

Chapter 1: Memories and Meanings of Refugee Camps (and more-than-camps)

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Introduction

This chapter presents a counter-analysis of the widespread depiction of refugee camps as quintessential 'spaces of exception' (Agamben 1998, 2005), as 'non-places' or 'spaces of indistinction' which 'do not integrate other places, meanings, traditions and sacrificial, ritual moments but remain, due to a lack of characterization, non-symbolized and abstract spaces' (Diken 2004: 91, referring to Augé). While this depiction is in many ways canonical, it has nonetheless been extensively critiqued, including for discursively reproducing – rather than resisting – the depiction of refugees as 'bare life' (Agamben 1998), as non-agentic bodies which are the subject of diverse forms of governmentality, and for dismissing, a priori, the multiple meanings and senses of (be)longing(s) which may be developed, negotiated, resisted and contested by the inhabitants of protracted refugee camps (i.e.: see Puggioni 2006; Le Cour Grandmaison et al. 2007; Huysmans 2008; Ramadan 2012; Qasmiyeh and Fiddian-Qasmiyeh 2013; Fiddian-Qasmiyeh 2016a, 2016b; Gabiam and Fiddian-Qasmiyeh 2017). Building upon these critiques, this chapter examines the ways in which refugee camps become (and/or remain) spaces of memories, meaning and belonging for refugees that endure across time and space in spite of, or precisely because of, being spaces of temporary-permanence created through violence and precariousness. In addition to situating the importance of camps in the lives of displaced people, I also argue that camps must be conceptualized as being deeply connected with, and constituted by, diverse spatialities and temporalities: in essence, I posit that camps are always-already 'more-than-camps',

being connected to and through other spaces (diverse camp and non-camp spaces), and other times (including diverse pasts, presents and futures).

The chapter is based on my longstanding research vis-a-vis three intersecting case-studies – the Sahrawi refugee camps in Algeria, and Palestinian refugee camps in Lebanon on the one hand and in Syria on the other. In particular, I bring together research that I have conducted in refugee camps and refugee-hosting cities since 2005 as part of a series of projects in the Middle East, the Caribbean and Europe. This includes my multi-sited ethnographic research with over 100 Sahrawi refugees (originally from the non-self-governing territory known as the Western Sahara) in the Sahrawi refugee camps in Algeria and during Sahrawi refugee youth's primary, secondary and tertiary level studies abroad in Cuba, Libya and Syria (see Fiddian-Qasmiyeh 2013, 2014, 2015)ⁱ and with 50 Sahrawi refugee children participating in a Holidays in Peace programme in Spain (Crivello and Fiddian-Qasmiyeh 2010). I also draw on my ongoing research with more than 100 Palestinian refugees from Lebanon and Syria living in Palestinian camps in Lebanon (Fiddian-Qasmiyeh 2015, 2019); and with Palestinians living, studying and/or working in Cuba, France, Libya, Sweden and the UK (see Fiddian-Qasmiyeh 2016a, 2016b, 2017a, 2017b, 2019; Fiddian-Qasmiyeh and Qasmiyeh 2013, 2016, 2017; and Gabiam and Fiddian-Qasmiyeh 2017).ⁱⁱ These projects have thus included research in, about, and through Sahrawi and Palestinian refugees' *home-camps* on the one hand (in Algeria, and in Lebanon and Syria respectively), and in a range of 'hosting' spaces (France, Spain, Sweden and the UK), including spaces that have been 'shared' both by Sahrawi and Palestinian refugees (Cuba and Libya).

While studies have examined the ways in which camps become memorials of past traumatic eventsⁱⁱⁱ and of the homeland (i.e.: Khalili 2005), the first part of this chapter traces the extent to which memories not only of the homeland but also of home-camps travel with refugees across time and space.^{iv} It does so, in the first instance, through reference to my research with Sahrawi refugees studying in Cuba and Syria and visiting Spain, and is guided by a framework of 'travelling memories' (following Said 1983, see Fiddian-Qasmiyeh 2012); subsequently, it draws on my research into Palestinian refugees in the Middle East and in Europe, by tracing the connections and affinities that people may have with violent and hostile places, which researchers have in the past often argued are *not* (or indeed cannot be) spaces of belonging or longing precisely due to those exclusionary and violent characteristics. It is my aim here to demonstrate the need to transcend a long-standing binary academic focus on the significance of the past/homeland and the present/host-state, by highlighting that people hold multiple and simultaneous spatialities of belonging, including to home-camps and spaces characterised by, and created through, overlapping forms of precariousness.

In the second part of the chapter I further examine the multiplicity and simultaneity of Palestinian and Sahrawi camps as spaces of departure, origin, return and (non-)arrival. This entails acknowledging camps as complex spaces of refuge that are concurrently characterized and *constituted* by death, dying and destruction. In particular, I examine a range of processes surrounding and being created through what I conceptualize as 'the death and after-life of the camp'. While Ramadan (2012) has examined the destruction of Nahr el-Bared camp in North Lebanon as a process of 'urbicide,' I focus on the 'deaths' (or perhaps 'campicide') of Yarmouk camp (Syria) and Nahr el-Bared and Tel el-Zataar camps (Lebanon), through two main lenses.

Through an expansion of the lens of travelling meanings, I argue that camps that have been destroyed – such as Yarmouk, Nahr el-Bared and Tel el-Zataar – have taken on great emotional, symbolic and political significance on an individual and collective level both amongst former residents and *also* amongst those who have never resided in those camps and who are currently situated within and outside of the MENA (Middle East and North Africa) region. In turn, I examine what I refer to as 'the remains', or 'the after-life' of the camp, by continuing to experiment – building on Deleuze and Guattari (2013) – with developing a *rhizoanalysis* of refugee camps (Fiddian-Qasmiyeh 2019).

Explored in more detail below, a rhizoanalysis effectively entails 'redirect[ing] analysis away from identifying stable meanings of interactions to mapping possibilities produced through interactions' (Lowry 2013: 26). In this context, it includes particular attention to the multiple interactions and relationalities that are *produced* in and through camps in relation to overlapping and ongoing processes of displacement and violence. It entails recognising the multiple relationships that exist between and produce different time-spaces, by acknowledging that these connections amount to more-than-a-network. That is to say that it is not simply that camps and their inhabitants are *connected* to other camps, to the homeland, and to other host-states through, for instance, physical visits and journeys, emotional connections, symbolic mobilisation, political affiliations and/or financial remittance. In order to shape this idea, I experiment with applying the metaphor of 'the rhizome' as proposed by Deleuze and Guattari (2013: 1-27) to re-conceptualise meanings of camps. In biological terms, the rhizome is the opposite of the vertical model of the root: unlike a tree or rooted plant – which dies when it is uprooted or its roots are broken – a rhizome is a network of subterranean stems that extend horizontally, sporadically erupting to the surface to create new shoots while the stems

continue both to expand and interconnect. It is through conceptualising protracted camps through the metaphor of the rhizome and by tracing rhizomatic dynamics that I argue that a camp is always more-than-a-camp and that camps are always-in-becoming, even when, or precisely because, they have been 'killed' and razed to the ground.

On the one hand, this part of the chapter includes an empirical reflection on the significance of life and death in the camp through an analysis of people's memories and ongoing visits to camp cemeteries in both 'living' and 'killed' camps (also see Qasmiyeh this volume; Qasmiyeh and Fiddian-Qasmiyeh 2013; Fiddian-Qasmiyeh and Qasmiyeh 2017). On the other hand, since a rhizome by definition has 'no beginning or end; it is always in the middle' (Deleuze and Guatarri 2013: 26), I argue that it is essential to trace the ways in which camps are constituted precisely by the process of always being 'in the middle' of displacement. It is through an application of a rhizomatic lens that I argue that refugees and camps are always-already-in-the-middle (of displacement, and of being), and are intimately connected to other (camp and non-camp) spaces and times in such a way that even the 'erasure' or 'closure' of a camp at a particular time does not mark their end, as these remain as traces, or even as camps *in potentia*.

Concretely, I pinpoint and examine four modalities of 'shoots'^v that have erupted to the surface of these always-already-interrupted-territories, with these physical and more-than-physical shoots indexing, or offering topographical testament to, refugees' and camps' simultaneous absence and presence: these shoots correspond to the Al-Awda/Salloum camp(s) on the Libyan-Egyptian border; Nahr el-Bared and Tel el-Zaatar camps in Lebanon, and Yarmouk camp in/from Syria; in addition to the

cemeteries and tombstones of Nahr el-Bared and Baddawi camps in Lebanon; and Al-Mazaar School displaced from and for Nahr el-Bared and Baddawi camps.

The chapter argues that these reflections have broader implications for conceptualisations of camps in relation to different processes, times and spaces of refugees' journeys (and, indeed, processes of immobility) on personal, familial and communal levels alike. Recognizing that camps are spaces of longing and belonging, of meaning and memory, and of production and reproduction, is not to romanticize camps – which in the Palestinian context in particular, as Sayigh has noted (2000), are 'islands of insecurity' – but to centralize the extent to which camps themselves – whether physically intact or demolished – travel across time and space, being reconfigured, recreated, and re-membered in complex and often paradoxical ways. In turn, by starting from the premise that camps are not isolated spatial zones inhabited by (and providing a space to bury) refugees, the urgency of focusing more intently on what I refer to as 'refugee-refugee relationality' (Fiddian-Qasmiyeh 2016) prompts us to go beyond tracing, for example, 'the Sahrawi rhizome' or 'the Palestinian rhizome' as separate entities and instead to focus on the productive and constitutive nature of the intersections arising between and across *diverse* refugees' lines of movement across time and space; for instance, through the Sahrawi-Palestinian-Syrian rhizome(s) implicitly mapped out below.

Travelling memories and meanings of home-camps

There has long been an overarching tendency in diaspora studies to explore migrants' and refugees' commitment to their and their ancestors' place of origin – the homeland –

to the detriment of exploring the emotional and existential commitments that people may hold, develop and resist vis-à-vis multiple geographies and temporalities (see Fiddian-Qasmiyeh 2012). Indeed, the definitive (normative/archetypal) features of 'a diaspora' include members' commitment to ensure the survival and strengthening of a common and collective memory about the homeland, including their commitment to transmit this memory of the past/homeland to their descendants, and to other members of the diaspora located in other present/host-states (Safran 1991; Cohen 2008). While implicitly centralising *inter-generational* memory and identity with regards to this time-place, however, the diverse ways in which refugees, including children and youth, inherit, contest, negotiate, transmit and mobilize memories of different times and spaces have infrequently been examined (Fiddian-Qasmiyeh 2012).

In order to address this gap, and complementing insights from the broader field of transnational studies, I developed (in Fiddian-Qasmiyeh 2012) a multi-sited case-study of Sahrawi refugee youth to explore the ways in which different types of memories are transmitted both across time (from the older to the younger generation of Sahrawi refugees) and across space (from the Algerian-based refugee camps, to educational/hosting contexts such as Cuba, Libya, Spain and Syria, and to international arenas such as the UN). Following Said's notion of 'travelling theory' (1983: 226-247), I explored those dynamics as embodying a process of 'travelling memories.' Given that the educational trajectories of Sahrawi children and youth have required their short- and medium-term absence from their refugee camp homes, with the expectation of returning to work in the camps upon graduation, I examined the extent to which the transmission of a collective Sahrawi memory can be considered to take place *in spite of* children's separation from their families and home-camps, or *because of* this distance. More

precisely, throughout my research, the transmission of official memories of the *home-land* (the contested territory of the Western Sahara), under the 'guidance' of Sahrawi 'memory supervisors' who accompany refugee-students during their time away from the camps, emerged as being complemented and at times superseded by the development of and longing for memories of youth's *home-camps* (Fiddian-Qasmiyeh 2012).

In this regard, my interviews with Sahrawi children, youth and adults in, through, and beyond their home-camps in Algeria and their 'hosting' spaces of Cuba, Libya, Spain and Syria, have demonstrated the existence of multiple spheres and locations of both memory-making and memory-projecting, revealing the Sahrawi refugee camps to be both a location from which to remember the homeland, but also as spaces to be remembered (and constructed) by Sahrawi children and youth from a distance. In this context I have argued that the transmission and negotiation of individual and collective memories of the refugee camps are arguably as significant to attempts to promote overall political change, as memories of the history of the struggle to regain the Western Saharan homeland per se. One of the implications of this is that multiple processes of memory-making and memory-recuperating underpin diverse political commitments to a plurality of home-spaces, including both the home-land and the home-camp.

In the context of protracted encampment – such as that experienced by Sahrawi refugees since the 1970s, and by Palestinian refugees since the 1940s – refugee camps are therefore not only spaces from which refugees may solidify and transmit particular memories of the homeland in order to develop political campaigns, for instance, to secure the establishment of an independent state (the Western Sahara and Palestine,

respectively). Rather, and precisely by virtue of the protracted nature of the camps' existence and the diverse mechanisms developed to ensure the camps' survival and that of their refugee inhabitants, refugee camps themselves may become spaces to be remembered, and equally spaces for political intervention and action in their own right. Even if refugee camps are themselves not conceptualized as permanent spaces by academics (op cit), international stakeholders (such as representatives of the UN or International Organizations) or by many refugees themselves, refugees living in (and born into) protracted encampment situations may nonetheless – amongst other things – feel a sense of belonging to and longing for 'their' home-camp (also see Peteet 2005); the politicization of memories of the homeland may correspond to only one dimension of their means of ensuring the survival of the refugee community, in the present and future.

In essence, while prioritizing the commitment to the Palestinian homeland is of course pivotal on multiple levels for Palestinian refugees,^{vi} my ongoing research has aimed to show the urgency of going beyond the commonplace binary – which is essentially a spatio-temporal one – between the past/sending/homeland and the present/receiving/host-state (Gabiam and Fiddian-Qasmiyeh 2017: 735).^{vii} Brun – building upon Olwig's work – has argued that '[al]though many refugees and migrants *feel that they live*, or want to live, their lives elsewhere [i.e. the homeland], they have a present life, where they need to survive' (2001: 19, emphasis added). This highlights not only that people hold and develop 'multiple spatialities of belonging' (Gabiam and Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, 2017: 735), but also that these are characterised by *simultaneity*. Brun introduces this as a 'contradiction' – by noting 'the contradictions of being physically present in specific localities, but at the same time being part of translocal

communities "rooted" in distant places' (2001: 19) – and yet this simultaneity directly 'disrupts the notion of the homeland being a place inhabited in the past, longed for in the present and desired for the future, by recognising that migrants may feel that their lives are *currently* lived in the homeland, even if this is from a physical distance' (Gabiam and Fiddian-Qasmiyeh 2017: 735).

However, such examples demonstrate the extent to which studies undertaken through diasporic and transnational lenses have typically reproduced – rather than interrogated or situated – a focus on migrants' and refugees' connections with their past/homeland and the place in which they are currently present (ibid; see Vertovec 2001; Mason 2007). On the one hand, the homeland and the "home" of the lived reality' (Mason 2007) are clearly of great significance on individual and collective levels; however, on the other hand, nuanced analyses have yet to carefully examine 'the complexities of being simultaneously affected by, attached to, and mobilising for, not only the homeland and the current place of residence, but also other places which may or may not be physically inhabited by family or community members' (Gabiam and Fiddian-Qasmiyeh 2017: 736). Importantly, such home-places and places of 'affinity' include hostile and precarious places – including violent home-camps – which researchers have in the past often argued are *not* spaces of belonging or longing (or indeed, are 'non-places' and 'spaces of indistinction', op cit) precisely due to those exclusionary and violent characteristics.^{viii}

By complementing a focus on the affective and political connections of refugee children, youth and adults to their and their families' 'home-camps', with attention to the significance of camps (and indeed other spaces) which have/had *not* been personally

inhabited, it is possible (and urgent) to transcend a focus on the long-standing homeland/host-state dichotomy and to acknowledge the significance that diverse in-between spaces (and spaces-in-becoming) hold for different people in situations of displacement; as noted above, these include, precisely, diverse refugee camps characterised by violence and erasure.

Camps as spaces of origin, return and arrival

During my ongoing research in Baddawi refugee camp in North Lebanon – as part of a multi-sited analysis of local experiences of and responses to displacement from Syria in nine refugee-hosting and refugee-host communities in Lebanon, Jordan and Turkey – Palestinians formerly based in besieged (and often destroyed) Syrian camps and cities such as Yarmouk camp in Damascus have repeatedly indicated that when they fled Syria to Lebanon ‘we arrived in the camp’ and just ‘passed through Lebanon’ (see Fiddian-Qasmiyeh 2016b). Having crossed the Syrian-Lebanese border, my interlocutors (including both Palestinians from Syria and Syrians displaced by the conflict) explained that they had travelled directly to, and arrived in, Baddawi camp, where established refugee-residents offered them shelter, food and clothes. Baddawi refugee camp was identified as their intended destination point from the very onset of their journeys, fleeing their ‘original’ home-camps in Syria to seek refuge in other Palestinians’ home-camps precisely by retracing not (only) their own or their families’ past steps, but rather the collective lines of movement and segmentation that constitute what I conceptualize as part of “the Palestinian refugee camp rhizome.”

Refugees’ home-camps have often been conceptualized and positioned as

Palestinian and Sahrawi refugees' spaces of origin/departure/destination *in* which, or *from* which, safety can be sought in the context of diverse conflict situations. In this regard, currently Baddawi camp is both the 'origin(al)' home-camp for its circa 50,000 'permanent residents' and is also the camp-of-destination for Palestinian refugees (and indeed Syrian nationals) displaced by the conflict in Syria; equally, in previous processes, it has been the point of destination for tens of thousands of Palestinians displaced by recurrent conflicts, including elsewhere in Lebanon, and in Iraq, Kuwait and, just prior to the Syria conflict, also in Libya (see Fiddian-Qasmiyeh 2011, 2015).

The case of Baddawi highlights the extent to which 'non-Baddawi' Palestinians from Syria, and Syrian refugees alike, sought out the camp through their own means – often physically walking from Syria to Baddawi – while in the context of the 2011 Libyan conflict circa 900 Sahrawi children who were studying in Libya were formally 'repatriated' to the Algeria-based refugee camps by the Algerian state (Fiddian-Qasmiyeh 2011). Among other things, this reasserts that the Sahrawi refugee camps are not merely points of *departure* (from which young people leave to seek an education, employment or indeed asylum), or places from which durable solutions must be sought. Rather, the Sahrawi camps in Algeria have been positioned as the Sahrawi's 'home' and (a) point of origin. 'Return' from Libya to the refugee-camp-origin in 2011 may well have been 'a solution' for these Sahrawi refugee adolescents, and may indeed have been longed for by young people who hold affective and political links to their home-camps, and yet it was certainly far from a *durable solution* as traditionally understood within the context of the formal international refugee regime (which denotes the durable solutions as local integration into a host state, repatriation to *the country of origin*, or

resettlement to a third state).

Nonetheless, in the context of Sahrawi refugees' inability to return to the original *patria* (the Western Saharan 'homeland'), Sahrawi refugees' return to this refugee-camp-origin demonstrates that far from a linear process (displacement – protraction – solution), Sahrawi refugees, like so many other protracted refugees including Palestinians, are always-already in the middle of displacement, where the camp is simultaneously the space of refuge, space of danger, point of origin, point of departure, point of return, and everything in-between and in-becoming. Indeed, well before 2011, both Sahrawi and Palestinian refugees had endured multiple experiences of displacement from Libya since at least the 1970s. These experiences of living in and being displaced in/from Libya both constitute the nature of 'the Sahrawi rhizome' and 'the Palestinian rhizome' respectively, but also delineate traces of what we can refer to as the Libyan dimension of 'the Sahrawi-Palestinian rhizome.' Likewise, the encounter and relationality between Palestinians *and* Syrians displaced by the Syrian conflict and currently living in Baddawi camp in North Lebanon (outlined above) highlights the extent to which 'the Palestinian camp rhizome' is always and already 'more-than-Palestinian', intersecting as it does with the 'Syrian rhizome' to constitute part of the 'Palestinian-Syrian rhizome'.^{ix}

Perhaps the most relevant case for the proposition of a rhizomatic approach to the study of camps derives from the expulsion of an estimated 30,000 Palestinian refugees from Libya in 1995, through which Gaddafi protested the PLO's signing of the Oslo Accords. This mass expulsion was accompanied by the construction of a 'great camp' on the Salloum border between Libya and Egypt, ostensibly, according to

Gaddafi, to secure Palestinians' 'return to Gaza and Jericho'. In Gaddafi's words:

And as I care about the Palestinian cause, and in order to achieve the best interest of Palestinians, I will expel the thirty thousand Palestinians who currently live in my land, and *try to secure their return to Gaza and Jericho*. If Israel would not let them in, while Egypt does not allow them to pass through its territories, then *I shall set a great camp for them on the Egyptian- Libyan borders*.

Gaddafi, quoted by Sarhan in Al-Majdal 2010: 46, emphasis added

It is notable – amongst other remarkable things – that Gaddafi's choice of name for the 'great camp' clearly centralized the Palestinian Right of Return, as enshrined in UN Resolutions 194 and 3236: *Mukhayyam Al-Awda* – The Return Camp.

In this dramatic example, Palestinian individuals, families and communities were simultaneously forcibly displaced and rendered immobile in sacrifice for the greater good: to force 'the' durable solution of Palestinians' right to return to Palestine. We can indeed conceptualise the erection of the Return Camp precisely as a 'forced shoot' (in the sense of a bulb which is forced to bloom out of season), which Gaddafi erupted to the surface, thereby topographically indexing both the existence of Palestinian refugees, and, precisely, their inability to 'return'.

While Palestinian refugees evidently were not able to return to Gaza and Jericho at this time, and The Return Camp disappeared through diverse means (including through the fraught relocation of Palestinians to diverse camps and cities which they

had or had not previously inhabited across the Middle East, and the 'return' of Palestinians to different cities and towns across Libya), the closure of the camp was far from the end of the camp. By the outbreak of the 2011 Libyan war – which affected over 50,000–70,000 Palestinians who were working and studying in Libya at the time (see Fiddian-Qasmiyeh 2015) – several thousand Palestinians were once again left stranded on the Libyan-Egyptian border, including precisely at the Salloum crossing where Gaddafi had, in 1995, created The Return Camp.

The closure of Al-Awda Camp in the late-1990s may have temporarily suppressed the Palestinian camp/shoot that Gaddafi had forced to the surface of the Libyan-Egyptian border in 1995; however, a new line of flight in 2011 led to a camp's physical re-eruption in the same place at another time. This re-eruption reconnected both the new camp and the *trace* of Al-Awda camp to an ever-evolving Palestinian rhizome that is constituted through a multiplication of (current, past, future) places and spaces. In 2011, the camp(s) for Palestinian refugees on the Salloum border – a camp that *returned*, even if it was not The Return Camp – demonstrates that the erasure or closure of a camp at a particular time does not mark the camp's end as it remains as a trace, or, as this case-study suggests, as a camp *in potentia*. Here, the inhabitants, name and purpose of the camp have formally changed over time, and yet both camps are intimately related and intrinsically connected.

Where the construction, disappearance and return of Al-Awda camp remains an under-explored trace of Palestinian experiences of expulsion and encampment, the extreme violence and destruction characterising the siege of Yarmouk camp (referred to in the vignette from/of Baddawi above) has meant that this camp in many regards became – and remains – a key symbol of the ongoing vulnerability of Palestinians in

Syria, and also of the brutality of the Syrian conflict as a whole (see Steele 2015).

However, as argued in more detail in Gabiam and Fiddian-Qasmiyeh (2017), Yarmouk camp acquired a visceral centrality precisely as a symbol of the ongoing Palestinian catastrophe (Sa'di and Abu-Lughod 2007): 'the hermetic siege [of Yarmouk] will be remembered by historians along such infamous memories like that of Deir Yassin, Sabra and Shatila, Jenin and Gaza' (Baroud 2014).

Camps, death and campicide

To these 'remembered' besieged camps and territories, in this section and below I add Nahr el-Bared and Tel el-Zaatar camps in Lebanon, as amongst the innumerable destroyed spaces for which both former residents and those who have never resided therein (including Palestinians who currently live inside or beyond the MENA region) have strong emotional and political affinities, as spaces which have taken on great symbolic and political significance on an individual and collective level across time and space. In addition to this, I argue that they are camps with important 'afterlives,' beyond the dimension of remaining through memories and affinities, even in the context of total erasure and destruction.

Qasmiyeh's account – as a Palestinian who was born and raised in Baddawi camp in North Lebanon and who has now long-researched and 'written' the Palestinian camps from a 'middling' vantage point as a British citizen in the UK since the mid-2000s (see Qasmiyeh, this volume) – is particularly poignant vis-a-vis the multidimensional significance of Nahr el-Bared camp in North Lebanon and its destruction by the Lebanese army:

We used to visit my mother's family in Nahr el-Bared.... [T]hroughout my life, the journey itself to Nahr el-Bared has embodied an unbreakable link between one camp and another through a non-camp space. However, the unbreakable nature of this link was both amputated and transmuted due to the Lebanese military's destruction of Nahr el-Bared in 2007, which entailed the physical erasure of the camp and the relocation of the entire camp population, including my relatives, to my own home camp – Baddawi – and other camps across Lebanon. Despite the physical destruction of the camp infrastructure, or what Ramadan [2009] refers to as an instance of 'urbicide,' this space, this land, still bears the traces of both the living and the deceased, and my mother has continued to visit the cemetery where my grandparents and relatives are buried in Nahr el-Bared. If the destruction of Nahr el-Bared in and of itself embodied a *Nakba* within the *Nakba*, the determination to return, visit and revisit the cemetery there has become a central form of solidarity with memory and history.

Qasmiyeh, cited in Qasmiyeh and Fiddian-Qasmiyeh 2013: 132-133

Even in the case of the 'urbicide' (or 'campicide') of Nahr el-Bared and Yarmouk camps, the 'death of the camp' through physical erasure and forced depopulation is far from an absolute process. Not only does the 'e/razed', flattened camp retain people's emotional and political affinity through their memories and longings, but also through the subterranean trace of Palestine within the camp cemetery's remains.

In the same context, Baddawi camp has come to witness the enduring trace of

refugees whose overlapping experiences of displacement have led to their (temporary or permanent) relocation to live in Baddawi – including through the arrival of refugees displaced from Yarmouk and Nahr el-Bared – and which have also led to their burial in one of Baddawi's cemeteries. The tombstones in Figures 1 and 2 below respectively mark the multiple processes of displacement and violence experienced by internally-displaced refugees from Nahr el-Bared to Baddawi, and by Palestinian refugees displaced from Yarmouk camp in Syria, whose remains now lie, and are inscribed through their tombstones, in Baddawi camp.

<Figures 1 and 2 here>

As Qasmiyeh and I argue (Qasmiyeh and Fiddian-Qasmiyeh 2013: 133) with regards to the tombstones and that which they continue to protect within Nahr el-Bared (in spite of the camp's supra-destruction), the camp cemetery

ironically represents a form of physical permanence which is sadly embodied by the dead while the living continue simultaneously to seek transience in the camps and permanence through a desired return to Palestine. As such, while the living 'desire' transience and refuse their permanent situatedness in the camps – wanting to move, migrate or return to the Palestinian home-land – the inevitability of leaving physical and spiritual traces through both bodies and shrines continues to force a never-ending bond with this transience.

The multiple places of origin – born in Haifa, displaced from Yarmouk, died in Baddawi – marked on the tombstone depicted in Figure 2 point to this simultaneity of transience and permanence, of multiple origins and belongings in contexts of

overlapping displacements. The tombstones - and indeed the graves marked, in poverty, by stones, earth and wild flowers (Figure 3) - are branching shoots nurtured to rise above the camp's surface, offering topographical testament to refugees' simultaneous presence and absence, here and there.

< Figure 4 here: unmarked grave >

In addition to highlighting the extent to which 'ex-camps' continue to have an afterlife through these traces and never-ending bonds with these times and spaces, Qasmiyeh's invocation of the destruction of Nahr el-Bared as 'a *Nakba* within the *Nakba*' (op cit) not only refers to an additional catastrophe (such as the destruction of the camp and subsequent displacement from Nahr el-Bared) within the overarching national catastrophe (i.e. the loss of Palestine and the displacement of Palestinians from their territory); it also offers a tempo-spatial conceptualization which can be tied to the rhizomatic notion of a never-ending eruption of memories, traces and physical structures emerging within always-already-interrupted territories.

A topographical conceptualisation within this context can be indexed to both to the re-birth of Al-Awda/Salloum camp on the Libyan-Egyptian border and to the birth of the tombstones in Baddawi – as individual 'shoots' erupting from subterranean remains to the surface of the earth, with the cemetery performing its dual role as a gatherer and gathering of markers of presence, absence and potentiality (Fiddian-Qasmiyeh and Qasmiyeh, 2017). Hence, while the notion of the destruction of Nahr el-Bared as 'a *Nakba* within the *Nakba*' can clearly be extended to the siege of Yarmouk, and also more broadly to the violence experienced by Palestinians across Syria

throughout the Uprisings in that country, we can also reconfigure this to argue that we must conceptualise 'the camp' itself as both embracing and embodying other camps, becoming more-than-a-camp and also more than a-camp-within-the-camp. The latter is reflected not only through the arrival and enduring presence of Yarmouk within Baddawi camp, but also through the 're-emergence' of Tel el-Zaatar camp, which was destroyed in the Camps War, *within* Baddawi itself – Tel el-Zaatar was erased, and yet continues to exist, physically as well as metaphorically, in Baddawi (see Figure 5).

<Figure 5>

Here, it is not merely memories and meanings of camps that travel across time and space, nor merely the inhabitants of camps that travel physically throughout and across the camp-rhizome: camps themselves travel over time – as exemplified in the case of the return of the trace of The Return Camp through the eruption of 'a' new camp on the Salloum Border – and over space – through the 're-emergence' of Tel el-Zaatar within and *as* Baddawi camp, and some could argue, the more recent arrival of Yarmouk camp in Baddawi.

Within the broader refugee-camp rhizome, where the eruption of tombstones and ex-camps mark the presence/absence of reconfigured camps, it is equally the case that concrete components of an ex-camp may re-emerge in, and even migrate to and from a same-different camp, produced by and producing new encounters. One such 'migratory' shoot is Al-Mazaar School, which in 2018 hosts the largest number of Palestinian children from Syria currently living in Baddawi:

Al-Mazaar School [in addition to Majiddo and Amqa schools] *travelled* with the people from Nahr el-Bared... It used to be in Nahr el-Bared camp but when the camp was destroyed, and the people arrived here, schools were built for the children of Nahr el-Bared and they were *given the same names*. When the war from Nahr el-Bared ended, Amqa school *returned* to Nahr el-Bared while Majiddo and Al-Mazaar *stayed* in Baddawi, both for the children from Nahr el-Bared who remain here. and also for the children from Syria who have more recently arrived.^x

A new structure was erected in Baddawi under the same signifier, 'Al-Mazaar', to educate the same displaced children absent/present in both spaces – the collective departure (from Nahr el-Bared) and arrival (in Baddawi) of the children and their families was accompanied by the 'migration' of their school. This school bears the same name and, initially, taught the same students, but is now (in) a different-same place. While both Al-Mazaar and Majiddo schools migrated to and have 'stayed' in Baddawi, with their physical presence and names now marking the continued absence/presence both of the children of Nahr el-Bared and of Palestinian children from Syria, the secondary level Amqa school 'returned' to Nahr el-Bared as the camp's reconstruction has progressed. Amqa school is both a rekindled shoot in/of Nahr el-Bared and a withered shoot in Baddawi, marking the place where the displaced children once were, are no longer, but may, potentially, be again.

Towards a rhizoanalysis of 'more-than-camps'^{xi}

As highlighted by Qasmiyeh (op cit), journeys between camps (whether 'regular,' to

visit family or cemeteries, or in the context of conflict and mass violence), and the after-lives of camp residents, camps and camp-components alike, simultaneously mark *spatial* connections between different types of space ('an unbreakable link between one camp and another through a non-camp space'), *temporalities* (a simultaneous desire for 'transience' and 'permanence' and an imposed 'never-ending bond with this transience'), *directionalities* and *im/mobilities* (visits, relocation, situatedness, remains, and return).

The presence, absence, and trace of people and camps within, under, through, and *as* a camp such as Baddawi mark the overlapping histories and spatialities of displacement which both define Palestinian-ness and also 'make' the camp – through their symbolic and physical resonance, Yarmouk, Nahr el-Bared and Tel el-Zaatar camps are more-than physically 'within' Baddawi camp, they *are* the history, present and potential future of Baddawi. Baddawi cannot be visited, seen, heard, photographed, or written (Qasmiyeh, 2016, 2017a, 2017b, 2017c, this volume) as a camp, even a home-camp, in isolation – it is, by definition more than 'a' camp, not only because of the movements of people for whom the camp is an origin, a point of departure, a destination and place of refuge, but also because of both the mobility and immobility of different camps and camp-elements in and out of and emerging through the camp. It is always a camp-in-relation, always a camp-in-becoming and both 'a home-camp' and an 'ex-camp' *in potentia*.

Here I am continuing to re-member camps through a rhizoanalysis. In my analysis of Baddawi camp's position in relation to other camps such as Yarmouk, Nahr el-Bared and Tel el-Zaatar, I have aimed to draw the figure/metaphor of the rhizome,

which Deleuze and Guattari conceptualize (some decry, overly romanticize) as characterized by a seemingly limitless adaptability and multiplicity. In line with Deleuze and Guattari's conceptualization of the rhizome, I have aimed to argue that 'sporadic eruptions' – in this case, including the interconnected eruptions of people, tombstones, schools and camps themselves – change the camp-rhizome's very 'nature as it expands its connections' (Deleuze and Guattari 2013: 7): these productive eruptions themselves mean that, although a camp-rhizome 'may be broken, shattered at a given spot ... it will start up again on one of its old lines, or on new lines...' (ibid: 8). In this way, a camp-rhizome is always in a process of *becoming*: it is 'a model that is perpetually in construction or collapsing' and which is characterised by 'a process that is perpetually prolonging itself, breaking off and starting up again' (ibid: 21).

As I have argued elsewhere, what is essential in developing a rhizoanalysis of camps is to 'examine how power works through the organization and conceptualization of space and movement' (Stepputat, 1999: 416), and to 'simultaneously challenge and redefine locatedness,' rather than deny the significance of locatedness (Gedalof 2000). As my research demonstrates (in line with Turton's assertion with regards to the Mursi people of Ethiopia, 1999:421), being displaced should not (only) be defined in terms of having been forcibly removed from a nurturing homeland which one longs for, but as the perpetual risk of being displaced from a broader terrain across which one has multiple, and yet at times paradoxical, attachments and affinities.

Deleuze and Guattari remind us of the coexistence – rather than duality – and mutually constitutive relationship between territorialization and deterritorialization, of locatedness and the permanent risk of expulsion:

Every rhizome contains lines of segmentarity according to which is it stratified, territorialized, organized, signified, attributed, etc., as well as lines of deterritorialization *down which it constantly flees*. There is a rupture in the rhizome whenever segmentary lines *explode into a line of flight*, but *the line of flight is part of the rhizome*. These lines always tie back to one another.

Deleuze and Guattari 2013: 8-9, emphasis added

The conceptualization of territorialized, segmentary lines of a rhizome 'constantly flee[ing]' and 'explod[ing]' into deterritorialized lines of flight which are essential *constitutive* parts of the rhizome, is of particular relevance to my reflection on the nature of camps as more-than-camps: the erasure of Yarmouk, or Nahr el-Bared, or Tel el-Zaatar, has not lead to the death of the camp per se, not only because Nahr el-Bared is being physically 'reconstructed' (on a different scale) as I write, but also because of the flight, eruption and re-emergence *of these camps into* another space (in this case, Baddawi camp) which itself is *constituted* by the imminence of such ruptures, explosions and eruptions.

The multiple processes of erasure, displacement and dispossession that refugees have directly experienced, observed and anticipated from afar, lead me to recognize the significance of Deleuze and Guattari's conceptualization of the rhizome as having 'no beginning or end; it is always in the middle, between things, interbeing, *intermezzo*' (Deleuze and Guattari, 2013: 26). It is from this 'middle' 'from which it grows and which is overflows' (ibid: 22), with the rhizome – and the camp – composed 'not of units but of dimensions, or rather directions in motion' (ibid). When viewed through this analytical lens, refugee camps and their residents are always-already in the middle

of displacement, never at the beginning or at the end. Recognizing that there is no end to 'the refugee cycle' (Black and Koser 1999) is not to refute the significance of developing lines both of segmentarity and of deterritorialization to continue life and living. Rather it encourages us to examine displacement and camps by 'proceeding from the middle, through the middle, coming and going rather than starting and finishing' (Deleuze and Guatarri, 2013: 27). To do so is to challenge, rather than reify, a sense of liminality by recognizing that there are multiple attachments to multiple 'plateaux' and that with each eruption into a line of flight, the camp-rhizome itself changes and continues its process of *becoming*, rather than reaching a (re)solution.

In effect, as I have argued above, refugees, including Sahrawis and Palestinians, develop strong attachments to certain places and territories, including but not limited to the historic homeland (Western Sahara and Palestine, respectively) and home-camps, but also diverse camp and non-camp environments which may or may not have been personally inhabited; this is the case even if such forms of attachment are ambivalent in nature, simultaneously attractive and yet repulsive, spaces of refuge and of persecution (i.e.: see Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, 2013; Qasmiyeh and Fiddian-Qasmiyeh 2013; Gabiam and Fiddian-Qasmiyeh 2017). These multiple forms and directionalities of attachment, and the recognition that refugee camps and their residents, like rhizomes, 'can act at a distance, come or return a long time after, but always under conditions of discontinuity, rupture, and multiplicity' (Deleuze and Guatarri, 2013: 16), require us to continue developing alternative conceptualizations of displacement and camps alike.

Refugee camp-rhizomes – which are constantly changing in light of local, national and geopolitical shifts – encompass infinite spatialities and temporalities, including homelands, home-camps, host-states, and past, present and future other-same-

camps (also see Gabiam and Fiddian-Qasmiyeh 2017). Camps are always more-than-camps, characterized by multiple origins, presents and futures (also see Maalouf's *Origins*), and both connected to and constituted through other camp and non-camp spaces and times. As I have argued elsewhere (Fiddian-Qasmiyeh 2013; Qasmiyeh and Fiddian-Qasmiyeh 2014; Gabiam and Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, 2017), far from being quintessential 'spaces of exception' (Agamben 1998, 2005) or 'non-places' (Diken 2004: 91, referring to Augé), refugee camps are simultaneously 'reservoirs of memory' of the homeland and are themselves spaces of belonging and longing, both as 'lived' home-camps and potent 'symbolic' spaces; they are a symptom of displacement and are also simultaneously 'original' spaces, spaces of origin, of destination, of return, and spaces-in-becoming which intersect, connect with, and are constituted through the eruption of 'other' and 'other-same' refugees' lines of flight. Furthermore, rather than camp-rhizomes developing in isolation (i.e.: assuming the existence of 'the Sahrawi rhizome' or 'the Palestinian rhizome'), it is essential, moving forwards, to continue being attentive to the productive and constitutive processes through which diverse refugees' lines of movement intersect and connect with other refugees' lines of movement (i.e.: the Sahrawi-Palestinian rhizome and the Palestinian-Syrian rhizome implicitly traced above and in Fiddian-Qasmiyeh 2019), and indeed how these intersecting and multiplying lines of flight tie back to one another to constitute the very nature and directionality of these and other rhizome(s).

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ⁱ This multisited research formed the foundation of my ESRC-funded doctoral research vis-à-vis the protracted Sahrawi refugee situation (see Fiddian-Qasmiyeh 2014).

ⁱⁱ Research with a dozen Palestinians undertaking their studies in Cuban universities formed part of my ESRC-funded doctoral research; interviews with 49 Palestinians based in France, Sweden, and the United Kingdom at the time (between 2012 and 2014) formed part of the broader 'Stateless Diasporas in the EU' project funded by the Leverhulme Trust that I led at the University of Oxford (as part of the university-wide Oxford Diaspora Programme) and which examined how Kurds and Palestinians in Europe conceptualise statelessness and diasporic belonging; interviews with Palestinians based in 7 camps across Lebanon were funded by a grant from the Henry Luce Foundation; and my ongoing research with Palestinian refugees from Syria and with Palestinians based in Lebanon is part of a broader project examining local community responses to displacement from Syria across 9 communities in Lebanon, Jordan and Turkey, funded by a large AHRC-ESRC research grant (see www.refugeehosts.org).

ⁱⁱⁱ In relation to the Palestinian camps, these include memorials for past/ongoing events such as the *Nakba* and the Right to Return (see Gabiam and Fiddian-Qasmiyeh 2017).

^{iv} This part of the chapter draws upon sections from Fiddian-Qasmiyeh (2013).

^v Acknowledging that these are different 'modalities' and 'directionalities' of shoots, I have not labeled these different shoots given my concerns around typologies and categorisation, other than referring to Al-Mazaar as a 'travelling' or 'migratory' shoot. I anticipate dwelling further on the modalities and directionalities of these and other shoots within/across/as the Palestinian-Syrian rhizome in future.

^{vi} See: Fiddian-Qasmiyeh 2017, 2019 and Gabiam and Fiddian-Qasmiyeh 2017. Indeed, it is worth stressing that:

Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, E. (forthcoming) "Memories and Meanings of Camps (and more-than-camps)," in Farrier, D., Woolley, A., Stonebridge, L., Durrant, S. and Cox, E. (eds) *Refugee Writing: Contemporary Research Across the Humanities*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press (forthcoming/2019)

'forms of attachment and belongings to places other than Palestine do not necessarily come at the expense of refugees' sense of connection with the Palestinian homeland or their political activism in relation to the homeland. Not only do affective links to the camp and the homeland often co-exist (see Fiddian-Qasmiyeh 2015, 2016) but they can also feed off each other.' (Gabiam and Fiddian-Qasmiyeh 2017: 740)

^{vii} The following sections are based on arguments I have made in Gabiam and Fiddian-Qasmiyeh (2017).

^{viii} I see Mason (2007) on a reported lack of (be)longing to Kuwait amongst ex-Kuwaiti Palestinians based in Australia; cf. Fiddian-Qasmiyeh's research with Palestinians displaced in/from Libya in the 1970s, 1990s and 2000s and who yet report 'missing' and 'longing for' the country (see 2015:131).

^{ix} On the Sahrawi-Cuban-Palestinian rhizome, see Fiddian-Qasmiyeh (2019).

^x This extract is taken from Yousif M. Qasmiyeh and the author's interview with a female Palestinian teacher from and in Baddawi refugee camp, Lebanon in April 2017. Translated by Qasmiyeh from Arabic into English; emphasis added by the author.

^{xi} This section builds upon my experimentation with rhizoanalysis in relation to reconceptualising 'durable solutions' for Sahrawi and Palestinian refugees (Fiddian-Qasmiyeh 2019).