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The Ghosts of Resistance: Dispatches from Palestinian Art and Music

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In the summer of 2010 Palestinian artists Emily Jacir and Yazid Anani installed two billboards in downtown Ramallah as part of a public intervention called *al-Riyāḍ*. Visually mimicking the urban-development genre, the two billboards ironically questioned the erosion of a collective Palestinian political project through the building of gated communities (that look conspicuously similar to illegal Israeli settlements in the West Bank) and the creation of a Dubai-style business tower that was to be constructed atop Ramallah's fruit and vegetable market. Their work was part of a larger exhibition titled *Ramallah: The Fairest of Them All?* produced by the Birzeit Ethnographic and Art Museum and the Ramallah municipality. Yet within twenty-four hours the municipality, calling the billboards "problematic," removed them. Despite demands from the artists and the organizers of the exhibition to discontinue such acts of censorship, both the mayor of Ramallah and the director of the municipality remained steadfast in their decision and offered no further clarification of their problematic nature.[1]

While the Ramallah municipality had initially approved Jacir and Anani's public intervention, the problem with the works arguably centered on their exposure of the destruction of a collective political project through the neoliberal and neocapitalist agenda being pushed through by the Palestinian National Authority (PNA). In other words, it exposed the divide between the political program of the PNA and the collective political project of the Palestinian people, whereby causing embarrassment for the PNA. More importantly, however, the works exposed the complicated role of culture and cultural practices in a paradoxical context in which occupation, continued colonization, and state-building initiatives coexist.

For years Palestinian artists and musicians have struggled against their work being interpreted exclusively within the paradigm of liberation politics,[2] which sees the task of art and music, their raison d'être, as the emancipation of Palestinians and Palestine from the stranglehold of colonialism and occupation—in short, art and music at the service of politics.[3] Yet, while constantly trying to escape the reductive discourses surrounding culture and politics, including those defended by Palestinian political representatives like the PNA, many refuse to give up engaging with it in their work. This tension between nationalist liberation discourse and the creative strategies of Palestinian artists and musicians has been exacerbated by the interest taken by international cultural actors, organizations, and institutions with Palestinian artists, and by the gradual move by international nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and humanitarian aid agencies toward funding cultural projects in the Occupied Palestinian Territories. Together these have resulted in an unprecedented dissemination of Palestinian cultural production, both locally and globally. Palestinian artists and musicians are confronted today with an increasing range of brokers and mediators that include, among others, the PNA, Western and Palestinian humanitarian aid agencies and NGOs, art museum and gallery curators, and connoisseurs and music industry representatives from all over the world. Why are these international actors taking an interest in Palestinian culture now? How is the link between culture and politics being articulated in this context? What are the political and aesthetic repercussions of the internationalization and humanitarization of Palestinian art and music? And, finally, how does the current situation affect the discourse on "culture as liberation" and "culture as resistance" that dominated studies of Palestinian art and music during the twentieth century and continues to inform most sociocultural analysis of Palestinian culture today?

We argue that Palestinian music and art have been represented through three ideological frameworks that have informed the roles and meanings attributed to cultural practices in Palestinian society: culture as survival, culture as resistance, and culture as a site for humanitarian intervention and development. Although emerging at different moments over the last one hundred years, these frames of reference tend to overlap and interact, creating tensions with which musicians and artists continue to struggle. In making this argument, we are admittedly taking a step back from music making and art making as practice and focusing on the discourses that have surrounded them. These discourses have been mobilized to varying degrees by scholars, by Palestinians in their daily representations and interactions with music and art, as well as by mediators and cultural brokers like NGOs. In other words, this is not about Palestinian music and art per se, but about the discourse on Palestinian music and art. As such, our argument is not ethnographic, but epistemological and historiographical. We revisit the theoretical and discursive framework that has surrounded Palestinian cultural production, mainly music and art, and build on ethnographic studies, some of which are represented

in this book, as well as on our own field research, to propose a moment of reflection on the profound changes that have occurred with relation to the meanings and roles attributed to Palestinian cultural practices like music since the end of the nineteenth century and on their implications for the future.

When Things Fall Apart, All That Remains Is Culture: Cultural Survivalism in and after Palestine

The tension between culture and politics is not unique to Palestine.[4] In societies that have been through traumatizing historical experiences, such as colonization, the forced uprooting of a people, or a civil war, cultural practices take on meanings and roles that go well beyond questions of creativity and aesthetic appreciation. Whether it is in Palestine, or in South Africa during or after apartheid, or in Lebanon during and after the civil war, cultural practices are intimately implicated in projects of nation building and have been used for political propaganda, resistance against colonialism, and to criticize corrupt postcolonial governments, among other things. Anthropologists and ethnomusicologists today tend to focus on the many ways cultural production is entangled in the formation of national and transnational imaginaries in the face of globalization, economic, political, cultural, and social fluidity, instability, inequality, and heterogeneity (White 2012; Marcus and Myers 1995). They investigate how cultural practices such as music making participate in the generating and reinforcing of hegemonic representations and ideologies just as they can be mobilized for resistance, critique, and the subversion of power (Nooshin 2009; Clayton, Herbert, and Middleton 2012).

These sometimes contradictory roles attributed to the arts and cultural production are not mutually exclusive. That is especially the case with Palestinian cultural production since the last quarter of the nineteenth century, when it emerged as an object of study (and fantasy) in Orientalist literature only to become the gravitational core around which Palestinians' attempts at reconstituting a shattered homeland would develop after the *Nakba* (catastrophe) of 1948. While these two perspectives differed on many levels in terms of the representations associated with Palestinian culture, they both tended to frame it within a survivalist ethos, albeit for very different reasons. Indeed, in the decades preceding the Nakba, the "manners and customs of the indigenous Arabs of Palestine" (to use the language of that era) were central to European archaeological and theological studies of the "Near East." This interest was not motivated by a sudden appreciation for the history and culture of Palestinians, but by the belief that the customs and traditions of Jews during biblical times had survived among Palestinian peasants. According to Khaled Furani and Dan Rabinowitz, the interest was so great that "the biblical rediscovery of Palestine triggered more European writing on Palestine in the nineteenth century than on any other Arab territory save Egypt" (2011, 477). Citing

the enormous amount of literature produced during that period, they add, "This conjuring of biblical time objectified contemporary Palestinians as living fossils, mumming a historiography that serves Europeans" (478).[5]

Over the next two decades, scholarship on the subject of Palestinian customs would continue to grow, prompting the foundation of the *Journal of the Palestine Oriental Society.* And as it did, Palestinian researchers increasingly got involved. Tawfiq Canaan (1882–1964), a leading Palestinian scholar of that period, wrote several articles on traditional medicine, as well as on the myths and beliefs of villagers, including the "folklore" of the Palestinian family home (1934, 1932). Canaan was partly driven by the need to correct the shortcomings of Orientalist literature and partly by a sense of imminent danger as the first waves of Jewish immigrants arrived at the ports of Palestine and Zionism began changing the political, economic and cultural landscape (Al-Qush 1994). As Furani and Rabinowitz have noted:

> Canaan, with a circle of mostly Christian contemporary Palestinian intellectuals, (e.g., Totah, Stefan, Haddad, al-Bargouthi), portrayed Palestinians as a vibrant, cumulative assemblage of modern and ancient civilizations that included Israelites, Egyptians, Syrio-Aramaics and, not least, Arabs (Canaan 1931:34). This depiction was strategic. It challenged a colonial British version of Palestinian history that saw Arabs in Palestine as transient and ephemeral, offering a narrative that contested the endorsement by the Balfour Declaration of a national Jewish homeland in Palestine. Within the biblical and Oriental modalities of ethnographic work on Palestine we have reviewed, Palestine as the cradle of Christianity and the contemporary Orient as the key to understanding the Bible's inception was the theory. (2011, 479)

Even though much could be said about the legacy of Orientalism in his own work, Canaan is recognized as the pioneer of Palestinian heritage studies and among the first researchers to adopt the methodological and theoretical principles of anthropology—that is to say, conducting fieldwork and approaching Palestinians as individual subjects.

This approach would be taken up by Hilma Granqvist (1890–1972), who arrived from Finland with a delegation of German theologians and archaeologists during the same period. She dropped her original project to investigate the status of women in biblical times and decided to focus on the present lives of Palestinians, signaling perhaps the growing influence of anthropology and ethnography as tools for the production of knowledge during the colonial era. One might also say that constructing Palestinians as the survivors of a biblical past was becoming increasingly problematic, as it belied growing Zionist claims that the land was uninhabited and that those who did live there were mostly nomads without deep roots in the area. Nevertheless, Granqvist invested several years studying life in the Palestinian village of Arṭās between 1920 and 1930. Although her doctoral

dissertation was rejected in 1932, and her ethnographic approach embodied much of what classical anthropology would later be criticized for (Fabian 1983, Clifford and Marcus 1986), including a static conceptualization of culture, Granqvist's portrayal of Arṭās offers a rare glimpse of life in Palestine during the British mandate (1947, 1931). It would also be an important reference in what would later become the Palestinian folklorist movement and one of the markers of the "salvage and preserve" turn in studies of Palestinian culture.

In the first two decades that followed the 1948 Nakba, survivalism in the Palestinian context took on new connotations as Palestinians went from being the custodians of practices that were thought to have survived through two thousand years of history to being the victims of ethnic and cultural cleansing. Consequently, the 1950s and early 1960s tend to be portrayed as years of loss and passivity, during which Palestinians were reduced to life-sustaining strategies (Peteet 2005). It was thought that staying alive in the terrible conditions of the refugee camps or as virtual hostages in the newly constituted Israeli state did not allow time, space, or energy for any creativity in terms of music and cultural production.

In fact, far from being a period of cultural inertia, these twenty years (1948–1967) set the foundations for the gradual development of a distinctively Palestinian musical and artistic expression. Indeed, a new generation of Palestinian scholars emerged, the majority of whom graduated from European universities and institutions in various fields of cultural and social studies. Their aim was to research, collect, and preserve all aspects of Palestinian culture as it became increasingly threatened by the dispersal of the majority of the people; the destruction of the villages; the uprooting of farmland; and the cultural, social, and political confusion that sprouted within the refugee camps. It was without doubt a question of survival, albeit not of a millennial past but of a present that was systematically being erased. Their work was published in the 1960s, initiating one of the richest and most productive periods of the Palestinian folklorist movement (Alqam 1994, 1977). Among these pioneers we may count Abdellatif Barghouti, who earned a PhD from the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) in London and produced an invaluable collection of studies on traditional Palestinian song (1963, 1986, 1990). He was followed by Abdulla H. Lutfiyya, who worked in the village of Baytīn (1966), and Khalil Nakhleh, whose research focused on Palestinian citizens of Israel (1975).

Nakhleh's work was particularly interesting as a counter-narrative to Israeli representations of Palestinians. While Palestinian scholars were keen on salvaging the memory and culture of destroyed villages in diaspora and in the refugee camps of the West Bank and Gaza, Israeli scholars constructed their own narrative on Palestinians by taking advantage of the access they had to the Palestinians who had remained within the newly established Israeli state:

> Propelled by an Israeli culturalist desire to fabricate a secular and modernized Israeli identity, many of these writers worked within the dual dismissal

> of the Jewish diaspora and Arab culture. They largely generated functionalist accounts that portrayed Palestinians as "traditional," resistant to modernization and politically detached—a trope diametrically opposed to the self-image of a rational, forward-looking, modernizing Israeli. (Furani and Rabinowitz 2011, 480)

Paradoxically, many of the first publications on Palestinian culture, including music, and those that followed, emphasized the village and rural traditions and practices as well. Even though emphasis by Palestinian scholars was driven by very different reasons, which we will discuss later, it has tended to overshadow an equally vibrant urban music heritage that was going through its own brand of survivalism in the 1950s and 1960s.

Surviving in the City

At the time, a wave of nationalization and modernization (greatly influenced by Western models) was transforming the politics and aesthetics of music in the metropolises of the Arab world (Castelo-Branco 2002), as pan-Arab nationalism was brought to the forefront by Gamal Abdel Nasser and the brief unification of Egypt and Syria. Citing the founding of *firqat al-mūsīqá al-ʿarabīyyah* (the Arab Music Symphony Orchestra) in Cairo in 1967, Salwa E. Castelo-Branco summarizes some of these changes as follows: "A large chorus of twelve men and twelve women replaced the solo vocalist . . . The concert hall was established as the performance setting for Arab music, and the norms of performance by Western symphony orchestras were imposed" (2002, 561). However, these events did not have the same impact on Palestinian urban music; after all, Palestine had not experienced decolonization or independence. Furthermore, anxiety over Zionist attempts at assimilating Palestinians into an all-encompassing Arab identity compelled Palestinians to resist some of the homogenizing and Western-oriented aspects of pan-Arab nationalism. As a result, they maintained a tense but productive relationship with both trends: Arabism and Westernization.

In the West Bank, performers of art music, or *ṭarab,* embraced modernization strategies that reflected a stronger commitment to the *maqām* tradition. While the *firqah* (symphonic orchestra) and the *ughnīyyah* (popular song) were taking over the Arab musical sphere through cultural centers like Egypt (Racy 2003), the smaller *takht* ensemble and the *waṣlah* (suite of vocal and instrumental performances) continued to be prominent in Palestinian cities, including cities like Nazareth that were now part of Israel. In fact, a localized genre of waṣlah called *nasrawīyyah* (of Nazareth) continues to be part of contemporary Palestinian musical practice (Libbis 1994, 1989). The survival of this repertoire and its ensemble is evident today with the central role that instrumental groups such as the Oriental Music Ensemble, Sabreen, and Karloma, who draw on the takht formation, continue to play in the contemporary Palestinian music scene.

Besides maqām-centered urban music practices, the religious status of Palestine and Jerusalem endowed it with a strong Christian liturgical music tradition rooted in Western music idioms and practices. As ethnomusicologist Christian Poché notes, many musicians who had developed their skills through that repertoire went on to perform and compose Western music during the first half of the twentieth century:

> The various Christian communities and their liturgies were important in the musical life of Jerusalem. These included the Armenian, Coptic, Ethiopian and Roman Catholic ("Latin") liturgies performed in their various languages. Franciscan and Dominican monks trained local musicians to provide music for the religious services, and the musical techniques of the West were most readily adopted by the Arab Christians practising the Latin rite. (Poché 2001, 935)

Counting among those composers are Salvador Arnita; Yousef Khasho, whose musical legacy includes a repertoire inspired by Italian-style nineteenth-century romanticism; organist Augustin Lama; and ethnomusicologist Habib Hassan Touma, who composed Western contemporary music before dedicating himself to the study of Arabic music (Poché 2001). These two repertoires, Arab maqām music and European tonal music, existed in parallel without necessarily converging, as was the case in Egypt. Therefore, according to Poché, art music in Palestine maintained what he described as a "traditionalist spirit," which we believe served to revive the takht and its instruments in Palestine today.

Resistance and Catharsis

As the implications of the 1967 defeat of Arab forces by Israel started to sink in, the question of survival among Palestinians was in many ways indigenized. No longer associated with the survival of an imagined Israelite peasant life during biblical times, or the survival of urban musical practices that had been profoundly transformed in the rest of the Arab world, investigating Palestinian culture and music took on new meanings as part of a concerted effort by Palestinians to take their fate into their own hands.

Anthological projects that went beyond specific aspects of expressive culture to cover all aspects of Palestinian village life emerged in different parts of the Palestinian diaspora. Years of research and collaborative work would lead to important publications in Arabic and other languages during the 1980s and early 1990s, including the multivolume *Encyclopaedia Palaestina* (1984–1990) and Nimr Sirhan's *Encyclopaedia of Palestinian Folklore* (1989). These projects were not motivated by grief and nostalgia alone, nor by an irrational urge to recreate an idealized homeland through the model of the Palestinian village, but by a determination to counter attempts at erasing Palestinian rootedness to the land that had become Israel, to

fill in the flagrant gaps in Western literature on Palestinians, and to cauterize the wounds of displacement. The desire to "re-member" the dismembered parts of Palestine through the nucleus of the village was understandable, as the majority of Palestinian refugees were of peasant origins (see Bisharat 1997). They would also become the main constituency of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO)—the principal source of funding for most of these studies—and act as primary sources of information for scholars. The production of knowledge on Palestinian culture was also propelled by the conviction among Palestinian refugees that return to the homeland was only a matter of time. These uprooted practices must be kept intact until they are reinscribed in their original context when the refugees finally return. When approached from this angle, the Palestinian folklorist movement can no longer be interpreted through the sole lens of a posttraumatic reaction to the Catastrophe of 1948. It also indicated the beginning of the resistance movement as a political and cultural force that was geared toward a future in which return was not only possible but also an inevitable event that must be prepared for.

This new emphasis on action, emancipation, and self-preservation through the appropriation of their own cause translated into two tendencies in terms of music making: the explosion of political songs and of musical theater onto the Palestinian cultural scene. Political songs evoking Palestinians' plight and their fight spread in the Arab world. Combined with the repertoire that the Palestinian folklorist movement was making accessible to the general population, both tendencies resulted in the emergence of several popular arts and music groups. El-Funoun's elaborate theatrical productions in the Occupied Territories, on the one hand, and Al-ᶜAshiqeen's patriotic performances in diaspora, on the other, are some of the best-known representatives of these trends. The term "popular arts" replaced other terms such as "traditional" or "folk," as it allowed these groups more flexibility in the kind of repertoire they drew from for their productions and in the way they reimagined and transformed it through performance. Musicians invested heavily in field research, collecting songs from elders or from folklore books. In the case of Al-ᶜAshiqeen, these songs were then politicized through changing the lyrics, citing the names of destroyed or occupied towns and villages, famous martyrs and revolutionary figures from the British mandate era, or by recalling important dates in the history of Palestinian resistance.[6] Aesthetically they included elements of Western harmony and modern instruments, such as drums and synthesizers. Performances often began with passionate speeches on the Palestinian cause. Sometimes one or two stanzas of engaged poetry would precede the songs. Other times they would begin with a *shubbābah* (traditional flute) or the *mijwiz* (double clarinet) solo followed by a *dabke* (circle dance), thus referring to the false tranquility before the storm of revolution. Musicians and dancers would be dressed in *fidāʾī* (guerilla/revolutionary) military uniforms or traditional costumes, with emphasis on the peasant roots of the resistance movement.

In the case of El-Funoun, the group developed an aesthetic inspired by Palestine's cultural heritage but aiming at modernization in the hopes that it would re-

main relevant to Palestinians' contemporary lives and concerns (Al-Kurdi 1994). The repertoire of musicals were partly inspired by the Rahbani brothers' popular operas in Lebanon but also based on stories from Palestinian rural life. Here, too, traditional music and dance were set in counterpoint with complex choreography that was reminiscent of Arabic modern dance and ballet, and original musical compositions were created and performed by Palestinian musicians who were equally immersed in Arabic art music and Western art music, such as Said Murad and Suhail Khoury.

In both of these styles of performance, past and present were nested within each other, giving the music a sense of authenticity while captivating the audience, either with an overtly political message or one that was translated through a strong aesthetic project. These performances spread through solidarity events or festivals held throughout the Arab world and, subsequently, recordings of these performances that were then copied, shared, and distributed through largely informal channels.

While many of these modernizing initiatives were a product of the urbanization and transnationalization of Palestinians, they did not displace the village as the nucleus of Palestinian identity in diaspora. If anything, the lifestyle of villagers became mythicized. As anthropologist Randa Farah notes, talking about a specific culture to refugees implied recognition of a new existence, that of the refugee, an existence considered abnormal, artificial, inauthentic by Palestinians in exile: "Remembering the 'way it was there and then' became a cultural form through which refugees re-claimed their history in a particular territory . . . Put in other words, remembering the past became a way to re-historicize a territory and re-territorialize a history" (1999, 222). As a result, diaspora discourse during the 1970s and 1980s tended to place cultural practices and the realities of life in exile in different temporalities, countering the daily trials of a present in exile with cultural practices that were firmly anchored in the past. Indeed, cultural practices did not function as mere reflections of refugee life, but offered a counter-narrative, or, rather, an antidote to it.

While it is tempting to interpret these positions as stemming from a state of denial, it would be more appropriate to approach them as part of a process of catharsis (Delvicchio-Good and Good 2008). Beyond its use to inspire or legitimate political and armed resistance, culture also became a site where suffering could be differed. No one perhaps said it better than Antonin Artaud (1964), who describes theater as the scene on which there is a collective emptying out of an abscess that can either end in healing or in death. Keeping this in mind, it is no coincidence that after poetry, theater is the form of art that blossomed the most in the Arab world following the disaster that was the 1967 war (Stone 2008).

In diaspora, amateur musical theater—in particular, combining music, dance, theatrical sketches, and poetry readings, inspired by groups like El-Funoun—has become a common occurrence among Palestinians (El-Ghadban, 2004). In most Palestinian communities today, regardless of country, there are equivalents of what

Yara El-Ghadban (2004) observed during field research among Palestinian youth in Montreal, Canada: the organization of culture nights, in which younger generations of Palestinians who had not experienced the uprooting directly, recreate the before and after of the Nakba, wear Palestinian traditional clothes, play recordings of Palestinian songs like *dalᶜūnā,* and choreograph dabke dances alternating with poetry and theatrical sketches of significant moments of loss and triumph in the Palestinian experience. The youth participating in such events were not naïve about what they were doing. As one of El-Ghadban's interviewees eloquently explained, they weren't dancing to bring awareness to the Palestinian cause within the international community. They weren't educating ignorant but well-meaning outsiders. The point was to give Palestinians in diaspora a sense of community and to transmit the memory of the Nakba to the next generation (2004). In many ways they were dancing for themselves, talking to themselves, dreaming collectively. In such events, memories, true and invented, mythical and real, would circulate among an audience almost exclusively composed of Palestinians, feeding and bouncing off each other, answering each other, creating and recreating Palestine in an immense transparent bubble that excluded everyone but those who knew the secret of being Palestinian in diaspora. Far from being introverted and self-isolating, however, art making and music making in this context acted as a form of catharsis—in other words, as a process of emotional cleansing. As these theatrical performances played out, the audience was confronted with what Julia Kristeva (1982) calls the abject—in this case, the Nakba and its aftermath. By expressing and reflecting horror and violence, these performances simultaneously served to release it, thus contributing to a healing process.

In the Occupied Territories catharsis was not an option, as the realities of life under occupation and daily confrontation with Israeli soldiers left no space for any kind of distancing. The explosion of political music as a form of resistance and counterattack would reach its peak with the first *Intifada* (uprising) in 1987. The symbol of the revolutionary peasant was gradually overshadowed by that of the children of the stones and of the martyr.[7] Hundreds of secret recordings circulated among the Palestinian people that glorified children of the revolt and encouraged their audience to action. According to ethnomusicologists Anne Marie Oliver and Paul Steinberg (2002), the aesthetics of the music of the Intifada reflected the different political ideologies that competed for Palestinian public opinion—that of nationalists, who defended the notion of a Palestinian secular state, as opposed to that of Islamists, who advocated a transnational vision of Palestine within the vast Muslim *ummah* (nation).

It is primarily in reference to the period of the 1970s and 1980s that most studies on Palestine and Palestinians tend to emphasize resistance as a dominant political and cultural paradigm. In many ways it has become an unquestioned premise on which most subsequent literature on Palestinian music is built. As a result, it has also become a discourse toward which Palestinian musicians and artists today

are compelled to position themselves. By focusing on meanings, representations, aesthetic idioms, and connotations, other dimensions of that period—particularly those related to the role that mediators such as political factions, grassroots organizations, and international NGOs played in the way Palestinians constructed their own subjectivities and cultural identity—have tended to be overlooked. If we are to understand what has become of the "culture as resistance" discourse since the 1990s, a period marked by the rise and fall of the Oslo peace process as well as by the increasing impact of globalization, we must pay attention to these mediators and track their genealogy in the Palestinian context.

Committing to Culture: The Story of Palestinian Grassroots Organizations

In the Occupied Territories, culture, its valorization, and its preservation were indeed enlisted, so to speak, as important components of Palestinian resistance to the occupation and one of the central concerns of the nationalist movement up to the end of the first Intifada. As we have indicated, the recognition and promotion of culture contradicted Israeli claims that Palestinians had no real or rooted relationship with the land. However, a new social and economical dimension, which had already emerged in the camps in earlier decades, became increasingly influential as the potency of culture when a means for economic support and development began to be fully recognized. A network of cultural committees established as part of socially and politically engaged Palestinian organizations or affiliated with Palestinian universities had already emerged in the 1970s and 1980s, which, in turn, led to the founding of departments dedicated to the study of culture (Craissati 1998).Each village, town, or refugee camp had one or more such groups that were centered on culture and acted independently or as part of regional or national political organizations. One of the first was the Committee for Social Research and Palestinian Folklore, which counted among its members prominent artists such as Sliman Mansour and researchers, historians, and folklorists including Sharif Kanaana, Ibrahim Muhawi, Nabil Alqam, andAbdellatif Barghouti, among others. Published individually and in partnership, members of the committee produced several books on various aspects of Palestinian culture.[8]

As Dina Craissati explains, the tendency to create committees, with the encouragement of the PLO, was "aimed at the mobilization of the population in the Occupied Territories in building an infrastructure of national institutions to sustain a process of self-reliance and of disengagement from the occupation. In a way, one could venture to concede that the politics of *ṣumūd* (steadfastness) represented aspects of a traditional welfare system carried by a 'quasi-state,' that is the PLO (which had by that time a well-developed bureaucracy outside the Occupied Territories)" (1998, 121). Palestinian organizations in the Occupied Territories and in diaspora launched embroidery projects that served to preserve this tradition and to employ women in the camps. These initiatives went beyond culture, focusing

on education, health services, and employment. Undertaken individually and collectively, with the financial and logistical support of the PLO, they contributed to the birth of a new educated generation and the development of a Palestinian civil society outside the parameters of an independent state or geopolitical boundaries.

With the PLO weakened after the 1982 invasion of Lebanon by Israel, the West Bank became the center of a new form of social activism, propelled by such committees that would later develop into local grassroot NGOs. Social and cultural organizations comprising, among others, Inash al-Usra, the Popular Arts Center, and the Khalil Sakakini Cultural Center took an active leadership role during the first Intifada by mobilizing popular classes and organizing collective resistance efforts through the recording and dissemination of a Palestinian cultural narrative. Other aspects of this movement would eventually challenge some of the presumptions associated with PLO-initiated committee programs by opting for "alternative, decentralized, more open democratic structures, through grass roots voluntary work and within a spirit of egalitarian social transformation" (Craissati 2005, 186). As Craissati notes, "When the Intifada began in 1987, they could provide the organizational basis and the agenda to sustain the movement" (186).

A further challenge to the PLO's monopoly on the production of Palestinian culture began to appear through the increased presence of international aid through international NGOs and development agencies that, during the Intifada, had been funding professional centers, providing "support, technical assistance and training to other organizations, to charitable societies, to grass roots committees and to various unions and cooperatives" (Craissiti 2005, 186). All of these players would later be at the heart of what Sari Hanafi and Linda Tabar have described as a fundamental shift in the political economy of aid to Palestinian NGOs in the early 1990s:

> Solidarity-based support . . . withered and was replaced by bilateral and multilateral relations between Southern NGOs, [including Palestinian NGOs] and European as well as North American governments and development agencies. Regionally and locally, this period coincided with the 1991 Gulf war and the onset of the Madrid peace talks, through which Palestine's geopolitical status was reconfigured and the West Bank and Gaza Strip recast as a site of "peace-making." (2005, 25)

This shift to "peace-making," as opposed to the marginalization of occupation through grassroots activism, brought a new organizational order within the NGO network in the Occupied Territories. Voluntary work was gradually replaced with professionalized paid work as Western NGOs funded by international development agencies offered well-paying positions to local personnel and trained them to implement projects following international management standards and funding

criteria. In order to compete for funds, Palestinian NGOs, which tended to be affiliated with various political factions and ideologies and counted activism among their central activities, were under increasing pressure to disengage from direct action and focus instead on witnessing, democracy and rights advocacy, relief, and development, all of which are framed within an apolitical rights-based and civil-society-building framework, as opposed to fighting the occupation (Nakhleh 2012). As Hanafi and Tabar have argued, this led to a process of "disembedding and disassociation" wherein Palestinian NGOs were separated from their role as "the nexus of the popular movement of the first intifada" and pushed toward workshops and training programs (2005, 26). Mufid Qassoum goes further by arguing that this shift to advocacy has "put an end to mass social movements," dismantled "the triad affinity between the intellectual, the masses, and the progressive and revolutionary ideas," in effect, leading to demobilization, de-radicalization and depoliticization (Qassoum cited in Hanafi and Tabar 2005). While many of these scholars have pointed to health, human rights, and women's rights as the main areas in which this shift was enacted, culture also became an important arena for this new form of intervention.[9] As we will see below, this trend can be traced back to the foundation of the *United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization* (UNESCO) in 1945. However, engagement with culture on humanitarian and developmental grounds has intensified over the last two decades, propelled by globalization and the expansion of humanitarianism's boundaries as an ideology and set of practices in realms beyond relief (Gabiam 2012).

Since the early 1990s, and particularly in the wake of the optimism that followed from the Oslo Accords, Palestinian society underwent a veritable explosion in terms of culture and arts, partly due to the interest taken by the international community in Palestinian culture and to the presence of international NGOs and agencies on the ground as mediators. From the Edward Said National Conservatory of Music to the Institute for Palestinian Art, the last two decades have been a watershed in terms of cultural production and funding. Importantly, this resurgence of Palestinian culture has not been confined to the local scene. It has been wholly embraced through international music festivals, museums, and galleries. This is not the same cultural scene that existed in the 1970s and 1980s, as there has been a shift not only in the type of works being produced but also, and more importantly, in the attitudes of artists and musicians themselves.

By 1993, with the recognition of the PNA and a formal government in place, the conditions of the survival of music and art became increasingly dependent on international support, both politically and economically. Two agendas were at work: economic development and state building by enforcing the role of NGOs as active partners in reinscribing the already existent Palestinian civil society networks within the parameters of a state-in-the-making. For foreign donors, that involved the establishment of a cultural policy that would allow freedom of expres-

sion and the right to culture for Palestinians. Culture became the new buzzword, the new commodity for foreign investment with the belief that culture would provide the basis for a modern liberal and democratic Palestinian society, a society, in the words of UNESCO, built on "co-existence, evolution, dynamism" and that questions patterns of thinking and acting (Eriksen 2001). Central to this project was the establishment and flourishing of cultural institutions, which provided space and support for writers, musicians, painters, performers, media artists, and so forth. For Palestinians, this attention to their work provided an opportunity to continue to relate to their cultural traditions in light of their political plight while also transmitting and communicating the language of Palestinian culture to the world. However, it also meant yielding part of their ownership and control of their creative process and musical practices to mediators like NGOs. Individual Palestinian artists and musicians, and the various Palestinian liberation movements, are no longer the only, nor even the principal, agents handling the production of Palestinian art and music and its meanings.

In Palestine, in the aftermath of the 2006 election that brought Hamas to power, NGOs were handed an enormous amount of power and resources as a way for Western countries to absolve themselves of the guilt of cutting aid to the Palestinians. Besides Christian missionary organizations that have been present for multiple decades, musicians and other artists rely heavily on funding from Scandinavian development agencies, such as the Swedish International Development and Cooperation Agency (Sida), which supports institutions like the Edward Said National Conservatory of Music in the West Bank. Other organizations and foundations worth mentioning are the A. M. Qattan Foundation; the Ford Foundation; UNESCO; the Prince Claus Fund; Regional Social and Cultural Fund for Palestinian Refugees and the People of Gaza (Germany); EuropeAid (ENPImed); the Danish Center for Culture and Development; the Qatar Foundation; the Khalil Sakakini Cultural Center; and the Aventis Foundation, based in Germany, which funds the West-Eastern Divan Orchestra, whose mission is to bring Israeli and Palestinian children together through music.

What lies behind such interest in the funding of Palestinian culture is a discourse that has moved away from art and music as a form of resistance and nation building to its becoming an instrument of redemption and a new avenue for humanitarian intervention. This is in line with what George Yudice has identified as the redefining of "culture" in the era of globalization, first and foremost, as a resource:

> *Culture-as-resource* is much more than a commodity; it is the lynchpin of a new epistemic framework in which ideology and much of what Foucault called disciplinary society (i.e., the inculcation of norms in such institutions as education, medicine, and psychiatry) are absorbed into an economic or

> ecological rationality, such that management, conservation, access, distribution, and investment—in "culture" and the outcomes thereof—take priority. (2003, 1; emphasis in original)

Further on, he adds: "High culture becomes resource for urban development in the contemporary museum. Rituals, everyday aesthetic practices such as songs, folktales, cuisine, customs, and other symbolic practices, are also mobilized as recourses in tourism and in the promotion of the heritage industries" (4). All of these are endeavors that the above-mentioned funding agencies are happy to participate in, especially because they do not involve critiquing the occupation, but contribute to state building.

To be sure, in places where the state is powerless, and where power is still in the hands of colonial actors, as in the Palestinian Territories, NGOs become the channels and networks through which culture as a resource is put to work. Drawing on the uses of culture to improve social conditions in Brazil's favelas, Yudice observes: "The most innovative actors in setting agendas for political and social policies are grassroots movements and the national and international NGOs that support them. These actors have put a premium on culture, as a resource already targeted for exploitation by capital and as a foundation for resistance" (2003, 6). While we fully agree with Yudice's argument, we do not follow him in his optimistic assessment of culture's use by NGOs as a resource for resistance under conditions such as those facing Palestinians, especially when we consider the work of scholars such as Hanafi and Tabar (2005), Nakhleh (2012), Craissati (1998, 2005), Fassin (2009, 2010), and Feldman (2010), to name but a few, on the negative effect that the internationalization of NGOs and the humanitarization of the conflict in Palestine has had on mobilization and popular movements in the last two decades. If culture is a resource in the Palestinian Territories, it has been mainly constructed within a paradigm of development and humanitarian intervention. As such, it provides an effective alibi for the international community to keep deferring a lasting and just resolution to the political situation of the Palestinians.

An important contributor to culture as a form of humanitarian intervention is the Prince Claus Fund (PCF) in the Netherlands, whose funding is based on the principle that "culture is a basic need." It has recently pushed this ideology even further by creating the Cultural Emergency Response (CER) program, which acts as a type of International Red Cross for culture in situations marked by violence and unrest. Created in response to the looting of Baghdad's museums following the U.S. invasion of Iraq and the destruction of the Bamiyan Buddhas in Afghanistan, the PCF has also been active in the Palestinian Territories. Through its emergency program, it contributed to the reconstruction of the Center for Archaeological Heritage at the Islamic University of Gaza, which was completely destroyed by Israeli bombing in 2008. It has also funded the Three-Dimensional Virtual

Museum (3DVM) at Birzeit University. Both projects are worthy of praise in their own right. However, the justification the Prince Claus Fund uses to underline the importance of funding such projects raises questions as to their ultimate legacy in the context of conflict. Citing the virtual museum, the PCF website promoting the project notes:

> The 3DVM is expected to be of great importance in Palestine, where restriction of movement, checkpoints and siege . . . are the reality of everyday life. In this environment, and with the paucity in the number of professionally run galleries or museums, a 3D Virtual Art Space will stand as a *substitute* [our emphasis], offering visitors wherever they are, in cities, villages or refugee camps, the opportunity to experience going online to a gallery or museum.[10]

While the fund's engagement is commendable on many levels, its statement is indicative of the new role culture is playing when it comes to international support for the Palestinian struggle for their rights. Creating a virtual museum to overcome checkpoints is much less risky than actually calling for the removal of the wall and the checkpoints. Similarly, building a music school is much easier to achieve than demolishing Israeli colonies.

Perhaps the most dramatic demonstration of this movement toward culture as a substitute for political resolution is the recent attempt by the PNA to obtain recognition for Palestine as a full-member state of the United Nations. The move was immediately rejected by its main opponents—namely, the United States and Israel—and even among sympathetic states it was portrayed as unjustified "unilateralism." A few weeks later however, UNESCO, which is the UN's main cultural organization, admitted Palestine with great fanfare and loud but empty protests by the United States, who threatened to cut its contribution to UNESCO. UNESCO's decision was represented in the international media as a big step toward the recognition of Palestine and as a big sacrifice (or loss) for Israel and the United States. The refusal to recognize Palestine as a member of the United Nations was swept under the rug as Western countries congratulated themselves for the UNESCO decision.

The implication of such a move in terms of the politics of culture become clearer when one considers UNESCO's history and its way of functioning. In his ethnographic study of UNESCO, anthropologist Philip Rousseau (2011) recalls the origins of the institution, which was founded in 1945 as a response to the devastatingly effective Nazi propaganda machine. The first director of the institution, Julian Huxley, laid down the orientation of the institution in 1947 as the principal protagonist for a good and "true propaganda" using education, science, and culture as tools "and deliberately bending them to the international tasks of peace,

if necessary utilizing them . . . to overcome the resistance of millions to desirable change" (Huxley cited in Rousseau 2011, 113). Although UNESCO would provide the ideological framework in the name of which culture would be promoted, as an institution composed of independent member states it would still be up to those states to ensure the implementation of cultural policies in line with UNESCO's ideals. By including Palestine into UNESCO but refusing it full state membership in the UN, Palestinians are being asked to adhere to UNESCO's ideology through peace-making cultural projects, even as they still suffer from occupation and denial of their right of return, while simultaneously depriving them of the very legitimacy and autonomy to implement cultural policy as they see fit, since Palestine is not an internationally recognized state.

The long-term impact of international aid on Palestinian cultural practices needs to be examined. While the culturally informed pedagogical/relief projects of Western national development agencies in the Palestinian Territories has provided Palestinian artists and musicians much-needed financial support, the political and aesthetic implications of such support cannot be ignored. What does it take for Palestinian cultural practices to be recognized by institutions like UNESCO? What are the criteria they have to correspond to? What interpretative frame are music and art being confined to in order to receive funds? Regardless of the individual agency of the artists and musicians, their works increasingly depend on being able to sell an artistic project to a given funding organism. The aesthetic norms and tools of art and music production are influenced by implicit and explicit criteria that artists and musicians have to grapple with in order to get funding regardless of their discourse. These criteria act as terms of recognition through which the work of Palestinian artists and musicians is legitimized or not.

Two funding and promotion ideologies seem to have emerged. On the one hand, Palestinian musicians are encouraged to embark on creative projects that emphasize collaboration and dialogue with Israelis and Jewish counterparts in general. These are the buzzwords that are constantly used in what appears to be a cultural reincarnation of the peace process. Imposing such criteria on artists and musicians today takes on highly political significations when we consider the growing call for the political, economic, and cultural boycott of Israel. On the other hand, a trend supported by international activist groups frames Palestinian art and music as part of a globalized resistance movement, whereby the struggle of Palestinian musicians and artists is inserted within the larger postcolonial struggles of indigenous peoples for their autonomy. The risk here is that the long and rich histories of different peoples and nations are reduced to one traumatic experience—the colonial experience—and that everything else these peoples and nations produce in terms of culture, knowledge, politics, and economics is a product of, or a reaction to, the West, and not first and foremost for themselves. Furthermore, artists are all seen as a collective that is acting in a sort of choir of postcolonial critique, but

not as individuals. In this case the discourse on art as resistance is paradoxically turned into a commodity, where artists who do not fit neatly into that frame, either aesthetically or politically, tend to be ignored.

How do musicians and artists deal with all of these challenges and the cultural brokers that are behind them? How do they negotiate the tension these brokers have created between culture as resistance and the framing of culture as a "basic need" or a peacemaking tool, in their creative processes?

I Make Music, Therefore I Am Human: The Globalization of Palestinian Culture

The question we ask is complicated by the fact that this shift in the politics of culture came hand in hand with the globalization of Palestinian cultural production. In many ways the humanitarization and the globalization of Palestinian music are two faces of the same coin. The promotion of Palestinian music and art as site for peace-making and for developing cross-cultural and cross-musical dialogue cannot be separated from the emergence of a global market for "third world" artists. Events such as the World of Music, Art, and Dance (WOMAD) festival have become launching pads for Palestinian musicians onto the international scene. Despite severe restrictions on their mobility, they rode the wave, performing for Palestinian and international audiences in the diaspora. Palestinian art experienced a similar resurgence as the art market was globalized and opened its doors to Palestinian artists. Consider that in 2008 artist Emily Jacir was the winner of the prestigious Hugo Boss Prize, which was followed by a major show at the Guggenheim Museum in New York City in 2009, while Sharif Waked, an artist based in Haifa, recently sold pieces of his work to the Guggenheim and other museums.

On the international scene the ideological underpinnings of this recent interest in Palestinian art and music has been the idea that Palestinian art and music can foster cross-cultural understanding, in this case providing the West with an image of Palestine and Palestinians that challenge specious media stereotypes. It follows from this that art and music are evidence of a Palestinian humanity. In her discussion of this phenomenon with respect to Palestine, Jessica Winegar refers to the press release accompanying an exhibition of contemporary Palestinian art that traveled (with great opposition) through the United States starting in 2003 titled *Made in Palestine,* in which the director of the Station Museum in Houston is quoted as saying, "It is our conviction that the American public deserves to be made aware of Palestinian art as a profound manifestation of the humanity of the Palestinian people" (Winegar 2008, 672).

On the local scene this overture took place at a time when the hope for peace following the Oslo Accords was still strong. The PNA had yet to establish itself as the new authority in cultural policy, and NGOs were not viewed with the same

skepticism and suspicion as they are today. As a result, artists and musicians felt free to engage actively in bringing culture back into Palestinians' lives as an expression of life beyond mere survival and struggle. Most importantly, after decades of enlisting musicians and artists in the struggle to liberate Palestine through cultural revival, folklore, and resistance songs, there was an effort to get out from under the political rug. Encouraged by international funding, musicians in the West Bank were deeply involved in music education and transmission through institutions such as the Edward Said National Conservatory of Music or by organizing creative workshops.

Undoubtedly, all of these developments on the local and global front, compounded by the discourses brought in by NGOs and other cultural brokers, not to mention the fluid political situation since the 1990s, have had an important impact on the kind of music and art Palestinians are making today.

Instrumentalizing Palestinian Music

In terms of music, one important trend has been the move from the politicized lyrics of the 1970s and 1980s toward a greater emphasis on instrumental music. The Edward Said National Conservatory of Music (ESNCM) counts within its network today no less than five orchestras: the ESNCM Orchestra, the ESNCM Wind Band, the Palestine Youth Orchestra, the Jerusalem Children's Orchestra, and the Palestine National Orchestra, not to mention the chamber ensembles composed of the conservatory's professors, like the Oriental Music Ensemble (OME). Other ensembles worth mentioning are Le Trio Joubran, Sabreen, Karloma, and the Gaza Orchestra. What are we to make of this move toward instrumental music? And how is it linked to larger phenomena such as the globalization of music and the increasing intervention of governmental and nongovernmental organizations in the Palestinian cultural realm?

In a wide-ranging article documenting the aesthetic and political effects of globalization on musics from the Middle East and Central Asia as they have traveled beyond local performance contexts, ethnomusicologist Jean During (2011) highlights a series of aesthetic transformations that many of these musics share. First, they undergo a process of "metropolization" as practices that were once mostly embedded in rural or regional contexts are lured into "world cities" like London, Paris, and New York, where demand for world music is great. According to During, metropolization tends to discourage music centered on solo performers based on improvisation and instead puts forward music ensembles, which have better visibility on the global stage.

Relevant to our discussion on cultural brokers here, turning to ensembles, During argues, offers more opportunities for local musicians to experiment with new sounds and to participate in cross-cultural collaborations. Both of these are important assets to have in order to woo international cultural patrons like NGOs,

development agencies, and institutions such as UNESCO, who determine the terms of recognition, legitimization and funding in a global musical market along with multinational music production companies. For these institutions, ensembles make a stronger impact as cultural ambassadors than individual artists. They are also more attractive for global audiences looking for something different but not alienating.

Inevitably these changes in the context of performance have an important impact on the aesthetics of performance. As During has remarked in his research with musicians from Central Asia, playing in a group tends to encourage the use of polyphony, which in turn leads to less attention to regional and local aesthetic idiosyncrasies. It also leads to effect-driven performance styles that eliminate subtle dynamics, as well as heterophonic and modal nuances that are the cornerstones for musical practice in the Middle East and Central Asia. Some of these trends are discernible in contemporary Arabic music and in Palestinian music since the 1990s, as we have seen with some of the examples cited above. However, it should be noted that the pressure to fall into the global aesthetic flow described by During is mitigated in the Palestinian context by the unresolved political situation. Palestinian musicians and artists today are more entangled than ever in the discourses surrounding culture as they strive to move beyond political music toward a more subjective aesthetic project in a context where such a project implicates dealing with cultural brokers like NGOs who have their own agendas.

In many ways the trajectory of the ensemble Sabreen, in particular, resonates with the dilemmas most Palestinian musicians and artists face today. When they first entered the Palestinian music scene in the 1980s, they felt that the political theme was something the audience could relate to, which in turn enabled them to try out new musical ideas, including the integration of Western instruments, while remaining relevant to the public (El-Ghadban 2001). In their subsequent albums, however, they debated a return to Arabic instruments. As Said Murad, one of the founding members of Sabreen, recalls, "We had been using the organ (synthesizer) and drums for a long time. We faced a very serious question: Should we put Western instruments aside and use the *ʿūd* [lute] and *qānūn* [zither] instead, or both?" (cited in El-Ghadban 2001, 31). They would eventually opt for the third option by allowing both types of instruments to play a more active role in their songs: "We have several drums with which we can apply Western-inspired rhythm techniques. We divide up the music among different drums, using certain ones to play traditional rhythms. So the listener, instead of hearing just one drum, hears the bass in all the music, emanating from all the instruments" (31).

It is not so much the mixing of Western and Arabic forms and performance styles that leaves the listener with a curious sense of simultaneous familiarity and instability. It is more likely the new role that traditional instruments like the qānūn, the ʿūd, and the *ṭablah* (Goblet drum) are assigned, suddenly coming out of the

shadow of the voice and taking on full characters in the making of the music (El-Ghadban 2001). If we were to consider the voice as the embodiment of the "music as resistance" discourse, then ceding some of its authority to the instruments in Sabreen's music, while never completely disappearing, is an eloquent metaphor to Palestinian musicians' ambiguous position in the current cultural context. This trend can be clearly heard in Suhail Khoury's music as well, particularly in the instrumental album *Jerusalem after Midnight* (2009), in which the clarinet enacts the daily routine of life with the checkpoint, playing short punctuated musical phrases against sound effects evoking ambulance sirens, gunshots, and the robotic voices of soldiers herding Palestinians. The political message is loud and clear; however, it is expressed through the voice of the clarinet as opposed to a human voice.

In cases where the voice is still prominent, as in Kamilya Jubran's latest album, *Makan,*[11] written and composed songs recreate a sense of improvisation, embedded in the ṭarab and maqām tradition but through an uneasy and often tense dialogue with the ʿūd. The melodic lines break some of the foundational characteristics of Arabic music performance style through quick register changes, flashes of atonality, ruptures in the maqām formal structure, heterophonic harmonics, chromatic slides, and sudden aggressive attacks.

As these examples show, while participating fully in the globalization of music by distancing themselves from rural-inspired political songs and embracing instrumental music on the international stage, since the 1990s the unresolved political situation has also pushed Palestinian musicians to engage with globalization critically by reacquainting themselves with a long tradition of commitment to maqām and ṭarab, dating back to before the Nakba, thus bringing Arab music practices to the forefront. The work of musicians like Issa Boulos, a strong critic of standardization tendencies in maqām tradition; of Ahmad Al Khatib, who continues to produce solo ʿūd performances; and archivists like Nader Jalal, whose organization, the Palestinian Institute for Cultural Development (NAWA), is unearthing precious recordings of ṭarab music from the pre-1948 era by Palestinian musicians, all testify to this.

Beyond Resistance Discourse

The place of culture in Palestinian society today is paradoxical. On the one hand, it offers an important counterweight to the dominant political discourse on offer, which is to say, it provides a much-needed re-presentation of identity, place, and time (Sherwell 2005)—what Rancière (2000) refers to as "dissensus" or a reconfiguration of the sensible, a transformation of the way of seeing the world and what is possible. On the other hand, there is a political field into which culture is subjected, not only in terms of which artists and musicians get recognition, or which cultural projects are funded and produced, but in terms of the roles attrib-

uted to culture in Palestinian society and the ideologies within which artists and musicians are pressured to insert their practices—that is, a cultural politics of art and music.

As we have demonstrated, Palestinian cultural production has moved through three important phases over the last one hundred years: (1) the folklorist movement phase, which attempted and succeeded in stopping the cultural cleansing of Palestinian society and identity through the meticulous collection and preservation of life histories and Palestinian heritage; (2) the emergence of an art as liberation and resistance movement through a generation of politically active artists and musicians who have kept the Palestinian cause on the international map and succeeded where politicians have failed; and (3) the period of globalization and ambivalence during the 1990s, which may have opened a window to an alternative path for art and music aesthetically, but at the same time has reinscribed them as instruments of social and economic development and as conduits for a new form of interventionism and humanitarianism. While the discourse on art and music as resistance can shed some light on some of the practices and creative strategies that dominated during each of these phases, it has tended to flatten out other roles and meanings attributed to cultural production among Palestinians, including culture as survival, as catharsis and most recently as a humanitarian project.

The music of the Palestinians is undoubtedly linked to their struggle for recognition of their rights and of their identity, but as we have seen with musicians in the 1990s, the creative strategies used to express that struggle cannot be limited to a unique model of cultural resistance. There is as much an element of seduction in turning to instrumental music as there is an element of subversion of the effects of globalization and the influence of cultural brokers—namely, the aid industry. Such ambiguity complicates any attempt at anthologizing Palestinian music through a single theme of resistance. Focusing on resistance as an interpretative frame, in other words, leaves many unanswered questions as to what happens when cultural production goes global and when it falls into the realm of humanitarian intervention. In our view the humanitarization of cultural production in Palestine combines and distorts existing discourses on Palestinian music, art, and culture. It is at once a form of survivalism as it constructs culture as a basic need no matter how emptied out of the dynamic and future-oriented dimensions that we summarized earlier. It provides catharsis while ignoring the causes that led to the wounds in the first place, limiting itself to the relieving of the symptoms of occupation rather than countering the disease. And, as in the case with Palestinian NGOs, which have lost touch with their grassroots and mobilizing origins, it compels artists to perform in the name of peacemaking and state making rather than resistance to occupation.

To return to our introduction, it is arguable that Jacir and Anani were well aware that by taking on the neoliberal and neo-capitalist agenda of the PNA, their

public intervention was bound to be problematic for the Ramallah municipality. More important, it is equally evident that these artists had chosen to subvert the funding and organizational structure of the local art world and its demand for an anaesthetized cultural commodity. Did their work succeed? Did its proclaimed political import achieve a disruption of the fabric of consensus maintained by international NGOs and donors? This is obviously a question that is impossible to answer, never mind the works being removed soon after their installation. Yet, manifest in this exercise is the precarious existence of the musician and artist in Palestine: a place between censorship and complicity, between obscurity and notoriety, where the performance of culture is commoditized at the very moment of its creation—a game of culture borne between depoliticization and resistance.

An anthology of Palestinian music needs to take into account these fundamental changes and reflect on their repercussions, on Palestinian culture in general, and on the way we have studied it up to now.

Notes

1. Ali Abunimah, "Ramallah Municipality Censors Artist Billboards," Posterous blog, July 13, 2010, http://aliabunimah.posterous.com/ramallah-municipality-censors-artist-billboar.

2. See the essay by Stig-Magnus Thorsén in this book.

3. In this chapter we define culture as a dynamic set of values, discourses, representations, and practices that may be part of, reflect, or comment on larger social issues, while politics is defined as the relations of power concerned with the representation and governance of social life. The aspect of social life that concerns us here is cultural practices and how these relations of power structure and are structured by cultural practices—in this case, music and art.

4. The comment in the title to this section is attributed to Haitian author and journalist Dany Laferrière following the January 12, 2010, earthquake that devastated Haiti.

5. Orientalist scholars visited the land in organized expeditions, which then resulted in books such as the *Palästinischer Diwan* by German theologian Gustaf H. Dalman (1901). He had collected a repertoire of traditional songs that he then listed in the book by geographical area; context of performance; and melodic, rhythmic, and poetic form. See the essay by Rachel Beckles Willson in this book.

6. See David McDonald's essay in this book.

7. See McDonald's essay in this book.

8. See Alqam 1977, Barghouti 1986, Muhawi and Kanaana 1989, Kanaana 1992, among others.

9. See the report of the International Federation of Art Councils and Culture Agencies, *Creative Intersections: Partnerships between the Arts, Culture, and other Sectors* (2012), which documents the ways governments and funding bodies have been engaging with the arts and culture as part of their national and foreign policies on education, health, the environment, social cohesion and inclusion, business, conflict resolution, institutional capacity building, and development, among others.

10. See Prince Claus Fund for Culture and Development, "3-dimensional virtual museum in Palestine," July 25, 2012, http://www.princeclausfund.org/en/activities/3-demensional-virtual-museum-in-palestine.html.

11. Kamilya Jubran, *Makan* (CD), Harmonia Mundi, 2009.

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