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THE EMERGENCE OF PALESTINIAN *MUGHTARIBÛN:* DIASPORA POLITICS AND STATE-BUILDING IN OSLO PALESTINE

Abstract
This article argues that the second generation of Palestinian *returnees*, the *mughtaribûn*, form a distinct category in the migratory flows that ensued from the Oslo accords. Mainly originating from North America and Western Europe, they actively took part in the state-building process, while simultaneously investing in their globally-oriented professional careers. These new experts partly owe their return to the investment earmarked for these "expatriate nationals" made by the United-Nations since the 1970s, endowing them with a degree of privilege in accessing political positions within the core structures of their homeland states. The *mughtaribûn* illustrates the complex history of relation between exile and power in the Palestinian national movement and a more globalized phenomenon of circulation between highly skilled diasporic actors and their homelands.

INTRODUCTION[1]

In the wake of the 1993 Oslo Accords, around 200,000 Palestinians 'returned home.' Among them was the iconic leader, Yasser Arafat. Forty-five years after the *Nakba*, or catastrophe, which sent more than three quarters of the Palestinian population into exile, the importance of this return was more than symbolic. Soon known as the *'a'îdûn*, or returnees, those former fighters and PLO activists quickly settled in the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPT) and actively participated in erecting the Palestinian National Authority (PNA), the 'autonomous' power designed by the Oslo Accords to rule the OPT alongside the Israeli administration.

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In the late 1990s, a second generation of diasporic actors started to arrive. Unlike the previous generation, these new arrivals originated from the Palestinian diasporas that had settled in North America or in Europe. Unlike the previous generation, who had returned following certain agreements between the PLO and the government of Israel or family reunification programs, new returnees arrived in the OPT for professional purposes. They were soon recruited by the new PNA ministries or the blossoming NGO-organized Palestinian civil society, both elite-oriented and largely funded by Western donors, into high level positions.[2] The new arrivals represented what Saeb Erekat calls the "tool of civilization" of the Palestinian national movement, which despite the Occupation sought to take on the manifestations of a *de facto* state.[3] The arrivals are known as the Palestinian *mughtaribûn*, which broadly translates to 'expatriates.' However, more precisely the word translates to 'estranged from us.'

The case of the *mughtaribûn* rests at the intersection between a sociology of return migration of the Palestinian political elite and one of the global field of expertise; as such, it raises several research questions. The central aim of this paper is to focus on the particularities of this migrant group in relation to the 'state-building process' in Palestine, which allows these actors to access positions of political power and state-building in their "homeland." This research asserts that, contrary to any previous Palestinian migratory wave, the *mughtaribûn* wave does not exclusively rely on the Palestinian history of exile. Instead the *mughtaribûn* are in part a result of the 'state-building process' at work since 1993. In addition, they illustrate the migratory displacements that characterized a more globalized elite specifically in their relations with internationally-sponsored state-building programs. This paper offers to analyze the particular conditions of *mughtaribûn* return through the use of the term of 'stopover.' This concept comprehensively reflects two dynamics that seem crucial to understanding the *mughtaribûn*'s conditions of return: first, the return's temporality and second, the return's position in a longer professional trajectory.

While the role of the Palestinians refugees and the *'â'idûn* in the making of the contemporary Palestinian national movement is well documented, the later phenomenon of *mughtaribûn*, which corresponds to the last period of the national movement, is poorly documented.[4] More generally, publications on return migration often explore the importance of the economic situation of the homeland, or the financial inducement directed toward the returnees that allows for their return.[5] As a result, the ties that exist

between political upheavals and return migration have been relatively unexplored.

This paper offers to bridge the gap by presenting an original contribution on the migratory trajectories and the conditions of return of the *mughtaribûn*. Looking at the broader history of Palestinian migration and exile, this paper contrasts the *mughtaribûn* with previous waves of returnees and questions the relevance of the distinction commonly made between these two groups. Building on the existing literature on return migration, and specifically Palestinian migration, this research aims to untangle the ties that exist between the political situation of the homeland and the conditions of the expatriates' return, thus exploring the diasporic participations in state-building processes. To better interpret the connections made between migratory flows and political dynamics, this paper analyzes the characteristics of 'counter brain-drain' programs that support the development of 'politics of the diaspora' since the mid-1970s.

To do so, the article will present a brief overview of the Palestinian history of exile and retrace the categories at work within the 'Palestinian diaspora' in order to illuminate the fact that the distances and boundaries are formed by power relations as much as geography. After this, it will present the use of the concept of diaspora in the Palestinian case to clarify its heuristic value. This section will aim at presenting the emergence of the category of 'expatriate nationals' at the crossroad between development programs and the growth of a globalized field of expertise. Finally, it will unfold its argument on the emergence of a new category of Palestinian returnees, the *mughtaribûn* with a detailed case study of a political institution and its members, the Negotiations Support Unit. This last section will question the relations between state-building, diasporic actors and foreign institutions in the Palestinian case.

This article utilizes different designations for territory. "Palestine," when describing the "homeland," refers to the geographical borders of the dreamt or claimed territory or the state project. "Mandatory or historical Palestine" refers specifically to pre-1948 Palestine under the British Mandate, today the Palestinian Territories: West-Bank, East-Jerusalem and Gaza plus Israel. Finally, "Occupied Palestinian Territories" (OPT) refers to the administrative territory defined by the Oslo Accords.

DISPERSED PALESTINE: REVISITING THE CATEGORIES IN USE TO DESIGNATE THE PALESTINIAN OTHERNESS

Restructured in exile after 1948,[6] the language of the national Palestinian movement is deeply characterized by the original dichotomy between "interior" and "exterior."[7] The interior refers to the territory of Mandatory Palestine, while the exterior, though demographically and politically more significant, remains merely residual, and so is defined by the negative to connote what is not geospatially inside Mandatory Palestine.[8] A close study of the Palestinian labels used to name the various segments of this exterior group shows that they vary over time, space, and commitment to the political scene. Such a presentation does not aim at crystallizing categories that will not embrace the entire complexity of legal and political realities of Palestinians living inside or outside Palestine, but aims at discussing the denomination and self-denomination of social groups in relation to the contemporary political history of the Palestinian national movement.

From the refugee to the fidâ'iyyûn: *the path to armed resistance*

In 1948, between 700,000 and 900,000 Palestinians were forced to flee Mandatory Palestine where they faced brutal military exactions and suffered under the "ethnic cleansing" policy that had presided over the creation of the state of Israel.[9] Having fled into neighboring countries of Jordan, Syria, Lebanon, and to a lesser degree Egypt, they became known as the Palestinian refugees, or *lâji'ûn* in Arabic.[10] This denomination encompassed both their legal status in the host countries; their support by a dedicated UN body, the *United Nations Relief and Work Agency* founded in 1949; and their settling in marginalized urban zones, the refugee camps.

It was within exterior refugee areas that the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), which was to become the dominant Palestinian political institution, was born in 1964. From this point on, the Organization was involved in various aspects of life in camps—education, health, labor, etc.—while rallying the quasi-totality of political forces.[11] The PLO was the structure under which most of the armed struggle and the diplomatic offensive was conducted, thus winning recognition as the "sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people" and paving the way for the right to self-determination.[12] This prevalence of the PLO in the Palestinian political and social arenas,[13] and the modality of its domination, enables us to speak of a Palestinian "quasi-state" when referring to the Organization.[14]

The Palestinian refugees formed the vast majority of the rank and file of the PLO's troops. Banned from the OPT, which fell under direct Israeli military control since 1967, the PLO's presence was mostly restricted to the exterior and its refugee camps. Yet, the PLO also existed in other countries both politically and socially: sometimes it functioned as full-blown embassies, and its youth organizations were a prelude to further diasporic or diplomatic institutions.[15] The refugee identity gained a political dimension and embodied the fate of a forcibly displaced population that was no longer, thanks to the PLO, a target population for humanitarian policies and state security services. The refugee symbolized the shared aspiration of reunification on the very day the Palestinian people would be able to enjoy its right of return. This is the meaning of the expression *al-shatât*, or dispersal, which is commonly used to designate the phenomenon of the wide dispersal of the 'Palestinian diaspora.'

While Palestinians carried out armed actions against Israel since 1948, especially from the Gaza strip under Egyptian military control, this phenomenon increased in the aftermath of the Suez crisis in 1956 and even more throughout the 1960s, with guerilla fighters crossing from Jordan and Lebanon to Israel. These fighters were soon known as the *fidâ'iyyûn*, which may be translated as 'those who accept to sacrifice themselves for a cause.' If the distinction between fighters and non-fighters does not always follow the lines of the one between interior and exterior, the most prominent, visible and publicized actions were nonetheless perpetrated by refugees, like the 1968 Karameh battle between Palestinian guerillas, Jordanian soldiers and the Israeli army. Encouraged by the PLO, which supported the diffusion of a counter-narrative to victimhood, Palestinian refugees came to incarnate better than anyone else the heroic figure of the 'freedom fighter,' thus concealing the role of non-Palestinians or Palestinians from the interior.

From exile to return, the emergence of the â'îdûn

In 1982, following the invasion of Lebanon by the Israeli army during the operation *Peace for Galilee*, the PLO was forced to flee Beirut, which up until then had been its headquarters.[16] The Palestinians found refuge in Tunis, from where they directed their operations for more than a decade. This geographical remoteness from Palestine coincided with a strengthened involvement in the diplomatic option.[17] This choice led the Palestinian movement to embark upon the negotiations that would result in the signature of the Oslo accords in 1993. The PLO agreed to postpone the discussion around implementing the Palestinian refugees' right of return to the "Final status agreement" designated

to take place in 1999. In return, the Israeli government conceded to grant the possibility of return to a few thousand Palestinians. The concession was presented as a 'gesture of goodwill' that did not involve any explicit recognition of UN General Assembly Resolution 194, which was the first to grant Palestinians a collective right of return. They thus formed a new category within this scattered population, the category of 'those who have been allowed to return.' They represented the *returnees* or '*â'îdûn* in Arabic.[18] This is the first migratory flow of this size of Palestinians who legally cross the border from this direction, coming *in* rather than *out* of Palestine, since 1948.

Roger Heacock, in his comparative study about the birth of Bosnia, Armenia and Palestine in the early 1990s, places in perspective the moment of state-building with that of the migratory waves of returnees. He thus demonstrates that this historical moment acted as a window of opportunity for returnees who often subsequently committed themselves to the construction of the state institutions.[19] Their participation seemed so crucial that the author does not hesitate to call those states "returnee states."[20] This intertwining between migratory trajectories and state-building is particularly salient in Palestine as the vast majority of these exiles returning from Tunis or elsewhere participated in the territorial settling of the PLO. The very existence of the *â'îdûn* was thus intrinsically linked to the deep-rooted upheavals that accompanied the creation of the PNA, in charge of assuming the mission of interim government defined by the Oslo Accords.

The concept of *returnee* has fueled numerous academic discussions, and evolved throughout the years from a neo-classic economic perspective to transnationalist studies with a debate largely focusing on the conditions of exile and return.[21] Yet, there remained a purely indigenous use of this notion of returnees that by no means matches its academic definition.[22] In this usage, the political proximity with the PLO, and the subsequent 'exogenous life-styles,' imported from Lebanon or Tunisia, takes precedence over the migratory trajectories. In the collective imaginary, the *'â'id* is a "Tunisian," whose life is inextricably intertwined with that of the PLO. The context of a struggle for legitimacy and for the representation of national identity, between the interior and the exterior, between those who stayed and those who returned in the wake of the PLO, largely explains the resort to a term that questions one's 'Palestinianess' and challenges one's position of power. Notwithstanding, a considerable number of Palestinians who returned in the aftermath of the Oslo accords are not identified as '*â'îdûn* within the Palestinian society, when they maintained personal ties with the interior,

despite the experience of exile and their proximity to the PLO. The use of the label turns out to be so associated with a power position, rather than a migratory past, that it is often used within the political arena to delegitimize an adversary.

Malki and Shalabi estimate that in 2000 around 10% of the Palestinians living in the OPT were returnees[23] an estimate that Hanafi confirms in his own study.[24] However, the common use of the term *'â'îdûn* in Palestine refers more to a position of power than to migratory situation. The *'â'id* does not stand out due to a socio-economical situation, family network, or any other particularities but rather because of the individual's proximity to the center of the newly erected power and its involvement in the so-called state-building process. In the context of the failed promise of an independent Palestinian state, the *'â'id* becomes the incarnation of the connivance or the compromise with Israel and the wrongdoing of the PNA.

The Rise of the mughtaribûn

The late 1990s made visible another segment of the population which had previously been largely absent from the national narrative. These were the *mughtaribûn*, who, due either to their living condition in exile or status with the UNRWA, were not refugees. Instead, they belong to the category of Palestinians who grew up and lived abroad, outside the Levantine region. If the term *mughtaribûn* includes the Palestinians of the Gulf, who were to become the main players in the young Palestinian economy, it first and foremost refers to Palestinians who arrived from Western Europe or North America in the wake of the Peace Process with the intention of settling in Palestinian towns.[25]

Their return, in contrast to the migratory trajectory of the *'â'îdûn*, was not the consequence of any prior commitment towards the PLO. Rather, it resulted from the radical transformation of the job market exin the West Bank, which nabbed a migratory influx of highly qualified labor in support of the state-building project. Designated as *mughtaribûn* by the Palestinians from the OPT—a label that implicitly casts them as foreigners—they prefer to introduce themselves as of the 'Palestinian diaspora.' This self-qualification is not neutral, and partially harkens back to the representation that these players entertain of their own migration. Indeed, if this conceptual category of diaspora was forged in the arena of the social sciences with the emergence of Diaspora Studies as an autonomous field, it was to become an object of public policy in the late 1980s, either from international organizations or national administrations. This self-identification as a diasporic actor establishes a

difference in terms of temporality from other forms of reverse Palestinian migration, like the *'â'îdûn*, whose return is *a priori* definitive. The difference is also one of scale: while the *'â'id* is first and foremost a Palestinian political subject anchored in a history of forced migration, the *mughtarib* incarnates a more globalized and connected history, within which the intensity and the frequency of migratory displacements were becoming the norm.[26]

THE PALESTINIAN DIASPORA: BETWEEN SCHOLARLY AND POLIICAL USES OF A CONCEPT

The very use of the concept "diaspora" to apprehend the scattered Palestinian population does not come without questions. If this term provides a useful analytical framework to approach a particular social category that voluntarily and legally lives outside Palestine, it also harkens back to academic debates concerning the usefulness of the concept to describe the permanency of refugeehood among Palestinians.[27]

The "Palestinian case" in scientific literature

In his article "The 'Diaspora' Diaspora", Roger Brubaker, after having provided a full-length critical overview of the notion in social sciences, attempts to identify the constituent elements in its definition which enable a consensus among the major authors. He singles out three criteria which need to be fulfilled for a migrant group to qualify as diasporic. First, they must be dispersed among several countries other than their homeland. Second, they must have an "orientation" towards the real or imagined homeland, constituent of a certain way of presenting oneself, and a wellspring of individual and collective action. Lastly, they must have preserved an identity distinct from that of the host country.[28]

Nevertheless, as pointed out by Basma Kodmani-Darwish, the use of this concept to refer to the Palestinian situation is anything but self-evident, and continues to be vigorously debated within the scientific community.[29] Elias Sanbar questions the relevance of the concept of diaspora in designating a population in majority composed of refugees—53% of the Palestinian population in exile[30]—when this characteristic elicits highly different practices from those identified as diasporic.[31] However, it seems that the majority of studies which attempt to apply the concept of diaspora to the Palestinian population focus their attention on the identity construction of Palestinians in exile, without trying to articulate this phenomenon with the political

transformations brought about by the territorialization of the Palestinian political power[32] or proposing a diasporic reading of the Palestinian history of the last century.[33] The latter proposition challenges any reading of Palestinian social history as dichotomized between an interior and exterior seen as crystalized and intangible; instead, it highlights the importance of migratory flows between the interiors and the refugee camps towards an "extensive diaspora" which "literally stretches to all continents."[34]

The use of this category in the Palestinian case is also made uncertain by the first occurrences of the concept of 'diaspora,' emphasizing the porosity of the frontiers between scholarly and political discourse. The Jewish diaspora is often set up as an archetypal model in the literature on diasporas, to the extent that some of the definitions proposed as a model for this concept in fact derive directly from this historical experience.[35] If this reference has been at times challenged by certain authors who wish to enlarge the basis of historical references to other populations, or to call into question the paradigmatic nature of Jewish dispersal, it definitely comes with another meaning from the Palestinian point of view. Indeed, if the issue of return within the frontiers of the 'homeland' is a defining element of the diasporic character of a population, in the present case the good fortune of the former—the Zionist movement and the Jewish diaspora's return to *Eretz Israel*, the land of Israel —is the source of the misfortunes of the latter. One might say that this represents the continuation, in the field of memory, of a conflict which is never-ending in its territorial dimension.[36] Accordingly, the adoption of the diaspora reference to designate the Palestinian population takes on a political dimension which cannot be brushed aside. It is in itself a challenge to the national Jewish narrative—Zionist and then Israeli—and an imaginary re-appropriation of its territory.

Kamel Doraï offers a very different reading of the recourse to the concept of 'homeland' in the Palestinian case.[37] For him, it is precisely the PLO abandonment of the demand for sovereignty over the totality of the territory of Historical Palestine that has made it possible for Palestinians to distinguish between their national territory and their "imaginary motherland", between the political framework and the founding myth. In other words, Oslo was not only the birth certificate of the Palestinian National Authority, but it was also that of its diaspora. Remaining in a grey zone, Palestinians living in Israel are neither in the diaspora nor in the national territory.

From the Palestinian "political diaspora" to a Palestinian policy of diaspora

In an attempt to grasp the contours of what constitutes a diaspora, several authors have put together typologies, along the lines of the type of social network envisaged, the transnational character of migrant groups involved, or the characteristics of local organizations. Basing his typology on the last of these three, Michel Bruneau claims that the Palestinian diaspora is a "political diaspora."[38] Behind this label resides the idea that the institutions of the diaspora are in fact for the most part "political," as opposed to "entrepreneurial diasporas" such as the Lebanese and Chinese, or "religious diasporas" such as the Jewish and Greek.[39] He also argues that diaspora constitutes a pool of "resources" for the state of origin. Bruneau invites us to focus on the resources of diasporic actors in regard to their value in the homeland state, which in the case of this study are certain political competences, to describe their position in the diaspora. His approach helps in understanding the 'downgrade' of Palestinian refugees amongst the diaspora as a consequence of a deficiency in the resources needed to participate in the ongoing 'state-building process."[40]

While the refugees of the Palestinian camps were well endowed in militant capital, the expatriates are rather endowed with economic, social or cultural forms of capital, whose value and reconversion went on growing along with the process of state-building.[41] For instance, the financial participation of the Palestinian diaspora in the economic basis required by state-building has been studied in detail by Sari Hanafi, who cross-references the experiences of Palestinians from the Gulf, investors and "philanthropists", partners of the new Palestinian National Authority, and the booming Palestinian private sector.[42] To use the words of Francesco Ragazzi, the Palestinian diaspora comes to be a recruitment pool for highly qualified "guest workers."[43]

The issue of diaspora has also benefitted from a renewed attention at the instigation of United Nations programs aiming to counter the "brain-drain" effect on the southern countries, and to set up instruments facilitating the return of exiles to their country of origin. This is the TOKTEN program, which was experimentally implemented for the first time in Turkey (1977) through the United Nations Program for Development (UNDP), and later come into its own in Africa and South-East Asia.[44] Under the slogan "TOKTEN channels global expertise back home," the UNDP sets up mechanisms to solve issues that are particular to these development programs, for example, the need for technical expertise and fast-track installation in the host country as well as the struggle against the spiraling cost of expatriate experts. This is illustrated through the TOKTEN-Lebanon program:

> The TOKTEN concept is a global UNDP mechanism for tapping on expatriate nationals, who had migrated to other countries and achieved professional success abroad, and mobilizing them to undertake short-term consultancies in their countries of origin, under UN aegis. The TOKTEN approach is regarded as an added dimension of technical cooperation, which contributes to reducing the adverse effects of the "brain-drain", with several advantages such as the shared language and traditions, relatively low cost and speed of implementation.[45]

Contrary to the UNHCR's "Voluntary Repatriation" program, which aims to bring "back home" refugees who recently fled and for the most part live in camps, the TOKTEN program specifically targets a category of the diaspora already well-established abroad.[46] Nevertheless, both programs intend to facilitate individual returns, therefore creating a returnee population. However, the two have very different approaches and goals. While the UNHCR aims at putting an end to a situation of forced exile, the TOKTEN initiative builds on expatriate nationals' skills to help them implement development programs in their homeland, therefore participating in a complete repackaging of the link between the expatriate or exile and his homeland.

Noting a shortfall in various specific skills in the target country for the setting up of program of development, the UNPD created consultancy positions reserved for expatriate nationals. This interest in the diasporas of the South rests on a series of assumptions concerning the aptitudes of these actors—especially professional, but also linguistic and cultural—which are purportedly conducive to their immersion in their countries of origin.[47] Though the validity of such assumptions and their consequences are debatable, even under the aegis of "short-term consultancy," the TOKTEN program succeeded in introducing the United Nations—and later the private sector and government agencies—in the economy of returnee migratory trajectories, thus favoring the spread of its practices. It was these three components—UNPD, governmental institutions, and foreign companies—which were to be found in the development of a consultancy firm specialized in negotiation which came into existence in the OPT in 1998.

The Negotiations Support Unit: *Diaspora at the core of the 'Peace Process'*

In the course of the emergence of the PNA and the return of the leadership cadres of the PLO to the OPT, the rules of access, cooptation, and creation of political positions were the expression of a constantly changing balance of power between those who had arrived in the wake of the Oslo accords, and those who were already in the Territories and who had never left. These struggles were notably expressed in the composition of the negotiating teams, directed by Saeb Erekat. The current general secretary of the PLO executive committee was once a professor at al-Najah University in Nablus and one of the rare holders of a PhD to be sitting at the negotiation table.[48]

The period was also characterized by an intense diplomatic effort in which state actors were legion. Present on the diplomatic front, such actors, mainly European or North American, were also involved with the aid program for the setting up of the Authority and its different components, within the framework of various state or institution-building programs. These programs were implemented very concretely through mechanisms of direct funding, cooperation and outplacement of advisers to assist ministers. This state of affairs is still ongoing: the European Union remains, for instance, the prime source of funding for the PNA, to the extent that it picks up the tab for a large part of the payroll of Palestinian civil servants.

It was in this context that the Negotiations Support Unit (NSU) came into existence. Its birth draws from the development of an international field of expertise in conflict resolution and post-conflict intervention as well as the pursuit of negotiations and the emergence of an Authority tasked to pave the road for a future state of Palestine.[49] The NSU is a legal consultancy firm for the PLO's negotiators set up by Adam Smith International (ASI), a private company that specializes in institutional reforms for its clients. It is funded by aid programs set up by several European countries including the United Kingdom, Sweden, Denmark, and Norway, among others. Inaugurated in 1998, this agency was managed until 2010 by Andrew Kuhn, an ASI economist. Early in 2010, the PLO decided to withdraw the leadership of the NSU from ASI. Since then, the UNPD has been in charge of carrying on administrative business, while the PLO defines the missions of the NSU and assumes its leadership. The ASI's tutelage has thus given way to a dual leadership: on the one hand, the PLO Negotiations Affairs Department headed by Erekat is in charge of steering the NSU; on the other, the UNPD centralizes the funding of donors and participates in the recruitment of advisors, in majority originating from the Palestinian diaspora.[50] These job opportunities are funneled through

expatriates' channels in the OPT, for example, specific websites, mailing lists of the major NGOs and international organizations, etc. Here is a sample of their wording:

> An international development consultancy wishes to recruit several highly skilled, energetic and dedicated professionals to its donor-funded project, the Negotiations Support Unit, in Ramallah. The NSU's mandate is to provide expert legal, policy and communications advice to the Negotiations Affairs Department of the PLO and related Palestinian institutions on a range of issues related to permanent status negotiations and the development of a Palestinian state. All candidates must be fluent in English and Arabic (knowledge of other languages is an asset), have excellent academic qualifications, a detailed understanding of the Palestinian- Israeli conflict, and a proven track record of working in teams, liaising with government organisations and delivering work to tight deadlines.[51]

Contrary to the TOKTEN program, the diasporic dimension of the recruitment does not figure explicitly in the job offer. For several reasons, the first being the division of labor between "expats", "expat-nationals" and "nationals' which causes a variety of profiles to cohabit within the institution, though the majority of legal and political advisors between 1998 and today originate from the diaspora. The second reason is that the priority granted to the Palestinians of the diaspora has been a source of tension between the leadership and the employees of the NSU. The answer addressed by Erekat to the employees who were asking for a boost in local employment clearly bears witness to this, "All Palestinian candidates (whether recruited from the West Bank or elsewhere) should be considered. It would be wrong in principle as well as in practice to draw a distinction between 'local' and 'foreign' Palestinians."[52] By these words, Saeb Erekat was highlighting what he had already emphasized in 2012 during an interview:

> Those recruited will be the best. And if the best means our Palestinians who studied at Harvard or Yale, and believe me there are a lot, to the detriment of the graduates from Birzeit, I have no trouble with that.[53] One is just as Palestinian as the other, and they speak perfect English, which is already a plus for diplomatic dealings.

This was to be reiterated by him live in 2012 on Al Jazeera *in English*'s "Head to Head": "I have 22 lawyers in my team, they are Palestinians from all over the world. From Chili, Argentina, London, Paris, Harvard, Italy, Canada, the best of the best."

The NSU thus appears to be a vantage point for the observation of the conditions of return of these *mughtaribûn* in their relationship with the homeland. It does indeed offer the opportunity to study, over a period of fifteen years or so, the particularities of the entry, residence and departure of such actors, and to highlight a certain number of invariables which distinguish them from earlier migratory flows. As previously highlighted for the *'â'îdûn*, the label *mughtaribûn* does not embrace the entire Palestinian population that returned to Palestine from Western countries since Oslo, but the ones close to power. Therefore, among many sites of observation to the phenomenon of return in Palestine, the NSU offers an essential quality: the institution by itself belongs to the state apparatus. NSU employees are at the front line in establishing the Palestinian state through the PLO negotiation efforts. Moreover, the NSU mandate encourages the recruitment of diasporic actors however most of them have left the OPT. As a result of the high turnover of *mughtaribûn*, this research relies on private and government archives as well as interviews conducted inside and outside the OPT. The institutional memory illustrated by primary and secondary sources, provides me with an extensive overview of the NSU team throughout its existence.

A RETURN TO THE PALESTINIAN TOP ECHELONS, AND FURTHER

The return of the Palestinians of the diaspora is above all a question of individual migratory trajectory, clashing head on, in the Palestinian context, with the exercise of a collective right of return for the refugees. It is not that the former is an obstacle to the latter; rather, that they obey diametrically opposed logics. Indeed, if the right to return is a juridical answer to a situation of forced exile, the return of the individual actors of the diaspora is a response to quite different contingencies. This research shows that it mainly revolves around patterns of professional choice.

Migratory trajectories limited in time

Unlike the return of the refugees, which is supposed to happen within the framework of an Israeli-Palestinian peace agreement, the return of the

mughtaribûn is taking place while Israeli colonization is still under way. Consequently, these Palestinians only dispose of passports issued by their countries of adoption or exile (their 'host land') and can enter the OPT only under the condition of having been delivered an Israeli tourist visa. This three-month visa is the only means of working on the West Bank, as the Israeli authorities do not deliver a work visa to anyone working for an institution based inside the Territories.[54] This restriction is the first barrier to the permanent, or durable, settlement of the diasporic members of the NSU on the territory of the Palestinian National Authority. As Elizabeth Al-Jayyusi* notes:

> I could make an application for a Palestinian identity card, which would transit through the Israeli Ministry of Civil Affairs [official denomination of the West Bank Military administration], sole authority able to deliver such papers. The process is long, and I would end up being treated as a Palestinian of the Territories and not as a British citizen, I would lose the right to go to Jerusalem or to fly from Ben Gurion airport, in Tel-Aviv. The restrictions on travel are the main reason for my not applying for it, even if I have to leave every three months.[55]

If the NSU members' short period of settlement is partly due to the conditions, or rather the virtual impossibility for any foreigner of taking up residence in the OPT, it also corresponds to other types of rationale. In his autobiographical book, Ziyad Clot, a French-Palestinian lawyer, describes how, during a dinner party where he met the administrators of the NSU, he was attracted by the idea of contributing his experience as a lawyer—even though he was trained and employed in business law—to help in resolving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.[56] His experience is thus fairly symptomatic of what a temporary appointment as an advisor—be it juridical or political—with the NSU may represent in the career of some of its members. Though Clot was not destined for a 'global' career when he joined his first legal firm in Paris, and was still less prone to Middle-Eastern leanings, this first experience enabled Clot to acquire a set of skills, accumulating social and cultural capitals that finally facilitated his own settlement in the Middle East after quitting the NSU.[57] For Miriam Mansour,* joining the NSU provided the opportunity to "reconcile [her] professional career with her wish to spend more time in Palestine."[58] She had indeed pursued a career as a legal advisor for an international court, which has enabled her to be appointed to a

prestigious position within the NSU since 2012. Her experience at the side of the Palestinian diplomats who have been successful in assuring the accession of Palestine to the International Criminal Court has strengthened her resolve to pursue a career with the international jurisdictions. Like many other experts, she would "never have worked for the NSU if it had been directly affiliated to the PLO" and, consequently, "does not consider embarking on a career as a senior Palestinian civil servant."

While these examples demonstrate that working for the NSU can serve as a springboard towards an international career, a detour with the NSU may also provide advancement within the system of Anglo-Saxon higher education. Rashid Marwan* provides a good example. This Canadian citizen is the offspring of two Palestinian exiles, his mother coming from a Lebanese camp, and his father from Jordan. After graduating with a BA in Political Science, he obtained a Master in International Relations, but on a "second class" campus.[59] Once he had graduated, he was recruited by the NSU, which enabled him to travel to the OPT for the first time. In conjunction with his role as a political advisor, he taught for a year at the Al-Quds University, in the framework of a department set up in partnership with an American university, Bard College. After this experience, he applied for a position again at the top-notch universities, which had turned him down in 2010, and was recruited by Oxford University in September 2014.[60] Another colleague of his gained admittance to a Business School in Paris, where courses are exclusively taught in English in order to attract international students.[61]

Among the NSU members who come from the Palestinian diaspora, very few stood out as exceptions to this rule of partial or limited return. One of them, Eduardo Bseisso* has followed an atypical course. [62] By all appearances, Bseisso is representative of the Palestinians "of the South," since he originates from a Latin American country; he is one of the rare few to have been appointed to the NSU without a Master's degree. A former member of the General Union of Palestinian Students, the PLO branch for youth, he spent all his summers in Palestine, in his grandfather's village, and aspired "no longer to be militant for this country alone, but also for Palestine, which had always been part of [his] family universe."[63] It was thus the desire to "resettle" in Palestine which brought him back to the West Bank, where he now lives in his family village. After he joined the ruling party, Fatah, he became a communication officer for the NSU, liaising with the Spanish-speaking media. Hailing from the diaspora, but having applied for a Palestinian identity card,

he is also the only *mughtarib* of the NSU I met who wishes to settle with his family in the OPT and pursue a career in the Palestinian diplomatic service.

The return—which it would be more appropriate to call a "stopover"—of the *mughtaribûn* is thus typically limited in time because of the conditions imposed by the Israeli occupation, which hinder foreigners from settling permanently in the OPT. Unless one accepts the precariousness of a status constantly to be renewed, that of a tourist, it is not possible to permanently reside in the OPT as a foreigner.[64] It is thus different from the migratory trajectory of the *'â'idûn*, who settled in the OPT for good upon returning. Additionally, the *mughtaribûn* differ from the *'â'idûn* in another way. While the latter returned in the wake of the PLO, which they had already served in exile, the *mughtaribûn* have developed a more individual approach to their career, pursued first and foremost abroad, and outside the Palestinian institutions.

The "stopover", a professional milestone in an international career

In a letter addressed to the director of the NSU in 2010, when the PLO was preparing the withdrawal of Adam Smith International, the negotiators of the NSU raised a series of questions concerning their relations with the PLO. It is true that the NSU *ad hoc* administrative structure helped its employees navigate throughout the Palestinian political turmoil generated by the Intifada or the 2006 Hamas' electoral victory, but one cannot exclude that their demand to steer clear of the PLO also serve personal and professional purposes. In fact, many of them have confirmed in private interviews their wish not "to be directly affiliated with the PLO, because of the problems that might entail [for them]." One NSU staff member pointed out: "How can one convince people that one is just a consultant, when one is associated with an organization which some people think is still engaged in armed struggle?"[65] The terms of the letter are more measured, but tend to corroborate this testimony concerning the fear of a negative impact on people's careers:

> The current arrangement, whereby NSU staff, and external experts, are consultants with a contract for services with a private management company, has allowed the NSU to operate without any risk for its staff and consultants of liability or prosecution under US and other States' anti-terrorism legislation, including after Hamas' electoral victory and formation of the national unity government. The concern that many

> staff have is not merely over the formal identity of the party "signing" the contract. It is with the nature of the employment relationship itself and the identity of the actual employer.[66]

Concerning most of the *mughtaribûn*, the period of 'return' corresponds perfectly to the duration of their employment by the NSU. The recurrence of this observation seems to indicate that it is often not so much the return that encourages one to apply for and find job opportunities, but that in fact the opportunity to work with the NSU prompts the return. In other words, the *mughtaribûn* 'come home' for a specific job and the vast majority quit Palestine once their contract ended, a contract that provided some with salaries as high as 6,700 dollars a month, about ten times the average salary of a Palestinian civil servant.[67]

The false promise of the expatriate nationals

The careers of expatriate nationals seem to benefit from their employer's assumptions about the kind of professional skills imparted by the diasporic condition. In confronting these assumptions with the aptitudes observed, and the social practices of the *mughtaribûn*, an analytical approach jeopardizes the preconceptions in circulation in the international organizations regarding the skillset held by expatriate nationals. For instance, although some are able to hold a conversation in colloquial Arabic, none of the NSU advisors "from the diaspora" were talented Arabic readers. If it is true that their working language is English, fluency in Arabic is nevertheless one of the prerequisites posted on job vacancy announcements. Yet, the recruitment process does not include any language test.[68] It also highlights the notable difference between these trajectories and those of the *'a'îdûn*, in the light of a sociology of Palestinian migrations. More than a generational effect between migratory waves, I am in fact discussing two distinct phenomena: on the one hand, the permanent return of exiles accompanying a 'state-building process', on the other, the 'stopovers' of expatriate nationals on the territory of their homeland.

TOKTEN-like programs justify their preference for expatriate nationals by their supposed 'facility of integration' what is defined as a "shared language and traditions" and "speed of implementation." Nonetheless, in the course of my interviews with the advisors of the NSU, it turned out that only one of them lived outside Ramallah, the *de facto* capital where virtually the entire expat community of the West Bank lives. They reside mainly in two

recently-constructed neighborhoods that have come into their own with the urban development experienced by Ramallah over the last two decades: al-Massioun and al-Tireh, the residential districts of the Palestinian power elite or the wealthiest expatriates.[69] The *mughtaribûn* occupy their own apartments even if they are not married, sometimes living in co-tenancy—including mixed ones. In this they sense maintain a 'foreigner's' way of life in the midst of a Palestinian city. The same parallel can be drawn between their leisure practices or social networks and those of non-Palestinian foreigners. The similarity between the *mughtaribûn*'s way of life and that of foreigners in the OPT, far from being a moral judgment, helps in distinguishing them from the previous *'â'îdûn*.

Their supposed 'facility of integration' would assume similar social practices as Palestinians from the interior or *'â'îdûn* way of life. Yet, my research shows that no evidence for such proximity exists. In this sense, expatriate nationals are first and foremost expatriate. This category does not arise from an empirical-based observation, but from a top-down series of assumptions regarding the socio-economical profile of diasporic actors in relation to a professional 'return.' In exchange, positions at the NSU offer the *mughtaribûn* the chance of being recruited by a United Nations-affiliated institution. The NSU also allows the *mughtaribûn* to become closely involved in one of the most complex diplomatic portfolios, mixing the steering of bilateral negotiations with diplomatic advocacy, UN bids, supranational jurisdictions' procedures, and more.

When examining their positions after leaving the NSU, *mughtaribûn* acknowledge that their 'stopover" in the OPT was a valuable career decision. Upon the leaving the OPT they can be found working in the dominant institutions of their newly acquired professional fields, be it academic, expertise, international organization, big NGO or governmental agencies. These are highly prized posts on the ultra-competitive international job market. In experience of Farah Thiab,* a former political advisor for the NSU, it was the close working proximity with the Israeli-Palestinian negotiations that provided top-rank connections that largely benefitted her freelance consulting position. The position is, in her own words: " the dream of every student in 'Conflict Resolution' and an unbelievable practical experience."[70]

Entering the category of 'expatriate national' provides individuals a competitive edge, largely based on a widespread misreading of aptitudes as explained above, which enables one to enter a globalized job market at a cut price, palliating both lack of academic merit and prior professional

experience.[71] It thus appears mandatory, in order to clearly retrace the outline of these migratory trajectories, not only to embed the *mughtaribûn* in their relationship with the country of origin and the host country, but to study them through the prism of the professional field within which the expatriates are inserted. This distinctive character of their professional 'migration' definitively differentiates them from the *'â'idûn.*

CONCLUSION

In view of the Palestinian experience of migration, the *mughtaribûn* form a specific category. Following the *'â'idûn*, they form a second generation of Palestinians who have taken the inverse route of exile, however in fewer numbers. Their trajectory confirms the impact that the Palestinian National Authority has had on Palestinian migratory flows, since these returns have been outstandingly linked to state-building. More than returning to the OPT for the state-building process, observations show that anticipation of the potential for improved career opportunities within the globalized job market is an additional motivation for the *mughtaribûn's* return.

The *mughtaribûn* are distinguished from the *'â'idûn* both in their aptitudes—graduate 'migrancy,' low-profile militant past, no prior relationship with the exiled Palestinian institutions—but also in the conditions of their 'return.' I have suggested in this paper that scholars should adopt the use of the term "stopover" instead of "return" in order to distinguish the *mughtaribûn's* presence in the OPT from the *â'idûn,* thus more accurately reflecting the punctual character of this Palestinian moment. It is finally to be noted that these passages very largely fit into the progress of a professional career, rather than into a militant trajectory or a personal history. In this sense, this category of *mughtaribûn* also represents a local manifestation of the effects of globalization on certain professional sectors.

It is indeed impossible to understand the migratory trajectories of the *mughtaribûn* without recalling the role played by the policy of struggle against the "brain-drain" introduced in the 1970s, which made *returnees* a target population for programs whose aim was to develop links between the countries of origin and the players of the diaspora. The implementation of these policies enabled the creation of a market segment of reserved expertise. In the case of Palestine, the demand for technical expertise to accompany the negotiations, and more specifically, the 'judiciarization' of the Israel-Palestine conflict, has enabled the return of several dozens of *mughtaribûn* who specialize in such questions. The attractiveness of these stopovers in the country of origin is in

part the rapid accumulation of capital that one can retrace in the high-profit conversion of such capital on exiting the 'stopover.' This paper suggests that the phenomenon of the stopover of expatriate nationals witnessed in Palestine through the case of the *mughtaribûn* is a component in the making of a globalized market of expertise. An exploratory research trip in Tunis suggested that other countries, in the wake of the Arab spring, offer similar conditions for indigenous phenomena of *mughtaribûn* that could emerge in the coming years.

NOTES

[1] I would like to thank the European Research Program WAFAW and his Principal Investigator, François Burgat, the multiple known and unknown colleagues who patiently reviewed this article and shared with me their fruitful critics. Among them, Vincent Geisser, Claire Beaugrand, and Julia Daley. The author would like to thank the two anonymous referees for their suggestions and comments and the editors of *Mashriq & Mahjar* for their support. In order to protect anonymity of the interviewees all names have been changed. Pseudonyms are indicated with an asterisk

[2] Benoît Challand, *Palestinian Civil Society. Foreign donors and the power to promote and exclude* (London and New York: Routledge, 2009), 84.

[3] "Have the Palestinian leaders failed their people?" *Al Jazeera*, last modified February 28, 2014, http://www.aljazeera.com/programmes/headtohead/2014/02/palestinian-leadership-failed-people-201422117215875031 6.html.

[4] On the *mughtaribûn*, see for example the publications (English and Arabic) of Shaml-Palestinian Diaspora & Refugee Center; Majdi Malki and Yasser Shalabi, *Internal migration and Palestinian returnees in West Bank and Gaza strip*, (Ramallah: MAS, 2000); Nadine Picaudou and Isabelle Rivoal, ed., *Retours en Palestine, trajectoires, rôle et expérience des* returnees *dans la société palestinienne de l'après-Oslo* [Return journeys to Palestine: trajectories, role and experience of *Returnees* in Post-Oslo Palestinian society] (Paris: Karthala, 2008). On the refugees's participation there are countless publications. For a valuable historical documentation, see Yezid Sayigh, *Armed Struggle and the Search for State. The Palestinian National Movement, 1949–1993* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999).

[5] See for example David Zweig, Siu Fung Shu and Wilfried Vanhonacker, "Rewards of technology: Explaining China's reverse migration," *Journal of International Migration and Integration* 7 no. 4 (2007): 449–71; Elizabeth Chacko, "From Brain Drain to Brain Gain: Reverse migration to Bangalore, Hyberabad, India's globalizing high tech cities," *GeoJournal*, 68, no. 2–3 (2007): 131–40.

[6] While the article focuses on its contemporary institutionalization in exile (with the creation of the Palestine Liberation Organization and parties such as Fatah or the Arab Nationalist Movement, later the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine) it does not intend to cast doubt on the existence, or the crucial importance of a Palestinian national movement during the Mandate period and before.

[7] The distinction interior/exterior draws from the work of Camille Mansour, *Les Palestiniens de l'intérieur: les arrière-plans politiques, économiques et sociaux de l'Intifada* [Palestinian from the interior: Political, economical and social background of the Intifada] (Beirut: Institute for Palestine Studies, 1989). It differs from the inside/outside used by Palestinians from the interior to distinguish between those living inside the Green line (1949 armistice borders also known as (pre-)1967 borders that refers to the OPT) and those living beyond the line, in Israel.

[8] This typology borrows the categories used by Roger Brubaker in his introduction "The Institution of Citizenship" in Roger Brubaker, *Citizenship and Nationhood in France and Germany*, 2nd ed., (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1998), 21–34.

[9] Out of 12 million Palestinians in 1948. The Reconciliation Committee of the UN speaks of 726,000 refugees, the bracket indicated originates from Benny Morris, *The Birth of the Palestinian refugees problem revisited* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003) and Ilan Pappe, *The Ethnic Cleansing of Palestine* (London and New York: Oneworld, 2006).

[10] Palestinians living in Gulf countries, Europe or the Americas have no access to the refugee status. In 2015, they represent around 47% of the Palestinians established abroad from different waves of migration. Displaced families from what became Israel were to live in refugee camps in Gaza and the West Bank, an internally displaced population that shares certain legal and political characteristics with those living abroad.

[11] Notably excluding the Islamist parties, Hamas and Movement of Islamic Jihad which were to emerge in the 1980s inside the OPT.

[12] "Resolution on Palestine," *Seventh Arab League Summit Conference* (Rabat, October 28, 1974).

[13] Charitable Associations, Trade Unions or Financial institutions are placed under the tutelage of the PLO.

[14] Rashid Khalidi, "Que peuvent les Palestiniens ?" [What can the Palestinians do?], *Politique Étrangère* 3 (2009): 651–62.

[15] The *General Union of Palestinian Students,* is the main example of this. However, it was mainly the refugee students from Lebanon, Syria and Jordan who went abroad to study—in the US, in Western Europe, but also in Cuba or the USSR—who were to compose the ranks of the GUPS. It thus represents more a prolongation of institutions present on the local level than the birth of 'diasporic' institutions.

[16] Arab historiography refers to this military episode as *al-Ijtiyâh,* the invasion.

[17] Whose birth originated in 1974, with the admission of the PLO to the Arab League and as observer member of the UN. This first accession to the UN was highlighted by Arafat's famous speech: "I have come bearing an olive branch and a freedom fighter's gun. Do not let the olive branch fall from my hand."

[18] As already in the original French-language version of this paper, the English term, *returnees* is used here when a more general aspect of the phenomenon is under discussion, and the Arabic term *â'îdûn* (singular: 'â'id) when it is necessary to specifically designate the Palestinian *returnees.*

[19] Roger Heacock, *The Becoming of Returnees States: Palestine, Armenia and Bosnia* (Birzeit: Birzeit University Press, 1999).

[20] Heacock, "Conclusion: Evaluating the Model," in *The Becoming of Returnees States*, 57. On this occasion, he recalls the importance of two elements: the individual and collective memories of the years in exile, and a relatively short timeline between exile and return. This insistence on historicity enables him to distinguish his model of the *Returnee State* from that of a *Settler State*, which Israel exemplifies paroxystically, in which the experience of exile is first and foremost embedded in collective memory, rather than in the experience of generations still living.

[21] To further the discussion, see Jean-Pierre Cassarino. "Theorising Return Migration: The Conceptual Approach to Return Migrants Revisited." *International Journal on Multicultural Societies* 6, no. 2 (2004): 253–279.

[22] Isabelle Rivoal, "Conclusions," *Retours en Palestine*, 222.

[23] 267 355, according to Majdi Malki and Yasser Shalabi, *Internal migration.*

[24] Sari Hanafi, "Revenir dans les territoires : *returnees,* zones de souveraineté et crise de l'état-nation," in Nadine Picaudou et Isabelle Rivoal, eds., *Retours en Palestine, trajectoires, rôle et expérience des* returnees *dans la société palestinienne de l'après-Oslo*, 27.

[25] See for example Sari Hanafi: "La diaspora palestinienne et la reconversion des capitaux issus de la rente pétrolière" [The Palestinian diaspora and the reconversion of unearned capital assets from the Oil industry], *Tiers-Monde* 41, no. 63 (2000), 623–43.

[26]They are in this sense characteristic of the international flows identified by Arjun Appadurai, shown to be less attached to the defense of a territory than to that of a set of rights. See: *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1996).

[27] Sari Hanafi, "Rethinking the Palestinians Abroad as a Diaspora: The Relationships between the Diaspora and the Palestinian Territories," *Hagar International Social Science Review* 4, no. 1–2: 157–182.

[28] Rogers Brubaker, "The 'diaspora' diaspora," *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 28, no. 1 (2005): 1–19.

[29] Bassma Kodmani-Darwish, "La question des réfugiés et l'émergence d'une diaspora palestinienne" [The question of refugees and the emergence of the Palestinian diaspora], *Confluences Méditerranée* 9 (1994): 53–60. See also Mohamed Kamel

Doraï's chapter: "Les Palestiniens : vers l'émergence d'une diaspora de réfugiés ?" [The Palestinians, towards the emergence of a diaspora of refugees ?], *in* Lisa Anteby-Yemini, William Berthomière, and Gabriel Sheffer, eds., *Les diasporas, 2000 ans d'histoire*, [Diasporas : 2000 years of History] (Rennes: Presses Universitaires de Rennes, 2005), 211–23.

[30] Xavier Guignard, "1994-2011: L'édification de L'Autorité Nationale Palestinienne et la permanence des réfugiés palestiniens au Liban" [1994-2011: The Edification of the Palestinian National Authority and the Permanence of the presence of Palestinian refugees in Lebanon] (Master Thesis, Université Paris 1 Panthéon Sorbonne, 2011).

[31] Elias Sanbar, "La diaspora palestinienne. Entretien avec Elias Sanbar" [The Palestinian diaspora. Interview with Elias Sanbar], *Hérodote* 53 (1989): 70–83. Also Julie Peteet, "Problematizing a Palestinian Diaspora," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 39, no. 4 (2007): 627–46.

[32] For example, Juliane Hammer, *Palestinians Born in Exile* (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 2009); Helena Lindholm Schulz, *The Palestinian Diaspora*, (London: Routledge, 2005); Elizabeth Mavroudi, "Learning to be Palestinian in Athens: Constructing National Identities in Diaspora," *Global Networks* 7, no. 4 (2007): 392–411.

[33] Samih K. Farsoun, "Palestinian Diaspora," in Melvin Ember, Carol R. Ember, et Ian Skoggard, eds., *Encyclopedia of Diasporas* (2 vols., New York, NY: Springer, 2007), i, 233–44.

[34] Samih K. Farsoun, *Encyclopedia of Diasporas*, 233.

[35] Lisa Anteby-Yemini, William Berthomière, et Gabriel Sheffer, eds., *Les diasporas, 2000 ans d'histoire*, [Diasporas, 2000 years of History]; Alain Médam, "Diaspora/Diasporas. Archétype et typologie" [Diaspora/Diasporas. Archetype and Typology], *Revue européenne des migrations internationals* 9, no. 1 (1993): 59–66; Stéphane Dufoix, "Chronique bibliographique : l'objet diaspora en questions" [Bibliographical chronic : the object 'diaspora' in question], *Cultures & conflits* 33/34 (1999): 147–63.

[36] Nadim Khoury, "National arrative and the Oslo Peace Process: How peacebuilding paradigms address conflicts over history," *Nations and Nationalism* 2016 (to be published).

[37] Kamel Doraï, "The meaning of homeland for the Palestinian diaspora," in Nadje Al-Ali and Khalid Koser, eds., *New approaches to migration? Transnational Communities and the Transformation of Home* (London: Routledge, 2001), 87–95. Or again: Victoria Mason, "Children of the "Idea of Palestine": Negotiating Identity, Belonging and Home in the Palestinian Diaspora," *Journal of Intercultural Studies* 28 no. 3 (2007): 271–85.

[38] Michel Bruneau, editor, *Diasporas* (Montpellier: Reclus, 1995).

[39] Michel Bruneau, *Diasporas et espaces transnationaux* (Paris: Anthropos, 2004).

[40] For a precise study of these migratory trajectories in relation with state-building and the conditions of return, see Aude Signoles and Jalal Al Husseini, eds. *Les Palestiniens*

entre État et diaspora [The Palestinians, between State and diaspora] (Paris: Karthala, 2012). On the 'downgrade' of Palestinian refugees see: Xavier Guignard, "1994-2011: L'édification." (1994-2011: The Edification).

[41] On the notion of capital see Pierre Bourdieu, "The forms of capital," in John Richardson, ed., *Handbook of Theory and Research for the Sociology of Education* (New York, NY: Greenwood, 1986). For a definition of 'militant capital', Franck Poupeau et Frédérique Matonti, "Le capital militant. Essai de définition" [Militant Capital. An attempt at definition], *Actes de la recherche en sciences sociales* 155, no. 5 (2006): 4–11.

[42] Sari Hanafi, "La diaspora palestinienne et la reconversion des capitaux issus de la rente pétrolière" [The Palestinian diaspora and the reconversion of capital assets from the Oil industry], *Tiers-Monde* 41 no. 163 (2000): 623–43 and "Contribution de la diaspora palestinienne à l'économie des Territoires : investissement et philanthropie" [The Contribution of the Palestinian diaspora to the Economy of the Territories : Investment and Philanthropy], *Maghreb Machrek* 161 (1998): 59–68 ; Éric Rouleau and Jim Paul, "The Palestinian Diaspora of the Gulf," *Middle East Review of International Affairs* 132 (1985): 13–5.

[43] Francesco Ragazzi, "Governing Diasporas," *International Political Sociology* 3 (2009): 378–97.

[44] "Transfer of Knowledge through Expatriate Nationals," *UN Volunteers*. Last modified December 1, 2008, http://www.unv.org/fileadmin/docdb/pdf/2008/TOKTEN_factsheet_01.12.2008.pdf.

[45] "Tokten Lebanon," last accessed January 25, 2015, http://www.toktenlebanon.org.

[46] "Voluntary Repatriation," *UNHCR*, last accessed on June 22, 2015, http://www.unhcr.org/pages/49c3646cfe.html.

[47] Without reopening the debate surrounding the word "Culture" in the social sciences, this expression here refers to the documents of the UNPD and to our interviews during which the words culture/cultural refer to a series of non-linguistic aptitudes (understanding the social order, gender relations, social groups, etc.).

[48] Palestinian negotiation teams included different PhD holders, primary Palestinian academics, among others were Rashid Khalidi or Camille Mansour. Yet, Saeb Erekat is one of the few political figures holding a PhD directly relevant to his political position (Peace Studies, Bradford University), while his colleagues graduated from various academic discipline: Hanan Ashrawi (Comparative literature, University of Virginia) and Mahmoud Abbas (Csc, an PhD equivalent diploma in History, Patrice Lumumba University of Moscow).

[49] On post-conflit expertise, see Sandrine Lefranc, Frédéric Vairel, "The Emergence of Transitional Justice as a Professional International Practice" (paper presented at the International Studies Association, San Francisco, CA. April 5, 2013).

[50] Since the end of 2012 a will to "Palestinize" the recruitment, to borrow the Director of the NSU, Issa Kassassieh's terms, is observable. This will is currently partly expressed by a more local recruitment of experts, but it also corresponds to the slump

in outside candidacies for new posts. Late in 2014, the NSU still numbered four *mughtaribûn* in a team of a dozen or so people.

[51] NSU archives, consulted in May 2014. The job vacancies are originally published in English.

[52] Al Jazeera "Palestine Papers," printed version available at the Institute of Palestinian studies, Ramallah. These "Palestine Papers" collect more than 1600 documents from the NSU uploaded onto the Internet site of the Qatari TV network. The formatting is faithful to the original document.

[53] Birzeit is thel argest private university in Palestine.

[54] To the notable exception of the employees of USAID, the US Development Agency, who are gratified by the delivery of a work visa valid for one whole year.

[55] Juridical advisor to the NSU, interview with the author, July 2013.

[56] Ziyad Clot, *Il n'y aura pas d'État palestinien. Journal d'un négociateur en Palestine* [There will be no such thing as a Palestinian state. Diary of a Negotiator in Palestine] (Paris: Max Millo, 2010). The author had also interviewed him in 2012.

[57] First recruited as a political advisor to one of the Gulf countries, he went on to become the CEO of a pure player operating from Beirut.

[58] Interview with the author, December 2014 and March 2015.

[59] Interview with the author, September 2013.

[60] Interview with the author, August 2014.

[61] Interviews with the author, March 2012 and July 2014.

[62] Interviews with the author, March 2011, October 2012 and May 2014.

[63] Interview with the author, March 2011.

[64] For a more detailed presentation of foreigners' situation in the OPT, see Clio Chaveneau, "Les 'internationaux' dans les Territoires Palestiniens Occupés. Trajectoires, experiences migratoires et engagements sociopolitiques" ['Internationals' in the Palestinian Occupied Territories. Trajectories, Migratory Experiences, and Sociopolitical commitment] (PhD dissertation, Université Paris Descartes, 2016).

[65] Interview with the author, June 2013.

[66] Al Jazeera "Palestine Papers," printed version available at the Institute of Palestinian studies, Ramallah.

[67] "Annex 4: List of NAD staff and Budget Breakdown," *Standard Letter of Agreement Between UNDP and NAP/PNSP for the Provision of Support Services*, private archives.

[68] Quite similar to the models set up by the great International organizations (written tests, first interviews by videoconference, a fresh series of tests and finally a battery of interviews with different executives of Adam Smith International, the last being a meeting with the members of the NSU, in order to "verify the compatibility of the person recruited with his future colleagues"). The mode of recruitment set up since 2012 is a lot faster, and reposes above all on the prior knowledge of the candidate on the part of the PLO recruiters. Anonymous interview with an administrator of the UNPD in Jerusalem, March 2014.

[69] Lisa Taraki, "Enclave Micropolis: The Paradoxical Case of Ramallah/al-Bireh," *Journal of Refugees Studies* 37, no. 4 (2008) 6–20.
[70] Interview with the author, February 2014.
[71] Though many have studied in the precincts of the great American Universities, they have only rarely figured on the final top rankings, or won the honors degrees of their institutions.