects that are not dictated by "imperialism" or "neo-liberalism," as scholarly arguments about human rights might argue.

Allen's central insight is that a dialectical interaction operates between, on the one hand, the role of human rights in political claims and their framings for international interlocutors, and on the other, the role of human rights in Palestinian state creation and the formation of local governance and political subjectivity. Allen will examine how the whirlwind of rights activity occurring in the occupied Palestinian territories at once reaffirms human rights law and the international community as sources of authority and arbiters of justice, and at the same time reduces the credibility of aspirants to state

power and of human rights notions and civil society itself. The theoretical contribution of this derives from the observation that the increased importance of human rights has had profoundly paradoxical results for Palestinians and for the conflict more generally. The malleability of human rights is the ironic result of its success as a transnational language and set of practices. By calling attention to this irony, Allen looks to develop an anthropological theory of cynicism that draws on but moves beyond concepts of ideology in an attempt to capture analytically people's reactions to social systems and social relations felt to be out of kilter.

Lori A. Allen is an anthropologist and lecturer in Contemporary Middle Eastern Society and Politics at the University of Cambridge, Department of Middle Eastern Studies. She may be reached at laa29@cam.ac.uk.



WASIM AL-HABIL

Establishing Local Governments with Indigenous Roots: Palestine's Future Unifying Centuries of Occupation and Diaspora

Wasim Al-Habil proposes to explain the inability of governing institutions to deliver needed services in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, and how this trend has contributed to conflict, despair, and a lack of development in Palestine. A unique history capped by more than forty years of ongoing military occupation has led to internal political divisions and significant levels of violence in Palestinian society. At this point, and even in the absence of protracted conflict, the public sector would be hard pressed to gain the support and faith of residents. For local government to restore the confidence of people in the West Bank and Gaza, the effects of centuries of civilian and military rule of conquering empires and states on the formation of non-indigenous institutions must be assessed.

The administrative systems in the West Bank and Gaza are the products and remnants of policies developed by the Ottoman Empire, Great Britain, Jordan, Egypt, and Israel. Each regime grafted new layers onto institutions established by prior occupiers, interfering with any process of local maturation. Sufficient attention needs to be paid to the creation of indigenous institutions for Palestinians; the challenge of build-

ing confidence in public institutions that can deliver needed services for social and economic development is critical.

Al-Habil's research will summarize the impact of various occupations on the structure of local governance in the West Bank and Gaza. He will follow this assessment with a consideration of the participation of expatriates and their influence on governance systems. Historical records will supplement a survey of Palestinian business and community leaders to provide data for research. His work will conclude by presenting recommendations to develop local governments anchored in local culture, capable of delivering public services, and subsequently inspiring public confidence.

Al-Habil's recommendations will be presented outside the context of a 'two-state solution' or other plans for peace between Israel and the Palestinians. Resolution of the internal civil conflict within Palestine will not be addressed. However, looking beyond these critical political conflicts does not render them irrelevant to the research. Al-Habil recognizes that competing political actors, Israeli and Palestinian, can benefit from deficient confidence in local Palestinian institutions, political instability, and economic decline. Students and professional public administrators, however, have different responsibilities and agendas. Both Israelis and Palestinians, irrespective of political allegiances, have a shared interest in governments that are trusted by their constituents to deliver public services. Viable local institutions are needed to serve the four million Palestinian residents of the West Bank and Gaza. To do so, they must also earn the confidence of these residents.

Wasim Al-Habil is a lecturer and researcher at the Islamic University in Gaza. He may be reached at al_habil_wasim@hotmail.com.

ALUMNI IN THE NEWS

Wasim Al-Habil (2010) Establishing Local Governments with Indigenous Roots: Palestine's Future Unifying Centuries of Occupation and Diaspora

Assistant Professor in the College of Commerce at the Islamic University in Gaza - al_habil_wasim@hotmail.com

Wasim Al-Habil co-authored an article based on his dissertation and PARC-funded research with his supervisor Professor Mark Rosentraub, entitled "Indigenous Local Governments for Palestine: A Roadmap for Replacing Imposed Institutions to Build Stability and Confidence," in the *International Journal of Public Administration* in March 2010. Al-Habil's dissertation was published in July 2009, entitled *Occupations and the Local Governments for a Palestinian State*.

Isis Nusair (2009) Gendered Politics of Location of Four Generations of Palestinian Women in Israel, 1948-2008

Assistant Professor of International Studies and Women's Studies at Denison University - nusairi@denison.edu

Isis Nusair's upcoming book, co-edited with Rhoda Kanaaneh and entitled *Displaced at Home: Ethnicity and Gender among Palestinians in Israel*, will be published by SUNY Press this year. The idea for the book emerged from the PARC-sponsored double-session panel at MESA 2006. PARC also sponsored a workshop with Columbia University in the summer of 2007 that brought all the contributors together to read and comment on each other's work.

Julie Norman (2008) Beyond the Battikh: Youth Participation in Nonviolent Activism in Palestine

Professor in the Department of Political Science at Concordia University - jnorman@alcor.concordia.ca

Julie Norman's book, *The Second Palestinian Intifada: Civil Resistance*, was published by Routledge in May 2010.

Tayser Abu Mourad (2007) Demand for Primary Health Care in the Gaza-Strip - Palestine

Director of Health Information, Department in the Ministry of Health, Gaza Strip, Palestine and Assistant Professor of Public Health - tayserm@hotmail.com

Tayser Abu Mourad recently published an article entitled "Self-Reported Health Complaints in a Primary Care Population Living under Stressful Conditions in the Gaza Strip, Palestine" in the journal *Medicine, Conflict, and Survival* (vol.26, no.1, 2010).

Karam Dana (2007) Letters of Palestinian Elite, 1920s-1930s

Post-Doctoral Fellow in the Center for Middle Eastern Studies at Harvard University - karam@u.washington.edu

Karam Dana received the American Political Science Association's 'Best Paper Award' for 2008 for his "Is Islam Compatible with the West? Muslim Political Participation in the West," co-authored with Matt Barreto. Dana has recently accepted a position in the Department of History at Tufts University.

Osamah F. Khalil (2007) At the Crossroads of Empire: The Origins of U.S. Foreign Policy toward the Arab-Israeli Conflict, 1946-1967

PhD Candidate in U.S. and Middle East History at the University of California, Berkeley - okhalil@berkeley.edu

Osamah Khalil is a co-founder and one of the network managers of Al-Shabaka, The Palestinian Policy Network. Al-Shabaka is a non-profit think tank, "without borders or walls," founded to educate and foster public debate on Palestinian human rights and self-determination within the framework of international law. For more information, see www.al-shabaka.org.

Rebecca L. Stein (2007) Dis/possessions: The Social Life of Palestinian Subjects

Assistant Professor of Cultural Anthropology and Women's Studies at Duke University - rlstein@duke.edu

Rebecca Stein published an article entitled "Traveling Zion: Hiking and Settler-Nationalism in pre-1948 Palestine" in *Interventions: International Journal of Postcolonial Studies* in 2009. She also has an article entitled "Explosive: Scenes from Israel's Queer Occupation" in *GLQ: Gay Lesbian Quarterly* (vol.16, no.4, 2010).

Amer M. El-Hamouz (2006) Usage of Stone Cutting Waste in Producing Chemical Construction Products

Associate Professor in the Department of Chemical Engineering at An-Najah National University - elhamouz@yahoo.com

Amer El-Hamouz, in co-authorship with Shadi Sawalha, published an article entitled "Improvements of the Tensile Properties of Recycled High Density Polyethylene (HDPE) by the Use of Carbonized Olive Solid Waste," in the journal *Polymer-Plastics Technology and Engineering* in March 2010. The research behind this paper began with El-Hamouz's PARC fellowship.

Falestin Naili (2006) Memory and Oblivion in Artas: An Element of the Rural History of Palestine

Associate Researcher at the Laboratoire de Recherche Historique Rhone-Alpes in Lyon, France and Adjunct Faculty at the University Rupercht Karl in Heidelberg, Germany - ifnaili@yahoo.fr

Falestin Naili's article "Memories of Home and Stories of Displacement: The Women of Artas and the 'Peasant Past'" was published in the *Journal of Palestine Studies* (v.38, no.4, 2009) last summer. Earlier this year, she published «Les déplacés de 1967: des réfugiés en devenir ?» in A. Signoles/ J. Al Hussein (dir.), *Entre Etat-nation et Diaspora : Les Palestiniens face à l'incertitude*, Paris : IISMM/ Karthala, February 2010.

Anthony Wanis-St. John (2006) Back-Channel Negotiations in the Palestinian-Israeli Peace Process

Assistant Professor in the School of International Service at American University - wanis@american.edu

Anthony Wanis-St. John's has been working on a project regarding civil society roles in peace processes. His initial research was published in a journal that he guest edited, *International Negotiation* (v.13, no.1, 2008), in an article entitled "Peace Processes, Secret Negotiations and Civil Society." His upcoming book, *Back Channel Negotiation: Secrecy in Middle East Peacemaking*, will be published in September 2010 by Syracuse University Press. In December 2009, Wanis-St. John traveled to Chad on behalf of the United States Institute of Peace to conduct unity consultations with Darfur's rebel movements.

Susan Greene (2005) Violence, Trauma, Resilience and Creativity in Occupied Palestine

Independent Scholar and Visiting Faculty at the San Francisco Art Institute - susangreene@mindspring.com

Susan Greene contributed a chapter, "Up Against the Wall," to the forthcoming *Shifting Sands: Jewish Women Confront the Israeli Occupation*, published in the spring of 2010.

Maia G. Hallward (2005) Building Space for Peace: Identity and Discourse in Israel/Palestine

Assistant Professor in the Department of Political Science and International Affairs at Kennesaw State University - mhallwar@kennesaw.edu

Maia Hallward published an article on nonviolent activism in Bil'in entitled "Creative Responses to Separation," in the *Journal of Peace Research* in July 2009. In addition, based upon research she conducted as a PARC Fellow in 2004-05 on Israeli and Palestinian activist groups, Hallward published an article entitled "Building Space for Peace? Israeli and Palestinian Activism in the Second Intifada," in *Global Change, Peace and Security* in October 2009. Hallward and former PARC Fellow Julie Norman were both on a panel discussing Palestinian nonviolent activism in the Second Intifada at the 2010 conference of the International Studies Association.

Yael Warshel (2005) Childhood Constructions of the Palestinian National Identity

Assistant Professor in the International Communication Program and Associate Faculty of the International Peace and Conflict Resolution Program in the School of International Service at American University - ywarshel@yahoo.com

Yael Warshel published a piece on Palestinian children's TV viewing practices entitled "Broadening the Discourse about Martyrdom Television Programming," in *Arab Media and Society* in the spring of 2009. Warshel also contributed a chapter on peace education practices in the Israeli-Palestinian con-

continued on page 14

PARC ALUMNI FELLOWS

Please respond to the E-mail sent to all fellows to help us build our Web site with information on all PARC alumni. If you do not receive an E-mail, please let us know by contacting us at us.parc@gmail.com.

Alumni in the News

(continued from page 13)

flict entitled "The Contributions of Communication and Media Studies to Peace Education," to the *Handbook on Peace Education*, edited by E. Cairns and G. Salamon, published by Psychology Press, 2010.

Morag Kersel (2004) Selling the Past: Global Strategies for Cultural Property Protection

Morag Kersel recently accepted a position as Assistant Professor in the Anthropology Department at DePaul University. - morag.kersel@utoronto.ca

Basem Lufti Ra'ad (2004) Palestinian Subaltern Heritage: Ancient and Modern

Professor at Al-Quds University in Jerusalem - braad@gmail.com

Basem Ra'ad's new book, *Hidden Histories: Palestine and the East Mediterranean*, has been published by Pluto Press in London, and will be available from Palgrave Macmillan in the U.S. and Fernwood in Canada, as well as elsewhere. The book addresses various understandings of the past and its present operation in such matters as religion, sacred places, place names, cultures, identities, and heritage. Its eleven chapters aim to reply to common claims and misunderstandings, to emphasize continuities, and to decolonize minds.

Awad Halabi (2002) Transformation of the Prophet Moses Festival and Shrine at Jericho: From Local Worship to Nationalist Identity

Assistant Professor in the Departments of History and Religion at Wright State University - awad.halabi@wright.edu

Awad Halabi hosted "Direct Access to the Muslim World" Fulbright Visiting Specialist Dr. Musa Shtewi from the Department of Sociology at the University of Jordan, for a one-month visit to Wright State University in January 2010 to discuss issues of gender relations in the Middle East, Islamic political movements, and democracy.

In 2009, Halabi's article, entitled "Symbols of Hegemony and Resistance: Banners and Flags in British-ruled Palestine," was published in *Jerusalem Quarterly* (vol.36, Winter 2009). Also in 2009, Halabi's chapter "Islamic Ritual and Palestinian Nation-

alism: al-Hajj Amin and the Prophet Moses Festival in Jerusalem, 1921-1936," was published in *Jerusalem Interrupted: Colonial Transformation, 1917-Present*, edited by Lena Jayussi (Olive Branch Press, 2009).

Daniel B. Monterescu (2001) Jewish-Arab Relations, Urban Space, and the State in Palestinian-Israeli Mixed Towns

Assistant professor in the Department of Sociology and Anthropology at Central European University, and a Marie Curie Fellow at the European University Institute - monterescud@ceu.hu

Daniel Monterescu, one of PARC's original Fellows, published an article entitled "The Bridled Bride of Palestine: Orientalism, Zionism, and the Troubled Urban Imagination," in *Identities: Global Studies in Culture and Power* (vol.16, no. 6) in November 2009.

Hamdan Taha Getty Research Exchange Fellow

Assistant Deputy Minister, Department of Antiquities and Cultural Heritage in the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities in Palestine - htaha99@yahoo.com

Hamdan Taha has a chapter entitled "Some Aspects of Sugar Production in Jericho, Jordan Valley," in *A Timeless Vale: Archaeological and Related Essays on the Jordan Valley in honour of Gerritt van der Kooij on the occasion of his sixty-fifth birthday*, edited by Eva Kaptijn and Lucan Petit (Leiden University Press, 2009). This chapter represents the preliminary results of Taha's research supported by the CAORC Getty Research Exchange fellowship program. In 2009, Taha also edited "Inventory of Cultural and Natural Heritage Sites of Potential Outstanding Universal Value in Palestine," with the Department of Antiquities and Cultural Heritage, and Al-Nasher Advertising Agency in Ramallah. He also has a chapter entitled "Einfuerung: Die Verwaltung der Archaelogischen Ressourcen in Palaestina," in *Gaza Bruecke zwischen Kulturen 6000 Jahre Geschichte* edited by Mamoun Fansa and Karen Ayadin, 2010.

In addition to these publications, Dr. Taha will be co-directing a three-year project for reassessment, management and site development at Tell Balata, to be carried out on behalf of the Palestinian Department of Antiquities and the University of Leiden in cooperation with UNESCO in Ramallah.

Visit PARC at <http://parc-us-pal.org> for up-to-date information on fellowships, current activities, and resources on Palestine.

MESA Honors CAORC Director

As most of you may know, PARC's parent organization is the Council of American Overseas Research Centers (CAORC), which consists of 23 American overseas research centers around the world. PARC is pleased to announce that CAORC's Executive Director, Dr. Mary Ellen Lane, was the recipient of the 2009 Jere L. Bacharach Service Award conferred at the Middle East Studies Association's annual meeting in Boston in November 2009. In making the award, MESA cited Dr. Lane's consistent determination to support and create opportunities for advanced scholarly research and area studies around the world - especially in the Middle East.



PARC owes an enormous debt of gratitude to Dr. Lane as the force behind PARC's founding in 1998. As Dr. Philip Mattar, former President of PARC's Board, noted, Dr. Lane's assistance was essential to PARC's creation: "In spring 1997, she organized a meeting to help organize PARC, write its mission statement—to promote Palestinian studies and cooperation

among scholars, among other things—and write its by-laws. Subsequently she helped PARC get on its feet and continues to help in its development. Since 2000, PARC has given an average of a dozen fellowships to Palestinian, American, and other scholars each year. PARC would not be in the position it is today were it not for Dr. Lane's crucial leadership."

Since 1986, when Dr. Lane joined CAORC as Executive Director, she has helped CAORC's member centers work together on cooperative projects, obtain support for new projects, and secure stable annual operational funding. One of Dr. Lane's most important accomplishments has been helping the centers expand their reach beyond supporting Americans conducting overseas research to be of greater direct benefit to local scholars and to involve host-country universities and organizations. In the Middle East, Dr. Lane worked with American and host-country scholars and officials to establish and make viable several new American overseas research centers in addition to PARC: the American Academic Research Institute in Iraq, and the American Institute for Afghanistan Studies, as well as to help the American Institute of Maghrib Studies expand into Algeria.

(Excerpted from the CAORC Web site: <http://www.caorc.org>.)

Third Gerner Award Conferred at Al-Azhar University

Ashraf Ahmed Dahalan, a Middle East Studies master's student, was selected by his university to receive the Gerner Award for 2010. Mr. Dahalan is an honors student at Al-Azhar University in Gaza, with an average above 93%. He received his bachelor's degree in political science from An-Najah University in 1996 and recently finished his master's degree coursework at Al-Azhar. He is now in the



process of selecting the topic of his thesis. Faculty members at Al-Azhar have remarked that Mr. Dahalan is open-minded, considerate, and a skillful researcher.

This annual award is in memory of PARC board member Deborah J. "Misty" Gerner who passed away in 2006. Misty spent more than 25 years studying, teaching, visiting and living in the Middle East and specialized in the Arab-Israeli conflict and Palestinian affairs. This is the third Gerner Award to be conferred; the first award was conferred at Birzeit University and the second at An-Najah University. All recipients have been deeply grateful and proud to receive this honor.

Please donate books and resources to PARC's Ramallah Library

Your resources may be useful to Palestinian researchers.

Consider donating them to the new PARC library in Ramallah.

For more information, please contact PARC at parcpal@palnet.com.

ALUMNI SYNOPSES OF FINAL REPORTS

Morag M. Kersel (2003-2004) Selling the Past: Global Strategies for Cultural Property Protection

The primary objective of Morag Kersel's PARC research program was to examine the legal strategies employed by nations to protect their cultural heritage. Through a series of ethnographic interviews with the various stakeholders with a vested interest in the legal trade in antiquities in Israel, she explored the efficacy of this mechanism as a way of combating the illegal excavation of archaeological sites and the resulting illicit trade of antiquities.

During her research, she confirmed, through interviews and ethnographic analysis, that archaeological material is coming into Israel from Jordan, Palestine, and other areas rich in archaeological sites. Clear indication that the legal market in Israel is actually fueling the pillage of archaeological sites in the surrounding regions is evidenced by a rise in looting of the region over the last number of years. Not only is looting occurring within the boundaries of Israel, it is unmistakable in the Palestinian territories. Palestinians are turning to pillaging knowing that there is a legal market for archaeological material mere kilometers away. Reports have surfaced that villagers on both sides of the Jordan River specifically look for archaeological material with Jewish motifs (highly collectible) underscoring the link between supply and demand.

Morag Kersel may be reached at morag.kersel@utoronto.ca.

Susan Greene (2004-2005) Violence, Trauma, Resilience and Creativity in Occupied Palestine

Susan Greene's 2004-5 project used action research to present a case study of creative resistance to the militarism, oppression and violence in Occupied Palestine. Two collaborative community murals were created: the first with a

Palestinian family whose home is surrounded on four sides by the 'occupation or apartheid wall'. The second was a mural honoring and remembering those from a particular refugee camp who had been killed by occupation forces. This study in part revealed the importance and multiple meanings of solidarity and its relationship to resilience and creativity. For example: H. A. said, reflecting on the experience of painting, with his family, neighbors and international activists, the wall facing his front door:

When the Israeli government started building the wall, many people from all over the world came to support our resistance to it. The government arrested or took all of the supporters and deported them. The Israelis said: "You are now alone. Who is going to help you?" It lifted my spirits when the solidarity people, including Israelis, came back to paint on the wall. My kids started to play outside again after a year of being too depressed and afraid. When you come to paint with the children, it makes them feel like they can live.

Greene's current research, "Resilience, Creativity and Solidarity" builds on the findings of her earlier study, asking:

- How does solidarity impact resilience and resistance?
- What is the relationship between solidarity and activism?
- What is the impact on Palestinians of multiple expulsions over several generations in an area about the size of New Jersey?
- In what ways can this work be communicated more powerfully to larger audiences and used in organizing for social change?

"Resilience, Creativity and Solidarity" investigates "A Tale of Two Cities ~ The Olympia-Rafah Solidarity Mural Project," two 'sister-city' interdisciplinary murals, one in Olympia, Washington, USA; and one in Rafah, Gaza, Palestine. The mural

in Olympia is nearing completion and this summer the project in Gaza will take place. These projects aim to move from the local to the global by bringing people together across social justice movements and continents. More than 150 organizations and individuals contributed images to the mural in Olympia, articulating how a wide range of issues, including globalism, precarity, environmental justice, racism, colonialism, rights of indigenous people, and anti-war movements, inform and link the social and political struggles in Palestine and Israel to social struggles throughout the world. The project aims to organize, raise awareness, and build community and resiliency in creative and transformative ways on societal and individual levels.

Each mural will make use of audio and video tracks that, in addition to being available via computer, will be accessible on site by cell and iPhone. Thus the street will turn into a listening station where the viewer will be able to listen to poetry, music, interviews, etc. associated to different images in the mural.

Using social networking systems, all of the groups and artists in both public art projects, their constituents, and the general audience will be able to continue to build relationships and organize through the conversations that social networks make possible.

Global Positioning Systems (GPS) and Geocaching technologies will be used in both projects to layer distant locations upon each other and provide alternative walking tours. For example: the viewer will be able to tour downtown Olympia, Washington and view what they would see if they were walking down a street in Rafah in the Gaza Strip, or along the wall on US/Mexico border, or on an Indian reservation, etc. This aims to challenge the way distances and borders are experienced.

Susan Greene may be reached at susangreene@mindspring.com.

Around the PARC

(continued from page 3)

lasting connections with our Palestinian colleagues. Thanks go to all the presenters, organizers, chairs and discussants on both of PARC's panels for sharing their ideas and their work with us. We also appreciate Omar Kader's support to PARC that allowed us to host a reception at MESA for panelists, PARC members, and colleagues.

PARC board member Nathan Brown has organized a double panel for MESA 2010 on "Islam and Politics in Palestine." A full description of the panel is on page 4. We will bring together quite an amazing group of scholars to tackle this important topic. If you might be interested in hosting one of the presenters to speak on your campus, please let us know.

ALUMNI FELLOWS: As always, PARC alumni fellows are engaged in some fascinating work and have authored some excellent new publications. I hope you will take a look at *Alumni in the News* and *Alumni Synopses of Final Reports* to learn about their current work. We have also listed each of their E-mail contacts in order to help keep the community of scholars on Palestine connected.

With the three aims of connecting people who are working on Palestine, offering resources to those interested in Palestine, and highlighting the remarkable work of our alumni, all PARC fellows will soon receive an email to help us develop a special section of our Web site devoted to our alumni. We look forward to your replies and assistance. We are always delighted to get an E-mail in the inbox from a former fellow!

ELECTIONS FOR PARC BOARD OF DIRECTORS: PARC held board and general membership meetings at MESA in November and a board meeting in March in Washington, DC. We extend our gratitude to Rhoda Kanaaneh, whose term as a PARC membership rep-

resentative on the board is expiring. You will find on page 18 biographies of two candidates standing for election, Bilal Ayyub and Loren Lybarger. We are grateful that both of them have taken such a keen interest in PARC and are willing to serve on the board. In early September, all current members will receive an E-mail inviting them to vote. I hope that you will take part in our elections.

NEW U.S. STAFF: PARC welcomes our new administrative assistant, Rana Khoury, who is pursuing a master of arts in Arab Studies at Georgetown University, where her academic concentration is in comparative and regional politics of the Middle East. Born in Cleveland, Ohio to a Syrian family, Rana has always been attuned to politics, culture, and the Arab world. After graduating with a BA in Political Science from American University, she took off to Damascus, where she enrolled in several months of intensive Ara-



bic and worked as an English instructor for the United Nations Relief and Works Agency. It was her work with adolescents at one Palestinian refugee camp, in particular, that inspired her to continue her studies at Georgetown to grasp better the complex political and social realities in the region. After spending her first year as a research assistant in the department, Rana is eager for the continued exposure to scholarship and academia that she hopes to obtain at PARC.

WEB SITE UPDATES: Our 60-page, annotated list of films on Palestine is finally ready for the PARC Web site. Please look for it in coming weeks. We hope it will be a valuable resource for both educators and those interested in Palestine. The 90-page, annotated list of links to Web sites on Palestine should be up on our Web site by late September and will bring a wealth of Internet sites on Palestine to your fingertips. Be sure to visit PARC at <http://www.parc-us-pal.org>.

Appreciation for PARC Board Member Rhoda Kanaaneh

Rhoda Kanaaneh is a former PARC fellow and the author of three books, including the award winning *Birth of the Nation: Strategies of Palestinian Women in Israel* (University of California Press 2002), *Surrounded: Palestinian Soldiers in the Israeli Military* (Stanford University Press 2009), and *Displaced at Home: Ethnicity and Gender among Palestinians in Israel* edited with Isis Nusair (forthcoming from SUNY Press). Rhoda has been a wonderful contributor to the PARC board. Not only did she serve on the grant review committee and co-organize, with Isis Nusair, an excellent double panel at MESA 2006 during her tenure, but she also hosted two beautiful PARC fundraising parties, which were held in her home in New York City. The double panel at MESA focused on a neglected aspect of Palestinian scholarship, examining the lives of Palestinians living inside Israel. Rhoda subsequently worked with Isis Nusair to produce an edited volume using the material from the double panel. With funding from PARC and Columbia University, they held a workshop in 2007 to bring the authors, all women who are Palestinian Israelis, together to discuss their papers and forge them into the forthcoming book. We extend our gratitude and appreciation to Rhoda for her years of fine service on the PARC board.

PARC Elections for Member Representative on Board of Directors

In early September, all current individual members of PARC will be sent an E-mail inviting them to vote for a member representative on the PARC board of directors. If you are a current member, please ensure that we have your current E-mail address on file by sending your information to us.parc@gmail.com. If you are not a current member and would like to participate in the elections, please become a member today by mailing in the membership coupon on the back page of the newsletter along with your check or by visiting our Web site and joining using PayPal or a credit card (<http://parc-us-pal.org>). Please do so prior to August 30, 2010 in order to be included in the voting. The current members of PARC's board of directors are listed on page 2 of the newsletter. The board meets twice a year: at MESA each fall and in Washington, D.C. in March. Voters will be asked to choose one of the following candidates. The candidate receiving the most votes will assume a position on the board. Thank you in advance for your participation.

Profiles of PARC Members Standing for Office

Bilal Ayyub

Dr. Bilal M. Ayyub is a professor of civil and environmental engineering at the University of Maryland (College Park) and the director of the Center for Technology and Systems Management. He is the president of BMA Engineering, Inc., a consulting firm in Bethesda, MD in areas relating to infrastructure, homeland security, and defense systems. Dr. Ayyub completed several research projects funded by government agencies, foundations and corporations. Dr. Ayyub is a fellow of several societies including the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE), the American Society of Mechanical Engineers and the Society of Naval Architects and Marine En-

gineers. Dr. Ayyub is the recipient of several recognition awards including the ASCE Edmund Friedman Award in 1989, the ASCE Walter Huber Research Prize in 1997, and the K. S. Fu Award of NAFIPS in 1995. He received the 2003 State of Maryland Governor's Citation for "positive contributions, leadership and distinguished service ..." Dr. Ayyub was appointed to many national committees, investigation boards, and corporate boards including most recently to working groups of the transition team of Maryland Governor Martin O'Malley, 2006-07, and to the Maryland Middle Eastern American Commission and the Montgomery County Middle Eastern American Advisory Board. In 2007, he received the U. S. Army Commander's Award for Public Service for the development of the risk model for the hurricane protection system of New Orleans in response to Hurricane Katrina. Dr. Ayyub is the author and co-author of more than 500 publications in journals, conference proceedings, and reports. Among the publications are more than 20 books including the several textbooks used by many universities worldwide.

Loren Lybarger

Dr. Loren Lybarger is an assistant professor in Classics and World Religions at Ohio University and received his doctorate from the University of Chicago (Divinity School, Sociology and Psychology of Religion Program) in 2002.

His main concern as a researcher has been to understand and interpret the effects of Islamist mobilization on individual and collective political orientations. His first book, *Identity and Religion in Palestine: The Struggle between Islamism and Secularism in the Occupied Territories* (Princeton 2007), examines this question in relation to the rise of Hamas and its impact on how individuals situated across the religious and political spectra conceived of being Palestinian toward the end of the Oslo interregnum. His current research continues this concern for religio-political mobilization but shifts the focus to Palestinian and Somali Muslim immigrant communities in the United States. This new comparative project seeks to test claims about "re-Islamization" or "neo-fundamentalism" and its effects on Diaspora Muslims by carrying out ethnographic observations and interviews in a range of social settings in both communities. These interests, and especially his concern for Palestinians, stem from the seven years he spent teaching English in the West Bank, Egypt, and the Gaza Strip between 1986 and 1993. He returned to Palestine in 1999-2000 to carry out Fulbright-supported research for his dissertation and book. He joined PARC when it first announced its existence and has supported its mission ever since. He believes that PARC is a critical resource for scholars doing research on Palestine and that it deserves our fullest backing.

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