



## Editorial

### *The Violence of Exclusion*

Former entrance to Shuf'at Refugee Camp.  
*Source: Tina Sherwell.*

*Jerusalem Quarterly's* production manager, Tina Sherwell, travels almost daily from her home in Jerusalem's Shu'fat refugee camp to Ramallah where she is the co-director of Palestine's International Academy of Art. A constant, if malevolent, companion on her journey over the last decade has been the evolution of the Qalandia checkpoint (and its progeny barriers and obstacles), dividing East Jerusalem from Ramallah and the West Bank. Indeed, the twists and turns in Tina's journey to work, including the encroachment of the Wall around Shu'fat camp itself, mark the stages of Israel's control of Palestinian movement as she vividly described in JQ 38. But since mid-December 2011, Sherwell, a Jerusalem resident living within the municipal boundaries of Jerusalem, can also no longer reach East Jerusalem – or its schools, hospitals, cultural institutions, religious sites, commercial centers and

unpleasant but vital government bureaucracies – without passing through a new “terminal” which resembles a “border crossing between two countries more than it does a security checkpoint,” as one Israeli journalist observed.<sup>1</sup> The most pressing immediate issue for her family’s life is that her children must cross this new “border” in order to go to school. In the long term, however, residents of Shu‘fat camp, and the other Palestinian neighborhoods now separated from Jerusalem, suspect with good reason that the new border, like the Wall, signals the clear and present danger of a loss of Jerusalem residency and all rights to their city. This is a danger, as Yudith Oppenheimer points out in this issue, shared by some 70,000 Palestinian Jerusalemites in eight Jerusalem neighborhoods behind the Wall, which Jerusalem Mayor Nir Barakat, in a recent address, declared himself ready to relinquish – or in other words, to exclude from Jerusalem.

In this issue of *Jerusalem Quarterly*, contributors bring to life the consequences of policies and ideologies of exclusion and separation in Jerusalem and its environs, illuminate the changes in the city, and delineate the everyday activism of those who are targeted for exclusion. “Remember, remember, you are Palestinian and you are not allowed to dream” is the message May, a twenty-four-year-old Jerusalemite, recounts to Nadera Shalhoub-Kevorkian as the words she hears from Israeli power. In this issue, Shalhoub-Kevorkian takes us into the troubled world of a generation of young Palestinian Jerusalemites as they struggle to work, marry and survive in precarious circumstances where as many express, they are “living in a trap.” She both gives voice to the experiences and problems of her respondents living in the Old City, Shu‘fat/‘Anata camps, Silwan, Beit Hanina and Sheikh Jarrah and sensitively analyzes their narratives, shedding important light, for example, on the ways “traps” are gendered, whether in residency, home demolitions or at the checkpoints. She finds that “violence of exclusion” operates relentlessly to confine these Palestinian Jerusalemites and deny them a meaningful future, but that their challenges to power generate critical consciousness and thus sources of hope: a twelve-year-old whose family house in the Old City is encircled by Jewish settlers explains that his father has bought cameras so they can document settler harassment. He further opines: “Really, we’re stronger than them, and if it wasn’t for their weapons they wouldn’t be able to do anything to us.” Shalhoub-Kevorkian illuminates these everyday acts of agency while never underestimating the “terror of everydayness” generated by the powerful brew of racism and demographic policies that can be read as ethnic cleansing.

Almost a century ago in 1915, Hagop Arsenian and his family were the victims of a deadly form of exclusion and ethnic cleansing – the mass deportation of Armenians from their homes in Turkey. A portion of Arsenian’s diary of his dangerous journey from home to shelter in the Old City of Jerusalem, ably edited by his grand-daughter Arda Arsenian Ekmekji, is published in this issue of JQ. It is a detailed eyewitness account, which, most significantly, is written at the time, in the course of Arsenian’s journey, rather than in retrospect. One can only wish similar diaries of the 1948 expulsion of Palestinians would come to light. For Hagop Arsenian, known in Jerusalem as Abu Nubar, the city was a haven where he was able to live and prosper, rather than a trap where his existence is

thrown into question – the contrast, we fear, is telling.

In a perceptive essay on the Jerusalem-themed paintings and other works of Sliman Mansour, Tina Sherwell traces how the artist responded visually to the changing realities of the city and to Jerusalem's iconic place in the Palestinian imagination. In a well-known early work, *Camel of Hardship*, an old man carries Jerusalem on his back; the image is of an “unblemished city presented in an utopian light, with perfect architectural works,” although surrounded by a non-space of loss, melancholy and exile. In later works, the images of absence and loss penetrate the city itself as Mansour uses various media to explore the degraded spaces of Qalandia, the Wall and a city stripped of its golden hue.

Walaja, a Palestinian village that is “between Jerusalem and nowhere,” is the focus of Ruba Saleh's meticulous study of the effects of Israel's “apartheid planning.” She traces the history of Walaja – called by its residents a “microscopic Palestine” – from the loss of the village and its lands in 1948-9, to the building of a new Walaja on an opposite hill, to the partition of the village into a Jerusalem and a West Bank side, to the present sealing of the village as the Wall advances through the southern West Bank. Her detailed discussion of the legal action and popular protest of the people of Walaja, as well as three detailed case histories of residents, are particularly valuable in illuminating how planning can be a tool of political segregation and how it can be challenged.

Musa Budeiri's introduction to a new edition of his book on the Palestinian Communist Party (1919-1948) reflects on the vision, political platform and debates of a party and its partisans who were committed to internationalism – rather than exclusion – in the midst of a “colonial encounter of a unique character.” Reviews of Mourid Barghouti's new book, *I Was Born There, I Was Born Here* by Raja Shehadeh and of Laila al-Haddad's *Gaza Mom* by Penny Johnson round out this issue of JQ. Selected features from *Jerusalem Quarterly* can now be found on the excellent Jadaliyya website, as well as all articles on our own [www.jerusalemquarterly.org](http://www.jerusalemquarterly.org)

#### **Endnotes**

- 1 Nir Hasson, “Israel gearing for effective separation of East Jerusalem Palestinians,” *Ha'aretz*, December 23, 2011.