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THE INDEPENDENT PERSONALITY OF THE
PALESTINIANS THROUGH THEIR ARTS

by
Prof. Dr. Türkaya Ataöv
The views expressed in this Paper are those of the author, and do not necessarily represent those of EAFORD.

All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood.

Universal Declaration of Human Rights

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THE INDEPENDENT PERSONALITY OF THE PALESTINIANS THROUGH THEIR ARTS
by Prof. Dr. TürkKayta Ataöv*

Introduction
The exodus and the dispersal of the Palestinian people after the occupation of their land by the racist Zionist entity could not hinder the tradition of national expression. This expression, linked to the national question, was even developed as a reaction to foreign invasion. No doubt, the Palestinian armed struggle, following the Israeli attack in 1967, has caused an explosion of a potential energy not only in terms of military force, but in the realm of culture and arts. Palestinian culture, in the form of poetry, folk tales, popular singing, dancing, national costumes, embroidery, ceramics, carving, glass and metal work or various other forms of expression, is the vivid proof of the existence of a homeland and a people’s yearning for it.

The Palestinian masses, under occupation or in exile, are gathering, safeguarding and developing their own culture, knowing full well that the preservation of culture is an effective way of resistance to attempts undermining national consciousness. The Zionist entity has not only looted the land of the Palestinians, but is also suppressing their culture and what is more trying to usurp it from them. But the Palestinians are engaged in a struggle to obtain recognition of their independent personality and existence. In spite of Zionism’s aggression, the roots of a people, deep in the Palestinian soil, cannot be erased.

Assertion of a Personality
The Palestinians were aware of the dangers posed by Zionism’s immigration, much earlier than generally accepted. Throughout many centuries, the Holy Land prospered under the tolerant rule of Arab and Ottoman Turkish sovereigns, who safeguarded the rights of all faiths. The Zionists, on the other hand, were planning to transform this land into an exclusively Jewish state. This drive for immigration, aggression and conquest, often referred to as “exclusiveness”, was characterized as “a form of racism and racial discrimination” in Resolution 3379 adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations on November the 10th, 1975.

Nine years after the first wave of Jewish immigration to Palestine, which occurred in 1882, came the first official Palestinian protest in the form of a petition to the Ottoman Porte requesting prohibition of entry and land

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Purchase by the Zionists. This reaction did not emanate from naught. Palestine was inhabited by a people whose sons and daughters were the indigenous legitimate heirs of successive Palestinian generations. Nevertheless, Theodore Herzl’s report on his visit to Palestine in 1898 did not have a single word on the Arab population. All other Zionists pursued the same line of denial. The former Israeli Premier Golda Meir, for instance, had inquired “Where is this Palestinian people?”

The Palestinian people were in Palestine before recorded history and have been completely Arab since the Arab conquest of Syria in the Seventh Century A.D. They have been waging against Zionist immigration and armed resistance, the signs of which appeared as early as 1886, coupled with certain forms of political protests. The second wave of Zionist immigration, which began in the first decade of the Twentieth Century, laid the foundation of the policy of Jewish labour, from which the indigenous Palestinians suffered. Arab writer Naguib Nasser began to utilize his paper Al-Carmel (1909) as an instrument facing Zionist aggression. Naguib Aziz, an Arab from Jerusalem, had already founded (1905) a society in Paris called the Ligue de la Paix Arabe. He had also published a book entitled Le Revolt de la Nation Arabe. Just before the break of the First World War, several organizations were founded, one being the Palestinian Association at the American University of Beirut (1913).

However, such assertions of national consciousness did not prevent the Zionist challenge reaching its aims. The Balfour Declaration (1917) and the ensuing British occupation facilitated the establishment of a “national home for the Jewish people,” which meant for the Palestinians their own uprooting and the destruction of their own organic unity. In spite of the usual Zionist arguments that the Jews were fellow benefactors returning home and that they would respect Arab culture, all the investigating commissions sent to Palestine in the wake of every outbreak of disturbance concluded that the Arabs were opposed to the establishment of a Jewish national home in Palestine.

After the United Nations decision to partition Palestine, the people of that land faced a programmed attempt aiming at eliminating its existence and obliterating its national identity. The land was divided between Israel and the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, the latter receiving the West Bank. In addition, Al-Quds in the North was to be administered by the Syrians and the Gaza strip in the South by the Egyptians. A blow was dealt on the unity of the people, by subjecting part of it to Israeli rule and annexing the other half to Jordan, in the process of which “refugees” were dispersed to the four corners of the world. The Zionist circles and their friends presented the question to world public opinion as a “refugee problem” involving evil, housing, employment, food, and compensation.

Conclusion

The Palestinian Revolution is asserting the unified entity of the people of Palestine. A long protracted struggle is being waged to change several wrong concepts. The Palestinian reality is already rooted in the Arab Palestinian conscience. It is taking root in the international thinking as well. All that have been done to further the political or cultural entity of this people are proofs that attempts to deface their independent identity have failed. What is more, the Palestinian personality is being promised. The writers, poets, artists and other intellectuals of this people, outnumbered all over the world, are struggling to bring about real peace, which cannot be based on the restoration of the rights of the Palestinians.

1991


This article has been translated into Arabic in Beirut in 1978 while visiting the writer in the former Palestinian Plastic Art Museum. For an interview with Mr. M. Sadiq, see: “The International Art Exhibition for Palestine,” Palestine, Beirut, PLO, Vol. IV, No. 3 (15-30 April 1978), pp. 11-12.

12. Ibid., pp. 21-23.
enemy armour passing over his farm. The farmer, who becomes a fighter, leaves to his son a rifle and the land, symbolizing continuity of armed struggle against the racist enemy. Iraq has done several documentaries such as "Zionism: A Racial Movement", "Death in Lebanon", "Road to Victory", "An Ever Lasting June", the like.

Since 1973, Baghdad has been the host to successive Palestine Film Festivals. In the early 1970s, an enlarged discussion had taken place at a conference of the Arab world on the aim of collecting all film materials, television programs and documentaries and having them all screened in a biennial festival. Consequently, the first festival was held in the Iraqi capital in 1973. After the first festival, it was decided that it be permanently organized in Baghdad by the Iraqi Broadcasting and Television Establishment. The second festival was held in Baghdad in 1976, the third in 1978 and the fourth in 1980. "The Fourth International Festival of Films and Television Programs About Palestine" was organized under the following slogan: "The Liberation of Palestine is the Cornerstone of World Peace."

The Baghdad film festivals habitually screen documentaries, features and cartoons. For instance, the 57-minute Quebec Radio interview with the PLO leader Yasser Arafat is an important documentary. The 29-minute Yugoslav production called "Flame and Light" brings to the spectator the plight of the Palestinian poets. The 5-minute Syrian film "The Roots" was actually a chronicle of the Palestinian state. The festival screened many films critical of the Camp David Accords. For instance, the 20-minute "Treschery", produced by the PLO and the 2-minute Iraqui cartoon were short, but very convincing replies to pretensions that Camp David brings peace. Among the outstanding feature films were "And They Murder the Birds", "The Skirmisher" and "A Numberless Operation", all from Iraq.

The cause of Palestine has enjoyed support in various other festivals, notably the ones in Moscow, Tashkent, Carthage, Carlo Vineri, Karacove and Darmascus. The Polish film entitled "The Promised Land" and shown at the 9th Moscow Festival, traced the ties of the industrial bourgeoisie with Zionism. The Arab film, "Kafir Kassem", introduced at the same festival, narrated the story of the notorious massacre, "The Ten" (Iraqi), shown at the 11th Moscow Festival, exposed the murder of Palestinian children. "Report on the Situation in Lebanon" (Iraq) focused on the Palestinian resistance in Lebanon. The Soviet film entitled "The Palestinians: The Right to Live" stressed the legality of armed struggle. "Kafir Qubla", shown in Tashkent, was based on Zionistic aggression on that Libanese town. "Men Under the Sun" won the silver medal at Carthage.

The question itself was, for a time, reduced to a conflict between Israel and the Arab states over borders.

Thus, between the catastrophe of 1948 and the 1960s, the Palestinians sought the revival of their independent national identity. "Ali-Patch" went ahead of all other organization in this respect. Its review entitled Our Palestine, issued in Beirut, stressed Palestinian thoughts and concepts, based mainly on Palestinian sources. This also meant rejection of patronage over the Palestinians by any party. The victory of the Algerians in 1962 was another proof for the Palestinians that any people that holds its own cause firmly in its own hands was capable of achieving its national aspirations. Hence, the formation of the Palestine Liberation Organization was announced in the first session of a conference held in Jerusalem in 1964 and attended by 388 delegates. The PLO soon completed its substantial structures, enabling the Palestinian personality to assert itself. The first Arab official recognition of the PLO occurred two weeks after its establishment. The sign of international recognition appeared in the conference of the non-aligned states in Cairo the same year. The People's Republic of China was the first foreign state to recognize the PLO in 1965. And a year later, the World Peace Council decided to consider Palestine as one of its members.

Following the Israeli aggression in 1967 and the Karemeh victory in 1968, the freedom fighter became the symbol of the Palestinian personality. The resistance movement is now the expression of the existence of a people, and the PLO is the mechanism through which the actual embodiment of this personality can and should be attained. The vote of the UN General Assembly in 1974, granting the PLO an observer's status, is another assertion of the Palestinian people's unity and representation. In spite of split, dispersion and exile, its national identity is inalienable. The "Land Day" uprisings (March 30) of the Palestinians living under occupation are glaring proofs of their independent identity, unity and loyalty to unified leadership. Palestinian leadership believes in the masses as the only force capable of achieving victory. The revolutionary war advocated has the clear political objective of restoring to the Palestinians their own homeland. The political and the armed struggles are two complimentary means to achieve this objective. Tawfek Zayed, the Palestinian poet, expresses the mobilization of the masses in the following lines: "It is much easier for you / To pass an elephant through a needle's eye / Or catch fried fish in galaxy / Though the seas / Or humanize a crocodile / Than to destroy by persecution / The shimmering glow of a belief / Or check our march / One single step."

Usurpation of Culture

The Palestinians now realize that Israel has not only occupied their own
The Association for Theater and Palestinian Popular Art is one of the cultural institutions, that this writer has visited in Beiruit. The performers put on a stage a dance sequence reflecting their struggle against the occupying entity. At the beginning, the Palestinians plant peas and plant peacefully. Girls sing and dance to the music. Suddenly there is an explosion with discordant sounds, seemingly having no relation with the land and the life on it. The Israelis enter with different uniforms but the land rejects them as the fence overcomes the discordant music at the end. Likewise, the Palestinian Cinema Institution and the Samed Production are both taking up the issue of a people whose land was usurped by force. In late 1978, "The Day of the Land", directed by Ghalib Sha’ab and describing the enduring resistance of the Palestinians, was awarded the "Golden Prize" at the Leipzig Film Festival. The film on Tal Al-Zaatar figured out prominently at the Cartagia Film Festival in Tunisia the same year. Another one, done in 1979, in cooperation with the Palestinian Red Crescent Society, does not only show the labor’s activities, but is also a testimony of Zionist atrocities. Sent to the International Film Festival in Yarna (Bulgaria), this film was vetoed by the Americans, West Germans and the Swiss, but was shown outside the competition and awarded a special prize. "The Children of Palestine", showing the bombardment of schools, is another documentary record of Israeli destruction. This film, shown on channel 13 in the TV network of New York City, caused contradictory reactions. While some were shocked by the brutal Israeli attacks on the civilians in Southern Lebanon, the Zionist circles got the person, who had approved its showing, fired from his job. The same film, now circulating almost everywhere, received an overwhelming reception at the Internationale Dokumentar-und-Kunstfilmwoche in Leipzig. It was awarded the "Special Jury Prize". In Leipzig, another film, dealing with the Cuban Youth Festival, had its premiere. Ghalib Sha’ab is presently working on "The Olive Branch", "The Fifth War", on the Israeli invasion of South Lebanon in early 1978, is a co-production of the Palestinian Cinema Institution and the Samed Cinema Production. Another one on nursery schools is being done with the Palestinian Women’s Union. A magazine entitled Al-Sar Al-Falastinyya (The Palestinian Image) is being published, with the aim of reflecting Arab and world-wide revolutionary film-making as well as fighting Zionist film propagations.

Several productions in Arab countries now deal on the issue of Palestine. In Iraq, for instance, "The Bitter Winter" (directed by Shukri Jamali) and "The Field" (director Sabeek Abdul Karim) both confirm that the Palestinians cannot give up their land. The latter was the Harun Al Sharif, a Palestinian farmer who confronts the occupiers of his land and observes
including the orange trees that his father had planted. While Ghasan was working as the Editor of a new daily called Al-Alamar, he published at the same time the weekly Al-Falasteen. In 1965, he wrote his famous short story “Al-Nabat” (The Pomegranate Tree) which was later published in his novel “Al-Tha’ali” (The Uprising). This novel was a major work in Arab literature and it was translated into several European languages. Ghasan was a very prolific writer and his works were widely read in the Arab world. He was a symbol of resistance against the occupation and he was a hero to many young people.

Ghasan continued to write and to publish his work until his death in 1972. His legacy is still remembered and his works are studied in schools and universities throughout the Arab world. His works have had a profound impact on the Arab world and they have become a symbol of resistance against oppression and occupation. His works have also inspired many young people to stand up against injustice and to fight for their rights. Ghasan was a true hero and a true friend to the Arab people.
The Zionists also want to alter the traditional face of the city for theological purposes of their own. The desecration of historic quarters, the expropriation of Moslem and Christian properties and the desecration of cemeteries serve to eliminate the life of the city and transform it into a Jewish city.

The "restoration" of the Temple of Solomon, which is very close to the great mosques of Al-Aqsa and Omar, has already seriously weakened the foundations and structures of the past generation. A fire has destroyed a large part of the Al-Aqsa, including the irreparable minbar, or pulpit, of Saladin, which was one of the most successful specimens of Medieval Arab woodwork.

Voices of protest against this "massacre" of the holy city have been raised throughout the world. First of all, a whole series of resolutions taken by the U.N. General Assembly since 1967 have condemned continuing occupation of Jerusalem and the measures threatening the status of the city. For instance, a Security Council Resolution, taken in 1971 by fourteen to none, once again confirmed that all legislative actions taken by Israel to change the status of Jerusalem, including the expropriation of land properties, the transfer of populations and legislation aimed at the incorporation of the occupied sector are totally invalid and cannot change that status.

There have been similar reactions from scholarly persons and interested organizations. Italy's leading urbanist Prof. Bruno Zevi, for instance, has described the Zionist attempt to alter the universal character of Jerusalem as an example of "collective harr-kiri." Time magazine of March 1, 1971, observed that Israel was literally bulldozing its way to Jewish control over the limestone and sand of Jordanian Jerusalem before the peace negotiations could be held. Prof. T. Otohashi of Kyoto University, formerly British Ambassador to Jordan, made the same point in a letter published in the London Times of March 15, 1971. There are many other reports on the desecration of church property in Israel. For instance, the celebrated Kifitaka tiles, brought especially from Turkey by the Armenian pilgrims in the Eighteenth Century, were ripped from the walls of the Church of the Patriarchate of St. Saviour, which is traditionally the burial-place of Patriarchs of the Armenian church in Jerusalem. Adjacent to the Armenian church is the Greek Orthodox cemetery on Mount Zion, in which practically every tomb is smashed.

Art as a weapon

Under the circumstances, it is not surprising that the Palestinians consider the safeguarding of their culture as a form of resistance. Hence, the first conference of the General Union of Palestinian Artists was held in Sousse.

Abu Hussein in Fayyad in the "Merc" represents any other Palestinian whose land, the only source of income, is confiscated by the Zionist authorities. "The Sea Became Blue," written by Yahia Bashir in the Dar Al-Balad Refugee Camp in Suez, tells of the life of the refugees who, having been expelled from their homes in the desert, or between justice and the impossible. The main character Abu Al-Habib, who has to go out fishing, never returns from the sea, which the Zionist authorities describe as a "military zone." The rope around the neck of Abdul Ghani Al-Asyabi in wall Rabah's "Inscriptions on the Wall of the Cell" is actually the bondage of a whole people. Youssef Irsi and many others have unfolded the unfolding massacre in Tal Al-Zaatar. In these writings lives the legendary battle of fifty-three days, in which the community of the working people repelled so many attacks. In Rashid Abu Shwar's "The Amethyst", Mahmolb and Sweetheart fight in picking up his rifle after having buried his father. Mahmoud Labadi's "The Room on the Roof" is only one of the episodes concerning the destruction of Arab dwellings. Fara Ghobash's "The Return" is more than an analysis; it is a solution; to the old Jewish man, who has come to Palestine, many years ago, as pioneer with ideals of conquest and glory but who now sees what kind of destruction this foolishness has caused. Abu Adnan, hitting his veteran rifle more securely on his shoulder, says: "Palestine is still alive, and there is more hope for you and us."

We may pause here for a few moments to re-live the memory of Ghassan Kanafani, a great Palestinian writer who was assassinated by Israeli agents in Beirut on July 9, 1972. He was born in Acre on April 9, 1936, at the beginning of the Palestinian Arab revolt against Zionist forces and the British Mandate Authority. The Deir Yassin massacre also took place on April 9. Ghassan's 40th birthday. He never celebrated his birthday again. Every year on that date, Anni Kanafani, the Danish-born widow of Ghassan, stood in silence for him and for the innocent victims of Deir Yassin. And on that same date in 1940, Anna's country, Denmark, was occupied by the German Nazis. Her father had joined the resistance movement, which also helped to save Jews from the occupying Germans. Years later, Israeli agents killed her Palestinian husband, Ghassan seemed so dangerous for them as a writer and as a spokesman.

Ghassan's family had left Acre shortly before May 15, 1948, and moved first to a mountain village in Syria and then to Damascus. In 1955, he joined the Arab Nationalist Movement (ANM). Dr George Kassab convinced him to come to Beirut in order to work on Al-Hurriyah. In 1962, he wrote the novel Men in the Snow, which became known throughout most of the Arab world. The Land of the Sad Oranges, published a year later, was a collection of short stories on Palestine and its people. In the latter, the author related how the family had to move out of Acre, leaving behind everything,
(France), Renato Guttuso (Italy), Julio Leparc (Argentine), Cardenas (Cuba) and the like. Janet Veitchboyer's (Australia) "Zionist Crime", Quanero Netto's (Brazil) "Neo-Colonialism", Matta's (Chile) trilogy of "Palestinian Martyrs", Claude Larrard's (France) "Daily Life in Occupied Territories", Marc Wintz's (France) "The Bird of Death" and V. K. Schmidt's (F. R. of Germany) "Death to Fascism" are among those attracting the eye.

The Palestinian Revolution has exerted great influence not only on Palestinian or Arab plastic arts, but also on the entire democratic Arab culture. What the Palestinian Revolution has brought to the seven arts in the Arab world shows that Arab culture is not a mere "neobourgeois" form. Many Arab writers, poets and artists are turning towards the Palestinian revolution. Not only do they feel that it is a resistance of their own, but also they can express democratic and revolutionary content in treating the goals of the Palestinian Revolution.

Novels, short stories and poetry

The struggle for Palestine has enriched arts in the Arab world. Even the Arab script itself is searching for a new realistic form. The wall posters and the headlines of the publications reactivate the form of the old Arabic script. One can perceive the old lines, but they are even developed further. The point may be better illustrated by giving the example of Nawa'a Abu Al-Hajjaj's latest novel entitled You Are the Equator. This short novel treats the dialectical relationship between the Palestine problem and the national issue as well as the social objectives of the Arabs and the idea of total liberation, linked with the developing humanitarian spirit of Arab personality. The characters of the novel typify the personalities created as a result of the impact of the Palestine Revolution on the Arab mind.

The short stories written by the Palestinians reveal the same approach. Those who have prepared the translations of a selected group of such stories say:

"We Palestinians like to talk about our loved one - Palestine. Many a Palestinian loved his country and gave the flower of his youth and even his life to redeem her. . . . The lovers who fell are transformed into candles to light the way for the heroes who come after them. . . . They seized our land . . . changed the name . . . its features . . . They took Palestine's heritage to make it their own . . . We decided with this selection of stories to tell the world that . . . the Palestinian people are alive and will never die."

Take Tawfiq Fayyad, for instance. He is a Palestinian novelist who lived in occupied Palestine, where he witnessed Zionist terror and racist practices. His series of short stories, entitled The Yellow Road, reveal the sufferings and perseverance of his people under occupation. The peasant al-Garb, Lebanon on July 4, 1979, under the following appropriate slogan: "Art is a weapon for Palestine." The Palestinian artists have created masterpieces full of determination to be masters of their own land. No matter what plastic tendencies they may have, they preserve what is specifically Palestinian. They understand art as a means for permanent struggle.

The central theme is that of return and love for the land. Arab artists who are not Palestinians have found their own personalities in this unifying theme. Houssain, for instance, is from Amman (Jordan), who has studied sculpting in Paris. Feeling like a Palestinian, she now heads the Plastic Arts Section of the P.O. The Palestinian painters participate in the struggle through their works. When Houssain and Nawa'a Abu Al-Hajjaj visited the Palestinian refugee camps in 1968, and gave crayons and paper to the children, they produced vivid images of the Israeli airplanes throwing napalm bombs and the Palestinian guerrillas holding their guns against the invading tanks. These drawings, chosen from thousands collected from Baqaa' camp in Jordan from Palestinian children aged 5 to 14 years, were later published. She had gone to the camp nearly a year after the Zionist aggression in 1967. She says:

"Spread under the burning sun, thousands of tents sheltered 50,000 of the Palestinian refugees who had sought shelter there. . . . I went to the camp with the idea of giving the young Palestinian painters and crayons . . . to express themselves freely . . . What can innocence say about unjustified violence, aggression and the loss of a home? How tellingly can children play the game of adults? Those were the questions I hoped the children's drawings would answer . . . Their drawings began to take shape, telling the tragedy in colours brighter than the sun. Watching their hands drawing I felt the crayons had turned into sharp knifes. They had an obsessive desire to carve their experience into the paper with all the density of its full reality . . . These drawings . . . testify that the song of life and its joyfulness will overcome oppression . . ."

Child or adult, the Palestinian artist is revolutionary, since he rejects imperialist and Zionist injustice without ceasing to acclaim the beauty of the world. Some of them work under the harsh realities of occupation. The appearance of the Palestinian flag on the canvas is a "crime", and so is the depiction of any kind of violence. Several Palestinians working in one branch of the seven arts have suffered imprisonment, torture or deportation. Yet, they continue to express their message, be it the folk costumes, the solemn faces of the peasant women or simply the land itself.

Painting

One of the earliest and best-known Palestinian painters is Ismail Shamoun, whose simple but emotional style is very popular with the masses. Shamoun occupies a special place because he has played an
The effective part in creating a whole new succession of Palestinian artists. His works have a committed form, which appear connected to reality. Born in the Palestinian town of Lydda in 1930, he showed an early interest in arts, but the tragedy of 1948 turned his concern into another direction. Although he was born of middle-class parents, he found himself and his family in a desolate place far from home, having taken refuge in a tent. He eventually became a teacher with the U.N. Relief Agency for Refugees, and later went to Cairo to study arts. There he painted "The Little Refugee Girl", "Where is My Father?" and "Waterer". He had an exhibition in Gaza in 1953, the first one held by a Palestinian in Palestine. He pursued further studies in Rome, where he painted "Memories and Fire" in 1956. Successive disasters, such as the wars in Gaza in 1956 and 1967, the Israeli massacre of 1968 in the Palestinian village of Samarra, the September 1970 wars in Jordan and the butchery of Tal al-Zaatar in 1976, forced him to interpret the feelings of his people.

Ibrahim Ghanam, born in 1930 in the village of Al-Yajour near Haifa, suddenly found himself a refugee in Lebanon. He generally expresses his happiness they were in Palestine. "The Harvest", for instance, is a painting depicting the Palestinian farmers reaping their wheat. "The Wedding Feast" shows the peaceful life that Zionism has deprived them. He also paints the poverty and life of the PLO's life in the refugee camps, showing the people standing in lines, each waiting to receive a small quantity of flour, rice or sugar. The Tal al-Zaatar massacre affected Ghanam, who painted a naked Palestinian girl, hands tied with a rope, being pulled by a Phalangist militiaman while other militiamen dance around.

One of the leading Palestinian painters living in exile in the United States is Kamar Boullata. Vladimir Tansari lives in Japan. Mouzaffar Hallaj told this writer in Beirut that since 1967 the members of his family have not been able to gather around one table. The leading Palestinian artists in the occupied territories like Soleman Mansour, Kasem Al-Moghammi, Nahid Anani and Ismael Badr reveal an all-dominating "Palestinianity". They follow a style rooted in popular art traditions, folklore, handcrafts and calligraphy. The themes are the people's aspirations, problems, needs and work. Open "political" expressions were forbidden in the occupied areas, they often resort to symbols, such as the use of the national colours in disguise. The Palestinian artists under occupation actively participate in the growing struggle of their people to preserve and develop their culture. In spite of all forms of suppression, they have succeeded in furthering the daily symbiosis with overall resistance.

The first Palestinian art exhibition took place in Amman. It reflected the Karameh reality, or the hopes for a future free from the chains of Zionism. The first exhibition abroad was held in London in 1976 and a year later in the United States. The last mentioned encompassed the works of Mansour, Badr and Ibrahim Saba. In all these exhibitions as well as the numerous ones that followed the struggle of the Palestinian people was embodied, full with pain and bitterness, but also with hope for a just and peaceful future. Some like Abdi er-Rahman Al-Muzzayen portray Palestinian and Canaanite mythlogy, using historical symbols. Others like Nasir Assoumi excel in engravings. Still others like Adnan Assarif derive their topics from stories written by the Palestinian writers. As new plastic exhibitions are being held, new men and new themes of the Palestinian life before 1948. As one of the more recent exhibitions, the one held in Japan, entitled "The Restoration of Human Beings and Nature", was in fact a cultural exchange as a way of commemorating the Japanese progressive movement. The Palestinian and Japanese artists have made an agreement to have more mutual friendship programmes and also to establish an International Art Camp in Beirut.

There has also been an exhibition of Palestinian posters printed between 1967 and 1979. With the growth of the Palestinian Revolution, such posters appeared on the walls in the Arab countries and in many capitals and cities all over the world. They help to spread the slogans and the symbols of the Palestinians. The exhibition, held in Beirut, was dedicated to the memory of the martyr Izzeddin Khattab. The poster artist working on a book about Palestinian posters when he was assassinated by the Israelis in 1978.

The Plastic Arts Section of the PLO has also organized an international exhibition of solidarity with Palestine. The PLO has sent invitations to several artists around the world to participate in the exhibition and to show their work as an expression of their solidarity with the Palestinian people in their just struggle for self-determination and restoration of their land. This exhibition was for the Palestinian artists a starting point for a militant culture in the front that would enable them, through artistic expression, to convey their cause. In this exhibition, 184 artists from 29 countries proclaimed their support for the Palestinian people. They followed a style rooted in popular art traditions, folklore, handcrafts and calligraphy. All the works were gifts, constituting the nucleus of the "Museum of Solidarity with Palestine." Seventeen Palestinian artists have taken part in this exhibition. There were also celebrated artists from other Arab countries such as Dikia Azzawi from Iraq, Hamed Abdullah from Egypt and Axel Reyes from Lebanon. Among them, Azzawi's works are really renewal of anger against injustice, bursting even from the lips of ancient stone heads. He has illustrated several books, such as From the Land of Oranges, a collection of writings by the martyred hero Ghassan Kanafani. For the hopes for a future free from the chains of Zionism the following ought to be mentioned: Jean Miro (Spain), Andre Masson.
The first Palestinian art exhibition took place in Amman. It reflected the Karameh reality, or the hopes for a future free from the chains of Zionism. The first exhibition abroad was held in London in 1976 and a year later in the United States. The last mentioned encompassed the works of Mansour, Badr and Ibrahim Saba. In all these exhibitions as well as the numerous ones that followed the struggle of the Palestinian people was embodied, full with pain and bitterness, but also with hope for a just and peaceful future. Some like Abu-er-Rahman Al-Muzzayen portray Palestinian and Canaanite mythology, using historical symbols. Others like Nasir Assousi excel in engravings. Still others like Adnan Asharif derive their topics from stories written by the Palestinian writers. As new plastic exhibitions are being held, new and more modern traits of the Palestinian life before 1948. As one of the more recent exhibitions, the one held in Japan, entitled "The Restoration of Human Beings and Nature," was in fact a cultural exchange as the wars of Zionist aggression in 1956 and 1967, the Israeli massacre of 1966 in the Palestinian village of Samna, the September 1970 wars in Jordan and the butchery of Tal el-Zaatar in 1976, forced him to interpret the feelings of his people.

Abraham Ghanam, born in 1930 in the village of Al-Yajour near Haifa, suddenly found himself a refugee in Lebanon. He generally expresses his happiness they were in Palestine. "The Harvest," for instance, is a painting depicting the Palestinian farmers reaping their wheat. "The Wedding Feast" shows the peaceful life that Zionism has deprived them. He also paints the gloomy and tragic life of the PLO's life in the refugee camps, showing the people standing in lines, each waiting to receive a small quantity of flour, rice or sugar. The Tal el-Zaatar massacre affected Ghanam, who painted a naked Palestinian girl, hands tied with a rope, being pulled by a Phalangist militant while other militant dance around.

One of the leading Palestinian painters living in exile in the United States is Kamal Boullata. Vladimir Tansari lives in Japan. Mostafa Hallaj told this writer in Beirut that since 1967 the members of his family have not been able to gather around one table. The leading Palestinian artists in the occupied territories like Soleman Mansour, Kamel Al-Moghanni, Nahil Anuni and Issam Badr reveal an all-dominating "Palestinianity." They follow a style rooted in popular art traditions, folklore, handicrafts and calligraphy. The themes are the people's aspirations, problems, needs and work. Open "political" expressions were forbidden in the occupied areas, they often resort to symbols, the use of the national colours in disguise. The Palestinian artists under occupation actively participate in the growing struggle of their people to preserve and develop their culture. In spite of all efforts of suppression, they have succeeded in furthering the daily symbiosis with overall resistance.

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(France), Renato Guttuso (Italy), Julio Leparc (Argentina), Cardenas (Cuba) and the like. Janet Venezbovna's (Australia) "Zionist Crime", Quanres Netto's (Brazil) "Neo-Colonialism", Matta's (Chile) trilogy of "Palestinian Martyrs", Claude Larrard's (France) "Daily Life in Occupied Territories", Marc Wintarc's (France) "The Road of Death" and Vittorio Schmidt's (F.R. of Germany) "Death to Fascism" are among those attracting the eye.

The Palestinian Revolution has exerted great influence not only on Palestinian or Arab plastic arts, but also on the entire democratic Arab culture. What the Palestinian Revolution has brought to the seven arts in the Arab world shows that Arab culture is not a mere "arabesque" form. Many Arab writers, poets and artists are turning towards the Palestinian resistance. Not only they feel that it is a resistance of their own, but also they can express democratic and revolutionary content is treating the goals of the Palestinian Revolution.

Novels, short stories and poetry

The struggle for Palestine has enriched arts in the Arab world. Even the Arab script itself is searching for a new realistic form. The wall papers and the headlines of the publications reanimate the form of the old Arabic script. One can perceive the old lines, but they are even developed further. The point may be better illustrated by giving the example of Nawaf Abu Al-Hajj's latest novel entitled You Are the Equator. This short novel treats the dialectical relationship between the Palestinian problem and the national issue as well as the social objectives of the Arabs and the idea of total liberation, linked with the developing humanitarian spirit of Arab personality. The characters of the novel typify the personalities created as a result of the impact of the Palestine Revolution on the Arab mind.

The short stories written by the Palestinians reveal the same approach. Those who have prepared the translations of a selected group of such stories say:

"We Palestinians like to talk about our loved one – Palestine. Many a Palestinian loved his country and gave the flower of his youth and even his life to redeem her. . . The loavers who fell are transformed into candles to light the way for the heroes who come after them. . . They seized our land . . . changed the name . . . its features . . . They took Palestine's heritage to make it their own. . . We decided with this selection of stories to tell the world that . . . the Palestinian people are alive and will never die."79

Take Tawfik Fayyad, for instance. He is a Palestinian novelist who lived in occupied Palestine, where he witnessed Zionist terror and racist practices. His series of short stories, entitled The Yellow Road reveal the sufferings and perseverance of his people under occupation. The peasant al-Garb, Lebanon on July 4, 1979, under the following appropriate slogan: "Art is a weapon for Palestine." The Palestinian artists have created masterpieces full of determination to be masters of their own land. No matter what plastic tendencies they may have, they preserve what is specifically Palestinian. They understand art as a means for permanent struggle.

The central theme is that of return and love for the land. Arab artists who are not Palestinians have found their own personalities in this unifying theme. Mouna Saudi, for instance, is from Aman (Jordan), who has studied sculpturing in Paris. Feeling like a Palestinian, she now heads the Plastic Arts Section of the PLO. The Palestinian painters participate in the struggle through their works. When Mouna Saudi visited the Palestinian camps in 1968, and gave crayons and paper to the children, they produced vivid images of the Israeli planes throwing napalm bombs and the Palestinian guerrillas holding their guns against the invading tanks. These drawings, chosen from thousands collected from Baqqua camp in Jordan from Palestinian children aged 5 to 14 years, were later published. She had gone to the camp nearly a year after the Zionist aggression in 1967. She says:

"Spared under the burning sun, thousands of tents sheltered 50,000 of the Palestinian refugees who had sought shelter there . . . I went to the camp with the idea of giving the young Palestinian children paper and crayons . . . to express themselves freely . . . What can innocence say about unjustified violence, aggression and the loss of a home? How tellingly can children play the game of adults? Those were the questions I hoped the children's drawings would answer . . . Their drawings began to take shape, telling the tragedy in colours brighter than the sun. Watching their hands drawing I felt the crayons had turned into sharp knives. They had an obsessive desire to carve their experiences into the paper with all the density of its full reality . . . These drawings testify that the song of life and its joyfulness will overcome oppression."80

Child or adult, the Palestinian artist is revolutionary, since he rejects imperialist and Zionist injustice without ceasing to acclaim the beauty of the world. Some of them work under the harsh realities of occupation. The appearance of the Palestinian flag on the canvas is a "crime" and so is the depiction of any kind of violence. Several Palestinians working in one branch of the seven arts have suffered imprisonment, torture or deportation. Yet, they continue to express their message, be it the folk costumes, the solemn faces of the peasant women or simply the land itself.

Painting

One of the earliest and best-known Palestinian painters is Ismail Shamoun, whose simple but emotional style is very popular with the masses. Shamoun occupies a special place because he has played an
The Zionists also want to alter the traditional face of the city for theological purposes of their own. The desecration of historic quarters, the expropriation of Muslim and Christian properties and the desecration of cemeteries serve to give a life to the area and to turn it into a Jewish city. The "restoration" of the Temple of Solomon, which is very close to the great mosques of Al-Aqsa and Omar, has already seriously weakened the foundations and structure of the area mentioned. A fire has destroyed a large part of the Al-Aqsa, including the inreplaceable minbar, or pulpits, of Saladin, which was one of the most successful specimens of Medieval Arab woodwork.

Voices of protest against this "massacre" of the holy city have been raised throughout the world. First of all, a whole series of resolutions taken by the U.N. General Assembly since 1967 have condemned continuing occupation of Jerusalem and the measures changing the status of the city. For instance, a Security Council Resolution, taken in 1971 by fourteen to none, once again confirmed that all legislative actions taken by Israel to change the status of Jerusalem, including the expropriation of land properties, the transfer of populations and legislation aimed at the occupation of the occupied sector are totally invalid and cannot change that status.

These have been similar reactions from scholarly persons and interested organizations. Italy's leading urbanist Prof. Bruno Zevi, for instance, has described the Zionist attempt to alter the universal character of Jerusalem as an example of "collective barn-killing." Times magazine of March 1, 1971, observed that Israel was literally bulldozing its way to Jewish control over the limestone and sand of Jordanian Jerusalem before the peace negotiations could be held. Prof. Arnold Toynbee and Sir Geoffrey Parling, formerly British Ambassador to Jordan, made the same point in a letter published in the London Times of March 15, 1971. There are many other reports on the denecration of church property in Israel. For instance, the celebrated Kibbutz byblos, brought especially from Turkey by the Armenian pilgrims in the Eighteenth Century, were copied from the walls of the Church of St. Sotir, which is traditionally the burial-place of the Patriarchs of the Armenian church in Jerusalem. Adjacent to the Armenian church is the Greek Orthodox cemetery on Mount Zion, in which practically every tomb is smashed. Likewise, Father Ayoub published several photographs showing smashed tombs belonging to the Latin church.

Art as a weapon

Under the circumstances, it is not surprising that the Palestinians consider the safeguarding of their culture as a form of resistance. Hence, the first conference of the General Union of Palestinian Artists was held in Sour.
including the orange trees that his father had planted. While Ghassan was working as the Editor of a new daily called Al-Alamar, he published at the same time the work, published Essays About Resistance Literature, which for the first time revealed to the Arab world that determined Palestinian poets existed in the occupied land. The ANM was soon to give its first martyrs. Hence, Ghassan dedicated his novel All That is Left for You (which received the Lebanese Literature Prize for 1966) to Khaleel Al-Hass, one of those early martyrs. In 1967, Ghassan joined the daily Al-Amur and wrote Al-Hadaf. In 1969, he wrote Umm Sa'ad (Sa'ad's Mother). The heroine was a dear old friend of his author, a symbol of the Palestinian woman in the camp. In 1970, he finished his last novel, Back to Haifa. When he was imprisoned in 1973 for an article in Al-Hadaf, he began to write The Lover, his long novel about Palestine. This was intended to trace the whole Palestinian struggle from its beginnings against the British and the Zionists up to the present. He was planning to finish it during the Summer of 1972.

The day after he was killed, The Daily Star wrote: "Ghassan was the commando who never fired a gun. His weapon was a halalpen and his arena newspaper pages. And he hurt the enemy more than a column of commanders."

Ghassan Kanafani's books are read throughout the Arab world, but in his occupied homeland, Palestine, his writings are pirated and illegally. His widow says: "When the Palestinian people return home, they will meet Ghassan in every flower, in every tree — they will feel him in the red and the air of Palestine."

Most of the Palestinian Arab poets now living under Zionist occupation were caught up in the tragedy of theiropian country in their childhood or adolescent years. The anguish and the prophecy in their verses prove that the struggle to liberate Palestine cannot be stopped.

As expressed in Tawfeek Zeyad's lines, the Palestinians are like a thousand prodigies spreading everywhere, singing their songs, filling dungeons with pride and spilling their deepest blood. In a beautiful long poem, Mahmoud Darweesh describes the lover from Palestine: "...Palestinian are your eyes, your tattoo, your clothes, / Your feet, your form, / Palestinian the words, / Palestinian the voice, / Palestinian you live, / Palestinian you will die." Samih Al-Qasem's poem in which the line "I shall not compromise!" repeats itself refutes the claim that the so-called "Israeli Arabs" have been taught to accept the Zionist state as a fact. As Fallwa Taweel wrote, "the black blood broke loose from barbaric shores upon the green good earth, the tree fell, but the roots never die. And we may join Muree Buasyo, in addressing men and women of the world: "Be with us now!"

his profound imprint on its destiny. And the Moslems regard it as one of the holiest of cities for Islam; it is believed that it encompasses the site of Prophet Mohammad's nocturnal journey to heaven. It was not by coinci-

Specific instructions to that effect were incorporated in the text of the Mandate granted to Britain. When in 1947, the Mandatory Power declared its intention to withdraw from Palestine, the United Nations re-affirmed the will of the international community to protect the unique character of Jerusalem. A "corpus separatum", under international sovereignty, was to be set up for Jerusalem and its environs. The Arabs of Palestine, then representing the two-thirds majority in Palestine, had refused the idea of partitioning their land into Arab and Jewish states for reasons valid now as they were then.

The seizure of the whole of Jerusalem was always a part of Zionist strategy, and this plan would have succeeded in 1948 had it not been for the intervention of the Transjordanian Army, Count Bernadotte, the U.N. Mediator, who recommended that Jerusalem be placed under effective United Nations control, was assassinated by Israeli terrorists in 1948. Three months later, a U.N. General Assembly resolution repeated that Jerusalem, Bethlehem and Nazareth be put under U.N. control. In 1949, it reiterated its intentions in even more resolute terms instructing the Trusteeship Council to draw up a Statute for the city. In 1950, the Statute was prepared and duly approved by the Trusteeship Council, but was never imple-

The announcement made the same year by the Israeli Government that Jerusalem was its capital has never been accepted by the U.N. In fact, it was condemned on several occasions.

The Zionist entity occupied Jerusalem and the rest of the West Bank in 1967. Within days, the demolition of historic buildings and the expropriation of religious and private properties began. The Arabs became inhabitants, not citizens of Jerusalem. They are being held in captivity, just like the city itself. The tolerance which has marked Arab and Ottoman Turkish rule, gave way to Zionist discrimination. The Israeli authorities have been testing ever since to modify the traditional face and the skyline of Jerusalem, to help change the balance of population and thus create a "new fact" with which they hope to block any U.N. decision to do justice to the city and its original inhabitants. Jerusalem, which is one of the oldest cities in the world, now has sections resembling one of Mississauga or Ponsk.
The Association for Theater and Palestinian Popular Art is one of the cultural institutions, that this writer has visited in Hebron. The performers put on stage a dance sequence reflecting their struggle against the occupying enemy. At the beginning, the Palestinians dance peacefully. Girls sing and dance to the music. Suddenly there is an explosion with discordant sounds, seemingly having no relation with the land and the life on it. The Israelis enter with different uniforms but the land rejects them as the music overrules the discordant music at the end.

Likewise, the Palestinian Cinema Institution and the Samed Production are both taking up the issue of a people whose land was usurped by force. In late 1978, "The Day of the Land," directed by Ghalib Sha'sh, and describing the enduring resistance of the Palestinian masses, was awarded the "Golden Prize" at the Leipzig Film Festival. The film on Tel Al-Zaatar figured out prominently at the Carthage Film Festival in Tunisia the same year. Another one, done in 1979, in cooperation with the Palestinian Red Crescent Society, does not only show the labor's activities, but is also a testimony of Zionist atrocities. Sent to the International Film Festival in Yarza (Bulgaria), this film was vetoed by the Americans, West Germans and the Swiss, but was shown outside the competition and awarded a special prize. "The Children of Palestine," showing the bombardment of schools, is another documentary record of Israeli destruction. This film, shown on channel 13 on the TV network of New York City, caused corrosive reactions. While some were shocked by the brutal Israeli methods on the civilians in Southern Lebanon, the Zionist circles got the person, who had approved its showing, fired from his job. The same film, now circulating almost everywhere, received an overwhelming reception at the Internationale Dokumentar-und-Kurzfilmtage in Leipzig. It was awarded the "Special Jury Prize." In Leipzig, another film, dealing with the Cuban Youth Festival, had its premiere. Ghalib Sha'ssh is presently working on "The Olive Branch," "The Fifth War," on the Israeli invasion of South Lebanon in early 1978, is a co-production of the Palestinian Cinema Institution and the Samed Cinema Production. Another one on nursery schools is being done with the Palestinian Women's Union. A magazine entitled Al-Sur Al-Falasteenya (The Palestinian Image) is being published, with the aim of reflecting Arab and world-wide revolutionary film-making as well as fighting Zionist film propaganda.

Several productions have been made in Arab countries now dealing with the issue of Palestine. In Iraq, for instance, "The Bitter Winter" (directed by Shukri Jamali) and "The Field" (director Sabeeh Abdul Karim) both confirm that the Palestinians cannot give up their land. The latter tells the story of a Palestinian farmer who confronts the occupiers of his land and observes
enemy armour passing over his farm. The farmer, who becomes a fighter, leaves to his son a rifle and the land, symbolizing continuity of armed struggle against the racist enemy. Iraq has done severa documentaries such as "Zionism: A Racial Movement", "Death in Lebanon", "Road to Victory", "An Enemy Within", and the like.

Since 1973, Baghdad has been the host to successive Palestine Film Festivals. In the early 1970s, an enlarged discussion had taken place at a conference of the Arab League on the aim of collecting all film materials, television programs and documentaries and having them all screened in a biennial festival. Consequently, the first festival was held in the Iraqi capital in 1973. After the success of this first festival, it was decided that it be permanently organized in Baghdad by the Iraqi Broadcasting and Television Establishment. The second festival was held in Baghdad in 1976, the third in 1978 and the fourth in 1980. "The Fourth International Festival of Films and Television Programs About Palestine" was organized under the following slogan: "The Liberation of Palestine is the Cornerstone of World Peace."

The Baghdad film festivals habitually screen documentaries, features and cartoons. For instance, the 57-minute "Québec Radio interview with the PLO leader Yasser Arafat" is an important documentary. The 29-minute Yugoslav production called "Flame and Light" brings to the spectator the couplets of the Palestinian poets. The 5-minute Syrian film "The Roots" was actually a chronicle of the Palestinian struggle. Many films critical of the Camp David Accords. For instance, the 20-minute "The Vulture", produced by the PLO and the 2-minute Iraqi cartoon were short, but very convincing replies to pretensions that Camp David brings peace. Among the outstanding feature films were "And They Murder the Birds", "The Skirmisher" and "A Numberless Operation", all from Iraq.

The cause of Palestine has enjoyed support in various other festivals, notably the ones in Moscow, Tashkent, Carthage, Carlo Vinneri, Karacov and Darmascus. The Polish film, entitled "The Promised Land" and shown at the 9th Moscow Festival, traced the ties of the industrial bourgeoisie with Zionism. The Arab film, "Kafir Kassem", introduced at the same festival, narrated the story of the notorious massacre, "The Toy" (Iraq), shown at the 11th Moscow Festival, exposed the murder of Palestinian children. "Report on the Situation in Lebanon" (Iraq) focused on the Palestinian resistance in Lebanon. The Soviet film entitled "The Palestinians: The Right to Live" stressed the legality of armed struggle. "Kafir Shobak", shown in Tashkent, was based on Zionist aggression on that Lebanese town. "Men Under the Sun" won the silver medal at Carthage.

The question itself was, for a time, reduced to a conflict between Israel and the Arab states over borders. Thus, between the catastrophe of 1948 and the 1960s, the Palestinians sought the revival of their independent national identity. "Al-Fateh" went ahead of all other organization in this respect. Its review entitled "Our Palestine" issued in Beirut, stressed Palestinian thoughts and concepts, based mainly on Palestinian sources. This also meant rejection of patronage over the Palestinians by any party. The victory of the Algerians in 1962 was another proof for the Palestinians that any people that holds its own cause firmly in its own hands was capable of achieving its national aspirations. Hence, the formation of the Palestine Liberation Organization was announced in the first session of a conference held in Jerusalem in 1964 and attended by 388 delegates. The PLO soon completed its substantial structures, enabling the Palestinian personality to assert itself. The first Arab official recognition of the PLO occurred two weeks after its establishment. The sign of international recognition appeared in the conference of the non-aligned states in Cairo the same year. The People's Republic of China was the first foreign state to recognize the PLO in 1965. And a year later, the World Peace Congress decided to consider Palestine as one of its members.

Following the Israeli aggression in 1967 and the Karameh victory in 1968, the freedom fighter became the symbol of the Palestinian personality. The resistance movement is now the expression of the existence of a people, and the PLO is the mechanism through which the actual embodiment of this personality can and should be attained. The vote of the UN General Assembly in 1974, granting the PLO an observer's status, is another assertion of the Palestinian people's unity and representation. In spite of split, dispersion and exile, its national identity is inalterable. The "Land Day" uprisings (March 30) of the Palestinians living under occupa- tion are glaring proofs of their independent identity, unity and loyalty to unified leadership.

Palestinian leadership believes in the masses as the only force capable of achieving victory. The revolutionary war advocated has the clear political objective of restoring to the Palestinians their own homeland. The political and the armed struggles are two complimentary means to achieve this objective. Tawfeek Zayed, the Palestinian poet, expresses the mobilization of the masses in the following lines: "It is much easier for you / To pass an elephant through a needle's eye / Or catch fried fish in galaxy / Though the seas / Or humanize a crocodile / Than to destroy by persecution / The shimmering glow of a belief / Or check our march / One single step."

Usurpation of Culture

The Palestinians now realize that Israel has not only occupied their own
purchase by the Zionists. This reaction did not emanate from naught. Palestine was inhabited by a people whose sons and daughters were the indigenous legitimate heirs of successive Palestinian generations. Nevertheless, Theodore Herzl’s report on his visit to Palestine in 1898 did not have a single word on the Arab population. All other Zionistsavored the same line of denial. The former Israeli Premier Golda Meir, for instance, had inquired “Where is this Palestinian people?”

The Palestinian people were in Palestine before recorded history and have been completely Arab since the Arab conquest of Syria in the Seventh Century A.D. They have been waging against Zionist immigration and armed resistance, the signs of which appeared as early as 1886, coupled with certain forms of political protests. The second wave of Zionist immigration, which began in the first decade of the Twentieth Century, laid the foundation of the policy of Jewish labour, from which the indigenous Palestinians suffered. Arab writer Naguib Nasser began to utilize his paper Al-Carmel (1909) as an instrument facing Zionist ment. Naguib Aziz, an Arab from Jerusalem, had already founded (1905) a society in Paris called the Ligue de la Justice Arabe. He had also published a book entitled La Revolte de la Nation Arabe. Just before the break of the First World War, several organizations were founded, one being the Palestinian association at the American University of Beirut (1913).

However, such assertions of national consciousness did not prevent the Zionist challenge reaching its aims. The Balfour Declaration (1917) and the ensuing British occupation facilitated the establishment of a “national home for the Jewish people”, which means for the Palestinians their own uprooting and the destruction of their own organic unity. In spite of the usual Zionist arguments that the Jews were fellow citizens returning home and that they would respect Arab culture, all the investigating commissions sent to Palestine in those wake of every outbreak of disturbance concluded that the Arabs were opposed to the establishment of a Jewish national home in Palestine.

After the United Nations decision to partition Palestine, the people of that land faced a programmed attempt aiming at eliminating its existence and obliterating its national identity. The land was divided between Israel and the Hashemite Kingdon of Jordan, the latter receiving the West Bank. In addition, Al-Quds (Jerusalem) in the North was to be administered by the Syrians and the Gaza strip in the South by the Egyptians. A blow was dealt on the unity of the people, by separating part of it to Israeli rule and annexing the other half to Jordan, in the process of which “refugees” were dispersed to the four corners of the world. The Zionist circles and their friends presented the question to world opinion as a “refugee problem” involving relief, housing, employment, food and compensation.

Conclusion

The Palestinian Revolution is asserting the unified entity of the people of Palestine. A long protracted struggle is being waged to change several wrong concepts. The Palestinian reality is already rooted in the Arab Palestinian conscience. It is taking root in the international thinking as well. All that have been done to further the political or cultural entity of this people are proofs that attempts to deface their independent identity have failed. What is more, the Palestinian personality is being promised. The writers, poets, artists and other intellectuals of this people, scattered all over the world, are struggling to bring about real peace, which can only be based on the restoration of the rights of the Palestinians.

10. This article has been sent to Beirut in 1978 while visiting the interior of the former Palestinian Plastic Art Museum. For an interview with Mr. Maha Saleh, see: “The International Art Exhibition for Palestinians,” Palestine, Beirut, PLO, Vol. IV, No.4 (1-25 April 1978), p.11-12.
12. Ibid., pp.21-25.
THE INDEPENDENT PERSONALITY OF THE PALESTINIANS THROUGH THEIR ARTS

by

Prof. Dr. Türkayata Ataöv*

Introduction

The exodus and the dispersal of the Palestinian people after the occupation of their land by the racist Zionist entity could not hinder the tradition of national expression. This expression, linked to the national question, was even developed as a reaction to foreign invasion. No doubt, the Palestinian armed struggle, following the Israeli attack in 1967, has caused an explosion of a potential energy not only in terms of military force, but also in the realm of culture and arts. Palestinian culture, in the form of poetry, folk tales, popular singing, dancing, national costumes, embroidery, ceramics, carving, glass and metal work or various other forms of expression, is the vivid proof of the existence of a homeland and a people's yearning for it.

The Palestinian masses, under occupation or in exile, are gathering, safeguarding and developing their own culture, knowing full well that the preservation of culture is an effective way of resistance to attempts undermining national consciousness. The Zionist entity has not only looted the land of the Palestinians, but is also suppressing their culture and what is more trying to usurp it from them. But the Palestinians are engaged in a struggle to obtain recognition of their independent personality and existence. In spite of Zionist aggression, the roots of a people, deep in the Palestinian soil, cannot be erased.

Assertion of a Personality

The Palestinians were aware of the dangers posed by Zionist immigration, much earlier than generally accepted. Throughout many centuries, the Holy Land prospered under the tolerant rule of Arab and Ottoman Turkish sovereigns, who safeguarded the rights of all faiths. The Zionists, on the other hand, were planning to transform this land into an exclusively Jewish state. This drive for immigration, aggression and conquest, often referred to as "exclusiveness", was characterized as "a form of racism and racial discrimination" in Resolution 3379 adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations on November the 10th, 1975.

Nine years after the first wave of Jewish immigration to Palestine, which occurred in 1882, came the first official Palestinian protest in the form of a petition to the Ottoman Porte requesting prohibition of entry and land

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