

ARTICLE

## In the Shadow of War: The *Journal of Palestine Studies* as Archive

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### ABSTRACT

In this article, coeditor Sherene Seikaly examines the *Journal of Palestine Studies*' first two decades as the premier English-language academic publication on the Palestinian question and what was once referred to as the Arab-Israeli conflict. Using the keyword "war" in article titles as a prism for a granular analysis of the knowledge produced in the *Journal*, Seikaly traces some of the trends that undergirded *JPS*'s evolution—its prescriptive, programmatic, and prognosticating approach that was deeply imbricated in the patriarchal paradigms of international relations and political science (Revolution with a capital "R," the "great men" of history, the imperative to make one's case before the colonizer), but also a capacious space to view the contested terrain of knowledge production. A close reading of seventeen articles and one interview over the arc of twenty years illuminates the *Journal*'s pivotal role as a repository of primary and secondary literature and as an archive of Palestine and the Palestinians.

### KEYWORDS

Palestinian scholars;  
*Journal of Palestine Studies*;  
knowledge production;  
Palestine; PLO; war;  
archive

HISHAM SHARABI PENNED THE FIRST EDITOR'S NOTE in the *Journal of Palestine Studies* in 1971. At that critical juncture of transformation, loss, and possibility, he was addressing an "international audience" in "Western Europe ... North America ... the socialist countries, and the ... Third World."<sup>1</sup> The Beirut-based Institute for Palestine Studies and Kuwait University were sponsoring this "international forum" where "all aspects of the Palestine question and the Arab-Zionist conflict" might be "freely discussed."<sup>2</sup> The *Journal*, Sharabi explained, focused on a global conflict over a small territory where a small number of people could lead the "greatest powers on earth into confrontation."<sup>3</sup> Sharabi made some foundational pledges: the *Journal* would shed light on "points of view otherwise uncirculated or ignored."<sup>4</sup> It would not "engage in polemics" or "become a propaganda vehicle" because "adhering to the facts and their unbiased analysis" was the best way to serve "peace and justice" in Palestine and globally.<sup>5</sup> "Commitment," Sharabi insisted, "does not preclude fairness or objectivity."<sup>6</sup> These two threads, Palestine as an arena of global power and the relationship between objectivity<sup>7</sup> and commitment, would occupy the founders and their successors for the decades to come.

Empirically grounded, evidentiary knowledge was the vehicle through which Sharabi and his editorial colleagues, luminaries such as Walid Khalidi, Burhan Dajani, Fuad Sarruf, and Constantine Zurayk, sought to articulate the question of Palestine. They confronted a landscape of erasure, denial, and urgency. Just four years prior to the establishment of this intellectual space, the 1967 war had brought all of Palestine under some form of Israeli rule. At that time, Gamal Abdel Nasser's confidant, the editor, journalist, and political commentator Mohammed Hassanein Heykal, framed the disaster as a setback, Naksa, a rhythmic analogue

to, but less injurious than, the Nakba or catastrophe. Naksa implied that the 1967 war was a mere divergence. As Nasser's stature attenuated, he perished in the wake of the war's exigencies. But Heykal's language lived on. We still call it Naksa despite the consensus that 1967 was but a station in an ongoing catastrophe.

Sharabi, Khalidi, Dajani, Sarruf, and Zurayk established *JPS* as historical subjects and narrators of this Palestinian condition. They inhabited the steady, incessant pain of the ongoing Nakba's original inception, 1948. In, despite, and through that loss, they shaped the language of our present. It was Zurayk, after all, who coined the term "Nakba"<sup>8</sup> to capture the death of contiguous Palestine and the birth of the Palestinian refugee condition.<sup>9</sup>

From that first issue in 1971 and through five decades of quarterly publication, the editors of *JPS* and its contributors crafted a repository of primary and secondary literature, an archive of Palestine and the Palestinians. I joined the *Journal's* editorial board in 2015 and became its first coeditor, and first woman editor, in 2020. Shortly thereafter, the editorial team<sup>10</sup> began planning the commemoration of the *Journal's* fiftieth anniversary. To take part in this fraught and demanding labor, I looked for ways to read across the fifty volumes of *JPS* articles, interviews, reports, media roundups, photographs, and testimonies. I decided to focus on article titles, searching for keywords like war, peace, land, liberation, Nakba, Oslo, return, state, freedom, and the future. Each keyword returned tens of articles. Each result promised a unique window on the *Journal's* trajectory, as well as its shifting form and content.

I settled on the keyword "war" for a number of reasons. It yielded abundant results: from the first through the fiftieth volume of the *Journal*, forty-one article titles featured the word "war," which was outnumbered only by "peace." "War" shed light on multiple spatial, geographic, and political scales, and Palestine's role and place therein. It inspired the sort of discomfort that is productive for the complicated work of commemoration. It was war's centrality to the Palestinian condition that was most compelling. The *Journal's* founding figures and the people who came after them shaped intellectual and political labor in the layered shadow of war, not only those of 1948 and 1967 but also the multiple wars that punctuated *JPS's* birth, coming of age, and maturity. Indeed, the *Journal* did not simply feature war, "it emanated from it."<sup>11</sup> Of all the wars, it was the October War of 1973 that occupied the *Journal* most prominently, appearing in seven article titles. The wars of 1948 and 1991 (the Gulf War) each appeared in five article titles. Those of 1967 and 1982 (Israel's invasion of Lebanon) appeared in four article titles each. Three article titles referenced each World War I and the 2008–9 Israeli assault on Gaza. The Israeli incursion into southern Lebanon in 1978, as well as the so-called War on Terror and the 2014 Israeli assault on Gaza, appeared in two article titles each. And finally, the War of Attrition between Israel and Egypt, and the Cold War, appeared in one article title each. There were an additional three articles in my sample, one about war generally and another two that referred to war as a metaphor. The sample that featured "war" in article titles spanned the decades: there were ten in the 1970s, seven in the 1980s, eleven in the 1990s, one in the 2000s, twelve in the 2010s, and one in the two years of the 2020s up to this writing. The sample featured film studies, media analysis, literary studies, and history, as well as more journalistic and humanitarian reporting. Political science, diplomatic studies, and international relations dominated the sample. The authors included Palestinians, Egyptians, Lebanese, Syrians, Americans, Israelis, and Europeans. In fifty years of articles with "war" in their title, I found one woman author in the twentieth century and another two in the twenty-first.<sup>12</sup>

In what follows, I explore the *Journal's* first two decades by surveying seventeen articles and one interview that feature “war” in their titles. The sample is neither representative nor complete. It offers glimpses into *JPS's* shifting form and content, its empirical, theoretical, and methodological contributions and absences, and the relationship between commitment and academic rigor that Sharabi spoke of some fifty years ago. While I am solely responsible for the analysis here, I have called on the generous insights of scholars, artists, writers, and organizers<sup>13</sup> to make sense of this historical record. These thinkers, past and present, together offer “a call to read historiography as we have created and shaped it, and not as external to it.”<sup>14</sup>

## **A Political Incubator: The First Decade**

While the sample I compiled focuses on articles, I diverge from this rule to begin with an interview about war and peace that featured the scholar and journalist Edmund Ghareeb in conversation with Heykal. Conversing in a Cairo steeped in the aftermath of the 1967 defeat, the two men sought to make sense of the present and to envision the future. Questions of theory and practice preoccupied them.

Foremost among these was strategy. Ghareeb began with the 1969 Rogers Plan that proposed an Israeli withdrawal from Egyptian territory and a ceasefire in the ongoing War of Attrition along the Suez Canal; the ceasefire eventually came into force in August 1970. Ghareeb asked why Nasser had agreed to this imperial move. Heykal delivered a stiff defense of Nasser, as well as an unstinting analysis and an insistence on Egypt's leadership of both the Arab present and future. He narrated Nasser's priorities from the June defeat until the president's death on 28 September 1970, no doubt the most immediate loss that shaped Ghareeb and Heykal's conversation. Nasser had focused on fortifying Egypt's military capacity and mobilizing diplomacy to leverage political possibility. As 1967 had made all too clear, “Israel wants Palestine, the whole of Palestine.”<sup>15</sup>

To avoid this eventuality, Heykal seemed to suggest, people needed to know their place. Upstarts had entered the scene and overestimated their own importance. The “Marxist Left” was one such group of parvenus; Sudan was another crucial arena. In 1964, a forum on the southern question at the University of Khartoum brought together communist and Muslim Brotherhood students opposed to the military government. The police encircled the assembly, killing a student and wounding many others. Thus commenced the October Revolution against military rule in Sudan.<sup>16</sup> Ghareeb and Heykal minimized this uprising, rendering it as “the Sudan incidents.”<sup>17</sup> The Muslim Brotherhood's role in Sudan garnered no mention. Whatever the Sudanese rebels believed, “the Marxist Left will never rule the Arab world,” Heykal insisted.<sup>18</sup> At the same time, he counseled that disavowing these Marxists would be an “historical error.”<sup>19</sup> The way forward, Heykal opined, was to ride the “Nasserist tide.” The deceased president's legacy was “the coalition of the working classes, of the people” invested in political and social liberation, impeccably nationalist, and seeking social change.<sup>20</sup>

Such a coalition was contingent on what Heykal called “the Arab idea, the notion of an Arab entity,” which he depicted as authentic and historical. Yet, it “needed time” and was “not as much felt today as it ought to be.”<sup>21</sup> The two men were silent on the current that ebbed the “Nasserist tide”: the catastrophe of 1967. They focused instead on the future. In the wake of the Egyptian president's death, would this “notion of an Arab entity” live on? If so, who would lead it? Would Egypt enter a phase of “neo-isolationism” following Nasser's

death? Heykal was adamant: “Never!”<sup>22</sup> Egypt, he insisted, had a long history, from the pharaohs to Muhammad Ali, as a defender of “security.” “I am not in the least worried about the Arab character of Egypt,” he asserted. Nasser had not discovered this character, he had simply affirmed it in an “irrevocable manner.”<sup>23</sup> And yet, the future of an “Arab entity” faced many challenges.

A set of contradictions wracked this aspirational body. There were unresolved choices such as “Arab or Islamic nationalism,” national independence versus a pan-Arab “formula,” and “revolutionary” as opposed to “traditional” development. There was a temporal lag, too. Arabs were “still living in the Fifties,” unable to comprehend the significance of technology and its impact on ideology. Worse yet, they suffered from “mental constipation.”<sup>24</sup> The Arab League was an example of this stultification. Heykal had imagined the organization would transcend “the will of any nation” just as “a state was a sovereign agent” above its people’s shortcomings.<sup>25</sup> But the Arab League was simply a reflection of the broader Arab condition, characterized by “material and objective disparities,” riddled with problems such as the “question of oil” and the “acquisition of sudden riches.”<sup>26</sup> The “notion of an Arab entity,” Heykal concluded, was only “potentially valid.”<sup>27</sup> He narrated an older iteration of pan-Arabism as both new and inextricable from the state form.<sup>28</sup>

A fragile potentiality, a “notion,” lay at the core of the inauguration of the flagship English-language *Journal of Palestine Studies*. Where did the Palestinians fit in this “Arab idea”? They make a late appearance on the last four pages of the interview. The first mention of Palestinians is with the word “fedayeen.” The guerrillas’ presence in Jordan had provided King Hussein with an excuse for inaction, Heykal explained. Having successfully expelled them, Hussein would now have to secure Palestine’s Eastern Front. The Palestinians took shape here much like the Sudanese and the Marxist Left. They were upstarts with an exaggerated sense of self-importance, imagining themselves to be the “vanguard of the Arab revolution.”<sup>29</sup> Like the “Arab idea” itself, such a revolution was dependent on “the maintenance and realization of the state form.”<sup>30</sup> The Palestinian resistance, Heykal insisted, could never lead the Arab revolution. The role of the “Palestinian revolution” was more modest: to embody their people’s “political existence,” to secure its ties to the “Palestinian masses,” and to become the “true expression of the Palestinian people.”<sup>31</sup>

These pages of *JPS*’s first issue were programmatic in tone. They engaged with a “long standing question in Arab thought”<sup>32</sup>: the analysis of “what was to be done.” These first pages also featured a rehabilitation of Nasser, an articulation of state-centric pan-Arabism, and an excoriation of the conditions of the present. The Arabian Peninsula appears as an interloper, ascending to the scene by the geological coincidence of its fossil fuels. A hierarchy of scale takes shape: a smaller Palestinian revolution and a more expansive Arab Revolution. The actors who stand as proper nouns are the great men of history: Nasser, Hussein, perhaps Heykal himself. Egypt, Israel, the Soviet Union, and the United States were the adults in the room. The Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), established in 1964 and central to the Palestinian revolution from 1968 on, is notably absent. The Sudanese, the Marxist Left, and the Palestinians generally appear as infantilized collective nouns. Similarly, the farmers, laborers, and everyday people that revolution depended on appear as an amorphous and abstract collective noun: the masses. These limitations reflected and produced the contemporaneous landscape that gave birth to *JPS*. From its first pages, the *Journal* sought to wed the production of knowledge to the possibility of revolution (or was it Revolution?).

The next piece in my sample was similarly programmatic but also offered clear departures. In the *Journal's* second year, 1972, two scholars, Hussein Agha and Ahmad Khalidi, outlined the options open to “both sides in the Arab-Israeli conflict.”<sup>33</sup> Writing about themselves in the third person, they pledged “insofar as possible” to refrain “from weighting the article with their own political values.”<sup>34</sup> Arab incapacity to achieve military superiority, they said, was due to lack of cooperation, inefficient administration, and especially the technological gap that U.S. support of Israel deepened.<sup>35</sup> All-out war on the Arab side was impossible. Low-intensity, long-duration operations, such as those that had taken place along the Suez Canal in 1969–70, were the only option. And yet, Agha and Khalidi warned, wars of attrition came with a heavy price; they required readiness to sustain damage and escalation. The two authors surveyed nuclear, chemical, biological, regular, and irregular warfare. They assessed the potential “emergence of radicalized Arab masses.” They distinguished between national liberation, which sought to defeat colonial power, and popular liberation, whose impetus was social transformation. Confronting the prospect of extended Israeli occupation in the West Bank, along the lines of “the Algeria model,” they assessed the viability of guerrilla warfare under colonial control. The size and character of the terrain would constrict guerrilla mobility and operations and would persist even “in the presence of a unified Palestinian Revolutionary Organization.”<sup>36</sup>

This “Palestinian Revolutionary Organization” appeared as an aspirational body, not an existing one. The PLO remains unuttered. There is no explicit mention of the formative Battle of Karamah, that fifteen-hour military engagement that had cemented the PLO as a force in 1968. Two years prior to the publication of this article, the PLO had confronted Hussein’s regime during Black September. Except for Heykal’s passing mention of the fedayeen’s expulsion from Jordan, Black September is absent in this sample. How do we make sense of such invisibility? The absence is partly semantic: the analysis of Black September appears as early as 1973 under the rubric of “resistance.”<sup>37</sup> At times, it appears to be the result of a political angle of vision; at others, it takes shape as an abundance of caution. Some of these thinkers were themselves active members in the struggle for liberation while others may have supported it from a distance.<sup>38</sup> In all cases, the unspoken reveals the struggle for and over language as parallel to and overlapping with that other more familiar struggle for and over land.

And yet, in Agha and Khalidi’s article, the Palestinians are not synonymous with fedayeen. Indeed, the prospect of “Palestinian return” informed the authors’ reflections on the future of peace, statehood, and the character of Israel itself. There are no heroes, no assurances, no prescriptions in this piece. Rather, it confronts stark disparities of power. It positions a powerful but undefined “social change” as inextricable from political struggle. There is no “clear-cut distinction between ‘pure’ struggle and social transformation,”<sup>39</sup> Agha and Khalidi conclude, neither in theory nor in practice.

These two initial articles place the reader in a situation room where Ghareeb, Heykal, Agha, and Khalidi delineate power and possibilities, tactics and strategies. While tactical and strategic exigencies would continue to be a focus, the command center setting that sought to manage the 1967 defeat receded in the years to come. It would not be until the late 1980s,<sup>40</sup> after both the October War and the 1982 Israeli invasion of Lebanon, that an article title would feature the 1967 war. For the remainder of the sample’s first decade, 1967 appeared to exit the scene, although its shadow remained as ubiquitous as that other formative defeat, 1948.

Walid Khalidi brought 1948 into full view in the *Journal's* second volume. Then professor of political studies and public administration at the American University of Beirut, Khalidi contributed the next piece in the sample: his English translation of Nasser's memoirs of "the first Palestine war." Three father figures appear: Nasser, whose ghostly presence is as formative as any war in those early years; Heykal, who inaugurated the *Journal*, ghostwrote Nasser's memoirs, and whose linguistic damage control still shapes our present; and Khalidi himself, a founding pillar of the Institute for Palestine Studies, *JPS*, and Palestine studies.

Nasser's memoirs had first appeared in Arabic in the Egyptian weekly *Akhir Sa'a* in the spring of 1955. *JPS* offered the first English translation.<sup>41</sup> For Walid Khalidi, the memoirs threw "intimate light on the strength, organization, morale and performance of the Egyptian army in 1948."<sup>42</sup> They were never finished, however. In 1959, the Presidential Office granted Khalidi permission to publish the English translation; "the hope was expressed" Khalidi said, that a final chapter "would be finished and sent to me."<sup>43</sup>

Khalidi revealed a different Palestine, one that was not a mere backdrop to the machinations of global power. It was in the "Palestinian environment," Khalidi wrote, that "the revolutionary ideas of the Egyptian officers matured on the eve of the downfall of the monarchy."<sup>44</sup> At the start of what would become an illustrious career of retrieving, archiving, writing, and teaching a history in the face of, and despite, persistent erasure, Khalidi posed Palestine not as a stage, but as an incubator, a space to cultivate politics and revolution. Nasser wrote this memoir, Khalidi explained, as he weighed approaching Moscow for arms in the wake of the Israeli raid on Gaza on 28 February 1955. Perhaps the gravity of the moment had informed this somewhat counterintuitive reflection for a military officer:<sup>45</sup> "I hated war. Not only this particular war . . . but the idea of war itself."<sup>46</sup> This piece, official, personal, and testimonial, is the first direct engagement with 1948 in the sample. The Nakba comes into view through the eyes of a young Nasser on a battlefield with "no concentration of forces, no accumulation of ammunition and equipment. . . . no reconnaissance, no intelligence, no plans."<sup>47</sup> This "could not be a serious war," Nasser wrote, "there was to be advance without victory and retreat without defeat."<sup>48</sup> It was simply "a political war," which Nasser defined as "a state of war and no-war," that would lead to "unqualified catastrophe."<sup>49</sup>

The sample's next piece transports the reader to the battlefield in an article penned by then-PhD candidate in war studies at King's College, London: Ahmad Khalidi. Two months before the October War, in August 1973, Khalidi reassessed the War of Attrition between Egypt and Israel (March 1969–August 1970). The low-grade war was not "recognized for the major confrontation that it was," he wrote.<sup>50</sup> The Israeli victory of 1967 had been militarily but not politically decisive; the "Arab capitulation that Israel's leaders expected did not materialize."<sup>51</sup> The PLO finally comes into view: the PLO Research Center appears, not yet in the main text, but on its margins, in the footnotes.<sup>52</sup> Khalidi refrained from declaring victory in the throes of defeat. He offered instead a measured diagnosis: the Egyptians had failed to prevent the hardening of ceasefire lines into "a new status quo."<sup>53</sup> And yet, their defensive posture was "incomparably stronger" than at any time since the 1967 war, even if at the cost of a dramatically increased Soviet presence along the Suez Canal.<sup>54</sup>

If Nasser's memoirs were framed by the momentous decision to approach Moscow, the reality of Moscow's influence on the ground and the strengthened position of Egypt's forces set the stage for the war to come. The October War dominates the sample for the remainder of the decade. With one notable exception, a diagnostic tone triumphs over programmatic prescription.

That exception came in 1974, when Salah al-Din al-Bitar, former prime minister of Syria and cofounder of the Baath Party, assessed the October War's implications for the Arab world. The *Journal's* editors described al-Bitar's "thought" as having "exercised a prime influence on the growth of modern Arab nationalism."<sup>55</sup> Al-Bitar assured readers: "The Arabs are in a good psychological state and the Jews are in a state of dejection."<sup>56</sup> The Arabs had made a "discovery" of petroleum's "political" use. The only path forward was the "unification of national life," a unity, al-Bitar insisted, "we must believe passionately in," think of "unceasingly," and "work for indefatigably."<sup>57</sup> Here we can see the clear continuity with Heykal's inaugural interview: an insistence on the health of Arab nationalism that betrays the nagging anxiety about its precarity. There is another resonance between Nasser (or was it Heykal?) and al-Bitar: both defined the political as primarily a lever of global interstate power.

From the observations of political leaders, we move to reflections on the geopolitical implications of 1973. Publishing exactly a year after the war's conclusion, Ibrahim F. I. Shihata, legal advisor to the Kuwait Fund for Economic Development and professor of international law at Ain Shams University, argued that the October War was above all about territory. While the 1949 Armistice Demarcation Lines were provisional, Shihata insisted, sovereignty over Sinai and the Golan Heights rested squarely with Egypt and Syria. The settlement of the question of Palestine "could not have included, by any stretch of imagination, reallocation of sovereignty over the territory of other Arab states in favour of Israel."<sup>58</sup> Shihata's analysis separated the question of Palestine from what he represented as the certitude of Egyptian and Syrian sovereignty. He departed from Heykal's delineation (Palestinian revolution versus Arab Revolution). Shihata wrote in the shadow of another—and at this stage in the sample, as yet unnamed—man of history, Anwar Sadat.<sup>59</sup> Nasser's formidable ghost appeared in its final retreat as Shihata mirrored Sadat's repudiation of Arab nationalism. From this angle of vision, Palestine was no longer the stage; it was not even a backdrop.

Palestine as the *mise-en-scène* to map global power, prestige, and danger quickly returned in the sample. Ibrahim Sus (Sous), then president of the General Union of Palestinian Students in France and a doctoral candidate at the University of Paris specializing in Soviet policy in the Middle East, wrote the next article with "war" in its title. Sus analyzed Western European support for Israel in the wake of the October War. Charting state policies in France, Britain, Holland, Denmark, Italy, Belgium, West Germany, Austria, and the Vatican, he averred that the October War had "triggered off customary regrets about Europe's loss of influence, and about the hegemony of the two superpowers."<sup>60</sup> Britain yearned for the "good old days" when London was the center of the "great power club."<sup>61</sup> Sus introduced a new factor to the sample: public opinion, specifically European public opinion. The October War had uprooted "the Israeli myth of invincibility" that 1967 had produced.<sup>62</sup> European states' affirmation of "Israel's right to exist within secure frontiers" was unshaken. Yet, "for the first time, the tone is not ardent, the defence is generally devoid of passion."<sup>63</sup> This declaration of "the first time" in relation to publics and their opinions of Israel's moral claims would appear again in the sample. Israel's "strategic defeat" and the "psychological blows dealt by the Arab armies" in the initial stages of the October War had "accomplished changes in Europe's outlook which the disillusioned Arab of 1967 failed to achieve."<sup>64</sup> Sus suggested, perhaps hoped, that the October War might facilitate not just European reentry into an Eastern Mediterranean dominated by U.S. and Soviet fleets, but an enlivening of Europe as a global power.

The remainder of the articles in the sample of the 1970s followed Sus's lead. They focused on public opinion and media representations in the United States<sup>65</sup> as well as, importantly, in

Israel.<sup>66</sup> The authors wrestled with images all too familiar to us: Israel as a “faithful reflection of Western civilization, a solid bastion of modern progress . . . surrounded by a sea of vengeful, backward Arabs.”<sup>67</sup> Here we trace again Palestine’s centrality to global politics, and the significance of tracing shifting “public opinion” as a signal of opportunities and possibilities. Indeed, public representations of Israel’s moral claims would become an intense and reiterated scholarly focus on the *Journal’s* pages.

In line with that emphasis, a new space and cast of characters took shape in the next article in the sample. Saad Edine Ibrahim, then professor of sociology at DePauw University, offered a comprehensive survey of U.S. public opinion, advocacy, and media shifts between 1967 and 1973. Offering a wide-ranging analysis of international relations, social movements, and the media, he detailed American Jewish support for Zionism, the work of the Anti-Defamation League, the impact of the American Israeli Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) on Capitol Hill, and the instrumentalization of charges of anti-Semitism to demonize critical voices. Ibrahim surveyed the opposition: the New Left and what he called its eroding influence, the Committee for New Alternatives in the Middle East (CONAME), and the Christian clergy’s investment in the plight of Palestinian refugees. The evangelical Right is a notable absence, although that constituency would appear shortly.<sup>68</sup> Ibrahim also assessed the Arab American political scene: he started with the radical Organization of Arab Students (OAS), established in 1952, and its influence on the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) and Students for a Democratic Society (SDS); he moved on to the Association of Arab-American University Graduates (AAUG), established in the aftermath of 1967; and he concluded with the National Association of Arab Americans (NAAA), established in 1972. The latter he admired for seeking “to fill the role of an effective political group and offer national direction to those Arab-Americans.”<sup>69</sup> NAAA represented an ascending middle class and eschewed radical politics. The radical labor of AAUG, SNCC, the SDS, and the New Left aside, Ibrahim concluded that real politics happened on Capitol Hill. That understanding would come to be a dominant, if contentious, imperative on *JPS’s* pages.

And yet, even in this insistence on establishment politics, Ibrahim shredded mainstream media depictions of Arabs. Ethnic jokes “and racist remarks” were so ubiquitous in major newspapers that the bloodthirsty, cowardly, incompetent, and treacherous Arabs appeared “at best subhuman.”<sup>70</sup> Israel was the “epitome of success,” an island of democracy in “an ocean of ‘feudalist’ and autocratic rule.”<sup>71</sup> Egypt, Syria, and Algeria were “communist” or irredeemably anti-American.

The October War had chipped away at these tropes. Ibrahim compared coverage of the 1967 and 1973 wars in *Time*, *Newsweek*, the *New York Times*, and the *Christian Science Monitor*. In 1967, the first three of those publications were “strongly pro-Israel,” depicting a land that “blossomed under the Jews” while Egyptian soldiers were “papyrus tigers inspired by hashish.”<sup>72</sup> These “old stereotypes of Arabs” were among “the early casualties” of the October War’s first weeks.<sup>73</sup> *Newsweek* headlined its 22 October 1973 cover story, “A War That Broke the Myths” and on 10 November 1973, the *National Observer* offered this assessment: “There has been a tendency in recent years to portray the Arabs in two guises. They are either incompetent boobs, forever fumbling with their fezzes, or bloodthirsty primitives not far removed from Attila the Hun. But such amusements have their cost. These obviously contradictory stereotypes not only dehumanize a considerable slice of this planet’s humanity; they also develop a pervasive, insidious, cultural blind spot that this nation can no longer afford to tolerate.”<sup>74</sup>

Despite this anomalous “soul searching,” the main crisis for the U.S. media was to represent this new Arab who had achieved military successes. Reporters searched for a “meta-Arab,” Ibrahim said, because they “couldn’t believe that the Arabs could do it.”<sup>75</sup> Wire services and newspapers “blindly and uncritically” circulated “rumours of North Korean, North Vietnamese, Cuban or Russian pilots helping the Arabs.”<sup>76</sup> Israelis were “good soldiers” caught unprepared. Arab success was mostly to Sadat’s credit as he had through “tremendous hindsight” orchestrated a breakthrough for peace. While the depictions of Arabs as “subhuman” remained consistent, the U.S. media had shifted, Ibrahim argued. On the one hand, “the Arabs proved to be better fighters, more organized, more united, and more skillful in the use of oil diplomacy.”<sup>77</sup> On the other hand, domestic upheaval was ubiquitous in the United States: Vice President Spiro Agnew had resigned, Watergate special prosecutor Archibald Cox had been fired, Department of Justice officials had staged a mass resignation. Ibrahim recalled the convergence: “On the night of October 19, Arab students and members of both AAUG and NAAA, along with Black and New Left supporters, staged a candlelight march in front of the White House protesting against Nixon’s foreign policy. On the evening of October 20, thousands of Americans were staging a similar march protesting against Nixon’s domestic policy and the corruption of his administration. The symbolism of the two marches on two consecutive nights highlighted the interconnectedness of domestic and foreign policies.”<sup>78</sup>

Two years later, in the first article by non-Arabs in this sample, another group of men tackled the puzzle of various publics and their opinions in the United States.<sup>79</sup> Professors of political science at the University of Wyoming Kenyon N. Griffin and John C. Martin joined forces with Oliver Walter, then a law student at Georgetown University, to determine if Americans’ religious roots influenced support of U.S. economic and military aid to Israel, particularly in the wake of the October War. On 13–14 October 1973, the researchers conducted telephone interviews with a random sample of 309 residents from Laramie County, Wyoming. Considered a bellwether for presidential elections since 1896,<sup>80</sup> the county was economically, politically, racially, and socially heterogenous. The majority supported economic and military assistance to Israel regardless of their religious beliefs. Thus, the assumption that “the highly orthodox Christian” would be more supportive of Israel because of “the belief that Israel is the fulfillment of Biblical prophecy” was unsupported, the authors concluded.<sup>81</sup> People rejected direct military involvement due to the long shadow of the Vietnam War as well as the fact that data was gathered when “hostilities were going badly for the Israelis and their defeat was considered highly possible.”<sup>82</sup> Four out of ten people believed that an oil shortage would “force the United States to adopt a more even handed policy in the Middle East.”<sup>83</sup> And thus, “rural Americans would provide little opposition to the pursuit of this policy.”<sup>84</sup> Griffin, Martin, and Walter, offer a United States that is a bit less “amorphous” and not quite so “mercurial”<sup>85</sup>; it is an America that advocates on Capitol Hill could move.

The final two pieces in the sample’s first decade depart from the United States. Elias Shoufani, then associate professor of history at the University of Maryland, transports the reader to another locale: Israel. From Mi’liya inside the Green Line, Shoufani, a Palestinian withstanding Israeli military rule, would become the “Arab world’s leading analyst of Israeli affairs.”<sup>86</sup> He summarized the Hebrew University’s Institute for Applied Social Sciences survey, conducted in the wake of the October War. Ninety percent of Israelis polled expected another war. Eighty-four percent believed that the Arab aim was to destroy Israel, that a ceasefire would not lead to peace, that a withdrawal from the occupied territories would not bring permanent

peace, and that a major achievement of the Arabs in the war had been to improve their fighting image. Israel's 1967 victory, Shoufani explained, had convinced Israelis that the Arabs would not dare challenge Israel's military power again. Faced with "a coordinated and massive Syrian-Egyptian attack," they "responded with surprise, anger and anxiety." This alarm escalated as the battle dragged on and expectations of an ultimate victory "did not materialize."<sup>87</sup>

Shoufani moved to survey the Israeli press. For the editor of the right-leaning *Hatzofeh*, the October War resurrected in Israel "fear for its very existence 'the feeling which has smoldered since the War of Independence.'"<sup>88</sup> The Egyptian soldier, according to General Mattityahu Peled, writing shortly before the ceasefire on 22 October, "continues to show a strong fighting spirit, and has not lost his will to carry on in the war, despite the heavy losses."<sup>89</sup> Shoufani cited the journalist and military historian, Zeev Shiff, who put it this way: "We believed that tanks always overwhelm infantry that stands in their way, and lo and behold, the Egyptians daringly leapt onto the tanks [. . .] Egyptian infantry succeeded in exhausting Israeli armour in the first stage, and built bridges all along the Canal [. . .] It became clear to us, as one Israeli leader put it, that the Egyptian fellahin had turned into tank-hunters. The valour which the settlers of Daganian and Negba displayed in the War of Independence was now performed by Egyptian fellahin."<sup>90</sup>

Shoufani contributed key conceptual and methodological firsts with this piece. His article is the first in this sample to engage, survey, and detail the Israeli landscape that he knew so intimately. Unraveling the fear factor, he also introduced two new subjects: the settler colony and the Indigenous people. Shoufani wrote: "A settler society in the midst of large indigenous populations like that of Israel cannot withstand the feeling of vulnerable existence."<sup>91</sup> Israel was not anomalous in this regard: "it is rather common to all settler societies that they are unable to admit to themselves a radical change in the native society which they displaced or dominated, since the implications of this for their survival would be too shattering."<sup>92</sup>

A militant, a scholar, and an activist, Shoufani lived in the United States during the establishment of the American Indian Movement (AIM), which may have inspired his thinking.<sup>93</sup> He returned from exile to join the Palestinian resistance in Lebanon in the early 1970s. He hailed from that group of Palestinians who originated inside the Green Line and who were subject to multiple technologies of erasure. Alongside Sabri Jiryis, Mahmoud Darwish, and Habib Qahwaji,<sup>94</sup> Shoufani shaped new ways of thinking. In Rashid Khalidi's words, he was a man "who spent much of his life in opposition to the trends of the time."<sup>95</sup> He did this lifework within the PLO itself, becoming "a scathing critic"<sup>96</sup> of the organization's shift to a negotiated two-state solution in 1988. In this article, Shoufani swims upstream, against the tides of infantilization, abstraction, and an insistence on high politics. Shoufani brings war into view as a "technology for maintaining the settler colony as opposed to the inter-state foundations of war" that dominate the sample.<sup>97</sup> Here then, *JPS* is a site to both produce and dismantle conventional wisdoms.

If 1967 was the salve on the "Vietnam Syndrome,"<sup>98</sup> the October War put everyone invested in Israel's invincibility into a tailspin. For the United States, the war posed "interpretive difficulties" due to "the new and different element of Arab armies on the offensive and fighting well against the Israeli army."<sup>99</sup> Indeed, we have seen the analysis of these interpretive difficulties dominating the *Journal's* pages.

John P. Richardson, the author of the final article in the sample's first decade, challenged this emphasis. Then president of American Near East Refugee Aid (Anera), the organization

that Ibrahim had called “a pro-Arab lobby,”<sup>100</sup> Richardson brought to light another character, one that appeared for the first time in this sample. Enter, the “Arab civilian.” Writing in the register of a humanitarian report, Richardson narrated his travels to the troubled border zones of Lebanon, Syria, and Israel. He detailed the Israeli bombing of a town on the slopes of Mount Hermon. Fifty houses had evidence of shrapnel. People took shelter in the church, but that vicinity was the worst hit: “We went up on the flat roof connecting the priest’s quarters with the church, where we saw how the door had been badly burned by the phosphorous. A man took us over to the low wall where some of the orange-coloured phosphorous still clung. He scraped it with a knife, and that portion of the concrete wall burst into flame.”<sup>101</sup> It is this kind of testimonial that makes *JPS* a repository, a record of the quotidian suffering that war inflicts. Richardson brought into view not just the civilian, but the dead, the wounded, those made homeless, the refugees. The decade began with prescriptions for a revolution alternatively enmeshed in establishment and radical politics. It ended with the reality of death and dispossession, and with people’s capacity to survive and withstand war.

### Functional Dualism: The Second Decade

The 1980s begin with an important first: a woman. Claudia Wright, Washington correspondent for the *New Statesman*, navigated the 1982 Israeli invasion of Lebanon and wrote several articles for the *Journal* in its aftermath. By this decade, the PLO’s central presence on the battlefield takes full shape on the pages of *JPS*. Tracing the transition from Alexander Haig to George Shultz as secretary of state under then U.S. president Ronald Reagan, Wright provided a compelling narration of internecine conflict at the White House, uncovering the significance of corporations like Bechtel, of which Shultz had been the “millionaire executive.”<sup>102</sup> Wright delineated Bechtel and other U.S. corporations’ Arab clients, “local elites” who favored “the open door to foreign investment,” tourism development, land speculation, and “expensive showpiece industrial projects designed to symbolize long-term planning.”<sup>103</sup> Like so many authors in this sample, she positioned Palestine as a backdrop to international intrigue: the Americans were the “Ottomans” and the Israelis their “Janissaries.” Wright hinted at a waning confidence in the United States’ international stature,<sup>104</sup> something to which the Lebanon War was central:

For the first time, the United States found that it stood entirely alone with Israel against the rest of the Security Council and the world. For the first time, no one believed—not even the supportive American press—Israel’s claim to be fighting a “defensive” war. For the first time, Israel was viewed internationally (and within the Jewish Diaspora itself) as committing atrocities and indiscriminate slaughter of thousands of lives. For the first time, the Americans did nothing to stop the murder, opting instead to place elements of its rapid deployment forces in the support of Israel’s attack.<sup>105</sup>

Certainly, the Israeli atrocities of the 1980s were “an opportunity to write about those that preceded them.”<sup>106</sup> And yet, here again we see this repetitive refrain of firstness with regard to Israel’s dubious monopoly on moral authority. In this sample alone, we see it in the work of both Sus and Ibrahim. Perhaps this emphasis on the ruptures in Israel’s claims to moral authority overdetermine its power.

Nevertheless, Wright made multiple pivots. She revealed U.S. corporations’ inextricability from Arab elites in their projects of building extractive economies. She unfolded a shaky U.S.

imperial enterprise. And perhaps most uniquely, she engaged the Palestinians as main characters, albeit in a sectarian logic that contradicted their political claims: “The decisive Arab pressure that unnerved the White House was the tenacious fight to the death of the Palestinians themselves, and their ability during the siege of West Beirut to preserve their alliance with the Lebanese Muslim forces—the Shiites, Sunnis and Druzes.”<sup>107</sup>

The Lebanon War appears synonymous with the 1982 Israeli invasion of Lebanon in this sample; it is noteworthy that Lebanon’s civil conflict does not appear through the keyword title search “war.” The 1982 invasion of Lebanon was, on the *Journal’s* pages, an opportunity to understand Israel’s military capacity. The next contribution, from then-foreign policy researcher Clifford Wright, detailed the Israeli war machine in the wake of the devastation. Wright explored the troubled distinctions between military defeat, political triumph, and psychological victory. He laid bare the contradictions in Israeli characterizations of the enemy as “barbaric and cowardly,” on the one hand, and “incompetent and very powerful,” on the other.<sup>108</sup> The Israelis “described their anabasis as ‘Peace for Galilee’”<sup>109</sup> and “fielded 90,000 men, 1,300 tanks, 12,000 troop and supply trucks, 1,300 Armored Personnel Carriers (APC), an air force of 634 combat aircraft and a virtually unchallenged navy. It attacked the Syrian army and air force in and over Lebanon, but the main thrust of this force was against 10,000–15,000 Palestinian and Lebanese fighters with no air force, no navy, and no mobile armor.”<sup>110</sup> Wright unraveled the United States’ crucial role in the building of two new Israeli airbases, Uvda and Ramon, which had “proceeded at a feverish pace” since the Camp David Accords of 1978.<sup>111</sup> Despite these resources and the monopoly on the military fundamentals of success—“readiness, intensive training, leadership, innovation, organization, and flexibility”<sup>112</sup>—the Israelis were “unable to dislodge the PLO.”<sup>113</sup> Of course, it is important to remember that the 1982 invasion was one of many Israeli attempts to dislodge the PLO from Lebanon. But what is significant here for our purposes is that the PLO takes shape not simply as a unified actor or a representative of the Palestinian people but as a primary player on and off the battlefield.

By 1983, the PLO would not simply occupy a primary role; it would become a subject of history on the *Journal’s* pages. Writing then as a “researcher and writer on Middle Eastern Affairs,” Yezid Sayigh charted a map of the Palestinian armed struggle’s seventeen-year trajectory. It was here that he offered the beginnings of a history of the PLO and a glimpse into his later groundbreaking work.<sup>114</sup> In the wake of the 1982 invasion of Lebanon, the PLO had faced “radically changed political and military conditions” that affected “their future choice of methods and programs.”<sup>115</sup> Sayigh’s piece resonated with those by the thinkers who traveled upstream in this sample: Walid Khalidi who posed Palestine as an incubator and Shoufani who theorized existential angst as constitutive of settler states. Sayigh, too, wrote against the grain. He sought to fill a gap in the literature on Palestinian military experience, which offered “many lessons” hitherto ignored. In the lead-up to the 1982 invasion, Palestinian forces in Lebanon “had lost the guerrilla’s advantages of mobility, flexibility, and relative invisibility,” while simultaneously not gaining “the advantages of a regular army.”<sup>116</sup> And “functional dualism” plagued the Palestinians as they faced an external Israeli enemy and several internal Lebanese enemies. They armed, trained, organized, and planned in two distinctly contradictory ways. They knew an attack was coming but had no contingency plans. The Palestinians, Sayigh concluded, needed either “a much broader human base” or elite units to successfully marry a regular army with revolutionary aims. He suggested that the return of guerrilla tactics in

Lebanon's South held "positive lessons for the future."<sup>117</sup> Sayigh's piece is exceptional in its focus on the Palestinians as historical agents, people who have something to teach us. In illustrating the dualism between guerrilla status and a regularized army, Sayigh charted the limits of a parastate framework. At the same time, he made a future horizon visible.

If 1973 had shaken the myth of Israeli invincibility for Israel's loyal adherents, 1982 attenuated its moral force even further. The media scholar Paul Jalbert concluded the sample's coverage of the 1982 Israeli invasion of Lebanon with an incisive analysis of the grammars of erasure in mainstream U.S. media. A number of articles had charged the U.S. media with being "pro-PLO" or "anti-Israel."<sup>118</sup> Jalbert tackled the topic to ask: what indeed was the U.S. media's approach? He gave a name to a site of battle in which the *Journal* was mired: language.

Jalbert's first target was the passive voice. On 6 June 1982, ABC News had quoted then secretary of state Haig as saying, "We are extremely disturbed by the loss of innocent lives in this fighting on the Israeli-Lebanese border."<sup>119</sup> Jalbert dismantled the passive constructions: "loss of innocent lives" and "fighting." Who was doing the fighting? Which lives were "lost"? Who were the people who were not "innocent"? That same June day, Chris Harper of ABC News had also reported: "The airstrikes continued for the third day in a row as casualties mounted on both sides. Over three hundred people have died so far here, and there are fears the tolls will be even higher as the Israelis push north."<sup>120</sup> Jalbert argued that "casualties mounted," was a "special kind of passivization" as the dead appear to accumulate independently of Israeli pilots dropping bombs. In a searing deconstruction, Jalbert dug deeper: "The verb 'to die' does not require an agent. This is important because the subject of the verb 'to die' is not the 'agent' of that state, but the 'receiver' of that state due to the reflexive character of the verb. This is the active voice. There is no passive voice for this verb. No one can 'be died' by someone else. However, someone can 'be killed' by someone else. There is 'killing' going on in wars, not merely 'dying.'"<sup>121</sup>

The "overwhelming propensity" in U.S. media coverage of the 1982 Lebanon War was to passivize Israeli acts and use the active voice to describe PLO acts. On 8 June 1982, Mike McCourt, reporting from Beirut for ABC News, had stated, "Damour, nine miles south of Beirut, was under attack all day, and the port city of Sidon is under heavy siege."<sup>122</sup> Here, the agents of the attack remain unnamed. Metonymic constructions, in which general phenomena replace agents, were another key linguistic strategy. That same June day, McCourt reported, "Israeli air power is continuing to move the front of the Lebanese war steadily northward."<sup>123</sup> Here the abstract concept of "air power" became the agent.

Jalbert moved on to the synonymization of "terrorist" and "Palestinian" before turning his analytical acumen to the frequent depiction of Israel's morality as God-given as well as the repeated representation of Ariel Sharon as a "runaway bulldozer" who acted "in secret," leaving the Israeli government innocent.<sup>124</sup> By the end of this media analysis, Jalbert showed incontrovertibly that U.S. television coverage had been pro-Israeli. Of course, he did much more than this. Drawing on cognitive theory, he unfolded the realm of "sociolinguistic warfare"<sup>125</sup> as a key instrument in waging "hegemonic struggle," a struggle in which the question of Palestine remains mired.<sup>126</sup> Harkening to Shoufani's insights on the constitutive angst of settler states, Jalbert revealed the centrality and fragility of claims to moral superiority that continue to anchor Israeli power.

By 1985, we move with the sample to the West Bank, where we face not a literal battlefield but rather what Richardson calls a tug of war. Richardson, who had introduced the "Arab

civilian” in the previous decade, once again complicated the scene. Like Sharabi in that first editor’s note, Richardson gestured to the eroding geography of the so-called Third World. He detailed the Israeli occupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Mapping the labor of what he called private voluntary organizations (PVOs), a precursor to today’s more familiar language of nongovernmental organizations or NGOs, Richardson revealed the dangers and limits of infrastructures of aid. Organizations such as the American Friends of the Middle East (later AMIDEAST), the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC), the Mennonite Central Committee (MCC), Cooperative for Assistance and Relief Everywhere (CARE), Catholic Relief Services (CRS), and the Holy Land Christian Mission, as well as Anera, were trapped in a “contest of wills between Israeli authorities bent on total control” and ambivalent congressional support.<sup>127</sup> When the House Foreign Affairs Committee created the Middle East Special Requirements Fund (MESRF) in 1974, it sought “to preserve peace” by expanding “educational and vocational training institutions in the occupied territories.”<sup>128</sup> By the following year, then secretary of state Henry Kissinger’s “antipathy toward the PLO”<sup>129</sup> (and one might add to the Palestinians more broadly) shifted MESRF’s mission. Curbing and containing Palestinian aspirations became central. The 1975 foreign aid authorization bill aimed to preserve the United States’ leadership and to divert Palestinians from “revolutionary organizations.”<sup>130</sup> While the Quakers and the Mennonites continued to decline U.S. government funding as a matter of principle, others were increasingly entrenched in the battle between MESRF’s lack of clarity and Israel’s expansive occupation.

The Israeli government’s relationship to the MESRF program and the PVOs became more “confrontational” after Menachem Begin’s 1977 election. The State Department left the PVOs “on their own in dealing with the Israeli government.”<sup>131</sup> In the meantime the Israeli press charged PVOs with inciting “university student riots” and, worse yet, helping to “establish a Palestinian state infrastructure on the West Bank.”<sup>132</sup> Richardson provided glimpses of how threatening even the prospect of a Palestinian state was. The fear of political transformation, in line with Shoufani’s insights on the threat that change among Indigenous peoples represented, was also evident in 1980, when Israeli authorities denied Paul Quiring entry into the country. Quiring, the director of the MCC, had testified to a congressional subcommittee on Israeli water policies in the West Bank. Israeli officials deemed this testimony “political rather than humanitarian in nature.”<sup>133</sup> That year, Israel replaced the military government in the occupied territories with a so-called Civilian Administration, headed by Menahem Milson, an Orientalist, professor of Arabic literature, and an officer in the Israeli reserves, who sought to “replace ‘pro-PLO’ urban attitudes with ‘moderate’ village influence.”<sup>134</sup> After Reagan’s Middle East initiative collapsed in 1982, the State Department shifted to the modest plea that Israel “improve the ‘quality of life’ under occupation.”<sup>135</sup> Richardson drew on the work of Israeli scholar and former deputy mayor of Jerusalem Meron Benvenisti, who warned in a 1984 report that U.S. aid was a “pacification program” that rewarded “communities and institutions amenable to Israeli directives” and punished everyone else.<sup>136</sup> Richardson concluded with his signature penchant for emphasizing the deepest stakes: ignored in this tug of war between the Israeli authorities, the State Department, and the PVOs were the Palestinians.

Toward the end of the *Journal*’s second decade, we return with the sample to the two formative wars of 1948 and 1967. The last time the 1948 war appeared, it was through the eyes of a ghostly Nasser, mediated by Heykal, and translated by Walid Khalidi. The next voice to weigh in on 1948 in my sample was Avi Shlaim, a founding father of Israel’s so-called New

Historians. Enjoying access to newly released Israeli archives in 1978 and rattled by their government's brutal invasion of Lebanon in 1982, these men would chip away at the origin myths of the Israeli state.<sup>137</sup> The first Israeli in the sample, Shlaim explicated Britain's rapid and clumsy withdrawal from Palestine as neither pro-Arab nor pro-Zionist, but rather "essentially an exercise in damage control."<sup>138</sup> These arguments would become core to the New Historians' subsequent contributions. Their position as Israelis legitimized historical findings and narratives that Palestinians, Arabs, and Europeans had long put forth. A political economy of knowledge has rendered recognition of a massacre, an atrocity, or an expulsion contingent on an Israeli pedigree (a scholar, a document, a testimony). The long labor of a multitude of scholars, not least among them the Palestinians themselves, were obscured. Walid Khalidi, a pioneer of 1948 historiography, had laid the foundations in explicating the grim realities of the Nakba as early as 1959, both within and beyond the *Journal's* pages.<sup>139</sup> Khalidi would also challenge the "newness" of these findings.<sup>140</sup> Again, *JPS* served as a capacious space to view the contested terrain of knowledge production.

The decade ended with a return to 1967. Gregory Orfalea offered the sample's first comparative literature piece.<sup>141</sup> His sharp analysis of spy thrillers, historical novels, and adventure stories traced the "American fixation on 'the bad Arab.'"<sup>142</sup> He shredded Leon Uris's *Exodus* (1958) with these words: "It could be called the foreign policy's *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, though the Arab character it presumes to describe is more debased than the docile Uncle Tom of the nineteenth-century novel by Harriet Beecher Stowe. Uris stereotypes in two directions: he elevates the Israeli to a Superman but portrays Arabs as filthy, cowardly, and cutthroat."<sup>143</sup> Orfalea, drawing on Edward Said's groundbreaking 1978 work, provided a thoroughgoing explication of Orientalism. Noteworthy here is the emphasis on the Black American experience as a point of comparison that, while potentially powerful, flattens racialization and difference. Orfalea outlined the search for a "good old-fashioned reliable American villain" in the latter half of the twentieth century, and in particular in the 1980s landscape "beset by economic recession, unemployment, nuclear confrontation, and attacks on [U.S.] embassies."<sup>144</sup> He recovered some forgotten details, particularly the celebration of the 1967 war as an "American victory" while the PLO was an "embodiment of evil."<sup>145</sup> Orfalea reminded the reader that Reagan, who was governor of California at the time, had toasted the war in Sacramento. Orfalea concluded the sample's second decade with the aspiration that "vision, humanity, and the honest pen may yet go where politicians fear to tread."<sup>146</sup> Writing in a humanistic register, Orfalea unfolded the literary and cultural as spaces of change and possibility.

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Who was at war? What were the sites of battle? What can such a historiographic exercise reveal about the content and form of the *Journal of Palestine Studies*? The logic of war shifts over the two decades of the *Journal's* youth. We move from the command center to the media room, from the prescriptions of the great men of history to the artist's access to the "plenitude of existence."<sup>147</sup> A political and ideological geography comes into view; it does not resemble our present, but still shapes it. There is a "Third World," a bloc of "socialist countries," and the Soviet Union, a source of power, leverage, and "danger." A patriarchy consolidates over time. It is invested in affirming the precarious potentiality of the "Arab idea"<sup>148</sup> and binding it to the state form. It embodies an establishment politics that in its earliest versions apprehended a revolution on the horizon. But the horizon is bifurcated. There is the Revolution, it too

seemingly bound to the state form, fragile and not quite realized, and the smaller Palestinian, Sudanese, and Marxist revolutions. We see here “the buried history of Sudan as a vanguard site of the Arab left as opposed to the more customary focus on Lebanon, Syria, and Iraq.”<sup>149</sup> There are the adults, the big men, who make history happen, and a spectrum of parvenus from Sudan to Palestine and to “radicals” in the United States. Defeat was certain in 1967, even if assuaged as a Naksa, or temporary diversion.

The October War and its analysis on these pages offer some instructive lessons. The leverage produced by that war was inextricable from Sadat’s definitive separation of the question of Palestine from the certitude of Egyptian territorial sovereignty. Perhaps it was this war more than any other that was the final death knell of what Heykal had called the “the notion of an Arab entity.” We move from the testimonials and prognostications of high politics (Heykal, Nasser, Bitar) to the analysis of that high politics (Ibrahim, Sus, Shihata). Palestine throughout appears as a backdrop to a global competition for power and privilege; it is a place to track the shifting membership of the “great power club.”<sup>150</sup> We see the tilt to Capitol Hill as the place to effect change (Ibrahim).

By the end of the first decade, media representations and public opinion are a permanent fixture. The United States comes into a view as a place to survey and understand. The Arab civilian makes a quick appearance. The Palestinians begin to have proper names; they are historical actors who have something to teach us. The PLO becomes a primary actor, capable of waging war against a force superior to it in scope, technology, and size. Language comes to the fore as a field of battle; grammatical turns like the passive voice and metonymic constructions become weapons in the struggle for representation (Jalbert). U.S. aid unravels as an infrastructure of dependency and uncertainty, ultimately benefitting Israeli power (Richardson). The long shadow of Vietnam on U.S. policy and popular opinion haunts a U.S. public alternately “amorphous” and accessible.

War was an arena that required popular support and shaped cultural production. Throughout the sample we are immersed in establishment politics, which is consistently subject to interruptions in spatial imaginings, in angles of vision, and in the characters who fight for a place on the stage. The authors on these pages search for “possibilities to shift the balance of power, to undo defeats, to regain territory, or merely to hold on to it, materially or discursively.”<sup>151</sup> Many of the concerns they grappled with “remain the political and intellectual matters we are still sorting out”<sup>152</sup>—Palestine’s place and role in the Arab world, the history and legacy of the PLO, the debilitating infrastructures of aid, the role and power of U.S. empire, and racialized media representations. Radical critique interrupts the clinical confidence of the men, and one woman, diagnosing the disease and prognosticating its cure. We see, then as now, the complexities of navigating “shifting notions”<sup>153</sup> of academic rigor and political commitment.<sup>154</sup> Palestine and the Palestinians are defined by war. They redefine it as an experience and a condition. In all of these articles, Palestine’s geography “supersedes place”:<sup>155</sup> it stands in relation not only to its neighbors but also to its past and future. It is a site to “challenge territorial spaces as all-encompassing social containers.”<sup>156</sup> It is a site where “imagination is central to possibility.”<sup>157</sup>

It may seem ironic that it is the Palestinians themselves who do not appear as fully shaped historical actors in the sample. In the beginning of the first decade, we see them as alternatively fedayeen or masses. With the shifts to the media room and the intense tracing of publics and their opinions after 1973, the PLO takes shape as the “villain of the late Cold War while the

Palestinians as a people remain largely invisible.”<sup>158</sup> By the end of the 1970s, a new category emerges: the Indigenous facing the settler colony. And by the 1980s, the occupation of the West Bank and Gaza has forged the Palestinian as an object of humanitarian assistance.<sup>159</sup> If the PLO only starts taking shape as a subject of history and historiography in 1982, we can only begin to imagine the layers of silenced subalterns sedimented in the Palestinian experience and beyond.

How do we make sense of these silences? Were these authors navigating censure or exercising political caution as the struggle on the ground took place? Certainly, the present-absent Palestinian, her silencing and erasure, were contingent on “patriarchal and androcentric renditions of the political”<sup>160</sup> that enforced strict hierarchies of “maturity and relevance.”<sup>161</sup> Certainly, the keyword “war” also produces gendered erasures, not just in the absence of women as scholars but in our understandings of “political violence,” which leaves out phenomena such as wartime sexual violence.<sup>162</sup> Historically dominated by masculinist forms of knowledge production, the *Journal* embodied both class privilege and respectability politics.<sup>163</sup> It is crucial to note here, of course, that *JPS* took part in a much larger Palestinian discursive archive.

But perhaps the Palestinians’ absence as fully shaped historical actors in this sample is not so ironic. It embodies the current informing the *Journal of Palestine Studies*, then and now, the struggle for a name, for legibility, for possibility. Evidentiary rigor is still a site of contestation. A politics of recognition still polices the truth content of historical writing. Thus, the “battle for sovereignty moves from the land to the text.”<sup>164</sup> In these parallel and overlapping spaces, land and text, we can trace internal and external contestations, classed notions of respectability, patriarchal and state-centered structures, and radical imagination. In this sense, language as a battlefield “exceeds its metaphorical power.”<sup>165</sup> In this sense, the *Journal* “was not only publishing about war, it was at war.”<sup>166</sup> In this sense, the *Journal* is “a site and a place of memory.”<sup>167</sup>

Then as now, the object of writing and the process of shaping language are inextricable. On these pages, a record unfolds, a record of the labor of people who balanced their analytical precision with their political and intellectual commitments. The thinkers on these pages, the ones from those formative decades, and the generous people who read them along with me, shape a capacious, contentious, and living archive.

## About the Author

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## Endnotes

1. Hisham Sharabi, “This Journal. . .” (editor’s note), *JPS* 1, no. 1 (Autumn 1971), no p.n., <https://doi.org/10.2307/2535996>.
2. Sharabi, “This Journal.”
3. Sharabi, “This Journal.”
4. Sharabi, “This Journal.”
5. Sharabi, “This Journal.”

6. Sharabi, "This Journal."
7. Leena Dallasheh, Jennifer Mogannam, Nadine Naber, Abdel Razzaq Takriti, and Lana Tatour each urged me to historicize "objectivity" and problematize what Sharabi might have meant. Dallasheh reminded me of Frantz Fanon's directive that "for the native, objectivity is always against him." Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, trans. Richard Philcox, anniversary edition (New York: Grove Press, 2021), p. 76. I did not want to give up on the language of objectivity and was not sure why. Gokh Amin Alshaif helped me understand that Sharabi's use of it is telling, not simply of his epistemological perspective and context but also of the imperatives he and his colleagues were operating under, most pressing of which was the violent erasure they wrote against. At the same time, as Sreemati Mitter pointed out to me, objectivity for Sharabi was part of commitment and not compromised by it.
8. Constantine K. Zurayk, *The Meaning of the Disaster*, trans. R. Bayly Winder (Beirut: Khayat's College Book Cooperative, 1956).
9. Hana Sleiman, "History Writing and History Making in Twentieth Century Beirut" (PhD diss., University of Cambridge, 2021), <https://doi.org/10.17863/CAM.72567>.
10. This team included Rashid Khalidi, maia tabet, Emily C. Smith, Maggie Nye Smith, and Maria Khoury. Laura Albast was also pivotal to the broader work of commemoration at the level of the Institute for Palestine Studies.
11. Salma Shash, email communication with the author, 25 January 2022.
12. Claudia Wright, "The Turn of the Screw—The Lebanon War and American Policy," *JPS* 11–12, no. 4 (1982): pp. 3–22, <https://doi.org/10.2307/2538329>; Jeannette Greven, "U.S. Security Coordination and the 'Global War on Terror,'" *JPS* 49, no. 1 (2019): pp. 25–46, <https://doi.org/10.1525/jps.2019.49.1.25>; Elizabeth M. Holt, "Resistance Literature and Occupied Palestine in Cold War Beirut," *JPS* 50, no. 1 (2021): pp. 3–18, <https://doi.org/10.1080/0377919X.2020.1855933>. Certainly much seminal work by women scholars, such as Rosemary Sayigh, Irene Gendzier, Sara Roy, and many others, addressed war and its consequences, but they do not appear in the sample with "war" as a title keyword. Thanks to Sreemati Mitter for pushing me on this point.
13. For generous comments, insights, time, and labor, I thank Kareem Abdelbary, Gokh Amin Alshaif, Sinan Antoon, Tareq Baconi, Rana Barakat, Nimrod Ben-Zeev, Leena Dallasheh, Nada Elia, Julia Elyachar, Noura Erakat, Samera Esmeir, Basma Fahoum, Amy Fallas, Anthony Greco, Sarah Ihmoud, Nour Joudah, Rashid Khalidi, Maria Khoury, bridge mcwaid, Maya Mikdashi, Sreemati Mitter, Jennifer Mogannam, Nadine Naber, Haneen Naamneh, Mezna Qato, Loubna Qutami, Tareq Radi, Salma Shash, Hana Sleiman, maia tabet, Abdel Razzaq Takriti, Lana Tatour, Sharif Waked, Alex Winder, and Himmat Zoubi.
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19. Heykal, "Mohammed Hassanein Heykal Discusses War and Peace," p. 13.
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23. Heykal, "Mohammed Hassanein Heykal Discusses War and Peace," p. 10.
24. Heykal, "Mohammed Hassanein Heykal Discusses War and Peace," p. 11.
25. Heykal, "Mohammed Hassanein Heykal Discusses War and Peace," p. 11.
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37. Samir Franjeh, "How Revolutionary Is the Palestinian Resistance? A Marxist Interpretation," *JPS* 1, no. 2 (Winter 1972): pp. 52–60, <https://doi.org/10.2307/2535954>. Thanks to Rashid Khalidi for bringing this to my attention.
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