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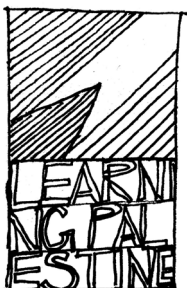
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Photographs by Scott Caruth.

We are (re)publishing these texts to disseminate knowledge on the history and present-day struggles for justice and liberation for Palestine and the Palestinian people. We opted for publishing the texts without going through the process of seeking permission from the authors or publishers*. We believe that these texts ought to be read, circulated, and acted upon urgently as the genocidal war on Palestine continues, unabated. The publications are meant to contribute to historical and political literacy for liberation in the service of the people. What is knowledge for if not to change the world to a just place for all?



*These texts are not meant to be used/ circulated for commercial purposes.

The word *pamphlet* originates from the 12th-century Latin love poem 'Pamphilus, seu de Amore'. Pamphilus, or 'concerning love' is derived from the Greek name Πάμφιλος, meaning 'beloved of all'. The popular poem formed a slim codex and was copied and circulated widely.

[2] The Law of Return was enacted in 1950. Its first article grants every Jew the right to immigrate to Palestine. This law is one of the pillars of the Israeli regime of oppression and domination.

[3] The Citizenship Law was enacted in 1952, and its second article grants automatic citizenship to every Jew who immigrates to Palestine under the Law of Return.

[4] The Knesset enacted this law for the first time on July 31, 2003, calling it a temporary measure; the measure was approved for security reasons. However, the law came to be reenacted annually, and the Israeli Supreme Court approved reenactment on two separate occasions, in 2006 and 2012. Following an internal conflict between the coalition and opposition parties, the occupation government, led by Naftali Bennett, failed to secure the majority required to extend this law until its expiry in July 2021. In the weeks and months following the law's expiration, thousands of Palestinians submitted applications for family unification and residence permits. But Ministry of Interior employees, directed by Ayelet Shaked, refused to consider any of these applications and left them to collect dust, as though the law were still in effect. Thus, the procrastination continued until the law was reenacted with minor amendments.

[5] Most of the names used in this text are pseudonyms, but they belong to real people whose stories and experiences are real.

[6] Occupation authorities use Article 119 of the 1945 British Emergency and Defense Regulations as a legal basis for demolishing the homes of Palestinian families to punish them for a resistance operation carried out by one of their members.

[7] The occupying power does not have a written constitution, but a series of basic laws approved by the Knesset that have constitutional status, and the amendment of any of their articles requires a special majority (more than half of the Knesset members, i.e., at least 61 members—not the majority of those present at the session). One of these laws, enacted in July 1980, is called the Basic Law of Jerusalem, the Capital of Israel. Its first article states that “the complete and united Jerusalem is the capital of Israel.” Article 7 states that changing the area of influence of the [occupation's] municipality of Jerusalem, as announced on June 28, 1967, requires a two-thirds majority.

Budour Hassan

Silent Violence: Thus Impinges Israeli Colonialism on Our Family Lexicon



“Memory is ephemeral,” Italian author Natalia Ginzburg writes in the preface to her novel Family Lexicon, a mot that inspired this article. “Because books based on reality are often only faint glimpses and fragments of what we have seen and heard,” Ginzburg adds. There are no whole stories here. Rather, there are fragments of stories and memories from talks thickened with voids and gaps, fissures and rifts that stand as daily reminders of the bruises left on our bodies and souls by colonial injustice.

territory,” says a resident. All his neighbors in the building “have sought refuge” in Kufr Aqab for the same reason: “A half-half border town.” They may be thought of as “citizenship and entry law refugees.”

Some live parallel lives between the West Bank and the Green Line, and others live suspended lives. There are those who choose between country and love, and there are women from the West Bank who are forced to remain in violent and abusive marriages in Jerusalem to protect their children’s residence status. There are those who are compelled by this silent violence to leave after Earth, as vast as it is, closed in on them.

All these people, regardless of their walks in life, their decisions, or their destinies, bear invisible wounds and scars, and they are united by a family lexicon reshaped by the laws of occupation with cold, bureaucratic violence; a violence no less severe or dangerous than that inflicted by direct military oppression, a violence that crawls beneath the skin and gets stuck between the teeth, sealing the fates of Palestinians and stifling their capacity for love and intimacy.

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Notes

[1] The Knesset enacted this amendment to the Law on Entry into Israel on March 7, 2018; Article 11(a)(1) authorizes the Minister of Interior to strip a person of his permanent residence if it is “proven” to that he carried out an act that would “violate loyalty to the state.” This amendment was approved in response to the Israeli Supreme Court’s decision (on a case involving four Jerusalemites) that individuals may not be stripped of their residence status without legal authorization. The court did not reject the decision to withdraw residence in itself. Rather, it objected to making the decision in the absence of an explicit legal provision, a simple loophole that the authorities were quick to close.



The system of Israeli occupation laws, procedures, and policies—restricting family unification, stripping Jerusalemites of residence status, and complicating the procedures for registering children in Jerusalem when one parent is from the West Bank or the Gaza Strip—is nothing but an intensification of the daily bureaucratic violence that state agencies employ to exercise control over the Palestinian people’s bodies and minds. This daily violence is a cornerstone of the system of oppression, domination, and slow, forced displacement, and a tool for dividing the Palestinian people, consolidating legal divisions, and subjecting Palestinian feelings to the permit system’s boundaries and hierarchy. Israeli authorities present us with blatant and crude examples of this violence, practiced daily against Palestinians, who resist, out-maneuver, or circumvent it, and sometimes admit defeat before it. Many choose to live in Kufr Aqab despite its overcrowding and difficult living conditions, due to its dual legal status. Like the Shuafat refugee camp, Kufr Aqab belongs to the occupation’s municipality of Jerusalem; therefore, those who live there do not lose their residence status. But, also like the Shuafat camp, Kufr Aqab is located behind Israel’s territorial annexation and expansion wall; therefore, Palestinians from the West Bank can enter without an Israeli permit. “It is neither beautiful nor comfortable, and we do not feel we belong to it, but it is neutral

“Family unification requests.”

“Half-year permits.”

“Residence renewal.”

“Center of life proof.”

“A security ban.”

“They [Israeli occupation] cut off insurance.”

“Finally, a response from the Ministry of Interior?”

“You must wait, we must wait.”

“At the mercy of the officer.”

“There’s still no decision.”

“The lawyer promised us.”

“The lawyer isn’t answering.”

“They extended the effect of the law.”

“A new law?”

“And now what?”

“Over fifty years old... will there be hope of a permit then?”

“Waiting.... waiting...”

“God is enough for us, and [He is] the best disposer of affairs.”



For Shaked and the hegemonic value system she represents, maintaining demographic “balance,” protecting the “Jewish state” from “demographic time bombs,” and preventing the entry of Palestinians under the pretext of family unification are not only legitimate goals but national duties. According to the Right, these obligations are not to be thwarted by the government, its ministers, or its allies. They can be worded differently or enacted with less visible cruelty—which may lean on complicit Palestinian politicians—but the goal is the same: maintaining Zionist hegemony.

The glaring and grave demographic issue aside, the other features of the family unification restriction policies are not to be neglected: cumbersome application procedures, the registration of children, and the provision of numerous other documents, including the personal information form and required proofs. Such psychological and mental exhaustion, exacerbated by the state’s procrastination, places Palestinians and the most intimate details of their quotidian lives under permanent and extensive Israeli control.

You are certain that the colleague you fell in love with during your medical studies at An-Najah University in Nablus is the partner of your dreams, but you know that the occupation will not allow you to live together in Nazareth, where you hope to practice medicine. “He has been rejected for security reasons due to his political activities;” this is the barrier you will encounter, and it is more difficult to pass through than the Hawara or Zaatara checkpoints.

Nazareth, the city he saw in your eyes and heard in your voice, is against him. He is not allowed to visit it to ask your family for your hand in marriage. You know that every decision you will make is subject to the unification laws, and you cannot ease your family’s fears or answer their questions about the future and children; you can only say that you are in love. You know, however, that the legal stratification of the Palestinian people places your Jerusalemite colleague, who is in love with a young man from Ramallah, in an even more sensitive position. She might lose her status as a “permanent resident” of Jerusalem if she moves to Ramallah. You will not lose your status as a resident of Nazareth because you hold the Israeli citizenship that was imposed on the Palestinians inside the Green Line in the aftermath of the Nakba. Neither of you chose your status or the tyrannical reality that tears through your nation, separating Nazareth from Nablus, Acre from Gaza, and Jerusalem from Ramallah. The laws confirm this absurd separation and division and determine who you may love based on the color of a card.



approval reinforces the notion that the permit regime is a mechanism not only for controlling, suppressing, and monitoring Palestinians, but also for entrapping and exploiting them.

Left-wing Zionist politicians in the Israeli coalition government resented the March 10 2022 reenactment of the Citizenship and Entry into Israel Law. “It tarnishes our legislation and our reputation, and contradicts our democratic principles,” they said. These are their preoccupations: the aesthetics of their legislation and the reputation of their state, which they protect with their false narrative of “Israel’s democratic values.”

Minister of Interior Ayelet Shaked has been louder, clearer, and more consistent than her fellow leftists: “A Jewish and democratic state, a state for all its citizens,” she tweeted after the law was reenacted. She repeated this statement again and again, with no concern for political correctness: This law has a demographic *raison d’être* of which Israelis should not be ashamed. Shaked seeks to transform this law from a temporary one into a fundamental part of the immigration basic law that is planned to be enacted,^[7] a constitutional law that will cement the Zionist policies on which the occupation’s colonial system was founded.

These are the strands and filaments threading through and wrapping around Palestinian morning and evening conversations: scraps of sentences composed of hard-to-chew legal expressions, questions scattered across the dining table, preferring arduous deferral to dry negation. Thus have the Israeli occupation’s laws, procedures, and policies transformed the lexicons of thousands of Palestinian families. For the occupation’s bureaucracy to break into Palestinian homes, it is enough for Palestinian Jerusalemites and Palestinians of from the Green Line to court potential partners from the West Bank or the Gaza Strip; it is enough for them to long to cross the imaginary lines and the walls, military checkpoints, and arbitrary classifications that at once bind the Palestinian people and rip through those bonds; it is enough for them to love without heeding the color of the passports that were forced upon them, for most mundane appointments to become cumbersome, and costly procedures that can take years, gnawing at one’s life.

Al-’Ayzariyyah (Bethany) was the home of siblings Martha, Mary, and Lazarus. On its soil, Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead after four days of entombment. The town’s name derives from Lazarus’s. Spreading over the eastern slopes of the Mount of Olives, Al-’Ayzariyyah stands as the eastern gate to Jerusalem (Al-Quds), as well as a piece of its heart—the distance between the two towns is only 3.2. km.

“Now Bethany was nigh unto Jerusalem, about fifteen furlongs off,” chapter eleven of the Gospel of John tells us. The two cities are bound by a chain of geographic, historical, social, and family bonds that the Israeli occupation has been working systemically to break after it annexed the eastern part of Jerusalem in 1967, first by using legal-administrative divisions and then by erecting military barriers and building the territorial annexation and expansion wall. The occupation has redrawn Jerusalem’s borders to grab the most land and exclude as many Palestinians as possible from the city. Annexing large areas of arable and uninhabited land, the colonial Israeli state has excluded entire towns and villages adjacent to the city, such as Al-’Ayzariyyah, Abu Dis, lower Beit Hanina, as-Sawahera ash-Sharqiya, ‘Anata, and Al-Walajah. The Palestinian community has been treated as a demographic burden to be isolated from Jerusalem and kept under military control. The Jerusalemites within the Israeli occupation’s municipal boundaries, to whom the Israeli civil and administrative legal systems—and not the military system— apply, and of whom the occupation has been unable to rid itself, have been crammed into what looks like a legal purgatory. They are forced to hold

blue ID cards that entitle them to social and economic benefits in exchange for the taxes they pay, but their legal status is precarious and subject to being revoked at any jiffy based on vague criteria, such as whether their center of life is in a foreign country. The West Bank, according to this set of criteria, is a foreign country.

Jerusalemite women's lives are dictated by a host of contradictions. One must get the status of "permanent resident," according to the Entry into Israel Law of 1952, even though Israel was the entity that invaded and occupied one's city. Families are forced to move from their homes in At-Tour (the Mount of Olives) to, for instance, Al-'Ayzariyyah, because they have expanded and the occupation refuses to grant Palestinians permits for home renovations. The occupation's Ministry of Interior strips Jerusalemites of their residency, as it has already stripped some 15,000 of them since 1967, under the pretext that their West Bank "center of life" is in a foreign country. In order to reclaim residency in Jerusalem, one must prove that the occupied city has been one's seat of life and that one has not left it for at least two years. To that end, Jerusalemites must submit water and electricity bills together with a handful of other official documents. A woman from Beit Hanina was forced to leave her husband, who resides in the United States, to save her residency in Jerusalem so that she could take care of her mother there. The divorce papers were among the pile of documents she used to support her claim that she did not intend to leave Jerusalem again. A retired worker's old age pension was suspended by the Israeli National Insurance Institute (NII) because the West Bank was identified as her center of life. NII inspectors paid a Jerusalemite teacher an unannounced visit in As-Suwaneh and searched her bedroom, kitchen, and refrigerator to make sure that she did indeed live with her family—not in a foreign country. The inspectors did not believe that a family of seven members could live in a fifty-square-meter rental property while owning a large house in Ramallah. It is in the NII's interest to deny the family's residency in Jerusalem, as the family can then be denied social benefits. It is also in the Israeli Ministry of Interior's interest, as the family's residence in Jerusalem can then be revoked and the family can be deported. It is very well known how various occupation institutions—the Ministry of the Interior, the NII, the Municipality of Jerusalem, and the Tax Authority—combine efforts to continue their silent war against the Palestinians in Jerusalem.

As a Jerusalemite woman through and through, you know Jerusalem's streets by heart: their stones, speed bumps, and potholes. You map the city through its



imagine what the law means by "identification with the State of Israel," "meaningful economic or security contributions," and "special interest." This card is, without a doubt, exclusive to collaborators. It is not uncommon for the Israeli occupation to wield its bureaucracy to blackmail Palestinians—including but not limited to offering entry permits for medical treatment on the condition of providing intelligence information, or granting work permits in exchange for collaboration with the occupation. Notably, the authorities use work permits as means of blackmailing Palestinians in an attempt to contain and domesticate them through economic pressure. This is likewise reflected in the occupation government's recent decision to increase the number of work permits granted to Gazans to 20,000, as well as in the occupation forces' proposal to expand the scope of work permits for West Bankers in the wake of the Bnei Brak and Tel Aviv resistance operations. The Israeli occupation forces believe that a greater number of work permits would facilitate the monitoring and tracking of Palestinians, contribute to reducing resistance operations, and contain popular uprisings.

It is abundantly clear that the Citizenship and Entry into Israel Law legitimizes blackmailing, without limiting it to intelligence operations. This stamp of

Bet is sitting on a goldmine of personal data about thousands of Palestinians.

Karim, from the Jabal al-Mukabber district in Jerusalem, has all the “evidence” he needs to anticipate that there would be a security ban on his West Bank wife: her father is a prisoner of the occupation (who was unable to attend his daughters’ weddings due to his imprisonment). Karim and his wife avoided the path of family unification and decided to content themselves with requesting temporary stay permits that must be renewed every six months. “To apply for family unification, she would have to disown her father; this is not an option.”

This broad definition of “family” suits the Israeli occupation’s collective punishment tactic, a legacy of British colonialism that also manifests as punitive home demolition^[6], the withholding of the bodies of Palestinian martyrs, and the detention of the relatives of Palestinian martyrs and fedayeen (resistance fighters). The occupation punishes entire towns if one of their residents carries out a resistance operation. The military encircles and storms the town, launching arrest campaigns and violations that spare no one. With the blessing and approval of the Israeli “independent and liberal” judiciary, the fedayeen’s family homes are demolished without the slightest concern for the family members who will be displaced. The violation of the principle of individual responsibility becomes justifiable in the name of deterrence. In the same colonial vein, vengeance upon the collective is called “deterrence” in Israel’s judicial lexicon. A Palestinian is prevented from living with his wife in Jerusalem on security grounds because his brother may have thrown a stone at the occupation forces once upon a time, or because his sister-in-law is an administrative detainee in an occupation prison, without charge or trial—another legacy of British colonialism enshrined by the Israeli occupation. Again, the occupation ignores the concept of individual responsibility and defines then redefines that of family as needed.

Among the law’s stifling restrictions and narrow exceptions, a special offer for West Bank and Gaza Palestinians and citizens of “enemy countries:” an entry card, and even the possibility of Israeli citizenship. According to Article 9 of the Citizenship and Entry into Israel Law, this opportunity is available to those who “identify with the State of Israel and its goals, and residents who have performed, or whose family members have performed, a meaningful act to advance security, the economy, or another matter important to the state, or to whom granting Israeli citizenship or residence status are of special interest to the state.” One can easily

scents, its sounds, and the passages you insist no one else knows. The city has made you made shed tears and roar with laughter, its particularities ensconced in your memories. Now you, your mother, and your father must go to the offices of the Israeli Ministry of Interior in Wadi al-Joz or Qalandia to “prove” to an Israeli employee from New York that Jerusalem is your “center of life,” convince a foreign intruder that you are a daughter of your hometown. You rehearse what you must say before the colonial settler employee/investigator, jot short answers on slips of paper to prepare your elderly parents for the interview (which is similar to a criminal investigation), inundate the family WhatsApp group with instructions and reassurances, and warn your government-fearing father not to stumble or get nervous, for any slip of the tongue or uncalculated body gesture would stir the officer to question your statements and reject the residence application. The employee catechizes your sixty-something-year-old father as to the name of his primary school in Jerusalem, compares the water and electricity bills of the two houses in At-Tour and Al-’Ayzariyyah, requiring an explanation for the past year’s high monthly electricity consumption in the Al-’Ayzariyyah house. Does this disparity in consumption not indicate that Al-’Ayzariyyah is your center of life? “We will study the request, but you have to bring more papers. . . Next,” the





officer/settler/investigator retorts in his sticky Arabic, and signals you to leave. Choked with enough rage to launch a barrage of insults at him and his colonial state, you suppress your anger in your parents' presence to spare them the officers' disproportionate response, and make do with the word "Mahzalah!" (Arabic for farce).

Host of contradictions. The power occupying their city reduces their status to "permanent residents," amending the Entry into Israel Law to green-light the minister of interior to strip them of their residency if they are deemed disloyal to their colonizer.^[1] Jerusalemite Salah Hammouri's absolute right to life on his ancestral soil has become a privilege contingent upon his loyalty to an occupier who stole his land and a jailer who stole more than ten years of his life. The occupation courts—which gave the Israeli Parliament, the Knesset, the green light to enact the "Breach of Loyalty" bill—remain as a last resort to challenge the decision to forcibly deport him from Jerusalem. Salah is aware that there is no hope for justice from these courts and their settler colonial judges, but he must exhaust all avenues. They do not and will not understand why a French citizen whose wife and children

husbands, fathers, and children. In short, only a husband can submit an application for family unification on his wife's behalf and a wife on her husband's, and only a mother or a father can submit one on behalf of a minor child.

Souad, originally from Nablus, has been living with her husband and stepson in Al-'Isawiya village, Jerusalem, for more than two decades. Her residency in Jerusalem depends on a family unification permit that must be renewed annually. She and her husband used to turn to a human rights organization in the occupied city for help applying for renewals. Souad did not have significant problems renewing the permit until her husband passed away; then, her residence was suddenly at stake. The Israeli occupation's Ministry of Interior refused to grant Souad anything more than a half-year permit, warning her that she would not be eligible to extend it any longer. Souad is now stuck between a rock and a hard place: she must either leave Jerusalem, where she has been receiving chemotherapy, to settle in Nablus, where she has no family or friends, or stay in Jerusalem without a permit, facing the constant threat of deportation. The law's definition of "family" does not extend to her stepson, whom she raised and who calls her "Yama" (Arabic for "mom").

By contrast, with regard to the security ban, the legal definition of "family" expands to include brothers and their spouses, thereby authorizing the Ministry of Interior to reject a family unification application if a husband, one of his brothers, or one of his brothers' spouses is considered a security threat. A Jerusalemite wife applying for unification with her West Bank husband must submit a personal information form that includes the names, addresses, phone numbers, and other details of his parents, siblings, and siblings' spouses, along with information about his relationship with each one of them. She must also attach records of his phone calls and photos from their wedding ceremony. The couple then waits a year or longer for the Ministry of the Interior to make its decision following a Shin Bet security vetting. Those who are rejected on the grounds of security have the right to appeal, but they do not have the right to access the "secret evidence" with which the Shin Bet justifies rejecting the family's application. How can a defendant challenge a nameless charge? "A drowning man will clutch at a straw," a proverb that reflects Palestinian women who appealed to lawyers to have the security bans on their husbands lifted. These women paid the lawyers "all that we had," but the lawyers and their promises vanished, while the security ban remains. Meanwhile, the Shin

many Palestinians to work “outside the law,” which increases their vulnerability to exploitation and abuse by Israeli employers. “Well, I’ll wait until I turn fifty,” Mona relates bitterly, referring to the recent amendment that grants people aged over fifty and those who have had stay permits for at least ten years temporary residence. This type of permit, which must be renewed every two years, entitles holders to economic and social benefits as well as granting them the right to work—another of the Israeli legislature’s acts of goodwill, whereby Palestinians can begin their lives after turning half a century in age.

Temporary residence, permanent residence, limited entry permit, medical treatment permit, stay permit, work permit, half-year permit: a bureaucratic downpour of permits falling upon Palestinians since their birth, directing their lives and determining their steps without shedding a single drop of blood. Meanwhile, the law cloaks its violence and racism in disingenuous neutrality.

The law prohibits husbands and wives from the West Bank or the Gaza Strip from uniting and entering Jerusalem if the Ministry of Interior or the Israeli military commander in the West Bank decides that a husband or one of his family members poses a “security threat to the State of Israel.” Furthermore, with regard to family unification permits, the law provides a rigid definition of family limited to



are prohibited from entering Jerusalem and the West Bank would choose to stay in the former, where arrests are all too frequent. They do not understand how he can choose a life fraught with threats, abuse, oppression, and persecution over a safe and comfortable life with his family.

The lives of Palestinians are dictated by a host of contradictions. The same week the occupying power received Jews fleeing from Ukraine and Russia and, in accordance with the Law of Return^[2] and the Citizenship Law,^[3] provided them with Israeli citizenship as soon as they landed at Lod Airport, the Knesset reenacted the Citizenship and Entry into Israel Law (temporary order).^[4] This law severely restricts Jerusalemite and Green Line Palestinians’ right to live with their spouses from the West Bank or the Gaza Strip. The restrictions extend to spouses who are residents and citizens of countries considered hostile to Israel—namely Syria, Lebanon, Iraq, and Iran. The law expired last July after having been extended year after year since 2003.

The law prohibits men and women from the West Bank and the Gaza Strip under the ages of thirty-five and twenty-five, respectively, from cohabiting with their spouses in Jerusalem or inside the Green Line. Under the pretense of good grace, the law institutes a “humanitarian” committee to grant exceptional approvals for what it calls “humanitarian cases.” However, no more than fifty-eight cases are to be approved, regardless of the number of requests submitted to the committee—the same number of exceptions that were made in 2018. Palestinians have had harsh experiences with this amorphous creature called the humanitarian committee. Through their encounters with this apparatus, they learn that a spouse’s or a child’s disability, for example, is not sufficient ground for a humanitarian exception. Although, in theory, the law allows West Bank/Gaza Strip Palestinians of the requisite ages to obtain “residence permits” to live with their partners in Jerusalem or inside the Green Line, these permits must be renewed yearly and do not entitle their holders to social or economic benefits, health insurance, or the right to work in most professions inside the Green Line.

Mona^[5] from Al-Ayzariyyah waited until her twenty-fifth birthday to move in with her husband in Jerusalem’s Wadi al-Joz neighborhood. She passed the Israeli pharmacy licensure examination in Jerusalem, yet the stay permit, which she obtained in response to her request for family unification, does not authorize her to work as a pharmacist in Jerusalem or inside the Green Line. Such a reality forces

