THE REPUBLIC OF TURKEY
BAHCESEHIR UNIVERSITY

WESTERNIZATION OF PALESTINIAN ISSUE IN ABU ASSAD'S FILMS

Master's Thesis

MOHAMMAD MASALHA

ISTANBUL, 2019

THE REPUBLIC OF TURKEY
BAHCESEHIR UNIVERSITY

SOCIAL SCIENCE INSTITUTE
CINEMA AND TELEVISION

WESTERNIZATION OF PALESTIINIAN ISUE IN ABU ASSAD'S FILMS

Master's Thesis

MOHAMMAD MASALHA

Supervisor: Assistant Prof. ELENI VARMAZI

ISTANBUL, 2019

DEDICATION

I dedicate this search

To

My father and mother

My brothers, sisters and their families

My friends

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I want to express my deep gratitude to my supervisor ELENİ VARMAZİ and all of my teachers in cinema and television department.

ABSTRACT

WESTERNIZATION OF PALESTINIAN ISSUE IN ABU ASSAD'S FILMS

Mohammad Masalha

Cinema and Television

Thesis Supervisor: Assistant Prof. Eleni Varmazi

June 2019, 70 pages

The Palestinian issue has been always the focus of films made by Palestinian directors. Amongst these directors is Abu Assad, who became a phenomenon while working in Palestinian cinema and has achieved international fame. Abu Assad expressed the Palestinian issue with a cinematic language that varied from other Palestinian directors. A quick look at Abu Assad's films shows how his films, *Omar*, *Paradise Now*, and *Rana's Wedding*, were filmed in western cinematic language to capture these sensitive topics. Abu Assad's professional use of western cinematic language made his films successful in the western world. Though his films were well-received and praised by the western audience, having won international festivals and even nominated for the Best Foreign Language Film in the Academy Awards, they were not well-received amongst local audiences and there was even a division in their opinion between those who agreed with Abu Assad's methods and those who claimed that Abu Assad did not properly address the Palestinian issue. Moreover, they claimed the films disrespect the Palestinian issue in areas of religion and the ongoing resistance movement.

It appears that Abu Assad knew the effective means to see his films influence and gain the western audience's acceptance by using the cinematic language and elements they are familiar with. Furthermore, his proficiency in filmmaking increased his global publicity and led to his cooperation with prominent filmmaking companies in addition to working with first-class actors and actresses. To sum up, this study aims to analyze Abu Assad's films to explain the cinematic language and the western elements that drawn the western audience's attention in addition to the reasons why his films were not as well-received amongst Palestinian audiences.

Keywords: Abu Assad, Abu Assad's films, Palestinian issue, Palestinian cinema, Western elements, Genre, Western world.

ÖZET

ABU ASSAD'IN FILMLERINDE FILISTIN SORUNUNUN BATILILAŞTIRILMASI

Mohammad Masalha

Sinema ve Televizyon

Tez Danışmanı: Assistant Prof. Eleni Varmazi

Haziran 2019, 70 sayfalar

Filistin sorunu, Filistin sinemasının başlangıcından bu yana Filistinli sinemacıların yöneldiği asıl konu olmuştur. Bu yönetmenlerin arasından biri olan Abu Assad Filistin sinemasında fenomen olmuş ve uluslar arası ün kazanmıştır.

Abu Assad'ın Filistin sorununu dışa vurum tarzı, sinema dili açısından diğer Filistinli yönetmenlere göre farklılık göstermiştir. *Omar*, *Paradise Now* ve *Rana's Wedding* filmlerine bakıldığında sinemada batılı anlatım tarzıyla bu konuların işlendiği görülmektedir. Abu Assad'ın batılı sinema dilini profesyonelce kullanmış olması sayesinde filmleri batı dünyasında başarılı olmuştur. Filmleri batılı izleyici tarafından kabul edilmiş ve övülmüş olmasının yanında uluslar arası ödüller kazanmış ve Yabancı Dilde En İyi Film kategorisinde Oscar adayı gösterilmiş olmasına rağmen yerel izleyici kitleleri tarafından hoş karşılanmamış ve Abu Assad'ın metodlarını kabul edenler ve Filistin sorununu doğru yansıtmadığını düşünenler arasında ayrım oluşmuştur. Bununla birlikte, Filistin sorununa ve süregelen direniş hareketine saygısızlık yaptığı iddia edilmiştir.

Görünüşe göre Abu Assad filminin etkilerini biliyordu ve kullandığı batının aşina olduğu sinema diliyle batılı seyircilerin onayını aldı. Üstelik, sinemadaki ustalığı dünyaca tanınırlığını artırdı ve önde gelen film yapım şirketleriyle ilişkilerini güçlendirdi. Özetle, bu çalışma Abu Assad'ın filmlerini sinema dili ve batılı seyircinin ilgisini çeken unsurlar açısından inceleyerek filmlerinin neden Filistin seyircisi tarafından kabul edilmediğini analiz etmeyi amaçlamaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Abu Assad, Abu Assad'ın filmleri, Filistin sorunu, Filistin sineması, Batı unsurları, Genre, Batı dünyası.

CONTENTS

FIGURES

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The ability of cinema to express itself through sound, image, movement and expressive elements makes it unique in a special international language called cinematic language, which is understood by all humanity despite differing languages and cultures. This has made it a scientific field for academic studies that have resulted in scientific theories and intellectual visions.

In the changes within movements of political, intellectual, social, material and moral thought, cinema has evolved to be a tool to highlight, criticize, and influence these transformations. This leads to the creation of different forms of changes in intellectual life and the manifestations of customs, behaviors and social values, changing attitudes and opinions of the public, and representing different societies by observing the pertinence and unconscious infusion of ideas streaming from hegemonic authorities and cinematographers who possess great artistic and creative abilities to disclose their activities.

This rapid spread of cinema in the world swept into some Arab countries, which contributed decent films even as independent cinemas were born. As for Palestine, the arrival of cinema brought about opportunities to present the Palestinian issue through films. Since its beginning, many Palestinian directors have been keen to provide details and facts about what is happening in Palestine. One of them, notably Hany Abu Assad, is a Palestinian director who aimed to depict the Palestinian issue in a different style and cinematic language than the rest of the Palestinian filmmakers. He did so in a way close to the language understood by the international audience, especially the Western public. In this study, the researcher tries to review and research the films of Abu Assad and their role in presenting and dealing with the Palestinian issue in addition to the new way that the Palestinian director uses to attract the audience and make it understandable for them.

The reason that makes the researcher pay attention to Abu Assad’s films is the controversy and criticism that his films received by the Palestinian society. Despite reaching Hollywood in a step not made by any other Arab director, some critics have

accused Abu Assad of changing facts to conform to the policies of American production companies in his films that were about the Palestinian issue. Although the director is a Palestinian who presents films dealing with the Palestinian issue, of which exists varying opinions supporting and opposing the content of the films of Abu Assad, the researcher attempts to explain the reasons that led to the reactions to Abu Assad films.

Subsequent chapters of the thesis

To explain more about the topic, the researcher divided the study into four basic chapters in addition to the introduction and conclusion:

The Palestinian-Israeli conflict:

In this chapter, the researcher presents a summary of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict and the most important events of this conflict.

Palestinian Cinema:

The researcher presents the most important periods in Palestinian cinema since its beginnings until nowadays, as well as the Palestinian issue during these periods. The researcher presents these four periods, divided according to many historians and writers.

Hany Abu Assad:

In this chapter, the researcher presents the life of the director Hany Abu Assad from birth to what he has become today, the stages of his life and the films that he produced and directed from documentary films to feature ones. The researcher also presents the life of Abu Assad in the West world and his experience in Hollywood.

Case Studies:

The researcher here analyzes a couple of Abu Assad's films and explains the cinematic language used here in the films. The cinematic language, in addition to key elements and symbols, is specifically chosen to be understandable to the Western public audience. In addition, his films consistently show how Abu Assad was selective in using cinematic language in order to include the elements of popular films of its time.

The Subject-Matter

This study focuses on the films of Palestinian director Hany Abu Assad and their approach to the Palestinian issue: firstly it highlights the importance of the Palestinian issue, then it addresses why these films have great influence in supporting the issue by influencing the public opinion around the world. The researcher highlights the various ways of depicting the Palestinian issue and the symbols that clearly indicate the director's intent in a film suitable for a Western audience.

The Subject Argument

The study argues that though the Palestinian director Hany Abu Assad steers from the common methods and styles of Palestinian directors to present the Palestinian issue and appears to have strayed from addressing the issue directly, his prolific use of Western cinematic language and elements in his films present the Palestinian issue in a way that can be better accepted and understood by the Western public. By Western cinematic language the researcher mainly refers to Hollywood mainstream cinema.

The study aims to achieve the following

1) Explain the reasons why Abu Assad's films - case studies - are widely praised and well received in the Western world.

2) To identify the elements used by the director to get the Western public attention.

3) Explain the importance of cinema and the role it plays in attracting the attention of Western public opinion by presenting sensitive issues in the language of Hollywood mainstream cinema and the importance of this language in reaching and influencing the Western public and its opinion.

4) To benefit the other researchers because the lack of the academic studies on Palestinian cinema and academic researchers in the field.

The Importance of the Study

There are a number of ways and methods in which the media participate in supporting the Palestinian issue, specifically explaining it and conveying its truth to the world. Cinema

is one of the most important of these mediums. It participates in it as strongly as the press, radio and television; hence cinema must play the role assigned to it. With the developing platforms of international film production and organized film festivals, the role of Palestinian cinema in particular is increasing in importance. This study attempts to show the different way of presenting the Palestinian issue through Abu Assad films.

In addition, the study derives its importance from the remarkable shift made by Abu Assad in the Palestinian cinema, where his films were the most accessible films in having reached the western audience and the western world, despite the sensitivity of the subject presented in his films. This is proven by the many awards he received, as well as his Oscar nominations.

Furthermore, this study identifies the importance of cinematic language and how to avoid factors that could reduce access to western platforms of film distribution, as well as the experience of director Abu Assad in mixing different genres and elements of cinema to create new distinctive works.

The reasons for choosing this topic

a. To understand the reasons why Abu Assad's films received Western attention
b. Despite the Western attention of director Hany Abu Assad, the researcher tries to shed light on the reasons that led to negative criticism by his local audience.
c. To explain reasons that persuaded international production companies to cooperate with the Palestinian director Hany Abu Assad.

1.2 LITERATURE REVIEW

The researcher sought to search for the studies and researches that dealt with the films of Abu Assad as much as he could, but he did not find studies related to the subject of the study specifically. There are, however, some studies that are partially related to components of the topic, although they do not wholly encompass the subject matter of the study itself. Here we present some of these relevant studies:

1) Reel Violence: Paradise Now and the Collapse of the Spectacle, Nouri Gana, Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East, by Duke University Press 2008.

This article seeks to explore the challenges faced by Arab writers and artists at a time when the Arab world has become known as a region of sectarian violence and death. The researcher focused on the dialectic of humanity behind suicide operations (terrorism, as some know, especially the West). The researcher takes the film Paradise Now by Abu Assad and how to present the subject of the film with a different narrative vision. The researcher claims that the movie Paradise Now opens the doors of sympathy for people carrying out these suicide operations. In addition, the film deals with martyrdom operations with a view that does not justify these operations and how Abu Assad uses cinematic elements to remove the sense of terrorism (such as camera failure and thriller).

2) Modern Palestinian Filmmaking in a Global World, Sarah Frances Hudson, University of Arkansas, Doctor of Philosophy in Comparative Literature and Cultural Studies 2017.

The study centers on the transformation of Palestinian cinema from focusing on collective experiences to focusing on individual experiences in dealing with the Palestinian issue. It goes on to elaborate how that was a result of appearing Palestinian directors who work independently, in addition to analyzing the cinematic language of some Palestinian directors.

3) The Palestinian Cinematic Wedding, Nadia Yaqub, Journal Of Middle East Women's Studies Vol. 2007.

The researcher focused here on the important role of weddings to show the Palestinian character through ethics, national and traditional identity as a center of control and resistance. The researcher analyzed films by Palestinian directors Michel Khalifa and Hani Abu Assad.

4) Palestinian Film: Hyperreality, Narrative, and Ideology, Sarah Frances Hudson, University of Arkansas, 2011.

The researcher studied three Palestinian films of different Palestinian directors and analyzed their content to find out whether or not the contents of these films were

compatible with the stereotype known in the Western world, considering that the Palestinians were portrayed as the victims in this conflict, as well as the comparison between violence in films and in reality.

5) Palestinian Cinema: A Guardian of Palestinian Identity, Doomed by Hope, Abir Abyad, The University of Virginia in Candidacy for the Degree of Master of Arts 2017.

In this study the research subject is about the identity of the Palestinian cinema and its challenges, especially the lack of funding. In addition the book includes the analysis of some Palestinian films and the way that these films present the Palestinian issue and their role in serving the Palestinian identity.

1.3 DATA AND METHOD

The researcher focuses on a textual analysis approach, but also uses a specific scenes formalist analysis, narrative analysis and also tries to examine film genres in relation to narrative. All these aim at describing and analyzing the meanings of the image and the contents that it symbolizes. In addition to comparing the cinematic language used in the films of Abu Assad and those used in Western films, the researcher aims to track the Western elements used by Abu Assad in his films to convey the Palestinian issue differently from other Palestinian films but similar to Western movies.

The researcher aims to prove that Abu Assad uses the style of western films to present the Palestinian issue in a way that the Western viewers can understand and accept better. The researcher relied on books, articles and news in the analysis after gathering and summarized a number of these views to see its effect.

2. THE PALESTINIAN-ISRAELI CONFLICT

2.1 INTRODUCION

This term indicates the historical conflict that has been ongoing since the mid-19th century. The key issue is that there are two nations living on the same land and each of them considers this land as their own. On one hand, Palestinians consider it their land because they have been living there for many centuries. On the other hand, Jewish people consider it as their Promised Land, in which they have the divine right as interpreted from the Torah (Preiger 2012, p: 19). Additionally, the conflict focuses on the legitimacy of the State of Israel's control over the Palestinian territories through progressive periods and on the massacres committed against the Palestinians that forced them to leave their land to replace them with Jewish immigrants (Modalal & Abo-Amer 2013, p:164). However, during this process, they did not show any interest in the livelihood of others in Palestine when they decided to build this state in the nineteenth century, which resulted in discord. The history of this conflict emerged with the rise of Zionism, the Jewish nationalist movement, in the nineteenth century in response to campaigns of persecution against the Jews in Europe (Preiger 2012, p:21). Zionism believed that the establishment of the state of Israel would protect Jewish people from the injustice that they had been subjected to for centuries. (Preiger 2012, p:19).

2.2 PALESTINE 1870s – 1948

In 1870s, there were a few Jewish activist groups living in Russia, in addition to Jewish institutions calling for a return to the Land of Israel because living in Russia became intolerable. Later, the idea of auto-emancipation appeared. It was published in 1882 by Leo Pinsker, who stated that anti-Semitism had become a major problem. The only solution was to build a national homeland for the Jews but he did not specify in the text that this homeland should be in Palestine. Other possibilities included North America. This official statement of the land drew a lot of attention from Jews around the world at that time (Harms & Ferry 2008, p: 52). Theodor Herzl, the Austro-Hungarian journalist, was one of the founders of the Jewish movement. He mentioned in his book, *The Jewish*

State, that depending on Jewish public opinion there are options for Jews either to choose to immigrate to Palestine or Argentina (Herzl 1896, p:15) Herzl's book was the embodiment of Zionist ideology: also included in it was a plan to build a Jewish state in all its details. (Touma 1972, p:52). Herzl held many conferences and played an important role in stirring the mindsets of the world toward Jews and their cause (Natsheh 2018, p:7)

In the seventh Zionist conference in 1905, it was decided to maintain the decision that Palestine is the national homeland for the Jews. Despite the attempts of the Zionist movement to encourage Jewish immigration to Palestine through the exploitation of their religious feelings, the Jews did not care about this, preferring their economic interests to their religious beliefs. As an example, this had not prevented Jewish immigration from Europe to the United States, during the period between 1881-1918 Jewish immigrants to the United States numbered nearly four million while in Palestine they were 80,000. At that time, a slow settlement of Jews in various parts of Palestine can be observed. There were 6 settlements with 400 farmers working on 35 thousand acres (Touma 1972, p: 65) In addition, most of the Jews who emigrated from Russia or Europe to Palestine did not participate in Jewish practices of worship despite the claim of Zionism that the choice of Palestine was a religious goal, but most of them relocated as a result of being persecuted in their countries of origin (Harms & Ferry 2008, p 63).

When the Jews arrived in Palestine, they found about a thousand towns and thousands of areas of cultivated land and railways (Harms&Ferry 2008, p: 60). What that meant is that they knew there were people living on that land and they could not create a Jewish state without a collision with the local population (Preiger 2012, p: 31). One of the seniors and the founders of Zionism, described Jews as abusing and disarming the Arabs of their rights. The Jews were persecuted in the diaspora but after they acquired freedom for their tyranny was awakened and they began treating the Arabs in the same oppressive manner (Touma 1972, p: 66). We see from this point onwards the beginning of violence against local Arab citizens, and the endeavor to impose the Jewish state and apply force onto the Arabs in order for them to surrender to the Zionist occupying forces (Touma 1972, p: 67).

The Balfour Declaration that was released in November 1917 marked a turning point in the history of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. Contained within the declaration was Britain's promise to establish a national home for the Jewish people in Palestine (Spaitan

2016, p: 138). Taking a look at its legitimacy, the Balfour Declaration is one of the strangest agreements made in the history of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, in which the British Foreign Secretary Arthur Balfour assured one of the leaders of the Zionist movement Walter Richard that land that did not belong to him would be given to the Jewish people (Harms & Ferry 2008, p: 63). Although there are some theories about the motives of Britain to establish this national homeland all these theories are questionable. One of the reasons put forward was that Britain gave this right to the Jews in gratitude to them for the discovery of acetone solarium during World War I by the Jewish scholar Jaime Weizmann (Touma 1972, p: 80). There is a theory that Balfour made this promise to atone for the tyranny imposed on Jews from Europe (Touma 1972, p: 80).

On the 24th of July 1920, the council of the League of Nations approved the mandate on Palestine. After that the British Mandate of Palestine made it possible to exercise the Balfour Declaration to fulfill the promise of a homeland for the Jews in Palestine and now Britain was responsible for the preservation of the rights of the Jews, their resettlement in Palestine, and the establishment of a national homeland, all this while ignoring the rights of the Arab people (Touma 1972, p: 123). In the meantime, Zionism emerged in many forms; of which the one of utmost importance was the growth of the military and training of soldiers under the pretext of self-defense (Touma 1972, p: 105).

There have been many attempts by the Arabs to stand against the illegal presence of Jewish people in Palestine and to gain self-rule, but all these attempts have failed while the Jewish presence in Palestine began to proliferate and control the land especially the territory of absent land owners. Weizman admitted in his book that the Zionist organizations had confiscated 80,000 acres of the plains and meadows from the family of Bani Amer in Labnat and the Sarsaq family and there were a few more Arab villages but he claimed that these villages were deserted (Touma 1972, p: 131). At the same time, clashes between the Arabs and the Jews led to many casualties. Many historians agree that the reason this continued to happen was due to the role of Britain in fueling the conflict between Arabs and Jews through the principle of divide and conquer. These events accompanied demonstrations by Jews and Arabs, each of them proclaiming that the Buraq wall belongs to them (Touma 1972, p: 160).

In the wake of these events, Britain sent an investigation committee that confirmed the Arabs fear of the waves of Jewish immigration. The committee recommended decrease of the emigration of Jews to Palestine (BBC). Palestinians continued their resistance against the Jewish immigration movement and their presence in Palestine until the big Palestinian revolution in 1936 that started in Jaffa city, which led to the killing of 5000 Palestinians and the injuring of 150 thousand at the hands of British forces. The revolution later ended in 1939. Later, Zionist groups began to even attack British forces, a fact that led Britain to put the Palestinian issue into the hands of the United Nations at the end of the Second World War in 1945. The United Nations established a committee to consider the Palestinian issue in 1947 and the committee recommended the partition of Palestine into an Arab state and a Jewish one, putting the city of Jerusalem and its surroundings under international rule (BBC).

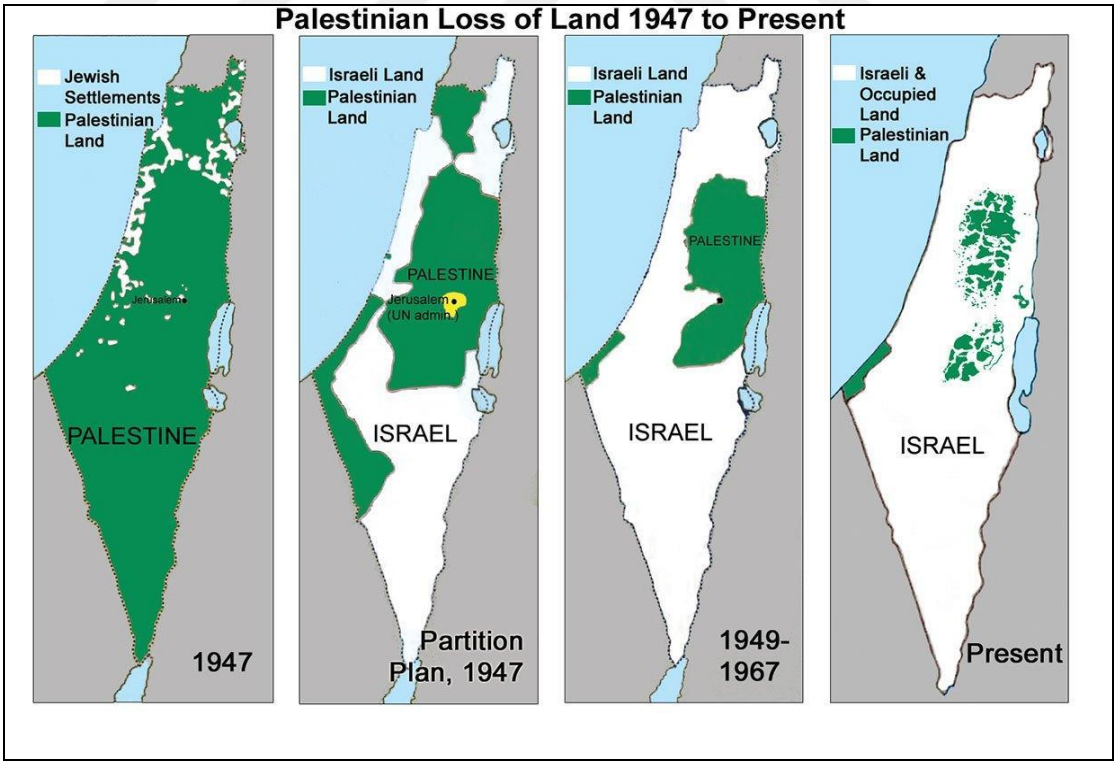
2.3 PALESTIE 1948 – NOWADAYS

Later in 1948, after Britain's declaration of ending their mandate, Israel declared its independence. The West Bank and East Jerusalem were placed under the rule of Jordan, while Gaza strip was placed under Egyptian rule and Israel occupied the rest of the areas. That year was the year of Nakba. 500 towns were destroyed; thousands of Arabs were forcibly removed from their cities. These cities and towns were removed from the map, replaced with Jewish settlements and given Jewish names. Moshe Dayan, one of the famous leaders in Israel even said, "there is no place to settle except in Arab villages" (Preiger 2012, p: 50). The result is that on the 14th May of every year, Jews celebrate their independence day while Palestinians commemorate Nakba, the day when they were forced to become refugees with no hope of return. Many resolutions have been issued by the UN General Assembly, confirming that the refugees have the right to return to their lands, but none of these resolutions have been implemented. In 1950, 750 thousand refugees were registered in the UNRWA records (Preiger 2012, p: 50). The Palestinian refugees live in 58 recognized Palestinian refugee camps in Jordan, Lebanon, and the Syrian Arab Republic. The camps in the West Bank number around 19, 12 camps in Lebanon, 10 in Jordan, 9 in Syria and 8 in Gaza. Even though half of the population of

Jordan hails from Palestine, 70% of the Palestinians in Jordan are considered refugees (Preiger 2012,p: 56).

Moreover, Israel began to take control of more Palestinian land which resulted in more refugees. Particularly, during the Six-Day War, also called June War or Third Arab-Israeli War in 1967, Israel managed to take over East Jerusalem, West Bank, the Syrian Golan Heights and Sinai Peninsula after defeating Arab armies (McClellan 2015,p: 38-39). During this war and the remaining year, which has been called Naksa, many Palestinians were forced to leave their lands to flee to neighboring countries (McClellan 2015,p: 39). Thus Palestinians, especially those displaced by force, commemorate Al-Nakba and Naksa, the time when they were expelled from their lands. After this war, the city of Jerusalem was declared as the capital of Israel. Israel also took control of the rest of the West Bank's wealth (McClellan 2015,p:40).

Figure 2.1 Map Of Palestine: Loss Of Land 1947 To Present



Source: Scam (2014) *Countering the 'shrinking Palestine Maps' scam*

As is seen in figure 2.1, present Palestine can be divided into the following areas:

a) The 48 areas where Palestinians who have not left the areas controlled by Israel after 1948 live, and whose residents are called Israeli Arabs for the State of Israel, and who hold Israeli identity.

b) Residents of Jerusalem: Palestinians who live in the city of Jerusalem but do not have an Israeli identity, but a ten-year term that can be renewed and may not be renewed for certain reasons by the Israeli side. They are entitled to move inside the Green Line and can be considered as having no nationality, because they do not have Israeli identity or even Palestinian identity. In addition, the Israeli authorities attempt to expel the Palestinian population from this area through the demolition of unlicensed houses and houses built after they took control of the city of Jerusalem in 1967. Almost 2000 Palestinian homes in Jerusalem were demolished between 1987 and 2017 by the Israeli authorities.

c) West Bank and Gaza Strip residents: Palestinians living in the rest of the West Bank and Gaza Strip who hold Palestinian identity, but are prevented from crossing the Green Line by Israel unless they have permits to enter. These permits, too, usually restrict movement to a particular area.

d) Palestinian refugees: Palestinians who were forced to abandon their land after the wars of ‘48 and ’67, the majority of whom settled in camps scattered across the Arab countries, most of them in Jordan, Lebanon, Syria (Natsheh 2018, p:12).

e) Note: The Green Line refers to the border between Israel and the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. There are those who use the term "1967 borders" instead of the Green Line to refer to the border between the Palestinian territories acquired before in 1948 and West Bank and the Gaza Strip, acquired in 1967, and yet these are the areas that are recognized by the global community as Palestine (Harms & Ferri 2008, p:99).

Despite the Arab failures and their impact on the Palestinian issue, there are some actions that changed the course of events. For example the First Intifada (uprising) started in late 1987 and became a turning point in the Palestinian struggle. It was sparked when an Israeli truck driver ran over a group of Palestinian workers at the Israeli Erez checkpoint, which separated the Gaza strip from the rest of the Palestinian territories since 1948. Four Palestinians were killed and 19 wounded. Palestinians considered the incident as the process of deliberate murder and went out to the streets throwing stones at Israeli soldiers.

Demonstrations against the occupation began to spread throughout Gaza strip and West Bank (Abu-Arafeh 2017, p: 69).

One of the features characterized by this uprising was the racist policy and collective punishment implemented by Israel that ignited Palestinian fury. Despite the issuance of UN Security Council Resolution 605, which condemned the Israeli practices and violations of human rights in Palestine, the Israeli government continued to suppress the Palestinians by various means. The Israeli government also used other practices such as beating the defectors and breaking their hands or their legs and the firing of firearms, as well as mass arrests, blowing up houses, deportations and other acts of brutality (Abu-Arafeh 2017, p:70). At that time, many Palestinian resistance groups emerged as well as other forms of protest against Israeli policies with demonstrations and stone throwing (Abu-Arafeh 2017, p:71).

Statistics estimated that over 1000 Palestinians were killed during the events of the Intifada by the Israeli army while over 100 Israelis were killed by Palestinians. The Palestinian uprising began dying out in 1991, and it officially ended in 1993 with the signing of the Oslo Agreement (Harms & Ferri 2008, p: 147). The Oslo Agreement, also known as the Oslo Accords, is an agreement signed between Israel and the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) on September 13, 1993, which is not a peace agreement or final solution but an agenda of negotiations (Harms &Ferri 2008, p: 153). However, some Palestinian organizations that rejected the agreement did not stop their struggle. Later, a Jew belonging to the Kahane Chai (KACH) killed 29 Palestinians worshipers in Al-haram Al-Ibrahimi in Hebron in 1994. In 1995, an interim agreement was reached between the national authority and Israel; this agreement was the basis of several following agreements between the Palestinian authority and Israel, but in 2000, the negotiations broke down (Alaraby 2015). This was followed by the outbreak of protests in Palestinian streets as the result of the visit of Israeli defense minister Ariel Sharon to Al-Aqsa mosque yards. Sharon was outspoken against the Palestinian authority and its control over the rest of the Palestinian territories since his intentions were to take over the rest of the Palestinian lands. Soon these protests turned into the second intifada called Alaqsa Intifada at the end of 2000 (Harms &Ferri 2008, p:170).

The second Intifada sparked seven years after the signing of the Oslo Accords, and there were many instigators, one of which was the continual settlement of Palestinian lands. The total number of occupied territories between 2000 and 2003 was about 210 thousand acres. The US Secretary of State, Colin Powell, remarked that the Palestinian people were resisting what they see as settlements and occupiers of their land. In addition to the demolition of houses and the building of new settlements, the failure of the Oslo Accords to provide security and peace and the establishment of an independent Palestinian state as well as the failure of the Camp David II agreement deepened the desperation and enmity between the two sides (Shtyih 2011, p. 90). This intifada led to the death of 2,046 Palestinians in early 2003, including 400 children and 176 women, in addition to 41,000 wounded. The second intifada also caused heavy losses in the Palestinian economy. As for the results on the Israeli side, 620 people were killed and 5000 wounded by the fall of 2002. In terms of settlements, the London Times reported on October 7, 2002 that settlements in the West Bank increased by 4.8% between 2000 and 2002. As for the Gaza Strip, the number of Israeli families has increased to 242, and the number of Israeli settlers in the West Bank and Gaza in 2001 reached approximately 21,000, in addition to the construction of 42 settlement sites during 2002-2003 (Shtyih 2011, p: 91).

One of the most prominent events in the third year of the second Palestinian Intifada is the separation wall that Israel built to isolate the Palestinian territories and prevent Palestinians from entering Israel without supervision under the pretext of “security measures”, despite international condemnations and appeals (Harms & Ferri 2008, p:176). Although this process of "isolation" or "separation" is an old idea conceived by Ben-Gurion, on June 23, 2002, the then-current Prime Minister Ariel Sharon was the first to put this plan under implementation. (Aljazeera 2014). The length of the wall in the occupied West Bank is 770 kilometers, including 142 kilometers in the Jerusalem area, called the Jerusalem envelope, and the height of the wall reaches eight meters. In total, the Wall will account for 46% of the West Bank area of 5,000 square kilometers, as well as initiate a demographic and geographical separation of Jerusalem from the West Bank cities and villages. Thousands of Palestinians were forced to obtain special permits from the occupation to allow them to continue living and moving between their homes on one side and their lands on the other (Aljazeera 2014). After its completion, Israel will also take over 80% of the available Palestinian water resources in the West Bank. The barrier

passes through populated and agricultural land in the West Bank and prevents Palestinian access to some local streets and some fields. Its route in the northern area isolates more than 5,000 Palestinians in "closed" areas between the Green Line and the ceasefire line between Israel and the West Bank. The wall violates the fundamental rights of approximately one million Palestinians in the occupied territories (Aljazeera 2014).

The policy of forcing the owners of a land to leave and replace them with settlers who come from different countries is one of the policies adopted by the Israeli occupation authorities to increase the proportion of its citizens and the proportion of land seized. The director of the Jewish Agency Josef Weitz held that, “we must declare clearly that there is no place in this country for two nations, and there is no choice except to transfer Arabs to neighboring countries” (Brieger 2012, p: 39) In a new report from the Palestinian Zaytouna Center, the number of Palestinian refugees outside Palestine was estimated at approximately 8.5 million, which is considered the largest proportion of refugees living outside their homeland (Al-Zaytouna Center for Studies & Consultations 2017). These refugees cannot return to their homeland despite the United Nations General Assembly Resolution 194, which gives them the right of return to their homeland, since Israel rejects this decision and prevents its implementation (Berger 2012, p:166).

Israel, in the beginnings of the formation of the Jewish state, received support from powerful countries on a global level; Zionism tried to draw the attention of these countries to sympathize with the Jews because of the Holocaust. However there are Jewish groups that support the establishment of a Palestinian state, and do not recognize Israel. These groups are protesting and raising the Palestinian flags on many occasions, expressing their desire to create a Palestinian state living under its laws, and return the land to its owners (Aljazeera 2017). They express their dissatisfaction towards the use of Zionism as a response to the spilled blood of their ancestors, especially with what happened in the Holocaust, and believe that the politics and aggression of Zionism goes against the teachings of the Torah (Neturei Karta 2014, p: 3-6).

2.4 CONCLUSION

The Palestinian-Israeli conflict cannot be described as an issue only between the two sides of the Palestinian and Israeli people; from its beginning it was, and is continually becoming more of a global issue with the increasing participation of world powers. It is a fundamental point that the Palestinians are not against Judaism as a religion but against Zionism and its plans, and as mentioned previously there were several options for the land for the Jewish state but Palestine was chosen for strategic geopolitical reasons of interest groups and not entirely religious as it was claimed.

Surprisingly, there is hardly any awareness of the full details surrounding the Palestinian Israeli conflict. The same special interest groups that spearheaded the formation of the Israeli state have steered public opinion with their propaganda and as a result most media portrayals and focuses are upon the violence of the Palestinian armed resistance while the Palestinian cause is largely ignored. As this is a global issue, it's imperative for global understanding of this dispute to encompass both sides but most attempts at voicing Palestinian opinion have been ineffective. As awareness increases, the influence of the global public opinion will increase and this will play a crucial role in resolving the sensitive issue that is the Palestinian-Israeli conflict.

3. PALESTINIAN CINEMA

3.1 INTRODUCION

Due to its religious significance and geopolitical position, Palestine has attracted international directors and production companies since the beginning of its cinema and filmmaking industry. For example, even in the beginning of cinema's history, the Lumiére brothers produced a film in Palestine in 1896 (Gertz and Khliefi 2008, p: 14). As a result, the camera and the production tools necessary to filmmaking were known to the Palestinians from an early period. This awareness led to the flourishing of cinemas in all Palestinian cities: the city of Jaffa had 17 theaters before the Nakba in 1948 (Jerusalem. A 2017). As director Khalil al-Muzain mentioned, in the Gaza Strip there were more than 10 theaters (WAFA) and in the capital, Jerusalem in the 1920s, there were more than 5 theaters that were screening international films (Madanat 1995, p: 839). Despite this, the Palestinian awareness and attention to cinema was affected by the political and economic conditions of the region, and according to writers and historians, Palestinian cinema can be classified by four periods that portray the Palestinian issue:

3.2 THE FIRST PERIOD: 1930s – 1948

Cinema was known in Arab countries by the 1920s, ever since the Egyptian cinematic pioneer, Mohammad produced his first feature length film in 1923, *Barsum Bayomi Looking For Job* (Schotter 2018, p:151). In Syria, cinema began when the Syrian director Ayyub Badri produced a feature film, *Innocent Accused* 1928 (Pepper& Beattle 2001, p:319). For Palestine, cinema was established in the early 1930s (WAFA). The very first beginnings of Palestinian cinema were that of individual people who had acquired modest cinematic equipment and had a passion to document the Palestinian issue.

On the other hand, it is believed that Palestinian cinema started in the early 1920s when the brothers Ibrahim and Bader Lama came to Palestine (Ellis 2018, p:101).The two brothers known as the Lama brothers were born to a Palestinian family who migrated from the city of Bethlehem to Chile in the early twentieth century. In 1926, they decided to return to Palestine and establish a film industry there, bringing their cinematic equipment with them. In Palestine, they attempted to film a movie in Jaffa, but the British

authorities prevented them from continuing their work (Barakat 2013, p: 6). They tried again to make a film in the cities of Bethlehem and Jerusalem, but again their efforts were hindered by the British authorities, and because of their failing attempts to make a film in Palestine due to the unstable situation and tense conditions there, they decided to go to Egypt where they stayed in the city of Alexandria. There the brothers founded the Mena Film Club and then the Condor Film company which produced a silent feature film entitled *Kiss In The Desert* in 1927 (Ellis 2018, p:101). Furthermore, it is believed that in the early 20th century a documentary film was made to show the reality in Palestine; the film treated the Palestinians as an inseparable part of the Palestinian land and depicted their circumstances then (Gertz and Khliefi 2008, p: 15).

As for the 1930s, one person who started making films in Palestine at that time was Ibrahim Hassan Sarhan. He was born in 1916 and in 1935 at the young age of 19, he made a 20-minute short silent film about Saudi King Abdul-Aziz's visit to Palestine while he was travelling between the Palestinian cities accompanied by Haj Amin al-Husseini who was at that time the Mufti of Palestine (Gertz and Khliefi 2008, p: 13). Sarhan enthusiastically bought a hand-held camera for 50 liras after he had read books about photography, lenses, printing and acidification. He practiced what he read in creating the necessary equipment himself, including the editing table. The result was a silent film that was screened in Nabi Rubin Festival. Sarhan played music as the movie played: the audience was not aware that the film had no musical soundtrack (Gertz and Khliefi 2008, p: 13). After making that film, Sarhan and a man named Gamal Al-Asfar partnered to make a film titled *The Realized Dream* 1935 about the Palestinian singer Syed Heron. He later made another film about Ahmed Pasha Abdel Baqi, a member of the Arab Higher Committee. After this film Sarhan founded a production studio called Palestine Studio in 1945, which contained two printing and acidizing machines. Due to financial needs, he put an advertisement in a newspaper. Through this, he received 12000 messages and with each message, a participation fee that added up to about 2000 Palestinian pounds (İbrahim 2005, p: 35). With that, Sarhan and Ahmad Hilmi al-Kilani, who studied cinema in Cairo, established the Arab Film Company. Under the name of the company Sahan and al-Kilani made a film entitled *Holiday Eve*, but it is believed that the film was not completed. Sarhan claimed that the film was completed and screened it at his brother's house. In the end, the Palestine Studio only released one film entitled *Storm in a House* that depicted

the story of Palestinian popular figures then (Gertz and Khliefi 2008, p: 13). Sarhan remained alone, filming short films until he immigrated to Jordan after 1948. In the next year, he agreed with a Lebanese producer to make a feature film, but the project was not completed. Sarhan died in 1976 in the Shatila, a Palestinian refugee camp in Beirut, where he worked as a plumber (İbrahim 2005, p:36).

Ahmad al-Kilani was another Palestinian who studied filming in Cairo from where he graduated in 1945. Al-Kilani returned to Palestine to establish with Gamal Al-Asfar and Abdul Latif Hashim the Arab Film Production Company. After the Nakba, he migrated to Jordan, where he worked in the field of filmmaking (Barakat 2013, p: 6). Another filmmaker, Mohammed Salih al-Kayali, moved to Italy in order to study cinema and photography but he was not accepted at the Institute of Cinema so he received courses in photography and editing. Then he returned to Jaffa in order to open a photography studio in 1939 (İbrahim 2005, p: 38). Al-Kayali participated in the field of cinema in Palestine in the 1940s and made short films about the Palestinian issue; these films were funded by the representatives of the Arab League. After making these films he left to Cairo in 1948. After a while, he made a long feature film in 1969 about the Palestinian revolution (Gertz and Khliefi 2008, p: 14).

In the pre-Nakba period of 1948, Palestinian cinema was purely individualistic experiences. It could not account to a true national Palestinian cinema, because it was not organized, nor was a foundation set for the Palestinian film industry (İbrahim 2005, p:40).

3.3 THE SECOND PERIOD: 1948-1967

After 1948, there is no information about Palestinian cinema produced by Arab Palestinians who did not leave their country during the immigration period, between 1948 and 1967, to the neighboring Arab states. No one has ever heard of any feature film or short film made by the Arab Palestinians after the war of 1948 until 1967 (Gertz & Khleifi 2008, p: 19). That period was called the silent era. There were some attempts from Sarhan to produce a film entitled *Battle in Jerash* 1957, which had no connection to the Palestinian problem, but it was prevented by the Jordanian authorities because they believed that the film would distort the name of the tourist city. A little while later, they were allowed to release it again after the director made changes to it. Another film

connected to this period, *My Home My Love* 1964, was made by the Palestinian director Abdullah Kawash (İbrahim 2005, p: 36).

3.4 THE THIRD PERIOD: 1967-1980

The birth of the new Palestinian cinema began with the creation of a small photography section by Salafah Gad Allah Mirsal, the first Palestinian graduate of the Cairo International Film Institute in the field of cinematography (WAFA). From early 1967 to late 1968, Mirsal filmed some revolutionary material with primitive equipment. Most of these materials were photography of the martyrs of the revolution. The need arose to establish an archive of the martyrs, along with other materials and documents related to the revolution. Everyone needed the photographs taken by Mirsal with the aim of documenting the Palestinian issue (Barakat 2013, p: 7). At that time, Palestinian leadership began its first steps towards armed revolution. Other cinematic activities started with very modest material and technical possibilities; meanwhile, Mustafa Abu Ali, a Palestinian director, borrowed a 16mm camera from his place of work, the Jordanian television, and began filming films (Barakat 2013, p: 7).

In late 1969, and in the service of the revolution, Mustafa Abu Ali and Hany Jawharya , Palestinian director, filmed Palestinian demonstrators that were opposing Rogers's Plan in Jordan and interviewed some of the protesters. After the assembling of videos, the result became a 20-minute documentary entitled *No to Peaceful Solution*, which was the first film of the Palestinian revolution (Gertz and Khliefi 2008, p: 21). The film was screened in Amman, where the majority of the audiences were leaders of Palestinian organizations. Before the screening, the director said, “I am not a political man, but I am sure that the political messages were approved in the film”, since the director wanted to know the leaders opinion before releasing the film to the public (Gertz and Khliefi 2008, p: 26).

The Palestinian revolution attracted many international journalists’ and filmmakers’ attention, among whom was the French prominent director Jean-Luc Godard who went to Jordan in 1968 to make a film. Godard went to the camps, met refugees and filmed their living conditions and stories. He also met a number of Palestinian filmmakers, including Mustafa Abu Ali, who accompanied him and assisted him in filming, but unforeseen events did not allow Godard to finish the film. Later he used these materials

in his film, *Here and Elsewhere*, which was made in 1976, a documentary telling the story of a French and a Palestinian family examining the parallel lives of them and capturing Palestinian circumstances (e.g., the camps, poverty …) (Barakat 2013, p:8).

In the same period, Qasim Hawal directed the film about the Palestinian refugee camp *Nahr al-Bared* 1970, followed by a film by the same director about the life and struggle of the martyr Ghassan Kanafani (İbrahim 2005, p: 34) The same period also witnessed the appearance of two documentary films by Rafiq Hajjar: *The Road* concerning the social and political reality of the Palestinian camps in Lebanon, and *Unified Guns* about the events of May 1973 in Lebanon. Another feature film about the Palestinian struggle was *The Voice of Jerusalem* 1977 by Qais al-Zubaidi (WAFA).

In 1978, Adnan Madanat, through his film *Palestinian Views*, presented the life of the talented Palestinian artist, Ibrahim Ghannam, who played the Oud, wrote poetry, painted, and sang about the Palestine that remained alive in his memory, preserving its culture through his work and drawing its heritage, folk customs, traditions, paintings, landscapes, houses and human beings through a realistic and naturalistic view (Barakat 2013, p:8).

During the Palestinian Revolution, many films were made such as *The Four Days War* 1973, *They Have No Presence* 1974, *Kafr Shuba* and *The War in Lebanon* 1977, *Palestine in the Eye* 1977, *Because the Roots Do not Die* 1977, and *The Song of the Liberals* 1978. They are all of importance since they depicted the Palestinian issue using impressive film techniques (WAFA). Meanwhile, Palestinian films focused on the independence struggle as the primary theme and the films were considered as integral part of the Palestinian revolution. Documentary films were close to newsreel style that contained political analysis and depicted the footage of bombings, battles, destructions in addition to interviews with civilians, fighters and political-military leaders (Gertz and Khliefi 2008, p: 26). Furthermore, it was believed that these films would be the revolution's archive that would be, in later years, rare and valuable documentary materials accessible to filmmakers, researchers and historians (WAFA).

In Beirut, a Palestinian Cinema Group was founded. This group produced a single film in 1973 that was entitled *Zionist Aggression*. The film, directed by Mustafa Abu Ali, captured the destruction, the occupation and loss of life under occupation. The group

stopped production for organizational reasons (Gertz and Khliefi 2008, p: 26). When it stopped, the Palestine Film Unit was established and produced many films related to the Palestinian revolution. Mustafa Abu Ali continued to work for the Palestinian Film Foundation where he served as the president until 1979 when it was shut down (Barakat 2013, p: 8).

In addition to the Palestinian Film Foundation, there were some cinematic committees that emerged in the field of Palestinian cinema, which were completely under the control of Palestinian organizations.

Among them was the Palestinian Film Unity that created many films: for example, the film *A Palestinian Night* by Samir Nimr in 1973, *Why to Plant Roses? Why do we Carry Weapons?* By Qasim Hawal, who participated in the World Youth Festival in Democratic Germany in 1974, and *The Winds of Liberation and For the Revolution?* by Abu Ali in 1974 (WAFA).

The technical committee of the Central Media affiliated to the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine began producing its first films in 1974, entitled *The Palestinians*, *The Intifada* 1975, *Born in Palestine* 1975, *The Story of Tal al-Zaatar* 1976 by Adnan Madanat, and *The Siege* 1978 by director Qais al-Zubaidi (Ayash 2009 , p: 49).

The technical committee of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, which produced a number of films, such as: The Word 1973, *Our Little Houses* 1974, *The Guns Will Not Silence* 1974, *On the Road to the Palestinian Revolution* 1971, and *Black Papers* in 1979, and *Treason* in 1980 (Ayash 2009 , p: 51).

The media and culture department of the Palestinian Liberation Organization produced its first film in 1972, *Youth Camps* by Ismail Shamout; the director was a plastic artist who also released another film in 1973, *Memories and Lights* (Ayash 2009 , p: 51).

In the 1970s, the Palestinian Liberation Organization established the Samid Foundation which specialized in the fields of Palestinian social affairs, history, and the Palestinian issue. In the terms of film production, they made their first film in 1976, *The Key*, directed by Ghaleb Shaath, followed by *The Land Day* by the same director in 1978, and *Olive Branch* in 1978 (Ayash 2009 , p: 52). These departments were founded at the same time

as the Palestinian Film Foundation and remained in existence until 1979. Cinema at that time was called revolution cinema as they were filming the revolutionary events and realities about that period of Palestinian resistance (Ayash 2009, p: 52).

However, the interest of Palestinian leadership in cinema was just due to it being a means of spreading propaganda rallying military action to the world. This agenda was promoted by the directors of this period. According to Gertz and Khliefi, because the Palestinian organizations believed in cinema and its role to advance the Palestinian issue, they specified its basic principles as it justifies the Palestinian position, documents their realities and struggle, mobilizes the masses to stand by them, and expresses the importance of the fighters (Gertz and Khliefi 2008, p: 22). Thus the films were limited to a rigid documentation of the events with the same revolution dominated by the slogan "No voice above the voice of the Intifada". Meantime, the only feature film was one that was adapted from the novel of the martyr writer Ghassan Kanafani entitled *Return to Haifa* 1982 by the Palestinian director of Iraqi origin Qasim Hawal (Saqa 2017). Moreover the films that were made during this period promoted the values of many political resistance organizations since the organizations provided the film departments with crews and finance (Gertz and Khliefi 2008, p: 22).

The third period of Palestinian cinema, which was called the Cinema of the Palestinian Revolution, treated Palestinian issue from specific aspects. Its contents focused on the sensations evoked by military, political and social events since the cinema's attention focused on showing the emotional images, especially tragedy, such as tents, refugees, suffering, misery and death but without getting often deeper in those subjects. They focused more on the speech of the revolution and its songs, slogans, and refugees' dreams of returning to Palestine, as well as, liberation. Despite all this, Palestinian cinema did not appear to be a specialized type of cinema. It could not clearly articulate its cinematic language nor did it possess plans or development strategies, perhaps because of the multiplicity of ideologies, political positions, and the lack of efforts to create a single Palestinian institution, or a specific vision of Palestinian cinema (Ibrahim 2005, p:41).

3.5 THE FORTH PERIOD: 1980 – NOWADAYS:

1980 was the year of the appearance of Michel Khalifi, a Palestinian director who is considered the pioneer of independent Palestinian cinema. In 1980 Khalifi began his filmmaking journey from Nazareth with his film *The Fertile Memory*, which combined documentary and drama style. It was a film about identity, adherence, and loyalty, depicting the strength of Palestinian women and their ability to hold on to their land, and through this strength they manage to defend the culture of their people and to give hope for all coming generations (Gertz and Khliefi 2008, p: 31). Another documentary film by Khalifi *Maalol Celebrates Its Fire* was released in 1985. The idea of the film was inspired from the village of Maalol that was completely destroyed in 1948 (Alarabi 2017). Later, Khalifi's film *Wedding in Galilee* in 1987, is considered as the first Palestinian feature film that shows Palestinian traditions and national identity. He made many films such as *Canticle of the Stones* in 1990, *The Tale of the Three Lost Jewels* in 1995, *You, Me, Jerusalem* in 1995, *Forbidden Marriages in the Holy Land* in 1995, R*oute 181: Fragments of a Journey in Palestine-Israel* in 2004, until his last film *Zindeeq* in 2009, which told the story of a memory that is related to the generation of the Nakba, the generation of 1948. In Khalifi's films, the central motif is the memory of a place since his films focused mostly on the Palestinian land and places (Barakat 2013, p:11). He also uses an eastern-style narrative to depict the Palestinian Cause especially in his film *Wedding in Galilee* (James 1988, archive New York Times). Furthermore, a reoccurring element in all of Khalifi's films is the blurred combination between documentary and fiction (Gertz and Khliefi 2008, p: 40).

His brother, director George Khalifi, made many films such as *The Children of Stone* in 1988 and *Alnasik* in 1979. He also helped in producing the *Fertile Memory* of Michel Khleifi and producing the film *Wedding in Galilee*. Later, George Khalifi's work focused more on making television programs and reports (Barakat 2013, p:11).

Mai Al Masri is a Palestinian filmmaker who started making many films in cooperation with Jean Chamoun, who is one of the founders of the new Lebanese cinema (Barakat 2013, p: 11). She is considered the first active Palestinian woman in filmmaking after Salafah Gad Allah who founded the Palestinian Film department. She produced and directed many documentaries with Chamoun who later became her husband and partner

in her career. Mai Al Masri shed light on the Palestinian issue through her films, showing the issues of the Palestinian people and the injustice from the perspective of Palestinian women and their circumstances (Darwish 2017). Her last film in 2015, entitled *3000 Nights* and considered as her first feature story, tells the story of a woman who is a young Palestinian teacher unjustly arrested in an Israeli prison; she gives birth to a baby and is forced to raise her baby among Palestinian women who are political prisoners and other Israeli women who were presented as a criminals (Barakat 2013, p:11).

In this period, the Palestinian director, Ali Nassar, emerged and made many films. Nassar studied filmmaking in Russia in the 1970s. In 1983, he directed his first 60 minutes documentary entitled *The Story of a City on the Beach*. Almost ten years later, in 1994 he directed and produced the film *The Lactator*, a feature film. One of the most important works of Nassar was the long feature film *The Milky Way* 1997. Besides being influenced by Soviet cinema, Nasser has a distinctly eastern style, in which he focuses on the importance of the local surroundings (Hodson 2017, p: 67). Besides his work in cinema, Nassar focused on theater and directed several plays (Barakat 2013, p: 11).

A number of filmmakers emerged in Palestine since the 1980s such as, Ziad Darwish with his films *Anchor on the Land* 1989, *Beit Sahour* in 1992, *Marda* in 1992. Another notable filmmaker was Hanna Elias, who made many films including *Departure* 1986, *The Mountain* 1991, *Sobh* 1991, *Roadblocks* 2002, and his long feature film *Olive Harvest* 2002. Subhi Zubaidi also emerged during this period, he made many films including *My Very Private Map* 1998, *Women in the Sun* 1998, *Ali and his Friends* 1999, *Light at the End of the Tunnel* 2000, and *Crossing Qalandia* 2002, which all are documentaries focused on human rights, reality and refugees (WAFA).

Mohammed Al Bakri entered the field of directing when he made his documentary *1948* and completed it in his film *Jenin Jenin* in 2002 a documentary that shows the battle between the Israeli forces and Palestinian fighters and documented the Israeli army's practices against the Palestinians in Jenin Refugee Camp (Aljazeera 2013). Another director, Nizar Hassan, specialized in documentary filmmaking to show the Palestinian circumstances (WAFA).

Ellia Suliman, another Palestinian director, made films depicting the reality of the Palestinian issue such as *Chronicle of a Disappearance* 1996, followed by *Divine Intervention* 2002 and *The Time that Remains* 2009 (Barakat 2013, p:14). What distinguishes the films of Suleiman, who is considered one of the pioneers of the renaissance of Palestinian cinema, from other films of its era was that they revolve around a non-linear style of narrative; it uses wide shots, repetition, black comedy, and sharply criticizes (Hodson 2017, p:111). Suliman said (Alriyadh 2014):

> *I dealt with cinema by coincidence. This experience came from my inner; I was influenced by some Asian directors such as Japanese director Ozu whose alienation is very similar to the alienation of people in my country. People do not know why I mock in my films, humor in my films is a kind of attempt to adapt to life. This long term war with the occupier is imposing on me and as a kind of sympathy, to mock the occupation makes me feel fun.*

In the same period, the Palestinian director Hany Abu Assad worked in the Netherlands and travelled to the Palestinian territories. He directed and produced many documentaries and dramas since 1990. The big change, however, happened when his film, *Paradise Now* was nominated for the Oscar and then *Omar* filmed in 2013 created a qualitative shift in the Palestinian cinema industry (Barakat 2013, p:11). What distinguishes the cinema of Abu Assad from other Palestinian directors is that he used innovative genres as compared in Palestinian cinema and his style is similar to popular cinematic standards and expectations worldwide. He did not focus on the nation-state in his films, but on the personal psyches of the characters (Hodson 2017, p:137).

Another Palestinian director and producer is Omer Alqattan. He had a remarkable cinematic breakthrough with *Rêves et silences* which he directed in 1991 and worked on a list of films, the latest of which was *Zendeeq* 2009, directed by Michel Khleifi. He then stopped making films to work as a head manager in his father's company Abdul Almusen Qahtane Foundation, which support many educational and cultural fields, including cinema in Palestine (Hamdan 2016).

Rashid Masharawi, a Palestinian director who is considered a self-educated director started filmmaking in the mid-90s (Hodson 2017, p:50). Despite being well less known than other Palestinian directors, he was very influential. Mashharawi spent his childhood in al-Shati Refugee Camp and most of his content and thematic work was influenced by his experience there (Hodson 2017, p:50). He began working in cinema in 1981, directing

a short film entitled *Partners*, and in 1986 he directed his second short film *Passport*, telling the story of a family who is stuck at an Israeli checkpoint because the husband had lost his passport. In 1990 he cofounded the Aylul Film Company with Hany Abu Assad (Hodson 2017, p: 50). Mashharawi, generally, has distinguished himself in the field of documentary film, in which he has been filming for years, such as *Dar w Dour* in 1990 and *Long Days in Gaza* in 1991 to *The Curfew* in 1994, *Haifa* in 1996, *Rabab* in 1997 and other documentary films capturing the Palestinian reality (Barakat 2013, p:15). In addition to documentaries, Mashharawi made fiction films too such as *Ticket to Jerusalem* 2002 and *Waiting* 2005 which represented the general Palestinian situation in relation to the issue of the Palestinian refugees living in the camps of the surrounding countries (Barakat 2013, p: 15).

The fourth period which is called the new Palestinian cinema or the independent cinema is contrast to what was prevalent in the Palestinian cinema during the period of the Palestinian revolution. Though the new cinema steered away from the revolutionary qualities and speeches, and became more focused on the Palestinians as individuals, it did not lose sight of its main motive task in capturing the stifling occupation, its brutality and ruthlessness and the need for the Palestinians to obtain their legitimate rights and return to their homes. Meantime, the documentary films continued to dominate in the Palestinian cinema (İbrahim 2005, p: 44).

3.6 CONCLUSION

The cinematic production in any country cannot be separated from the impact of the economic and political situation. Based on the above, it can be said that the Palestinian cinema has passed through many stages in which the political and economic situation has played a role due to the lack of cinematic production. Despite the difficult circumstances, the Palestinian directors and filmmakers took upon themselves the documentation and depiction of the events and facts that are in Palestine. As seen in the history of Palestinian cinema since its beginning, the Palestinian identity was the main focus. Most Palestinian films, however, did not find popularity on a global level, mostly staying within Palestine and surrounding Arab countries; yet, a few reached some international festivals and others, such as Abu Assad's films, were even nominated for the Oscars.

2. HANY ABU ASSAD AND THE WEST

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The cinematographic experience of Palestinian director Hany Abu Assad has been quite remarkable since the nineties. It has made further advances after the year 2000 with his movies *Paradise Now* and *Omar*, which gained several international and prominent prizes, in addition to a nomination for Best Foreign Movie in the Academy Awards. Furthermore, the experience of Abu Assad has been unique and different from the rest of Palestinian filmmakers in various ways, to the extent that led Hany to Hollywood and managed to get him contracts with many first class actors in a manner that has not occurred before with Palestinian or even Arab directors.

Hany Abu Assad is a Palestinian director; he was born in Nazareth (territory of 48) in 1961 into a middle class family. His father was the owner of an industrial company for manufacturing cement and later he turned to work in transportation business in his hometown (Gertz and Khliefi 2008, p: 47). Unlike other young Palestinians, even in his early life, particularly at the age of four, he started watching films and became fond of western cinema (Hosdon 2017, p: 111). In an interview with Ruby Rich, Abu Assad stated (Rich 2017):

> *When I was four, we did not have a television at home, and my first experience of motion pictures was in the cinema, where I was impressed by the colorful images of people moving. I can say I was shocked because I did not understand that these scenes exist in our real life. The first film I had seen and still remember was a western with shootings. I was afraid when the sound of gunfire rose. I also felt the reality of the horses as they are coming toward the camera and they would attack me, so I hid under my chair, after the movie ended, I went and looked for the horses in the rear section of the screen. What I felt since my first experience changed me, so I became interested in the cinema. In Nazareth, there was only one cinema, every Sunday we were meeting there because there was only one ticket per week which allowed us to see two movies, a lot of boys around the city were coming and as children we were fighting each other to get a seat in the cinema, we were fighting to discover the world. Charles Bronson could get revenge, what was the girls' reaction when they saw the Beatles, at that time I realized my passion to discover the language of cinema through seeing western, Indian musicals, and other dramas.*

In Nazareth, there was an institute called Arab Students Club for social, educational and entertainment activities that belonged to the municipality of Nazareth. It was here where Abu Assad was going to watch films with his friends in his youth; they watched various films of diverse topics that were boring or unappealing to the youth (Dabbah 2015).

Ahmed Alzubi, who was the responsible of the club, began to teach them cinema, showing films, explaining their importance and emphasizing that everyone has to watch and analyze these films from different perspectives because of their importance (Dabbah 2015). The first time Abu Assad thought of making films was at the age of 14 after he watched *One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest* in 1975, a film directed by Milos Forman, staring Jack Nicholson and Louise Fletcher (Dabbah 2015). Abu Assad said that the film gave him an inspiration and desire to create something film related. Before that point, he had been considering joining a Palestinian resistance organization but his family did not allow him. He discovered the alternative choice for him to express his feelings, namely through cinema, after he realized that the armed struggle was failing and few resistance armed organizations remained. Knowing this, he concluded that "the medium that can make our voice to the world is the intellectuals and through cinema" (Dabbah 2015).

In 1981, Abu Assad graduated from high school, then moved to Netherlands where he had to complete his study in airplane engineering (Hosdon 2017, p: 111). While he was there, Abu Assad strengthened his conviction of becoming a filmmaker; at first he worked as an aircraft engineer, but the idea of being a filmmaker took root when he tried to impress a girl by saying he was a filmmaker. At that point, he had to do something and make a film in order not to lose the relationship with that girl. In the end, he was unable to salvage the relationship, but he learned a crucial point (Rich 2017). Abu Assad mentioned that one of the reasons that made him love cinema was that he could express his feelings through his films by transforming his pain to a cinematic language (Zoubi 2008). Furthermore, through cinematic language he wanted to capture the Palestinian pain and express it to the world, especially after he saw the Palestinian director Michel Khleifi films and realized the importance of Palestinian cinema in presenting Palestinian issue (Hosdon 2017, p: 112). But amidst these, the biggest reason that led him to filmmaking was his watching of films since his childhood. Abu Assad remarked that if he was used to another form of art he would have went down that path instead; for example, if he used to read books he would have been a writer or became a musician if he liked to listen to music. But in the end, films were always what he was interested in (Hosdon 2017, p: 112).

4.2 THE BEGINNING OF ABU ASSAD:

In 1987, Abu Assad got a job at Channel 4, the British public-service television broadcaster, and after that, in BBC (Nassar 2011). In 1990 Abu Assad met the Palestinian director Rashid Mashharawi in Nazareth where they founded a film production company together named Aylul. The first collaboration between Abu Assad and Mashharawi was a documentary film titled *Dar w Dour* in 1990; the film was directed by Mashharawi, while Abu Assad served as an assistant director (Gertz and Khliefi 2008, p: 47). *Dar W Dour* was the first Palestinian film that shows the Palestinian issue indirectly through filming the daily and ordinary life of Mohammed, a Palestinian refugee who lives in Al-Shati camp in Gaza. The protagonist, Mohammed, is 40 years old, married, and has seven children. He goes every week to work in the city of Tel Aviv, cleaning Israeli houses. The filming took place in Gaza and Tel Aviv, presenting the difficult situations in the first intifada and the Gulf War and the sacrifices Mohammed had to make in order to survive. The film was shown in many European theaters and won many awards because of the importance of the issue that the film deals with (Shayip 2017, p: 204).

There are many of Mashharawi's films that Abu Assad was involved in as a producer or an assistant director. *House-House* was the second film in which Abu Assad worked as an assistant for Mashharawi (Gertz and Khliefi 2008, p: 47). The film *Long Days in Gaza* 1991 by Aylul production, was written and directed by Mashharawi, produced by Abu Assad, and in cooperation with (BBC) (Shayip 2017, p: 204). The film captures the effects of the Gulf War on workers through three characters, Jumaa, Ibrahim, and Mustafa. In light of their difficult condition, their journey shows their views of the Palestinian society, economy, politics, the Intifada, the Gulf War, and their vision of the future. Another film, *Hatta Ishaar Akhar* 1994, is a drama film that tells the story of two days of curfew by Israeli army in a Palestinian refugee camp. The film, too, was directed by Rashid Mashharawi and produced by Abu Assad (Shayip 2017, p: 204). Over these couple years, Abu Assad and Mashharawi made many films together.

In the mid of 1990, Abu Assad started attending film classes while he was in Netherlands (Hosdon 2017, p: 112). In 1991, not only was he involved in the film industry, he started directing films. *To Whom It Concerns*, a documentary film, was the first film directed by Abu Assad and produced by Rashid Mashharawi. The film is considered the first work of

Abu Assad (Gertz and Khliefi 2008, p: 47) and is about fifteen minutes long. It contains a brief view of the Palestinian stance during the Gulf War. The film won the award of best short film at Arab World Institute in Paris (Shayip 2017, p: 204).

In 1992 Abu Assad made his first fiction film, *Paper House*, a short fiction film (28 minutes) written by Abu Assad and produced by Aylul Film Production (IFFR) co-directed by Hanna Elias. The film was awarded the Best Short Feature Film at the Arab Cinema Biennale in Paris 1994 (Zoubi 2008). Telling the story of Khalid, a 13 year old Palestinian boy, who dreams to build his house after the Israeli army destroyed his family's house. He achieved his dream of building a house in cooperation with his friends. Like many of his other films, *Paper House* was also financed by Dutch television (Shayip 2017, p: 204). About *Paper House*, Abu Assad says:"It is a half-hour film that reflects my childhood. I built a house and my mother destroyed it because she thought it was dangerously put together. Even my mother didn't trust me as an engineer; she believed that I am good at storytelling." (Gertz and Khliefi 2008, p: 47).

In 2000, on the occasion of the Pope's visit to Palestine, specifically to Nazareth, Abu Assad returned to his city Nazareth from Netherlands to tell the real story of the city, the reality of the city's conditions, and the reality of human beings and their changes in a film entitled *Nazareth 2000* (Assaf 2015), a long documentary (55 minutes) of Palestinian-Dutch production. Abu Assad in his film interviewed two Palestinian as the main characters, Abu Arab and Abu Maria, who work in a gas station. Abu Maria is Christian and a native of Nazareth, and Abu Arab, a Muslim, is from the village of Majidil and one of the Palestinians forced to leave their villages that were destroyed in 1948. Many topics were discussed in his film, the most important of which is Pope's visit, the constraints of the occupation army on the people, and the view of the Christian and Islamic reality in Nazareth (Jazaer 2015). In actuality, *Nazareth 2000* was partially scripted and the interviews were written by a young writer, Adaniya Shibli, assisted by Abu-Assad (Gertz and Khliefi 2008, p: 48). During the shooting of the film people were coming to Abu Assad and telling him their stories and through this, Abu Assad began to realize the relation between fiction and documentary and the freedom to convey a point more artistically in fiction (Nasser 2017).

In that same year, Abu Assad made his film *Under the Microscope*, a 23 minutes short documentary film, which attempts to investigate the reasons that pushed the Palestinians to the first Intifada, particularly, the participation of 48 Palestinians that led to the death of 13 persons from the city of Nazareth, and the surrounding villages (Shayip 2017, p:206).

In 2002, Abu Assad released his long documentary *Ford Transit* (80 mins) (İMDB). Focusing on scenes of passing Israeli checkpoints, Abu Assad depicted a Palestinian driver and the difficult conditions of his daily life. Furthermore, the film contained some interviews with Palestinian well-known figures who were in the same vehicle on their way to Jerusalem such as Dr. Hanan Ashrawi, Dr. Azmi Bishara, and Father Atallah Hanna, who told their views about the Palestinian issue (Shayip 2017, p:206) Abu Assad said that he wanted to make a documentary with a different form. He said (Aljazeera 2006):

> *I tried directing it as a fiction story but also I worked in between the documentary and fiction, the film's main character wasn't just a driver, but also acting, and sometimes I was telling him what to say and what to do to make that mixing between fiction and documentary languages.*

His film does not only mix documentary with fiction but also uses western elements. Abu Assad says" the reason that I put west wild film music is that in the cowboy films (wild west) there are no laws… same as Palestine these days there are no laws" (Aljazeera 2006). The film was considered a landmark in Abu Assad's filmmaking career due to the awards it won and was produced by Augustus film, a production company (IMDB) that was created in Amsterdam on the 1st of August 2000 by Abu Assad and Bero Beyer. The company later produced many films, most of them filmed in the Middle East. They produced *Rana's Wedding* and *Paradise Now*, which helped later to receive international co-production including funding from Germany, France, and Israel (CINANDO).

Abu Assad had many years of experience in documentary filmmaking before he changed and started directing long feature films. In his documentary films he had been trying to put dramatic elements to draw viewer's attention. When he was asked about switching from documentary to fiction filmmaking Abu Assad said (Mohammad 2018):

> *Art for me is freedom and creativity, I did not find that in the documentary films, but there are standards to provide, and the most important is honesty in the presentation of this kind of cinema without giving views, but I found my pleasure in long feature*

> *films, at the same time I do not mind returning to documentary films but I wanted to achieve my dream of presenting long feature films and then working on several sides.*

In the start of the transition, he made a long drama and a romance film in Netherland titled *Het 14e Kippetje* in 1998. The film was far from the Palestinian issue but in cooperation with Arnon Gromberd, a Dutch-Jewish writer, Abu Assad tried to analyze the apathy and fallacy of the new generation of young Westerners, which is centered on several characters telling the story of young girl and boy getting married in a comic style (Aljazeera 2006). It was negatively received, to the point where critics of that time classified the film as the worst film of all time (Gertz and Khliefi 2008, p: 47). Abu Assad stated, "in my Dutch film, for me, it was only the stage of learning and practicing my projects. I mean, I came here to study" (Aljazeera 2006).

4.3 HOLLYWOOD FIRST EXPERIENCE:

Abu Assad was considered as a self-educated person in the field of filmmaking, and his time in Hollywood furthered his experience. After his films *Rana's Wedding* in 2002 and *Paradise Now* in 2005 became successful films in the western world, Abu Assad moved to the United States. He had hoped to acquire more experience and to pursue more opportunities in the world of cinema, but the time spent in Hollywood wasn't a successful venture for him in terms of his fame or wealth (Hosdon 2017, p: 112).

In Hollywood, Abu Assad directed *The Courier* (2012), staring Jeffrey Dean Morgan, Josie Ho, Til Schwinger, etc. It was written by Brannon Coombs and Pete Dris and is a thriller crime movie about a million dollar job for a specialist carrier to deliver a briefcase to the underworld's most dangerous hitman (IMDB). The critics commented negatively on the film, remarking that the story is weak, the film is poorly made in terms of technical aspects, and overall, lacks originality. As such, the film wasn't a successful step for Abu Assad in Hollywood. However, that period he spent did give him many benefits and much experience. Abu Assad said "in the four years that I spent in Hollywood I learnt much more than the previous 25 years of filmmaking… success sometimes makes you blind. In Hollywood I reconstructed my vision, talent and humanity. I learnt a lot there (Hosdon 2017, p: 112)." After his four years of Hollywood experience, he moved back to Nazareth

and realized that his passion of capturing realities of life under the occupation through nonviolent films (Cook 2013).

4.4 BACK TO PALESTINE: ABU ASSAD'S FILMS AND THE WEST:

After returning to Palestine, Abu Assad's film production focused primarily on the Palestine-Israel conflict. Though he always received technical assistance to finance his films from countries such as United States, Netherlands and France, Abu Assad always wished to have Palestinian finance and to involve Palestinians in his film crew. It wasn't until his feature, *Omar*, that he could finally fulfill this and it became his first Palestinian financially-backed film (Shayip 2017, p:206). In *Omar* 2013, Abu Assad's cinematic style reflected the influences of western cinema, particularly the mainstream Hollywood style found in popular genres (Hosdon 2017, p: 112). Furthermore, the film received rewards from international film festivals, and was nominated in the Oscars, and was widely distributed in the west. It was also available on Netflix, the US and the world entertainment service (Hosdon 2017, p: 123).

His other film, *Paradise Now*, too had a remarkable success in the western world and film critics even argue that the film is the most successful Palestinian film despite the film's controversial subject of suicide bombers (Hosdon 2017, p: 112). Abu Assad had received financing for the film from different countries such as France, United States, Germany, Holland, and different organizations, one of which was an Israeli film production called Llama Films. The crew of the film consisted of people from these countries in addition to British and Belgian nationalities. Regarding the unusually large crew and how he had three production companies, Abu Assad commented that the financing system requires people from each country to be involved in the production. In actuality, filming in Palestine has its own dangers; despite the concerns, "presence and safety weren't factors" that held them back and the crew completed their required filming (Cook 2013). The next step for Abu Assad was the international film festivals and how to draw attention to the film. After the film's success in festivals, one of Hollywood's largest distributors at that time, Warner Independent Pictures was interested and bought the film, which shocked Abu Assad. As a result, *Paradise Now* became the most accessible Palestinian film, well received and distributed in the west world and despite the subject of the film being a sensitive topic, it was praised by the American audience. In contradiction, when the film

was screened in the Palestinian city of Ramallah, it was not well received and the reviews were all negative, as Palestinian viewers claimed the film does not portray the Palestinian issue in a respectful manner, but a few other viewers praised the film as an appropriate gateway for the global viewer into the world of Palestinian cinema (Hosdon 2017, p: 112).

Additionally, though *Rana's Wedding* received many awards in international festivals and was also well received and distributed in United States, France and other western countries, the film faced the problem of being distributed in Palestine (Haider 2010). Abu Assad's films could not get a wide distribution in Palestine but Abu Assad justifies this because there is no Palestinian distribution channels like in other nations, which could help his films, reach the Palestinian audience (Haider 2010).

In his cinematography, Abu Assad exceeds the traditional narrative and documentation of the revolution and resistance. He writes the film narrative in a way that the purpose of the film is apparent but simultaneously writes it to gain the international audience's attention. He claims that in cinema the most important aspect is how to share a story in a dramatic style. Abu Assad: "My films are for the wide audience. Any director has to know which audience to address, and the international film festivals are important to market your films" (Dabbah 2015). Moreover, Abu Assad was affected by Hollywood and the films of the west that he grew up watching, in his films, Abu Assad uses well-known genres that familiar to the westerns audience. As an example, he uses action thriller in *Paradise Now*, romance and action thriller in *Omar*, and he uses road and romance elements in *Rana's Wedding*; for this reason his films were well received internationally (Hudson 2017, p:114).

According to many critics, Abu Assad uses such elements because he wants his films to be distributed and received widely. According to Nashef, Abu Assad's films contain similar elements found in general cinematic scenes; he could successfully reach the world through his high cinematic style and defying dominant stereotypes, in addition to receiving his financing from many western countries. The films also show characters like "rebellious teenagers, sympathetic mothers… etc." (Nashef 2015, p:12). Through his films, unusual characters who are unwanted in the west world such as suicide bombers and collaborators are portrayed. Abu Assad elaborates that he presents characters from a dark place to the ones who are not in those places and cannot understand what they

endure. From this, it shows how Abu Assad made decisions with accurate knowledge of his audience (Hosdon 2017, p: 125). This knowledge allowed him to effectively showcase the Palestinian situation in an comprehensible manner to people disconnected from it.

4.5 ABU ASSAD, SECOND EXPERIENCE IN HOLLYWOOD:

Abu Assad's second time in Hollywood and his first big budget foreign film to date was *The Mountain between Us*. The screenplay was by Chris Weitz and J. Mills Goodloe and the film stars two of Hollywood's famous and talented actors, Idris Elba (Dr. Ben Bass) and Kate Winslet (Alex Martin) (IMDB). The film tells the story of two strangers who get lost on a mountain after a tragic plane accident. Dr. Ben Bass was an important doctor and Alex Martina, a photojournalist, was going to her wedding. Both seek for a way to survive. During their journey the film switches to a romantic melodrama (IMDB). What attracted Abu Assad to direct this film was the mixture between love story and a survival one which posed a challenge to him since romance has a different structure from a survival (Cox and Fuller 2017).

Being in Hollywood and getting publicity is a colossal step or probably a dream many hope for, if not all that of all aspiring filmmakers. There is no doubt that this was a big opportunity for Abu Assad to find the chance to work with famous actors and with a large budget that well surpassed that of his previous films. It is a big achievement for Palestinian cinema that Abu Assad reached Hollywood in a way that no Palestinian, let alone Arabic, director has done before (Hejazi 2017).

Abu Assad expresses his happiness from his time in Hollywood and describes it as rewarding. "After they were convinced and sure that I learned Hollywood cinematic accent, I'm here" (Hamad 2017). Added (Vogue 2017):

> *Our shooting was in 45 days, and it was the first time I felt I was just a director that, in my previous films I was solving the whole problems, the permits, locations, etc.… but here I have the whole people who dealt with the problems, my responsibility was overlook the actors and the film, The budget of each of my previous films was low, I was responsible for a part of the production and for most location and details. Now my responsibility was focused on directing, and the experience was great*

Abu Assad previously often worked more with local actors, who did not have that much experience in acting, especially in his films, *Rana's Wedding*, *Omar* and *Paradise Now*.

However, in Hollywood he dealt with famous and experienced actors, such as Idris Elba and Kate Winslet. He described it by saying:“The directing functions are the same if the actors are beginners or world-renowned actors as Kate and Idris. As director, the things that must be done are the same: image, lighting, etc. I didn’t force them to obey my orders” (Hamad 2017)

In addition to the differences between his experience in Hollywood and his previous experience, Abu Assad comments on the marketing of the film (Vogue 2017):

> *The marketing team in my previous films consisted of me and my wife, while the marketing team now consisted of about fifty people… We don’t need to point out to Hollywood's influence over the world. This experience allowed me to understand Hollywood better, I didn’t care about the revenue before, but I wanted my films to be accepted at major world festivals.*

4.6 CONCLUSION

From his humble beginnings until reaching international fame, Palestinian director Hany Abu Assad aimed through his documentaries and feature films, be they short or long, to present the Palestinian issue in a different cinematic language from what the local audience is used to. This difference caught the eye of the western viewer and was praised since the cinematic language that Abu Assad uses in his films is similar to the one used in western films. Despite his unique start in studying airplane engineering while he was in university, Abu Assad’s career as a director began when his passion in cinema from his youth took hold of him and revealed how he could address the Palestinian issue through motion images. Furthermore, through his films, Abu Assad managed to reach a position that the majority of filmmakers aspire to achieve around the world, namely, to work in Hollywood alongside big-name actors. Incorporating the western language to target these audiences, Abu Assad managed to not only make his films internationally renowned, but fundamentally, through his films, was able to convey the reality of the Palestinian issue to audiences where the issue is often viewed too sensitive to address.

3. CASE STUDIES

5.1 RANA'S WEDDING 2002

Rana's Wedding resembles a normal Hollywood romantic comedy in the midst of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict (Ebert 2004). Moreover, the film shows a considerable suspense in Rana's, a 17 year old girl, journey to marry her lover Khalil; otherwise she has no choice but to move to Egypt with her father (Holden 2003). The film begins by explaining that Rana lives with her father in Jerusalem, and one day her father gives her a list of men's names to choose whom to marry before he leaves to Egypt at four o'clock. If she does not marry one of them, she will follow him to Egypt to complete her study there. On the second day, she decides to leave her home of Jerusalem to find her boyfriend, Khalil (Khalifa Natour), a theatre director whom she plans to marry, but he is not listed as a good candidate to be her husband. Rana has to find Khalil and the registrar to let them meet her father since in her religion it is forbidden for her to get married because she is under the age, unless she receives father's approval. Rana faces challenges through her journey to find Khalil and the film ends with Rana marrying her lover. In the last moments of the film, she celebrates her wedding with the people in the street near the Israeli border.

What makes the film attract the attention of the viewers is the rare glimpses into romantic life in a culture where it is not common to be explicitly portrayed (Toumarkine 2004). Although the viewers see the film as a romantic story in its foreground, there are subtle notions in the background of the occupation and its daily practices in the occupied areas against the civilians (Ebert 2004). One critic argues that the strength of the movie is in its details. For example, in one scene, young boys are throwing stones at soldiers on the barrier, and the soldiers shoot back at them. In another, Rana forgets her clothes on the street and goes back to retrieve them but is too late because the items were detonated by Israeli police for being suspicious. In another tense scene, she yells frustrated when her cell phone turns off mid-call, which alarms soldiers to point their guns at her. Moreover, many other details are shown in many close-up shots arrayed throughout the movie. The characters filmed in close-ups always help capture and convey a deep sensitive performance. Rana's facial expressions, especially, convey her feelings of hopelessness,

hesitation, kindness and love, and as the film revolves around changing emotions, Abu Assad wanted exactly to show this change through these close-up shots (Holden 2003).

Rana, too, is not a typical female protagonist as she overcomes hurdles herself and refuses to rely on a man. The audience becomes quickly fond of Rana not just because she defies the norms of her culture, but also because she solves all the challenges that face her (Murphy 2003). On one hand, she is a determined girl since she challenges her father by marrying the one whom she chooses and not one within her father's preference. But on the other hand, she shows obedience by respecting her father's authority and societal rules. Overall, Rana is an anomaly of Palestinian femininity; she shares the features of women in that setting that are culturally frowned upon: wearing fitted t-shirt and slacks, remaining messy in her appearance and dressing in a "scandalous manner", using a spoon as a shoehorn, hungrily wolfing cakes down in one scene, noisily booting a bottle down the street, and walking streets alone… etc. (Yaqup 2007, p: 72) From her appearance and behavior, Rana is clearly a distinctive character that breaks the traditional archetype set by Palestinian society.

Weaving fiction and fact, tragedy and comedy (Rich 2017), the film shows the reality of the resistance through the exaggerated humor. Clearly in the scene where Khalil and Rana are sitting to rest, Rana feels as if she is being observed by Israeli surveillance, a mention to Palestinians always being under the eye of observation. She covers her face with her arm and starts crying into Khalil arms. Abu Assad conveys Rana's fears of being under the occupation that invades all parts of their lives and in this scene, the occupation was potentially preventing her marriage. Khalil consoles Rana and makes humorous and crude movements in front of the camera to make Rana laugh. This scene shows the frustration of those under the occupation, being driven to protest in ridiculous manners. Abu Assad shares a sense of displaced humor through showing the pain of people under occupation and their tragedy, yet this scene comes bittersweet and does not arouse the regular laugh as the viewer recalls the circumstances surrounding Rana and Khalil (Tobias 2003).

The film ends in a cheerful tone during the ceremony as Rana marries Khalil. Despite the existence of the occupation, Rana is filled with positivity after she overcomes all obstacles to achieve her dream of marrying the man she loves. This corresponds with what Abu Assad comments during one of his interviews by saying that hope is a crucial part of

resistance (Haider 2010). Abu Assad captures many events that have been normalized under the occupation for Palestinians through Rana's adventure: from the moment she wakes up in the morning until the moment she is married. Throughout the journey, the film shows the ugliness of Israeli occupation from the Israeli barriers to the soldiers, the home demolitions, the funerals, the ruined buildings, boys throwing stones at armed Israeli soldiers, permission required from the occupation in many of her steps simply to marry. Throughout these moments the film shows the daily life of Palestinians who live under the occupation as they normally cope with it. During the scene of the funeral, Rana exits from a car and stands in the opposite direction and looking at the faces of funeral goers of a person killed by Israeli forces. The scene gives the sense that Rana feels as if she is a stranger among her own people. When she gets back in the car there are close-ups of Rana's face that express her inner turmoil as she flails in exasperation. The scene ends comically as her boyfriend appears next to the car making funny faces, bringing a smile to her face. Abu Assad comments saying: what the scene means is that after she looks at the people and gets back in the car she feels how absurd her journey is. While she is looking for her boyfriend to marry him, there are people dying and suffering. This polarity conflicts and becomes a burden to her (Aljazeera 2006). As the film progresses, the unequivocal strain of the lives of Palestinians under the occupation begins to emerge amidst the typically celebratory notion of marriage.

Rana's Wedding is similar to the Italian neorealism: a story occurs amongst the people living under an occupation, with the difficult conditions of the conflict being presented. André Bazin called that movement a cinema of fact and reconstituted reportage (UKEssays 2018). Abu Assad uses a gritty documentary realism filming in *Rana's Wedding* to show Rana's life under the occupation and highlight the traditional Arab patriarchy (Costanzo 2013, p: 140). Roger Ebert describes the film as a romantic comedy story but fascinating as a documentary: the film shows the audience that Palestinians are not all suicide bombers as reflected in news; there are numerous realities shown regarding the Palestinian-İsraeli conflict, Jerusalem streets and neighborhoods, the borders, and occupation practices through Rana's journey (Ebert 2004). It is a dramatic cover to show the realities of people as they affected by Palestinian-Israeli conflict through the eyes of the emotional heroine, who is forced to get married in a hurry. Yet in most of it is details, it cannot be said that this film deals with a folkloric material or deals with details of

marriage traditions. Moreover, Rana does not only struggle against the political circumstances that restrict her life but also against a strict paternalistic society and its traditions from which she cannot escape (Hornaday 2003). *Rana's Wedding* is a distanced and broad view of the middle-class Palestinian life under the occupation through the journey of a young Palestinian woman who finally decides her own future (Young 2002).

Unfortunately, *Rana's Wedding* did not achieve much attention and fame in Palestine. In his interview, Abu Assad claims that there were no distribution channels to reach the audience in his own country. Despite that, the film was widely distributed in the western world, particularly, United States, France, and Germany, and won awards in several international film festivals (Hudson 2017, p: 114). This film is created to be fascinating for the international audience since in its core, the film portrays life and love caught in a war area where suspicion and gun control is prevalent but does not lose the enjoyability of familiar entertainment in its romantic premise. Moreover, in examining the film's genres, there is significance in the basis of the story being a wedding. Movies about weddings have been around for a long time, and span a wide range of emotional tones, cinematic styles, and cultural terrain. *Rana's Wedding* adds to this genre in addressing the place of women in society yet appeals as a familiar and widespread topic. (Costanzo 2013, p: 127-140). In regards to the international audience, Doris Toumarkine in his review Film Journal International confirms the intentional appeal to the international audience when he observes Rana as the Muslim girl who enters a small dark place, full of candles, that resembles a church more than a mosque. The stone of Jerusalem's alleyways, too, recall the coastal Italy or France while the western elements in the film's impressionistic piano score divert from traditional music. In the end, it's a universal experience that remarkably caters to the preferences of the international audience (Toumarkine 2004).

5.2 PARADISE NOW 2005

Said: "Do you think that we are doing the right thing."

Khaled, hesitantly: "…of course. In one hour we will be heroes."

Paradise Now tells the story of two young Palestinian men, Said and Khalid, from Nablus who work as mechanics in a car repair shop. They are childhood friends who live under difficult circumstances under the Israeli occupation. They are chosen by an unknown Palestinian resistance organization to carry out a martyrdom operation via suicide bombing in the city of Tel Aviv. The resistance organization prepares the two young men to carry out the operation and transfer them to a place where they are supposed to pass through to Tel Aviv. However, an incident with Israeli forces prevents them from completing their mission. With the friends separated and the operation postponed, the two friends start searching for each other. Meanwhile, Suha an educated Palestinian expatriate tries over time to convince the two friends to give up on the mission. Suha is in love with Said, but her ideas far differ from his. Suha persuades Khalid to give up on carrying out the mission but cannot convince her lover, Said, who eventually fulfills the operation. The film covers Said's and Khalid's last 24 hours while they try to carry out the martyrdom mission against the Israeli occupation.

Paradise Now, the Oscar-nominated film (IMDB), presents one of the complex issues in Palestinian society in its conflict against Israeli occupation. Particularly, it is looking at martyrs (suicide bombers) and their economic, political, and psychological motivations that push them to be involved in a suicide mission. It presents this topic in an artistic way that gives the suicide bombers a humanistic face, breaking the common-held stereotypes that are held by Western communities and viewers.

The general style of the Hollywood thriller genre is used in this film – two young men are embarking on a murder-suicide plot. The use of a specific genre for a film creates an expectation for the audience; film viewers should then be able to form their own expectations about the upcoming events by building suspense and creating tension (Imre 2012, p: 199). Abu Assad brilliantly uses the thriller genre with its sustained suspense in the plot progression and main conventions to keep the viewers engaged. Furthermore, the topic of the film gives a sense of terror, but the use of cinematic conventions in the film,

the thriller genre and camera malfunctions...etc., is applied in order to ease the sense of terrorism and to create a more nuanced and challenging narrative of Palestinian nationhood, a narrative that has been so far both impermissible and readily discreditable by the hegemonic system of Israeli occupation (Gana 2008, p:3). Another genre that this film is associated with is the war film genre as it explores the Palestinian-Israeli conflict following two characters who want to complete an assigned mission reaching a collective goal – liberation.

In the beginning of the film, particularly in the first several scenes, Abu Assad uses fixed camera movements, primarily wide shots and close-ups of the characters. The lack of camera movements provides a simple introduction to the many complex issues that Palestine faces including the Second İntifada. In the beginning of the First Act, the film shows through a wide shot a girl who wants to cross the barrier. Her name is Suha (acted by the Moroccan actress Lubna Zubal). She is a Palestinian girl who was born in France, grew up in Morocco and now she is a returnee to Palestine following the Oslo Accord where she is forced by the Israeli military to cross the barrier. After years in exile, she returns back to Palestine.

The First Act focuses on the silent barrier where there are no pedestrians in sight; only hands passing the identity card, bags being searched, guns hanging around shoulders, belligerent eyes and gestures, and in the end, the allowing of passage to Suha who begins her road trip to Nablus. Everything in the first scene expresses the daily insult and humiliation that the Palestinians are exposed to. The soldier's cold gaze towards Suha expresses the dominance of the occupation on the land where nobody can pass through without being checked. Only the soldiers can decide if Suha can cross or not. Suha's determined gaze in response expresses the resistance against occupation and she is not satisfied with their existing dominance of the land and their current practices.

In the following scene, the film moves directly to two Nablusian friends, Said and Khalid. They are handsome characters of an archetype found in Western films. Rich argues that in the Western world, Said and Khaled are characters who could have acted in Kevin Smith and Richard Linklater films and they would have been convincing characters in a Samuel Beckett play instead of acting in a Palestinian film (Rich 2017). The scene takes place with the two of them working in a car repair shop arguing with an upset customer

who makes the insulting comment, “the car bumper crooked like your father” referring to Said’s father which follows with a destructive reaction as Khalid hits the car bumper of the customer’s car off with a hammer. Meanwhile, the coffee boiling over during this scene gives the viewers the first symbol of building anticipation of upcoming events in the film.

Suha comes to the shop to ensure that her car has been fixed. In this scene the viewers see Suha and Said standing by her car and she gives her keys to Said. Through their facial expressions, the viewers realize that there is a love interest between them. In the next scene viewers see Said and Khaled smoke and dance while listening to Western music. They both have interest in love and they are learning how to live despite their circumstances. In the same scene there is a spiteful gaze from a boy who brings two cups of tea to the two main characters. This dissatisfaction was caused by the fact that he was paid one coin, but he wanted more. This gaze expresses that the young boy, who lives under the occupation, resists through silence by showing his facial expressions. (Patricia Bronislawski 2015, p:115).

These two men seem to be consistently in the car repair shop and sitting pleasantly on a hill overlooking Nablus city. The viewer notices a contrast between their minds and their actions. The first character, Khalid, tends to be happy and laughing. While Said tends to be conservative refusing to smile even in front of the camera. In the studio where Said goes to take a photo he goes and stands in front of a painting. Mathews argues that the autumn trees, houses and white church in the painting is a symbol of the New England that they love. This also portrays the valley where the blood of Redcoats (a historical item used to refer to British clothing and British soldiers who were on their way to fight during the American Revolutionary War in the 18th century) and Patriots (or known as the revolutionaries who rebelled against British rule to gain their independence) are captured and stands as a symbol of heroism. But Said’s face is melancholic (Mathews 2010, p:52). Moreover, there is a contradiction in their names. Said in the Arabic language means happy but he is an unhappy person, while Khaled means eternity. Wondering about the reasons that make Abu Assad choose such names for the characters and the reasons that make them decide to participate in suicide bombing, Abyad argues that these types of questions target the international audience. Meanwhile, the film’s title is contradictory to

the beginning scenes of the film that shows Palestinian life as anything but paradise (Abyad 2014, p: 68).

After showing the personality and difficult circumstances of the two main characters, Said and Khalid, the film continues with Jamal, a religious teacher, appearing and telling them that they will carry out a martyr mission the next day as a response to the assassination of one of the resistance organizations' leader. As Said and Khalid had requested it before, the choice to carry out the mission is then confirmed by them. This is consistent with the fact that these kinds of missions are arranged according to the wishes of the person who wants to participate (Ibrahim 2005).

The night before carrying out the mission, Said goes to Suha's house to put her car keys under her door. Suha becomes aware of his attempt and opens the door. Said claims that he just came to deliver her car keys. Suha invites Said to enter and drink a cup of tea. They engage in a conversation about whether Said goes to cafes or watches movies at the theatres or not. He says that he went once to the theatre to burn down Rivoli Cinema because the Israeli soldiers had closed the crossing. When she asks him about the film genre that he likes the most, he answers if there is such a thing as a boring genre. His answer refers to the miserable life and the hopelessness he feels under the occupation and its practices destroying their life standards. The occupation represents the main problem that the Palestinian youth suffers from the suppression of their freedoms, the denial of their will and the confiscation of their rights, creating a general feeling of tension, frustration, anxiety, and fear, and affects them at the psychological, social, political and security level (WAFA). As a result, in the film and reality, the occupation is making their life arduous and boring, particularly in the First and Second Intifadas.

The film proceeds to reveal Suha as the daughter of Abu Azzam, who is one of the martyrs of the revolution and one of its leaders during the days of the armed revolution. She appears as a girl who is confident of herself and her vision towards life and reality, occupation and struggle. She doesn't feel anxious like Said who later asks his mother about his father, a former collaborator for Israeli occupation who was executed by a Palestinian resistant organization. His mother justifies it by saying, "what he did was for us." Her answer is not convincing for Palestinians who consider collaboration with Israeli soldiers as the highest betrayal, and that collaborators must receive the worst outcome.

Even in the beginning, the audience is shown a scene where Khalid leaves Said and goes to eat in a restaurant and a Palestinian man expresses his opinion saying that not just the collaborator has to be killed and punished, but also his family, relatives and the ones of the Palestinian side who helps him.

Note: Since the first Intifada (1987 until 1993) the Palestinian resistant organizations took a strong position against those who were confirmed to work with Israeli authorities. They were considered as part of the enemy. Resistant organizations chased them and executed hundreds. At that time the number of those executed because of their collaboration with Israeli military was around a thousand Palestinians (Khdair 2014, p: 156).

In an isolated place where the Alkataeb of liberation (the resistance organization) hides, Khalid, carrying a gun, reads his martyrdom message which combine religious, national, emancipative, and official political stand of the Palestinians. As he reads, organization members watching begin to snack on the sandwiches made by Khalid's mother in a scene that appears misplaced. Upon seeing them, Khalid stops reading the prepared script and is reminded of his mother and the true words of his heart. In a comical manner, his face softens but remains solemn and Khalid proceeds to record a message for his mother about where to buy cheaper "water filters". Though suicide bombing is a complex issue to address, in *Paradise Now* it is presented in a comedic way. Black comedy or dark comedy is used in the film to describe controversial, disturbing issues and highlight them through humor. Through these scenes, the unease of the topic is dispelled and the viewer is able to understand.

After Khalid, Said went up to record his martyrdom message. In an attempt to not disturb but rather acquire the western sensibilities, Said's message, instead, were devoid of religious references (Abu-Khalil 2006). Mathews argues that what makes this film broadly interesting is that in a way it imitates the American story. Khaled's character imitates the tone of Patrick Henry, one of the Founding Fathers of United States, in his speeches and also those people who refuse to live in subjection. The audience sees this in Jamal's sentence "Death is better than submission". This sentence is familiar to the famous sentence in American "Give me my liberty, or give me death." Many of these dialogues are similar to that of Americans who believe in the right to fight for liberty (Mathews 2010, p: 50).

The film continues with scenes of the two young men preparing for the mission, specifically religious preparations (e.g., prayer, body washing, coffins, and shaving their curly hair off. This scene ends with them in black suits and it becomes apparent how disconnected they are from the norm of a martyrs (suicide bomber). In other words, Hamas and Jihad are the Islamic organizations that were often responsible for carrying out these missions and the appointment for the martyrdom missions, deep-rooted in the Palestinian community, are always dependent on strict rules. This appointment is precise and the chosen person is grateful to gain this honor and often carries heavy religious motives. However, Said and Khalid are not the men who fit this role when examining their persona. They are young men who smoke shisha, talk about women and listen to music (Honeycutt 2005). From the beginning Abu Assad wanted to show how they are ordinary people, deviating from the hate-filled religious norm that's often perceived of suicide bombers. Even the leader of the resistance organization appears more charismatic, tired of having to carry out this obligatory task (Ebert 2005). Abu Assad's way of portraying of Said and Khalid brilliantly struck his audience by challenging the preconceived stereotypes (Allen 2006).

Later, Said and Khalid, along with the organization members, sit together for their last meal in a layout that clearly resembles Da Vinci's *The Last Supper*. It was clear the director in this scene wants to appeal to the West by saying that just as Christ was a great martyr because he chose death to liberate man from sin, the Palestinians choose martyrdom to liberate themselves from humiliation and the homeland from occupation. Dying as a martyr will lead to heaven. Yet for Said and Khalid, they were not asking for heaven, but rather salvation from occupation and humiliation and the ending of the violence (Aksa 2015). Their eyes were not to heaven; this paradise, which Suha says does not exist, was not their motivation.

Abu Assad elaborated on the last supper scene. It is a deliberate reference to Jesus Christ that is understandable by western world that it is possible to win a victory over your enemy by taking him with you to death (Mathews 2006). In another interview Abu Assad said (Nasser 2017):

> *I have prepared the legend of the Last Supper in that scene. The Supper takes place somewhere north of Jerusalem, and here was Palestine as a true story. From the background to the legendary scene, Said, in the film, was conscious that he would*

> *become part of that legend, but with new dimensions. I have prepared the scene in a way similar to Leonardo Da Vinci's Last Supper. I am making a film, a cinematic painting by reconstructing this painting with all the elements and problems included*

In the following scene, Khalid moves to the corner, stands on one foot and turns back quickly toward the camera. He puts his hand near his waist as if he's about to draw a weapon in a Wild West gunslinger imitation (Mathews 2010, p:49). Clearly an homage to western cinema, this move by Khalid combines black comedy as well as lightens the solemnity of the task they are about to carry out. One of the mission supervisors tells the protagonists to kill soldiers, as many as they can. He treats them as machines that he is using to achieve what he wants. He doesn't care about them as a human. The relationship between the resistant organization and those young men is based on utility; the organization uses those men to achieve their objectives. This scene conveys a sense of pity for these young men lose their lives on behalf of people who send them to death but don't go themselves (Ebert 2005). Yet in reality, these missions are carried out with individual motivations often aligning with that of the community and organization. (Khamis 2014)

Moreover, this discordance of motivations between organization and individual are highlighted further when the notion of "paradise" isn't shown as a goal for Said and Khalid, even after the commander asks for lasts requests and promises that they will be honored as heroes. Khalid's requests were modest: to provide for and protect his family after he is gone, should they see retaliated from Israel, and asked to hang his image with Said's together. In the next scene when they are talking about the arrival of two angels to take them to heaven after the mission, Khaled express his doubt by saying, "certainly?" (Ibrahim 2005). One of the reasons that causes Palestinians to carry out martyrdom mission is that in their religion is the definitive, undoubted, promise to be taken to heaven by two angels after achieving the mission (Volkan 2001, p: 210). But as a clear contrast to this, both young men question as children do, showing how they are not particularly devout nor is their motivation for participating "paradise" (Ebert 2005). Yet the questions do not end with one; Said turns to Khalid shortly after to ask too, "do you think we are doing the right thing?" and "is this the right way to struggle?" revealing the uncertainty that is boggling his mind and closing in on his doubts on two levels: faith and the jihadist struggle. They question the fact of the two angels taking them to Paradise, and above all, asking the question of the existence of paradise itself. However, it is common in

Palestinian society for someone about to carry out martyrdom, faith and religion is an obvious fundamental reason (Banat 2010, p:17). The other level of their doubt is the jihadist struggle: to question the efficacy of this method and its political drawbacks on the society and even families of participants and to consider in its place the presence of another more useful method. Yet martyrdom operations is one of the means Palestinians strongly believe will help them regain their land (Banat 2010, p:5). An uncertainty in resolve, especially for people soon to carry out a martyrdom mission, is completely unheard of, yet here we have Said and Khalid discussing this topic as they do menial actions such as urinating or smoking.

In a twist of events, as they cross the border to complete their mission, Israeli troops patrolling the area forces the characters to return to through the fence again. Abu Assad wants his narrative to continue with suspense. The two friends are separated; Khalid returns back to the organization and the explosive belt is removed from him while Said is lost around the area and on his waist, the explosive belt remained. The suspense grows as Said's mind conflicts whether to continue the mission or give it up (Ibrahim 2005). Said returns through the border again and finds Israeli passengers at a bus station. When he arrives, some of them look at Said. A silent moment passes and followed by a close up of Said's waist where he holds the wire to detonate his belt. A bus comes and Said and the bus driver are found staring at each other. He becomes hesitant to board the bus after he sees a child, a fact that expresses Said's compassion for and lack of desire to hurt civilians. Whether he feels that they have no contribution in the conflict or that what happened with his father does not justify killing them, this decision humanizes the notion of suicide bombers (terrorists, as they considered in the west) as they are shown not to kill with a desire to harm everyone.

Said crawls through the fence again to return to where the organization had planned the mission to find no one there. In panic he enters a toilet and sits in a stall, contemplating. The camera zooms on the waist where the explosive belt is and then of Said's sweaty face. Signature to Abu Assad's style, these close-ups and gazes reveal the character's inner turmoil and thoughts as he looks at the camera, namely how he is convincing himself that there is no other choice but to fulfill the mission. Furthermore, this complex

deliberation within Said's mind creates sympathy since the viewer can visibly sense the turmoil as he decides to accomplish the mission (Bronislawski 2015, p: 111).

After, Said goes to the repair shop to ask for Khalid. There he meets Suha who comes to get her car repaired. After he fixes the car, he closes the car on his watch and breaks it. Suha insists that she was the reason for breaking Said's watch and they head to a shop where they expect to fix the watch. At the shop however, Suha is shocked when she finds out there were videos of martyr statements before their last missions and collaborator's confessions before they were executed by the resistant organizations for selling and renting. Suha is confused on why these videos are profitable products, and especially wonders about why collaborator videos are more profitable than the martyrdom ones. Said becomes uncomfortable and pulls Suha out of the shop without fixing the watch and they enter Suha's car. Yaqup argues that Suha's car represents the Palestinian issue with violent and nonviolent-Palestinians represented by Said and Suha. Both are involved with the broken watch, which is a symbol of the time and progression. Yaqup continues that the pragmatic shop where they go to supposedly find a specialist who can fix the watch is a symbolism of the US that doesn't give an appropriate attention to the issue. This act represents the peace process that pushes the Palestinians to do what they are doing and give the occupation the excuse to continue their practices as well (Yaqup 2011, p:87).

Sitting in the car, Said and Suha discuss the miserable life of the Palestinians. He admits to Suha his need to stay away from the people who live around him and harass him when he tells her the truth of his father being a collaborator with the occupation. When Suha tells him she did not know about this, he tells her that a girl like her came from another world who lives in a fancy neighborhood doesn't know anything. Through this the viewers have insight into who Suha is. As the director intended, their dialogue divides Palestinian society into two parts. The first part is represented by Said, Khalid and other people who live in camps with economic problems and the other part like Suha, who live in fancy neighborhoods, with good living standards, and do not know about the rest of society. Furthermore, Said and Khalid have differing opinions from Suha about the solutions to the conflict. Her having lived in the West, there is no doubt that Suha has the archetype of thinking found in the western society (Ebert 2005). As a result she acts differently from other women in the film. While other women represent Palestinian culture, and those who

live in Palestine under the occupation, Suha is a girl who spent years of in Europe away from Palestine and Palestinian culture so she does not represent the normal Palestinian woman. She brings the aspect of a foreigner to Nablus that contrasts with how Khalid and Said's mothers prepare food for their children and lovingly does house chores (Yaqup 2011, p:78). As someone living in a society held by an old unsolvable conflict, she finds it difficult to engage easily with the new society because her thoughts are so different. Said too, can hardly engage with other people due to the past of his father, revealing his hopelessness. However, contrasted to Said who is against his father's collaborative efforts, Suha is against her father's politics and resistant position. She criticizes the violent resistance against occupation, firmly believing that violent resistance has a negative impact on innocent people and continues to be a cycle with no end (Ebert 2005). She believes that the Palestinians have to find other peaceful ways to get their rights. Due to the familiar beliefs, Suha is one of the characters Abu Assad placed in the film that the Western viewers appreciate more.

In a romantic act, Said draws close to Suha and kisses her. This scene is meaningful because though Said is seen as a terrorist in the westerner's eyes, he is able to love and kiss. This humanly display of emotions stirs up sympathy for the conflicted Said (Ibrahim 2005). Confused, Said exits the car and runs away while Suha returns to her house where she meets Khaled wearing a black suit as well. These black suits, while originally a symbol of attending weddings for Palestinians, becomes a symbol of death as Suha exasperatedly understands the job that Khaled and Said had agreed to. They then conclude to search for Said.

While in the car, Khalid and Suha talk about various topics, such as: ways of resistance, the differences between revenge and sacrifice, the possibility of mutual solutions, and the imbalance of power between the victim and the executioner. Even questions such as, "is there really paradise, or is it just an idea in their minds? Is it enough to throw themselves into hell because of an idea in their mind or to make up for this living hell?" These questions show the dichotomy between the western and Palestinian beliefs. Especially in this scene, Suha's role is seen more clearly. The existence of Suha both caters to the western audience and gives a chance for Abu Assad to clearly explain the Palestinian issue. With a thought process that more so resembles the western mind, she serves as a

mirror for which to reflect on the Palestinian beliefs. Yet in an interestingly enough, throughout the conversation, both sides are presented while no one side is shown to be entirely right.

The conversation is stopped short as they come across a Israeli road block. They are forced to make a detour and continue searching, to find Said lying on his father's grave. Said's choice of lying on his father's grave reveals clearly the real motive that is inspiring him: the shame of his father in having been a collaborator and the shame he had experienced since he was a child. Suha tries to convince them to give up the mission but they decide to continue. Suha, having come from living overseas, was not able to convince Said to give up the mission and change his fate. More than just an attempt of a woman to save her friends, it was a statement of how Abu Assad, who came from the west, was unable to gain influence amidst his own people, the Palestinian peoples. Abu Assad and his films had a limited effect on Palestinian viewers (Yaqup 2011, p: 80).

Said and Khaled decide to continue their mission with the bomb. Said and Khaled arrive in the city of Tel Aviv looking at the city streets and people. Abu Assad creates one of film's mise-en-scène in the parallelism between Palestine and Tel Aviv. Throughout the film, Palestine, especially Nablus, is shown to be in disconsolation by the dark camps, cities, streets, and crowded houses where it seems unlivable. On the other hand, Tel Aviv is the bright lively city. Through this mise-en-scène, Abu-Assad explains that Israeli procedures that prevent Palestinian youths from enjoying good circumstances and well-paying jobs (Grunes 2007).

Now, the two are ready to fulfill their mission. Meanwhile, Khalid is convinced by Suha, he believes in what she said, that there are many other ways of struggle to be free. When Khalid chooses to stop and not continue the operation, but Said decides not to return and goes on on his own. Throughout the film Said and Khaled go back and forth on their final decision. This is a direct and clear appeal to western audiences as the difficulty to make a decision to kill is highlighted (Ibrahim 2005).

In the last scene, Said is on a bus in Tel Aviv, which is full of Israeli soldiers. Abu Assad portrays the victims to be Israeli soldiers not children or women. There are many silent camera movements, namely a slow push that makes the viewer slightly closer to Said.

Suha looks at Said's photo wearing a blank facial expression but understands that Said would not abandon the mission and continue their love. Khaled is crying in the car, mourning his friend. Said's mother is shown staring deeply as she anticipates the loss of her son. The camera pans around the resistance leaders as well, with their cold, determined glances. The scene is silent and the camera zooms slowly into Said's face, which shows something inexpressible but present, deep beneath the surface. As the shot becomes an extreme close-up of Said's eyes, the movie brilliantly ends in a flash of white. Intentionally, Abu Assad does not show what is happening after the screen turns white. The audience is able to draw a reasonable conclusion as to what the white screen means, without directly seeing the action.

At its core, the main point of the film was surrounding suicide bombers, generally seen as martyrs in Palestinian culture and terrorists in the western ones. On one hand, Abu Assad humanizes the characters and gives them an identity by presenting the motivations which pushes them to give their lives. On the other hand, for Arabs and for Palestinians, in particular, the movie deals with martyrdom in an unacceptable way. Palestinian culture revolves around self-sacrifice. Instead the martyrs are aimless men who have their doubts about whether paradise really exists or if what they do is the right thing. Especially in the first Intifada, self-sacrifice was considered as a way to advance the Intifada and come out victorious. Local viewers refused to imagine the martyrs in the way the film presents them since Palestinians believe that the one who wants to be a martyr has to be confident of what he is doing. Others went to accuse the director of mocking martyrdom (Wadi 2006). Large numbers of people sought after the honor of martyrdom to do what their religion tells them: to defend their holy land. Children in Palestinian society were taught to sacrifice their lives for their land against Israeli occupation. In their religion, martyrdom is considered as a reward since the martyr is greeted in heaven (Loadenthal 2014). Yet the topic is not treated in a moral absolute, avoiding the moral basis of the martyrdom. Considering how *Paradise Now* captures them as if they are being manipulated by terrorist organizations and are young men who participate because of personal motivations apart from liberty, it seems as if there is no reasonable ground for martyrdom (Kinninmont 2006).

There were even rumors saying the Palestinian Minister of Culture would prevent the film from being screened because the film criticizes martyrdom (Bradshaw 2006). Even while filming, there was already opposition from locals, even resistance organizations. Abu Assad reflects back on the duration, saying (Paradise Now 2005, interview):

> *There were a widespread rumors around the city that we were doing something against Palestinian martyrs (suicide bombers; our location manager was kidnapped by a Palestinian resistant organization. The organization demanded for us to stop filming. We were in a case that the film might not be completed.*

Subhi Alzubaidi, a Palestinian director, argues that the film simplifies the martyrdom concept. He claims that because of the political view of Abu Assad, as he clearly opposes martyrdom operations, his film presented the film characters as they carry out the mission because of their shame rather than to fight the Israeli occupation and its crimes (Alghad 2005).

Moreover, in the film there are many acts that are unacceptable to local viewers such as the kiss between Said and Suha or the dialogues of the characters about doubting the struggle for liberty (Alghad 2005). Nonetheless, Alzubaidi understands that the incongruences and discontent of local viewers will not be felt or even noticed by the western viewers. The westerners who believe that suicide bombers (martyrs) are extremists will be relieved to find that they are not cold murderers but sophisticated people who look smart in suits and fall in love. Because the notion of suicide bombing is portrayed closer to a depraved act done by an ambiguous creature, many see the film as a funding-driven film (Frow & Schlunke 2008, p: 91). George Khalifa, a Palestinian director, stated that though the film is a sensitive issue of people living under Israeli occupation and its crimes that lead them to hopelessness, the film isn't overbearing with formality to explain the Palestinian-Israeli conflict but rather describes the characters as humans which contradicts the terrorist image of the Palestinian martyrs the western and Israeli media promotes (Alghad 2006). The viewer finds himself in the front of work that combines the drama with suspense, politics with parody, and reality with imagination. All these factors come together in a topic that touches the global issue of "terrorism", as it is called in the west. Unsurprisingly, this issue has a specific and a complex place in the western world. When introduced with a humanistic approach, it challenges the image and identity of Palestinians that are found in western society discourses. The suicide bombers are seen as anathemas to society by the media; in particular after 9/11 attack on the US

that makes the westerners perceive suicide bombers as radical extremists, both in the media and also in their social-political opinions. For this reason, Abu Assad avoided capturing anything that resembled or was commonly presented by western television or news (Hudson 2011, p:28).

According to Palestinian director Rashid Mashharawi, in addition to the deliberation in the film itself that Abu Assad used to cater to the audience in *Paradise Now*, political circumstances helped tremendously. The film debuted during a time when suicide bombing was on the main stage in the world's focus (Al-ayam 2007). Abu Assad, at the Berlin festival, explained that the audience objected to the topic of the film rather than to the film itself. But Abu Assad wanted to introduce a new perception and remove the prevailing ones known by the majority then, that suicide bombers are seen as terrorists or super-heroes, and to influence the audience's established perceptions (Georgakas & Saltz 2005, p: 17).

After *Paradise Now* was screened in the Hashemite Hall in the Jordanian City of Irbid, critic Ahmed Madanat said that the film doesn't serve the Palestinian issue wholly. He added that in more than one scene there were many contradictions which can be wrongly interpreted. The reason for is that the film is not directed to Arabs. It is directed to the western audience and succeeded in suggesting how a person can be a 'suicide bomber' not only because of religious conviction but also because of the occupation (Khateb 2006). Similarly, Assad Abu Khalil, a professor of political science at the University of California, was opposed to the film at first. He commented (Abu Khalil 2006):

> *Paradise now is not the best Arabic film made ever. Furthermore, something in it attracted Western critics. I understand why. I dare that Israeli people in the film are more civilian than Palestinians… Even in the last scene, Israeli male and female soldiers were seen on the bus talking and smiling generally, you should sympathize with them, and you should curse the killers, who is Palestinian and dared to disturb their lives but don't you dare curse those who disturb, on a daily life, the lives of Palestinian people. And you have to see that scene where Said could not get on the bus because there is an Israeli child. Israelis have children, Palestinians don't. Palestinians give birth to terrorist babies.*

He writes on the commercialization of the film as a film for the Western viewers, commenting on the enthusiasm of some Arab viewers for the film that portrays Arabs and Muslims as human beings after long suffering from stereotypes and racism (Abu-Khalil 2013).

Yet later, Abu Khalil writes, “after writing a critique of Hany Abu Assad’s *Paradise Now*, which won a nominee in the Oscars, Hany contacted me and we had long discussions on the phone about the Palestinian issue and about its portrayal in Western culture.” Abu Khalil realized that Abu Assad had avoided everything that could inhibit his film from reaching the international audience, especially the Western one. It is possible to conclude that Abu Khalil's statement indicates there are certain standards and policies that filmmaker must take into consideration, especially if he wants to distribute his film throughout the world. Being nominated for international prizes, especially the Oscars, is not easy. Such festivals may be politically influential, and the filmmaker must be aware and cautious, because his work may contradict certain policies and be prevented from being nominated.

Paradise Now is considered as a new shift in the Palestinian cinema, the film was shown in four theaters several times on the same day with a large audience in America. Most of the viewers were foreigners and the majority of them were Israelis. In less than a week, the film has filled American screens in a way that has never been seen with another Palestinian movie. The movie has roused both academic and ordinary discussions and has sparked many debates between those who saw it and those who didn’t see it yet. The film resonated and had an unexpectedly large attendance in America despite suicide bombers (martyrs) being long portrayed in media as savages and terrorists (Aksa 2005).

Paradise Now is a film that combines drama, thriller, and politics with comedy to produce a remarkable work that was distributed by one of Hollywood's biggest studios at the time, made with a convincible quality of to the level of Hollywood studios. Abu Assad talked about the film, remarking that everybody is shocked by the film as it allows the viewer to be in a place he did not go before and will not be there. The viewers will have insight into a different part of the world that they neither have experienced nor might they ever experience in their lifetimes (Georgakas & Saltz 2005, p: 17). What really attracted the attention of Western audiences, especially from the writers and critics, is the relatable qualities that Abu Assad gives to the two terrorists, (as termed in the West) Said and Khaled, as they approach the “moment of truth”, as many critics described. The characters of the film reluctantly come to believe in what they do (they do not believe in what they do as the right choice). The film is a rare one; it presents the conflict from a different

angle and presents a sensitive issue that has been and still is the center of the world's attention. Terrorism (or martyrdom) is a topic few people ask about or forwardly speak of, but Abu Assad made it the center of attention and in particular the talk of the Western community. Interestingly enough, the filmmaker presented it away from politics; he preferred to focus on the complex intellectual and psychological aspects surrounding an existing opinion. As mentioned above, Western audiences did not hide that they sympathized with these characters in a way they did not expect to and did not feel before. This was also the ability of the director to adeptly capture the personalities of the film.

Overall, the film presented new viewpoints to be recognized by the Western public, especially for those not from the Middle East to understand what is happening in there. The Western public needs to identify with other cultures such as Arabic and Islamic culture, especially to certain subjects, which is transmitted to them through their media. They display such people as wholly evil but after watching this film will recognize, through Said and Khalid, the suicide bombers (martyrs) as human beings. Additionally, the writers and critics, in addition to the Western audience, liked the language and the film genre used by Abu Assad to present such issues. The genres used by Abu Assad was appropriate for the subject of the film, adding more breath-holding suspense, as well as using gazes in a distinctive way that enables the viewer to connect with the characters of the film. There was even a scene that resembled the painting of Last Supper, which symbolizes an important event in Christianity as well as scenes with speeches close to the famous letters of liberation from individuals who are considered patriarchs in the Western world. The deliberation of each scene led to an exhilarating plot that drove the story but not without the underlying message that the filmmaker desired to convey. The film was written intelligently and beautifully, with its acting, powerful and emotional. It is to no surprise the film was nominated for the Oscars and received a huge amount of international attention.

5.3 OMAR 2013

Omar, the Oscar-nominated film (IMDB), is a thriller film that contains romantic melodramatic elements amidst the backdrop of the Israel-Palestinian conflict (Malley 2014). The film tells the story of a young Palestinian baker named Omar, who regularly

climbs over the separation Wall to see his girlfriend Nadia while avoiding the bullets fired by Israeli soldiers. The couple plans to marry and leave the country, but Omar and his friends Tarek and Amjad are involved in a resistance mission against Israeli soldiers. Omar gets arrested after the operation, in which one of the Israeli soldiers is killed. Later, Omar accepts to work as an informant with an Israeli intelligence officer called Rami after being tricked to admit his guilt. He finds himself between two difficult choices: to betray his friends and acquire freedom or to be a prisoner for the rest of his life. He appears to accept working with the Israeli inspector but on other hand he doesn't want to betray his friends. Omar uncovers that he is being manipulated by one of his friends, Amjad, who is collaborating with the Israeli forces. He planned to marry Nadia through convincing Omar that she is pregnant by him. The narrative finishes with Omar finding out the truth despite Amjad's lies and him killing the Israeli inspector.

The Palestinian issue has always been presented in western media from a political perspective detached from how the people actually live their lives. In his film, however, Abu Assad introduces the Palestinian people from a new perspective: rather than being objects of political caricature, their lives are covered in a humanistic perspective that illustrates love, family, and friendship, showing a tragic story of a fatal love triangle (Hornaday 2014). Furthermore, the film's thematic elements are familiar to such elements used in western films, especially the setting in the basis of film-noir mixed with action and neo-realism that shows the Palestinian landscape and the separation wall (Erickson 2014).

In the first scene, Abu Assad starts his movie with Omar (acted by Adam Bakri) climbing a section in the separation wall in order to cross into the other side of the wall. This wall, both in the film and reality, does not only separate Israel from Palestine, but also separates Palestinians from each other as well. It became a symbol of impossible love, loyalty and connection between Palestinians, and reminds the audience of the Berlin wall with its garish graffiti (Malley 2014).

With action scenes similar to those in Hollywood because of the gun shots and sirens, the film starts with Omar, a handsome young man, running through houses with quick camera movements while the sound of his breathing loudly plays in the background. The series of chasing scenes help to develop the psychological thriller (Hornaday 2014). The scene

ends when Omar manages to escape from the Israeli forces. He washes his hands, dismissive of the previous excitement, and continues his way to meet his friends Tarek (played by Eyad Hourani), Amjad (played by Samer Bisharat) and Nadia (played by Leem Lubnay). The love story begins when Nadia opens the door and puts a love letter for Omar under a cup of coffee. In the next scene the three friends are training and preparing for a resistance operation against Israeli soldiers at their gathering point and the three friends seem to be training independently without the help of any organization. This was done intentionally to show that Omar is an open minded young man who does not belong to any political party. Abu Assad himself clarifies his intentional decisions of Omar's character by saying, "You have the hero of the story, he is a person who needed sympathy and the hero must be beautiful and attractive" (BBC, interview 2014).

In his article *Out of frame: Omar*, Padua argues that Abu Assad is a director who knows what to mix together in a piece of excitement (Padua 2014). In many scenes, Omar climbs the separation wall and comes back using a rope. This scene resembles a usual act in the daily lives of Palestinians who routinely climb the separation wall to the other side, as they usually use the long ladder or a gap in the wall to pass. Whereas normally those who pass from the 1948 areas controlled by Israel to return to the 1967 areas controlled by Palestine, pass from checkpoints to the other side of the wall instead since the soldiers do not check their identities, the film has Omar return climbing the wall that appears sturdier with the rope. While this might not realistic, the director wanted to show such scenes with excitement more than the realistic details, which aren't as exciting (Khamis 2014).

Later in the movie's scenes, the three friends are sitting and telling dirty jokes to one another. Amjad, who seems to be the funniest guy among them, talks about his seven sisters in a disrespectful way which makes Omar and Tarek laugh by saying: none of my sisters is pretty. These kinds of jokes might be acceptable in the western movies but in the Palestinian culture are considered unacceptable. These jokes could be considered inappropriate and are not allowed to be made in front of others especially in films that present people fighting for resistance (Anan 2014). The audience rarely finds the larger principles of resistance organizations and the film characters do not seem to be members of such organizations. They throw dirty jokes and imitate Marlon Brando in a comical manner (Malley 2014). Among them, Tarek is probably the one who represents a mature

mind but for Omar and Amjad, it seems that their motives for partaking in the operation are because of their desires to impress Tarek, especially when the audience see them talking about Nadia (Tarek's sister).

At one point, Amjad kills an Israeli soldier. They escape and from this moment, the resistance operation begins to develop as the background of the love story. At the same time, the operation serves also as a demonstration of manhood since in many cultures, fighting is a practice of masculinity. Thus, killing the soldier is the rite of passage for these three friends (Scott 2014). A quick revenge of Israeli military one day after the attack, the first attempt to arrest the resistance group, begins when a small child says a warning: "Arabist". Arabist is a private Israeli security unit, whose members disguise themselves with Arab-like features among Palestinian protestors and demonstrators, wearing their clothes and speaking their language, and quickly turn against them with violence and arrest them for the Israeli forces (Aljazeera 2015). The scene surprises the audience when instead of the Arabist unit of Israeli military who are similar in their attire and their features to the Palestinians appearing when the warning was said, Israeli policemen in their official uniform arrived instead. When the dramatic chase ends, Omar is arrested and brought to a prison. In the scene that shows Omar hanged up, light on him, naked in a black room and being tortured.

In some of the scenes in the Israeli prison, the setting differs from the reality of Israeli prisons in many of the details. As Omar enters, a young man who introduces himself as a Hamas member in an artificial way asks Omar about the organization he belongs to, although in reality when a Palestinian prisoner enters the prison he goes through the organizational screening process and is placed with members of the same group already (Khamis 2014). Omar sits opposite another prisoner, who later turns out to be an Israeli inspector, but he plays the role of the collaborator in the prison. According to an interview with Issa Qaraqi, the Palestinian minister of prisoner's affairs, intelligence officers use many ways to trap the prisoner to get information that the Israelis want. However, most collaborators are prisoners who give up and become collaborators for the intelligence. These collaborators are spread among the prisoners and in the cells in order to obtain information from them and inform what they get to the Israeli side. They are rarely from the intelligence force itself (Interview given to the writer 2018). But as it seems, the goal

here is to add some suspense. Omar will meet the Israeli inspector Rami (played by Waleed Zuaiter) who appears as a Palestinian who belongs to the Palestinian resistance organization. He has a conversation with Omar in the prison cafeteria that looks closer to a type of cafeteria seen in western films than the type of food place in an Israeli prison. In contrast, Qaraqi adds that when eating in prison, Palestinian prisoners make their own food, cook in their cells, there is no room or private place to eat, and there is no cafeteria where the Palestinians gather (Interview given to the writer 2018). The conversation proves to be a trap by the inspector to make Omar say the fatal words, "I will never confess", a sentence that is considered as a confession of guilt in Israeli judiciary. The inspector trapped Omar who becomes stuck between two choices that the inspector offers: stay in the prison and spend the rest of his life there or hand his friend Tarek who is known by the inspector as the one who killed the Israeli soldier at that attack night. Both choices are difficult to be accepted by Omar, but Omar accepts the offer to become an informant.

When Omar is freed, he goes to see Nadia. They meet secretly despite being from a harsh society and controlled by its culture and traditions, they meet to exchange their love letters. Omar can't imagine his life without Nadia as she is the source of his hope and happiness. After Omar sees Nadia he meets Tarek and tells him the reason why the Israeli inspector released him, Omar here does not want to betray his friend. He also wants to prove to Tarek that he can be a fighter and earns his confidence to assure Nadia that he deserves her love. Later, in a romantic scene, Omar and Nadia find themselves in the flat where they plan to spend the rest of their lives after they get married. It's here that Omar gets closer to Nadia and kisses her. This same scene is seen in Abu Assad's other film, *Paradise Now*, between Suha and Said. In many of his films, Abu Assad uses the same important element for the western audience who believe that love has to be blatantly displayed on-screen and love is commonly expressed through kisses (Gobal 2012, p: 27).

The next scene is another dramatic chasing scene. Omar's house is located in the city of Nablus raided by the Israeli policemen, but it is well known to the Palestinians who live in the West Bank that arresting a wanted Palestinian is done by the Israeli army forces, not by the police. In an article on the site of Arab Organization for Human Rights in the UK it is written: "The detention of a Palestinian civilian from his home is the most common arrest by the Israeli army, often after midnight or early morning hours, when

large numbers of Israeli soldiers surround the house of the wanted person and then begin throwing sound bombs to wake him up. In the case that the person delays in opening his house, Israeli soldiers explode doors, creating an atmosphere of panic and fear, especially among the children." However, Abu Assad uses a uniform cinematic style which appears on the surface similar to that of the police thriller film filled with many chase scenes and this is one of the elements which contributed to the success of the film (Omari 2013). Omar then escapes and goes to see Nadia who starts to suspect that Omar is a collaborator. After they exchange their love letters Omar notices someone who observes him and he runs away. In the next scene, the three friends surround a collaborator who confesses that he worked with Israelis because of their promise to give him a visa to New Zealand. Here Abu Assad shows another incentive that Israeli intelligence force uses to trap Palestinians to collaborate with them however the film also portrays the Palestinian resistance as being easy to fall prey to cooperation and communication with Israeli for small incentives or relationship (Anan 2014).

After the three friends catch the collaborator, they make a plan to trap the Israeli forces. Omar calls and tells the inspector the place where he will meet Tarek. But to the audience's surprise the friends are trapped by the Israeli forces, as if they knew about the ambush. After the trap failed and Omar is arrested again by the Israeli forces, inspector Rami threatens him by saying that he knows some secrets about Nadia which can badly affect her reputation. This puts pressure on Omar to pretend to cooperate with Rami again. Despite Rami not being able to trust him anymore, Omar convinces him, and Rami lets him go again. What Rami wants, in the end, is to get the information to capture Tarek. The Israeli officer promises to reduce Omar's prison sentence if he gives them the required information. While this is unusual in reality in the Palestinian-Israeli conflict and received negative feedback for its unrealistic portrayal, it was appropriate for the Western audience and included to continue the story. Abu Assad does this to continue his narrative with more suspense about Omar and what he will do, he also wants the audience to be in anticipation of the following events. The former minister of prisoner affairs of Palestine explains the reality that "in the beginning, they may tell him his case is easy, but it is a trick. If any prisoner is charged with anything guilty, even if it is simple they do not release him" (2018, interview given to the writer). In the film, however, Omar is released again. Omar then goes to find Nadia but after being released twice by the Israeli forces

he is now under suspicion; no one in his society can trust him anymore and even Nadia suspects that Omar is a collaborator. Omar becomes silent and is not even able to answer Nadia's questions or clear up her suspicion yet at the same time, his relationship with Nadia is the only force driving him forward. Throughout this all, he cannot express his guilt nor can he let her know the truth. Omar's performance is reminiscent of the American actors in the way he expresses his inner world through his face and eyes (Sippl 2014). Moreover, love is one of the weaknesses that leads people to betray their own. With this, Omar is caught in a dilemma, unable to express his frustration nor explicate his current position.

Omar has to find a solution; he knows someone amongst his friends had betrayed them and informed the Israeli forces about the trap. Omar chases Amjad when he finds Amjad visiting Nadia in front of her school. Omar then beats Amjad into confessing his betrayal. Amjad admits he told agent Rami that Nadia is pregnant by his baby as Amjad knows well the weakness of his friend. To prevent Nadia from being a pariah and save her reputation, Omar tries to convince Tarek to accept that Amjad should marry Nadia instead of him. After Tarek also finds out about Amjad's betrayal, he started a fight with Amjad and was accidentally killed. Then, Israeli forces arrive and takes Tarek's body. At this point, the conflicts concerning the operation are finished and Omar is free from his prison sentence but the problem between Nadia and Omar still stands. He wants to sacrifice his love so that Nadia will be saved and decides to convince her father to allow Amjad to marry his daughter. All that Omar does in the film is the result of his love for Nadia, which makes him weak in his struggle against the intelligence officer. It was his fear of what would happen to Nadia that caused him to lose her.

After considering deeply, Omar comes to believe that he is being manipulated by Amjad because he wanted Nadia's hand. Omar asks Rami to get him a weapon so he can tell him about the one who killed the soldier, seeming to desire his revenge on Amjad. When Omar takes the gun, in a turn of events, he shoots Rami instead. In the final scene, the audience sees a story of monkeys narrated by Amjad in the beginning of the film. These monkeys were lured and caught by sugar cubes. This story was a metaphor for Inspector Rami believing that he is training Omar like Africans do with monkeys and makes him out to be a monkey. But at the end of the film it is evident that Omar knew how to keep up

despite his position and was directing the situation instead. Rami becomes the monkey of the story that picks up the sugar. From Omar's standpoint, Rami could be used as a resource to get rid of Amjad. From Rami's perspective, he believed he could make Omar a collaborator and gain new information about Muhsen, a new resistance leader. But the brilliant twist shocks viewers and reveals Omar's character through the decision that he makes to protect Nadia's honor.

The most beautiful thing in Omar's character, painted by Abu Assad, is that he is humane as well as the relationship between Omar and Rami that shown in many scenes, in the office scene where Rami and Omer have their a friendly conversation, the scenes that Rami helps Omar to be released and when Rami thanks and express his gratitude to Omar after they took Tarek's body. These scenes are filmed in close ups which create intimacy (Sippl 2014). Abu Assad clarifies that saying "I give a human face to the Israeli inspector because he is a human, there are no differences between him and Omar… he does not lie" (Alghad interview 2014). Though it caused dissatisfaction amidst Palestinian viewers, the relationship between Omar and Rami during the film was more so representation of equals rather than straight demonization of one or the other. This relationship, which almost had a hint of friendship, appealed to western audiences as it did not come across as a political message since it did not strongly represent any one viewpoint. The film is also unique as a transition from the straight political genre (Palestinian-Israeli conflict) to the romantic drama. It's a love story caught in the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, which softens the impact to westerners instead of presenting something fully political. Through Omar's and Nadia's relationship, the viewer is not challenged to pick one side or the other in regards to the conflict but rather brings awareness to and sheds light on the current situation. Furthermore, Abu Assad shows his western influences even with a Brando impersonation by one of his characters (Padua 2014). The atmosphere of suspicion among the characters in the film is familiar to the western cinema and drama, so viewers can learn about the tragedy of the hero, and the tragic love story without hardship. This film skillfully addresses the Western mentality through the artistic form in the narrative drama and a familiar style in its scene constructions (Omari 2013).

In his both films *Paradise Now* and *Omar*, Abu Assad presents the image of the resistant character and his organization with an almost-business relationship, that being a part of

an organization is beneficial for both sides rather than for a common cause. The main character in *Paradise Now* is motivated from shame of his father being a collaborator with Israeli forces and, thus, carries out the operation while simultaneously conflicted in its moral basis. In *Omar*, as mentioned previously, this motivation is purely comes from love. Since the audience tends to sympathize with the character because the conditions surrounding what lead him to do the resistance operation are known, the organization itself tends here to be mysterious and alarming as the motives are not made clear (Khamis 2014). From what is known of the resistance efforts in the world, the act of resistance must have its purposes derived from the individual's belonging in a community's collective and political context. Therefore this driving purpose is often more complex than the sense of shame Said feels in *Paradise Now* or a sense of manipulation and losing love in *Omar* (Khamis 2014). Incongruent to reality, there is no clear representation of the community's view since the motivations are not linked to the Palestinian issue in Abu Assad's films. The reason is clarified in an interview with Abu Assad when he explained (BBC 2014):

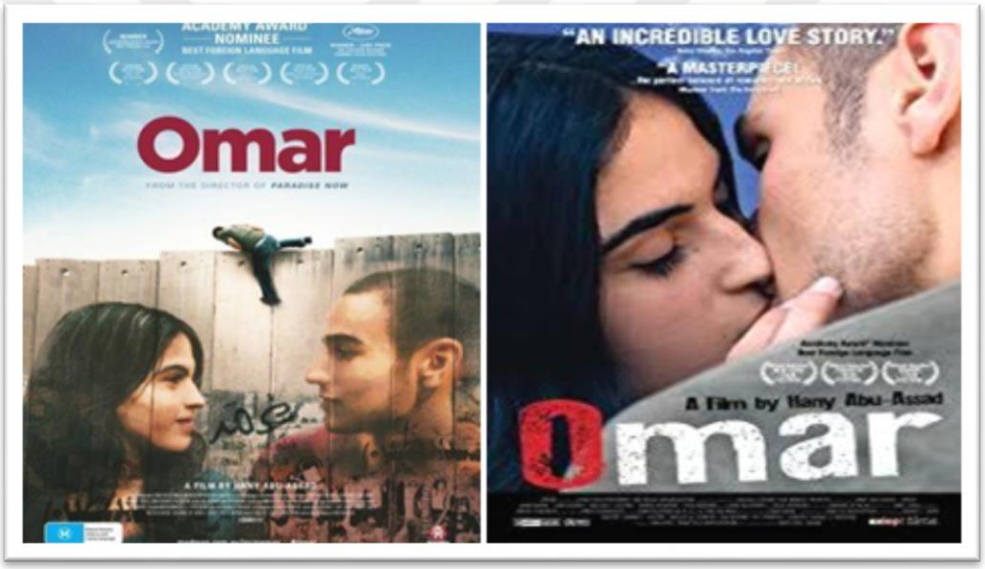
> *I believe that the Israeli occupation will go away, there is no occupation that lasts forever, so do not make your work tied to a certain occupation, you have to make a story that is universal, and that is what I am trying to do. I take a Palestinian story and make it universal so the international audience can interact with it and create sympathy. When I was in London their reactions were wonderful and the audience there could feel a part of our feelings*

In another interview, Abu Assad concluded that armed struggle for resistance has failed and few factions remain. At the moment, the only way that helps the Palestinian issue reach the world is through the efforts of intellectuals and the use of cinema (Dabbah 2015).

Omar is one of the films that is believed to have greatly influenced the Western world and has been nominated for many awards, as well as screened in Hollywood, Los Angeles, New York, and countless metropolitan Western cities (Sippl 2014). In her article, entitled, *Omar Is a New Palestinian Film That Holds the Status of Universality in All Its Forms*, Lulwa Ghazi mentions that the Palestinian film was screened in more than 15 European cinemas and received great praise and attention from the European audience. The film was chosen to represent Palestine in the Oscars and drew the attention of the European public to the Palestinian issue that was absent in their media. The love story of Omar and Nadia shows the Western viewers events that occur in the Palestinian society about love,

betrayal and psychological pressure. The film came with a variety of ideas that speak about the lives of the Palestinian people, it's an international film in terms of artistic and narrative standards that are well-known internationally (Ghazi 2013). Abu labels himself as a multicultural director, since he is Palestinian and his film language has expanded to become American, Indian and European like Truffaut, Godard and others (Almasoudi 2013). Almasoudi, too, describes Abu Assad as an international director in term of his films topics and cinematic language, he praised *Omar* and wrote that the film impressed the Western media and critics who were interested in the subject of the film and its high technological aspects.

Figure 5.1: Movie Posters of *Omar*



In an interview, Abu Assad revealed two inspirations of the story of *Omar*, the first being from the famous play "Othello" by the famous playwright, actor, and poet, William Shakespeare. As Othello could not make the right decisions when he was insecure, Abu Assad wrote the same personality into Omar's character, which caused critics to call *Omar* the Othello of the Occupation (Williams 2014). The second inspiration, which caused Abu Assad to get deeper into the subject, was when he realized Israeli intelligence was using the private life of one of his relatives to blackmail him. They tried to force him to cooperate with them because they knew the man's secrets, which would have cause a scandal for his family (Aljazeera 2013). From these Abu Assad sought to convey these two inspirations and two posters were prepared as is seem in Figure 5.1. One for the Arab

audience, with Omar and Nadia simply looking at each other, and behind them the separation wall, while another poster prepared for the western audience, captures Omar kissing Nadia (the only kiss inside the film) and behind them the blue sky. The words "an incredible love story" are written on the western poster not on the Arab one. Focusing on the differences between these two posters, its clearer how the film from a Palestinian background made its way to the western world, since the director knows exactly with which cinematic language to address the western viewers. Despite the dissenting opinion, it is not wrong to have an artistic work and market it according to the audience it is trying to target (Khamis 2014). Despite the attention that the film received by the international audience, the opinions of Palestinian viewers differed between those who considered it a shift in Palestinian cinema and those who saw it as having greatly compromised the standard. Some claim that the film doesn't show the Palestinian reality but reflects the Hollywood form of films in its scenes, chases, depictions of torture in Israeli detention, the importance of emotionality, and relationships of love in the film. Despite these criticisms, all agree on the quality of the film in terms of directing and photography (Anan 2014). Ultimately, *Omar* succeeded in what many other films with a backdrop of political climate and heavy conflict could not: namely, to reach an audience with an issue that is usually unmentioned to bring about awareness to the issues that the director desired to made known to.

4. CONCLUSION

In addressing the Palestinian issue and Israeli occupation, Hany Abu Assad is considered one of the most important Palestinian filmmakers since his films brought about a qualitative shift in Palestinian cinema. Abu Assad films generally differ from what the Palestinian cinema and other Palestinian films present regarding the Palestinian issue. Moreover, through his films he has attracted the western audience with the use of many cinematic elements. To start, his films revolve around characters whose personalities and behaviors draw the international interest. In his film, *Paradise Now*, he chose a topic that was one of the most important topics covered by the media and the talk of Western society then, the subject of martyrdom, (suicide bombings as known in the west) and according to many critics and directors the subject of the film is one of the reasons that led to the film success; Abu Assad turns the suicide bombers who are detested and obscure in the West into young men who have human faces and hearts that know how to love and do not kill out of evil desires. The new identity that Abu Assad gives to such young men was one of the reasons that attracted the western audience.

In *Omar*, Abu Assad touches another subject that is no less sensitive than suicide bombers, namely collaboration: Palestinians who stand against their people and friends to instead work with Israeli military. But in *Omar*, the main story was made revolving love to intentionally address the targeted audience; it was a love story in a society under occupation and this quality was a key feature of the film that attracted the audience. He does not present a film in which the common-held beliefs or the Palestinian issue are the main subject but it was presented on the basis of an unusual love story that was likened by some of Western critics to the famous story Romeo and Juliet, drawing attention and creating sympathy for the lovers. Also in Abu Assad's film, *Rana's Wedding*, he makes Rana embark on an adventure between two cities looking for her boyfriend whom she wants to marry. This becomes the main storyline in the presentation of the Palestinian issue and the experiences through the heroine's journey, resembling Italian neorealism, showing a girl looking for love within an area controlled by the occupation, which influences the viewers through the change in emotions and highlighting of day-to-day realities.

Not only are the characters a crucial aspect, but the cinematic language Abu Assad uses in directing his films distinguishes him from other Palestinian directors whose films are similar to the Eastern narrative style. Instead, Abu Assad uses the Western cinematic language to present the Palestinian issue to be more attractive his desired audience. In *Paradise Now* he uses thriller, drama, and comedy, mixing them to address suicide bombing, which was a prevalent subject at its time. This is in addition to the romance clearly presented by love stories that were important to make an impact on the audience's sensibilities. In *Omar*, Abu Assad uses thriller to create more suspense along with action chases that resembled police thrillers found in western films; according to many writers and critics, these elements are fundamental reasons which led to the film success, not disregarding the love story between Omar and Nadia. In *Omar*, however, this love story does not end happily as the audience would expect to see in other romantic films. Abu Assad chose to write the narrative to include an unforeseen twist ending. In *Rana's Wedding* he uses the romance genre along with melodramatic elements to capture the daily reality that the characters endure. Furthermore, Abu Assad in his films uses many elements that are understandable for the western audience such as the Last Supper, a church scene, Wild West gunshot scenes, and Brando impressions. Even the main characters in his films seem to be a type of the characters found in western films.

Through Abu Assad's films were not praised mostly by the local audience for many reasons related to their cause and beliefs, his films well received by the international audience especially the western audience. He was also the first Arab director to work under one of Hollywood big companies and direct a film starring first class actors and actresses. Abu Assad treats the Palestinian issue in a way that the western audience can accept and understand which led to his films' success and his own success with international stardom. From this we see that in addressing an issue, the direct method may not always be most effective due to political or social circumstances, especially if the desire is to raise international awareness to the issue. For the Palestinian issue too, the history and present of the ongoing conflict has not brought about sympathetic understanding towards the cause. However, Abu Assad's films have reached a wide range of the world's communities, especially the Western world where his films have been welcomed and praised as his films have even entered the international spotlight in being nominated for the Oscars. Through the distinctive style of Abu Assad that imitates

Western cinema, his films have caused many people globally to be aware of the realities of the people living in Palestine and their circumstances. Abu Assad did well in showing the Palestinian issue through a universal cinematic language, desiring that Palestinian cinema and its films can find its way to the international audience with its message of the Palestinian issue. With the globalization of the world and the power and influence of cinema on even political events, directors around the world, especially those in Palestine, can learn from this example to bring about social awareness to their desired cause.

REFERENCES

Books

Abyad, A.,2017. Palestinian Cinema: A Guardian of Palestinian Identity, Doomed by Hope. *Thesis for Master Degree. Virginia: University of Virginia*, 2017.

Abu-Arafeh, K. (2017). *Palestinian resistance to the Israeli occupation in Jerusalem* (1987-2015). Al-Zaytouna Centre for Studies and Consultations.

Adler, J. (2017). *Trees Before Walls: Alternative Cinematic Perspectives of the Palestinian-Israeli Conflict*. The Mel Hoppenheim School of Cinema.

Banat, B. (2010). *Palestinian Youth and the Rush Towards Martyrdom*. Al-Quds University, p.17.

Barakat, A. 2013. *The new wave of Palestinian cinema. Dar Al Jundi for Publishing & Distribution.*

Beattie, A. and Pepper, T. (2001). *The Rough Guide to Syria*. 2nd ed. Rough Guides.
Schotter, J. (2018). Hieroglyphic Modernisms: Writing and New Media in the Twentieth Century. EUP.

Costanzo, W. (2014). *World Cinema through Global Genres. Wiley-Blackwell; 1edition*

Ellis, K. (2018). *Secular Nationalism and Citizenship in Muslim Countries: Arab Christians in the Levant (Minorities in West Asia and North Africa).* 1st ed. Palgrave Macmillan.

Ebert, R. (2007). *Roger Ebert's Movie Yearbook* 2007. *Andrews McMeel Publishing.*

Friedman, Y., (2010). Palestinian filmmaking in Israel : negotiating conflicting discourses. *Thesis for the PhD. Degree.* London: University of Westminster.

Gertz, N. Khleifi, G.,2008. *Palestinian cinema, landscape, trauma and memory.* Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2008.

Herzl, T.,1896. *The jewish state*. S. D'Avigdor (Trans.), America: American Zionist Emergency Council 1946.

Harms, G. and Ferry, T. (2008). *The Palestine–Israel Confl ict A Basic Introduction*. Pluto P Press LONDON • ANN ARBOR, MI.

Healy, C., & Muecke, S.,2008 *Cultural Studies Review. Australia: Melbourne University Press.*

Khdair, A. (2014). The role of Israeli agents and collaborators with the Palestinians in tearing up the political fabric of the Palestinian people. *Alnajah University*.

Mdanat,A.,1990. *Palestinian Cinema*. *Palestinian encyclopedia*, second section, *volume IV. Beirut: Palestinian encyclopedia corporation*.

MacDonald, R., (2012). "A land without people for a people without land": civilizing mission and American support for Zionism. *Thesis for the PhD. Degree*. Ohio: Graduate College of Bowling Green State University.

Modalal, W. and Abu-Amer, A. (2013). *Studies in the Palestinian issue*1 .st ed. University of the nation for open education.

Neturei Karta, 2014. Misusing the Holocaust for Political Agenda, The State of Israel Hijacks a Jewish Tragedy. *60 Israeli Knesset Members Coming to Auschwitz to Push Their Agenda.* 27 January , 2014 Berlin, Germany: Auschwitz Memorial Press Conference

Petras, J., 2006. *The Power of Israel in the United States*. Atlanta: Clarity Press.
Costanzo, W. (2013). *World Cinema through Global Genres*.

Spaitan, F. (2016). *The impact of the Zionist occupation on the Palestinian child and the Palestinian cause.*1.st ed. Al Manhal.

Shtyih, M. (2011). *Encyclopedia of Palestinian terminology and concepts*. Dar Al-Jaleel for Palestinian Studies, Publications and Research.

Touma, E., (1972). *Roots in the Palestinian issue*. Union Cooperative Press - Haifa.

Periodicals

Allen, L. (2006). *Paradise Now's Understated Power*. Retrieved from: https://merip.org/2006/01/paradise-nows-understated-power/ [Accessed 29 Jan.2019].

Aljazeea. *Hany Abu Assad .. Adventures in the cinema*. Retrieved from: https://www.aljazeera.net/amp/programs/thearabiclens/2006/4/18/%D9%87%D8%A7%D9%86%D9%8A-%D8%A3%D8%A8%D9%88-%D8%A3%D8%B3%D8%B9%D8%AF-%D9%85%D8%BA%D8%A7%D9%85%D8%B1%D8%A7%D8%AA%D9%87-%D9%81%D9%8A-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B3%D9%8A%D9%86%D9%85%D8%A7 [Accessed 29 Jan. 2019].

AbuKhalil, A. (2006, January 1). The Angry Arab News Service. Retrieved January 29, 2019, Retrieved from: https://angryarab.blogspot.com/search?q=paradise+now [Accessed 29 Jan. 2019].

AbuKhalil, A. (2006). *Paradis Now? Paradise Never*. Retrieved from: http://angryarab.blogspot.com/2006/04/paradisnowparadisenever.html[Accesse 29 Jan. 2019].

Asfour, N. (2014, February 22). *Omar: the Palestinian Oscar nominee made amidpanic and paranoia*. Retrieved from: https://www.theguardian.com/film/2014/feb/22/omar-film-palestine-oscar-hany-abu-assad[Accessed 29 Jan. 2019].

Almasoudi, S. (2013). "Omar" Palestinian film tells the love under occupation and dazzles in Cane Festival. Retrieved from: https://www.alarabiya.net/ar/culture-and-art/2013/05/22/-%D8%B9%D9%85%D8%B1-%D9%81%D9%8A%D9%84%D9%85-%D9%81%D9%84%D8%B3%D8%B7%D9%8A%D9%86%D9%8A-%D9%8A%D8%AD%D9%83%D9%8A-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AD%D8%A8-%D9%81%D9%8A-%D8%B8%D9%84-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A7%D8%AD%D8%AA%D9%84%D8%A7%D9%84-%D9%88%D9%8A%D8%A8%D9%87%D8%B1-%D9%83%D8%A7%D9%86-.html [Accessed 30 Jan. 2019].

Abo-Moalla, S. (2005). The martyrdom on the cinema screen: The appearance of martyrdom with no goal. Retrieved from: https://www.alwatanvoice.com/arabic/news/2005/04/24/20597.html [Accessed 30 Jan. 2019].

Alkhateeb, A. (2006). Paradise Now in Irbid. Retrieved from: http://alrai.com/article/177635.html[Accessed 29 Jan. 2019].

Alsaqa, İ. (2017). Palestinian Cinema .. The story of the pain from Jerusalem to Galilee. Retrieved from: https://midan.aljazeera.net/art/cinema/2017/7/25/%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B3%D9%8A%D9%86%D9%85%D8%A7-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%81%D9%84%D8%B3%D8%B7%D9%8A%D9%86%D9%8A%D8%A9-%D8%B1%D9%88%D8%A7%D9%8A%D8%A9-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%88%D8%AC%D8%B9-%D9%85%D9%86-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%82%D8%AF%D8%B3-%D8%A5%D9%84%D9%89-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AC%D9%84%D9%8A%D9%84 [Accessed 30 Jan. 2019].

Aljazeera. (2006). The Palestinian film: paradise now. Retrieved from: https://www.aljazeera.net/programs/opendialogue/2006/3/9/الفيلم-الفلسطيني-الجنة-الآن [Accessed 31 Jan. 2019].

Alriyadh. (2014). Palestinian director Elia Suleiman: I enjoy to mock the Israeli occupation. Retrieved from: http://www.alriyadh.com/990651 [Accessed 31 Jan. 2019].

Aksa, S. (2005). Paradise Now. Retrieved from: https://www.alwatanvoice.com/arabic/news/2005/12/04/31902.html [Accessed 30 Jan. 2019].

Al-Arees, İ. (2014). Paradise Now by Hany Abu Assad: suicide bomber, terrorist. And martyrdom. Retrieved from: http://www.alhayat.com/article/823737/%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AC%D9%86%D8%A9-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A2%D9%86-%D9%84%D9%87%D8%A7%D9%86%D9%8A-%D8%A3%D8%A8%D9%88-%D8%A3%D8%B3%D8%B9%D8%AF-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A7%D9%86%D8%AA%D8%AD%D8%A7%D8%B1%D9%8A-%D9%88%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B1%D9%87%D8%A7%D8%A8%D9%8A-%D9%88%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A7%D8%B3%D8%AA%D8%B4%D9%87%D8%A7%D8%AF%D9%8A [Accessed 29 Jan. 2019].

Al- Ayam, A. P. (2007). *Rachid Mashharawi: Palestinian cinema has achieved a homeland not achieved by politicians*. [online] Al-ayyam.ps. Retrieved from: http://www.al-ayyam.ps/ar_page.php?id=2e2f2fdy48427773Y2e2f2fd [Accessed 29 Jan. 2019].

Alshaykh, O. (2017). Hany Abu Assad and "The Mountain Between Us" by Hollywood- Ruman Cultural Magazine. Retrieved from: https://www.rommanmag.com/view/posts/postDetails?id=4621 [Accessed 31 Jan. 2019].

Alarees, I. (2014). Paradise now of Hany Abu Assad: suicide bomber, terrorist and martyrdom. Retrieved from: http://www.alhayat.com/article/823737/%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AC%D9%86%D8%A9-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A2%D9%86-%D9%84%D9%87%D8%A7%D9%86%D9%8A-%D8%A3%D8%A8%D9%88-%D8%A3%D8%B3%D8%B9%D8%AF-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A7%D9%86%D8%AA%D8%AD%D8%A7%D8%B1%D9%8A-%D9%88%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B1%D9%87%D8%A7%D8%A8%D9%8A-%D9%88%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A7%D8%B3%D8%AA%D8%B4%D9%87%D8%A7%D8%AF%D9%8A [Accessed 30 Jan. 2019].

Anan, O. (2014, March 26). What do Palestinians say about Omar?. Retrieved from https://www.sasapost.com/palestinian-reviews-omar/ [Accessed 30 Jan. 2019].

Aljazeera (2013). Hany Abu Assad: "Omar" is a Successful Risk. [online] Aljazeera.net. Retrieved from: https://www.aljazeera.net/news/cultureandart/2013/5/24/%D9%87%D8%A7%D9%86%D9%8A-%D8%A3%D8%A8%D9%88-%D8%A3%D8%B3%D8%B9%D8%AF-%D9%81%D9%8A%D9%84%D9%85-%D8%B9%D9%85%D8%B1-%D9%85%D8%AE%D8%A7%D8%B7%D8%B1%D8%A9-%D9%86%D8%A7%D8%AC%D8%AD%D8%A9 [Accessed 31 Jan. 2019].

ALGHAD, A. P. (2011). Director of "Paradise Now" tells the story of the American dream of the Arabs. Retrieved from: https://alghad.com/%D9%85%D8%AE%D8%B1%D8%AC-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AC%D9%86%D8%A9-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A2%D9%86-%D9%8A%D8%B1%D9%88%D9%8A-%D9%82%D8%B5%D8%A9-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AD%D9%84%D9%85-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A3%D9%85%D9%8A%D8%B1%D9%83/ [Accessed 30 Jan. 2019].

Abu-laban, R. (2017). 95| Ibrahim Sarhan and his story with the Palestinian cinema. Retrieved from: https://www.alhadath.ps/article/66857/%D8%B9-95-%D8%A5%D8%A8%D8%B1%D8%A7%D9%87%D9%8A%D9%85-%D8%B3%D8%B1%D8%AD%D8%A7%D9%86-%D9%88%D9%82%D8%B5%D8%AA%D9%87-%D9%85%D8%B9-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B3%D9%8A%D9%86%D9%85%D8%A7-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%81%D9%84%D8%B3%D8%B7%D9%8A%D9%86%D9%8A%D8%A9--%D8%B5%D9%88%D8%B1 [Accessed 31 Jan. 2019].

Aljazeera (2010). Israel chases of "Jenin Jenin" movie. Retrieved from: https://www.aljazeera.net/news/reportsandinterviews/2010/1/20/%D8%A5%D8%B3%D8%B1%D8%A7%D8%A6%D9%8A%D9%84-%D8%AA%D9%84%D8%A7%D8%AD%D9%82-%D9%85%D8%AE%D8%B1%D8%AC-%D8%AC%D9%86%D9%8A%D9%86-%D8%AC%D9%86%D9%8A%D9%86 [Accessed 31 Jan. 2019].

Beesley, R. (2014). ASFF - Review of Hany Abu-Assad's Oscar-nominated Omar: A Universal Moving Story. [online] Aesthetica Short Film Festival. Retrieved from: http://www.asff.co.uk/omar-universal-meaning/ [Accessed 30 Jan. 2019].

Beesley, R. (2013). *Universal Meaning*. Retrieved from: http://www.aestheticamagazine.com/universal-meaning/ [Accessed 29 Jan.2019].

Bradshaw, P. (2006). Paradise Now. [online] the Guardian. Retrieved from: https://www.theguardian.com/culture/2006/apr/14/4 [Accessed 30 Jan. 2019].

Cook, J. (2013, July 28). Filmmaking as resistance: Hany Abu-Assad's dream of a new Palestinian cinema. Retrieved from https://www.thenational.ae/arts-culture/filmmaking-as-resistance-hany-abu-assad-s-dream-of-a-new-palestinian-cinema-1.328614 [Accessed 29 Jan. 2019].

Chikhaoui, T. (2019). *Ellia Soliman or the remain time.* [online] Archipels Images. Retrieved from: http://archipelsimages.com/2018/03/28/%D8%A5%D9%8A%D9%84%D9%8A%D8%A7-%D8%B3%D9%84%D9%8A%D9%85%D8%A7%D9%86-%D8%A3%D9%88-%D9%85%D8%A7-%D8%AA%D8%A8%D9%82%D9%89-%D9%85%D9%86-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B2%D9%85%D9%86/ [Accessed 30 Jan. 2019].

Darwish, I. (2011). Palestinian Cinema: A lost archive, surrounded by wars and rumors. Retrieved from: http://alqudslana.com/index.php?action=article&id=1064 [Accessed 31 Jan. 2019].

Debruge, P. (2017). Toronto Film Review: 'The Mountain Between Us'. [online] Variety. Retrieved from: https://variety.com/2017/film/festivals/the-mountain-between-us-review-1202553321/ [Accessed 29 Jan. 2019].

Erickson, S. (2014). *Oscar nominee Omar turns Palestinian conflict into a neo realist action movie*. Retrieved from: https://www.nashvillescene.com/arts-culture/film/article/13052869/oscar-nominee-omar-turns-palestinian-conflict-into-a-neorealist-action-movie [Accessed 29 Jan. 2019].

Ebert, R. (2004, January 30). *Rana's Wedding Movie Review & Film Summary (2004) Roger Ebert*. Retrieved from: https://www.rogerebert.com/reviews/ranas-wedding-2004 [Accessed 30 Jan. 2019].

Ebert, R. (2004). Rana's Wedding Movie Review & Film Summary (2004) | Roger Ebert. Retrieved from: https://www.rogerebert.com/reviews/ranas-wedding-2004 [Accessed 29 Jan. 2019].

Ebert, R. (2005). *Paradise Now Movie Review & Film Summary (2005) | Roger Ebert*. Retrieved from: https://www.rogerebert.com/reviews/paradise-now-2005 [Accessed 30 Jan. 2019].

Essays, UK. (2018). Development Of Italian Neorealism Film Studies Essay. Retrieved from https://www.ukessays.com/essays/film-studies/development-of-italian-neorealism-film-studies-essay.php?vref=1 [Accessed 9 may. 2019].

Grunes, D. (2007). *Paradise Now (Hany Abu-Assad, 2005)*. [online] Dennis Grunes. Retrieved from: https://grunes.wordpress.com/2007/03/29/paradise-now-hany-abu-assad-2005/ [Accessed 29 Jan. 2019].

Ghazi, I. (2013). (Omar) is a new Palestinian film with a universal image in all its forms. Retrieved from: https://www.alquds.co.uk/%D8%B9%D9%8F%D9%85%D8%B1-%D9%81%D9%8A%D9%84%D9%85-%D9%81%D9%84%D8%B3%D8%B7%D9%8A%D9%86%D9%8A-%D8%AC%D8%AF%D9%8A%D8%AF-%D9%8A%D8%AD%D9%85%D9%84-%D8%B5%D9%81%D8%A9-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B9%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85/ [Accessed 30 Jan. 2019].

Hejazi, M. (2017). Hany Abu Assad :the first Arab to make a film in Hollywood. Retrieved from: http://m.almayadeen.net/news/art/824518 [Accessed 31 Jan. 2019].

Rich , R. Bomb culture: Hany Abu-Assad's Paradise Now | Sight & Sound. Retrieved January 29, 2019, Retrieved from: https://www.bfi.org.uk/news-opinion/sight-sound-magazine/interviews/bomb-culture-hany-abu-assad-s-paradise-now-b-ruby-rich [Accessed 29 Jan. 2019].

O'Malley, S. (2014, February 21). *Omar Movie Review & Film Summary* (2013) | Roger Ebert. Retrieved from: https://www.rogerebert.com/reviews/omar-2013 [Accessed 29 Jan. 2019].

Hornaday, A. (2014, February 20). *'Omar' movie review*. Retrieved from: https://www.washingtonpost.com/goingoutguide/movies/omar-movie-review/2014/02/19/dd4a6202-94db-11e3-84e1-27626c5ef5fb_story.html?utm_term=.241a34c94aed [Accessed 29 Jan. 2019].

Hornaday, A. (2003). *'Rana's Wedding': Seeking Love Amid the Chaos*. Retrieved from: https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/lifestyle/2003/09/12/ranas-wedding-seeking-love-amid-the-chaos/9b6198da-9a2c-482d-b016-532c4ba75dd0/?utm_term=.148db3f094bf [Accessed 29 Jan. 2019].

Haider, S. (2010). *"Palestinian cinema is a cause": an interview with Hany Abu-Assad*. Retrieved from: https://electronicintifada.net/content/palestinian-cinema-cause-interview-hany-abu-assad/8708 [Accessed 29 Jan. 2019].

Holden, S. (2003, August 22). *FILM IN REVIEW; 'Rana's Wedding'*. Retrieved from: https://www.nytimes.com/2003/08/22/movies/film-in-review-rana-s-wedding.html [Accessed 29 Jan. 2019].

Holden, S. (2005). *Terrorists Facing Their Moment of Truth*. [online] Nytimes.com. Retrieved from: https://www.nytimes.com/2005/10/28/movies/terrorists-facing-their-moment-of-truth.html [Accessed 29 Jan. 2019].

Holden, S. (2003). film in review; 'Rana's Wedding'. [online] Nytimes.com. Retrieved from: https://www.nytimes.com/2003/08/22/movies/film-in-review-rana-s-wedding.html [Accessed 29 Jan. 2019].

Hamad, M. (2017). ‘The Mountain Between Us’: From Palestine to Hollywood. [online] Gulfnews.com. Retrieved from: https://gulfnews.com/entertainment/the-mountain-between-us-from-palestine-to-hollywood-1.2132413 [Accessed 31 Jan. 2019].

Hornaday, A. (2014, February 20). 'Omar' movie review. Retrieved from: https://www.washingtonpost.com/goingoutguide/movies/omar-movie-review/2014/02/19/dd4a6202-94db-11e3-84e1-27626c5ef5fb_story.html?noredirect=on&utm_term=.a17fe20e327f [Accessed 30 Jan. 2019].

Ibrahim, B. (2005). Abıut Paradise Now movie by Hany Abu Asaad. Retrieved from: http://www.m.ahewar.org/s.asp?aid=48768&r=0 [Accessed 29 Jan. 2019].

James, C. (1988). Review: New Directors/New Films; 'Wedding in Galilee,' Palestinian Village Tensions. Retrieved from: https://www.nytimes.com/1988/03/11/movies/review-new-directors-new-films-wedding-in-galilee-palestinian-village-tensions.html [Accessed 29 Jan. 2019].

James, C. (1988). Review: New Directors/New Films; 'Wedding in Galilee,' Palestinian Village Tensions. Retrieved from: https://www.nytimes.com/1988/03/11/movies/review-new-directors-new-films-wedding-in-galilee-palestinian-village-tensions.html [Accessed 29 Jan. 2019].

Jazaer, j. (2015). His films won the most prestigious international film awards and his film "Omar" opened the Dubai Film Festival. Hany Abu Assad: A dynamic and artistic Palestinian cinema. Retrieved from: https://www.djazairess.com/djazairnews/65758 [Accessed 30 Jan. 2019].

Jerusalem, A. (2017). Cinemas in historic Palestine before the Nakba earthquake. Retrieved from: https://www.alquds.co.uk/%EF%BB%BF%D8%AF%D9%88%D8%B1-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B3%D9%8A%D9%86%D9%85%D8%A7-%D9%81%D9%8A-%D9%81%D9%84%D8%B3%D8%B7%D9%8A%D9%86-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AA%D8%A7%D8%B1%D9%8A%D8%AE%D9%8A%D8%A9-%D9%82%D8%A8%D9%84/ [Accessed 31 Jan. 2019].

Khamis, T. (2014). "Omar" and the price of red carpet. Retrieved from: https://qudsn.co/post/40818/%D9%81%D9%8A%D9%84%D9%85%D8%B9%D9%85%D8%B1-%D9%88%D8%AB%D9%85%D9%86-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B3%D8%AC%D8%A7%D8%AF-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A3%D8%AD%D9%85%D8%B1 [Accessed 30 Jan. 2019].

Kinninmont, J. (2006). *Paradise Now*. [online] openDemocracy. Retrieved from: https://www.opendemocracy.net/en/palestine_3449jsp/ [Accessed 29 Jan. 2019].

Loadenthal, M. (2014). *Reproducing a Culture of Martyrdom*. Retrieved from: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/319619549_Reproducing_a_Culture_of_Martyrdom [Accessed 30 Jan. 2019]

Madanat, A. (2011, July 25). Madanat: "Paradise Now" succeeded in his message to the West, Retrieved from: https://alghad.com/%D9%85%D8%AF%D8%A7%D9%86%D8%A7%D8%AA-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AC%D9%86%D8%A9-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A2%D9%86-%D9%86%D8%AC%D8%AD-%D9%81%D9%8A-%D8%B1%D8%B3%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AA%D9%87-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85%D9%88%D8%AC/ [Accessed 30 Jan. 2019].

Murphy, M. (2003). *Film review: Rana's Wedding*. Retrieved from: https://electronicintifada.net/content/film-reviewranaswedding/3447 [Accessed29Jan. 2019].

Mohammad, M. (2018). *Hany Abu Assad: My films led me to Hollywood* [online] Elfann News. Retrieved from: https://www.elfann.com/news/show/1203004/ [Accessed 30 Jan. 2019].

Nassar, S. Director Abu Assad returns to the country to build a Palestinian film project. Retrieved from http://www.bokra.net/Article-1153212 [Accessed 29 Jan. 2019]

Omari, A. (2013, December 23). The film "Omar" and all this success .. Why?. Retrieved from: https://www.aljazeera.net/amp/news/cultureandart/2013/12/23/%D9%81%D9%8A%D9%84%D9%85-%D8%B9%D9%85%D8%B1-%D9%88%D9%83%D9%84-%D9%87%D8%B0%D8%A7-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%86%D8%AC%D8%A7%D8%AD-%D9%84%D9%85%D8%A7%D8%B0%D8%A7 [Accessed 30 Jan. 2019].

O'Malley, S. (2014, February 21). Omar Movie Review & Film Summary (2013) |Roger Ebert. Retrieved from: https://www.rogerebert.com/reviews/omar-2013
[Accessed 30 Jan. 2019].

Padua, P. (2014). *Out of Frame: Omar*. Retrieved from: https://dcist.com/story/14/02/21/out-of-frame-omar/ [Accessed 29 Jan. 2019].

Reynoso, R. (2015, October 8). *Omar: The Limits of our Sacrifice or The Boy, The Money,The Sugar, and The Stone*. Retrieved from: https://www.faithonview.com/omarlimitssacrificeboymoneysugarstone/ [Accessd29 Jan. 2019].

Scott, A. (2014). Treachery Thrives Where Trust Withers. [online] Nytimes.com. Retrieved from: https://www.nytimes.com/2014/02/21/movies/in-omar-the-west-bank-is-a-backdrop-for-betrayal.html [Accessed 30 Jan. 2019].

Shokur, D. (2015). Elia Suliman .. The pure cinema comes from its own. Retrieved from: https://www.alaraby.co.uk/diffah/interviews/2016/9/8/%D8%A5%D9%8A%D9%84%D9%8A%D8%A7-%D8%B3%D9%84%D9%8A%D9%85%D8%A7%D9%86-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B3%D9%8A%D9%86%D9%85%D8%A7-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B5%D8%A7%D9%81%D9%8A%D8%A9-%D8%AA%D8%A3%D8%AA%D9%8A-%D9%85%D9%86-%D8%AA%D9%84%D9%82%D8%A7%D8%A1-%D9%86%D9%81%D8%B3%D9%87%D8%A7-1 [Accessed 31 Jan. 2019].

Sippl, D. (2014). Omar — *the Palestinian: Hany Abu-Assad Calls It "Othello — the Occupation*." Retrieved from: http://www.kinocaviar.com/omar.php [Accessed 29 Jan. 2019].

Shafii, O. (2013). Hany Abu Assad: Omar bar of love and betrayal in a country of conflict . Retrieved from: http://www.ahram.org.eg/NewsPrint/215553.aspx [Accessed 30 Jan. 2019].

Salahat, M. (2017). About Palestinian cinema before the Nakba. Retrieved from: https://www.rommanmag.com/view/posts/postDetails?id=4002 [Accessed 30 Jan. 2019].

Tobias, S. (2003). *Rana's Wedding*. Retrieved from: https://film.avclub.com/ranas-wedding-1798198789 [Accessed 29 Jan. 2019].

Taher, M. (2015). *"I made Omar especially for Palestinians": director Hany Abu-Assad - Film - Arts & Culture - Ahram Online*. [online] English.ahram.org.eg. Retrieved from: http://english.ahram.org.eg/NewsContent/5/32/131411/Arts--Culture/Film/I-made-Omar-especially-for-Palestinians-director-H.aspx [Accessed 31 Jan. 2019].

Toumarkine , D. (2004). *Rana's Wedding*. Retrieved from: http://www.filmjournal.com/ranas-wedding [Accessed 30 Jan. 2019].

Weissberg, J. (2014, November 18). *Film Review: 'Omar'*. Retrieved from https://variety.com/2013/film/global/cannesfilmreviewomar1200484320/ [Accesed 29 Jan. 2019].

Wadi, D. (2006). Paradise now .. Death in silence .. Death in the hustle. Retrieved from: http://www.m.ahewar.org/s.asp?aid=56369&r=0 [Accessed 30 Jan. 2019].

Williams, D. (2014, January 28*). Palestine's tragic Oscar hopeful tests identity, ideas*. Retrieved from: https://www.reuters.com/article/us-oscars-palestine/palestines-tragic-oscar-hopeful-tests-identity-ideas-idUSBREA0R0VZ20140128 [Accessed 29 Jan. 2019].

Weissberg, J. (2013). Film Review: 'Omar'. [online] Variety. Retrieved from: https://variety.com/2013/film/global/cannes-film-review-omar-1200484320/ [Accessed 30 Jan. 2019].

Young, D. (2002*). Rana's Wedding / Jerusalem, Another Day*. Retrieved from https://variety.com/2002/film/markets-festivals/rana-s-wedding-jerusalem-another-day-1200549656/ [Accessed 29 Jan. 2019].

Zoubi, H. (2008). *A meeting with Palestinian director Hani Abu Assad*. [online] Euromedcafe. Retrieved from: http://www.euromedcafe.org/newsdetail.asp?lang=ara&documentID=12468 [Accessed 29 Jan. 2019].

Other Publications

Al Jazeera. (2015, November 12). Arabist units .. organized death squads. Retrieved from: https://www.aljazeera.net/encyclopedia/military/2015/10/13/%D9%88%D8%AD%D8%AF%D8%A7%D8%AA-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85%D8%B3%D8%AA%D8%B9%D8%B1%D8%A8%D9%8A%D9%86-%D9%81%D8%B1%D9%82-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85%D9%88%D8%AA-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85%D9%86%D8%B8%D9%85 [Accessed 31 Jan. 2019].

Aljazeera, N. (2014). Israeli Separation Wall. Retrieved from: https://www.aljazeera.net/encyclopedia/citiesandregions/2014/11/21/%D8%AC%D8%AF%D8%A7%D8%B1-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%81%D8%B5%D9%84-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A5%D8%B3%D8%B1%D8%A7%D8%A6%D9%8A%D9%84%D9%8A [Accessed 30 Jan. 2019].

AOHR. *Thus the Palestinian is arrested by the Israeli occupation*. Retrieved from: http://aohr.org.uk/index.php/ar/reports/-تقارير-منوعة/3088-هكذا-يتم-اعتقال-الفلسطيني-على-يد-الاحتلال-الإسرائيلي.html [Accessed 29 Jan. 2019].

ALGHAD, A. (2014, June 13). Today's Guest. Interview with Hany Abu Assad, Palestinian film director. Retrieved from: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iJtm2Dfmlb0 [Accessed 29 Jan. 2019].

Al-shayip, Y. (2017). [online] Yaf.ps. Retrieved from: http://yaf.ps/server/uploadedFiles/docs/palasinians-issuse12/17.pdf [Accessed30 Jan. 2019].

BBC interview (2014). Without restrictions: With the Palestinian director Hani Abu Assad, director of the film "Omar ". Retrieved from: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YVUOxPLlviU&t=846s [Accessed 31 Jan. 2019].

Bronislawski, P. (2015). *"Look them in the eye": Silence and gaze as Strategies of humanization in Paradise Now.* UniversidadeFederal de Santa Catarina.

CINANDO (n.d.). Augustus film. [online] Cinando.com. Retrieved from: https://cinando.com/en/Company/augustus_film_7517/Detail [Accessed 30 Jan. 2019].

Dabbah, S. (2015, November 09). Clicket Palestine Hany Abu Assad - Nazareth. Retrieved from: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bUZlOW9PouM&t=2s [Accessed 31 Jan. 2019].

Dabashi, H. (2019). *Paradise Delayed: With Hany Abu-Assad in Palestine*. Retrieved from: https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/09528820903488869. [Accessed 30 Jan. 2019].

Fuller, B. and Cox, L. (2017). Director Hany Abu-Assad Answers 5 Key Questions About 'The Mountain Between Us.Hollywood Life. Retrieved from: https://hollywoodlife.com/2017/10/06/the-mountain-between-us-director-hany-abu-assad-interview/ / [Accessed 30 Jan. 2019].

Gana, N. (2008). *Reel Violence: Paradise Now and the Collapse of the Spectacle*. Duke University Press.

Georgakas, D. and Saltz, B. (2005). *This Is a Film You Should See Twice: An Interview with Hany Abu-Assad*. Retrieved from: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/295304771_This_is_a_film_you_shold_see_twice_An_interview_with_Hany_Abu-Assad [Accessed 29 Jan. 2019].

Hamdan, B. (2016). Bashar Hamdan: Palestinian Film Center project to save the visual memory. Retrieved from: https://www.arab48.com/%D9%81%D8%B3%D8%AD%D8%A9/%D8%A8%D8%B5%D8%B1/%D8%A3%D9%81%D9%84%D8%A7%D9%85/2016/08/09/%D8%A8%D8%B4%D9%91%D8%A7%D8%B1-%D8%AD%D9%85%D8%AF%D8%A7%D9%86-%D9%85%D8%B1%D9%83%D8%B2-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%81%D9%8A%D9%84%D9%85-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%81%D9%84%D8%B3%D8%B7%D9%8A%D9%86%D9%8A%D9%91-%D9%85%D8%B4%D8%B1%D9%88%D8%B9-%D9%84%D8%AD%D9%81%D8%B8-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B0%D8%A7%D9%83%D8%B1%D8%A9-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A8%D8%B5%D8%B1%D9%8A%D9%91%D8%A9 [Accessed 29 Jan. 2019].

Hudson, S. (2017). *Modern Palestinian Filmmaking in a Global World*. University of Arkansas, Fayetteville.

Hudson, S. (2011). *Palestinian Film: Hyperreality, Narrative, and Ideology*. University of Arkansas.

IFFR (n.d.). Paper House. [online] IFFR. Retrieved from: https://iffr.com/en/1993/films/paper-house [Accessed 29 Jan. 2019].

Mahmoud, M. (2016). *Palestinian Rights: A Literary Multiple-Genre Approach*. The American University in Cairo.

Mathewes. F. (2005) Paradise Now, The Review of Faith &International Affairs.

Natsheh, A. (2018). *Normalization In Palestinian Cinema and the way to the Oscar*. Bahçeşehr University. Social Science Institute Cinema and Television

Naseer, I. (2017). Politics: Interview with Hany Abu Assad. Retrieved January 29, 2019, Retrieved from: https://www.arab48.com/%D9%81%D8%B3%D8%AD%D8%A9/%D8%A8%D8%B5%D8%B1/%D8%B4%D8%A7%D8%B4%D8%A9/2017/12/24/%D8%B4%D8%B9%D8%B1%D9%8A%D8%A9-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B3%D9%8A%D8%A7%D8%B3%D8%A9-%D9%85%D9%82%D8%A7%D8%A8%D9%84%D8%A9-%D9%85%D8%B9-%D9%87%D8%A7%D9%86%D9%8A-%D8%A3%D8%A8%D9%88-%D8%A3%D8%B3%D8%B9%D8%AF [Accessed 29 Jan. 2019].

Nashef, H. (2015). *Demythologizing the Palestinian in Hany Abu-Assad's Omar and Paradise Now.* American University of Sharjah.

Rich, R. (2017). Bomb culture: Hany Abu-Assad's Paradise Now | Sight & Sound. [online] British Film Institute. Retrieved from: https://www.bfi.org.uk/news-opinion/sight-sound-magazine/interviews/bomb-culture-hany-abu-assad-s-paradise-now-b-ruby-rich [Accessed 30 Jan. 2019].

Scam, C. (2014). Countering the 'shrinking Palestine Maps' scam. [online] Confronting antisemitism and Israel hatred. Retrieved from: http://edgar1981.blogspot.com/2014/05/countering-shrinking-palestine-maps-lie.html [Accessed 2 Apr. 2019].

Volkan, V. (2009). *Suicide Bombers*. Retrieved from: http://www.scirp.org/journal/psych. [Accessed 30 Jan. 2019].

Vogue. A. (2017). Hany Abu Assad speaks to Vogue about his Hollywood experience.Vogue Arabia. Retrieved from: https://ar.vogue.me/%D8%AD%D9%8A%D8%A7%D8%A9/%D9%87%D8%A7%D9%86%D9%8A-%D8%A3%D8%A8%D9%88-%D8%A3%D8%B3%D8%B9%D8%AF-%DA%A4%D9%88%D8%BA-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B9%D8%B1%D8%A8%D9%8A%D9%91%D8%A9-%D8%B3%D8%A8%D8%AA%D9%85%D9%8A%D8%B1/ [Accessed 31 Jan. 2019].

WAFA News Agency. Problems facing the youth sector in Palestine. Retrieved from: http://www.wafainfo.ps/ar_page.aspx?id=9477 [Accessed 31 Jan. 2019].

WAFA. (n.d.). Palestinian Cinema. Retrieved from: http://info.wafa.ps/ar_page.aspx?id=9497 [Accessed 29 Jan. 2019].

Yaqub, N. (2007). *The Palestinian cinematic wedding*. Journal of middle east Women's Studies.