

We are used to mourning and breast-beating

Elderly Haja Zareefa commonly told her grandchildren: "I spit on your weak generation. Are you the ones who will liberate Palestine!" This scolding would usually conclude with the phrase "In my... dreams you will"; you know what is the missing word is. Believing that we have run out of people to break across the firing lines, she used to say: "Where are the gunmen? Where are they?" She saw the youth of 2015 with their various accessories as people who value life, who would not sacrifice the luxuries to which they are so strongly attached, and who would never throw a stone or respond to a call for help. But it seems that Zareefa was mistaken and the elixir of love for Palestine is proving more powerful than anything else for us, apart from one thing that is even stronger: our hatred of the occupation and our desire to drive it out. With this in mind, here in what was called and will remain Palestine, the love potion for the homeland and the hatred for the occupiers will be enmeshed until the day of resurrection, or until we are restored to a homeland where we can be ourselves, and just ourselves.

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4 PAGES

"He sacrificed accuracy for a press scoop"

When the Palestinian press faltered

✉ Muntaser Hamdan

The rapid development of events in the Palestinian Territories has laid bare structural imbalances in the workings of the editorial boards of many local media outlets. The media have found themselves dragged into exchanging and disseminating news without any scrutiny of the credibility of what they publish or broadcast. This has served the Israeli narrative by enabling the transmission of misleading information about events, and several Palestinian media outlets have fallen victim to the speedy release of news at the expense of accuracy and scrutiny of information.

Many journalists and observers consider that the responsibility lies with journalists in the field to examine and ensure the credibility of the information they supply to their media outlet. Other media specialists believe that editorial boards are primarily responsible for the publication of the information received and should examine and check the credibility of this information prior to public transmission.

Palestine TV reporter Christine Rinawi believes that the rapid pace and number of events have led to confusion for both journalists and the local media, especially with the widespread use of social media and smart phones that disseminate information, images and videos without any checks on their credibility.

Rinawi refers to an event she was covering in which the death of a local martyr was announced from the speakers of the mosque in al-Tour. Several news stations transmitted the news. The man himself heard the news of his death while sharing a cup of mint tea with his wife on the balcony of their house. Rinawi explained that this story was the result of an erroneous statement by the Israeli police about the death of that resident, prompting media outlets to transmit the news, although the Israeli police later corrected their statement. Another journalist, Naela Khalil, believes that this popular uprising has revealed that local Palestinian media do not have in place proper methods for handling events and the exchange and transmission of information. She believes that this is an accumulative result of neglect and dependency over many years. These popular events have simply served to expose structural defects in the performance of journalists and media outlets.

"Journalists are not 100% excused from the responsibility of examining and verifying the information they publish, and neither are media outlets, including chief editors or editorial boards, exempted from the responsibility of publishing false information".

Naela Khalil added: "The other problem we face is that officials are used to

communicating with Israeli journalists and assuming that they have a press scoop. As a result, Palestinian journalists and society assume that what is published in the Israeli media is factual and can be transmitted without verification".

Journalist Fadi Arouri agrees and stresses the need to improve the performance of local media in view of what he describes as "catastrophic faults" that can have negative and direct effects on individuals or their families in many ways, including psychological damage.

He said: "The problem is aggravated when it comes to matters like publishing news relevant to the names of the wounded or martyrs with no consideration of the rules and ethics of the profession, or even of humanitarian requirements. It requires strenuous efforts to monitor and address this aspect".

Khaldoun Barghouti, the website administrator of al-Hayat al-Jadeeda newspaper, acknowledges that there is a real dilemma when it comes to handling breaking news such as an ongoing incursion or news about martyrs or wounded inside [the Green Line]. "Our work depends on speedy publication, but in such events we should use "brakes" because facts need to be scrutinized and verified".

"In the absence of a Palestinian source of information inside [the Green Line], we follow up on more than one source from the Israeli media before we accept any piece of information".

On another note, Said Abu Muala, media lecturer at the American University of Jenin, commented: "Today the term that is emerging in this field is that of 'media society'. This is a concept related to attributes that influence the work of the media and what is associated with it: intangibility (the digitalization of the press language and forms of transmission); knowledge (undermining the principle of monopolization and hegemony of knowledge); flexibility (ongoing education and improving proficiency); and change (work is not centralized or confined to a location)".

Farid Abu Thuheir, media professor at Al-Najah National University, finds that alongside the many advantages of social networking, the door has been opened wide for ordinary citizens to receive a rapid flow of information in an unprecedented manner. It must be admitted that journalists feel the impact and are pulled into this reality. It is difficult for journalists when the news is published first by ordinary people and not a journalist.

"A journalist is not an ordinary person who conveys information he hears about. A journalist is a professional who deals with information on a technical basis without emotion and with no calculated outcome.



A journalist's reputation will be threatened if he ignores this principle and prioritizes speed at the expense of accuracy".

Ashraf Ajrami, a journalist and former minister, believes that local media are unfortunately influenced by social networking that publish vast amounts of inaccurate news and information, often based on the personal experiences of individual witnesses.

Ajrami said: "The solution lies in reiterating that the local media must abide by the rules of the profession and take action against those who publish false information that causes harm to individual or public rights or leads to problems on a national level".

Commenting on the problem of rapid publication of news by the local Palestinian press at the expense of credibility and

accuracy, Hussam Ezzidin, head of the ethics committee of the Palestinian Journalists' Syndicate (PJS) said: "Our press has committed catastrophic errors, in the very sense of the word, by opening the door to information published by Israeli satellite stations and news websites as incontrovertible facts".

He added: "A professional framework is required, including the publication of information only if it has been verified by at least two sources and taking news about deaths only from medical sources. A specialist Palestinian security source is needed to provide accurate information on the situation". He pointed to a circular issued by the PJS on guaranteeing the accuracy of information and protecting the principles and rules of professional journalism.

The occupation turns a blind eye and the PA is not allowed to act

Legal drugs widespread among Jerusalem youth

Mahmoud Adama

At a time when the Israeli police and municipality officials are conducting daily prosecutions of Palestinian women selling vegetables at the square outside Damascus Gate in occupied Jerusalem, these same forces turn a blind eye to the destructive effects on young people in Jerusalem of the flood of drugs that are even sold openly. Palestinian security forces are unable to take any action to counter this phenomenon that threatens the lives of thousands of young Jerusalemites.

The head of the social department at the Al-Maqdesee organization for Society Development (MSD), Issam Jweihan, said that he has become aware of a drug that is spreading among specific age groups, especially school students, and causing serious psychological and mental diseases in some cases. He realized that these were not traditional drugs and prepared a report for submission to the relevant Palestinian authorities in the Ministries of Health, Interior, Social Affairs and the Ministry of Jerusalem Affairs.

Jweihan argues that Jerusalem is being subjected to an unconventional war in which the Israeli occupation is using non-traditional weapons to empty the city and divert its inhabitants to issues other than politics and resistance to occupation. He stated that there are 15,000 to 20,000 drug users in the East Jerusalem population, including six thousand who are addicts and whose lives are being destroyed by drugs.



Tempting wrapping to promote poison



Issam Jweihan



Omar Himmo

Smart propaganda

According to Jweihan, the branding of these drugs as legal gives young people the impression that they are not harmful. He explains that the blend is changed each year and named as a "new version". The mix is not blended under medical supervision or at medical laboratories; it is prepared from 6070- products, including organic materials used in animal drugs, plant fertilizers and insecticides, all mixed with the chemical ethanol.

These drugs are wrapped in different attractive packaging and are promoted according to the targeted group. For example, there are drugs targeted at men as sex boosters under names like "Mercedes" or "BMW", implying durability and strength; other drugs are targeted at women for weight loss, and others to school children as memory enhancers.

Locally manufactured

Alaa Kharoub, a coordinator for the prevention of drug and alcohol abuse in Jerusalem, said that this type of drug has become widespread in Jerusalem and the West Bank since 2010. These materials are manufactured locally to circumvent legal restrictions and lists of hazardous substances. Dangerous chemicals are mixed with herbal materials to manufacture drugs locally, thereby avoiding the costs of smuggling in drugs from abroad.

He added that these drugs are targeted at young people under attractive and tempting names, and they act quickly to encourage addiction. They are known locally under the names "Enchanted", "Mr. Nice" and "Guy". Health and social welfare institutions monitored the risks of these substances in 2013 and engaged in lobbying until the drugs were prohibited in 2014. Nevertheless, the sale of these drugs continues

and the number of abusers is rising. Kharoub says: "These drugs are available in the market for very low prices compared with other drugs. They come primarily from Israeli sources and may also be manufactured locally in illegal laboratories".

Death is one of the consequences

Omar Himmo, a counselor and physician who treats drug abusers, said that these drugs cause individuals to behave like a mentally ill patient as they suffer from hallucinations and fantasies and are difficult to deal with. Dozens of cases have been recorded over the past three years in treatment centers, mental hospitals and social institutions. Himmo also outlined the effect of these drugs on the body. They increase blood pressure, change heartbeat rates and may result in fainting. They can affect the brain and cause bursts of anger, aggressiveness, insomnia and irritation, possibly resulting in death.

New graduates are victims of media institutions...no legal deterrents



Mahmoud Fataftah



Sameh Hamdan



Naser Abu Baker



Maher Shalaby



Emad Al Asfar



Khalil Shaheen



Khaled Masoudi

Haitham Al-Sharif

"When I am sent a trainee, I take advantage of him", the manager of a media institution openly admitted. Al-Hal has investigated the extent of exploitation by media institutions of new graduates who require a period of training to acquire the necessary experience to enter the media profession.

Akrama Asafra graduated from Hebron University in 2013, majoring in media. He applied for a job in photography in a media institution. He stated: "I was offered monthly pay of NIS 1200. This minimal pay demonstrates why media institutions seek new graduates specifically as their intention to take advantage of them is obvious. I accepted the offer and worked for four months to obtain a certificate of experience. When a radio station announced a vacancy for a broadcaster, I applied and got the job. I worked as a program presenter adhering to the official working hours of 9am to 3pm, but was surprised when, one month later, the head of the station declared that I was still in training and not an employee. I left the job". It is obvious that new graduate trainees in media institutions undergo exploitation that cannot be ignored. The director general of the Nawras radio and TV station in Hebron, Khaled Masoudi, said: "This is not confined to the media sector; it is a common phenomenon in most institutions, where employers safeguard their own interests and a new graduate

has insufficient experience to qualify for a job. Thus, the graduate is forced to tolerate these difficulties faced at the start. Practical experience for a new graduate is a protective shield against any potential future exploitation by media institutions in terms of working hours or payment".

Masoudi believes that it is an exaggeration to describe new graduates as victims. "Sometimes the local media institutions are the ones who sacrifice their time to provide an opportunity for these graduates to prove themselves. For instance, we made an agreement with 24 new media graduates to make programs and news reports in return for a transportation allowance and a job for those who prove themselves at work. We had to deal with a lack of commitment to deadlines or to the policies of the institution. Some students even thought of themselves as well-qualified and without need for training, which resulted in several problems, including damage to cameras. Even those we selected for a job are unaware that we have the right by law to put them on probation for three months, let alone their demands for salaries way above what they deserve for their efforts or our pay scale".

Sameh Hamdan, the manager of Raya for Media and Publications, said: "I know employees who have been working for local radio stations for two or three years and are not paid. The director of one of the stations has even told them that they need to win advertising revenue to get paid".

The director-general of al-Falstiniah TV, Maher Shalabi, said that they rely on young people and new graduates and provide them with very good salaries. He said he was willing to show his payroll to prove this. He gave the reason as follows: "New graduates are efficient in modern communication technologies. It is not enough today to be a talented journalist if you are not competent in using technology. There are young people working who earn US 20003000-a month because their qualifications dictate the amount they are paid. For the same reason, other graduates started with us on US 700 and their salaries increase to over US 1300 after two or three months".

Media professor Mahmoud Fatafta points out that competition is fierce because of the limited number of media institutions and growing numbers of graduates in this field, resulting in the level of indignity faced by a graduate in the face of bargaining by a firm's owner.

The monitoring and evaluation coordinator at the Media Development Center of Birzeit University, Emad Alasfar, agrees with all the reports of graduate exploitation. "Many local private media institutions broadcast reports, investigations and appeals about the need to guarantee the rights of workers, the application of minimum wages and the employment of people with special needs. But these institutions themselves are not committed to the Palestinian Labor Law and do not apply it. Instead, they exploit new graduates by making

them work as an intern for long periods of time. This is tragic".

Journalist Khalil Shahin, research director at the Palestinian Center for Policy Research and Strategic Studies-Masarat, concludes that the exploitation of young people by some civil institutions is more noticeable in the Gaza Strip than in the West Bank due to the large number of graduates versus limited opportunities.

According to Shahin: "Graduates are obliged to work for two or three months under the title of 'temporary and emergency programs'. They are then sacked before they reach the legal deadline for job placement. They are not given any allowances, or if any, they are trivial amounts. This issue requires special attention from the Palestinian Journalists' Syndicate (PJS) to prevent journalists from being vulnerable to ugly exploitation".

The deputy chairman of the PJS, Naser Abu Baker, said: "The exploitation of new journalists needs to be addressed in concerted efforts by the PJS, the Ministry of Information and media departments at Palestinian universities. A memorandum was sent to the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ) in this regard. We also held a workshop on this issue with a number of Arab countries, including the participation of Palestinian universities, to urge them to provide media students with practical training courses. Workshops and meetings with university students are also required to introduce them to the PJS and their rights".

Controversy over a Palestinian authority in Jerusalem

Orient House closed for 14 years; owners to convert it into a hotel

Bayan Baydoun

On the 14th of July, Palestinian activist Ghazi al-Husseini, the son of freedom fighter Abdel Qader al-Husseini, wrote an article entitled *We and Jerusalem*, in which he stated: "Orient House was the house of the Palestinian government. It was the fountain of life for Jerusalemites; politicians and diplomats from the world over visited it to learn the basic truth of the right of the Palestinian people to their land. What has happened to Orient House now? Why is everyone silent in the face of the enemy's closure of this Palestinian institution?"

Located in occupied Jerusalem, Orient House was witness to successive events of historic significance in the Palestinian political and national story. The fervent desire of Israel to take control of Orient House is proven. The latest attempt was the news published on 14 February in Israeli newspaper *Kol Ha'ir* of a proposal approved by the Israeli occupation municipality to convert this building, which is a symbol of Palestinian struggle and of the beauty of Arab Islamic oriental architecture, into the 'Orient House Hotel'.

Solely a family decision

Some of the few people who are aware raised their voices and prepared to oppose this "very grave step which the Israeli occupation wishes to implement and which should be opposed by firm Palestinian diplomacy", according to the article. Many are unaware of the family's decision, taken in 2003 by a number of the inheritors, to create a family endowment (*waqf Thuri*) for the building, which was built by Ismail Musa al-Husseini over a century ago and served as the unofficial headquarters of the Palestine Liberation Organization PLO in East Jerusalem.

Khaled al-Husseini, a relative of the family and business supervisor to Ayman and Sayyar al-Husseini, who live abroad, says: "Orient House serves the owners through a family endowment issued by the Islamic Shari'a court. The proposed hotel is a family decision that was discussed and approved by the municipal conservation committee for old buildings in Jerusalem. The proposal comprises blueprints to establish additional buildings near to the historic main building. Although the committee approved building around the main house, it acknowledged that any change in the shape of the location and its three main buildings is not permitted".

Building or leadership?

Khaled al-Husseini believes that Orient House is not merely a building. He quotes the late Faisal al-Husseini: "Leadership without a building is better than a building without leadership". Thus, the essential principle is the Palestinian political presence in Jerusalem. Ishaq Budeiri, director of Orient House and the Arab Studies Society, also believes that the foundations [of leadership] could have been established anywhere in Jerusalem: The building is more than a story of a collection of stones. The establishment of the Arab Studies Society by Faisal al-

Husseini in 1983 is part of the Husseini family heritage. It was closed five years later during the first Intifada by then Israeli army minister, Yitzhak Rabin. In 1992, Faisal al-Husseini reopened it as an institution representing Palestinian legitimacy in occupied Jerusalem, naming it *Bayt al-Sharq*, a center where political dialogues, programs and activities in Jerusalem were conducted. It embraced the discussions that led to the start of negotiations in Madrid and Washington up to the signing of the Oslo Accords, after which the work of Orient House was confined to Jerusalem affairs only.

Not included in the negotiations agenda

Budeiri's opinion bolsters his belief that strenuous efforts are required to reopen Orient House and the Arab Studies Society. He does not exclude the possibility of negligence on the part of the Palestinian negotiators. He stated: "The whole truth lies in the fact that Orient House was never put on the negotiating table. I do not know whether this is due to the negligence of the Palestinian negotiators, or whether the issue of reopening was brought up but rejected by the Israeli occupation".

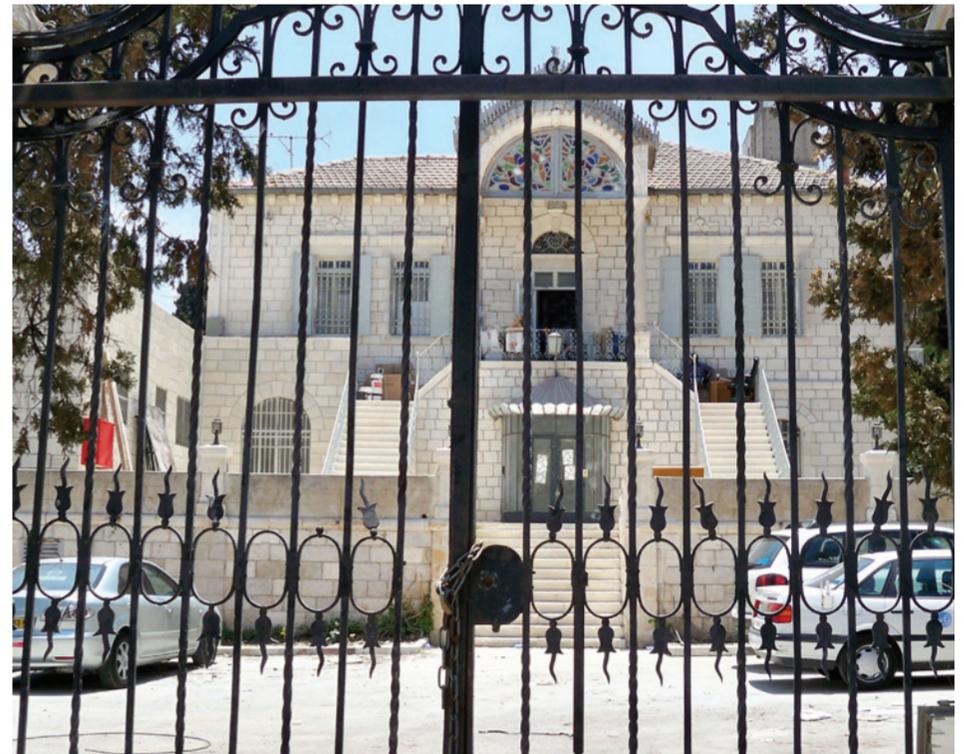
Khaled al-Husseini and Jihad Abu Zneid, a Jerusalemite member of the Palestinian Legislative Council (PLC), disagree. Both deny any negligence and state that Israel has never abided by its agreements or obligations towards the Palestinians. In fact, 26 institutions and offices have been closed by force by the Israeli occupation since 2001, including the Chamber of Commerce, the Arab Studies Society, Nadi al-Aseer (the Palestinian Prisoners' Club) and the Mapping and Geographic Information Systems Department. Orient House topped the list of closures issued by Uzi Landau, the Israeli Minister for Internal Security, on 10 August 2001, less than three months after the death of Faisal al-Husseini.

Israeli conditions

The newspaper report states that the proposal includes the addition of three new sections to surround the historic building, compatible with the oriental character of the city, plus the demolition of the extensions added in the 1950s and 1960s as inappropriate to the oriental nature of the building.

The news report also states that the municipal committee for the conservation of heritage sites imposed several conditions for approval of the proposal, including the appointment of a special engineer to ensure preservation of the old building throughout the construction period, and the renovation and relocation of the fountain located behind the building to the front.

Abdel Qader al-Husseini, like Jihad Abu Zneid, expressed astonishment that this item of news has not yet spread around town. Abu Zneid said that she had heard talk about the sale of Orient House. Abdel Qader condemned the idea that the Israeli occupation could decide to convert the building into a hotel: "This building is private and has not been confiscated,



Bayt al-Sharq remains closed since the death of Faisal al-Husseini. (By photographer Mahmoud E'layaan)

so the municipality or the occupation have no control over it. The Israeli order to close part of the building is renewed every six months, but the rights remain with the owners and legitimate inheritors to take any action".

On his role as the son of the late Faisal al-Husseini and the director of the foundation that bears the name of his father, Abdel Qader says: "Preserving the historic, political and resistance legacy of Faisal al-Husseini is one of the objectives of the foundation through the collection, documentation, preservation and dissemination of this legacy. I do not think that the lease by the owners of part of the building to Orient House and the Arab Studies Society would change even if the building remains under closure".

Fundraising

In an attempt to justify the family's decision to renovate this historic property as a hotel bearing the name Orient House and return it to its former glory of the 1950s, Ishaq Budeiri says: "This is an investment project for the establishment of a modern hotel to match the modern sophisticated style of hotels in Jerusalem and both Israeli licenses and funding are required. So far, the family has been unable to obtain a license from the municipality and investors have not been found to allow work to start. If there is no funding, the building will remain closed and the status quo will be maintained".

Closure and confiscation or investment

Budeiri's concerns about this decision are as follows: "The establishment of a hotel in this historic building will not serve Palestinian national interests. Essentially, Orient House should be reopened and operational. This should be in the form of an agreement with the owners to maintain the work of the foundation as a legitimate Palestinian

entity in Jerusalem".

Notwithstanding these comments, Budeiri still insists that the idea of turning the site into a hotel is the owners' right that no one can deprive them of, even if people have objections.

Jerusalem journalist Hiba Aslan shares his opinion and expressed her understanding of the family's desire to preserve the property from likely Israeli confiscation in the future by opting to turn it into a hotel. However, she fears that the transformation of a national institution that was once a refuge for Jerusalemites in good and bad times, is a controversial issue that may encourage the Israeli occupation to close Palestinian national institutions and deprive Jerusalem residents of its protective presence. The family is placed between a rock and a hard place".

No to the exclusion of a Palestinian authority in Jerusalem

To date, Orient House remains captive to the Israeli occupation. The building, resembling an old Ottoman palace, is defiant despite the Israeli flag that flutters on its roof, a punishment for the services once offered to Jerusalem residents in health and education, plus the renovation and restoration of old buildings to preserve their Palestinian identity and Arab nature even on the negotiating table.

The family of Taher al-Husseini lives at the rear of the building. Although Taher is a sick man now, he still struggles to preserve the heritage of his family and homeland. The upper floor of the building has been occupied for some time by the World Health Organization (WHO) under a lease contract.

The presence of this institution as the only legitimate Palestinian authority in Jerusalem is the message that Budeiri wishes to convey, summed up in the fact that it is the duty of the President's Office to double its efforts to reopen the building before it is turned into a hotel with the agreement of the owners.

Awni Thaher: A man and a museum

Abdel Baset Khalaf

Awni Thaher, a man in his fifties, has turned his home into a museum that summarizes the tale of 100 years of Palestinian history. He boasts of his vast archives where social, educational and agricultural life are recorded in the form of costumes, crafts, media, music and more. Every area of the house is bursting with artifacts, tools, collections of items that have vanished, old-fashioned clothing. Ancient documents compete with old tools for a space in his house, located in the town of Yaseed close to Nablus.

Relating the story of his passion for heritage and antique documents and tools, Thaher says: "My mother Fatima, may God bless her soul, was famous for making handmade items out of straw, such as quba'a, qirtalleh, juneh, etc. These names are now unfamiliar to the young generation. At that time, I was happy to watch her using these different utensils in her kitchen. I started at an early age, in 1980, to collect books and clippings from old newspapers and magazines. Whenever I saw antiques, I would buy them and spend all my money on them, giving priority to my car or tractor, which I sold to buy old tools.

Personal tour

Any visitor to Thaher's house will notice that the balcony is decorated with dozens of traditional Palestinian dresses, while the entrance hall is stacked with various agricultural tools and old wooden school desks, tools belonging to barbers, agricultural workers, merchants, carpenters, street vendors, cattle and horse breeders, teachers, journalists and the community in general. The rooms of the house are packed with books and rare educational documents that leave little space for the pottery and items made from straw, bamboo, glass, copper and iron. The courtyards are unable to hold the plethora of large items.

Thaher says: "I have 2000 old books on different subjects, and rare magazines and children's books. I have the earliest original versions of Khalil Sakakini's Ras Roos [a famous book for elementary students]. I have also compiled clippings from al-Quds newspaper and al-Bayader al-Syasi magazine that go back for more than a quarter of a century. The first document I kept was the marriage contract between my grandfather 'al-Armeet' and my grandmother 'Suad' in 1905. Her dowry was 50 Turkish piasters. Later, I added the marriage contracts of my father and mother, my brothers and my sons, leaving space for those of my grandchildren.

Five periods of time

Always with a smile on his face, Thaher stands in traditional dress next to the wooden boxes he made himself to cope with the limited space in his house. He says that he needs 3000 square meters to exhibit his collections, which cover the era of the Ottoman Empire, the British Mandate, Jordanian rule, the Israeli occupation and the Palestinian Authority. He continued: "Whoever comes into my house can travel back in time 100 hundred

years to see tools that have disappeared, like the old primus stove, a kerosene torch, a traditional coffee grinder, an iron that works on coal, watches that are half a century old, a drum made out of pumpkin, innumerable items in copper and ceramics, a stone hammer for olives, unusual knives, agricultural tools unknown to this generation and many dresses. I have collected the things that most people used because I could not afford to buy items from wealthier families and the bourgeoisie".

The house of this retired teacher, who worked for 30 years in teaching and administration, holds enough tools and equipment to stage a Palestinian film documenting life a century ago with period dresses, house and kitchen utensils, crafts and school items.

A fortune

He states: "I have thousands of small pieces such as buttons from clothes, hundreds of wooden, glass and copper tools, dozens of embroidered male and female clothes. I have a sartalyah (a white dress striped in black), which is a rare piece that is close to my heart, and old coins. My museum is my wealth that I cherish".

Thaher tends to favor his media and educational archives that comprise a wooden radio that operates on old bulbs, rare musical records and instruments, old cameras and photographs, obsolete teaching aids, educational documents dating back decades, books, tourist brochures, stories about martyrs, letters, old school certificates, and so on.

Description and anecdotes

Among the unusual documents in Thaher's archives are reports written by educational supervisors in 1944 about their visit to the village school of Baqa Sharqiah in Tulkarem governorate. The reports describe the village, its geography, latitude and longitude, history, antiquities, area and population. They also include the grades of students and the grades in reading and writing for each student. Thaher says: "Supervisors used to evaluate the students, whereas teachers are now responsible for this and the supervisor just adds formal remarks irrelevant to the teacher".

Thaher studied chemistry at the University of Jordan, but never worked in this field or taught chemistry. He is father to six sons, a daughter and three grandchildren. Since 1980 he has spent half of all his income (about 50 thousand US dollars) to buy and maintain old collections.

The Chest!

He concludes: "I made a three meter long wooden chest and put it in the hall of my house where I store my old and rare documents to protect them from damage when I have no place to exhibit them properly. I have lobbied the relevant bodies with letters to protest the lack of attention given to our heritage. If I were anywhere else in the world, the government would encourage me and would have knocked on my door. He who does not preserve his past will lose his future".



Thaher with his collections

From the Palestinian Museum



The scouts group from the government teacher training college, Jerusalem 1929/1930-, from the album of Janette Michael.

In collaboration with the Palestinian Museum at Birzeit University, Al-Hal publishes a photo in each edition to remind us of the past and evoke happy memories that have faded as a result of limited documentation and publication.