



## Israeli Routes Through Nakba Landscapes: An Ethnographic Meditation

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Hanna Zananiri house, Talbiyeh c.1940.  
*Source: Matson Collection, Library of  
Congress.*

While conducting research about the history of northern Israel, an Israeli friend of mine stumbled across the story of a mosque whose remains were situated on the grounds of her father's childhood kibbutz. She learned that the mosque's structure had remained relatively intact long after its Palestinian client population had fled or been expelled during the course of the 1948-1949 war, while its lands had been folded into the territory of the nascent Israeli state and subsequently redistributed for the expansion of Israel's rural Jewish communities. She called her father at his Tel Aviv home to confirm the discovery. Did he remember the mosque, she asked? No, he responded, he did not. She pressed him a bit. I have its coordinates, she insisted, and its remains are located on kibbutz land. But he was certain, reminding her that he knew every inch of kibbutz territory, having spent his childhood hiking its environs in accordance with prevailing Zionist

pedagogy.<sup>1</sup> His denial was categorical and there the conversation ended.

A few days later, he called her back with a set of belated memories. It seemed that in discussion with his sisters who had also grown up on this kibbutz, a forgotten landscape had slowly come into view. Yes, the mosque was there, he confirmed. Indeed, he recalled watching Palestinians harvesting fruit from its adjacent fields when he was a young boy, a memory he presumed to be a 1949 post-war scene from the moment when Palestinian families recently exiled from Israel returned to harvest their crops and inspect their property. This memory process disturbed him. How could such an intimate knowledge of one's homeland simply vanish only to come suddenly and vividly back into view?

This paper is an ethnographic exploration of Jewish Israeli encounters with formerly Palestinian landscapes, places, buildings, artifacts, and histories. It is a portrait of Israeli travels and routes of varying kinds – alternately as soldiers, looters, tourists, immigrants, and activists – through sites that are now legally 'Israeli' but which carry the traces, in varying degrees of visibility, of their pre-1948 Palestinian pasts. Grounded in incomplete snapshots from the lives of several different Israelis, from very different walks of life, this paper meditates on the highly political nature of Israeli itineraries within the borders of their nation-state and the ways these itineraries have, at different historically moments, intersected with the history of the Palestinian dispossession of 1948.<sup>2</sup> Through the lens of these routes and biographies, this ethnography attempts to raise questions about the ways that Israeli Jews have interfaced with the Palestinian history of their nation-state and contended with the abundant material evidence of pre-1948 Palestinian life that remains within Israel's borders – this despite Israeli state efforts to remove this evidence through both physical means (predominantly the razing of villages in the aftermath of 1948) and pedagogical projects of state-sanctioned forgetting.<sup>3</sup> Most of these incidents chronicle Israeli routes in what is now West Jerusalem. As such, this paper also aims to draw attention to the everyday ways in which Israeli Jews have participated in the erasure of the urban history of Palestinian West Jerusalem, even as it documents the efforts of some Israeli activists to reconstitute an Israeli historical imagination of this urban geography and its exiled communities.

## **Itineraries of Loot**

I met Moshe Amira while conducting fieldwork in the Palestinian village of Abu Ghosh – a village situated inside Israel's borders along the Tel-Aviv Jerusalem highway, a mere ten minutes by car from downtown West Jerusalem. He was the only Jew living in the village at the time of our first interview in 1995, having moved from the Jerusalem suburbs in search of more affordable real estate and "a simpler and quieter life." Amira lived in one of the oldest houses in this medieval village, purchased in the early 1980s and renovated a decade later. During the course of one afternoon, he escorted me through the history of his renovations, narrating the

progression of his basement from stable to now ornate guest room, replete with twelve-foot windows, inlaid marble benches, and a “specialty staircase” designed by a prominent Tel Aviv artist.

My tour of the house was punctuated by stories about things taken, found, and given by others—stories told openly and in rapid succession. Amira “discovered” the red rock that had been inlaid in his first floor in the Ramallah area. The inlaid marble and bits of mosaic which decorated the living room had been unearthed from the site of an archeological excavation in downtown West Jerusalem from which he also secured a tympanum and ceremonial wooden table. He had received the ornate pillar in his master bedroom “from some kids in the village as a present” and dated it as some 300 years old. By his own account, Amira brought home new pieces all the time and then determined if “the house would accept them.” While he was aware that he faced the threat of fine and even imprisonment if such “finds” were discovered by the Antiquities Authorities, this threat did not seem to dissuade. Indeed, his account of a lifetime of pillaging was not merely unapologetic but explicitly authorized by a salvage narrative, the notion that “if I didn’t take it, it would have been destroyed.”

Our tour paused in front of a radio which Amira had granted prominence on a marble ledge in his living room. It was a fantastic piece with high modernist lines hewn into caramel colored wood. No, he clarified, this he didn’t steal. But his mother had at his grandmother’s behest during the course of the 1948-1949 war. “She said to my mother, ‘everybody is going and taking something... Why don’t you go?’ So she went to Qatamon and took this radio.” For years it was the only radio in the family home and his parents continued to use it through the 1970s. Indeed, he told me, “it still gets great reception.”

This meeting with Amira was my first encounter with the history of Israeli looting and spolia as told from the vantage of the Israeli looter.<sup>4</sup> In subsequent years of fieldwork and archival research, Amira’s story would be augmented and substantiated by others: stories of looted goods presented by the Haganah as gifts to kibbutz children in the war’s aftermath, goods that were subsequently buried on kibbutz property in fury and protest by kibbutz elders who objected to profiting from the dispossession (Bronstein 2007); the memories of a middle-aged Israeli woman whose childhood kibbutz friends watched goods mysteriously appear in their home after the war’s cessation – including furniture and carpets – replete with unanswered questions about their provenance;<sup>5</sup> accounts of the books, indeed of entire collections, taken from “empty” Palestinian homes in the war’s midst and aftermath, many of which were transferred to Israeli university libraries, where they remain today (Amit 2006, 2007).<sup>6</sup>

War-time looting was particularly fierce in the middle class Palestinian neighborhood of Qatamon from which Amira’s radio was taken.<sup>7</sup> As we learn from the memoirs and memories of Jerusalem residents who lived through the war, acts of plunder and theft in this neighborhood were highly public practices. Consider the following account of looting as narrated by a Jewish resident of Jerusalem, then a teenage girl:

I remember the looting in Qatamon very well... At the time, my family lived in Rehavia [a Jewish neighborhood immediately adjacent to this Palestinian area, and one that connected Qatamon to other Jewish neighborhoods in the city]... For days you could see people walking by carrying looted goods. I would stare through the window of our apartment and see dozens of people walking past with the loot... Not only soldiers, civilians as well. They were looting like mad. They were even carrying dining tables. And it was in broad daylight, so everyone could see... One night a soldier took me out and showed me around the [adjacent Arab neighborhood]. I was stunned by the beauty of the houses. I went into one house – it was beautiful, with a piano, and carpets and wonderful chandeliers... One soldier wanted to please me, and brought me a handkerchief and earrings. I was flattered, but he didn't tell me he had looted them... When I showed them to my father, he looked at me and said, "Throw it away! How dare you take anything." (Krystall 1998, 102).

This testimonial speaks in several voices. It both points to the prevalence of looting as a popular practice in which both Jewish civilians and soldiers participated – a practice observed by all and prevented neither by cover of darkness nor by a prevalent ethos of shame – even as it identifies those who refused its allure. Indeed, the remainder of this narrative describes the family's fierce objections to this widespread and seemingly sanctioned public practice. This passage, with its ambiguous account of flirtation triangulated through looted objects (handkerchief, earrings), is also suggestive of the erotic charge with which theft and stolen property was sometimes imbued. In so doing, it reminds of the sexual violence that was a part of this post-war scene of plunder, violence which was explicitly discussed, although not condemned, by the Israeli cabinet of the period.<sup>8</sup>

A travel narrative is also lurking here. As we learn from this testimonial, the culture of theft brought Jewish Israeli soldiers and civilians inside private homes, into the most intimate of Palestinian interiors. Indeed, multiple interiorities are at issue in the scene of illicit entry described above: not merely of the house writ large, but presumably also that of the bedroom (where the earrings are found), the bureau, and the jewelry box. As Amira's testimony suggests, the desire to steal during wartime produced something of a culture of domestic exploration among Jewish Israeli soldiers and civilians alike. Indeed, such practices of exploration were almost obligatory (recall the words of Amira's grandmother: "everybody is going and taking something") with its promise of unprotected goods, available for the taking. These practices of theft and exploration yielded more than goods and intimate encounters. Rather, many routes into the Palestinian interior, particularly those in the wealthy Qatamon neighborhood, also yielded surprising new knowledges about Palestinian-Arab society and everyday life.

The artifacts found in these spaces (the carpets, radios, books and chandeliers) provided evidence of a vibrant culture of Palestinian cosmopolitanism that was at odds with the dominant Israeli account of Palestinian pre-modernity.

## Of Arab Houses

Ruth Shapira first visited Israel as a tourist in 1968, marveling in both awe and horror at the destruction in Jerusalem's old city as she wandered through what the state termed a newly "united" Jerusalem. Some five years later, she and her husband David had immigrated to Israel. By her own description, they were rather conventional American Zionists, albeit of a very privileged class (both had graduated from Ivy League institutions) – this being prior to the forms of radicalization they would experience in the early 1980s in the aftermath of the Lebanon War. Their radicalism would intensify at the end of the decade following the outbreak of the first Palestinian Uprising (1987-1993), a period in which Ruth's political attentions would be focused on anti-occupation activism.

In the summer of 2007, I joined Ruth in the living room of her spacious home in the West Jerusalem neighborhood of Abu Tur. From her backyard, which borders the Green Line (indeed, the line cuts directly through their property), one could look down into the Palestinian village of Silwan and across the valley to the southwestern corner of the Old City. During the first uprising, with Palestinian protest and Israeli military action particularly fierce in neighboring Silwan, Abu Tur was a place which most Israeli Jews studiously avoided. By 2007, at the time of my visit, Israeli sentiments had changed considerably, in accordance with changes in the political and material landscape. Prices for an 'Arab house' (*bayit 'aravi*) in Abu Tur had skyrocketed. Within dominant Israeli real estate parlance, the term had long been a purely aesthetic marker, as even a brief perusal of Israeli advertisements for property in West Jerusalem would suggest: "Authentic Arab style house in Baka... [replete with] original tiled floors and high ceilings"; "superb Arab house completely refurbished in the heart of Neve Tsedek"; "Arab House for sale in the Jewish Quarter [Old City, Jerusalem]... with lots of arches." In these commercial invocations, "Arab" is neither an ethno-national nor historical signifier. Rather, it is shorthand for a distinct set of architectural features attributed to the structure in question (stone walls, tiled floors, arched doorways, towering ceilings and windows) – features that confer value.<sup>9</sup> As such, "Arab" can be enunciated freely by real estate agents, potential buyers, and property owners without the fear of negatively impacting the property in question. The term is thus the locus of a symbolic dispossession.<sup>10</sup>

Sitting in her backyard, enjoying respite from the heat beneath towering trees, Ruth describes her family's history in this place. Their choice of Abu Tur had been somewhat haphazard: "I had a preference for older houses because I think they're built better than newer houses and they're more interesting ... In the 1970's, there were actually left wing [Jewish] people who rented and lived in all kinds of places, including in the Arab sector of Abu Tur – and in Sheikh Jarrah, the Mount of Olives, Mount Zion. It was inexpensive, it was fun, and the places were interesting... I think these people were actually interested in living in an Arab sector in Jerusalem. They certainly weren't settler types, it wasn't anything like that. It was sort of romantic...."

When they first saw the house in 1982, it seemed quite isolated – located, as it

was, at the very edge of the Jewish part of Abu Tur, abutting the Green line. Indeed, the street that ran beneath what became their garden had been the narrowest dividing point between Jordan and Israel between 1948 and 1967, a mere three meters in width. The houses directly across from the one that became their own had been a Jordanian military headquarters. The residence itself was something of a wreck before they moved in, Ruth noted, inhabited by an extended Kurdish family that had moved into the neighborhood in the late 1940s and early 1950s during the mass emigration of Mizrahi Jews from North Africa and the Middle East.

“The family had no money to do renovation. The kitchen and bathroom were outside in a kind of hut, as in the Ottoman period. So obviously the price was not so high, even though it had a big piece of land that went with it. [The negotiations] went well for us though we’re not very talented at that kind of thing. And we bought it, even though our parents though we were totally insane.”

She describes the course of their painstaking renovations of this classic Ottoman structure: transforming an interior courtyard into a bathroom; adding windows and skylights to the thick stone walls; conjoining a set of discrete domed structures to create a spacious dining room. The process was long but the results enormously satisfying. I ask her about the histories contained in this place, about her relationship to the Palestinian past which came before. Do they haunt them in the present?

“I just want to make a Zionist statement before I go on, in terms of living in an Arabic house. This did not bother me in the slightest. I mean, if it had bothered me, I wouldn’t have made *aliyah*... This isn’t to say that I’m not interested in the history of this house, the question of why there was a cistern underneath the property, and so on. As an archeologist and ancient historian, I’m very interested. But politically speaking, it’s not a problem for me. My attitude is that all houses, wherever you’re living, have very long histories. People come, people go, and nobody really owns a house. The house is there, the land is there, and people come and go. Soon we’ll be gone, too... And since I am and remain in favor of the state of Israel – I mean, the founding of the state of Israel – and made *aliyah* because I wanted to live there, I don’t think I have the right to turn around and say but I’m not going to live in this house.”

That Ruth’s house in Abu Tur, and her history as its resident, becomes the grounds for a set of clearly enunciated political claims is by no means an exception within the history of the Israel-Palestine conflict. Rather, private homes and the narratives that attend them have long constituted the battleground on which national claims have been staked on both sides of the conflict’s divide. This battleground’s most famous chapter is the much publicized attack on Edward Said claims to residency in the prosperous

West Jerusalem neighborhood of Talbiya in the pre-1948 period (Weiner 1999).<sup>11</sup> While much of the attack pivoted on the terms of legal ownership (the names of Said's grandfather and aunt appear on the property deed, rather than those of his parents), the critique is most concerned with the Palestinian national claims on which the history pivots – that is, claims about rootedness in Palestine, and subsequent refugee status in the post-1948 period. “[O]ne cannot avoid the reasonable conclusion,” writes his sharpest critic in the Jewish journal *Commentary*, “that just as Edward Said and his nuclear family were not long-term or permanent residents in Talbieh [sic]... [t]hey thus cannot be considered ‘refugees’ or ‘exiles’ from Palestine in any meaningful sense” (Weiner 1999, 28).

Consider the sharp contrast between these cases. In the debate over Said's “old house” in Jerusalem, proof of Palestinian belonging in Palestine requires evidence of rootedness in place/house – evidence that is seemingly undercut, indeed nullified, by both familial histories that disrupt the ties between the particular individual and the residence in question, and by histories of cosmopolitan mobility that unmoor the individual from place/house. In the Jewish Israeli case, by contrast, rootedness is not a precondition for claims of possession. To the contrary: the fact that Israelis have come from elsewhere to either their “Arab houses” or to their nation-state is not grounds for a nullification of their property rights. Rather, this history bolsters Jewish property claims at the scale of both the house and the territory of the nation-state in broader terms (“they had nowhere else to go”). Indeed, processes of national self-invention, this being the antithesis of ontology, are a celebrated dimension of the Israeli national character.<sup>12</sup> Like the Palestinian houses they inhabit, Jewish Israelis were constituted through renovation. Of course, this is not the story of Israel alone, but that of the settler-colonial project in broader terms.

## Activist Travels

In the spring of 2007, I joined *Zochrot* on one of their frequent walking tours of formerly Palestinian places conquered during the course of the war. This tour, which catered to a group of young Jewish Israeli educators, focused on the ruins of Lifta, located on the outskirts of West Jerusalem. These ruins are highly unusual, as Lifta was one of a mere handful of Palestinian villages whose primary structures were neither wholly razed by the Israeli army during or after the war, nor renovated and repopulated by Jewish Israelis (Khalidi 1992, 301-2).<sup>13</sup> In the sites of most former villages uprooted in 1948, Palestinian history is only visibly in evidence after diligent investigative work—like the gathering of shards and unearthing of overgrown remains. But Lifta's physical landscape is quite different. When walking through its grounds, even the most passive viewer is presented with a set of remarkably intact stone houses and walkways, by a central well surrounded by thriving almond, fig and cherry trees that testify to the place's rich agricultural history. Over the course of the last decade, Lifta's seemingly abandoned structures and scenic spaces have become a

playground for Israel's socially marginal, including Hasidic squatters and drug dealers, and is now a favored destination among spring-time hikers. Its stone exteriors are now overwritten with Hebrew graffiti, and its interiors strewn with the remains that squatters or picnickers have left behind.<sup>14</sup> Conversations with these itinerant visitors suggest that Lifta's Palestinian remains do not, by and large, haunt the Israeli publics that traverse them. That is, they are not historically resonant, but merely picturesque. Or rather, when historically resonant, they resonate in very particular ways, providing evidence of Israel's wartime victory rather than testifying to a history of dispossession and national shame.

The Israeli NGO and activist organization *Zochrot* (meaning "Remembering," in Hebrew), was founded by a group of radical Israelis in 2002 with the aim of educating their Jewish co-nationals, adults and children alike, about the history of the Palestinian dispossession, and the ways that history takes shape in the Israeli present.<sup>15</sup> Their means are varied, including guided tours through formerly Palestinian villages and cities, often aided by their former residents; ceremonies commemorating war-time atrocities; educational lectures and seminars on the dispossession; displays of contemporary Israeli political art on themes of Palestinian exile and Israeli state violence; the collection and publication of Palestinian oral histories of the pre-1948 era; the erection of signage in Israeli landscapes to dramatize Palestinian pasts (e.g. "this land belongs to the uprooted people of Miske"); and increasingly, dialogue with fellow Israelis about the practical possibilities for Palestinian refugees return – the latter being an issue which, *Zochrot* members concede, has virtually no traction among Israeli audiences. In their literature and public discourse, they refer to the 1948 war using the Arabic term *Nakba* – a term which most Israelis view as tantamount to national heresy. Working primarily with Jewish Israeli audiences, not for reasons of convenience, but because they believe that the center of the political struggle is here, they are engaged in a bold labor of defamiliarization, an effort to rewrite prevailing histories and geographies of Israel.

A small organization, *Zochrot* exists not only on the margins of the Israeli political consensus, but also the margins of the ever-receding landscape of Israeli left-politics. Yet this marginality has been tempered in recent years by the growing Israeli interest in the Palestinian history of 1948 – a trend evidenced, in part, by the organization's increased visibility in the Israeli mainstream media. This national visibility has its analogue in the international arena, manifest through growing invitations for *Zochrot* members at international human rights conferences and the increasing attention of international users of social media to *Zochrot*'s growing web presence. The growth of *Zochrot* over the course of the last decade can be read as a barometer of the shifting political sensibilities of the Israeli left – a left which once traced the emergence of Israeli militarism and settler-nationalism to 1967, viewing critical re-evaluation of 1948 as a blasphemous proposition for the ways it threatened to undercut the Israeli national project.

My guide through Lifta, – *Zochrot*'s founder, Eitan Bronstein – illustrated the village's history with the help of a map that delineated both current Israeli towns and



sites of former Palestinian dwelling. He pointed to the adjacent Palestinian villages of Beit Mazmi, Deir Yassin, Ein Karem, Saffa – a small portion of those in the Jerusalem area that were thriving prior to 1948. Some of these villages are no longer standing, their material structures no longer intact. Others, like Ein Karem, were renovated and reinhabited by Jewish Israelis, for whom Arab architecture signifies largely as an aesthetic rather than historical marker. Participants on the tour, a group of self-described leftists, were surprised by the map's coordinates, disarmed by the proximity of these formerly Palestinian places, places whose prior histories, although often visible in the landscape, have been all but removed from public memory. "I knew there were Palestinian villages in the area," one young man notes. "But so many?"

It should be stressed that although *Zochrot* speaks from the Israeli political margins, the radical project in which they are engaged has begun to take hold in Israel, albeit slowly and fleetingly. Indeed, over the course of the last decade, the very term "Nakba" has proliferated in the Israeli mainstream media – a rhetorical shift that was perhaps most powerfully evident in the decision of Israel's education ministry to permit the term's usage within the state-sponsored curriculum for Israel's Palestinian sector (Stern 2007). Since 2000, images of the Palestinian dispossession began to appear more frequently in Israeli feature films (Amos Gitai's *Kedma*, 2002; Udi Alon's *Forgiveness*, 2006).<sup>16</sup> The subject would be increasingly engaged by Israeli academics and literary figures in both their public discourse and published writings; one of these publications – *Homesick*, by Eshkol Nevo (2004), enjoyed a year on the national bestseller list, subsequently becoming part of the state-sponsored educational curriculum. Yet despite such shifts, both the term *Nakba* and the history it represents remain not only contentious but largely unintelligible for most Israeli Jews. The term represents a set of counter-histories about Israel's founding from which most have been systematically barred and about which most Israelis, as Bronstein has noted, lack the very language and political imagination with which to speak.

As our walking-tour descended into the heart of the village, I elicited the testimonial of a young rabbi who joined this tour as part of his graduate education. He described a rural Israeli childhood spent playing in orchards, among decaying stone walls, and in the shelter of numerous ruins. "All of these were signs," he told me, "of the people that used to live here, signs we saw with our own eyes. But no one ever told us who lived there, nor did we enquire." Only at a much later age, when he was nearly 30, did the Palestinian provenance of these ruins and neglected fruit trees become clear. "It shocked me," he confessed. "You've lived in this area your whole life, and with all these things, but nobody told us, nor did we ask. You live among these signs, but their past is erased."

For one familiar with Israel, this story is not unusual. Indeed, during my years in residence there, I heard many variants – that is, stories about the discovery that the seemingly Israeli landscapes of one's childhood had a vibrant Palestinian past. Most of these stories were enunciated with surprise, a surprise particularly acute within a nation-state that prides itself on thorough, tactile knowledge of the homeland. How, many wondered, could their knowledge of the national landscape be so dramatically

wrong? And why, many mulled, was their re-education so belated? There is often an audible urgency to such questions, a sense that the questioner is recalibrating not merely a national geography but also a personal one; that is, that this rethinking of the national landscape also necessitates a rethinking of Israeli identity itself.

After the tour has concluded, Zochrot's Eitan Bronstein offers a similar testimonial, one that draws on the same narrative form, the same structure of memory. He grew up on a kibbutz, close to the remains of a decaying fortress. We all thought it was a crusader fortress, he said. Only five years ago, long after army service, did he resuscitate its Palestinian history. "Of course," he says, "there were people on the kibbutz who knew, people from an older generation. But this history just wasn't a part of the discourse."

"But this history is present," he says, "like a ghost."

He pauses. "The *Nakba* is our trauma, too," he says. The trauma of the oppressor."

## **Dispossession, Otherwise**

Through this set of incomplete snapshots of a set of divergent Israeli biographies and routes, I have aimed to meditate on the micro-practices by which Jewish Israeli have lived with and incorporated the history of Palestinian loss into their everyday lives and into the everyday workings of the nation-state. By focusing solely on Israeli Jews as they contend with the legacy of Palestinian pasts – rather than turning to Palestinian informants, as does most of the literature on the Nakba – this ethnographic meditation argues that the Palestinian dispossession also plays a crucial constitutive force in the making of the Israeli nation-state, in the production of everyday Israeli subjects and sensibilities. Through biography, it explores an alternative mode of studying the legacy of Israeli colonialism and the violence of state formation: from the vantage of the victors.

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## Endnotes

- 1 Elsewhere (Stein 2009), I have discussed the relationship between Zionist travel practices and nationalist ideology in the pre-1948 period
- 2 For elaboration of the ways that tourism intersects with political histories and processes in the Israeli/Palestinian context, see Stein 2008.
- 3 On Israeli state efforts to physically remove such evidence, and the results of such efforts, see Khalidi 1992 and Morris 1987.
- 4 Tom Segev's 1949: *The First Israelis* includes one of the most comprehensive studies of looting during the course of the war. Also see Amit, 2006 and 2007 and Krystall 1998. Much of the literature on the war has either ignored the issue or has failed to treat it in a sustained fashion. In addition to those cited above, personal testimonials from the period include Ben-Gurion 1997 and Kimche and Kimche 1960..
- 5 Personal correspondence with Diana Dolev, 5 May 2008.
- 6 The theft of books during the war was also recounted by Palestinian Jerusalem resident Hela Sakakini (1987,30) in her memoir.
- 7 For a Palestinian account of the sacking of Qatamon during the war, see Sakakini 1987.. On the theft of books from Palestinian houses in Qatamon, see Amit 2006..
- 8 Where links between looting and sexual violence are concerned, consider the following quote from an Israeli cabinet session during the post-war period: "It's been said that there were cases of rape in Ramleh [sic]. I can forgive rape, but I will not forgive other acts which seem to me much worse. When [the looters] enter a town and forcibly remove rings from the fingers and jewelry from someone's neck, that's a very grave matter [*emphasis mine*] (Segev, 1986, 72).
- 9 On the architecture of formerly Palestinian-Arab neighborhoods in West Jerusalem, see Kroyanker and Yisrael 1989 and Kroyanker, Wahrman and Yisrael 1983 and 1987.
- 10 For discussion of the resettlement of Palestinian homes with Jewish families after 1948, see Segev, 1949, *the First Israelis*. On the transfer of Palestinian property, including homes, to new Jewish immigrants in the war's aftermath, and the magnitude of that wealth transfer, see Fischbach 2003 and Jadallah and Tufakji 2002 .
- 11 Scholarly literature concerning the attack and ensuing debate over Said's history in Jerusalem includes Bishara 2003 and Confino 2000.
- 12 I am thinking here of the invention of the national language (Hebrew), of the reinvention of the self through the taking of Hebrew names, and of the remaking of one's Jewish identity involved in the shift from diaspora Jew to 'new Hebrew.' On the latter, see Zerubavel 1995.
- 13 According to Walid Khalidi (1992), most residents of Lifta left their village after a series of attacks by Zionist forces in December, 1948; the remainder left subsequently after Zionist forces blew up several homes. On Lifta's status during the war, also see Morris 1992, 49-52, 309.; on its status prior to the war, see Tamari 2002.
- 14 On the ways that Israeli picnic grounds can function as sites of erasure of prior Palestinian histories, see Shelach 2003.
- 15 In 2004, Zochrot launched a campaign to oppose Israeli plans to build on the remains of Lifta. For the original text of Zochrot's appeal to the Israeli regional planning committee, see <http://www.nakbainhebrew.org/index.php?id=171>, accessed 7.8.10. For discussion of the Israeli development plan for Lifta, and Zochrot's stance against it, see Shoshan and Bronstein 2005.
- 16 For discussion of the first cinematic images of the dispossession on the Israeli screen, and the preceding and ensuing debates within Israel, see Shapira 2000.

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