Present Pasts, Vol. 2, No. 1, 2010, 126-141, doi:10.5334/pp.29

Structural Violence as Political Experience in Palestine: An Archaeology of the Past in the Present

العنف الهيكلي والتجربة السياسية في فلسطين : علم الآثار الماضي, في الحاضر

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While structural violence is indispensable to the functioning of Empire, its existence remains unacknowledged in mainstream political discourse. Perpetual checkpoints and insufficient infrastructure in Palestine are instances of violence that are integral to an ever-expanding Israeli state. This paper analyzes how archaeological narratives contribute to trauma and suffering in Palestine, and discusses alternative ways of doing an archaeology that is politically conscious by acknowledging co-responsibility for structural inequalities. Here it is critical that the practice of reflexively locating ourselves as researchers is taken beyond the epistemological level into the realm of political transformation: I propose a methodological shift in academic knowledge production that practices a politics of location and advocates alignment with oppressed peoples. Positing an 'archaeology of the past in the present,' I argue that this shift can be intellectually and politically meaningful only if it avoids analytical closure and recognizes how political struggle generates knowledge that can contribute to a just archaeological research agenda.

في حين أن العنف الهيكلي امرٌ لا غنىً عنه في عمل الامبراطورية , فان وجوده لا يزال غير معترف به في خطاب التيار السياسي الرئيسي. نقاط التفتيش الدائمة والبنية التحتية الغير كافية في فلسطين هي حالات من العنف والذي هو جزء لا يتجزأ من الاستمرار بتوسع دولة اسرائيل المستمر. . هذه المقالة تحلل كيفية مساهمة (الأثرية السرد) في الصدمة والمعاناة في فلسطين ، وتناقش السبل والطرق البديلة للعمل في علم الآثار والتي توجد الوعي السياسي من خلال الاعتراف بالمسؤولية المشتركة عن الاختلالات الهيكلية. من المهم هنا ان ممارستنا لعملية توظيف انفسنا كباحثين بالغريزة , اخذت تتجاوز المستوى المعرفي في عالم التحول السياسي : أقترح التحول المنهجي في انتاج المعرفة الأكاديمية التي تمارس السياسة من موقع التوافق مع المدافعين عن الشعوب المضطهدة . افتراض ان " علم اثار الماضي ,بالحاضر" , أنا اعتقد ان هذا التحول يمكن ان يكون ذا معنى سياسي وفكري ,فقط اذا تجنب اغلاق التحليلات وأدرك كيف ان النضال السياسي يولد المعرفة التي يمكن ان تسهم في جدولة اعمال للبحوث الأثرية فقط.

The politics of location

In recent years, in part stimulated by a more frequent appearance of the 'native anthropologist,' scholars have begun discussing the role that anthropology could play in the political enfranchisement of colonized peoples (e.g. Narayan, 1993; Ranco, 2006). Limitations remain, however, in that this discourse is often framed in terms of multivocality—considered an almost charitable act of granting a voice to the 'voiceless'—and inclusivity, which tends to be another form of co-optation of so-called minority groups within an already existing

exclusionary space (e.g. Scham, 2001). On the ground, "having a voice" and "having control over" are radically different positions (Rizvi, 2006: 398). While there are certainly indigenous anthropologists working to do radical de-colonizing work that makes an intervention into the hegemonic discourse (e.g. Mihesuah, 1998; Smith, 1999; Atalay, 2006), much of anthropology today, rather than enabling the expression of a diversity of interests and actual empowerment, continues to capitalize on Otherness.

Of course, we find critical intellectual production taking place in progressive niches within the academic space: especially those researchers, in anthropology as well as other disciplines, whose work is dedicated to a post-colonial cultural critique emanate emancipatory knowledge that is politically committed. However, since these scholars tend to work exclusively within "the academic authority-granting system" (Hale, 2006: 103) as a specific institution of the colonial power matrix, the applicability of their knowledge—and often literally its translatability into a more accessible language—is rarely a concern (Mignolo, 2007b: 452). Thus failing to actually initiate the replacement of the fundamentally oppressive structures within which colonizing practices become possible in the first place, anthropology is implied in a system of structural violence on the basis of which privileged spaces are maintained.

Characteristic of structural violence, which Žižek (2008: 2) has described as the "catastrophic consequences of the smooth functioning of our economic and political systems," is that it appears to lack identifiable perpetrators (Galtung, 1969; Galtung and Höivik, 1971). In this sense, structural violence can be distinguished from direct violence, which is much more immediate because it inflicts suffering directly onto bodies which often remain visibly scarred. While this analytical distinction allows us to grasp paradigmatic perpetrations of violence, in reality the line between direct and structural violence is blurry; even if holding both concepts in tension, it is not always possible to draw clear boundaries around them. This leaves the individual anthropologist in a paradoxical position of both complicity and discomfort: although we are not participating in acts of direct violence, many of us are nevertheless implicated in a system that is violent and exploitative, even when we are opposing it ideologically.

It has been argued that this unjust system can only be overcome by way of a radical de-colonial critique, the underlying goal of which is not enfranchisement but a total "de-linking" (Mignolo, 2007b) from the current political structures, which is achieved by way of delegitimizing and dismantling existing mechanisms of rule (cf. Mignolo, 2007a and 2009). In some cases an explicit anti-colonial, but pro-national agenda that supports the building of new states and the granting of national sovereignty to former colonized peoples, is here an essential step toward self-governance and freedom from imperial control. This stance, although to some degree evading the problem that states can never be truly democratized since they "are, after all, basically ways of organizing violence" (Graeber, 2007: 365), accounts directly for the political realities that exist on the ground in Palestine. The granting of statehood and citizenship to colonized peoples, and thus the making of self-determined legal subjects, is an important goal for anti-colonial projects in many parts of the world—not only because it is the basis for guaranteeing certain political rights, but because it provides various political agents with access to much needed resources that have previously been denied. This is the point of convergence of the political desires expressed in the de-colonial and the anti-colonial thinking: the common concern is to create new political landscapes by gaining ever larger spaces of autonomy for oppressed peoples through popular self-governance; these spaces are built on truly democratic ideals, which are founded in a collective morality and sensitivity for other's experiences of suffering and trauma.

In my attempt at what I consider coming to terms with the political realities of Palestine on the one hand and Euro-American ideals of de-colonization that are emanating from the academy on the other hand, I suggest developing principles for a politically conscious archaeological practice that can hopefully contribute to the goal of creating new political landscapes on the ground. Such archaeology must not only be aware of structural inequalities and violence, but ought to be characterized by a political morality that is true to ideals of justice and peace. Political morality implies taking ourselves to task as researchers, whose identity is often deeply implicated in structural violence, which delimits our right to formulate anti-colonial or de-colonizing strategies. Just as we step back as intellectual authorities, the diversity of political truths and desires in political struggles comes to the forefront, so that we can no longer operate on the assumption of a unified Palestinian position. However, it is also important to comprehend that in a context like Palestine, where levels of conflict are high, we cannot afford the "deconstructive scrutiny of all knowledge categories" (Hale, 2006: 102), including those of political identities and cultural differences. This is why I suggest to spell out the specifics of an 'archaeology of the past in the present' within the framework of the politics of location: that is, I place the Palestinian situation in the context of the global political economy in order to account for "the ways that difference is coded in national and transnational structures of capital, power, and culture." (Stephen, 2007: 322) This is not 'strategic essentialism,' but is essentially a political strategy that opens up the possibility for anthropologists to align with the Palestinian struggle for liberation—as diverse as its expressions might be—against the violent neo-colonial and neo-imperialist aspirations of the powers that be. In fact, the Palestinian struggle and the worldwide solidarity movement for this struggle are no longer simply directed against Israel alone, or the Israeli-American nexus, but they are aimed at the global political economy of unfettered capitalism that has political actors in its grip.

Archaeology and structural violence

The Palestinian struggle is a reaction to the political situation in Israel-Palestine, which is characterized by violence, structural as well as physical. Here structural violence, though not usually performed by an identifiable agent with imagined or real 'evil' intentions (Bernbeck, 2008: 393), is violence par excellence: not only is it the precondition for the functioning of direct violence as we see it performed, for example, in the torture of so-called enemy combatants in Guantánamo or the indefinite detention of Palestinians, but it is the backbone of Empire. Structural violence serves as guarantor for those self-proclaimed 'states of exception' (Agamben, 2005) under which individual rights can simply be diminished, superceded, and rejected by a government that claims exceptional extension of its power. Within the paradigm of an exceptional government, laws no longer provide protection from harm by the judicial system, but constitute an anchorage for structural violence. Exceptional laws mandate the exclusion of 'categories' of people from existing judicial frameworks, thus legally legitimizing the denial of basic human rights, such as *habeas corpus,* to certain 'kinds' of people.

Palestine finds itself in a perpetual state of exception that has intensified the existing structural violence over the last two decades. Through Israeli practices of occupation and circumvention of the standards of international law and human rights, oppression has not only become embedded in the everyday lives of the Palestinian people, but Israel has managed to create a whole new class of people—the non-citizens of Palestine. While Palestine was never really nationalized (from WWI to 1948, it was a British mandate, and before that, a province of the Ottoman Empire), a sense of Palestinian nationhood is present as a very

vibrant identity among people in Palestine (Said, 1979; Khalidi, 1997; Nasser, 2005). Yet, the majority of Palestinians today hold no legal status since they are, as occupied people and refugees, considered stateless before international law. Thus 'denationalized' they are—not unlike Agamben's (1998) *homo sacer*[1]—stripped of all citizenship rights and subject to the raw power of the Israeli state.

In addition to these structural problems, direct violence in Palestine is rampant: permanent checkpoints and other barriers (road-blocks, road gates, trenches, etc.) are set up by the Israeli military and police forces (and increasingly by private military contractors) in the West Bank, thus restricting movement of Palestinians and impeding on people's freedom to travel.[2] Basic infrastructure, such as roads and sewers, but also access to medical supplies, is generally insufficient in Palestine and especially in the camps where approximately 1.3 million Palestinian refugees live today.[3] Human rights are violated on a regular basis by the Israeli occupying power and include practices such as the detention of minors, trials before military courts that fail to meet international standards for fair trial, and torture of detainees. Palestinians are frequently subjected to forced evictions in the course of the expansion of Israeli settlements in the occupied territories, an activity that has long been recognized as illegal before international law.[4] These practices, which are carried out within a framework of structural inequality, violence, and oppression, are considered integral to the existence of the Israeli nation-state.

National Self-Imagining

Even though archaeology does not have any direct impact on legal issues such as citizenship rights or checkpoints, archaeological practice can contribute to structural violence—both through work in the field and through the discourses and narratives the discipline produces. As archaeological knowledge production is embedded in specific socio-economic contexts, the political interests of academic as well as non-academic stakeholder groups saturate our research at all times. Often, archaeology can rightly be called scholarship in the service of the state, because it operates within the framework of the nation-state on which it bases its conception of history as well (Gero, 1985). This is especially conspicuous in the use of archaeology for national self-imagining where archaeology is "directed towards strengthening patriotic sentiments" (Trigger, 1984: 358; cf. Kohl and Fawcett, 1995; Trigger, 1995; Kohl *et al.*, 2007); but also toward "territorial self-fashioning" (Abu El-Haj, 2001: 16-18), which time and again includes the resettlement of large portions of a population and even ethnic cleansing. Here, archaeological evidence and present day identities become entangled in such ways that the past is not only made to appear like the present, but that neither one retains a meaningful existence without the other (Silberman, 1995). Reverting to so-called scientific evidence of historical continuity of ethnic (as a precursor for national) groups, archaeological data are frequently used to assert the right of a given population to the land.

Israel is a clear case in point. Not only are many Israeli archaeologists trained in historical and biblical archaeology, but much archaeological inquiry in Israel-Palestine is focused on the Bronze Age and Iron Age—those periods most closely linked to the biblical narratives. While prehistoric archaeological research in the region is well-established today (as illustrated, for example, by the curriculum taught at the Institute of Archaeology at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem),[5] the majority of the popular versions of Israeli history, especially as perpetuated by mainstream media and the tourism industry, still foreground biblical archaeology. The findings and theoretical agendas of this archaeology continue to be located within the interpretive framework of Judeo-Christian biblical history where they support

Israel's claims to a historic right to the land by virtue of a presumed ethnic continuity and legitimate Israel as the occupying power over Palestine (Feige, 2007). Such a *"recruited archaeology"* (Ben-Yehuda, 2007: 252) functions in very specific ways, by creating an abridged history of Israel that recognizes only certain aspects of the region's past as historical record.

Archaeological strata from the Iron Age, for example, that are considered to be 'Israelite' are excavated and preserved, while the younger (Islamic) past receives less or no attention; this is apparent in the choice of excavation techniques as well, where bulldozers are utilized to plow their way through the remains of the 'recent past,' including present-day Palestinian villages and evidence from Islamic periods. But this is also a feature of much of the archaeology done in the Middle East in general, which habitually disregards Islamic remains, justifying its doings with the working definition of Middle Eastern archaeology at Euro-American universities as a discipline that covers only the periods from the prehistoric past until the end of the Persian Empire (see for example Addison, 2004). That certain archaeological remains are neither documented nor preserved is in fact a frequent occurrence in archaeological practice since the unearthing of material traces of past life through excavations is a highly selective process (Bernbeck and Pollock, 2004). The decisions of which sites, but also which strata within sites, are to be excavated, and how they are preserved and made accessible to visitors, are based on nation-state values of a rather static museum culture that renders some sites and time periods valuable, but not others. Then, even though the archaeological practices of excavating and collecting are justified in part as attempts at 'filling the gaps' of an historical record, these processes themselves create absences and new gaps by making certain records present and silencing others (Trouillot, 1995).

A Weapon of Dispossession

In other instances, it is the specific political situation in Israel-Palestine of the 19th and 20th centuries that has contributed to the erasure of archaeological evidence, which is not only scientifically doubtful, but politically problematic insofar as the people who lay claim to this evidence and the associated historical narratives suffer an alienation from a past that they consider theirs (Glock, 1994; Yahya, 2005; Starzmann, 2008). As an example, the construction of the Israeli separation wall has led to both the burial and the destruction of numerous archaeological sites in Palestine. Here as elsewhere, Israeli politics clearly has a propensity to disregard the protection of Islamic or other non-biblical sites, while making efforts to safeguard sites with supposed links to Israeli history (Yahya, 2008: 499).

Just as the destruction and burial of archaeological sites lead to the restructuring of space, archaeological projects frequently transform landscapes as they obtrude onto Palestinian settlements, thus uprooting people and pushing families out of their homes. In Silwan, for example, a Palestinian residential quarter in East Jerusalem, properties were bought up (in both legal and quasi-legal ways), buildings were demolished, and excavations carried out. Today, archaeological zones are persistently being extended within Silwan as well as into the adjacent Kidron valley (see figure 1). Notable about this case is that the militant Israeli settler organization El'ad, an NGO, is currently sub-contracting the Israeli Antiquities Authority (IAA) for carrying out large-scale excavations in Silwan. These archaeological projects are ultimately supposed to support the settlers' claims to a biblical right to what is referred to as the 'City of David' (Greenberg, 2009).[6]

What we witness here is the creation of new archaeological archives based on already existing political and economic interests—that is, the extension of Israeli territory. These pre-

existing nationalist aspirations receive their justification *a posteriori* through archaeological evidence, the very (re-)construction of which is based on these interests in the first place. As the case of Silwan exemplifies, archaeology may be considered an inventive or generating practice in two ways: first, by way of selecting specific material records as historical evidence, archaeological practice invents certain pasts; and, secondly, it generates a present by providing archaeological records that serve to legitimize present-day political claims, first and foremost territorial claims (Abu El-Haj, 2001: 13). Archaeological practice, by way of materializing a national ideology in facts on the ground, has here become "a weapon of dispossession" (Bronner and Gordon, 2008) (see figure 2).

Fig. 1: Areas of excavations and planned archaeological park in Silwan

Fig. 2: Protesters at a site of archaeological excavations in Silwan (photograph from http://insidethemiddleeast.blogs.cnn.com/2009/02/)

Israeli nationalist desires, which play out in the ways in which archaeology is conducted in the region, cannot be dissociated from Israel's role as occupier of Palestine. The building of a national territory and practices of colonization are co-constituting parts of a common project of "colonial nationhood" (Abu el-Haj, 2001: 6) within a transnational political framework. The state of Israel actively participates in the global political economy through the management of its nation's cultural heritage: not only does the Israeli government not prohibit or sanction trade in antiquities (Yahya, 2008: 500), but it also furthers "the reification of the archaeological past" (Baram and Rowan, 2004: 7) as a specifically 'Israeli past' through its commodification in the tourism industry. At the same time, Israel's biblical history is no longer exclusively owned by the Israeli nation-state, but it has become a universal good to be consumed by a global tourist community, which, no doubt, is overwhelmingly wealthy (e.g. Baram and Rowan, 2004; Scham, 2008).

Considering this, it becomes clear how the case of Silwan reaches beyond the level of institutionalized archaeology and points us to the complicity of the Israeli state with the neo-colonialist interests of right-wing settlers that resonate with global politics of occupation (where the US Empire is still the prime perpetrator). This situation is perpetual, even if its expression takes different forms at different political moments. Scham (1998: 303) has reported over ten years ago how the Israeli government, in response to the extreme anti-archaeological stance taken by ultraorthodox religious parties, laid off professional researchers working with the Antiquities Department. In contrast, today militant settlers have decided to deploy archaeological methods in order to back up their political claims with 'scientific' evidence as well as to encroach onto a new territory. In both cases, powerful political forces have set the research agendas of the archaeological work to be conducted, either with the active support

of the Israeli government or by way of its withdrawal and non-intervention. In this context, the presumed universality of Israel's cultural heritage does not conflict with the Israeli national project, which through commercialization has found a logical extension in the cultural imperialism of the global economy and its 'tourism-industrial complex' (Hamm, 2005). It is certainly not far-fetched to hint at the link that exists between this tourism-industrial complex and the military-industrial complex, which are both central elements to global imperial encounters, where profits are immense for the powerful and negative implications extreme for the poor populations of the world.

Alternative archives in archaeology

Working one's way toward an archaeology that aspires to achieving actual political transformations, it is important to recognize that a nationalist and colonialist agenda is not particular to Israeli archaeology. While this is one (admittedly prominent) case among many, it is the specific nature of archaeological work and its institutional location that make archaeology prone to operating in the interest of the capitalist nation-state (Trigger, 1984; Arnold, 1998/1999). It is for this reason that I will not be advocating for a 'Palestinian archaeology' since such archaeology could too easily become an anti-Israeli archaeology and thus be ensnared in the same problematic politics of exclusion, which are associated with practices of colonialism and imperialism that we have witnessed for Israel. The crux of the matter is elsewhere: due to its specific location in Euro-American institutions of education and science, the majority of archaeology's narratives make sense mainly to observers and readers educated within these institutions. Rather than promoting other nationalist archaeologies in opposition to the Israeli one, I therefore suggest that we start creating new archaeological (and hence political) landscapes altogether—landscapes that allow for difference and diversity, maybe even irreconcilability, in the historical narratives they produce. This also means that if violence is a means for establishing privileged spaces, those of us who occupy these spaces must develop strategies for advocating equality and morality from within the institutional framework of the academy.

Remembering things

As the goal is not to build a Palestinian archaeology that is forced into the framework of Western academia and its standards of professional scientific credibility, the objective is to push for an opening up of the academy to alternative discourses that are carried by subaltern stakeholder communities and, as is, to their approaches to the past. The specific approach I am striving for is based on Palestinian strategies toward history and memory, such as genealogies and oral histories, which constitute alternative historical archives (El-Nimr, 1993; Lynd *et al.*, 1994). Most importantly, these strategies include practices of memorializing events of the recent past, specifically British colonialism, the *Naqba,* and Israeli occupation, which have been inscribed in personal remembrances of Palestinians, often through experiences of suffering and trauma (Allan, 2005). The personalized accounts of history, which result from these memories, are a direct outcome of the political economic structures of capitalism and imperialism within which the lives of Palestinians are embedded. However, not all memories are transformed into formal historical narratives, but some result in incorporated practices: through habitual and collective performances—mourning and storytelling, protests and demonstrations—memory becomes recollected and preserved; in turn, individual remembrances of events get transformed into embodied social memory (Connerton, 1989). As this memory materializes, it may very well leave its traces in the artifactual record of a place (Van Dyke and Alcock, 2003; Mills and Walker, 2008).

While social memories have to be read within the political economic context from which they emanate, it is likely that the personalized histories of Palestinians are not always understood as expressions of these larger structures of exploitation, because they are entirely based on subjectivized insights. What I propose is a critical analysis of the structural violence that constitutes the framework for the social memories and collective practices of Palestinians by way of an archaeology of the contemporary past—that is, "the archaeology of places and events that relate to the period of recent or living memory" (Harrison and Schofield, 2009: 186; cf. Buchli and Lucas, 2001). Such an archaeology of 'the past in the present' recognizes how the (recent) past is linked to present political issues, often through material remains as is, for example, the case with cultural heritage. The aim is to study relatively recent or modern-day material culture—objects, places, events—in order to gain access to past practices that have been left out from the historical narratives that we are most familiar with. For instance, some have proposed an 'archaeology of protest,' springing from forces that oppose the nation-state (Badcock and Johnston, 2009; Marshall *et al.*, 2009; Schofield, 2009); another example is an archaeology of militarism and conflict, with a focus on what has been called 'super-modern' 20th century conflict, which includes otherwise neglected evidence of those who oppose war (González-Ruibal, 2008). In this sense, archaeology can also assist in the re-creation of collective memory about the past that has once been lost, erased, or repressed.

I suggest that an archaeology of the past in the present should embrace several methodological and analytical components, where it is important to move from recent political events back in time, thus establishing historical genealogies; this archaeology should also demonstrate a special sensibility for silences in the material record and place emphasis on abject experiences in history, such as suffering, violence, and trauma. The three key components of an archaeology of the past in the present then include a genealogical approach, a multi-sited research agenda, and the conducting of auto-archaeological research. Of course, moving toward a politically responsible archaeology certainly requires the formation of new research collectives, which open up space for the formulation of research agendas and goals by those individuals and groups of people who are affected by the work of anthropologists.

A genealogical approach

A genealogical approach to material culture traces objects in time and space in order to be able to understand genealogies, or histories of practices in the context of changing political landscapes (Gosden, 2005), with an emphasis on the transformative character of everyday practices. This approach is valuable for a politically conscious archaeology insofar as it does not prescribe a linear historical narrative, but rather emphasizes discontinuities and breaks between past and present. Because of this emphasis, another aspect of genealogical research is that it often tacks "back and forth between microscale details and macroscale patterns, all the while seeking other convergent or divergent lines of evidence" (Pauketat and Alt, 2005: 233).

Recently, Ziadeh-Seely (2007) has proposed a "refugee camp archaeology" in Palestine, which focuses on the excavation of partially or fully abandoned refugee camps in Palestine; in a number of cases her work also includes a comparative investigation of the ruined villages from which the refugees originally stemmed. Ziadeh-Seely's project contains aspects of a genealogical approach since it documents the material culture of Palestinian refugees—architecture, camp layout, and the presence or absence and distribution of artifacts—across time and space. The aim of this archaeology is "to document the adaptation processes and strategies of Palestinian refugees after losing their homes, lands, and livelihoods" (Ziadeh-Seely, 2007: 334). In other words, through the use of archaeological methods for the recon-

struction of every-day activities that were carried out by Palestinians, we might be able to trace evidence of practices of oppression, of coping with situations that are characterized by violent conflict, or even of resistance over time. In addition, because of its focus on discontinuities between past and present, a genealogical approach could contribute to the creation of a critical archaeology in Palestine that demonstrates that there exists indeed no direct link between, for example, the Iron Age past and today's Jewish settlements in the region.

Multi-sited research

The genealogical approach just described might be extended to link several different archaeological sites into one research project. Taking once more Ziadeh-Seely's work as an example, her research does not have to remain limited to refugee camps in Gaza and the West Bank, but could incorporate the camps of displaced Palestinians in Jordan, Lebanon, and Syria, for comparative purposes; or in order to extend the genealogical approach to a transnational level, it could trace the links that exist between the local and the global (Marcus 1995). This would mean to not only follow 'the thing' of the refugee camp, but rather to follow the people who live in camps as a result of being forced into the diaspora. This way, a multi-sited archaeology as here proposed is no longer bound to unveiling oppression of a specific group of people in one location, but can include the analysis of other sites of displacement in a diasporic world. The excavations of sites of Nazi terror come to mind here, which are part of a political project that is accountable to the victims of violence, but it is also committed to identifying the location of the perpetrators within the political playing field (Bernbeck and Pollock, 2007; Gilead *et al.*, 2009).

Auto-archaeology

In the specific context of Palestine, and particularly for a non-Palestinian archaeologist, I find a viable project in a sort of "auto-archaeology" (*sensu* Schofield, 2009) of the spaces of the oppressors with the goal of undoing the invisibility of the oppressed. It is this kind of 'self-archaeology' that allows me to approach my co-responsibility for structural violence. To this goal, it is vital to understand the spaces that I am most familiar with—my work place (in the field and on the university campus), my class position, my national background, etc.—as structurally oppressive to many others around me (and in a much more concrete way, take, for example, my archaeological fieldwork, where my status vis-à-vis the workers who are employed on excavations is often one of assumed cultural superiority and always one of economic advantage).

The approach of an auto-archaeology contains elements of "making manifest", or "remembering things" (González-Ruibal, 2008: 250; cf. Olsen, 2003), which refers to the performance of a political act that reveals by way of exposing objects. Auto-archaeologies should examine where, how, and why archaeological projects cut into and transform political landscapes. In extension, the concept is here also used to include narratives by way of ethnographic research: oral histories and interviews, for example, that consider the manifold interests of those who are exposed to archaeological work. The goal of such making manifest is to disclose "what the supermodern power machine does not want to be shown: the corpses in a Bosnian mass grave or the ruins of Bhopal's factory in India" (González-Ruibal, 2008: 262) or, one should add, the refugee camps of the occupied Palestinian people. Here, auto-archaeology is an especially viable strategy, because it renders structural violence visible, which would otherwise not get recognized due to the assumed absence of victims.

One project in Israel-Palestine that could be placed within the realm of an auto-archaeology of sorts, is pioneering here: Greenberg and Keinan (2007 and 2009) are two Israeli archaeologists, who have together with the Israeli-Palestinian Archaeology Working Group created an archaeological site database that documents information on surveys and excavations conducted by Israeli archaeologists in the West Bank (including East Jerusalem) from 1967 to 2007. Against the background of this work, it would be particularly interesting to examine archaeological activity by Israelis in interstitial spaces, such as border areas; scrutinizing, for example, the link that exists between the construction of the Israeli separation wall as a marker of national space and the destruction of archaeological sites in Palestine since the inception of the wall building activities. Likewise, we could ask where and why the route of the wall circumvents archaeological sites, especially in the context of global heritage tourism. But we might also want to consider the voices of those who live in Palestine and ask, how do residents, archaeologists, or other interest groups struggle with cultural heritage issues and how do they intervene politically, for example, by way of protests, salvage excavations, or by taking legal steps?

Coming back full circle

An auto-archaeology is most visibly committed to the politics of location that were introduced at the beginning of this paper, because this approach does not only document archaeological research within a political context, but it indeed characterizes it as political work. Thus recognizing the political content of archaeological research, it becomes possible to both reveal archaeology's contributions to structural violence and to underscore the potential sites at which archaeology can be deployed to effectively work against structural violence. On the one hand, archaeology can make structural violence visible by tracing its correlates in the materiality of dismal objects and gloomy spatial arrangements: walls, fences, and metal bars, refugee camps, dirt roads, and Israeli prisons make the material context for the oppressed bodies and stifled voices of the Palestinian people. On the other hand, as we become aware of the entanglement of violence, including structural violence, and materiality, we come to find a dense link between national projects (such as the Israeli one), issues of heritage management, and the global market economy. It is here that we come to realize that structural violence is not limited to one specific political context, but that it functions on a transnational or global scale, which is characterized by highly uneven power relations.

According to the politics of location, we are required to locate ourselves within this global structure that codes difference (usually framed as 'cultural' difference) in terms of capital and power. And we have the political responsibility—as archaeologists or otherwise—to pay attention to both the oppressed and the oppressors. Locating ourselves, and taking sides, does, however, not always lead to radical political changes; rather, it initiates a different language and practice on the ground that has real effects for those who have previously suffered from our very practices.

A group of archaeologists and residents of Silwan have recently initiated a project, which—instead of simply claiming Silwan as the 'City of David'—offers alternative archaeological tours that intend to shed light on the role of archaeology in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict (see http://www.alt-arch.org/). By using a new language and through a different engagement with the political landscape of Silwan, this kind of archaeology confronts structures of oppression and violence in Israel-Palestine. For the tourists visiting the area, the project might simply offer a new and exciting look into archaeological archives; for the people living in Silwan, however, the alternative historical narratives provide concrete political choic-

es, which could inform particular modes of resistance in Palestine as well as resonate with other spaces of apartheid.

Acknowledgements

An earlier version of this paper titled "The Wild Children of P. – Chaos & Order in the Post-colonial World" was submitted to the World Archaeological Inter-Congress in Ramallah, Palestine, in Summer 2009. Since I was unable to travel to Palestine myself, I am writing from a perspective that remains to some degree abstract. All the more helpful were the substantial comments by Susan Pollock as I started preparing this paper for publication, which included her experiences of having been to Ramallah. Reinhard Bernbeck has encouraged me to make the paradoxical nature of my position as a politically committed archaeologist an issue in this paper. A number of friends have read earlier drafts of this article and provided me with important criticisms. John Roby and Griffin Epstein have challenged me to take myself to task, with Griffin aiding especially by loaning me powerful vocabulary; John drew my attention to fascinating work on the archaeology of the contemporary past. Andrew Epstein has contributed knowledge about the politico-legal situation in Israel-Palestine. Brian Broad and Dellvin Williams have both pointed out to me the limitations of a radical de-colonial and/or anti-colonial critique coming from within the contradictions of the Euro-American academic framework.

Notes

1 Agamben uses the notion of *homo sacer* specifically for prisoners in Nazi concentration camps and, in extension, also for Guantánamo prisoners, because both are erased as legal subjects. The term *homo sacer* itself is derived from ancient Roman law, designating "a human being that could not be ritually sacrificed but whom one could kill without being guilty of murder." (Raulff, 2004: 609 fn. 1)

2 By September 2008 there were reports of 699 closure obstacles in the West Bank. See http://www.palestinemonitor.org/spip/spip.php?article8 (accessed 10 December 2009).

3 Statistics from Badil Resource Center for Palestinian Residency and Refugee Rights, Information & Discussion Brief Issue No. 10, December 2006. Available as PDF-file online at: http://reliefweb.int/rw/rwb.nsf/retrieveattachments?openagent&shortid=LRON-72KFQD&file=Full_Report.pdf (accessed 23 July 2009).

4 The latest information on Israel's human rights violations in Palestine can be found in a summarizing report by Amnesty International, published online at: http://report2009.amnesty.org/en/regions/middle-east-north-africa/israel-occupied-territories (accessed 24 July 2009).

5 The curriculum of the Institute of Archaeology at HUJ can be found online at http://archaeology.huji.ac.il/

6 The use of the term 'City of David' was introduced by French archaeologist Raymond Weill, who carried out the first excavations in Silwan in 1913-1914.

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