Cartographic Contestations in Mapping Palestine

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> Maps are neither mirrors of nature nor neutral transmitters of universal truths. They are narratives with a purpose, stories with an agenda. They contain silences as well as articulations, secrets as well as knowledge, lies as well as truth. They are biased, partial, and selective.
> — John Short 2003, *The World through Maps*, 24
> —
> In the history of colonial invasion, maps are always first drawn by the victors, since maps are instruments of conquest. Geography is therefore the art of war but can also be the art of resistance if there is a counter-map and a counter strategy.
> — Edward Said 1996, *Peace and Its Discontents*, 27

Introduction

There has been a growing interest in the relationship between maps and narratives as maps and how they are drawn tell a story, creating or defying a certain imaginaire. By default maps tend to depend on visualizing an imaginary portrayal of countries, cities, and natural spaces. This nexus is often present in narratives about political conflicts; consequently, this paper aims to investigate both cartographic propaganda maps and narrative maps in literature depicting the partition/occupation of Palestine as a case in point. To achieve this, I start my analysis by investigating the concept of 'critical cartography,' then proceed to link cartography to power where I depend on Pierre Bourdieu's concept of 'symbolic power' to examine propaganda maps in falsifying the real, on the ground situations, or as means by which maps can be tools in unlawfully usurping lands. Then, focusing on literature about Palestine, I scrutinize sections from Ghassan Kanafani's *Returning to Haifa* (1969/2000), Elias Khoury's *Gate of the Sun* (1998/2006), and Radwa Ashour's *The Woman from Tantoura* (2010/ 2014) besides referring to other works of fiction that engage with the idea of demarcating borders and map-making.

Cartographic Skepticism

Although the science of cartography has existed for a long time, the concept of critical cartography is relatively recent. Critical cartography emanates from the fact that map-making is not an objective science, as map readers have always assumed, for maps do not *represent* reality but rather *make* reality. In other words, maps are

not bloodless abstractions because any drawing or redrawing of maps creates new allegiances and passion, or even hatred and bias. Jeremy Crampton and John Krygier (2005) in "An Introduction to Critical Cartography" offer a definition to critical cartography highlighting its function: "Critical cartography challenges academic cartography by linking geographic knowledge with power, and thus is political" (11). In accordance with this definition, Mark Monmonier's (1991) *How to Lie with Maps* can be seen as a work of critical cartography that questions and challenges maps and their assumed 'objectivity.' In the Introduction, Monmonier (1991) confirms that a form of distortion is inevitable for a map to be drawn (3). This distortion could become noticeable on many levels: The projection of countries on the map or the visual; the textual (what is written and what is omitted), and the symbolic or the symbols used on a map. Any of these could be a means by which cartographers *make* reality in a way that serves one group's interests over another's. Maps, "like speeches and paintings, are authored collections of information and also are subject to distortions arising from ignorance, greed, ideological blindness, or malice" (Monmonier 1991, 2). Thus, maps constitute a form of power, one that can be used for mobilisation.[1] Hence, we can understand why critical cartography is essential as a means of healthy skepticism in our attempt to investigate maps and map drawing in the case of Palestine.

In this regard, I pay particular attention to specific types of maps, namely propaganda maps and resistance/ protest maps, reading literary works as a form of protest maps. Regarding propaganda maps and as the name suggests, they are created to *propagate certain ideas, concepts, or beliefs*. Often, the aim of propaganda cartographers is to persuade readers and influence their perception of reality. Historically, propaganda maps have been used in several famous cases. For instance, Nazi maps blatantly used this academic weapon to gain more sympathy for Germany and less for Britain and France during WWII. A famous incident would be what Nazi cartopropaganda drew on 5th of February 1940 and published in *Facts in Review* to persuade the USA not to participate in the war. The map captions: "A Study in Empires" in which the right panel reads "26% of the world" (The British Empire) and the left panel reads: "Germany The Aggressor Nation?" (Fig. 1). The right panel obviously suggests the greed of the British Empire with its acquisition of more than 26% of the world, while the left panel shows the small size of Germany, which is said to be the aggressor. Thus, it is clear in this map, that the cartographer made use of size projection to influence America's opinion about the war and how the British were in fact, the aggressor.[2]

A STUDY IN EMPIRES
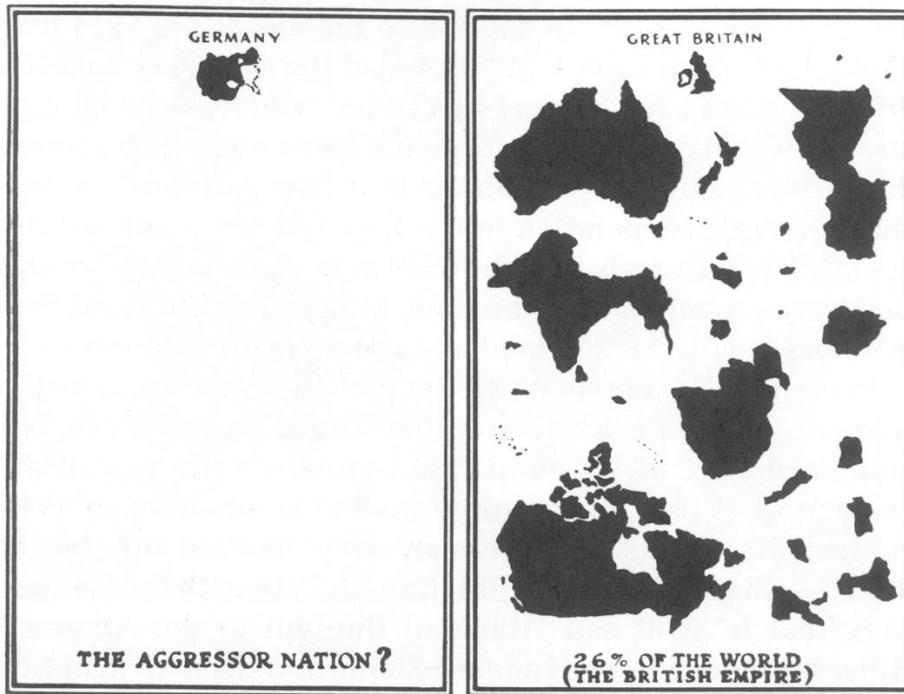
Figure 1. "A Study in Empires." The figure is an example of propaganda maps created by Nazis to dissuade the USA from taking part in WWII by visually comparing the size of Germany "The Aggressor Nation" to the UK highlighting the size of the latter. http://cartography.web.auth.gr/Livieratos/fil/Maps_Politics.html. Accessed 28 May 2017.

Similarly, the USSR used maps as vital 'tactical' weapon in its military counterintelligence. Soviet cartographers, on purpose, in WWII and in the 1960s during Cold War changed the location and shape of villages, rivers, boundaries, highways, railroads, and other features, especially in maps made for public use, thus making it deceitful to USA spies in the USSR. Again, in the 1960s, USSR manipulated tourist maps by omitting scales on the maps so that they were hard to read and sometimes even ambiguous (Monmonier 1991, 114-118). Such manipulation in the maps caused embarrassment and trouble to Britain, the USA and other war governments in the West.

Maps and Symbolic Power

By establishing a possible manipulation in mapmaking, it is plausible to link cartography to Pierre Bourdieu's concept of symbolic power. In *Language and Symbolic Power* (1991) Pierre Bourdieu uses the term 'symbolic systems' to refer to art, religion, and language as structuring structures, i.e. as "instruments for knowing and constructing . . . the world," further stressing the political functions of these symbolic systems (165). Cartography can be another addition to these to be used as a tool by a state and/or a group to impose power (symbolic or actual) over people as

well as the world in general. The way the Nazis and USSR, for example, utilized propaganda maps and defense maps to serve their political agendas emphasizes the political function of maps as sites and symbols of power, authority, and manipulation (de)forming reality. Accordingly, by employing the function of critical cartography and the concept of symbolic power, we can thoroughly scrutinize the drawing of the map of Palestine.

On November 29, 1947, the United Nations General Assembly passed Resolution 181 calling for the termination of the British Mandate over Palestine. Formerly, in 1937, a Commission by Peel (known as The Palestine Royal Commission) recommended that Mandate Palestine be partitioned into a small Jewish state, comprising the Galilee, the Jezreel Valley and the coastal plain, and a large Arab state while the rest of Palestine to be united with Transjordan. Although the Zionists initially refused the plan, they later accepted it as a modest beginning to achieve their dream of having a Jewish state (Pappé 2006, 15). All factions of the Palestinian national movement opposed the partition proposal, which led to the Commission's failure. The Palestinians premises were:

> Jews had no legitimate claims to their [Palestinians'] territory, and the sheer idea that a Jewish state would be established in any part of Palestine was unjust and unacceptable. Agreement to partition . . . would have implied recognition of their [Jews] rights in Palestine and would have constituted a turning point in the Palestinian position (Galnoor 2009, 82).

Worthy to note is that after WWII the British announced their desire to withdraw their forces from Palestine and as a result the United Nations appointed the United Nations Special Committee on Palestine (UNSCOP) which published its report in 1947 with a recommendation to establish two independent states in Palestine: A Jewish one and a Palestinian one. Again, the Palestinians rejected UNSCOP's proposal to divide their land, while the Zionist movement accepted it, as it did with Peel's Commission report in 1937, in fact, the Zionists regarded the UNSCOP report as a victory for the movement through which they could achieve their dreams. Though the suggested areas for their state were less than what they have wished for, Zionists accepted it and devised plans to procure the remaining parts by expelling the Palestinians in what Ilan Pappé calls "ethnic cleansing".[3]

Despite Palestinian rejection, partition took place and the partition maps drawn were unacceptable by and unjust to the Palestinians. The UN 181 Resolution suggested allocating 56% of Palestine's land to the establishment of a Jewish state, while 43% of the land was to become a state for Palestinian Arabs. Another facet of bias was that the proposed lines for the Jewish state were to include 85% of the agricultural land leaving the remaining 15% (mostly deserts and privately- owned land) to the proposed Arab state. Before partition and in 1945 a survey by the British Mandate showed that Jews made up 31% of the population; almost all of them were non-native, and 68% of the population were Arabs of Muslims and Christian

religions. Thus, using healthy skepticism, the UN's intentions of the UN giving 56% of the land to 1/3 of its population becomes questionable. Figure 2 shows the percentage of land ownership between Palestinians- a majority- and Jews- a minority–in 1945. As is clear, Palestinians owned most of the land and Jews' ownership was meager in comparison.
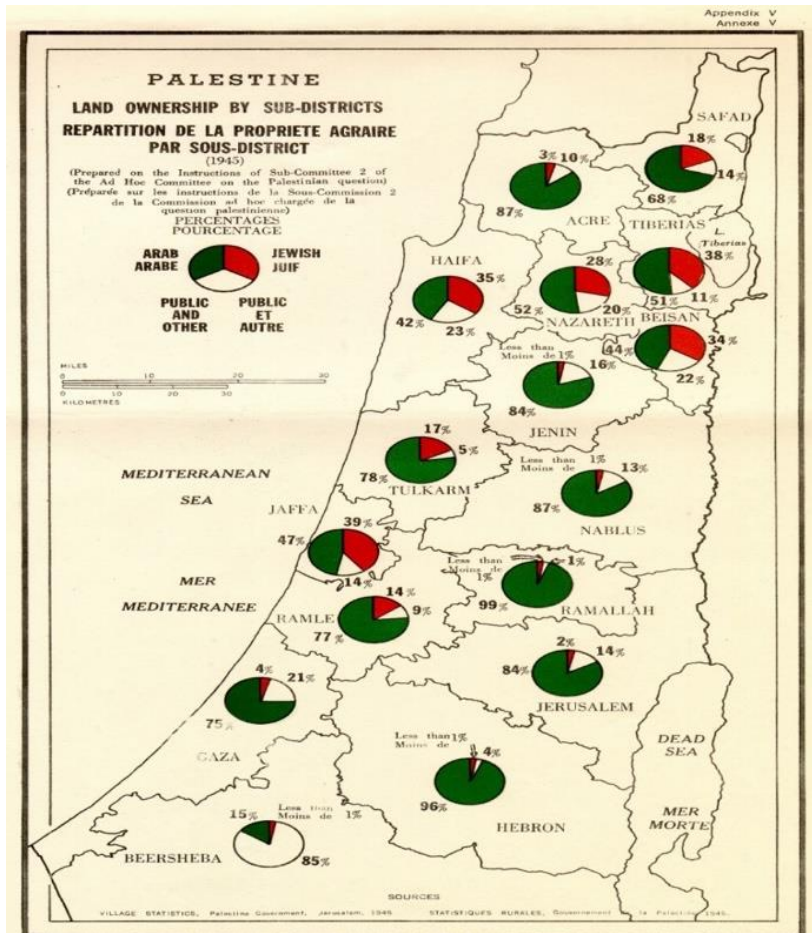
Figure 2. The figure shows the percentage of land owned by Palestinians and Jews in Palestine before *Nakba* highlighting that Palestinians privately owned the majority of the land. "*Palestine: Land Ownership by Sub-District*" - Map in "Ad Hoc Committee on the Palestine Question: Report of Sub-Committee 2 (11 November 1947) - Question of Palestine." United Nations. Accessed June 18, 2024. https://www.un.org/unispal/document/ad-hoc-committee-on-the-palestine-question-report-of-sub-committee-2-11-november-1947/.

Here, I argue that in Palestine's partition case, and dissimilar to the partition of the Indian Subcontinent, for example, there was an intentional division planned for by using propaganda maps drawn by the Zionists.[4] Pappé (2006) confirms: "*The Zionist emissaries to the negotiations with the UN actually produced a map showing the state they wanted* (my italics)" (32). As such, bias against Palestinians by the UN

reflects how 'imaginary' maps as structuring system have an undeniable symbolic power.

Earlier, the Jewish National Fund (JNF) exerted efforts to shape and control the imagination of the West about Palestine with the purpose of forging a national identity out of a religious one. The JNF sought to help visualize and materialize *Eretz Israel* to those who have never been there encouraging Jews around the world to donate in the blue box and to immigrate to the land as is clear in the use of propaganda maps on the famous donation blue box which existed in the house of almost every Jew in the West. Yoram Bar-Gal (2003) confirms: "The blue box became a symbol, not only of the JNF, but of Zionism . . . This unique design of the tin box, its blue and white national colors, and its symbolic illustrations [especially the map] made it a popular part of Jewish ceremonies, as well as being present in the minds of people in the West" (1-2). Figure 3 shows the JNF blue boxes; the box on the right is captioned "Jewish National Fund: Redeems and Reclaims the Land of Israel" along with David's star and a map of the land.

Figure 3. Jewish National Fund Blue Box (n.d.) https://thefunambulistdotnet.wordpress.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/jnf-box.jpg. Accessed 17 June, 2024

The box made use of various cartographic techniques such as textual ones when it purposely overlooked naming the Palestinian cities and villages and hills in the Negev. The blue box on the left panel (redesigned in 1934) with its all-Hebrew words (unlike the one on the right) used colours as a tool to show the land with many green areas and spots as a reflection of what the immigrants managed to do. Bar-Gal (2003), in his analysis of the map on the blue box, testifies its agreement with Avraham Ussishkin's[5] political views, and the JNF, to absolve itself from following the Mandate demarcations by continuing "to issue maps with the River Jordan

running down their center; it was a political statement that used cartography to de-legitimize Mandatory rule" (7). Such cartographic selectivity influenced the Jews and Gentiles in the West, particularly those who were part of the decision-making process. Maps also intensified Jews' feelings and sentiments towards Palestine and their desire to return to it, or at least to create a national home for diasporic Jews through donations. It stands to reason that the message conveyed through the maps, with the assumption of being *scientific expression* of 'reality' and bearers of 'truth', created a complex propaganda network that undoubtedly assisted in arousing the Europeans sentiments to support the Jews particularly after the Nazi Holocaust.

To recap, the propaganda maps created by the Jewish National Fund (JNF) had two main tasks: first, as mentioned earlier, to encourage Jewish immigration and donation, and the other more important task–in my opinion–was the demarcation of boundaries of the Land of Israel. Through these maps and in a kind of 'cartographic hypnosis', the borders of the *Eretz Israel* became inherent in every Jew's mind later legitimizing the expulsion of Palestinians by force under the pretext that the land is Jewish as the maps show.

Meanwhile, in occupied Palestine, Zionist colonial settlers embarked on massive process of materializing the map on the ground by Hebrewising names of places to impose a different identity on the place and create the imaginary community; in what is called toponymicide. Nur Masalha (2015) notes that the implementation of de-Arabisation and Hebrewisation in Palestine began immediately after the *Nakba* in 1948, aiming at constructing an organized memory by recalling the power of biblical names. Juilie Peteet (2005) comments that the process of toponymicide is a "process of de-legitimising [the] Palestinian perspective" and their right to the land (155) which Ilan Pappé in *Ethnic Cleansing* (2006) repeatedly condemns accusing Israelis of trying to achieve memoricide by toponymicide. Notably, the idea always existed in the Zionist mind; in the 1930s, the Names Committee was established, noting that the Israeli army played a role in this project by establishing The Hebrew Names Committee of 1949. The main function of the committee was to alter Arabic place names to either biblical or national Zionist names (Peteet 2005, 158). In other words, Zionist toponymic projects sought reclaiming through renaming. For Zionists, the change of place names creates a link between the contemporary Jewish people and their distant past, as well as forging a connection between Jews and *Eretz Israel*. Such acts are representative of symbolic power, a clear sign of political power over the land, and symbols of creating an alternative version of history. Meanwhile, the Palestinians, in an act of symbolic resistance, insist on the use of Arabic place names (Bigon and Dahamshe 2014, 615) as a means of proving their 'deep rootedness' in the land as is clear in the graffiti on the road signs leading to their towns and villages.

To elaborate, in their study of Israeli road-sign policies, Liora Bigeon and Amer Dahamshe (2014) draw attention to the Zionist attempts at linguistic hegemony, another example of symbolic power to further Hebrewize the land. In 2011, for instance, the rightist Likud Party proposed giving Arab neighbourhoods in Jerusalem Hebrew names and forced the official media to use them. In the last few years, Arabic names on road signs leading to cities, towns, and villages that have an Arab majority

have been erased. Meanwhile, "[the] Hebrew names were left as is and transliterated into Arabic" (Bigon and Dahamshe 2014, 608). The erasure of Arabic names is a signifier that no one except Jews, whose language is Hebrew and is present on the road signs- have ever lived on the land; practicing a type of cultural violence[6] that aims at eradicating any relation between the Palestinian Arabs and their land.

Based on the above, it can be clearly seen how Zionists usage of the different cartographic practices (toponymic, visual, and symbolic), and the corresponding changes on the ground are acts of propaganda using cartography and maps as the basis for claiming land while denying the existence of a population that inhabited the land for thousands of years. The changes in toponymy first on the map and then on the ground are clear symbols of power.

### Palestinian Narrative Maps

Literary works stand in resistance to such propaganda maps by offering alternative protest or resistance maps. In fact, in the literature, there has always been a sort of narrative mapping where characters occupy real and/or constructed places, thus enhancing and engaging the reader in imaginative mapmaking. Phillip C. Muehrcke and Juliana O. Muehrcke (1974) assert that "the essence of maps […] is a source of fascination for popular writers" (317). Truly, narrative mapping emerges from a dialectical tension between two modes of representing reality, one solely grounded in map-making, that is, cartography, and the other in the narrative. To consolidate, Jon Hegglund (2012) draws attention to the tradition of including maps in some fiction works. He asserts: "Maps have often appeared in frontispieces or as appendices intended to serve as reference guides to the events that unfold within the narrative" (9). Otherwise, the narrative itself (as in the descriptions) creates such maps. Homer's *The Odyssey* is a kind of literary cartography that depicts the wonderings of the epic hero, Odysseus. Figure 4 shows Arthur's Google Map depicting the journey of Odysseus.
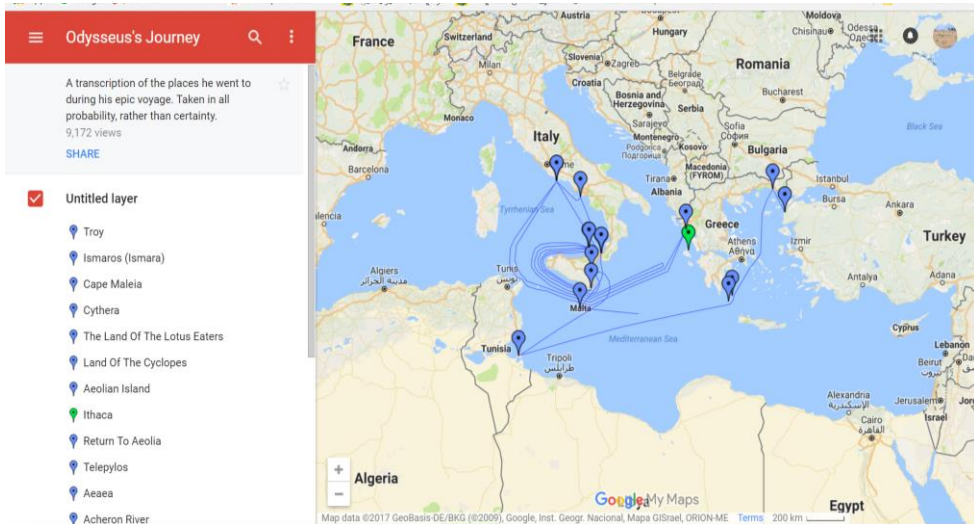
Figure 4. The figure shows a narrative map illustration of Odysseus' journey. "Odysseus's Journey." 2016. *Google My Maps*, Google. Accessed June 18, 2024.www.google.com/maps/d/viewer?mid=1lcCHomOHo3sLk_meAMGzhIM7Vwc&hl=en_US& ll=37.603171016546845%2C18.283267000000023&z=6.

Another map for James Joyce's *Ulysses* shows a chapter-by-chapter marking the protagonist's wonderings in Dublin (see Fig. 5).
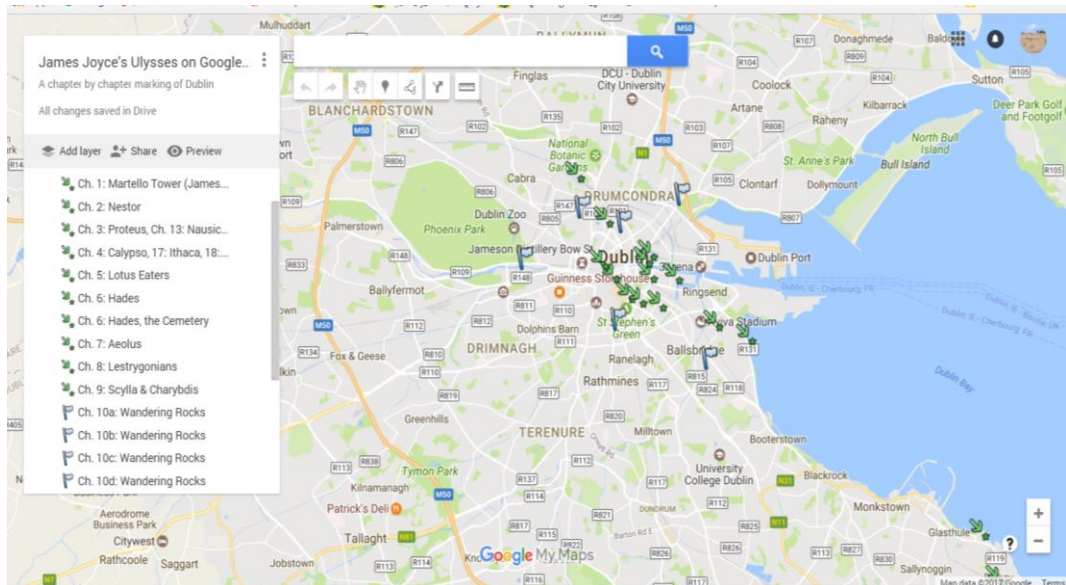
Figure. 5. The figure shows a chapter-by-chapter narrative map marking of Dublin in James Joyce's Ulysses. "James Joyce's Ulysses on Google Maps." 2023. Google My Maps, Google. Accessed June 18, 2024.
https://www.google.com/maps/d/viewer?mid=1PGlW4GaoXRaEBdsILVzl8fvCdAk&hl=en_US&ll =53.32356306497884%2C-6.20390150000004&z=12.

In both these works, and like the London of Dickens, Africa of Joseph Conrad, and Robert Louis Stevenson's *Treasure Island* (1883), the characters have been drawn both spatially and temporally. Hence, the use of narrative mapping is not new in the literature; its function or purpose is what could have witnessed a change.

Evidently, literature depicting Palestine during *Nakba* and afterwords featured some use of mapping and this is not exclusive to Palestinian or Arab use only but can be found in 'Israeli' literature as well. In Orly Castel-Bloom's *Dolly City* (1992), Dolly uses a knife to carve the map of Israel on her adopted baby. In a graphic scene, Dolly states:

> I took a knife and began cutting here and there. I drew a map of the land of Israel- as I remembered it from the Biblical period- on his back and marked in all those philistine towns like Gath and Ashkelon, and with the blade of the knife I etched the sea of Galilee and the Jordan River which empties out into the Dead Sea that goes on evaporating forever. (44)

The map Dolly draws on the baby's back is similar to the one on the blue box and even stamps, and it matches the forged collective memory. The names from the Biblical period marked by Dolly replaced the Arab names of the cities, towns, and villages where Palestinians live(d).

To counter the Zionist propaganda and narrative maps, in Arab and Palestinian writings, we can trace the use of toponymy and mapmaking as means of protest and/or resistance. Writers often resorted to mapping their narratives to resist Zionist hegemony over the political map. Rochelle Davis (2007) notes that in order not to be cut from their past, Palestinians resorted to more than one method like the production of poems, lists, *cartographic maps*, and narration where these methods or cartographies of remembrance function as shapers to the lost places (55). The poet, Tawfiq Zayyad, writes on resisting the imposed forgetfulness: "I shall carve the name of every stolen plot/ And where my village boundaries lay;/ What homes exploded/ What trees uprooted, what tiny wildflowers crushed. (quoted in Habiby 2003, 22)

Zayyad's words testify to the awareness of writers to the profound significance of toponymy and cartography as means of resistance to the Zionist intentional memoricide. For example, in *The Secret Life of Saeed the Pessoptimist* (1974/ 2003), Emile Habiby pays tribute to Palestinian villages that were demolished while hinting at how the Zionists 'stole' them. During his stay in al-Jazzar Mosque, Saeed meets Palestinian women who are taking shelter like him, and they ask him about their villages; the women say:

> We're from Kwaykaat. They demolished it and evicted everyone. Did you meet anyone from Kwaykat?" "I am from al-Manshiyya. There's not a stone left standing there except the tombs". "We are from Amqa. They

> plowed all its houses under and spilled its oil onto the ground." "We over
> here are from Berwah. They forced us out and obliterated it." (21-22)

Habiby's lists of destroyed villages are poignant reminders of places wiped off from the map, as they fight the Zionist attempt to inscribe a different history to the land. The place names that Palestinians use and remember all the time do not count only as signposts or location markers; they are also signifiers of specific lost past and future hopes of return.

Another example of the significance of place names is found in Ghassan Kanafani's works, where the spatial movement of the characters is given in detail. Works such as *Men in the Sun* (1962) and *All That's Left to You* (1966) are spatially narrated. Likewise, Kanafani's *Returning to Haifa* (1969/2000) took place in 1967 after *Naksa* or Setback. The novella covers two times: the past, in 1948 and the present in 1967 with the city of Haifa and Said and Safiyya's home in Halisa narratively mapped. The novella engages with the tradition of ekphrasis and can be read as a journey map as the character Said narrates the locations and directions in Haifa, leading to his home. Thus, readers are invited to visit places whose names have been changed on the maps, like Hanatir Square, which has been renamed and is now Paris Square. Throughout the narrative, we accompany Said in his life journey in time, past, and present, and in place with mapping as a significant element that differentiates memories from the real present. Said uses the original names of the streets of Haifa when he visits it on June 30, 1967. He travels north across Marj Ibn ('Amer plain), then he turns his car "at the end of King Faisal Street" (152). Depending on his memories, Said realizes that "he was driving the car through Haifa with the feeling that nothing in the streets had changed. He used to know Haifa stone by stone, intersection by intersection" (151-2). Memory did not fail him for he feels as if he had not left the city for twenty years. Names of places rain down on him; he remembers Wadi Nisnas, King Faisal Street, Hanatir Square, Halisa, and Hadar (152) or, in other words, Haifa before *Nakba*. Although Kanafani's *Returning to Haifa* does not include a map, it contains an excess of geographic details within the narrative itself.

During Said's visit, and even though was forced to leave by the Zionist bombing of Haifa, the past is antagonized by the present. Suddenly, Said desires to leave as his nostalgia mixed with his sense of guilt for leaving the city and his newly born son 20 years before weigh upon him. The changed name on the door caused the place to lose its identity, one that was enmeshed with Said's own sense of ownership of both the house and the land. For Said, as well as for other Palestinians, "there is no identity outside the framework of the relationship to the land" (Khoury 2013, 87) and this relation is threatened with the change of names on the map and on Said's door. As the only solution to fight the occupation and to regain this ownership, the novella overtly calls for resistance; it is a plea for struggle to regain the land, to the right of having Palestinian names written on its map again against the Zionist hegemony over the country's present as well as past.

Similar to Emile Habiby, Elias Khoury's *Gate of the Sun* (1998/2006) engages in narrative mapping. The novel includes two maps of Galilee and South Lebanon pre-1948 and after 1948 (See Fig. 6 & 7). Khoury's conscious choice of maps that feature Galilee and South Lebanon pre-and post-*Nakba* and how the toponymy is changed resist the acts of memoricide practiced by the occupying forces in Palestine. In that sense, the novel offers a form of critical cartography examining the imposed cartography as well as history on the land.
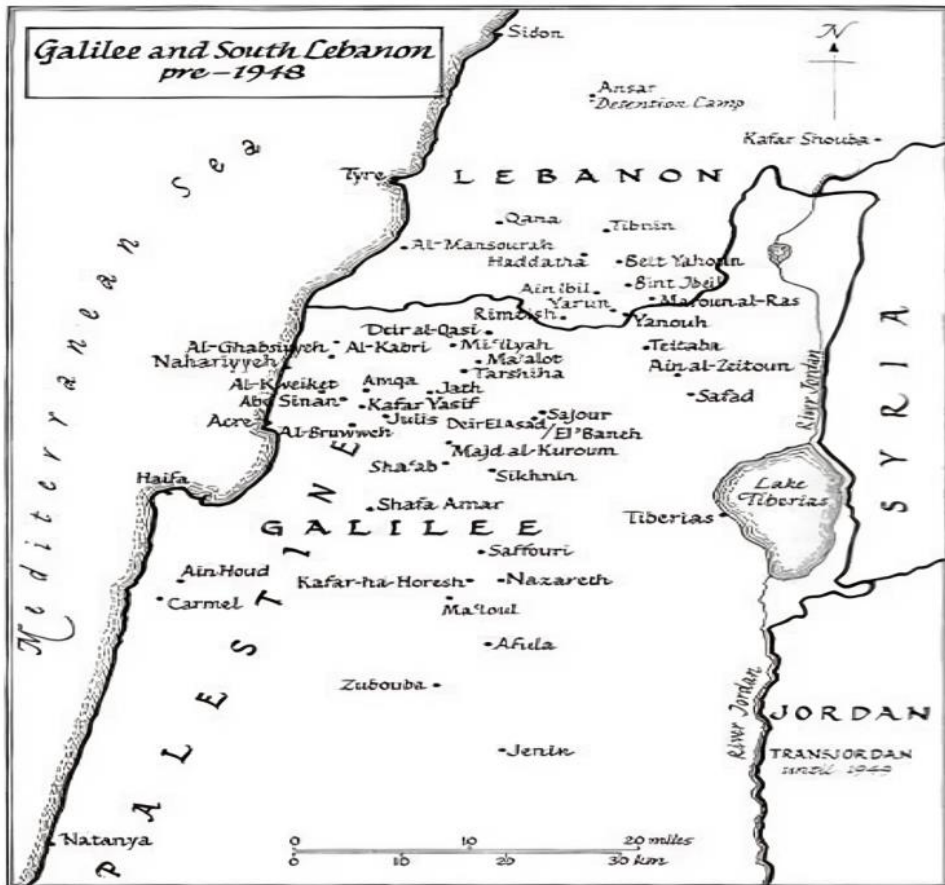
Figure 6. The figure shows a number of Palestinian villages before 1948. *Galilee and South Lebanon Pre-1948*. In Khoury, Elias. 2006. *Gate of the Sun*. Translated by Humphrey Davies. New York: Vintage.
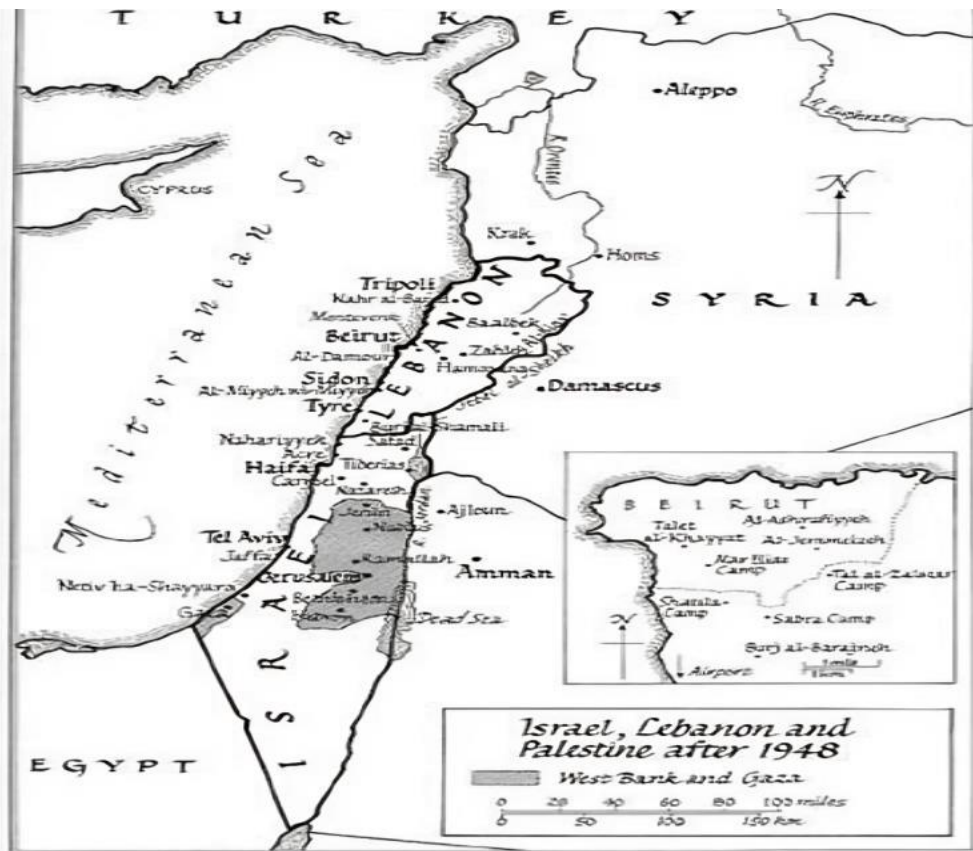
Figure 7. The figure shows a number of Palestinian villages before 1948. The figure shows the toponymic changes on the map after 1948. Israel, Lebanon, and Palestine after 1948. In Khoury, Elias. 2006. Gate of the Sun. Translated by Humphrey Davies. New York: Vintage.

Moreover, Khoury's novel- like Habiby's- recreates historical Palestine by means of naming the lost villages like, al-Kweikat, Deir al-Asad, Ain al-Zaitoun, al-Birwa, al-Ghabsiyyeh, and al-Kabri. Characters remembering their past lives in Palestine give detailed description to their destroyed villages (35 in total), the location as well as a glimpse on how life was, which constitute a potent resistance tool. Amir Khadem (2015) reiterates: "For Palestinians, memorialization is a matter of resistance to memoricide" (285). The disappearance of the name Palestine from the World's Atlas and other maps enhanced the Palestinian sense of place and their reminiscence of their fertile lands which triggered their acts of symbolic resistance.

One facet of remembrance in the novel can be traced in the use of "natural elements in the act of memorialization of a loss" (2015, 279). Such memorialization is represented quite often in narratives like Ghassan Kanafani's *Land of the Sad Oranges* (1962/1999) when the mother takes an orange with her to Sidon (76); the same in Khoury's *Gate of the Sun* (1998/2006) where Khalil's grandmother fills her pillow with flowers to feel "as though she'd returned to her village" (36). Though the grandmother's pillow of flowers is but a symbolic counteraction to the nonstop

process of memoricide, it is still a kind of resistance. She, as well as other Palestinians, are trying to keep the distant memory of their lost world alive. The grandmother in Khoury's novel, the mother in Kanafani 's novel, and the camp women in Ashour's *Tantoura* play a role against the nefarious presumption that no one is keeping a record, and that collective amnesia is inevitable. The Zionists' belief that the change of both cartography and toponymy will go unnoticed is symbolically fought by the spontaneous actions of these women.

In addition, Khoury's *Gate of the Sun* is a very clear example on how the imaginary turns into reality. In the novel, Gate of the Sun or *Bab al-Shams* is an imaginary village in Galilee, nonetheless it became a real one. On Friday 11th January 2013, a group of Palestinian activists built a village in the eastern part of Jerusalem that they called *Bab al-Shams*. The call for the establishment of this village was a response to the renewed attempt to confiscate the lands near al-Tour, al-Eissawyya, Abo Dees and Anata villages. *Bab al-Shams*, - a short-lived village, three days only- is a clear example of steadfastness and the grassroot resistance to the practices of the occupied forces. The significance of such an act is accentuated when knowing that on 19th November 2013, another village was established in occupied Jerusalem, this time the village had the name of *al-Karama* or Dignity. It is true that the Israeli forces did not allow these villages to exist for long, but the real message behind the establishment of these villages on lands that are controlled by Zionist settler colonials delineates the unwavering cartographic and geographic resistance of the Palestinians, not only in the camps in exile but also under the occupying authorities inside Palestine.

As for Radwa Ashour, a quick look at her total works unveils her fascination with and passion for the geography and the history of places and of Palestine in particular. Noticeably, her novels often portray the spatial movement of characters; this fascination combined with her engagement with the 1948 *Nakba*, the colonization of Palestine and the expulsion of its people qualify her work to exemplify symbolic resistance via narrative mapping. Ashour has always been a stout defender of the Palestinian cause; her "novels almost represent a popular archive of the Palestinian threatened memory" (Hanafy 2016, 37). For example, Ashour's *Atyaf* (1998) - translated as *Specters* (2010)- gives detailed narration to the massacre and ethnic cleansing of Deir Yassin. Also, *Qit'a min Awrupa* (2003)- or *A Part of Europe*, discusses the "Zionist project in Palestine in its intricate connection with colonial capitalism from the late nineteenth century until the massacre of Jenin in 2002 during the Second Palestinian Intifada" (Hanafy 2016, 37). Her last novel, *al-Tantourya* (2010)- translated as *The Woman from Tantoura* (2014)- is no exception.

The Woman from Tantoura (hereafter *WT*), like most of Ashour's works, portrays a massacre in one Palestinian village, *al-Tantoura* and despite the density of the narrative with its blend with the fictional life of Ruqayya, the factual events and real people, what attracted my attention to the novel is the use of mapping from its very first pages. Thus, I argue that Ashour's *The Woman from Tantoura* is a work of cartographic resistance to the world's amnesia about the *Nakba* that befell the

Palestinians and a tribute to the people of *al-Tantoura* who were massacred and often forgotten. Ashour draws a multidimensional narrative of the Palestinians before *Nakba*, their expulsion, passing by their life in the camps until the present. Tracing the personal journey of Ruqayya and her family, we have a sweeping picture of the painful losses and the haunting memories of the Palestinians. Gradually, Ruqayya maps her life, which runs parallel to that of many other refugees expelled from their homes in 1948 and 1967. The narrative map she presents is exemplary of a form of resistance to the political imposition and the state of *fait accompli*. Ashour, skillfully, creates and disseminates alternative mapping. Reading the first chapters from Ashour's novel side by side the books in *al-Qura al-Filastiniyya al-Mudammara* or [The Destroyed Palestinian Villages[7]] series produced by Bir Zeit University, one finds great similarity in the method of documenting the village(s). Davis (2007) notices the typical introduction to each of the books in the series; they "begin with the geographic location and history of the village and its name, and then move on to more diverse subjects: crops grown; livestock raised; religious holidays celebrated; lists of trades practiced, the vehicles owned, . . . shops in the village" (56). Ashour follows the same structure; the novel gives description of the geography of the village, its location, history, customs, and the everyday life of its people. On the second page, Ashour shrewdly pins the location of *al-Tantoura* village which has the sea as its border. The village no longer exists as it became a recreational beach by the Zionist settler colonials; nonetheless, Ashour draws and pins it on the map, reclaiming it by citing the exact location of the wiped village in relation to existing cities like Haifa allowing curious readers to pinpoint the location of Tantoura on the map. We learn that the train from Tantoura to Haifa takes less than 30 minutes (*WT* 6), and "the distance separating her [the village] from Haifa . . . [is] twenty-four kilometers, no more, and no less" (*WT* 9). It is "just a long street, one line . . . between Tantoura and Haifa or Tantoura and Qisarya" (*WT* 206). She goes further to give an approximate distance to the village of Qisarya, which was depopulated; it was on the coast like Tantoura, 'but it was south of town" (19), the reality was that "the distance between us [Tantoura village] and . . . [Qisarya] was no more than half the distance between us and Haifa. Twelve kilometers, ten minutes by car" (*WT* 26). As is clear on the map (Fig. 8), Ashour accurately measures the distance from Tantoura to Haifa.
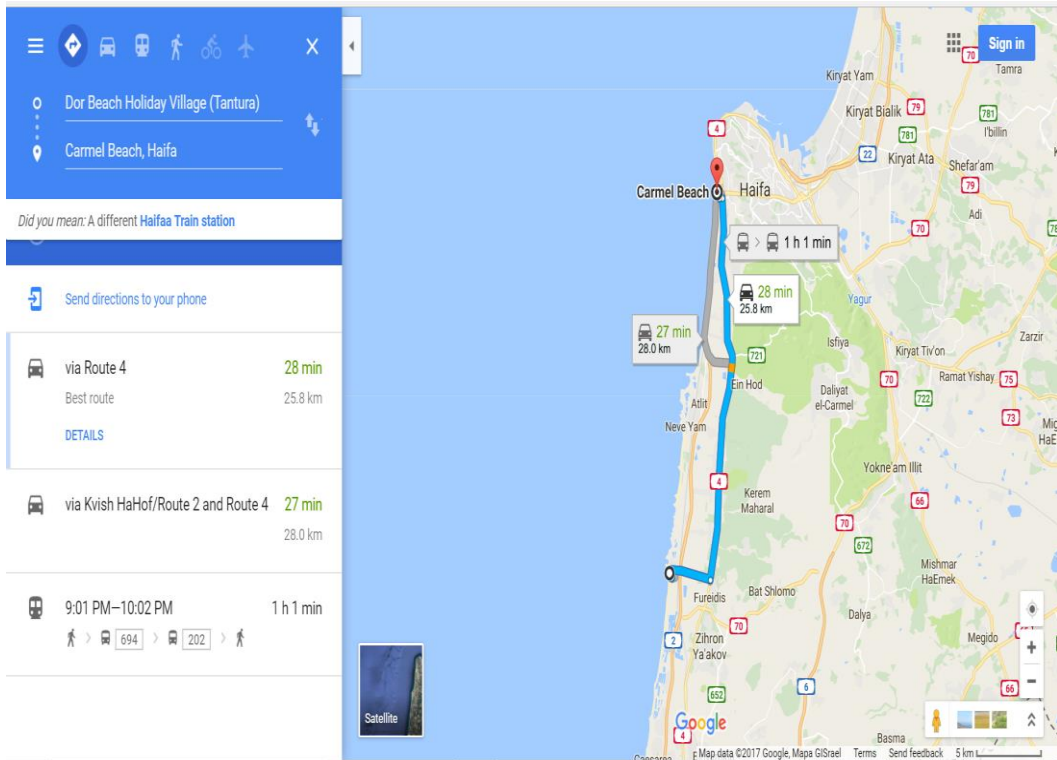
Figure 8. The Road from the destroyed village of *al-Tantoura* to Haifa created by the researcher using Google Maps. The map shows the time from Haifaa to the location of *al-Tantoura* village (half an hour) which matches the narrative description in the novel.

Ashour's clear insistence on offering an exact location to the long-forgotten village stands in opposition to the dominating Zionist narrative; by pinpointing *al-Tantoura's* location, she ventures to present a massacre that has always been denied by the Zionists.[8] If any, this suggests her acute awareness of the role that maps play in political conflicts like the one between Palestine and the Zionists.

Ashour's awareness of the importance of cartographical resistance is not only in describing places but also extends to raising awareness of younger generations to how map-making is a starting point of resistance for those born out of Palestine. Ashour portrays Ruqayya's son Hasan and her uncle Abu Amin as always engaged in cartographic practices where the old man teaches the young boy the map of Palestine. Abu Amin, the grandfather, instructs Hasan on the places of villages and their history as well as the villages' role in national resistance like the 1936-9 Revolution. More than often Abu Amin would bring 'thick white paper' for his grandson and would tell him to "draw the map, boy, make it large and use colors" (*WT* 95-6). Hasan would engage in outlining the map, using his eraser every now and then, he "makes the curves precise" (*WT* 96) and then does as instructed and begins the coloring phase. Normally starting with the sea, then the Negev Desert and then, he would locate the cities and the villages that his grandfather has always told

stories about. Hasan's textual markers on the map are very clear. He writes the name of *al-Tantoura* in larger letters than those he uses for Haifa or Jaffa "as if Tantoura were the district capital and not Haifa" (*WT* 96). Proudly, he would ask for his grandfather's opinion; Abu Amin does not stop looking, but he adds villages, even those in Lebanon, that were wiped out and the young boy did not know about. The grandfather would say:

> Here, you forgot these villages of Jabil Amal; they are Lebanese villages that the Jews captured after the truce in 48: Mentula, Ibis al-Qatmah, al-Zeus Alawa and al-zoo al-Tata, and al-Mansura.' He would specify the site of each village with a little red circle, and then his hand would slide a little lower, 'Here are al-Khalistan, al-Akasia, al- Naima, al-Salihiya, and Zawiya, near each other, no farther from each other than half an hour's walk on foot. (*WT* 96)

Ashour's cartographic anamnesis combines what Habiby and Khoury have used in their writings. She presents the map itself, as drawn by Hasan, and the lists to the villages that were wiped out. In this manner, she is involved in a process of salvaging the past by passing knowledge about the Palestinian landscape to the children of the second and third generations internally displaced or in exile.

Together with this, Ashour is keen on portraying the cartographic nostalgia that Palestinian refugees feel in the camps. They write village memorial books in which refugees emphasize their presence on the land through the authority of knowledge of the land, villages, roads, names, and stories. Davis (2007) notes that *The Dyar Aban* memorial book includes six separate maps that mark the location of the houses and the districts in the area and *since duplicating homeland is impossible, a metaphor for it in the form of a map is vital*. By recalling these destroyed villages, Palestinian refugees maintain links to the past; the maps and the village memorial books redress the Palestinian right to the land and to return.

The Woman from Tantoura also designates a considerable section of the narrative to the suffering of Palestinian camp-dwellers in Lebanon and their continuous attempts to regain their Palestine. Ashour highlights the resistance against memoricide: "As a restorative measure of what was lost, Palestinians in Lebanon have imposed their cognitive maps of space and names on the spaces of their refugee camps;" thus they are drawing and making a geo-social space that is Palestine in their exile, transforming an alien land to a 'knowable' one (Jassal and Ben-Ari 2006, 2214). Edward Said in *After the Last Sky* (1999) highlights that these measures reveal fierce determination to 'get back' on the map.

Being an optimist, Ashour refuses to end her narrative in a defeated note. The last chapter titled 'Across Barbed Wire' is a spark of hope to the possibility of return. Given the chance to see their land across barbed wires resurrected hopes in the hearts of the Palestinian refugees in Lebanon: Women, boys and girls dressed up as if it were the morning of Eid to celebrate on their way to see Palestine and their relatives from inside. Once the bus stopped, a woman suddenly shouted: "There's Palestine!"

(*WT* 355). The refugees are finally reunited with their land and families inside Palestine albeit through a barbed wire. Ruqayya sees her son Hasan who brings his children so that Ruqayya can finally see them, Anis, Mira and little Ruqayya. The grandmother is given the baby across the wire, and she thinks what to give and without hesitation, the old Ruqayya passes her past, her tale as well as those of others when she says: "The key to our house, Hasan. It's my gift to little Ruqayya" (*WT* 358). The gift is a sign of continuation and persistence, little Ruqayya is to complete the journey of resistance that every Palestinian carrying the key to his/her home must take.

Conclusion

In the final analysis, the scores of books written on the partition/occupation of Palestine are highly expressive of writers' fascination with, and awareness of the power of cartography. Reading literature together with an application of critical cartography to the maps drawn/narrated leads to better understanding of the nexus between literature, cartography and symbolic resistance. Literature describing the ongoing 1948 *Nakba* is an epitome of symbolic resistance; these works challenge Zionist propaganda maps by offering reclaiming authority of the map. Writers like Habiby, Khoury, Kanafani and Ashour not only wrote memorable narratives, but they actively participated in an act of resistance to the Zionist memoricide imposed both on the land and the culture. They list villages and draw maps of both the land and the people in an open resistance to the structural, political, linguistic, and cultural violence by the Israelis. In fact, literature about Palestine's occupation and the employment of cartographic and toponymic practices contributes to continuous acts of resistance.

Notes

[1] For more information on the power of maps see, Christian Jacob, Tom Conley (trans.), and Edward H. Dahl (ed.). 2006, *The Sovereign Map: Theoretical Approaches in Cartography throughout History*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

[2] On distortions of size and orientation see Black, Jeremy. 1997. *Maps and Politics*. London: Reaktion Books Ltd. pp. 29-57.

[3] Ilan Pappé defines ethnic cleansing as "an effort to render an ethnically mixed country homogenous by expelling a particular group of people and turning them into refugees while demolishing the homes they were driven out from. There may well be a master plan, but most of the troops engaged in ethnic cleansing do not need direct orders: they know beforehand what is expected of them" (*Ethnic Cleansing* 3).

[4] Ilan Pappé stresses the fact that since the nineteenth century the Jews aimed for the uprooting of the Palestinians to replace them (*Ethnic Cleansing* 126).

[5] A Russian technical engineer who immigrated to Palestine in 1919 and became the leader of the Jewish National Fund by 1923. He had a major role in land acquisition in Palestine and the JNF depended on his policies in purchasing land in Palestine.

[6] Nadim N. Rouhana (2006) postulates that "cultural violence is what makes personal and structural violence acceptable using national justification, ideological legitimation, and socially sanctioned public discourse" (119). For more, see Rouhana. Nadim. 2006. "Zionism's Encounter with the Palestinians: The Dynamics of Force, Fear and Extremism." in *Narratives of Conflict: History's Double Helix*, edited by Robert I. Rotberg, Indiana: Indiana University Press, pp. 115–141.

[7] The Center for Research and Documentation of Palestinian Society in Bir Zeit University launched a project in the 1980s-90s to document the history of the destroyed Palestinian villages publishing accounts about twenty destroyed villages. Also, Susan Slyomovics' *The Object of Memory: Arab and Jew Narrate the Palestinian Village*, published by University of Pennsylvania Press, 1998 investigates the village of Ein Houd. Slyomovics gave voice to Palestinians to narrate and recreate their lost homeland. Similarly, Walid Khalidi's *All That Remains* (1992) documents the 400 villages that were wiped out by the Zionists. Also, Salman Abu-Sitta's *Palestine's Atlas 1948* (2004) is a compilation of information on around 600 Palestinian villages that existed before *Nakba*; the maps offered stand in stark defiance to the Zionists' propaganda and political maps of the land.

[8] Many Israeli historians testify that the massacre took place. For example, Ilan Pappé's *Ethnic Cleansing* (133-138). Also, an MA thesis by Teddy Katz at Haifa University (1999) documented the Tantoura massacre through various testimonies by Jewish participants in the massacre. After being granted the master's degree, the university revoked Katz's degree due to the much attention and trouble brought by the IDF and the media. Ilan Pappé criticized this "The Tantoura Case in Israel: The Katz Research and Trial" in 2001, available at http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.1525/jps.2001.30.3.19. Not only this, but Samera Esmeir's "Memories of Conquest: Witnessing Death in Tantoura" published in *Nakba: Palestine, 1948, and the Claims of Memory* (2007) tackles the massacre as well.

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