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HISTORY | CRITICAL ESSAY

The permanently minority people: Palestinian refugees in *Jordan* and *Lebanon*, (Attempted) social death and desire to return

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Abstract: Seventy-three years, seven million people in exile; it has been this long since the Palestinian diaspora set foot. By expanding the Social Death theory to include "territory bounded culture," this paper argues that Israeli regime is inflicting an (attempted) social death upon Palestinian refugees by dispossessing them of their lands and denying their existence. This article attempts to unlatch another portal by exhibiting the possibility of creating an anti-thesis to the Social Death theory by the Palestinian resistance. Thus, showing the very act of Israel's attempted social death becomes the very fuel for the Palestinian resistance to social death. We also illustrate the interconnection between social death and hope to return, allowing another room for analysis of refugee's desirability to return and the problems of universalisation of solutions to the refugee crisis, in particular the cases of Palestinian refugees in Lebanese and Jordanian refugee camps.

Subjects: Middle East Studies; Sociology & Social Policy; History

Keywords: Palestinian refugees; minorities; Lebanon refugee camp; Jordan refugee camp; social death; Israel; desire to return

1. Introduction

Different Palestinians share different experiences due to the heterogeneity of their displacements. For instance, a Palestinian refugee in Lebanon will have a different experience than a Palestinian refugee in Jordan. These diverse experiences shape their worldview, perspective on their identity, continuity, future and ultimately, belief in return. Therefore, the researchers pose the question: can there ever be a universal solution to any refugee crisis? This article tackles the question of Palestinian refugees who are residing in Lebanese and Jordanian refugee camps. It posits the following research questions: 1) How is resistance to social death impacting Palestinian refugees' desire to return?; 2) How do Palestinian refugees respond to their attempted social death by Israel?; 3) How do Palestinian refugees in Jordan and Lebanon camps perceive their desirability to return?

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This article draws on the elaboration of social death theory and expand it to analyse the (attempted) social death Israeli regime is inflicting on Palestinian refugees. In this article, the researchers also touch on the return discourse, how the mainstream academia focuses on non-victims centred aspects when concocting solutions to refugee and forced migration crisis. Therefore, this article aims to situate marginalised Palestinian refugees as the object of inquiry. In an attempt to respond to our research questions, this article first illustrates how Israel attempts social death on Palestinian refugees by the expulsion of their lands and by analysing the language Israeli media and politicians use to deny Palestinians' existence. The researchers then argue that the Palestinians are resisting the social death imposed on them by narration and remembrance. By resisting their social deaths, this article argues there is a connection with their hope of returning to Palestine. This analysis then opens another opportunity for a critical discussion to locate Palestinian refugees at the centre. By looking at the question of hope and desirability to return, this article shows how there should not be a universal solution to the refugee crisis as that would result in further marginalising the oppressed, and in the case of this article, the Palestinian refugees in exile.

2. Literature review and theoretical framework

> Once history is forbidden, narratives become infrequent; the story of origins, of home, of nation, is underground. Palestinian life is scattered, discontinuous. (Said & Mohr, 1986, p. 20).

The Palestinian Nakba has no equal in modern history. A foreign minority expels the majority of the inhabitants of a country, occupies their land, obliterates their physical and cultural landmarks in a military campaign that is planned, armed, manned, and is financially and politically supported from abroad (PRRN, n.d.). Due to space constraints, the origins of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict (Frangi, 1983, pp. 29–33) will not be scrutinised. The declaration of Israel in 1948 marked the genesis of the Palestinian refugee problem ongoing to this day. As of 2018, the Palestinian world population is approximately 12.7 million, with over 6.8 million Palestinians in the diaspora (Hammad, 2018, p. 3). The ongoing Nakba is viewed as a program of violent dispossession and an assault on Palestinian social vitality. This section contextualises three parts: the first two being this research's frameworks, namely social death and the question of return or right of return. The last part delves into previous literature on Palestinian refugees in general and in Lebanon and Jordan in specific.

2.1. Social death

> "Do we exist? What proof do we have? The further we get from the Palestine of our past, the more precarious our status, the more disrupted our being, the more intermittent our presence" (Said, 1994, p. 177).

Social death theory has been applied extensively from social (slavery, racialised rightlessness, genocide) to medical (dementia, psychiatry; Goffman, 1961; Sudnow, 1967; Sweeting & Gilhooly, 1997) contexts. Králová (2015) notes that social death is used too broadly by academics in different disciplines creating ambiguity around its application. In essence, social death reveals three underlying notions: loss of social identity, loss of social connectedness and losses associated with the disintegration of the body. We will be focusing on the sociological application for relevancy. Patterson (1982) applies social death into slavery. He contends that the act of natal alienation is the social death of the slave. If the slave no longer belonged to a community or had no social existence outside of his master, he is considered a socially dead person. Conversely, Cacho (2012) views social death from a racial lens. She examines how human value is made intelligible through racialised, sexualised, and state-sanctioned violence. Drawing on Hannah Arendt's "the right to have rights," poor, criminalised people of colour bodies are signifiers for those who are ineligible for personhood and to be ineligible of personhood is a form of social death. According to Cacho, racism creates a space of living death and populations "dead-to-others" (2012 p. 7).

The researchers are specifically interested in social death in the genocidal realm, rooted in Patterson's (1982) social death. Social death by Patterson can be represented in two ways: intrusive and extrusive. Intrusive means the slave is conceived as someone with no past or future and did not belong because he is an outsider; in short, an external exile. In contrast, the slave becomes an outsider in extrusive mode because he no longer belonged; in short, an internal exile. The one fell because he was the enemy, the other became the enemy because he had fallen. Natal alienation results in loss of connection with the past and the possible future generation. This loss of intergenerational links, cultural heritage, and a sense of belonging to a place, becomes essential for Claudia Card's proposition of social death.

According to Card (2003), social death means loss of social vitality. Social vitality exists through relationships, contemporary and intergenerational, creating contexts and identities, thus giving meaning to our lives. Loss of social vitality comes with the loss of personal connections between kin and friends and less personal ones like economic, political, religious and educational connections. In the Palestinian context, we are contending that Palestinians are not entirely socially dead; however, they are, to a certain degree, are exposed to social death. The dispossession of millions of Palestinians in the past 73 years is an (attempt) to socially kill them. Quoting Edward Said (1986 p. 16), "*identity- who we are, where we come from, what we are—is difficult to maintain in exile*."

2.2. Social death and genocide? Unlatching a new portal to social death

Card looks at "genocide" from a sociological viewpoint, a stance that attempts to expand the legally bounded term of genocide. Interestingly exemplifying the Holocaust, Card contended that it was not only a program of mass murder but also an assault on Jewish social vitality. This article argues that the ongoing Nakba is not only a program of violent dispossession but an assault on Palestinian social vitality. Lendman (2010), in *Israel's Slow-Motion Genocide in Occupied Palestine*, perhaps puts it best in illustrating this. Palestinians: dispossessed of their lands, chased out of their sanctuaries, turned into permanently temporary people. This state of being permanently temporary separates them from their families and community is a form of assault on Palestinians' social vitality, therefore, an (attempt) to social death.

The researchers are cognizant of social death being the centre of genocide (Card, 2003, 2010; Card & Marsoobian, 2007). However, she also noted that "social death is not necessarily genocide. But genocide is social death", the same as we are conscious of the debate on using "genocide" to illustrate the violent Palestinian dispossession. Additionally, Card and Marsoobian (2007) point out that "genocidal acts are not always or necessarily homicidal" but achieve their intended effect by inflicting harm on the victim's social vitality. Similarly, Lemkin (1944) notes genocide is not necessarily the immediate destruction of a nation. Destroying social relations on which a group's identity and communal life are based can be genocidal (Lemkin as cited in Abed, 2007, p. 27). Culverwell (2017) notes that while social death is unrecognised as an act of genocide under international law, it is essential to understand these actions' impact on society as a whole. It is vital to note that this article will not ruminate on the genocide debate because it is not the focus of this research. There is a plethora of work on this, and among them are (Boyle, 2000; Doebbler, 2010; Lendman, 2010; Ophir, 2010; Pappé, 2006; Rashed et al., 2014) that the researchers find persuasive.

Abed (2007) responds and expands Card's (2003) social death in a manner we agree with. He introduced "territory bounded culture", which is central to our argument where the forced removal of a population from their traditional lands eventuates social death (2007 p. 47). From our observation, Abed (2007) and Patterson's (1982) work are interconnected. Patterson wrote: "slave is violently uprooted from his milieu and the process of social nullification constitutes the first external phase of enslavement" (1982 p. 38). The Palestinian case is a mixture of Patterson's framework of social death; they are violently uprooted from their milieu by being dispossessed of their homes and lands. Many if not all cases of genocide involve forced displacement of populations, and many of these populations have cultures that are, in varying degrees, "territorially

bounded" (Abed, 2007, p. 45). Nevertheless, Abed summarised Card's argument perfectly. Some would argue that Palestinians are not socially dead. However, Card points out that what matters is not simply the survival of tradition and culture but the ability of individual victims to sustain a socially meaningful connection to those traditions (Card & Marsoobian, 2007, p. 2).

Using the expansion of the social death theory to facilitate analysis of Israel's (attempted) social death on Palestinians, this article aims to unlatch a new portal to this theory: social death can be resisted. While Card sees social vitality as loss in social death, the researchers see social vitality as an anti-thesis to social death. This article will utilise this theory to demonstrate how Palestinians counter the social death imposed on them. The bracket in (attempt) is because the researchers argue the Palestinians are resisting it; therefore, parallel to this article's earlier argument, they are not entirely socially dead yet, but to a certain degree, exposed to social death.

2.3. Return discourse: customary solutions on refugees and forced migration

The three traditional durable solutions for refugees within the legal framework are local integration, resettlement and repatriation (return). However, popular solutions are inclined to resettlement and integration; the Western world, including the UN, came to see resettlement as the more realistic and practical solution for refugee problems (Irfan, 2017; Khalidi, 1992; Salam, 1994). With focus given predominantly on these two comes the issue of marginalisation of refugees' option to return.

Van Selm asserts resettlement is about "giving refugees the chance to get their lives back" (as cited in Dumper, 2007, p. 80). However, this article finds this notion very problematic: who holds the authority in deciding what refugees want? How could we possibly know what is best for every one of the millions living in the diaspora? This question is in line with Spivak's *Can the Subaltern Speak* and Edward Said's *Orientalism* about the West's (international community; as the West dominates it) tendency to speak for others (Sharp, 2009, p. 110). Finding solutions to refugee crisis is not just about which way is best but equally about what is right and what each refugee desires; these two aspects are interconnected. What is right is making sure the option for return of lands and properties is made available alongside the other durable solutions abovementioned but at the same time granting each individual the absolute freedom to decide which solution to go for. To put it simply, 1) the available solutions for refugee issues should not be attenuated 2) each refugee holds the absolute power to choose what is best for each of them. Irfan (2017) notes it is vital to engage with refugees when devising durable solutions. Similarly, Dumper (2007) agrees that refugees need to be actors rather than recipients in repatriation programs.

Nevertheless, the researchers are aware of the complexity of return as it does not consist simply of legal and political conditions. Each case requires a raft of specific measures to deal with the logistics of return and the reintegration of returned refugees and their host community (Dumper, 2007, p. 82). Rabinowitz (2010) notes the selective memory of pre-1948 Palestine, coupled with a reluctance to take on board the whole dimension of contemporary reality in Israel, facilitate an abstract, utopian discourse of return. However, this goes beyond our research scope. This article aims to put the frequently marginalised Palestinian refugees at the centre, thus making them the object of inquiry and being cautious not to shift them away from the focal point.

2.4. The problem with universalism in refugee solutions' discourse

"To themselves (Palestinians), the Palestinians are an uprooted community who see repatriation as the 'only solution' to their problem" (Barakat, 1973, p. 147). From this point on, this article will use the term return instead of repatriation as repatriation could mean "not to their direct homes, but someplace else in the country' (Kuzar, 2008, p. 632), which would implicate in the diminishment of one option for refugees. The discourse on return can be divided into legality, practicality, and desirability, with desirability being the only victim-centred aspect. Without a doubt, return is a legal right (UNGA, 1948). In terms of practicality, there have been various positions set out in academia. Some indicate it as practical (Abu-Sitta 1996; PRRN, n.d.) and others vice-versa (Abu-Zayyad, 1994;

Khalidi, ; Kuzar, 2008; Peretz, 1993). Kuzar (2008) perhaps put the best work to show the difference in positionality on return by dividing Palestinian intellectuals into maximalist and pragmatist paradigms and semantically analysing their usage of the term "return."

The term "return", as Khalidi (1992) suggests, brings a myriad of meanings beneath, ranging from Palestinians or their descendants Right of Return (ROR) to places of origin in Palestine to a return of some Palestinians in exile to some limited parts of Palestine. Contrasting with Abu-Sitta (1996), who imposed that return is sacred, legal and possible, Khalidi exerts that absolute return is non-viable. Parallel to Khalidi, Rabinowitz (2010) proposed the right to refuse, expressing universal return as an impractical quest. On the other hand, Barakat (1973) looked at questions of uprootedness and repatriation by analysing the socio-economic background of Palestinian refugees and concluded that rejection to resettlement and integration has social and political roots instead of just economic. Similarly, Thicknesse (1949) and Mezerik (1980) both concluded that refugees "quite unquestionably" and "have a strong desire" to return to their old homes in their survey of resettlement among Palestinian refugees (as cited in Barakat, 1973, p. 160). Irfan (2017) and Salam (1994) looked at the factors affecting Palestinian refugees' rejection of resettlement. They concluded that the rejection is due to their vehement attachment to repatriation and fear of national identity eradication, respectively.

The problem lies within academicians' tendency to impose what is possible and contrariwise, thus diminishing refugees' durable solutions when we should be endeavouring all the possible solutions for return. It has been observed many academic papers discuss the Palestinian rejection of resettlement as if it is a universal rejection and that they discuss the Palestinian agreement to return as it is a universal agreement. Within the return framework, the researchers contend that refugee solutions should not be universalised, and forced migration is not an issue with a one-size-fits-all solution glued to it; the only thing that should be absolute here is the power given to victims that have been violently dispossessed to choose.

Apart from that, most focus is on the practicality and legality of return, rarely considering what the victims genuinely desire. However, this is not to say there are none. For instance, Salam (1994) holds the view we concur with, that the ROR should be individual, independent of national rights. In this article, the researchers attempt to convey that refugees' options for solutions should not be diminished; they should choose from all the possible solutions available. As Rabinowitz (2010) notes, "Palestinian refugees' fate is regularly sealed by regional and global powers, leaving them limited control over their destiny" (2010, p. 510), and he endeavours a framework of return for Palestinian refugees that leaves the choices between various options wholly in the hands of refugees.

Barakat's (1973) sociological surveys' outcomes on Palestinian refugees in Jordan are seminal to our research. He noted that "*refugees are highly pessimistic about the chances for a peaceful return. However despairing, they never gave up hope*" (p. 161). It is observed that while they may be pessimistic of the practicality of return, they still hope and desire to return nevertheless. Here shows that practicality is not mutually exclusive to desirability and hopefulness. This paper attempts to probe this hypothesis by looking at the interconnection between the desirability of return with Palestinian refugees' resistance to social death.

2.5. Previous literature on Palestinian refugees in Lebanon and Jordan Camps

Issues covered by academia range from the psychological well-being of Palestinian refugees in Lebanon and Jordan refugee camps, politics around it to the legal frameworks of their refugee status (Achilli, 2014; Afifi et al., 2016; Alduraidi & Waters, 2018; Gustafsson & Alawi, 2015; Hutson et al., 2016; Martin, 2015; Soh et al., 2016; Tuastad, 2017). The ongoing debate concerning refugees' return outside OPT is that improving their camp livelihood would insinuate the diminishment of their ROR (Alnsour & Meaton, 2014; Dumper, 2007; Irfan, 2017; Talhami, 2003). The structure of the houses in refugee camps suggests that the temporary nature of the camps

symbolises the refugee ROR (Alnsour & Meaton 2014, p. 72). In contrast, Feldman (2012) looks at this issue from humanitarian aid angle, where humanitarian practice shifts from disaster relief to social service work and development projects. He questioned if the refuge life provided to Palestinian refugees has been moved from humanitarian practice to development projects; what does it say about Palestinians' ROR to their homeland?

Alduraidi and Waters (2018) looked at displacement psychologically, arguing that it leads to a loss of identity. This viewpoint concluded that Palestinian adult refugees with depression had decreased hopefulness about returning to Palestine (2018 p. 4). Similarly, looking at Palestinian identity, Siklawi (2019) recognises Palestinian refugees' identity in Lebanese camps faced a decline post-Lebanese civil war. Siklawi concluded the war and peace processes served to expel Palestinian refugees from surrounding Arab countries, thus terminating their ROR to Palestine. However, these papers centrality are pointed to the political, humanitarian and psychological aspects of the return. In this article, we want to shift the focus away from this and pinpoint the human subject instead, who has been affected the most by this ongoing conflict. Previous literature shows there has been an extensive amount of work done on Palestinian refugees. However, there remains no scholarly research on Palestinian refugees in Jordan and Lebanon camps informed by the social death theory to the best of our knowledge. What more looking at Palestinian refugees from the intersection lens of social death and desirability to return. While Abed (2007)) touched on Palestinians in his social death essay, it merely exemplifies his social death framework.

By situating this research in social death studies within the return discourse lens, this article not only fill a gap in the academia on how Israel is performing an (attempted) social death on Palestinian refugees and how Palestinians are resisting the social death imposed on them, it will also demonstrate how there is a relationship between social death and return discourse. Therefore, this paper aims to show that the very act of (attempted) social death (driving Palestinians away from their lands) is the same thing that fuels the anti-thesis of social death (Palestinians resistance towards it), thus fuelling their hope for return. Doing this also opens a new room for analysis where we learn that different refugees desire different, individual solutions, thus shedding light on the importance of centring victims and understanding the human prospect of this conflict.

3. Research methodology

The nucleus of this study is intergenerational Palestinian refugees residing in refugee camps. Following the UNRWA operational areas (West Bank, Gaza Strip, Jordan, Lebanon and Syria), we scale down the scope of Palestinian refugees to outside Occupied Palestinian Territory (OPT) to understand whether distance influences how refugees perceive their homeland. From this, the researchers have chosen to take Palestinian refugees in Jordan and Lebanon as our object of inquiry. Syria was excluded due to instability and ongoing crisis. Since 2011, more than 100,000 Palestinians have fled their homes, turning them into second-time refugees (Irfan, 2017, p. 70).

Aside from that, refugees residing in Jordan and Lebanon camps are chosen as their oral histories are better documented; hence, they are selected for more accessible data collection. The only demographic aspect taken into account is the generational gap: where we specifically look into generations. This matters as the first generation of Palestinian refugees is considered the last living link to a lost world (Allan, 2014, p. 193). Therefore, they are the only narrators of Palestinian lands, which is central to our analysis. Consequently, the three aspects taken into account for data collection are 1) Palestinian refugees, 2) Living in Lebanon and Jordan refugee camps, 3) Intergenerational: consisting of first-generation and generation(s) after.

This article aims to speak to the marginalised and dispossessed Palestinians in exile and not for them. It is understood the best way to conduct this is via conducting interviews with camp dwellers. Unfortunately, it is non-viable due to COVID-19, language barrier, and generational gap. Nevertheless, thankful for the commendable effort of certain parties in endeavouring to

document and preserve Palestinian history by interviewing first-generation Palestinian refugees, oral history has been of tremendous aid to our data collection of Palestinian refugees in Lebanon and Jordan camps. Apart from oral history archives, some researchers turned their in-depth interviews into books and reports. The research data collection of the Palestinian refugee narratives are tabled (Table 1 and Table 2) below:

The POHA is an archival collection of around 1,000 hours of testimonies in the Arabic language with first-generation Palestinians residing in refugee camps and outside camps in Lebanon (POHA, n.d.). Only three interviews out of 286 (after scaled-down) were chosen due to time constraints

Table 1. Data collection method: selected sources on Palestinian refugees narratives

Source	Generation(s)	Location	No. of interviews	Type	Collection Method
Palestinian Oral History Archive (POHA; Ahmad Salih,	First	Lebanon	3	Video: Interview	Advanced search: "return" and "refugee camp" to scale down
What it Means to be Palestinian: Stories of Palestinian Peoplehood (Dina Matar,	Multiple	Jordan Lebanon	3 6	Book: In-depth Interview	Manual: scrutinisation of the book cover to cover, direct quotes from refugees.
Refugees of the Revolution: Experiences of Palestinian Exile (Diana Allan,	Multiple	Lebanon	3	Book: In-Depth Interview	Manual: extracting data from Chapter 6: Many Returns, direct quotes from refugees.
Palestine Return Centre (PRC) by Maya Hammad	Multiple	Jordan	15	Report: Interview	Manual: scrutinisation of the report, direct quotes from refugees.
Total			30		

Sources: Adapted from Ahmad Salih (1997); Diana Allan (2014); Dina Matar (2011); Iftikar (2004); Maya Hammad (2018); Subhiyah (2004).

Table 2. Data collection method: Israel LANGUAGE on *Palestine*/Palestinians

Source	Type	Ideology	No. of Excerpt(s)	Reference
Arutz Sheva	Media Network	Religious Zionism	7	(Sheva, 2019, Sheva, 2020
Sunday Times	Politician Language	Labour Zionism	1	(Golda Meir, 1969, as cited in Doebbler, 2010)
Hagana Archives	Politician Language	Zionism	1	(Ben Gurion, as cited in, Pappé, 2006)

Sources: Adapted from Arutz Sheva (2019, 2020); Doebbler (2010); Pappé (2006).

and language barriers. An Arab family member aided the translation with minimal editorial intervention to ensure the delivery of words remains. Next, from Matar, after narrowing the scope manually by reading the book cover to cover, nine out of ninety interview excerpts were relevant to our research. Similarly, with Allan, three extracts were analysed from one chapter concerning Palestinian refugees' return interviews. The researchers are aware that these books are narratives of (Palestinian refugees) narratives; therefore, the data collection method was gathering direct quotes from the interviewees to ensure we do not hinder from our goal of placing them as the nucleus and, paradoxically speaking for them. The same applies to the PRC interviews. Arutz Sheva is accessed by the Nexis database available from 2014 to 2021. Arutz Sheva is an Israeli media network that offers online news. Out of sixty-five news that mentioned "Palestinian", "Palestine", "land", "exist", and "return", eight were relevant to this article. This news is chosen due to its identification with religious Zionism, which is deemed essential to our analysis due to its ideological belief of national redemption of "land" (Pappé, 2006, p. 11) that resulted in the dispossession of millions of Palestinians of their lands. For the politician language aspect, credible citations were used due to the inaccessibility of the original documents.

This article utilises Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) to display how language is employed by: 1) Israeli media and politicians that shape the Palestinian expulsion and land dispossession; 2) Palestinian refugees in exile that shape their resistance to social death, thus moulding their hope of a return to Palestine (Lewis-Beck et al., 2004, p. 2). CDA is also used to analyse how Palestinian refugees articulate their desire to return, aiding us to acknowledge and centralise Palestinian refugees' perception in those respective camps. Noteworthy, in this article, the researchers will interchangeably use hope/desire/wish as we have grouped them into one classification. Narrative analysis is also applied to this article as the narratives and stories generated by Palestinian refugees in exile are interpreted and analysed.

4. Discussion and analysis

In this section, the researchers endeavour to unpack two baggage. First, Abed's (2007) expansion of social death theory that includes "territory bounded culture" exhibits that Palestinians are peoples with a relationship to the physical space they inhabit. Therefore, by violently dispossessing them of their lands is contended an attempt of social death. Second, the denial of Palestinians' existence by analysing Israeli media and politicians' language on Palestine is also argued an attempt to impose social death on them.

4.1. Social death expansion: territorial land

"How unstable our place; and all because of the missing foundation of our existence, the lost ground of our origin, the broken link with our land and our past" (Said & Mohr, 1986, p. 26). Transgenerational projects and activities associated with the collective life of a nation often depend on the continued possession of a particular territory. At the end of the continuum are groups that treat land as a historical endowment rather than a commodity. The displacement of a group with this kind of relationship to the physical space it inhabits will cause severe and lasting harm (Abed, 2007, pp. 45–47). In the Palestinian context, it is argued that Palestinian identity is still rooted in territory and the traumatic history of expulsion (Allan, 2014, p. 191). The data this article collected remarked that the first-generation Palestinian refugees from both Lebanon and Jordan camps spoke profoundly of their lands.

As Palestinian scholar, Tibawi notes "some professedly academic writers give little or no weight to the human element in the tragedy. They ignore, for example, the natural attachment of the Palestine Arab to his village, farm and social environment" (Tibawi, 1963, p. 509). Table 3 below shows that Palestinians strongly connect to the physical space they inhabited by how they spoke of their lands. The fact that all of them are first-generation refugees is foreseeable. In the words of Allan (2014 p. 193), they are considered as "the last living link to a lost world." The first-generation Palestinian refugees were physically living in Mandatory Palestine, further proving them having a "territory bounded culture", as proposed by Abed.

Table 3. Mention of land by selected Palestinian refugees in Lebanon and Jordan

Name	Generation	Location	Excerpt
Iftikar	First	Lebanon	". to this day, we are still hoping that we will be able to return to our lands; they can be compared with nothing." "We are often asked (by the Lebanese) to go back to our lands. Yes, we have lands, and we will return to our lands." "This is the Palestinian history. I always narrate it to my children and grandchildren. I will always remind and make them aware of their lands (in Palestine). The lands that you have to return to and fight for."
Subhiyah	First	Lebanon	"Our lands have been handed over to Israelis. There is nothing left for us."
Ahmad Salih	First	Lebanon	"They asked us to sell our lands, but we have no intentions to do so. That is our home (Palestine)." "It's crucial for Palestinians to keep track of Israelis and what they do to our lands. Because without our lands, we are nothing."
Abu Ma'an	First	Jordan	"I am well off, and my children are all doing well, but I am still a refugee, with no homeland."
Amad Sa'adeh	First	Jordan	"We held meetings, had heated debates about ideology, about honour and dignity, about the land and the meaning of Palestine."

Sources: Adapted from Ahmad Salih (1997); Diana Allan (2014); Dina Matar (2011); Iftikar (2004); Maya Hammad (2018); Subhiyah (2004).

Social indicators from the survey by Barakat (1973) showed how refugees had strong ties with their home communities. 80 per cent and 61 per cent of them residing in Jordan refugee camps owned home and land, respectively, 59 per cent had lived in their property for two decades pre-1948, while 86 per cent lived in the same locality with their relatives (1973 p. 151). The data then reflect the extent of their social integration before being dispossessed and the deep feeling of separation from their home community afterwards. According to Barakat, the Palestinians are person, community, and family-oriented. Outside this lifestyle, they feel isolated and without a frame of reference which gives meaning to their existence. Abed noted that the attempt to eliminate the Palestinian Arab people would likely eventuate in cultural alienation and loss of personal and significant connections to past generations and the historical narratives they embodied (Abed, 2007, p. 32).

However, it is striking that Subhiyah was the only one speaking negatively of land. "Our lands have been handed over to Israelis. There is *nothing left for us*." Abed uttered that generations feel robbed of the cultural, social and economic inheritance they are entitled to and might be unable to carry on their ordinary lives (2007 p. 47). Notably, in Subhiyah's interview, she sounded hopeless. In her words: "We are not happy here (Lebanon). We are very sad, and we cannot do anything" (Subhiyah, 2004). This is what Abed meant by inflicting social death upon people who are bounded to their territory thus, enhancing our argument of Israel attempting social death on Palestinians.

To further justify, in 1947, almost all of the cultivated lands in Palestine was held by the indigenous population, with only 5.8 per cent in Jewish ownership (Pappé, 2006, p. 30). As of 1996, it was at 92 per cent (Abu-Sitta 1996, p. 3). That is an intense increase of 86.2 per cent of land ownership shift. Citing Edward Said, who also was a Palestinian in exile, "What happens to landless people? However you exist in the world, what do you preserve of yourselves?" (1994 p. 180). Apart from that, Umm Mahmud, who was interviewed after her mother's death (first-generation), spoke: ".with her death, it feels as if we are losing our own connection to Palestine" (Allan, 2014, p. 193). It can be concluded that driving them out and dispossessing them out of their lands, based on Abed's expansion of social death, is seen as an attempted social death by the Israelis on the Palestinians.

4.2. Denial of the Palestinian existence

"It was not as if there was a Palestinian people in Palestine, and we came and threw them out and took their country away from them. They did not exist." (Golda Meir 1969, as cited in Yadid, 2015). In an attempt to justify her earlier statement, Meir, then Israeli Prime Minister, told the New York Times in 1976, "there are no Palestine people. There are Palestinian refugees" (Doebbler, 2010, p. 210). By analysing the language used by Israeli politicians and media on Palestine and Palestinians, we argue that apart from the dispossession of lands as a form of social death, Israel attempts to inflict social death upon Palestinians by continually denying their existence. Arutz Sheva is an Israeli media network that identifies itself with religious Zionism. Table 4 illustrates excerpts from its' online news:

Arutz Sheva persistently associates Palestine and Palestinians with notions like "never existed", "factitious", "total fraud", "illegal alien", "no right to the Eretz land" in its online news clear-cut denying the Palestinians existence up until 2021. On the other end, in the account of Ali Taha, a Palestinian who stayed put after Nakba: "In those days, it was dangerous to mention the word Palestine. In schools, anyone who said Palestine would be kicked out. They (Israel) intervened in everything, in every detail of our daily lives. There were no libraries, no intellectuals left, and most people were peasants who could not read or write" (Matar, 2011, p. 79).

Israel's perpetual denial of Palestinians' existence, not just by Arutz Sheva but by prominent people like their Prime Ministers, is said to be an attempt to kill them socially. Doebbler would argue that that is not just merely an attempt at social death but also of genocidal intent. They at least provide prima-facie evidence of state intentions to destroy the Palestinian people by pretending they do not exist (2010 p. 210). Quite literally, Ben Gurion, former Israeli Prime Minister, uttered, "by this (purchasing lands in the east of the river), we will reduce the number of Arabs (in Palestine)" (Hagana Archives 1938, cited Pappé, 2006, p. 26). By denying Palestinian's existence through utterance, Israel then acts upon it. In Bilal's interview, he recalled his experiences when he fled Gaza with his family: "the Israelis on the bridge to Jordan let us sign a paper that said, "I will never return to Gaza." "You have left, so you have no right to return" (Hammad, 2018, p. 38).

As a consequence of Israeli's denial of their existence, Palestinians see themselves as the "other." Abu Sa'adeh remarked: "the word Palestine is associated with pain and suffering, and being Palestinian means being the 'other', the 'alien.' You pay a heavy price being Palestinian" (Matar, 2011, p. 83). This is closely linked to Patterson's (1982) social death. The act of natal

Table 4. Excerpts from Arutz Sheva on the status of Palestinian existence

Year	Excerpt
2014	"The 'Palestinian' identity is a rather new idea, perhaps no more than sixty years old. It is based on a pseudo-narrative of a historical 'Palestine' that never existed."
2019	"I oppose a Palestinian state. In my eyes, it's a dangerous idea for the future of the Jewish nation in their own land." " . . . but in no way will there be an Arab state in Judea and Samaria."
2020	"I have already stated that the Arab Population descends from illegal aliens who mass migrated into Eretz Israel and have absolutely no right to the land of Eretz Israel." "We must make up a name for this character who was completely contrived by the Arabs, UN and the EU, so we will call him Mr Palestine-who-never-existed."
2020	There has never existed a Palestinian sovereign entity, and, therefore, there exists no such thing as sovereign Palestinian land.
2021	"The claim that 'Palestinians' are the indigenous people of Israel and that most of the present Palestinian Arabs have lived in these lands since time immemorial is a total fraud."
2021	".tirelessly asserting their (Palestinians) irredentist claims to the entirety of a factitious country called Palestine."
2021	"In 1947, Jews and Arabs lived in what was the British Mandate of Palestine. This territory included what is now modern-day Israel, in addition to the 'West Bank' (Judea and Samaria) and Gaza, and not, as some claim, a country named 'Palestine.' No such country ever existed."

Sources: Adapted from Arutz Sheva (2019, 2020)

alienation and the loss of a sense of belonging makes the Palestinians' socially dead; thus, using language to repudiate Palestinians' existence is said to be an attempt to socially kill them.

Maintained by Abed, belonging gives a person a sense of security and orientation in an otherwise confusing world; it sustains the unity and coherence of the self rather than being a mere aspect of it. If the ability of a group to engage in cultural reproduction is impeded, the individual suffers severe deprivations even if members of the group to which they belong survive and make a strenuous effort to piece together their culture and identity (2007 p. 36). This article contends that it is possible to piece them back together, therefore, to resist social death, as is with the case of Palestinians.

5. Anti-thesis to social death: Palestinian refugees and social vitality

> "The Czechoslovakian Jews from the Auschwitz camp who walked into the gas chambers singing the Czech national anthem and the Hatikva clung to their social as well as spiritual vitality to the very end" (Card, 2010, p. 238).

The Jews were said to embrace their social vitality to their last breath. According to Card (2010), those who survive physically, knowledge and memory of what is lost are insufficient for social vitality. We want to offer a different perspective: you can resist social death, thus creating an anti-thesis: continued social vitality. Therefore, we bracketed the (attempt) to social death, as we contend that the Palestinians are resisting it.

In (Matar, 2011, pp. 3–4), "why don't you want to hear my story?" was a question often heard while Matar was on the field interviewing Palestinians. This desire to tell and be heard suggest that talking about and remembering is a continuous process of "re-membering, putting together moment by moment and of provisional and partial reconstruction" of the past in the present. We observe this as a form of preserving the Palestinian social vitality thus, resisting their social death. One theme that incessantly resurfaced during the data collection is narration and remembrance, making it an important theme. Miriam Greenspan observed what happened directly to every Holocaust survivor happens indirectly- in fantasy, imagination and dreams to their children (Gottlieb, 1988, p. 35). We observe that the same applies to Palestinians in exile, which has been used to advantage in resisting the social death inflicted on them. Table 5 below shows that the data collected are from both sides, the narrator and the listener. Again, it is anticipated that the narrators, Abu Issam, Iftikar and Ahmad Salih, are first-generation refugees; therefore, they accentuate the importance of narrating and remembering Palestine; as analysed earlier, they have a strong connection towards their lands.

In general, the potency of remembrance, which preserves what Rashid Khalidi calls the "internal map" of Palestine, is believed to be at the core of Palestinian refugee identity. Through remembering their lost land, such communities possess a rich, spontaneous, oral tradition that records the injustices and sufferings. Following this logic writes Diana Allan, "nowhere is memory claimed to be —or rhetorically constructed to be—more authentic or vital than among refugees living in the camps" (Allan 2007, as cited in Matar, 2011, p. 60). For us, through remembering Palestine, the Palestinian refugees resist their social death.

A very pivotal analysis is that it is found that there seems to be a relationship between resisting social death and hope of return. As seen in Abu Ma'an and Naguid's excerpts: "We grew up in an imagined Palestine … a magical place to look forward to seeing and returning" (Matar, 2011, pp. 67–68); ".so my brother and I grew up with this idea and hope of imminent return" (Matar, 2011, p. 101). However, it is vital to note the criticism of narrating and remembering. The gap between idealised versions of pre-Nakba Palestine and the tenure position of the Palestinian citizens in contemporary Israel is quite dramatic. It considerably complicates the task of bridging idealised nostalgic visions of return with the realities that would inevitably shape the lives of returnees (Rabinowitz, 2010, p. 503).

5.1. Social vitality is interconnected with hope of return

As demonstrated above, upholding your social vitality (resisting social death) can be done in the form of narration and remembrance. Observed is a connection between this act of narrating and remembering and their continuing hope to return. Salman Abu-Sitta, a first-generation Palestinian refugee, sees himself as "*sustained both by the memory of his ancestral land and the hope to return there*" (Abu-Sitta 1996, p. 1). This viewpoint gives us room for critical analysis. The act of driving Palestinians out of their lands with the intent of executing a purely Jewish state (attempted social death) becomes the very fuel for the Palestinian resistance to social death (by narration and remembrance of their dispossessed lands).

In simpler terms, the route that Israel took to exterminate the Palestinians from their lands becomes the very thing that drives Palestinians to resist and continue to hope for return. As narrated by Abu-Sitta, "villages may be destroyed, but they live in the memory of the people. Israel may destroy Palestinian villages, but they cannot destroy internal map; that lies within the Palestinians" (1996 p. 11). Nonetheless, we must be careful when executing this as this might generalise Palestinian refugees into all "hoping for return" because it has been further analysed that refugees desire different things, which brings us to the next theme.

6. Different refugees, different desires: centring Palestinian refugees

"A Palestinian who was not allowed to return to his home after 1948 cannot possibly have fewer rights than a Russian Jew who uses biblical promise for a return, after 3000 years" (Eldar, 2002, p. 18). Bell Hook's autobiographical approach is an attempt to be heard from the margins of

Table 5. Narration and remembrance of Palestine by selected *Palestinian* refugees in *Jordan* and *Lebanon*

Name	Location	Excerpt
Umm Mahmud	Lebanon	"She (mother) would tell us about Palestine, and we grew to love it through her." "My mother had the smell of Palestine about her; she carried it with her in everything she did."
Abu Issam	Jordan	"Whatever they do, however they pressurise us, we still live, and grow, and teach our children that Palestine is their home and that one day they will return. Jordan is our country as well, but Palestine is the Motherland."
Iftikar	Lebanon	"This is the Palestinian history. I always narrate it to my children and grandchildren. I will always remind and make them aware of their lands (in Palestine). The lands that you have to return to and fight for."
Ahmad Salih	Lebanon	"(I want to tell the future generations) to work and try very hard to drive Zionists out of Palestinian land. Always remember Palestine, never forget Palestine."
Abu Ma'an	Jordan	"Everybody talked only of Palestine. My father would talk to us about the land, how he married my mother. We grew up with an imagined Palestine, a picture no more, but it was a picture with an essence and a meaning, and a magical place to look forward to seeing and returning to."
Naguid	Lebanon	"My mother never put away clothes but just piled them in one corner as though ready to go on a trip. '*We must keep them this way because we are returning to Palestine tomorrow*', she would repeatedly tell us. So my brother and I grew up with this idea and hope of imminent return."
Ahed	Lebanon	"I am one of those people, like many others, who was deeply influenced by my parents and grandparents and their memories of the homeland. When you hear them talk about life there, you are bound to be committed and not to give up."

Sources: Adapted from Ahmad Salih (1997); Diana Allan (2014); Dina Matar (2011); Iftikar (2004); Maya Hammad (2018); Subhiyah (2004).

society. For her, the margins are a site of "radical possibility" that rejects the inside and outside politics, as "to be on the margins is to be part of the who but outside the main body." It is a knowledge she believes offers a unique and vital perspective that is not distorted by the prejudices of the centre (Sharp, 2009, p. 112)

Desirability is seen as the only victim-centred aspect in comparison with practicality and legal framework of return. In a 2012 workshop on Palestinian National Council elections as a mechanism for enfranchising refugee communities, the event was not advertised in refugee camps. It was explained that once the parameters for discussions were established, the second round of debates would only then involve camp communities. The exclusion of camp refugees seemed a conscious omission rather than an oversight. Poverty and marginalisation limited the ability of camp refugees to recognise their own political predicament. The fact that they are poor and disenfranchised disqualifies them from representation- thus goes the implicit and troubling logic (Allan, 2014, pp. 209–210).

Spivak's well-known argument is that the subaltern cannot speak for him or herself because the very structure of colonialism prevents the speaking (Jindal, 2017, p. 528). Thus, if the international community marginalises Palestinian refugees, how different are we from the settler colony, Israel, who we argue against attempting social death on Palestinian refugees by marginalising and dispossessing them of their lands and denying their existence? The intellectual project must try to make visible the position of the marginalised. Therefore, this article aims to put the frequently marginalised Palestinian refugees at the centre by looking at the desirability to return as illustrated in the Tables 6 and 7 below:

Table 6. Narratives on desire to return by selected Palestinian refugees in Jordan and Lebanon

Name	Generation	Location	Excerpt
Abu Issam	First	Jordan	"I just want to return. What will this document (National ID) do to me? With or without it, you're sleeping, eating and living."
Abu Ziyad	Second	Jordan	"No matter what happens and how long it lasts, one day we will return."
Ahmad Salih	First	Lebanon	"Yes, of course (I hope to return), even for a week." "The people are relying on hope. We would always listen to the radio, waiting for news that we can return to Palestine."
Naguid	Second	Lebanon	"My brother and I grew up with this idea and hope of imminent return."
Moayad	First	Jordan	"Even if we don't have anything in Gaza, I will return to anywhere in Palestine."
Tariq	First	Lebanon	"Bush does not have the right to decide my future; this is not his right to give away."
Iftikar	First	Lebanon	".to this day, we are still hoping that we will be able to return to our lands; nothing compares to our lands."

Sources: Adapted from Ahmad Salih (1997); Diana Allan (2014); Dina Matar (2011); Iftikar (2004); Maya Hammad (2018); Subhiyah (2004).

Table 7. Narratives on Not Desire to Return by selected Palestinian refugees

Name	Generation	Location	Excerpt
Umm Mahmud	Second	Lebanon	"If I only imagine my kids' future in Palestine, it is like cancelling our life here."
Abed	Unknown	Lebanon	"Ask a Palestinian here, and he would tell you that we just need space to breathe in. All this humiliation is for this idea called Palestine."
Munir	First	Lebanon	"My life is not in Haifa; what is there for me now? Still, I want the right to knock on the door of my father's house and say to the people living there, "this is my father's house, which you took from him in 1948. I understand that you are living here now, and that is okay. I don't want to live here, but I want you to acknowledge that you took this from him and me."
Tariq	First	Lebanon	"Return is our collective right as a people, but return for everyone is not realistic."
Abdullah	Second	Jordan	"The right of return is a myth that brainwashes the youth. It makes them think that this is not our country we won't live here forever. People use it as an excuse for the situation that they are in. It's not just the system's creators that are the abusers; it's also the system's beneficiaries that are abusing it."
Samirah	First	Lebanon	"I felt that liberating Palestine might have been a dream after all." "Now we have no more hope."

Sources: Adapted from Ahmad Salih (1997); Diana Allan (2014); Dina Matar (2011); Iftikar (2004); Maya Hammad (2018); Subhiyah (2004).

What is extracted from this table is that generations and locations vary on the desirability to return. Moayad notes that he is willing to return to any part of Palestine and not his original home, while the others only indicate they want to return with no precise location. Abu-Zayyad (1994 p. 77) noted that the sufferings that Palestinians endured had forced many of them to view return as the acquisition of national independence and dignity and not necessarily as a literal return. As is the case of Munir, he yearned the acknowledgement that his family has been wronged. Quoting Munir, "then I will feel that my dignity as a human being will be returned. When we talk about return, this is what we are talking about; the return of our dignity" (Allan, 2014, p. 195). The reasons for not having the desire to return vary. Some for survival, some for wanting to carry on

with lives, others look at return just as the return of dignity. There are even those who view it as a myth and blame it as an excuse to continue living dependent on charities; some are simply hopeless. Therefore, Abu-Sitta's "Palestinians remain adamant in their determination to return home" can be argued.

Generations still vary, and one aspect worthy of analysis here is that the majority who do not desire to return is from Lebanon. This is interesting as the Lebanese government is more hostile to refugees than Jordan, as mirrored in the BADIL Survey. When Palestinian youths were asked: "who ought to be prioritised in return?" Refugees in Lebanon were given top priority for return, recognising their particularly dire socio-economic reality that is well-known and acknowledged (n.d.). However, Khalil Shikaki's study, which was the largest survey ever conducted of refugee opinion on the return that over 100 Palestinian organisations denounced, found that if the legal situations and material conditions of refugees in Lebanon were to improve, the majority would prefer to remain, with only 23 per cent electing to return to their ancestral villages (Allan, 2014, p. 202). Therefore, this goes on to show that opinions indeed vary among refugees.

Apart from that, Tariq is an idiosyncratic case as he was included in both Tables 6 and 7. Tariq, who first viewed return as "not realistic", drastically changed his opinion when he was informed of George Bush's 2004 letter to Ariel Sharon: "unrealistic to expect that the outcome of final status negotiations will be a full return" (Allan, 2014, p. 197). For Allan, when others are seen as making compromises on behalf of refugees, staunchly nationalist positions resurge. His sample is essential to mark our argument that the power to choose the best solution on whether to return or resettle should lie on refugees. Allan noted there is no unified position on return (2014 p. 199). We would argue that as it should be. This is to prove that different refugees want different things. Therefore, there can never be a universal solution and academicians, policymakers, and institutions should not generalise refugees into one bunch of groups who desire the same thing.

6.1. Speaking for others and universalising solutions

Kuzar criticises Abu-Sitta's view as totalitarian because it does not leave room for any variation on return, thus generalising them as a single, timeless entity, untouched by generation shifts. In Abu-Sitta's words: "Yet after over half a century of suffering, the Palestinians remain adamant in their determination to return home" (Abu-Sitta 2001, p. 5 as cited in Kuzar, 2008, p. 634). However it is noteworthy that Abu-Sitta acknowledged that return options should be left to refugees themselves (1996 p. 9). Kuzar is inclined to agree with Palestinian pragmatists who see compensation as making the possibility for a rehabilitated life more concrete compared with a total return which is a "*distant dream with high human costs*" (2008 p. 638). While we agree Abu-Sitta should not generalise Palestinians into a single unit who desire similar solutions, we have to be careful not to diminish their choices. Kuzar should also note that pragmatists are doing the same harm of reducing the rights of the dispossessed, denying the desirability of certain Palestinians who want to return. Rabinowitz (2010 p. 504) alerts us that pragmatism often understood as the capacity to marry desirability with workability, does not ensure neutrality. Pragmatism treats prevailing conditions as the only point of departure to the future, making the chances of revolutionising the dispossessed slim.

The conception shown below implies generalisation to the desires of refugees: "Palestinians continue to believe they are entitled to their claim to the right of return, but they are prepared to bring it to the negotiating table" (Abu-Zayyad, 1994, p. 77). How positive are we that all seven million Palestinian refugees in the diaspora are prepared to negotiate? As shown in Table 6, the small-scaled data collection illustrated that some refugees are still enthusiastic about returning, varying from first generations to later. Generalisation can pose a severe threat to the diminishment of refugees' options to choose: "It is unrealistic to expect that the entire world can be turned upside down for absolute justice to be achieved". If unrealistic is Khalidi's argument, then what do we posit the fact the world allowed almost one million people driven out of their lands and homes to make room for settlers once upon a time in 1948? In Allan's *Refugees of the*

Revolution, ROR advocates, factions, and political spokespersons invoked the Return March in 2011 as indisputable proof of the centrality of the return of refugees. However, she noted:

> " … the most apparent consensus to emerge from my discussions in Shatila was the rejection and rebuke of the institutions claiming to represent refugees and their political appropriation of return" (2014 p. 207).

Here lies the problem of speaking for others. When we do so, we generalise the solutions as one-size-fits-all, which would erode refugees' voices from the political discourse of the peace process. We assume that the implementation of ROR would entail the return of all refugees (Allan, 2014, p. 192) while refugees should be entitled to a spectrum of remedial options, including the return, indemnities, and settlement elsewhere (Rabinowitz, 2010, p. 497). As this article has argued, not just by giving them options to choose from, but the freedom to choose should lie individually. Edward Said notes,

> "There are many different kinds of the Palestinian experience, which cannot all be assembled into one. Therefore, one would have to write parallel histories of the communities in Lebanon, the Occupied Territories, and so on. That is the central problem. It is almost impossible to imagine a single narrative" (Said, 1994, p. 188).

Therefore, the researchers would contend the same on the solutions; it is almost impossible to imagine a single, universal solution to the refugee crisis on account of their desirability. The world has to speak to the refugees instead of for them and come up with parallel solutions in line with the desirability of refugees in the spirit of centralising victims. As signalled in the previous discussion, refugees are and should be actors, not recipients, in the refugee crisis solution programs.

7. Conclusion

This article has examined how Palestinians are subjected to social death, and how they resist this through the maintenance of social vitality, especially via the demand of a right to return. In difficult, COVID-19 circumstances, this article utilises existing oral history interviews and statements by Israeli politicians to carry out a critical discourse analysis that delineates the discursive representation of Palestinians as socially non-existent, and the modes through which Palestinians insist on social life and existence in the face of social death, thus creating an anti-thesis to social death by upholding their social vitality via narration and remembrance. From the data collection, a pivotal reflection was made. The efforts made by the Israel to attempt social death on the Palestinians are the very thing that drives Palestinians' resistance and hope for a return to their homeland.

This article specifically inspects Palestinian refugees outside the Occupied Palestinian Territory (OPT) to see whether distance influences how they perceive their homeland to find out that there is no universal answer to this question. Generations and locations are not factors that affect Palestinian refugees' desire to return. The reasons as to why some refugees desire and do not desire to return vary as well. There is not one standardised aspect we can agree on. This article concludes that humans in their entirety are subjective. Therefore, solutions (in this case) on the Palestinian refugee crisis should not be treated objectively, too, if our primary goal is to de-marginalise the ostracised. Since this article focuses on Palestinian refugees in Lebanon and Jordan refugee camps, narratives from Palestinian refugees in other camps such as the OPT and Syria are extraterritorial, and this could plausibly be extended in future research.

While critically, this article encapsulates the Palestinian refugee resistance to the social death inflicted upon them, it is also as an effort to stand in solidarity with the dispossessed Palestinians by academically documenting them. It is an attempt to illustrate how when the world shifts the focus on the victims themselves and placing them as actors, we allow them to voice out their desire. This article demonstrates that each individual desires different things; therefore, the act of

universalising solutions will further marginalise these Palestinian refugees. By centring the subaltern, the researchers learned that in thinking of solutions for human rights crisis, we have to accommodate the victims' wants and desires, not them having to oblige to whatever solutions we put to the table because then, that would mean the same as oppressing and marginalising them.

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