

YWCA of Palestine Newsletter Vol. 4, December 2015

Between the Hammer and the Anvil

This issue of the YWCA's online newsletter on stories about women in Palestine includes stories about women's success as teachers, artists, and writers as well as entrepreneurs and fisherwomen. You will also find stories of women's resilience against imprisonment and living under military occupation and siege. In addition we have included some media resources that include videos and a pdf file from PASSIA on Palestinian women today.

As we come to the end of 2015 we invite you to stand with Palestinian women by supporting the end of Israel's settler colonial policies and prolonged military occupation. We invite you to stand with them when they join them in their resistance and celebrating with them in their victories.

Jarrar: 'My imprisonment is based on political reasons'



Senior leader of the Palestinian Popular Front Khalida Jarrar said yesterday that she is being imprisoned for political reasons, stressing that the Israeli judicial system is silencing any voice that discloses Israeli crimes, the *Safa news agency* reported.

During her meeting with the lawyer of the PLO Prisoners and Ex-Prisoners Affairs Commission in the Israeli prisoner of Hasharon, Jarrar said

that the Israeli court rejected an appeal against her imprisonment because she has parliamentary immunity.

<https://www.middleeastmonitor.com/news/middle-east/22843-jarrar-my-imprisonment-is-based-on-political-reasons>

Palestinian Refugees Are Starting an All-Female Food Truck in Lebanon by Alex Swerdloff



As 2016 rapidly approaches, we can comfortably say that humanity has attained many a soaring feat not thought remotely possible even a few generations ago. Which makes it all the more bitter that 2015 also marked the absolute *worst* levels of global displacement [in all of recorded history](#). Think

about that. We have never been closer to interplanetary habitation, yet *more* humans than ever

before are displaced from their homes, thanks to global conflict, socio-economic strife, and persecution. Those lucky enough to find themselves living in refugee camps will likely spend [decades, if not an entire generation](#), living in those camps. Mariam Shaar and Myrna Atalla want to help change that.

As the leaders of two different NGOs, Shaar and Atalla are working together in the hopes of empowering the female residents of Lebanon's Bourj el-Barajneh refugee camp. The camp, located near Beirut, was created in 1948 for the unending stream of Palestinians who were forced to leave their homeland by Israel. Due to the recent crisis in Syria, the camp's population has skyrocketed with refugees from that war-torn nation, too.

Shaar, who runs the the Women's Program Association at the refugee camp, first approached Atalla of Alfanar—the first venture philanthropy organization that works exclusively in the Arab world—just a few years ago. She was hoping to help the women at the camp establish a self-sufficient catering business. Two years later, Soufra—which means “dining table” in Arabic—was in full swing, selling meals to the refugees in the camp.

http://munchies.vice.com/articles/palestinian-refugees-are-starting-an-all-female-food-truck-in-lebanon?utm_content=bufferf3960&utm_medium=social&utm_source=twitter.com&utm_campaign=buffer/

Hungry Warrior: The Untold Story of Hana Shalabi By Ramzy Baroud



Throughout her hunger strike, that of exactly 47 days, Hana Shalabi never slept consistently for a number of hours. In the first few days of her strike, she would doze off only to wake up with the sudden fear that someone was trying to hurt her.

But after the first week of the hunger strike, having nothing but a few sips of water a day, her body simply ceased to function in any normal way. So, instead of sleeping, she would fall into a state of delirium, overtaken by frenzied hallucination where memories and persisting future fears coalesced into a sonata of night terror.

<http://www.palestinechronicle.com/hungry-warrior-the-untold-story-of-hana-shalabi/>

A Day in the Life of a 'Caravan Lady' by Sara Algebhawli



When the third of Israel's recent major military offensives against my besieged country was over last year, I wrote a memoir about surviving three wars through the brutal black nights of death that I had to witness. My memoir started like this:

The killing is over... but the pain of missing the dead is not.
The killing is over... but the injuries are not healed.
The killing is over... but the houses are no longer standing.
The killing is over... but our souls are not yet cured.

It's difficult to start writing about Gaza and not be talking about war and death. Here, death has killed our souls and settled indoors instead of coming and going. Death lives with us; it lives in us. I don't know how life can exist with all this death around; with all this loss; with all this misery. <http://www.palestinechronicle.com/a-day-in-the-life-of-a-caravan-lady/>

The female fisher of Gaza by Nisreen Al-Khatib



If you visit the Gaza seaport, you will see a variety of young and old, black and white, and injured and disabled fishermen who come from all areas of the Strip, forming a large and lively community despite an Israeli blockade that limits how far boats may sail. And you'd probably be surprised to see a lone female fisher among the roughly 2,000 men, because in Gaza it's a male-dominated profession

<http://www.wearenotnumbers.org/home/Story/133>

Hanan Alhroub



Hanan grew up in the Palestinian refugee camp, Bethlehem. One day, coming home from school, her husband and children witnessed a shooting incident involving Israeli troops. It took her family several years to overcome the devastating psychological impact that this experience had on her children's behavior and their educational development. Having found that her children's teachers did not deal with

these challenges in an adequate manner, she decided to become a primary school teacher herself. Her goal was to lend a helping hand to children who have been exposed to this kind of violence and therefore need special care in their first years at school. <http://www.globalteacherprize.org/finalist/hanan-alhroub>

Seattle Arab-American Poet Seeks To 'Remind Us Of The Human' by Elizabeth Austen



Washington state poet laureate Elizabeth Austen presents two poems by Seattle-based poet Lena Khalaf Tuffaha: "Fragment" and "Running Orders."

Tuffaha was born in Seattle, but spent her youth in the Middle East, the child of a Palestinian father and a Jordanian-Syrian mother. Tuffaha told Austen she hopes her poem "Fragment" will provide a different kind of context for events in Syria. "My hope for poetry, and all art, is that it reminds us of the human. It takes you back a few steps before the explosion," she said. "I keep wanting to gently help the reader pull back the curtain and see the human beings living inside the house before it's destroyed." <http://kuow.org/post/seattle-arab-american-poet-seeks-remind-us-human>

This Woman Is Using Graffiti to Change the Way Her Country Thinks About Girls



On a concrete wall in the alleyway of a Palestinian refugee camp in Irbid, Jordan, Laila Ajjawi works quickly, switching between the three spray-paint bottles that sit at her feet. Within 20 minutes, she has scrawled Arabic letters onto the veil of a girl with cavernous eyes and painted a feather quill by her side. Her mural is nearly complete.

Draped in a dark, paint-splattered cloak with a black respirator strapped over her hijab, Laila, 25, looks like a bona fide superhero. The

petite graffiti artist even has a superpower: talking through walls. "My energy will be reflected from walls to people," she said, explaining that people will then take her message to others.

<http://www.cosmopolitan.com/politics/news/a50015/this-palestinian-refugee-graffiti-artist-empowers-girls-with-street-art/>

Why my books are not published in Israel Activism Susan Abulhawa –



Over a year ago, in June 2014, I was offered a contract by an Israeli publishing house for both *Mornings in Jenin* and *The Blue Between Sky and Water*. As a firm supporter of both the economic and cultural boycotts of Israel, I refused. I did not make my decision public at the time, but had planned to write about it eventually. Then time passed too quickly, as time tends to do. So rather than write an essay, I'll just share the full correspondence here. My decision and reasons for it are evident.

I decided to redact names, because they're not really relevant.
The offer came to me via my agent. The following is the relevant portion of my response to her:

As for Israeli publishers, that is not an option. When we Palestinians are free to live in [our] own homeland as equal citizens of the state, I'll be happy to sign a contract for Hebrew translation. But until this Apartheid system falls, I will not have business dealings with Israelis.

<http://mondoweiss.net/2015/12/books-published-israel>

Media Resources

This Arab Girl Just Remixed Adele's 'Hello' With Fairouz...And it's 'Fire'

<http://muslimgirl.net/15886/arab-girl-just-remixed-adeles-hello-fairouz/>

Ghada Karmi's Return: A Palestinian Memoir

In *Return: A Palestinian Memoir*, Ghada Karmi frames her reflections on being a Palestinian in exile with an account of her "return" during a 2005 UN assignment as a consultant to the Palestinian National Authority, during which she travelled to "places she hasn't seen since her childhood; places that now have to live with the grim reality of occupation."

Hear Karmi speak about her book at Edinburgh International Book Festival in embedded video

<https://arabhyphen.wordpress.com/2015/09/30/ghada-karmis-return-a-palestinian-memoir/>

#StopNorasEviction in East Jerusalem

"I've lived through my life watching my neighbors and family being slowly pushed out of the city." Israel is set to expel the Sub Laban family from their home in East Jerusalem. This has been their family home since 1953.

<https://www.facebook.com/theIMEU/videos/1258527047497541/?fref=nf>

Report on Palestinian Women from Passia

<http://www.passia.org/images/meetings/2015/sep/Women2015.pdf>