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Faculty of Graduate Studies

The Museum between Industry and Colonialism-

Banksy Museum as a case study

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for the Master's degree in Intercultural Communication and
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Declaration

I'm Riham Abd Almuneim Abdullah Smaneh, declare that this thesis and the work presented in it are my work and has been generated by me as the result of my original research:

The Museum between Industry and Colonialism- Banksy Museum as a case study.

The work provided in this thesis, unless otherwise referenced, has not been submitted by others elsewhere for any other degree or qualification.

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Acknowledgment

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Dedication

To all martyrs, the oppressed humans, and the lost souls in this land... to the memory of my mother... to my beloved father... to everyone who illuminated the path for me with the hope of a better tomorrow... to all those who treasured this land and are devoted to it... to you all my love and gratitude.

Abstract

This thesis is established as a research attempt from inside the Palestinian museum model growing under Israeli colonialism; this museum preserves the structure of national identity and Palestinian memory and may constitute an important part of them. Therefore, in light of this significance, an attempt was made here to understand and analyze the museum by understanding the role of Israeli colonialism, the Palestinian Authority and the cultural industry in the museum. These three sides are examined through the location, holdings of the museum, the mechanism of its work, and its interaction with the environment and the audience, whether in Palestine or abroad. This attempt to dismantle the role of colonialism, authority and the cultural industry comes in order to try to measure the extent to which Palestinian national identity and memory are affected by examining every act or move that is presented in the museum, especially in light of the three dialectical sides intertwining, while highlighting that the existing Israeli colonialism has the greatest influence.

This attempt also tracks and analyzes the holdings and location of the Banksy Museum, the case study in this research, which is located inside a hotel in Bethlehem along with other Palestinian museums such as the Palestinian Museum, Yasser Arafat Museum, Bank of Palestine Museum, Mahmoud Darwish Museum, Palestinian Communist Museum, and others. The research included ten museums that were used to prove or negate some of the hypotheses of this research.

The research focused on presenting the history of museums in Palestine, the period they were established in, their locations, and their historical sequence. All of these Palestinian museums are not separated from the emergence of the international museums' system, its dialectic and the developments that have affected it. This is in order to understand the developments that coincided with the various historical periods and the impact of each of these stages, whether

pre-modern, modern or post-modern, on the building of the museum in general and in Palestine in particular. The research also analyzed the overlap between national identity, memory and the museum in its global context. All of this comes as a basis for understanding the museum system in Palestine and for understanding the type of culture that Palestinian museums mirror, the source of their presentation, the display of symbols of value and impact on memory and national identity and the way to portray these symbols in whole or in part, in addition to the type of discourse that predominates in them to know the impact they leave on the Palestinian national memory and identity.

Key words: Museum, Banksy, National Identity, Memory, Cultural Industries, Authority, Colonialism.

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Chapter I

Introduction 1.1

Palestine has witnessed a recent birth of museum attempts, this claim is due to the fact that the first documented museum attempts were in 1923, which is considered recent if compared with the history of international museums. Moreover, these attempts have been mostly growing in a random and disorganized form, which, according to Bennett, is one of the international standards in the postmodern museum reality¹. This standard model in the Palestinian case may have deeper roots from my point of view and this will become more evident later in this study. In fact, one of the reasons that caused this random and disorganized form is the existing conflict due to the repeated invasions and occupations of Palestine. In particular, the latest one is the present Israeli colonization which created many crises that hindered the formation of the nation-state in Palestine. Thus, these invasions and occupations have deeply affected the formation of museums even after a Palestinian institutional system, which mimics the system of any state, began to emerge and form more clearly after the Oslo Accord.

Among these cultural institutions are the museums, which I will address in this research while examining some museum models in Palestine, especially, museums constructed after 1990 and may be considered contemporary museums, such as the Palestinian Museum and Yasser Arafat Museum. In addition to the two previous museums, there is the

¹ Bennett, Tony. *The Birth of the Museum*. Translated by Mohammed Al-Mubarak and Hassanein Hayat. Bahrain: Bahrain Authority for Culture and Publishing, (2019), 125.

Banksy Museum, which will be presented as a base case study in this research. In fact, I chose this model for two reasons; the first is its questionable location in the midst of scenes of colonial violence, and the second reason is the works of art that are manifested in the museum, which were formed by an anonymous foreigner and were displayed on the Balfour Centenary. Furthermore, other museums will be added to this model that will be included in the research.

This comes in an attempt to dismantle and criticize these museums through several aspects; namely, Israeli colonialism, the existence of the Palestinian Authority, and cultural commodification. The main reason for this is to understand the structure of the museums in the research, their discourse, and their impacts through these three overlapping aspects. This comes in order to measure the impact of the museums' works on the Palestinian national identity and narrative.

This dismantling is examined through several theories that we will discuss during the research; some of which are secondary and some are structurally basic to this research. The first one is the nation-building theory, which sees that the nation is built through the construction of the national narrative, and is built through the imaginary that explains what societies will be like, according to Anderson. The nation is also built, according to Foucault and Bourdieu, through disciplinary methods that ensure these building processes. In fact, these disciplinary methods are demonstrated through different state and civil society institutions of which the museum is a part. I will explain later what the role of the museum is in this building process, and I will present this from the point of view of both Anderson and Bourdieu.

The second theory is the culture industry theory, which I presented from the point of view of Adorno and Horkheimer regarding capitalist domination and the introduction of art

and aesthetics to the market. This is presented through works displayed in museums in order to harmonize with the global context and to ensure that museums attract larger audiences and satisfy them.

While the third theory will be related to colonialism and domination and the impact of each of them on the museum system with its works. I present this from two points of view; the first is Fanon's point of view who highlights the depth of the colonizer's influence on the indigenous population and the impossibility of breaking away from the domination of the colonizer without its demise. The other point of view is for Marcuse, which reflects the invisible domination and control even of non-colonial societies from which it is also difficult to break. This comes in an attempt to examine the extent of the adherence of the entire museum system to the ruling regimes whether colonial or other. This is what I will try to emphasize in the research using the above theories, which will confirm or deny whether there is an impact of the hegemony of culture, education, and disciplinary tools on the works of the museum, its architecture, its facilities, and the behaviour of the individual during the visit to the museum.

This research will also present a summary of the emergence of museums in the world, especially in the stage of modernity and after this stage. The research will investigate the changes that occurred in the museums' function, purpose, tools, and ideology, and it will use the theories of the birth of museums, then it will advance on to the emergence of museums in Palestine and present a summary of some of the Palestinian museums since their inception until the present day. The summary will include the Palestinian museum's ideology, tools, and purpose in brief, and it will elaborate more on the main case study, which is the Banksy Museum.

Even though the world perspective of a museum, as Stallabrass points out, is mainly directed towards the museum that represents the past, the present and the future with what they carry from sufferings, successes, and morals for generations and predictions of the future, it is also directed towards displaying postmodern art, which tends to appear as something very unique². Thus, even though Palestine is still hostage to this extended past due to settler colonialism, it is not isolated from this perspective. Moreover, Palestine with its open space is considered an open museum with what it holds from destroyed ancient buildings, the signs of the existing checkpoints, and the apartheid wall along with the other sights stretching as far as the eye can see, to which new items are added every day because of the actions of the colonizer. From this, many questions arise regarding the cultural life that arises in the colonial environment, this environment led to the emergence of criticism and many questions about the museum system in Palestine, and in which we find different voices that support or attack these attempts. These diverse voices were observed in the sample of specialists interviewed while conducting this research, represented by 27 experts in museums and art criticism in Palestine. It has been demonstrated through this sample that 80% of the specialists support the establishment of museums despite the presence of colonialism and in the midst of conflict with it, while 20% do not support the establishment of museums in the presence of occupation³.

These specialists believe that the cultural system in Palestine, including museums, has undergone radical transformations as it has been and is still subjected to colonial violence, whether through destroying its facilities, interfering with its agendas, or restriction of its discourses and activities. To illustrate, anyone who violates the conditions of the colonizer is subjected to arrest, in addition to other penalties imposed by the colonizer through multiple means.

² Stallabrass, Julian. *Contemporary Art: A Very Short Introduction*. Translated by Marwa Shehata. Egypt: Hendawy Foundation for Education and Culture, (2014), 12.

³ This result came after conducting 27 interviews with specialists in museums and art criticism in Palestine.

In light of these details that constitute the museum's controversial state in the Palestinian case, can we claim that these museums can reflect Palestine imagined future in consonance with the existing narrative and identity? Are these communities shaped by the symbols and narratives that are passed on and implanted through cultural institutions of which the museum is a part? What is the extent of colonial structuralism's influence in this industry? I'm here pointing to the museum industry on the one hand, and the extent to which it has fallen into the trap of cultural commodification on the other. Also, what is the impact of both on the creation of museums? Also, how does the public living within this colonial system receive the idea of a museum and emerging artistic cases? I will try to disassemble and answer all these and other questions through the chapters of this research.

1.2 Research Objective

This research aims to discover the impact of the cultural industry on the museum system, the extent of its impact on the frameworks of memory and national Palestinian identity, and if the museum system has undergone transformations as a result of this industry, with the presence of Israeli colonialism and the interventions of the authority and capital. This impact of the cultural industry will be measured by the recipient and the creator, whether the artist or the founder of the museum and through the artworks in the museum. Knowing that I claim that the cultural industry under colonialism and in light of the interventions of the authority and capital may have an impact on Palestinian memory and identity, especially since this industry in Palestine coincided with the continued existence of the colonizer.

1.3 Research Methodology

The research uses a set of qualitative research techniques, which will be linked with the theoretical framework and literary readings related to the research context. It will mainly be based on interviews as the most data-gathering tool for the purpose of this research, in addition to analyzing the artworks presented in the research sample, i.e. the Banksy Museum. In this research, two types of interviews were used; the first type is the in-depth interviews, which aim to investigate information rich with the objectives and questions of the research. These interviews were conducted with a group of researchers who specialized in the art and museum field, and their specialization is related to the research objectives as follows:

1. Museum directors or owners, who follow up and manage the affairs of the museums addressed in this research. This is in order to identify the mechanism of the museum's work, its objectives and its origins. Attached in Appendix (1) are the questions which were asked to this sample of respondents.
2. Specialized museum curators, with the aim to hear their critical views regarding the models of museums spread in Palestine. Attached in Appendix (2) are the questions which were asked to this sample of respondents.
3. Palestinian artists from Palestine, in the homeland and the diaspora, to understand their relationship with museums and their role in producing artworks. They were also interviewed in an attempt to discover to what extent they were influenced by the cultural industry and to see if they believe there is a possibility of breaking away from it. Attached in Appendix (3) are the questions which were asked to this sample of respondents.

The second type is structured interviews, which focused on the surrounding population in the research sample in the Al-Azza and Aida camps. These interviews aimed to measure the impact of the museum and the museum's discourse on the ordinary citizen, in addition to understanding how much they benefited from the museum and their relationship and

association with it. Attached in Appendix (4) are the questions which were asked to this sample of respondents.

Furthermore, observation and monitoring are important tools in conducting this research. That is, monitoring the museums' models and the holdings they contain means looking closely at the item you want to see as it enables the researchers to describe what they witness. While, observation means, according to Abdelghani, to link between what is seen and what is heard.⁴ Thus, the importance of these interviews, according to the objectives of the research, is that they are attempts to understand the policies used in museums in Palestine in light of their existence under colonialism. The interviews also seek to understand the implications of the museums' location and holdings and their impact on Palestinian identity and memory. These collected sources of information are accompanied by a process of cognitive investigation of the studies and theories analyzed and compared to the dismantling and analysis of interviews and observations.

1.4 Research Sample

The total number of interviews in the research was represented by forty-six interviews; four curators, two art critics, five museum directors, thirteen Palestinian artists, and two art collectors. Their names are attached in Appendix (5). The rest of the twenty interviews were with the surrounding citizens of the Banksy Museum, and they were with a few random residents of Al-Izza and Aida camps.

1.5 Research Questions

⁴ Abdelghani, Imad. *manhajiat albahth fi eilm al'ijtima'i, al'iishkaliaati, al'tiqniaati, almuqarabat*. Beirut: Dar Al-Tali'a for Printing and Publishing, (2007), 67.

Main questions:

1. Has the cultural industry affected the museum system in Palestine?
 2. Are the new Palestinian museums built on a new culture based on the accepted and popular peaceful approach in the world?
 3. Does this approach reproduce colonial domination in the new museum form within the colonized space?
- Secondary questions:
 1. What are the changes that have taken place in museums in Palestine in terms of their purpose, tools, and ideology in the postmodern era?
 2. What are the effects of colonialism on museums in Palestine?
 3. Has the museum system become the product of a profit-making cultural industry?
 4. Can the cultural industry break away from the structure produced by colonialism and power?
 5. What is the impact of the imaginary of the museum system on the narrative and national identity?
 6. How has the museum system been affected by the existing Palestinian Authority?
 7. What is the type of discourse (manifested through artworks) in the museum space? Is it part of the discourse of political nonviolence reproduced by cultural institutions?

1.6 Research Hypotheses

- A new culture has been formed in the Palestinian museums through the use of the cultural industry which is the source of capital and which is presented by the new

museum form. Additionally, the cultural industry reproduces colonial domination over the colonized self.

- The museum considers itself a tool of resistance but, on the other hand, it encourages choosing the peaceful approach with the colonizer and considers its existence an inescapable reality, whereas the colonizer sees the natives as mere objects to be exterminated.
- On the one hand the memorials, some symbols and images disappear in this form, while other images appear in a new shadow that promotes the building of a peaceful revolutionary culture, on the other hand, the colonizer still maintains its violent acts and expands them.
- The nonviolent, peaceful and tolerant discourse pursued by the world dominates the museum space in Palestine; it is part of the power of political nonviolence discourse reproduced by cultural institutions.
- The complexity between the Palestinian Authority, Israeli colonialism and the cultural industry have an impact and an active role in the making of the museum system.

Chapter II: The Museum

2.1 The Concept of the Museum

The concept of a museum has changed frequently since its emergence, and no definitive definition has been agreed upon due to the specificity of each country in its museums on the one hand, and the diversity of museum forms on the other. The word (Musee – Museum) is derived from the word (Mouseion), a Greek word that refers to a temple that was built in Greece for the seven gods, and it contained many antiques and valuables that were given as a form of gratitude to the gods.⁵ The term Museum, according to its modernist origins, is the place where valuable things are placed, such as the cultural heritage of people throughout the ages, from sciences, arts, and all aspects of life. The purpose of this place is so that the public gets the opportunity to know and study the stages of human life development and its civilizational achievements⁶.

A museum holding does not necessarily mean inanimate objects, and dead things (obsolete eras) placed in a museum as it was previously known, but rather has become more diverse and selective in its display of the past, present, and future. These museums represent the viewpoint of the political and religious elite as a whole because they have undergone changes throughout the stages of their formation; these changes are caused by the fragmentation of identities, and as a result, more diversity has been allowed.

2.2 The Birth of the Museum and its Development

⁵ Zuhdi, Bashir. *almatahif*. Damascus: Ministry of Culture Press, (1998), 15.

⁶ Bennett, Tony. *The Birth of the Museum*. Translated by Mohammed Al-Mubarak and Hassanein Hayat. Bahrain: Bahrain Authority for Culture and Publishing, (2019), 33.

The first part of this chapter deals with the birth of the museum in terms of its origins, tools, goals and ideology throughout the stages of its formation, with a focus on the postmodern stage. As for the second part, it deals with museums in Palestine through all the aspects I mentioned, with a focus on contemporary museums given the emergence and diversity of museums in Palestine during this stage.

Museums have witnessed multiple sequential stages to appear in their current form today. The beginning was with the Alexandria Museum and the Pergame Museum in Asia Minor (197 BC), these were among the oldest museums that were known in history⁷. These museums were followed by the establishment of Italian museums, as the Italians were known for their passion for art collections of all kinds. As a matter of fact, this made many museum specialists consider Italy the birthplace of museums in the fifteenth century⁸. In the years 1792-1789, after the French Revolution, the expansion of museums returned and in abundance in the Louvre Palace.

Furthermore, on May 26 of the year 1791, a decree was issued that stipulates the transfer of all antiquities and art collections of the princes of ancient eras to the Louvre, which was officially opened in 1793 and was considered the first National Museum in Europe.⁹ In this regard, the Louvre was formed from the historic monuments of princes and eras, in addition to what was obtained during the various excavations in the countries that were colonized, especially in Egypt¹⁰. In view of our inability to return to the complete sequence of museums throughout history, I will confine myself to this simplified presentation of the first museums. I will move to the stages that followed this emergence, which we can divide into three stages;

⁷ Zuhdi, Bashir. *almatahif*. Damascus: Ministry of Culture Press, (1998), 18.

⁸ *Ibid*, 26.

⁹ *Ibid*, 31.

¹⁰ *Ibid*.

the pre-modern stage, the modernity stage, and the postmodern stage to which I will pay more attention and focus in this research.

2.3 Museums in the Pre-modern Stage

According to Bennett, in this stage museums, at the beginning of their formation, were considered places restricted to the ruling elite, i.e. the bourgeoisie, as the holdings of the museums were separated from the public by placing them in the vaults of palaces and places forbidden to enter by other classes¹¹. These places had different names other than 'museums' at the beginning, such as classrooms, cabinets of curiosity, antique rooms, and art rooms. The museums also had a variety of functions, such as stressing the royal authority as a status symbol to aristocrats and merchants. They were all socially closed spaces, access to which was markedly restricted, sometimes only to the person of the prince¹².

Then, in the middle of pre-modernity, a wider audience was allowed but it included and was limited to the elite. Bennett says that these places or museums have formed their ideal audience that matches their vision and aspirations and, in turn, the ideal function of the collections in their custody. Also, museums were used in the formation of the bourgeois public sphere, and the social space of the museum was reorganized to play this role¹³. This role in its essence shows the social exclusion of other classes, and museums in this period were under the control of the bourgeois ruling class.

2.4 Museums in the Modernity Stage

¹¹ Bennett, Tony. *The Birth of the Museum*. Translated by Mohammed Al-Mubarak and Hassanein Hayat. Bahrain: Bahrain Authority for Culture and Publishing, (2019), 33.

¹² *Ibid*, 196.

¹³ *Ibid*, 65.

The second stage is the stage of modernity, in which Bennett sees that the museum has supplanted and surpassed the cabinets of curiosity, which contained various forms of the museum's components¹⁴. This transformation came after the French Revolution, which had a great impact on opening the representative space of the museum by breaking the chain of succession of royal families¹⁵. A lot of the exhibits that were kept in the cabinets of curiosity or in the treasuries of the bourgeois class and amateur aristocrats were transformed to be displayed as performances and festivals for the public. Also, the idea of elitism emanating from the authority disintegrated and the entire state function shifted to take the role of the educator. This shift was due to the effectiveness of this role in ensuring the control of the authority, which led to the presentation of authority in front of the general public and the presentation of the general public within the ruling classes¹⁶ to show the state's relations with a moral scene, which was considered a distinctive feature of the modern bourgeois state and not a defining characteristic of the state itself.

The state's apparent ideology was based on the dismantling of the mechanisms of the ruling class's hegemony over art and archaeological collectibles. During this era, museums expanded more, and the display of sacred images of previous religions decreased, while the display of past lifestyles increased, with a focus on educating and developing the aesthetic sense and artistic expertise, in addition to disseminating knowledge, spreading culture, achieving awareness, and raising the artistic, cultural and social level of people¹⁷. In the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, the international museum culture remained firmly committed to the idea that the first responsibility of a public art museum, which is to enlighten

¹⁴ Bennett, Tony. *The Birth of the Museum*. Translated by Mohammed Al-Mubarak and Hassanein Hayat. Bahrain: Bahrain Authority for Culture and Publishing, (2019), 20.

¹⁵ Bazin, Germain. *The Museum Age*. New York: Universal Press. (1967), 218.

¹⁶ Bennett, Tony. *The Birth of the Museum*. Translated by Mohammed Al-Mubarak and Hassanein Hayat. Bahrain: Bahrain Authority for Culture and Publishing, (2019), 208.

¹⁷ *Ibid*, 35.

and improve its visitors morally, socially, and politically.¹⁸ This engraved culture coincided with the emergence of training of the middle and public classes to become pioneers of these museums after refining and immersing them in the system and obsessions of control so that they become more suitable to attend the museum.

As a matter of fact, France was one of the first countries where the dated principles of museum display and forming its suitable audience were developed¹⁹. These principles were subjected to continuous processes of politicization, and this was reflected in the discursive space of the museum in its nineteenth-century formation. The discursive space of the museum was a highly complex one shaped, in the main, by two contradictions that have served to generate and fuel a field of political relations and demands peculiar to the museum form²⁰. We can consider these contradictions the beginning of a disintegration of the relationship between the museum and the political relations as the relationship began to take a less severe form. In this period, the museum was also eager to adhere to the traditional form of the concept of world art history, which is keen to present its own history in the form of a series of events organized by the museum itself. This transformation in the style and place of display came as a result of the emergence of nation-states that needed new tools to help them achieve their goals of domination. Therefore, museums formed a part of new strategies of governing aimed at producing a citizenry that, rather than needing to be externally and coercively directed, would increasingly monitor and regulate its own conduct, rather than needing to be forcibly directed from outside²¹.

This is what we refer to through the research because it reflects the changing nature of the relationship between power and culture and how the first used museums with their artworks as

¹⁸ Duncan, Carol. *The Art Museum as Ritual*. (2005), 12.

¹⁹ Bennett, Tony. *The Birth of the Museum*. Translated by Mohammed Al-Mubarak and Hassanein Hayat. Bahrain: Bahrain Authority for Culture and Publishing, (2019), 166.

²⁰ *Ibid*, 216.

²¹ *Ibid*, 36.

a tool for the social management of the people after museums were nothing but cabinets of curiosity filled with dust and chaos. What confirms this according to Bennett, is that at the eighteenth century and the beginning of the nineteenth century, museums had to be refashioned so that they might function as a space of emulation in which civilized forms of behaviour might be learnt and thus diffused more widely through the social body,²² it has become an effective teaching tool because of that. Moreover, this is confirmed through the adopted pedagogic policies by the museums during the period 1902-1910 that was dedicated under the claim of the more conservative ideology of patriotic competence or the more liberal ideology of social reform²³. This led the authority to shift its view and consider high culture as a tool that can be used to control the field of social behaviour by giving the individual the ability to self-monitoring and control. From my point of view, this stage can be considered the foundational stage of the form that the museum has reached in today's world, with a difference in the tools used in the museum system.

2.5 The Museums in the Postmodern Stage

As for the third stage, from the postmodern stage to the contemporary stage, it is considered a product and complement to the previous stage and is characterized by many qualities, including aesthetic features. According to Duncan, the aesthetic feature is one of the competing principles of previous museums, i.e. the aesthetic museum²⁴. Accordingly, this stage witnessed the emergence of the idea of aesthetics in the artworks of museums, which was used as an essential tool. This stage was also characterized by the fact that museums were prompted to maintain the necessity of creating a sense of continuity and historical legitimacy

²² *Ibid*, 64.

²³ Bennett, Tony. *The Birth of the Museum*. Translated by Mohammed Al-Mubarak and Hassanein Hayat. Bahrain: Bahrain Authority for Culture and Publishing, (2019), 66.

²⁴ Duncan, Carol. *The Art Museum as Ritual*. (2005), 12.

through these aesthetic works. This is what politicians and capitalists need to consolidate the idea of a nation-state while hiding or ignoring the oppression of the indigenous population²⁵.

Moreover, since 1902, museums have been interested in building their image as a tool of popular education. In fact, this goal was a tool used by the museum to ensure that it had a recognized role in the annual conference of the Museums Association that year. This is because the museum was seen as the only great national work, as it aimed to build the empire by promoting communities and the individual.²⁶ This is one of the reasons museums were eager to attract visitors by taking into account the different cultural contexts of learning for visitors, through their enthusiasm to know the values and standards of different cultures and respect these cultures to meet the acceptance they want through their enthusiasm to understand the receiving audience. They have also tried to dismantle the idea of the traditional museum, by replacing the traditional theme with a new modern theme. These attempts are manifested in the significant diversity museums offer around the world, and in fact, the diversity and random model might be an attempt to create a new museum form depicting events in a different way.

Museums have become a space for contemplating artworks and a place for shows and events to be performed. This is because the museums are no longer limited to events organized by museums today like organizing exhibitions projects only but also lectures, conferences, readings, performances, concerts, guided tours, and so forth. The artistic projects presented by artists or craftsmen in these museums and through performances were keen to be in harmony with the human culture that permeated and invade their world,²⁷ according to

²⁵ Bennett, Tony. *The Birth of the Museum*. Translated by Mohammed Al-Mubarak and Hassanein Hayat. Bahrain: Bahrain Authority for Culture and Publishing, (2019), 368.

²⁶ Coombes, Annie E. *Museums and the Formation of National and Cultural Identities*. Oxford Art Journal. (1988), 64.

²⁷ Bennett, Tony. *The Birth of the Museum*. Translated by Mohammed Al-Mubarak and Hassanein Hayat. Bahrain: Bahrain Authority for Culture and Publishing, (2019), 67.

Bennett. Moreover, according to Mansour, this attitude has increased in the contemporary period where every design has become a social responsibility with the need to have an impact on collective thought within the prevailing context²⁸.

Furthermore, the museums in this period did not only present a world art history but were also filled with documents of past art events displayed alongside traditional artworks as an attempt to document an old event and turn it into a new event element and thus give it a new aura²⁹. Following this, the functions of the museum are considered complementary to the role of the museum that works on fulfilling civilizational continuity and human creativity, in addition to developing freedom of thought and careful observation by visitors. Significantly, museums are useful means in developing human energies, freedom of thought, depth of contemplation and careful observation, in addition to contributing to achieving a sense of scientific and civilized entity, achieving cooperation among all, developing human ideas, enhancing moral duty, and satisfying the passions of tourists according to Zuhdi³⁰. This is because we are living in an era where the museum has become a forum for civilization, a centre for scientific research, and a popular university for all³¹ with its various structural forms that play great importance in its fame, and this can be seen in both the museums that are established in ancient historical and archaeological buildings and the museums that are established in recently constructed buildings³².

Zuhdi highlights that many discussions took place in the postmodern period, which came as a result of the renewed interest in the New Museum Idea that is concerned with all classes. These discussions, according to Bennett, happened to change the idea that the

²⁸ Interview with the Palestinian artist, Suleiman Mansour, August 2, 2021.

²⁹ Bennett, Tony. *The Birth of the Museum*. Translated by Mohammed Al-Mubarak and Hassanein Hayat. Bahrain: Bahrain Authority for Culture and Publishing, (2019), 72.

³⁰ Zuhdi, Bashir. *almatahif*. Damascus: Ministry of Culture Press, (1998), 71-75.

³¹ *Ibid*, 102.

³² *Ibid*, 119.

museum is restricted to the bourgeois class, but rather extended to other classes for the purpose of education and entertainment. Meaning that the museum's purpose is to provide the average recipient with entertainment and knowledge and to provide the researcher with all possible means to examine and study the samples that are part of the museum's holdings. This may, in part, be in accord with the museum concept in the nineteenth century, which aimed to spread rational entertainment among the masses, and has turned into a provider of both "rational entertainment" and "scientific study".³³ In fact, the extension of the democratic principle of "education for all" was transformed through the institution of the museum into a discourse inextricably implicated in imperial ideologies³⁴.

This period also witnessed the expansion of the museums' range to be established by the state, municipalities, and the private sector (individuals) as an alternative to an entire space of transcendental artistic representation for everyone and everything. This was done through the preservation and maintenance of antiques of all kinds against the destructive power of time³⁵. As for the places the museums were established, they were, in fact, in ancient monumental buildings throughout these times. However, the shape of these buildings did not remain the same in the post-modern world and took on new innovative and bold forms and meanings commensurate with the discourse of technology, which replaced the discourse of symbol and myth. As a matter of fact, the shape of these buildings reflected in its entirety the virtual imagination provided by contemporary technologies³⁶. In addition, the museums, with their new meanings, have threatened to drop ideologies and have worked to dismiss some of the major narratives from the museum's discourse.

³³ Coombes, Annie E. *Museums and the Formation of National and Cultural Identities*. Oxford Art Journal: 11, no. 2 (1988), 57.

³⁴ Bennett, Tony. *The Birth of the Museum*. Translated by Mohammed Al-Mubarak and Hassanein Hayat. Bahrain: Bahrain Authority for Culture and Publishing, (2019), 142.

³⁵ *Ibid*, 96.

³⁶ Bennett, Tony. *The Birth of the Museum*. Translated by Mohammed Al-Mubarak and Hassanein Hayat. Bahrain: Bahrain Authority for Culture and Publishing, (2019), 97.

The museums have also promoted moving away from every standard measure and have strengthened the principles of individual affiliation as it was infused with the features of consumer commodity culture³⁷. The consumer commodity culture, in addition to what I mentioned earlier, is a characteristic of postmodern museums, which in their entirety were characterized by a chaotic, irrational and non-standard character³⁸.

2.6 Museums in Palestine

This chapter deals with the history of the birth of museums in Palestine in light of the never-ending colonial era. It shows parts of the history of some of these museums but more emphasis will be placed on contemporary museums, especially the Banksy Museum. These museums will be presented in terms of their tools, ideology, goal, and the impact of the uniqueness of the museum in Palestine, which is living under colonialism on the whole museum context.

As a matter of fact, Palestine was not isolated from the international museum form, although it has not joined it since its inception due to the multiple crises that afflicted and are still afflicting Palestine. It is noted that the development and growth of museums were slow. However, we can consider that the Palestinian museum style has been in harmony with the museum style in the postmodern era, as it did not go out of the context of the standards that were followed during this stage. This is what I will try to prove later in the research. The attempts of establishing museums kept advancing in Palestine and are still ongoing. Although the progress of these developments was slow and invisible due to the domination of the colonizer and its violence, the attempts still existed, and most of them were concentrated in Jerusalem and Bethlehem. The reason for this, from my point of view, is the religious

³⁷ Zuhdi, Bashir. *almatahif*. Damascus: Ministry of Culture Press, (1998), 77.

³⁸ Spicci, Mauro. *Museums, Memory and the Shaping of Identity*. (2011), 113.

significance of the two cities. This is what I noticed during researching and investigating the sites where the museums were located. Here, I will be mentioning and summarizing some of the museums I examined:

1. The Islamic Museum in Jerusalem, (1923):

The era of modernity witnessed the first officially documented museums in Palestine, which began with the establishment of the Islamic Museum in Jerusalem, founded by the Supreme Islamic Council in 1923³⁹. The museum is located to the west of Al-Aqsa Mosque in East Jerusalem. At the beginning of its birth, it contained a large number of copper soup pots and a cannon to announce the Iftar in Ramadan. In addition to a large tree stump and the remains of a pulpit. The museum also contained a large number of Qurans dedicated to Al-Aqsa Mosque through successive Islamic eras. However, over time, the museum's holdings expanded to include a collection of models of simple weapons that were used, such as cartridges, (gunpowder), the bloodstained clothing of the 17 Palestinians who were killed in the Haram al-Sharif in 1990,⁴⁰ and other various holdings that in its beginning reflected the religious identity. Then, the museum began to expand after the first intifada, and it began to display what is related to peaceful resistance and the suffering of the Palestinians under the violence of colonialism. With this, the museum combined the symbols of religious identity and national identity, as I could notice from what is displayed⁴¹.

2. The Palestine Museum of Antiquities, the Rockefeller Museum, (1938):

The Palestine Museum of Antiquities (Rockefeller Museum) is an archaeological museum located in East Jerusalem. It includes a large collection of artefacts discovered from

³⁹ Zuhdi, Bashir. *almatahif*. Damascus: Ministry of Culture Press, (1998), 59-60.

⁴⁰ "Islamic Museum, Jerusalem," Wikiwand, accessed May 29, 2021, https://www.wikiwand.com/en/Islamic_Museum,_Jerusalem.

⁴¹ *Ibid*.

excavations carried out in Palestine during the British Mandate period, between the twenties and thirties of the twentieth century, which reflects the stages of Palestinian history that influenced the formation of national identity. The museum contains a library built by architect Austin Harrison, and it was officially opened in 1938 to be one of the oldest archaeological museums in the Middle East. Then it was seized by Israel after the 1967 War and today it is under the management of the Israeli Museum.⁴²

3. The Talhami House Museum, (1948):

The Talhami House Museum was established in 1948 in Bethlehem and is specialized in collecting Palestinian dresses and garments that represent the identity of Palestinian cities from its inception until today.

4. Birzeit Museum, (1994):

The beginning of the art collection at Birzeit Museum was the work of Swiss artist René Freer who donated his six unique works in 1994 to the museum. His work is a collection of paintings that represents abstract sketches and these paintings were displayed in the first world-class art exhibition in November of the same year; the works were hung in the museum since that day in the main library. After that, artworks by the late Syrian artist Marwan Kassab Bachi joined the collection in 1998, in addition to many other works donated by many artists such as Samia Halabi, Etel Adnan and Kamal Boullata. These works were exhibited and preserved in the Qamar Gallery of Visual Arts, which was the first art gallery opened at the university in 2000. That being so, the Museum of Heritage and Artistic Collections opened its first gallery in 2005 under the direction of artist Vera Tamari, accompanied by the launch of

⁴² Interview with the Palestinian collector of antiquities and works of art, and who contributed to the establishment of multiple museums such as the Bank of Palestine Museum, George Al-A'ma, June 17, 2021.

the Virtual Gallery website, which was concerned with creating an electronic archive that included works from Palestinian art and art collections of Birzeit University.

In 2010, an educational art program was launched in the heart of the university as part of a vision that illustrates the potential the museum enjoys in the heart of the university and connects it in an organic relationship with the history of cultural work in the university as a whole. The museum focused on producing exhibitions by itself and throughout the year so that exhibitions intersect with the university's education programs and the art program for schools. During this period, the museum strived on producing conceptual and periodic exhibitions inside the museum and was interested in interdisciplinary artistic production and examined concepts circulating in education, media and political discourse through the production of three annual exhibitions.⁴³

Vera Tamari suggests that, in addition to all of the above, one of the purposes of the art exhibitions in Birzeit Museum was to display interactive and participatory works between the public and the museum through the use of public space in forming artworks in front of the public's sight so that they become accustomed to the scene and be able to enter the museum and think about the displayed works.⁴⁴ George Al-A'ma expresses that Birzeit Museum⁴⁵ played an enlightening role for Birzeit University students and was a method to introduce artists to each other. Therefore, Birzeit Museum is primarily artistic, and in this, it intersects with the Banksy Museum, considering the different intended audiences in each of them.

5. Mahmoud Darwish Museum, (2012):

⁴³ "About the Museum." Birzeit Museum, November 19, 2022. <http://museum.birzeit.edu/>.

⁴⁴ Interview with the Palestinian artist, the lecturer in Islamic art and architecture at Birzeit University, and one of the founders of the Birzeit Museum, she has also worked in managing the museum previously, Vera Tamari, August 25, 2021.

⁴⁵ Interview with the Palestinian collector of antiquities and works of art, George Al-A'ma, June 17, 2021.

Mahmoud Darwish Museum was established in 2012 to emphasize the position that Darwish carried in the Palestinian, Arab and international poetry and prose movement. This museum was founded in an effort to spread Darwish's achievements on the widest scale, highlight his poetic and prose-rich heritage, also in recognition of Mahmoud Darwish's creative uniqueness, which made him widely appreciated and respected, and in order to preserve his remarkable cultural heritage and commemorate his memory.

The museum contains collections related to the history of the poet and his private life⁴⁶. Rantawi says that the museum was opened on the fourth anniversary of the death of the poet Mahmoud Darwish. The museum contributes to building a Palestinian cultural scene through a set of angles that were specially built to form an open public theatre, whether through the Freedom Forum or Al-Birwa Garden. Furthermore, the museum's holdings reflect the noble values that are centred on the love of the homeland, securing people's dignity, respect for reason and the glorification of life by keeping up with new Palestinian and international publications and presenting them through cultural evenings and projects⁴⁷. It is observed that all the holdings in the museum belong to the late Darwish, i.e. they reflect the life history of a Palestinian poet. However, it was unanimously called a museum despite its small size and few holdings, unlike the Banksy Museum, which I will examine later, which contains many collectibles and is not centred on one person.

6. Bank of Palestine Museum, (2013):

This museum is considered one of the important archaeological museums, as it was announced to be established in 2013 after a decision was issued by the Ministry of Tourism to establish museums that attract and activate the tourism movement⁴⁸. The Bank of Palestine

⁴⁶ The Mission and Vision of Mahmoud Darwish Museum. Accessed July 2021. <http://bitly.ws/gMyx>.

⁴⁷ Interview with the former director of the Mahmoud Darwish Museum, Qais Rantawi, June 22, 2021.

⁴⁸ Interview with the Palestinian collector of antiquities and works of art, George Al-A'ma, June 17, 2021.

Museum is located in Bethlehem, and it is one of the tourist destinations because of its beauty and appearance. Furthermore, the aim of establishing and building this museum was to preserve the cultural and popular heritage. The museum is characterized by its innovative design and the beauty of its view, in addition to the splendour of its holdings and possessions. This museum's great importance is manifested in the preservation of the customs and traditions of the Palestinian people. It also included, among its folds, a large collection of records and documents, and possessed a number of collectibles and archaeological tools. This museum has supported the continuous artwork, which made it include a large number of pictures and paintings belonging to major artists such as the plastic artist and the great critic Jabra Ibrahim Jabra, the plastic artist Sofia Halabi and many other artists⁴⁹.

Al-A'ma, a collector and documenter of the museum's holdings, voices that the museum contains works dating back 400 years and more of Palestinian creativity. Even though it is currently closed, it mimics the approach of old museums with its accumulated holdings, which it is ready to buy from various auctions⁵⁰. This interference between art and capital does not occur in a vacuum, rather, art serves the capital in this particular case because the bank is willing to buy these works and participate in the cultural field in order to reduce the taxes imposed on it. It is known that if the owner of the capital or the project proves that this person has undertaken any activities in the interest of preserving the historical heritage, and in the interest of educating generations and serving the Palestinian cause, then this will be in the favor of reducing the taxes imposed on him⁵¹.

7. The Palestinian Museum, (2016):

⁴⁹ "About the Museum." Bank of Palestine Museum, June 2021. <http://bitly.ws/gNzY>.

⁵⁰ Interview with the Palestinian collector of antiquities and works of art, George Al-A'ma, June 17, 2021.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*

The Palestinian Museum, a non-governmental association registered in Switzerland with a branch in Palestine (under registration), is dedicated to promoting an open and vibrant Palestinian culture at the local and international levels. The Museum offers and contributes to the production of narratives about Palestine's history, culture and society with a new perspective, and provides an incubator environment for creative projects, educational programs and innovative research.

The Museum is designed to be an institution that crosses political and geographical boundaries, as it seeks to form a connection between Palestinians living in Palestine and abroad. This is done through digital archives and electronic platforms and through a network of local and global partnerships that will provide it and its partners with opportunities to exchange experiences, resources, exhibitions and projects.⁵² Also, the Palestinian Museum is an independent organization that is not affiliated with the government, knowing that there are many partnerships in which the museum intersects with the government, according to the researchers at the museum. However, it is affiliated with the Welfare Association, and the idea of the museum emerged on the initiative of Palestinians abroad, businessmen and intellectuals, i.e. most of whom were founders and financiers of the Welfare Association. Where the main idea was to perpetuate the Nakba, and for the museum to work on the model of the Holocaust Museum. However, the idea has changed with time and there is now more understanding of the situation on the ground that the Palestinian history of pain and the events have not ended yet. It has become reflective that there was a fundamental event that changed the form of life in Palestine.

The Palestinian situation is also different in that it has a deeper history and extends to deeper periods; it has important periods, so the direction has become to establish a museum that simulates the present and the future and asks and triggers questions from the present and

⁵² "About the Museum." The Palestinian Museum. Accessed September 28, 2021. <http://bitly.ws/gMcv>.

the future, not only from history⁵³. This proposition embraced by the museum may be a simulation of the new museum model, which shifts between the past, the present and the future in ways that are less stable and more cosmopolitan so that it becomes more popular and accepted by the other. In fact, this is reflected in the various exhibitions and events organized by the museum which have an active role in promoting the Palestinian cultural identity. In addition to these activities, the "Digital Archive" project was launched in its first stage in February 2018. The second stage proceeded in March 2021 and is considered a diverse opportunity for researchers and those interested in Palestinian lineage history⁵⁴.

8. Yasser Arafat Museum, (2016):

The Yasser Arafat Museum was opened in 2016 and it presents to the Palestinians and to the world the narrative of the Palestinian national movement through the biography of Yasser Arafat (Abu Ammar), the historical leader of the Palestinians, in an influential manner that creates a lively educational and cultural space. The museum is basically a forum through its collections, exhibits, and programs. As a matter of fact, the museum connects the past and the present in an interactive format through what it offers and the ideas and visions it implies that give these museum exhibits and collectibles a new and lasting life. It is also integrated with the tomb of the martyred leader, the mosque and a shrine that contributes to the preservation and permanence of Yasser Arafat's legacy⁵⁵.

Muhammad Halayqa says that the work in the museum is carried out through a precise and specific process that serves the purpose of the museum's existence, which is to enable the museum to perform the mission for which it was created. In order to ensure this, and after taking into account all the conditions of the country from a political and educational point of

⁵³ Interview with the employee at department of Public Programs and Production at the Palestinian Museum, Hanin Saleh, August 28, 2021.

⁵⁴ "About the Museum." The Palestinian Museum. Accessed September 28, 2021. <http://bitly.ws/gMcv>.

⁵⁵ "About the Museum." Yasser Arafat Museum. Accessed November 30, 2021. <https://yam.ps/page-1-ar.html>.

view, there should have been more than one point of view, a technical dimension, and a specific methodology based on teamwork. The reason behind that is that we are willing on preserving the speciality of the museum and the divided roles in order to serve the crowd and deliver the message in its best form⁵⁶. This context is reflected by the museum's organizers, while I claim that what has been displayed in the museum reflects a memorial of one person. This may contradict the presentation of museums in its entirety, which reflects multiple stages of the history of the place, filled with multiple characters and not limited to a single person, and this criticism also includes the Mahmoud Darwish Museum. This is because the history displayed in both museums is based on the history of the main characters in it, which is not isolated from all the Palestinians naturally. However, Mahmoud Darwish Museum looks at the Palestinian narrative from specific aspects, as a whole, linked to the ruling system. It also excludes frameworks that are outside the context of the system and shows only what is consistent and harmonizes with its narrative.

9. Palestinian Communist Museum, (2018):

It is an idea of a museum by Irene Anastas and René Gabri; this museum is based on the idea of open space, where its art collections are located inside the Palestinians' homes. This museum can be considered an effort to create a decolonized space that transcends borders and emerges as grass between concrete blocks and walls that have been crudely planned, designed and thrown above our imagination to suppress and contain it. The museum is thus a proposal to restore the unlimited frames and efficacy of art in its ability to change the way we see the world and in its ability to question life as it is today. Besides, the museum uses the new concept of communism as a major resource, and as a communist museum the struggle for

⁵⁶ Interview with the Yasser Arafat Museum director, Mohamed Halayqa, August 1, 2021.

liberation and equality through difference, solidarity and justice are not displayed merely as secondary themes, but they are its *raison d'être*⁵⁷.

The idea of the open space, as Anati suggests, is a problematic idea because we cannot impose the materials to be displayed on people in the open space, as each family has its own point of view and holdings that it sees as a museum⁵⁸. Besides, the closed museum space, according to Shibli, is loaded with many issues, one of which is its restriction to a limited audience and its confinement to the elite class, and this does not give the opportunity for all audiences to learn and benefit⁵⁹. This proposition reflects that museums, whether in their closed or open space, are loaded with multiple issues and corresponding benefits.

10. Al-Medina Museum "Ramallah":

It is a museum under construction that captures the city's history and explores its future. The idea of establishing the Ramallah History Museum is based on a review of the city's history from its earliest discovered past to the present day. This is carried out within a historical approach based on research in the history of the city and bears equal relative importance to key stations in the formation of the city through rich artistic expressions using multiple media, and with a special focus on the social history of the city. Al-Medina Museum project is not limited to a single building, but rather is a group of buildings linked together that mirror the history of the city⁶⁰. Vera Tamari says that this museum carries the idea of pioneering and working with a new spirit that will appear on the square of museums or exhibitions in Palestine.⁶¹

⁵⁷ "About the Museum." Palestinian Communist Museum. Accessed June 2021. <http://bitly.ws/gNBX>.

⁵⁸ Interview with a curator and general program manager at the Qattan Foundation, Yazid Anani, August 10, 2021.

⁵⁹ Interview with the Palestinian curator and art critic, Adaniya Shibli, July 18, 2021.

⁶⁰ "About the Museum." Al-Medina Museum. Accessed June 2021. <http://bitly.ws/gNFJ>.

⁶¹ Interview with the Palestinian artist, the lecturer in Islamic art and architecture at Birzeit University, Vera Tamari, August 25, 2021

2.7 Methodology of Previous Museums

We can notice that these previously mentioned museums and other museum attempts that crystallized during the modern and postmodern periods in Palestine were mostly based on ancient monuments and artifacts in addition to some symbols that strengthened the definition of national identity. This is due to the threat posed to Palestinians by colonization. In addition, museums in the postmodern and post-Oslo periods have experienced rapid development in the attempt to establish museums, some of which I mentioned in this research. All of the attempts to establish museums tried to harmonize with the universal museum system while maintaining the specificity of the Palestinian situation, i.e. being under colonialism. For example, we find that the Palestinian Museum exhibits are eager to keep abreast of developments while relying on the critical approach. In the context of the presentation of identity symbols, the museum assures that any identity construction is based on historical self-criticism as well as self-criticism in the present. This was reflected in the exhibitions of the Palestinian Museum, in which Barham stresses that they do provide information on the form of national or spatial identity. This is not necessarily praising the past in order to protect us from the future but it has more of a critical aspect.

The museum also asserts that it presents self-criticism, even if it is in the context of identity⁶², which is linked in our thinking to the collective situation. It is also keen on educating the public of all social classes according to Bennett who also asserts that this educational construction began in the world in 1902, as museums have been interested in building their image as a tool of popular education to ensure that they have a recognized role that shows their connection to the environment and the public. This was accomplished by addressing the widest possible segment, also the museums in Palestine have repeatedly

⁶² Interview with the Director of research and knowledge programs in the Palestinian Museum, Nabil Barham, August 25, 2021.

expressed the hope that they will occupy a neutral area wide enough to provide a common meeting ground⁶³. This is what museums in Palestine are keen on, which was noted through interviews conducted with the museums' directors. For example, Halayqa, the director of the Yasser Arafat Museum, stresses that the museum's goal is to maintain the national identity and educate all segments of society⁶⁴ by raising awareness, enhancing identity, and preserving Palestinian memory.

It is not always the case that the state is the promoter of identity, but it has come to enlist the existing forums, practices and institutions of high culture, such as the museum in the service of governmental goals aimed at producing an effective base of cultural power⁶⁵, as Bennett points out. That is what happened after the Oslo Accords in the Palestinian case, where the number of museums increased. This might be because of the increased confidence that the authority of the museum is able to play roles that are in harmony with the dominant system policy. It is as Bennett argues that the museums were used with their artworks as a tool for the social management of the people and its representation of heritage and a truly transnational, multi-regional and expressive identity, which transcends the structures of national specificity. This quest also appeared in strengthening the importance of identity through the archaeological quest for national identity in the independence movements of the nineteenth century⁶⁶. That is, strengthening the importance of identity is cumulative and continuous since the nineteenth century.

These museums, which have been reviewed, are cumulative and reflect the diversity in the museum's attempts, their form and objectives. Some of them imitate the old museum style,

⁶³ Bennett, Tony. *The Birth of the Museum*. Translated by Mohammed Al-Mubarak and Hassanein Hayat. Bahrain: Bahrain Authority for Culture and Publishing, (2019), 167.

⁶⁴ Interview with the Yasser Arafat Museum director, Mohamed Halayqa, August 1, 2021.

⁶⁵ Bennett, Tony. *The Birth of the Museum*. Translated by Mohammed Al-Mubarak and Hassanein Hayat. Bahrain: Bahrain Authority for Culture and Publishing, (2019), 63.

⁶⁶ Coombes, Annie E. *Museums and the Formation of National and Cultural Identities*. Oxford Art Journal: 11, no. 2 (1988), 66.

some mimics the new museum style, and in both styles, through what I have presented earlier and what I will present later, there are indications that museums in Palestine played different roles. Some of these roles aimed at strengthening and preserving national identity as a result of the threat surrounding it due to colonialism⁶⁷. Also, some of these roles aimed to expose the existing colonialism's true face; this colonialism has an impact and roots in these museum attempts.

⁶⁷ Interview with the Palestinian artist, Suleiman Mansour, August 2, 2021.

Chapter Three: Examining the Case Study

3.1 Banksy Museum (2017)

The basic research model, which is the Banksy Museum, is an extension of the museum models I mentioned earlier with their diversity and dialectic. I will deal with the Banksy Museum as a case study through several aspects complementary to the above and intersecting with it in some aspects. In this chapter, it will be explained why the Banksy Museum was called a museum, and I will narrate the history of its origin, location, tools, and ideologies. And how all these aspects were reflected in the narrative and national identity? The answer to this question will be crystallized further through analyzing some of the artworks contained in the museum, which will appear during this chapter and in the chapters that follow.

3.2 Why Call it a Museum and not a State of Art?

Before discussing the origin of the Banksy Museum and its holdings, we will explain the reason for my claim and why I marked this place as a museum in the context of this article. As I mentioned before there are many types of museums and this is universally agreed on. In fact, the museum does not have a fixed definition in general and varies according to the context in which it is placed. The case study used in this research has witnessed a clear argument in the local and international media at the time of its opening and among critics and artists, who were included in the interviews or others regarding the label of this museum and whether the place could be considered a museum, a state of art, an exhibition, or a hotel that used artworks to attract tourists? Besides, if it is a hotel, as its owner claims, then why the larger space is not used as bedrooms for the guests?

Even in the space assigned for accommodation one can notice there are many artworks spread and displayed to everyone who visits the museum. Furthermore, the entire space on the ground floor and the second floor was allocated for exhibition, whether through the rooms limited to display the works of art or the various artworks scattered in the corners of the cafe, restaurant and bar. There is also the large area on the second floor that has been allocated to the "Gallery", which witnesses a different display of artworks every now and then. This arrangement for the corridors of the place and exhibitions mimics, in part, the international museum style. Further, the constancy in some of the artistic and concentrated works, especially in the hall of the artist Banksy, led me to call it the museum in the context of my research. Besides, the Ministry of Tourism and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs recommend its visitors to go to the place on the grounds that it is a museum that depicts the Palestinian situation⁶⁸. However, this claim is not absolute, and it holds several points of view, for example, the Yasser Arafat Museum displays a stage of Palestinian history based on the life of only one person, as does the Mahmoud Darwish Museum. Both museums are considered as memorials in the international context, yet they are unanimously labelled in the Palestinian context as museums. In addition to these two museums, the Palestinian Museum with its galleries, wide spaces and approach, even though it is empty most of the time and contains no fixed works, it is still called a museum. Therefore, if we take into account this difference and diversity in the content and form of Palestinian museums, we may find, in addition to the reasons mentioned above, a justification for calling the basic case used in this research a museum.

⁶⁸ Interview with the Palestinian businessman and director of the Banksy Museum, Wisam Salsa, June 16 and August 23, 2021.

3.3 The Origin and Location of the Museum

The Banksy Museum is located in Bethlehem, between Aida and Al-Azza camps, south of Jerusalem. Its owners call it Banksy's Walled-Off hotel, and it is a destination for tourists from around the world. The place is generally known as the Banksy Museum, although it is registered in the Ministry of Tourism under the category of tourist hotels, as the director of the museum asserts, it may be registered in the future under the category of museums too⁶⁹.

The idea of establishing the museum with its location, designs and controversial holdings, and with the participation of an anonymous artist, was not a passing or random event for its founders and recipients. The beginning was with choosing the location, which was associated with the life and suffering of the Palestinians on the one hand, and with an anonymous artist named Banksy, on the other. This artist, even though he is anonymous, is already known for his artworks that are considered controversial around the world. What we know about him is that he holds English citizenship and was born in 1974. His name is likely to be Robert Banksy or Robin Cunningham, and his birthplace is Bristol⁷⁰. Furthermore, Banksy might be a group of artists, according to some stories, but this was denied by the museum director, Salsa, who indicated that Banksy is an artist⁷¹, i.e. only one person, despite the fact that the controversy over this character or group exists to this day.

In this research, I am not going to analyze the mystery of his personality and his fame as an artist that intrigued the curiosity of his recipients by not appearing in public or by being of a different nationality as much as I will focus on Banksy Museum as a museum alongside

⁶⁹ Interview with the Palestinian businessman and director of the Banksy Museum, Wisam Salsa, June 16 and August 23, 2021.

⁷⁰ Al-Ezzi, Saqir. "man hu alrasaam almajhul almashhur Banksy" [Who is the artist Banksy]. Filaat. Accessed 2021. <https://filaat.com/p10904>.

⁷¹ Interview with the Palestinian businessman and director of the Banksy Museum, Wisam Salsa, June 16 and August 23, 2021.

emerging museums in Palestine in the shadow of an entangled colonial political reality. Despite the emphasis on this aspect, we cannot deny that the great role of the museum's fame comes from the fact that it came at the hands of a person with a mysterious and unknown identity, and identity here refers to the name of this person's nationality and homeland.

Banksy visited Palestine in the years (2005, 2007, 2014, and 2017) and these are the visits announced. Salsa, the director of the Banksy Museum, adds that he accompanied Banksy on multiple tours inside the Palestinian cities and villages, where he was able, through these tours, to touch and understand Palestinian reality. In addition, the directions given to the artist by Salsa and those around him had an impact on the selection of his artworks. Art historian Dr. Gavin Grindon worked with Banksy on his project and was considered the apparent mediator and facilitator of Banksy in this museum and in other locations, as demonstrated by Salsa, who accompanied him in Palestine from the beginning of his journey.

Later, we find ourselves faced with an artistic situation created by Banksy, with intermediaries, intertwined with a colonial project that oppresses the native people. This is what becomes apparent to the individuals when they arrive at the place and witness the reality. This can be also considered part of the artistic display because these scenes extend inside the museum. These scenes can be viewed from several points of view, according to what I argue; one of them is that it is evidence that reveals the violence of the colonizer, or it may reflect the pattern of the continuity of life for the Palestinians under the existing colonialism, and another aspect is that the choice of location reflects the depth of irony of the traditional form of international museums. This is because international museums' location is characterized by tall and luxurious halls and resonant sites; these locations usually go back to classic designs which mean cumulative lifetime, history and continuity over time. These international museums are usually located in the capitals of countries or in the most attractive and

prominent places, while here the form and location of the Banksy Museum do not harmonize in some aspects with this style of international museums. I attempt, through this, on showing the different characters of the museum while comparing it to others. This does not mean judging the museums or other museums by any names whatsoever, because each case has its own uniqueness, which bears all contradictions, as there are different museums that are established in order to show the different views of the community, even if this museum's standards differ from the standards that govern museums as it cannot dissociate from the museum industry as a whole in our contemporary world.

In the Banksy Museum, this industry began (I will explain in the fifth chapter why it is labelled as an industry) in a place that was abandoned due to the presence of the colonizer and being a dangerous point of contact between the unarmed Palestinian and the heavily armed soldier. Salsa says about this area that the street was dead and lifeless and no one could sit in it due to the army's presence there all the time, but when the hotel opened, life initiated in the place⁷². The industry that constructed this place has perhaps worked to transform the scene of violence and colonialism into a satirical art scene. This finding was derived from the theme Banksy is known for, as he is an artist known for ridiculing regulations, restrictions and the system of authority so that the scene of colonial violence became a displayed piece of art that is added to Banksy's artworks in his museum. This scene begins sequentially from the apartheid wall to the narrow road and the old building turned into a hotel in which the lobby contains Banksy's work. Then, the scene extends in the form of a maze of narrowness that confines things within it, but in a moment you feel that the artworks have withered within the aura of mystery formed by this complex dialectic. On the second floor, there is a gallery in constant change, and upstairs are the dorm rooms, and in each room, there are artworks by Banksy; these are the works that you sleep surrounded by them, and they are still there when

⁷² Interview with the Palestinian businessman and director of the Banksy Museum, Wisam Salsa, June 16 and August 23, 2021.

you open your eyes to witness the same reality in the open space so that reality mixes with dreams and imagination.

This place, as a contrived event, was keen to look for a pretext for an event or occasion to come into existence. The aim was to fit into the event and make the museum gain more aura, thus the Balfour Centenary was chosen to launch this industry (the hotel and the museum). This is part of the strategy to create and launch the museum to ensure that its impact is maximized. However, what appeared through the museum, the works and the date of its launch showed that there is a shallow understanding of the event. For example, when Banksy mentioned that Britain's actions caused problems for everyone by showing different forms of suffering around the world in the museum, he as such still maintains the same main framework which is the anguish on both sides as if the injustice done to the Palestinians resembled the injustice done to all. This contradicts what Banksy has stated that the reason for opening the place on this day was a desire to minimize the chaos caused by Britain. In one of his statements, he said that Balfour did not consider the people who were already living here, and a century of confusion and struggle began with only 126 words and conflict brought a lot of suffering to people on both sides, it is not appropriate to celebrate the British role in creating this⁷³.

Although Banksy in his statement expressed his discontent and dissatisfaction with this Declaration due to the sufferings Palestinians went through, in the same speech he honours the industry he created in the museum or hotel, taking advantage of history and facts that changed the lives of the Palestinians to announce the launch of this place as a response to the Balfour Declaration. Actually, we can notice that the works of art created by Banksy in

⁷³ “Fi miawia "wead Balfour". Banksy yaetadhir lilshaeb alfilastinii” [On the centenary of the Balfour Declaration, Banksy apologizes to the Palestinian people]. Almodon, 2017. shorturl.at/BGOPX.

the hotel lobby do not depart from history and the effects of war. For instance, Balfour's anthropomorphism as signing the Declaration document, attached in Appendix (6), was embodied along with other works in a different manner that evokes an aura of mystery to the recipient who attests to the presence of the colonial condition within the corridors of the place in all its details. This presence inside is a reproduction of the real and truth outside the place which is produced by the colonizer on the outside. But herein lies the paradox of this scene and the works of art inside are the creation of the colonized. That is, it is the work of the colonized who live under colonialism. Even Banksy, the creator of a part of this aura, simulates with his work this imposed reality, which he sees and extends through it to achieve material and moral gains amidst an intertwined space.

This is the space in which you may find yourself forced to redefine the form of your existence in your land, which has become part of the imagination due to a multi-dimensional reality created by the colonizer. These dimensions have become a reality that is reflected through the works of the museum, and since truth is one of the necessities of preserving memory, Halbfax believes that the truth must be represented in a sensory image of an event or in the form of a person or place in order to be implanted in the memory of the crowd⁷⁴. This fact, embodied inside the museum, which will be recorded in the memory, is the product of the colonizer. For example, but not exclusively, I would like to mention here the violence that is evident in the vicinity of the museum, represented in the wall on one side, the watchtower on the other, and the scene of the settlements that surround Bethlehem on all sides and as far as the eye can see as is the case with other cities on the third. So these are all real facts created by the colonizer; we cannot be detached from them and they affect what remains in memory.

⁷⁴ Halbwachs, Maurice. *On collective memory*. Translated by Yasmin Az-Zahr. Biat Al-Muwatin for Publishing, (2016), 87.

Through these and other scenes, Banksy is introduced as the hotel which contains the artworks, and which has become a place where the visitor goes or is guided to be informed of the suffering of the Palestinians. Also, the view of the museum, which is considered one of the worst views in the world, was exploited to create another scene added to the other scenes of the museum and the connotations the museum carries.

3.4 The Banksy Museum and the Making of the Imaginary

Banksy, through what he sarcastically presents in his works whether inside the museum or his works around the world, tries to make the imagination a central matter by utilizing the powers of art and literature. This is so we can imagine a future in which equality, justice and freedom triumph over subordination, exclusion and violence. I will mention examples of this later during the analysis of the works of art in the museum.

This theme, Banksy pursues in the museum, aims to bring about the change that the new museum space desires. Pointing out that this new museum is loaded with all these previously mentioned connotations and addresses not only the Palestinian but also the global audience according to Salsa⁷⁵. The museum director also expresses that this is an attempt to transfer us towards a cosmopolitan image through the imaginary reflected in the selected artworks depicted on different levels that mirror the contradictory identity that Banksy reflects. For example, the scene of Christ, attached in Appendix (7), portrays the first martyr, i.e. the victim who was subjected to oppression, violence, crucifixion, and murder. On the one hand, this scene represents the identity of the Palestinian who is subjected to oppression and persecution by the colonizer, and this is a real fact that was and still is, on the other hand, in another scene, attached in Appendix (8), a state of balance between the victim and the

⁷⁵ Interview with the Palestinian businessman and director of the Banksy Museum, Wisam Salsa, June 16 and August 23, 2021.

executioner is demonstrated through a fight between a Palestinian and an Israeli soldier with a feather pillow. This may contradict the identity of the Palestinian victim to appear on the scene as if he were a match to the colonizer. In this work, we can witness an attempt to deconstruct the scene of violence while trying to create an imagination for another scene that does not reflect the state of colonial violence which is still ongoing through the existence of the colonizer, who carries out acts of murder, demolition and displacement to this day.

This imaginary does not come out of the blue,⁷⁶ and according to Anderson, it must have roots that make the foundation of this state. Moreover, in Banksy's case, the imaginary may be the product of the domination of colonialism and capitalist power, because they have the authority to correct and direct through their power. I will be discussing their impact in later chapters.

What I mentioned in the museum models that were put forward, and the Banksy Museum which is part of them raises many questions. For example, whether the museum models in Palestine are really capable of dismantling colonial violence? Or are they an extension of colonial violence in the guise of the cultural industry? Can the artistic attempt created by the Banksy Museum next to the wall be considered an attempt to shape reality in a way that is inseparable from liberal ideology? This ideology sees itself as producing the form of European knowledge, so that this type of museum, in addition to the institutional system of authority and civil society associations, may be the centre that educates and enlightens the Palestinians on a new form of safe resistance, tolerance and control of behaviour so that the Palestinians and their resistance will be acceptable to the other. The museums, according to Bennett and Foucault, are seen as a part of "universal culture" and are a means that can be used to regulate the field of social behaviour by giving the individual the ability to observe

⁷⁶ Anderson, Benedict. *Imagined Communities*. Translated by Thaeer Deeb. Cairo: The Supreme Council of Culture. (1999), 173.

and control oneself. This is the modern idea of the museum, which serves as the passionless reformers of the recipient⁷⁷. As I mentioned earlier, this passionless reformer in the case of the Banksy Museum was created in the museum in the scene of the wall and the watchtower imposed by the colonizer, to become a central location that carries a state of the art of its own. This setting is also available to the public at all times in the midst of a violent visual scene that the visitors of the place may get used to so that the sight of the wall becomes a form of nature that the sight becomes used to and becomes consumed by repeated viewing. In fact, the function of (watching) is a fundamental basis upon which the place was built, from which it gained its fame to become a well-established and essential part of the city with its economic and social dimensions. In addition, this place has other dimensions like actual truth and virtual reality from the point of view of the works it displays, which deliberately confuse the truth with the imagination.

3.5 An Attempt to Dismantle the Banksy Museum with its Works from the Inside

The gallery that contains the artworks, which I will analyze in conjunction with the centenary of the Balfour Declaration, was opened in 2017 in an old building located between the Apartheid Wall and the Israeli watchtower. The idea for establishing the museum or state of the art created by the artist Banksy originally came from a Palestinian businessman named "Wisam Salsa"⁷⁸, a citizen of Bethlehem. Wisam worked in partnership with the international artist Banksy to select the most controversial scenes in the city and create a complex of several controversial aspects that achieve multiple goals. The museum is a hotel for overnight stays, it also includes in its front entrance the reception hall that contains Banksy's works. The

⁷⁷ Bennett, Tony. *The Birth of the Museum*. Translated by Mohammed Al-Mubarak and Hassanein Hayat. Bahrain: Bahrain Authority for Culture and Publishing, (2019), 56.

⁷⁸ Interview with the Palestinian businessman and director of the Banksy Museum, Wisam Salsa, June 16 and August 23, 2021.

place also provides the opportunity for guests to sit and enjoy a variety of drinks, in addition to other rooms containing works and sculptures made by Palestinian artists, and a gallery with exhibitions that change from time to time. The design of the place remained the same until the COVID-19 pandemic swept the world. As a result, the place was closed due to the lack of tourists and the movement stopped, thus it was decided to restructure and repair the place. Then a restaurant and a bar were added to the corridors of the hotel, and also a room that displayed Palestinian artworks reflecting the bright side and the musical and sporting achievements of the Palestinians. In addition to that, new artworks have also been added to the museum's collections. I have chosen a collection of old and new works to name a few for analysis, and most of them are from the work of Banksy, knowing that other works were mentioned during the chapters of this research.

The museum's reception hall mimics the era of the English nobles' life during colonialism, which is displayed as if the impact of this era ended with the absence of the British, and these remnants are witness to it. This is reflected through the luxurious furniture of the old English style, which does not resemble the local character, whether old or new, not to mention the quiet classical music that does not belong to zajal, folk music, or Arabic in its entirety. This music overshadowed the bustle of the red colour of a chimpanzee standing at the entrance holding a bag littered with clothes, which is attached in Appendix (9). This chimpanzee belongs to European culture unlike the deer that belongs to the Palestinian culture and is most visible in it; the chimpanzee exists in this scene whereas the deer has disappeared from the museum scene. This projection of music, furniture, and other elements, is an indication of the idea of (Uniformisation) that aims to spread a single value pattern across the world through the media or culture, represented in this case by the museum. The museum has become an implementation tool and its role is to control the "imaginary" that assumes the function of giving the individual and society through the so-called "collective imaginary", i.e.

a distinct identity in the way of thinking and way of living. Controlling this imaginary allows controlling the direction of its thinking and directing it towards the cultural pattern desired by the ruling authorities or the owners.

In the same front hall, three oil paintings of Banksy, attached in Appendix (10), were hung on the wall showing the sea throwing a life jacket at its shore, and this is an expression of the refugee crisis who go to the sea to survive, whether Palestinian or Syrian refugees or others. In this, comparing the situation of the Palestinian refugee with other refugees, Banksy forgets that the suffering of asylum tested over 74 years, and I do not mean by what I say excluding or minimizing the crisis of any refugee; regardless of nationality, but generalizing the impact of asylum in the same light on everyone marginalizes the specificity of each case. For the Palestinians, this refugee situation is the product of colonialism that has existed for 74 years.

As for the figures on the front facade of children hanging from the ceiling with angel wings; their faces covered with masks that provide them with oxygen or masks that protect them from gas, as attached in Appendix (11), this scene bears several indications, according to the beholder. The first indication is that these stereotypes may be an extension of what I mentioned above regarding the idea of uniformisation. To illustrate, these angelic statues are more widespread in museums, churches and many European sites, so it is a typical sight for Europeans who see it everywhere, while for Palestinians it is a new scene. As for the second belief, it is that the figures reflect the children's attachment from their birth to this system loaded with cameras scattered around them on the ceiling of the room and feeding through it. Thus, anyone who loses this oxygen mask loses their life, or the system utters them outside of it; this imposes on the child the law of the surrounding from the moment of birth. In that sense, the museum has become, according to Bennett, a site where the mentalities are formed

under constant surveillance until they obey⁷⁹. As for the third indication, it may be that the angels' oxygen mask is an indication of the violence of the occupation, which uses suffocating gas on unarmed Palestinians and even children.

In another artwork, as attached in Appendix (12), a black cat sculpture hangs under an iron cage with a white "peace" dove inside. This may be a reflection of the scene of the victim and the executioner, as the stalker executioner represented (the colonizer) the black cat while the victim was portrayed in the dove. Thus, in doing so this art reshapes the past, which is still present, to meet the requirements of foreign visitors to the tourist sites that embody the characteristics of surprise, strangeness and originality, by presenting the areas that appear in contrast to the urban centres from which they came,⁸⁰ but without revealing the violent scene in which the colonizer is harming the victim. This is confirmed by the artwork in which the tear gas canister is transformed into a flower pot. This may be a lack of awareness by the artist of the depth of the conflict, in which he sees that it is easy to shift from colonial violence to peace, and this is reflected in his works, as he has turned a teardrop into a source that emits flowers and fragrant smell, as attached in Appendix (13).

The martyr's monument or its statue was not displayed next to the sculpture wrapped in tear gas in the Banksy Museum, as attached in Appendix (14). It should be noted here, that this martyr's monument is a projection of an important symbol for the Palestinian situation. So was this emerges from a desire to neglect this or to surprise the visitors on the ground that the museum of modern art is controlled by the rule of amazement to the point where it seeks to stop the visitors in their path by trying to convey the sense of the uniqueness of the artwork to them⁸¹? Even if it is done by substituting symbols this substitution leaves its mark on the

⁷⁹ Bennett, Tony. *The Birth of the Museum*. Translated by Mohammed Al-Mubarak and Hassanein Hayat. Bahrain: Bahrain Authority for Culture and Publishing, (2019), 190.

⁸⁰ *Ibid*, 338.

⁸¹ *Ibid*, 106.

memory for the fact that any work with its symbols or details turns into meaning and a symbol as soon as it enters the memory. That is, it acquires meaning and becomes an element in the intellectual system of the community⁸².

In another Banksy work, he used the soldiers' remnants of burlap covers, ammunition boxes and missile waste, as attached in Appendix (15). These were used to equip one of the hotel rooms, which are the remains of elements from Israeli military barracks. This room offers a bed starting at \$30 per night and includes a wardrobe and a shared bathroom. Thus, it combines between being a work of art and a sleeping room, and perhaps these rooms were designed with the aim for tourists of different nationalities to experience the difficult and cruel situation that the Israeli soldier goes through inside the barracks. Banksy may have used it also in an attempt to display the history of the barracks, which still continues to this day. Another assumption is the reversal of the familiarity with these barracks witnessed by the Palestinian, which has become part of Palestinian life even during sleep. These possibilities raised for any artwork inside the museum were used to bring in more tourists through the amazement and multiple meanings they carry.

The scene of amazement extends to all the corridors of the museum, and the huge number of security cameras that fill the place, whether inside or outside it as works of art as it is considered an imposition by the colonizer, continue to cause amazement to the recipient. This is done through the display of cameras, (as attached in Appendix (16)), which promotes the new system of monitoring and makes it like a scenic view, according to Foucault, whose tasks include mapping the social body to make it knowable and submissive to social control. The establishment of this map is done through means that enhance the construction of this map, including the museum which means that it is possible to talk about the formation of a

⁸² Halbwachs, Maurice. *On collective memory*. Translated by Yasmin Az-Zahr. Biat Al-Muwatin for Publishing, (2016), 78.

disciplined society within this movement that extends from closed disciplines (museum), which is a kind of social quarantining to a mechanism that can be generalized infinitely⁸³.

The Banksy Museum's enthusiasm to break down the visual customs inherited from past ages clearly shows through the works of art it reflects. For instance, in a work, an air balloon appears in the shape of a heart in front of the barbed wire, (attached in Appendix (17)). This balloon has a sticky wound on one end, covering a scar. A metaphor for the scars caused by wars in the hearts and bodies, which were previously reflected through artworks showing the Palestinian body that bears these scars. After this transformation, the recipient is faced with several questions, such as, is the effect of this scar left by the barbed wire curable? Is there a possibility to live with it? Will a new scar appear every time the balloon (the Palestinian body) passes in front of the barbed wire? What is the fate of this balloon (the body) in the face of the recurrence of these scars and ruptures?

In another work, a sign appears at the entrance to the museum reading in Arabic, Hebrew and English, "You have arrived. Welcome to the West Bank - a place steeped in history and steeped in conflict. Now is the time for you to choose a side - unless you don't want to." And as stated on Banksy's website, the museum is an independent entertainment facility set up with funding from Banksy. The website also states that the museum or hotel is not affiliated with any political party or any pressure group, and the purpose of its establishment is to tell the story of the wall from every side and give visitors the opportunity to discover for themselves. The wall, as Banksy is trying to reflect, is a fraud propagating the idea that there is a division among the people here, but it doesn't have to be that way for him. He views both sides as equals, even though most Palestinians live in poor colonial conditions unlike the other side and the acts of violence practised by the colonizer persist. However,

⁸³ Foucault, Michel. *Discipline and punish, panopticism*. London: Allen lane. (1977), 216.

despite this Banksy tries to look at the wall from different angles, displaying material that some may find disturbing, and focusing on pleasing a specific audience.

On the museum's website, we find a warm and special welcome to young Israelis, as well as to all parties of the conflict and from around the world. It is worth noting that this information is provided as an answer to one of the questions in the supposed questions about the hotel section. The question is, is this, i.e. the hotel or museum project- anti-Semitic? Banksy's website answers, "Definitely not."⁸⁴ These welcoming expressions reflect the methodology that the museum works on, which is based on accepting and welcoming the other in the first place. They also reflect the constant effort to attract more audiences with perhaps the aim of making a profit, or for the purpose of acceptance by the other, or in order to display and present the Palestinian suffering in an appealing way, in addition to other possibilities or reasons.

The Banksy Museum passes multiple messages either through the actual museum website, i.e. what is written on the website or through Banksy's work in the museum or outside the museum. Sometimes you find it trying to balance the scene of the victim and the executioner, and at other times it tries to show the desire for love, peace, coexistence, and to go towards cosmopolitanism through displaying a variety of different experiences around the world. At other times, it shows the victim's suffering, but with an eagerness to conceal the bloody scene. An example of this diversity in the presentation is the scene in which he emphasizes the methodology of peace and the desire to live in love for the benefit of future generations, which is reflected through the scene of a child with a hammer in her hand trying to destroy the wall, (attached in Appendix (18)); the child begins to demolish it in the form of a love heart. So, the question here is why did the picture that was sculpted into the wall show

⁸⁴ "Questions for Banksy Museum." The walled off Hotel. Accessed June 2021.
<https://walledoffhotel.com/questions.html>.

the shape of a love heart, and it did not appear completely demolished or otherwise? This work, for example, in addition to other works, shows the details of imagining the self in the future in different forms⁸⁵ by shifting from one artwork to another and from one showroom to another. Banksy jumps into another scene to show the suffering of the victim through the image of the golden fence and behind it a child and a woman carrying another child in an attempt to portray the siege of Gaza and the condition of its people, children and women, because of this isolation.

The above-mentioned works of art, with the exception of the artworks centred on the belongings of the soldiers, are mostly found in the piano cafe in the front part of the museum. The place is inspired by the colonial-era atmosphere as described in a description on the hotel's website.⁸⁶ So if what is meant by the colonial era is the British era, then why do scenes of Israeli colonialism appear in it (from the apartheid wall, security cameras, etc.), which Britain has assisted and sponsored since its birth? This colonialism did not become an era yet, because the era, as it is generally known, refers to the past that has ended, not the existing present. In addition, this part of the museum was limited to Banksy's work, while the part that was developed after the COVID-19 pandemic and called (the new bar) contained most of the works of Palestinian artists. The main work in it was featured in the painting "Sheep of the Century", (attached in Appendix (19)), created by the museum director himself, Wisam Salsa. This painting portrays a single sheep and around it a herd of wolves, and this is an indication of the Deal of the Century and Arab normalization, i.e. the most well-known event during this period. That is, there is an explicit tendency in the museum to follow the new wave in an attempt to attract more tourists to the place and to ensure that they are amazed.

⁸⁵ Bennett, Tony. *The Birth of the Museum*. Translated by Mohammed Al-Mubarak and Hassanein Hayat. Bahrain: Bahrain Authority for Culture and Publishing, (2019), 453.

⁸⁶ "Banksy Museum." The walled off Hotel. Accessed June 2021. <https://walledoffhotel.com/index.html>.

As for the hotel rooms, which were themselves part of the museum, and displayed with the works they contained, for example, "the presidential suite", and as mentioned on the museum's website, this luxurious suite was provided with everything a corrupt leader might need. For instance, a plunge pool for up to four people who adore luxury, original artwork, library, home cinema, garden, bar, collection of Dead Sea products used in bathing, and in-room dining service available upon request. It also accommodates six people.⁸⁷ However, it seems that this suite is intended only for high-income people due to the high cost of accommodation in it per night. Accordingly, the contradiction between the cover and the essence is evident in this project. The cover here is to criticize a corrupt leader, authority, or a traditional British colonial head from the beginning of the 20th century, whereas the essence is to provide a comfortable environment for the tourist who is required to reconcile with this colonialism by not recognizing it as colonialism. The cover is a scenic view of the "hideous" colonial wall and modern artwork that mixes classic with subversive, whereas the essence is to enjoy that spectacle with five-star service.

Through these works, the extent to which museums have been refashioned to function as a space of emulation in which civilized forms of behaviour might be learned and thus diffused more widely through the social body⁸⁸, represented by spreading a sense of empathy and cosmopolitanism by reflecting different cultures, people's struggles and the experience of refugees all over the world. The Banksy Museum represents a business project adopted by the owner of the capital, and it touched Palestinian and popular culture with its contents⁸⁹. Thus, it won the minds and hearts of the crowd, in addition to controlling and training their bodies⁹⁰. As the one-way organized paths that appear in the Banksy Museum and the narrow space are

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸⁸ Bennett, Tony. *The Birth of the Museum*. Translated by Mohammed Al-Mubarak and Hassanein Hayat. Bahrain: Bahrain Authority for Culture and Publishing, (2019), 64.

⁸⁹ Interview with the Palestinian plastic artist, Jawad Malhi, August 1, 2021.

⁹⁰ Bennett, Tony. *The Birth of the Museum*. Translated by Mohammed Al-Mubarak and Hassanein Hayat. Bahrain: Bahrain Authority for Culture and Publishing, (2019), 139.

control tools for the recipient's movements. What also the effectiveness of this control and the high sense of control increases, as the recipients become part of the show the moment they enter the place. With that, they will be the focus of the attention of the restaurant visitors, and this pushes them to pay attention to their movements and the way they react to what is displayed.

Thus, the transformation of the museum, which Foucault speaks of, shows that it is no longer built in order to be seen but to provide detailed internal control in order to make those inside it visible in a general. This is mainly a factor in changing individuals, influencing them, controlling their behaviour, carrying the effects of power to them, and being able to change them⁹¹. Moreover, this is done by exploiting any cultural site, such as the museum, as a means for civilizing the morals and behaviour of the population as well as a tolerant cosmopolitan⁹². This produces a new form of obedience framed to represent that it is filled with freedom. Furthermore, the more free and more diverse the social world becomes, the more complex the function of instilling subservience becomes, and the more challenging the problem of solving brainwashing mechanisms becomes, as Chomsky argues⁹³.

This is what the Banksy Museum might want to accomplish using art, space and capital to achieve this purpose. As it appears loaded with all the connotations of the colonizer and Palestinian history is made into tools in its hands through its clear use of the uproar of new young methods that direct the art of the present into the future⁹⁴. These methods are also based on utopian principles of the formation of tolerant humanity. They are arranged according to characteristics that carry cultural meanings of similarity and differences in universal issues, rather than arranges chronologically in the relations of before and after with

⁹¹ Foucault, Michel. *Discipline and punish, panopticism*. London: Allen lane. (1977), 172.

⁹² Interview with the Palestinian curator and art critic, Adaniya Shibli, July 18, 2021.

⁹³ "Sinaeat alhuia" [Identity industry]. Haytham Manna, August 28, 2005. <https://haythammanna.net/identity/>.

⁹⁴ Ar-Rawi, Nouri. *Muthaf alkhayal walhaqiqa* [Museum of Fiction and Truth]. Baghdad: House of Cultural Affairs, (1997), 26.

the symbols and roots of the recognized national identity. This leads to omissions and transgressions that may drop into aspects of history or symbols, especially if the artworks appear as an ongoing process formed by the existence of the occupation and do not show the depth of the ruptures and transformations caused by the occupation.

Besides, in the museum site next to the wall, colonial violence may be demonstrated. But on the other hand, the sight of the wall may become a form of nature that the eyes get used to, becoming an instant consumption of humanity that makes it look natural, this look turns it into space⁹⁵ to appear far from being a struggle between colonizer and colonized. In particular, the Banksy Museum takes a colourful depiction of modern, multicultural life sliding toward a boundless future⁹⁶. This life finds disappearance a necessity of historical progress⁹⁷, but this disappearance in the Palestinian case may serve the colonizer who strives to reproduce the history of the native people for the benefit of the colonizing state.

Even if the museum models considered themselves a tool of resistance, still these tools were formed in the shadow of the colonizer. Banksy's attempt to portray Palestine as strange and civilized at the same time, despite being under occupation, does not mean that he has broken away from the colonial situation. Especially since the project of exoticism in the museum did not stop at the architecture represented by its place, rather it expanded through the works which by using the museum could bring people from all over the world to Palestine. As the venue became more cosmopolitan, the number of audiences that could interpret the artistic forms presented by Banksy increased. This is proof that the language of this artist has become a common social language, and thus works of art, such as scientific results become the property of everyone because they transform from regional borders to international ones,

⁹⁵ Barthes, Roland. *The Eiffel Tower, and other mythologies*. New York: Hill & Wang. (1997), 197.

⁹⁶ Anderson, Benedict. *Imagined Communities*. Translated by Thaeer Deeb. Cairo: The Supreme Council of Culture. (1999), 19.

⁹⁷ Marcuse, Herbert. *One-dimensional man*. Translated by George Tarabishi. Beirut: Dar Al-Adab. (1988), 109.

and from daily life to permanent and sustainable art life, and from an isolated personal view to a comprehensive social view.⁹⁸

⁹⁸ Ar-Rawi, Nouri. *Muthaf alkhayal walhaqiqa* [Museum of Fiction and Truth]. Baghdad: House of Cultural Affairs, (1997), 22.

Chapter IV: Museum and Identity

4.1 National Identity

This chapter deals briefly with a general definition of national identity and its development in the general context and in the Palestinian context. In addition to the form of the intersection of identity with culture and how culture is used in order to strengthen and preserve the national identity through its multiple tools, of which the museum is a part. This proposal comes with a return to culture in order to understand the relationship of national identity in the museum and its intersection with both. Also, why and how does the museum affect the national identity and to what extent is it capable to influence?

National identity is the product of the development of modern nationalism. Since the French Revolution, modern nationalism is not only considered an ideology but also a political and social movement based on this ideology. The most direct political product of modern nationalism is the nation-state. Any modern nation-state includes two important aspects; one is the nation-state system and the other is the national identity of the inhabitants in the territory of the state⁹⁹. So what is this national identity?

National identity is defined, according to Darraj's definition, as a set of common characteristics that distinguish the national union of a group of individuals from others. There must be a set of elements that strengthen the concept of national identity and its connection to one person on one hand, and on the other hand, the connection of each individual to their homeland. The identity and the content of its elements differ from one country to another because it is in the form of symbols with which the individual and the group in a country

⁹⁹ Zheng, Y. N. "China should build national identity." *Global Times* (2004), 8-16.

identified in order to express themselves as belonging to a group¹⁰⁰. Therefore, national identity refers to the identity of the citizens of a country with their own country's historical and cultural traditions, moral values, ideals, beliefs, national sovereignty, and so on. All this is manifested as individuals or groups believing that they belong to a country as a political community¹⁰¹.

Identity is also a construction, it is therefore affected by crises that make it in a state of permanent change, fast or slow, by internal or external factors. There is a development in history from disciplinary forms of identity construction in early modernity to the fragmented identities in postmodernity where identities become fragmented, deconstructed and multiple. The depth of any feeling toward the identity is a matter of degrees in the absolute, and in light of threats and crises, the need to maintain identity increases. This is because identity is not an accomplished and definitive thing closed to itself, but rather an extension of history and civilization; it is values and characteristics that are subjected to modification, development and transformation from time to time¹⁰². Said emphasizes that identity itself is looking for an affiliation linked to the environment on the one hand, and on the other hand to the culture, which is a source of identity. It is a rather combative one at that, as we see in recent "returns" to culture and tradition. These "returns" accompany rigorous codes of intellectual and moral behaviour that are opposed to the permissiveness associated with such relatively liberal philosophies as multiculturalism and hybridity. In the formerly colonized world, these "returns" have produced varieties of religious and nationalist fundamentalism¹⁰³. Therefore, the extension of national identity with culture is natural to preserve identity as a culture

¹⁰⁰ Darraj, Faisal. *qadaya filastiniat alsiyasat walthaqafat walhuia* [Palestinian Issues: Politics, Culture and Identity]. Ramallah: Al-Ayam Printing Company, (2008), 37.

¹⁰¹ He, J. R., and J. R. Yan. "Discussions from Ethnic Identity to National Identity." *Journal of the Central University for Nationalities: Philosophy and Social Sciences Edition* 1, no. 3 (2008), 5.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*

¹⁰³ Said, Edward W. *Culture and imperialism*. Translated by Kamal Abu Deeb Kamal. Beirut, Dar Al-Adab, (2004), 59.

constantly reflects the roots of national identity through its various tools. Also, activating the role of culture through the intellectual and cognitive products it reflects is considered important in strengthening identity and maintaining its continuity. This is understood, according to John Dunn, through the fact that the relationship between identity and culture means the relationship of the self to cultural production. There is no doubt that any cultural production does not take place in the absence of a thinking self without going into the discussion that goes to the origin of this self and its ideal rational tendency or the discussion which makes the subject prior to the self. Everything in the mind is the result of what the senses bear and write on that page (the mind of man), as Locke says, in addition to the practical direction in general¹⁰⁴.

Considering that culture arises in a large part from an unconscious process, while identity is referred to as an affiliation criterion that must be conscious because the identity is based on symbolic contradictions. However, culture is formed within the general social system and forms a distinct and independent sub-form, though it interacts with the rest of the other sub-forms and develops with them. Also, culture forms a set of methods and standards that govern a human vision of reality. Thus, culture is the whole package of values, rules, norms, traditions and plans that create and organize mental, spiritual and sensory connotations, and function to preserve the balance, stability, and unity of the social system and unify the sub-forms of the social system by unifying the mental patterns that govern it. Culture feeds the sub-forms of the social system with similar values, thus creating a single social unit capable of reproducing itself¹⁰⁵, as Kush suggests. Therefore, culture is in fact nothing but society itself, and it has become a manifestation of consciousness or awareness, and this consciousness is at the same time self-awareness.

¹⁰⁴ Dunn, John. *Locke: a very short introduction*. Translated by Marwa Shehata. Egypt: Hindawi Foundation for Education and Culture. (2016), 90.

¹⁰⁵ Kush, Denis. "The concept of culture in the social sciences." Translated by Munir Saidani. Beirut: Arab Organization for translation. (2007), 101.

In conclusion, the thinking self plays a great role in the production of culture and in determining its type, goals and identity in every human society and in every era. But, Kush confirms that groups and individuals cannot do what they like with regard to identity because identity is always the product of a specific personality determination imposed by others on one and the definition that the individual asserts on self¹⁰⁶. As for culture, Gramsci considers it as a process of research in the superstructures consisting of a variety of elements, as it contains perceptions, intellectual patterns, behavioural ways of life, and a mass of feelings (wills, desires, and denials). These elements are not scattered around but governed by system and order and can call the system and order the cultural mass. The second distinguishing characteristic is the cultural unity that brings together diverse cultures. In fact, culture is not one unit as it contains mixed perceptions and contradictory feelings. So we find that culture has different levels, including a sophisticated, advanced, harmonious and organic culture with a dense cultural and moral system¹⁰⁷, because, according to Gramsci, it is difficult to create a moral and ethical cultural system, while it is easier to create new, authentic principles randomly, in a common language¹⁰⁸.

Culture, which affects identity as I mentioned earlier, can go through different stages; the stage of formation, i.e. the beginning of the emergence of a new cultural world that gradually develops, which I display through the museum in this research. Then there is the stage of cultural balance according to the balance of political forces. There is also the crisis stage, which Gramsci considers a rebirth that has not crystallized and is unable to emerge. On the other hand, the previous culture is in the process of perishing, that is, it does not respond to and is incompatible with social interests. This is in fact what I am trying to show through the movement that reflects the activity and effectiveness of the social and cultural bloc and the

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid*, 101.

¹⁰⁷ Gramsci, Antonio. *Selections from cultural writings*. New York: New York University Press. (1985), 250.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid*, 278.

life formed inside the museum, which may mean the birth of the social-cultural act of an organic class that seeks to dominate. Gramsci sees this domination through the effectiveness of the socio-cultural bloc that aspires for change and the radical change of mentalities and behavioural values at their general level. As culture is responsible for unifying perceptions of collective wills when the perception is homogeneous and the will is strong and united with morality in its new form. Moreover, what unites culture in its various degrees is a large group of individuals who make up a large social group in its active form, by understanding their different proposals and positions. These social-historical differences are reflected in the common language dominated by classes of elite and power¹⁰⁹. These classes also dominate the social structure as they use their ideological weapon across the cultural environment through their intellectuals¹¹⁰. These intellectuals play the role of intermediaries between these classes and the classes under ideological domination and political control. Thus counter-hegemony occurs only through conflict and not through the formation of internal homogeneous perceptions of individual production. Rather, it is a cultural struggle that aims to change popular mentalities and spread philosophical innovations that emerge, historically, as real. These philosophical innovations are controlled by this elite who prefer to continue living with elegance through a refined conception of life that highlights the necessity of communication between the educated and the simple people¹¹¹.

The cultural change is linked to the general movement of the comprehensive social structure. A structure is an external force that overpowers man, so one becomes indifferent and turns to the concept of freedom to create a new form of morality and politics¹¹² in its basic contradictory movement, which cannot be separated from the environment in its various forms of levels. Change is also witnessing various stages taking the form of a struggle between

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid*, p. 173.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid*, p. 171.

¹¹¹ *Ibid*, p. 146.

¹¹² *Ibid*, p. 126.

freedom as a historical social asset in the process of revolution, and authoritarianism as a form of preservation of the old. Moreover, the depth of cultural change is also political, and it is a form of social structure conflict. As the fundamental organic class at the level of production relations aims to dominate. Gramsci says that 'the party, as a practical activity, works to solve specific problems as an organic political program, as a general ideological tendency, and as a cultural form'¹¹³.

This cultural change aims to change the form of the relations in the outside world so that the organic class becomes more powerful in its work, and oriented in practical activity towards the circles of different social groups. A new conception of the world can only exist if it enters and seeps into society as a whole through the ability to replace a previous cultural ethical world threatened with demise. This process can be called the moment of domination. As this new cultural-ethical conception is about the movement of an organic social group that is not concerned with immediate socio-cultural interests. Rather, it also expresses future interests that turn the possible and the desired into a scientific, historical and social reality. This cultural change is only possible when the development of an organic class is completed and during the period when the social forces exhaust all their energies towards self-determination, the state of its collapse occurs. Then the new alternative (socio-cultural) to the above arises. The process of cultural conflict aimed at change aspires to create an independent high culture, and this is through the cultural cleansing of common sense to manifest and take its new form, i.e. the positive sense. The positive sense is the new popular cultural form by means of critical thought and the dominion of the spread of the Praxis philosophy, (The philosophy of Praxis is, in a sense, a philosophy that is liberated (or seek liberation) from every single ideological or fanatic element; it is the fully aware of contradictions), as a coherent and expressive conception of the interests of the organic classes in their cultural

¹¹³ *Ibid*, 134.

form. Regarding the positive sense, Gramsci says that affirming the need for new beliefs means the existence of a new common sense and thus a new culture and a new philosophy rooted in the popular consciousness as strongly as old beliefs¹¹⁴. The process of creating a new sense can only be through the contact and interaction of the intelligentsia with the simple. That is, the presence of organic intellectuals rooted in the masses in the broadest social groups and expressing the interests of the class in the process of socio-cultural change, and this process might affect the identity because they are intertwined.

4.2 The Intersection between Identity and Museum

Some historians, such as Khalidi, consider that the roots of the Palestinian identity preceded the emergence of the general Palestinian awareness of this identity, as the inhabitants of Palestine began to picture themselves as a distinct political unit since the beginning of the twentieth century. He establishes his argument on the theory of "Imagined Communities" for Benedict Anderson, who links the emergence of media discourse and the emergence of the awareness of self and the other¹¹⁵. The identity of Palestinians began to form since the time of the Canaanites, but others believe that awareness of identity among the Palestinians developed at the beginning of the twentieth century with the emergence of Zionism, which threatened the Palestinian entity and its existence on its land. This was particularly after the end of World War I, and the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire, which resulted in the division of the Arab countries, including Palestine, which was subjected to Western colonialism, that is, after the year 1917. Rafidi adds that in the forties, the national identity was at the height of its manifestation¹¹⁶ for the Palestinians, who were struggling to

¹¹⁴ *Ibid*, 50.

¹¹⁵ Khalidi, Rashid. "[BOOK REVIEW] Palestinian identity, the construction of modern national consciousness." *Middle East Journal* 52, no. 2. (1998): 184-188.

¹¹⁶ Rafidi, Wisam. *Alhuiat alwataniat alfilastiniat baed atifaqiat 'uwslu wa'iishkaliaat altafakuk* [Palestinian National Identity After the Oslo Agreement: The Problem of Dismantling by Drawing the System!]. Haq Al-Awda Newspaper, (2011), 45 edition.

survive in their land by holding to their presence and identity. Furthermore, Rafidi carries on that the Nakba was an important factor in shaping the form of the Palestinian identity¹¹⁷. In addition to the fact that British colonialism, according to Sabbagh, has isolated Palestine from the rest of the Arab Orient, and imposed on its Arabs a capitalist class system, within which an Arab society that enjoyed a certain specificity grew. In addition, the British colonial state subjected Palestine to European colonial settlement, which increased the specificity of Palestinian society, and the socio-economic conditions that emerged from these radical transformations produced a special context that fundamentally affected the Palestinian identity¹¹⁸.

In order to preserve national identity, a continuous process of inclusion and exclusion is required, and this process needs to use the power of narrative to show diversity and engage in politics. This role rests with the ruling authorities, who use multiple tools to form a new version of an old identity that is more flexible and agile. Among these tools are museums with their diverse content that intersect with national identity, which is an essential part of the foundations of the formation of nation-states, as I mentioned earlier. This is done through innovative traditions and state institutions such as museums, which are important sites where some claims of identity are examined and displayed, and this includes the museums in Palestine, which I cover in this research, or museums around the world. I mentioned earlier that museums have gone through three articulated stages, but the form and content of the museum in all these stages played the role of mediator or bridge of communication to fill the gaps between generations and share societal knowledge on a larger forum with different communities and a variety of visitors. Furthermore, the targeted category has become larger

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁸ Sabbagh, Zuhair. *Tahawulat fi alhuiat alfilastiniat mundh nashwiha" alhuiat alfilastiniat 'iilaa 'ayn?*. [Transformations in the Palestinian Identity since its Inception" Palestinian Identity... Where to?]. Al-Bireh: The Center for Heritage and Palestinian Society Studies at the In'ash Family Association. (2009), 105.

during the transition from one stage to another, as museums are no longer limited to the elite, according to Bennett. Moreover, it entailed a re-conceptualization of the museum in the mid-nineteenth century as a cultural medium that could be used as governmental means affecting the entire population¹¹⁹, so it was only natural to attract more audiences.

We also note that in the stage of modernity and after it, the size and scope of the national past have increased significantly and its discursive characteristics were significantly reorganized in the museum¹²⁰. This is in view of the fact that museums often attempt to convey something specific and lasting about the nation they represent derived from its identity. This is most evident in the more traditional museums of the modern era, which present elegant rows of artifacts arranged in chronological order or according to their genres. However, this form changed with the beginning of the postmodern era as the museum, at a time when it was considered a sight itself, has become the site for sight; a place both to see and be seen from. To illustrate, the museum allows the individual to circulate between the object and subject positions of the dominating vision it affords over the city and its inhabitants¹²¹. The museum is also considered one of the most important institutional forms that express in the time maps the origins in which societies form their identity and play a very active but hidden role in social control. It is also a forum to address public identity and social inclusion¹²². Furthermore, the museum works to strengthen the national identity to ensure its continuity for generations and bring about various social changes in order to be compatible with the identity.

¹¹⁹ Bennett, Tony. *The Birth of the Museum*. Translated by Mohammed Al-Mubarak and Hassanein Hayat. Bahrain: Bahrain Authority for Culture and Publishing, (2019), 27.

¹²⁰ *Ibid*, 295.

¹²¹ *Ibid*, 183.

¹²² *Ibid*, 78.

Moreover, although there is a difference in methods from one museum to another and from one country to another, all of them contribute to strengthening identity and improving people's lives by developing inspiration and expanding cognitive curiosity that constitutes a stock of the inherited identity of the public. Spicci suggests that contemporary museums attempt to express new identities and are seen specifically as being involved in the identity proceedings¹²³. What is meant by the new identities here is their cosmopolitan character in the postmodern world.

Museums are one of the cultural institutional forms in which societies shape their collective memory. For example, when a child goes to a museum, the museum is very important in shaping their idea of what is to be remembered. Likewise, when you go to a museum, you know that what you see is just a representation of the past. However, it takes a certain sociological perspective to realize that what is being represented there is part of a certain narrative, and not just “the past”. It is important when you look at museums to consider not only what is represented, but also what is not represented. This realization is reflected in the remembrance which takes place not only in the minds of individuals but also in the minds of social actors who reflect this remembrance through the institutional system of which the museum is a part. When we remember something, we remember it not only as individuals but also as members of a particular mnemonic community. So we have multiple memories in accordance with our participation in multiple mnemonic communities. Moreover, as Spicci proposes, it is not so much about shaping our memory, but about processing the way in which we shape our memories through what is presented to us. In this regard, just owning a museum was in itself an executive expression of possessing an identity whose symbols are clearly displayed within the museum¹²⁴, which is considered an expressive site for ways of thinking, public culture, and identity along with other public institutions. The museum also

¹²³ Spicci, Mauro. *Museums, Memory and the Shaping of Identity*. (2011), 116.

¹²⁴ *Ibid*, 117.

collects culturally significant objects that are easily designated as national manifestations of identity related to history. This does not necessarily mean that all that was displayed must be for the nation. Even though national artifacts and artworks were an important strand of culture and identity presentation as they reflect them as mere realities that play an important role in the emergence of nation-states. These nation-states, according to Bennett, are shaped at least in part by innovative traditions and state institutions such as museums since the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries¹²⁵. Moreover, they continue to play this role despite the fast developments of reality in the postmodern world. In fact, museums have been exploited as places to strengthen and enhance national identity, narrate the national story, and represent its heritage and identity. This is evident in traditional museums, which are usually deeply embedded within the nation-state; to be able to provide global narratives that transcend the biased idiosyncrasies of the nation, especially since most museums around the world are, directly or indirectly, connected to their national context. Likewise, Tamari mentions that Palestinian museums, which are an integral part of a national environment, tried to play this role,¹²⁶ on the grounds that museums, as Bennett emphasizes, create a sense of historical continuity and legitimacy. This is what politicians and intellectuals need to consolidate the idea of a nation-state while concealing or ignoring the oppression of the indigenous people¹²⁷ and the violence they are subjected to under colonialism, as in the Palestinian case. Moreover, if the museum, as Kaplan poses, is a place where social, ideological and cultural changes are manifested, and the representation of the ruling elites is promoted and politically legitimized¹²⁸, then is it so in Palestinian museums? These Palestinian museums are still under

¹²⁵ Bennett, Tony. *The Birth of the Museum*. Translated by Mohammed Al-Mubarak and Hassanein Hayat. Bahrain: Bahrain Authority for Culture and Publishing, (2019), 127.

¹²⁶ Interview with the Palestinian artist, the lecturer in Islamic art and architecture at Birzeit University, Vera Tamari, August 25, 2021.

¹²⁷ Bennett, Tony. *The Birth of the Museum*. Translated by Mohammed Al-Mubarak and Hassanein Hayat. Bahrain: Bahrain Authority for Culture and Publishing, (2019), 276.

¹²⁸ Kaplan, Flora. *Museums and the Making of Ourselves*. London and New York: Leicester University Press. (ed.1994). "Mexican Museums in the Creation of a National Image of Tourism." In *The Role of Objects in National Identity*. London: University of Leicester Press. (1993), 103-124.

construction and development while each of the countries of the whole world has at least a foundational museum in which there are different cultural themes and ideas. On the one hand, these countries have museums that present a set of prospects, even if it is not an infinite set, on the other hand, they may be eager to deal with the past according to the logic of the era, which is based on the thesis of the humanity of culture through the idea of cosmic culture. That is, the cosmic culture that is based on knowledge and the search for human and cultural similarities between the civilizations of the world through collections of antiquities from different countries of the world that confirm the existence of these cultural similarities in civilization. These antiquities are used to confirm this fact and not to only be displayed and observed. Also, these countries are not subject to colonialism while Palestine is still under colonialism, so can the museums in Palestine deal with the past as it has passed away in its museums? Here, the dialectic and speciality of the museum in Palestine appear in the light of the museum pattern that offers a tangible view of the advanced national identity, and its representations as a tool of nationalism. These museums also try to express their ideological stances. Even museums in Palestine are not isolated from these attempts to project their identity and shape their narrative despite being under colonialism, and this is clear by what I mentioned earlier when presenting the Palestinian museums. In fact, colonialism may be a greater catalyst for the establishment of museums, with their archives and displays of symbols of Palestinian identity; these attempts to establish museums may be considered as an attempt to resist the colonizer and emphasize the existence of the colonized.

4.3 Museum and Memory

Art museums of all kinds, whether modern or historical, resume emphasizing communication with the symbols or figures that peoples regard as immortal from the past. As most museums are designed to stimulate in observers that kind of immersion in the memory of

the past through the works they display, and according to Halbwachs, the primary task of the Art Museum is to oppose time and act as a means of preserving human memory. Seeing that, the human brain alone is not enough to carry out the process of recalling, distinguishing¹²⁹ and remembering memories, given the change of circumstances in which individuals live. What is meant here by the change of circumstances is the change of times, the succession of generations, the transformation in the information of the present and the quickness of its changes that impose oblivion? Assmann sees that this oblivion comes through changing the circumstances in which the memory is placed and in which the group lives. This happens through a complete change in social frameworks, the symbol and essence of this new reality, in which the old reality becomes invalid. When the reality around a person changes, there will be nothing easier for them than forgetting all the memories that were related to the old reality¹³⁰, which according to Halbwachs, despite their apparent uniqueness, have a common nature. These memories also have a collective nature that the surrounding society reminds us of. In fact, we are not alone at all¹³¹. From this standpoint, Halbwachs argues that oblivion cannot be understood simply as a physiological process; it is related to those same social frameworks that influence the individual remembering process. Moreover, forgetting a period of our lives (oblivion) means losing connection with those who were around at that period¹³². This hinders the act of remembering because, in order to recall one's own past, one needs the memories of others¹³³ to collect and complete the picture of the past. Truthfully, the memories that are most difficult to recall are those that belong to none but us, those which include our most exclusive possession. Regardless, the fact that each individual is connected to social

¹²⁹ Halbwachs, Maurice. *On collective memory*. Translated by Yasmin Az-Zahr. Biat Al-Muwatin for Publishing, (2016), 20.

¹³⁰ Assmann, Jan. *Cultural Memory and Early Civilization. Writing, remembrance, and political imagination*. Translated by Rajab Abdel Halim. Cairo: The Supreme Council of Culture, (1970), 61.

¹³¹ Halbwachs, Maurice. *On collective memory*. Translated by Yasmin Az-Zahr. Biat Al-Muwatin for Publishing, (2016), 48.

¹³² *Ibid*, 52.

¹³³ *Ibid*, 73.

frameworks facilitates the process of remembering due to the tangled connection of their life with the lives of others in the social frameworks in which one lives. This process of remembrance is not limited to social frameworks only but goes beyond it to the various institutional frameworks that play this role, even if it is partially, including the museum. Assmann sees the relationship is close between the museum and the process of remembering since the museum is seen as a mediator for the production of national identity¹³⁴ by preserving memory, which is the link or bridge that connects awareness, self, and identity¹³⁵, according to Locke. Furthermore, this memory in which justice is manifested in a time of random memories and identities, whether those identities were repressed, oppressed, or manipulated¹³⁶ which Anderson sees as the origin of the emergence of nations and national groups.

These nations and national societies depend on their collective historical memory upon which the groups are established when the historical elements and conditions are prepared for them, which would make the components of the collective memory part of national identity, with Andersen highlighting the role of oblivion and remembering and their functions in historical consciousness. How do we remember or forget? When do remembering and forgetting happen?¹³⁷ According to Assmann, if a person or society cannot but remember the things that can be restored in a past form within the frameworks formed in a particular present, this means that those things whose frameworks lost their ties within this present itself are forgotten¹³⁸. Then, is this forgetting done within the institutional system adopted by the ruling regime? Is this intentional or random? Particularly since this system is the framework within which our life begins from the moment of our birth, with which we are registered in it

¹³⁴ Assmann, Jan. *Cultural Memory and Early Civilization. Writing, remembrance, and political imagination*. Translated by Rajab Abdel Halim. Cairo: The Supreme Council of Culture, (1970), 77.

¹³⁵ Locke, John. *An essay concerning human understanding*. "Philosophy". The French Magazine. (1847).

¹³⁶ Ricoeur, Paul. *Memory, History, Forgetting*. Translated by George Al-Zitani. Al-Kitab Al-Jadeed for Publishing. (2009), 511.

¹³⁷ Kawtharani, Wajeeh. *Aldhaakirat min manzur muarakha* [Memory from a Historian's Perspective]. Tabayun Magazine, no. 33. (2020), 23.

¹³⁸ Assmann, Jan. *Cultural Memory and Early Civilization. Writing, remembrance, and political imagination*. Translated by Rajab Abdel Halim. Cairo: The Supreme Council of Culture, (1970), 64.

according to the system followed against our will, and what is preserved in the system record becomes the material reality of the existence of our personality. If it is deleted, altered, or modified, it remains the real material. This preserved crystallizes in other forms and places to contribute to preserving the memory through which narrative and identity are formed. Furthermore, if we consider that, within this system and within this framework, museums' model is formed that may intersect with memory, then it becomes natural that what is formed within the museum is related to what is within the framework of the system with its facts, projections or additions. Also, a new projection may be added to these projections if the museum represents and disassembles the archived within the framework of the system according to the approach of the museum owner. Or, according to what is prevalent in the production stage of the museum, instead of reproducing and representing the original natural preserve. This leads the recipient to analyze the original archive itself, analyze the production of the archived and present it to the one who appears before it. This successive projection has its rulings and its impact on memory records. Moreover, it is not fair that is responsible for judging and governing this analysis with the projections it holds and its display, nor is it mercy; it is life itself that is described as pushing towards the future. Also, as it pushes toward the future, it sometimes demands and requires forgetting. It requires destroying types of memory, i.e. images of the past that some people like to be affiliated with dimensionally, as Nietzsche declares¹³⁹. Furthermore, this is an attempt that always lurks in danger, because the process of remembrance imposed by the museum with its artworks is basically an attempt to create knowledge in different forms related to an assumed or real past or an imagined or desired future. What we place in the museum, for example, draws a ready-made form for the understanding that will be taught to future generations to learn about the past through it. This helps in shaping their memory to become, as the identities, a form of duty that is prepared by

¹³⁹ Kawtharani, Wajeeh. *Aldhaakirat min manzur muarakha* [Memory from a Historian's Perspective]. Tabayun Magazine, no. 33. (2020), 23.

the museum and all the institutions of the system. This act cannot be judged either positively or negatively. However, there is a problem that emerges through this proposition, which is the process of sanctifying the components of memory, so that it becomes impossible to be free or break apart from its components. Rather, it may shift to become a form of closure and a reason for exclusion, especially in the case of a state under colonialism like Palestine, and according to Kawtharani, this closure becomes a necessity to maintain existence through memory. This is because the demand for memory is, in principle, a form of appeal to justice, especially in this case. Although the memory that the museum displays and is influenced within the framework of the system does not revive the past, but reshapes it through the present, through which we can only read the past.¹⁴⁰ This present is steeped in the products of the social structure, which affects how to look at the past in itself as the past changes according to the products of our present time, and every input presented in the museum is subject to the time in which it lives. Moreover, the loss or exaggeration of any of these inputs presented in the museum leads to the amputation or concealment of a part of the collective memory, even if in an unnoticeable form, and this leads to disturbances in the collective identity. Also, even if Le Goff urges to work to use collective memory to liberate human beings, not enslave them,¹⁴¹ the amputation or addition of collective memory in the museum and the institutional and cultural system that is subject in its entirety to the ruling authority produces another form of enslavement. The reason behind that is that this system, according to Boutayeb, uses identity blackmail and memory control, through the selection of heritage works that are presented in the museum, as a means to enslave its people. This leads to the

¹⁴⁰ Halbwachs, Maurice. *On collective memory*. Translated by Yasmin Az-Zahr. Biat Al-Muwatin for Publishing, (2016), 27.

¹⁴¹ Le Goff, J. *History and memory*. Translated by Jamal Shahid. Arab Center for Research and Policy Studies. (2017), 103.

manipulation of memory and the abuse of heritage, and thus engaging in the heritage adventure will only serve the existing political authority.¹⁴²

Also, if the discussion is shifted to be about the museum in Palestine, then it should be mentioned that the past that is displayed in our Palestinian museums is not a past, but a present that its events are still occurring. Thus, do Palestinian museum call to liberate human beings from the enslavement that is still a confirmed reality because of the control of the colonizer? This colonizer seized the past and present through its influence and control over the various aspects of Palestinian life.

This control may turn the besieged Palestinian present and their desired future into two complementary dimensions; the identity that characterizes their existence from others and the memory that preserves what they have suffered and resisted to be free. The two dimensions raise many questions, as according to Darraj, there is no identity that does not know change as a result of change and instability, nor is there a tolerant memory that always stores what a wide diaspora people has lived through for seven decades and more. Perhaps the long-lived diaspora, which is approaching old age, is what made Palestinians talk about their identity out of concern.¹⁴³ Owing to the fact that the existential threat that the Palestinians are constantly exposed to because of the colonizer, in addition to the identity crisis that the Palestinians are going through wherever they are. This crisis may be used to ideologize memory, and this requires a certain social awareness to realize that the memory is being ideologized. Moreover, what is represented or attempted to pass is part of an ideology that reflects a particular narrative, and not a narrative that collects all of the past. Moreover, in every museum, there are always certain symbols on display and others that tend to be

¹⁴² Boutayeb, Rashid. *Turathuna hu alkawn* [Our Heritage is the Universe]. Tabayun Magazine. no. 33. (2020), 11.

¹⁴³ Darraj, Faisal. *Riwayat alfilastiniyyn bayn alhuat waldhaakirat* alqaliqa [The Palestinian narrative between identity and anxious memory]. Al-Awan magazine. (2020).

forgotten or partially modified. Bennett argues that the museum adheres to an institutional pattern of oblivion¹⁴⁴. This means that it may ignore aspects of history and symbols, such as the martyr's monument, the child holding the stone, and scenes of blood and death. There are also multiple omissions and elimination which will be mentioned in this research, that are followed by the museum in order to be in harmony with the trend of the new era.

The imaginary work presented through artworks in the Palestinian museums reflects diverse and harmonious narratives that may lead to a heightened awareness of national identity or it may not. According to Bennett, this heightened awareness of national identity exists because of the specific political and ideological associations that control the way the past is presented by means of a persuasive rationale discourse that governs the ways in which a past is retrieved and reconstructed in the form of a narrative in the museum¹⁴⁵, which is built based on the culture of remembrance pursued by the museum that specializes in the field of planning and giving hope. In the sense that it is directed to the future and planning based on remembering the past. This culture of remembrance through which the narrative is formed depends on images of contact with the past that does not currently exist and arises at the moment when individuals attribute themselves to them and communicate with their selves. The culture of remembrance, according to what Boutayeb emphasize, opens the way for the emergence of critical memory that can only be achieved at the level of what we called horizontal memory. That is, the memory that links us to life, modernity, and the other. While repeated memory remains the most eloquent expression of the logic that governs vertical memory or identity memory¹⁴⁶.

¹⁴⁴ Bennett, Tony. *The Birth of the Museum*. Translated by Mohammed Al-Mubarak and Hassanein Hayat. Bahrain: Bahrain Authority for Culture and Publishing, (2019), 231.

¹⁴⁵ *Ibid*, 243.

¹⁴⁶ Boutayeb, Rashid. *Turathuna hu alkawn* [Our Heritage is the Universe]. Tabayun Magazine. no. 33. (2020), 11.

According to Ricoeur, we have nothing better than memory to demonstrate that something has happened. This is the memory that is brought up in the museum because the issue of representing the past, for Ricoeur, begins with memory, which always refers to the past and not to history. The museums' claims that they display the truth of the past is what forms the cognitive dimension of the memory issue, which reflects something specific and related to a specific purpose or vision through which knowledge is formed and recognition is presented, whether it is manipulated or not. Ricoeur holds a privileged position for manipulated memory and he sees in it an embedded memory, so to speak. This is because both memory and oblivion are subject to intense manipulation of power. This manipulation is due to the factor of ideology that tends to legitimize the dominant power systems. Here, one can see as far as possible the modalities of memory abuse, which cannot be separated from identity and one cannot think of identity without memory. Also, identity is based on memory and it is through the narrative function that memory is integrated into the making of identity. Moreover, this is done through narratives made of remembering and oblivion. The memory is imposed by narration and comes armed with an "authorized" history, it is the official history that is taught in institutions, including the museum, where memory is not only manipulated but is also imposed on individuals¹⁴⁷, as Ricoeur suggests. So, were the Palestinian museums able to survive what was imposed on them by creating a state of balance that links us to memory, so that they can produce the narrative?

These assumptions and the tangled relationships between the museum, identity and memory were reflected through the museum model used in this research, especially the Banksy Museum. Here, I argue that Banksy is trying to reshape the Palestinian memory so that it is closer to cosmopolitanism and coexistence under the reality of occupation while preserving the containment of the past as a bridge to cross the national identity. This crossing,

¹⁴⁷ Ricoeur, Paul. "Narrative identity." *Philosophy today* 35, no. 1 (1991): 73-81.

which seems fragile, reflects the superiority of the occupying other, and this obstructs or distorts the path to identity with the existence of an inferior conviction of the superiority of the occupation and of a submissive conviction that is incapable of standing in the challenge. This conviction may have made works of art appear as a process of creation that is shaped and formed by the presence of the occupation, and does not show the depth of the ruptures and transformations caused by the occupation, to appear as far as being a struggle between colonizers and colonized.

Chapter V: Cultural Industries in the Museum

This chapter deals with the impact of commodification on the cultural field which produces what might be called "the cultural industry"¹⁴⁸. This industry is reflected through the popular cultural manifestations on which this research is based. Through this research, I try to examine whether the museum can be considered an artistic structure that attempts to reconstruct social life through a cultural industry that uses time, story, and even image and imagination in a different way from what is usual. Also, can the cultural industry, with its tools, influence the national identity and narrative, especially in light of the colonial existence imposed on museums in Palestine?

A lot of the culture we consume these days is produced and distributed by cultural and media institutions that rely on multiple tools. For example, but not exclusively, the museum model as a means that may help spread this culture, which I will present through the logic of Theodor Adorno and Max Horkheimer through what they put forward in the chapter "the industry of culture". This logic central idea is that each product of culture is designed to maintain the status quo that enhances the domination of the capitalist system and its extension in the life of the individual. This point of view leads to the fact that the museum is just a means or way for its owner to gain money and for the state to spread its propaganda, which I will address in a later chapter, and thus the works of art become not just art but business. This argument leads to the fact that culture is no longer made for the sake of presenting culture.

Knowing that I absolutely do not agree with what they propose because culture does not always seek to strengthen the current situation in absolute terms or to imagine the future based on it, as we may find it rebelling against the current state and present in order to create

¹⁴⁸ Horkheimer, Max, and Theodor W. Adorno. *Dialectic of Enlightenment*. Translated by George Katrah. Lebanon: Al-Kitab Al-Jadid House for Publishing. (2006)

a change. Also, this point of view is supported by the fact that the museums' approach does not fully comply with this proposition, rather there is a disparity from one museum to another and from one artwork to another. Also, there is always good art in spite of everything, even in the great age of commodity, there are still real museums and artists who make great works of art for reasons other than greed. However, the basic case study that I deal with in this research has supported the proposition of Adorno and Horkheimer, and this is what we are trying to prove through this chapter.

Museums bear multiple roles that are no longer limited to organizing events only but go beyond that to become a tool for investigating the event, its limits and structure. This made them the primary analytical tool for organizing and analyzing the event as a radical and irreversible emergency in our world. This digitally controlled world is based on tracking and securing the traces of our individual existence in the hope of creating everything that enables our world to be controlled, through multimedia. In the Banksy Museum, multimedia is embodied in modern art that no longer produces only objects and images but transcends it to analyze the reification of objects and the structure of the image. Also, taking into account the recipient's desires and requirements, the recipient became closer to the subject of supply and demand, which is in harmony with the nature of the changes that coincided with the end of World War II. Also, man has become very demanding, easily bored, demands renewal, and constantly urging development in an era when everything seems to be on the path of continuous development and permanent renewal¹⁴⁹ according to what Stallabrass emphasizes. Therefore, we find museums, with their models and multiple exhibitions in the current era, willing to develop and renew in order to maintain their position among the important cultural institutions with great cultural contributions in an era marked by development, modernization,

¹⁴⁹ Stallabrass, Julian. *Contemporary Art: A Very Short Introduction*. Translated by Marwa Shehata. Egypt: Hendawy Foundation for Education and Culture, (2014), 12.

precision specialization, the desire for general culture, comprehensive knowledge of the various fields of life, and concern for time.

During the nineties of the twentieth century, the activities of museum models became increasingly commercial as they adopted the principles of commercial institutions. In this regard, the museums established alliances with commercial companies, made their products closer to the commercial culture, and imitated shops and entertainment cities more than they imitated libraries. This is evident in the Banksy model through the multiple corridors that the place includes. For example, the surrounding of the place is filled with shops, hotels, restaurants, and even the building of the museum itself is prepared for overnighting, dining, and meetings between friends and visitors in the cafe, restaurant, or bar; all this reflects the development of capitalism influence in each of these manifestations. With care to mould it with the manifestations of luxury created by capital, which appears through the museum buildings that I present in this research and the elegance and modernity of its galleries.

All these manifestations affect and influence the human consciousness, making the individuals intervene in its industry as the agent that interacts with it, and it forces them to accept the illusions that it offers, not as compensation, but with the indication that the individuals must be satisfied with what they are offered only¹⁵⁰ according to Stallabrass. Adorno argues that what is fundamental in the cultural industry is that these production models are based on what is supposed to be the needs of consumers and thus the acceptance of this by the natives and recipients is explained¹⁵¹. That is, the recipient who goes to the Banksy Museum needs a place that provides knowledge and aesthetics, a place for food, a place for recreation, and maybe a place to sleep, and all of these are available in the museum. As well as the Palestinian Museum, which provides also the space and galleries, and this

¹⁵⁰ *Ibid*, 166.

¹⁵¹ Horkheimer, Max, and Theodor W. Adorno. *Dialectic of Enlightenment*. Translated by George Katrah. Lebanon: Al-Kitab Al-Jadid House for Publishing. (2006), 142.

luxury, which is available in the models of Palestinian museums, crystallizes as a necessity that the individual needs. Moreover, the directors of the museums interviewed confirm this claim, even if it originates from another standpoint, as they point to the museums' need to preserve awareness, memory and history. Also, this is confirmed by many of the artists interviewed too. Hence, this need is transmitted to the individuals so that the idea of establishing the museum becomes a necessity, and it highlights its importance for the development of life and keeping pace with globalization, which can only be achieved through it. Therefore, the hegemony of the cultural industry appears as a way of encouraging the productive need and does not contradict it¹⁵², according to Bennett, for a simple reason, which is that this hegemony is keen that the displayed and hidden catalogue of what is prohibited or permitted has reached an extent of breadth so that it does not leave a free sector, but rather includes it all¹⁵³. Anyone or any tendency that contradicts this need and is not in harmony with it is exposed to being excluded from the system.

Al-Malhi confirms this by explaining how he was excluded from the Palestinian artist scene and deprived of invitations to local and Arab exhibitions due to his unique and special style of art and its inconsistency with the context¹⁵⁴. These controls and conditions which force you to stay on the same approach, change the idea of the culture from where art emerges, which was part of the real tools of change in communities before it turned into a cultural industry that will never raise the communities but actually suppress them¹⁵⁵ in different ways, according to Bennett. Also, every manifestation of this cultural industry forces the victims once again without any vagueness to stress the permanent oppression imposed by civilization and which nourishes man with repeated practices. That is, when the system forces

¹⁵² Bennett, Tony. *The Birth of the Museum*. Translated by Mohammed Al-Mubarak and Hassanein Hayat. Bahrain: Bahrain Authority for Culture and Publishing, (2019), 160.

¹⁵³ *Ibid*, 150.

¹⁵⁴ Interview with the Palestinian plastic artist, Jawad Malhi, August 1, 2021.

¹⁵⁵ Bennett, Tony. *The Birth of the Museum*. Translated by Mohammed Al-Mubarak and Hassanein Hayat. Bahrain: Bahrain Authority for Culture and Publishing, (2019), 163.

the individual's artwork to be in harmony with previous works and build on it, i.e. this artwork must be the outcome of previous work, not some new idea from the artist, in order to be in line with what was developed and not deviate from it.

In order to ensure the occurrence of this repression, the artistic field has been globalized in its museum context linked to the site-specificity and the installation in the void, through the use of artworks intended for urban or regional development. This contemporary installation is expensive and is generally reliant on private sponsorship and public funding. It is thus tied to corporate involvement in the arts and the commercialization of the museum, in a way that directly cuts against its origins in do-it-yourself artists' projects; this in turn is linked to the connection between globalization and privatization (of which the privatization of the art world is just a small part) which pushes museums and galleries into an ever more spectacular display, according to Stallabrass.¹⁵⁶ Thus, museums, which were places to retell the stories of our time, those stories that rose to the belief¹⁵⁷, are transformed into the fruit of cultural industries directed through the structure formed by the surrounding system. This fruit interferes with the creation of the future imaginary that Anderson talks about. Anderson also considers that both museum and the museum's imagination are deeply political¹⁵⁸. All this type of imagination did not come from anywhere, it is the product of navigational technologies, time measurement, astronomy, observation, photography, printing, and the powerful driving force, which is capitalism¹⁵⁹. The idea of imagining in the Banksy museum was not aloof from all these influences, especially capitalism. This idea of imagination is fundamental to the existing power through which the nation is created and differentiated from

¹⁵⁶ Stallabrass, Julian. *Contemporary Art: A Very Short Introduction*. Translated by Marwa Shehata. Egypt: Hendawy Foundation for Education and Culture, (2014), 26.

¹⁵⁷ *Ibid*, 207.

¹⁵⁸ Anderson, Benedict. *Imagined Communities*. Translated by Thayer Deeb. Cairo: The Supreme Council of Culture. (1999), 170.

¹⁵⁹ *Ibid*, 173.

previous communities in the modern nation-state as Anderson asserts¹⁶⁰. Making the future of any nation is a deliberate invention that is applied through the institutional system of any nation, the most dangerous of which is culture.

This is confirmed by both Horkheimer and Adorno, who dismantle the cultural reality from the premise that it is based on the cultural industry directly associated with the use of the most profound colonial clichés. Furthermore, its only benefit is compatibility with what it is prepared for in advance¹⁶¹. In order for this benefit to be obtained, there must be supervision, so that nothing comes out of the culture factories without bearing the same signs of the dominant language and without obtaining approval at first sight¹⁶². Therefore, we find that Banksy Museum, Yasser Arafat Museum, Mahmoud Darwish Museum, the Palestinian Museum and others are keen to carry this language by appearing in the tolerant style acceptable to the whole world. This is in accord with the language of the existing Palestinian Authority, which is eager to demonstrate the desire for tolerance and peaceful coexistence, which I will discuss later in the chapter on the authority and the museum.

This desire, in essence, seeks to gain acceptance from the other. Therefore, museums in Palestine, such as Banksy Museum, find themselves forced to move according to a new display pattern, with templates that are in harmony with the global context that has turned into a commodity. According to Qupti, this model with its facilities, such as the restaurant and the hotel for overnight, are suitable for our time. This also gives the museum a greater chance of attracting an audience, ensuring the continuity of the place, and breaking the notion that the museum is a temple connected with a specific category. Qupti also believes that the museum or the artistic models in Palestine are obliged to continue with this approach because it is

¹⁶⁰ *Ibid*, 153.

¹⁶¹ Horkheimer, Max, and Theodor W. Adorno. *Dialectic of Enlightenment*. Translated by George Katrah. Lebanon: Al-Kitab Al-Jadid House for Publishing. (2006), 147.

¹⁶² *Ibid*, 150.

more attractive and sustainable¹⁶³. Despite this view, which sees in the commodification style a disintegration of the museum space that is limited to the elite, Bennett emphasizes that although museums were shaped by the idea of homogeneity between classes, they still played a major role in distinguishing the elite from the popular social classes¹⁶⁴. This was reflected in Banksy's model by the fact that the museum itself contains a hotel for accommodation at high costs that the middle and lower classes cannot afford to stay in, let alone the cost of sitting in the restaurant or the hallway at the entrance. This contradiction in the two viewpoints, since the museum is still limited to the elite, or disintegrated due to commodityism, cannot be resolved due to the diversity of viewpoints in it. However, there is no doubt that commodification and the cultural industry have an impact on the various developments taking place in this space.

Part of this development is linked to the neoliberal extremism in its treatment of culture as a commodity, the commodification of artworks, their dispersal, and the emergence of monopolies around some symbols or their marginalization and hiding from the surface to join the world of archives¹⁶⁵, as Groys asserts. Besides, during the mid-nineties, transformative and market-friendly works emerged, in which Stallabrass says that identities became spectral unions, and mixing and pushing them in all directions became subject to consumerism¹⁶⁶. These works have had an impact on societies because they reproduce people, according to the models of the industry as a whole. These models aimed at profit and maximizing wealth and instilling the culture of consumption that has long prevailed in Western societies, and made the world as a whole a large market for the promotion of their products. All of these changes fall within the scope of reshaping the perception, awareness,

¹⁶³ Interview with the Palestinian artist and Museum curator, Hanna Qupti, August 21, 2021.

¹⁶⁴ Bennett, Tony. *The Birth of the Museum*. Translated by Mohammed Al-Mubarak and Hassanein Hayat. Bahrain: Bahrain Authority for Culture and Publishing, (2019), 73.

¹⁶⁵ Groys, Boris. *Art Power*. Translated by M.F, Kulfat. (2020).

¹⁶⁶ Stallabrass, Julian. *Contemporary Art: A Very Short Introduction*. Translated by Marwa Shehata. Egypt: Hendawy Foundation for Education and Culture, (2014), 23.

and imagination of peoples, weakening their cultural immunity and gradually removing them from their identity circle by reducing human value to a commodity value. That is done through the invasion of the consumer procedure of all the life phenomena of community and its shift into its image, and its transformation into the production of use values, as Hungarian Georg Lukacs says, they are material and utilitarian values devoid of spirit, purpose, value and cultural origins, causing the abolition of idiosyncrasies and identities and creating a world of no cultures¹⁶⁷. Sherwell emphasizes that this proposition in some aspects can be projected to the Banksy Museum through the location, the artworks, and the way they are presented. In fact, Banksy understood how to play with the art market through these aspects and through the state of personal ambiguity¹⁶⁸. Moreover, Salsa adds that the presence of Banksy's works gave importance and value to the place according to its owner's point of view; he realizes that withdrawing Banksy's business means the collapse of the project¹⁶⁹. It is also clear from this statement that this model is being dealt with as an economic project, so that, according to Salsa, the rank of the place must not decline as it supports the local economy such as shops, hotels, the surrounding area, and Bethlehem. Furthermore, it provides the tourists with an introduction to the tourist places and facilities that they need. It also activates the movement of transportation, which benefits the taxis in the surrounding, and this stimulates the economy. To keep this situation as it is, professional work is carried out on all technical and logistical levels, and a lot of effort is put into achieving perfection. In addition, constant updates are also made to suit the situation and needs. For example, during the pandemic, a room for success stories of the Palestinians was added, which gives support and a bright appearance to the Palestinian cause. Also, a new piece brought from the British Museum was

¹⁶⁷ György Lukács. *Smashing the Mind*. Translated by Elias Marqas. Dar.Al-Talia' Al-Jadidah for Publishing. 1980, 107.

¹⁶⁸ Interview with the assistant professor in contemporary visual art program at Birzeit University, Tina Sherwell, July 26, 2021.

¹⁶⁹ Interview with the Palestinian businessman and director of the Banksy Museum, Wisam Salsa, June 16 and August 23, 2021.

included in the museum, and Palestinian art was contained in the model. This, according to Salsa, was an important step for appreciating Palestinian art and artist out of interest in Palestinian art¹⁷⁰. This development came after the pandemic and closures, which created a need for another audience, i.e. the local one, until the place could return to work. This pours into a circle of keeping pace with the extreme speed led by global culture according to the surrounding circumstances, and its transformation into commodities that achieve gains. This appears in the research model through the change in the Banksy Museum, adding to that, subjecting the museum to abstract economic logic is capitalist exploitation of culture at the expense of the community and through crises, as Scruton suggests. This is what we can call the “industrialization of culture”.

When cultural institutions, including contemporary art, are viewed in today's democracies as a means of capital, it will often become clear that counterfeiting is one of their purposes to gain more profits, and that it is a goal apparently intended to achieve the interests of all of us. In a world teeming with all that is fake, the public interest is constantly being massacred in favour of private imagination, and the facts we rely on to save us remain uncritically or unknowingly¹⁷¹. This is due to the mixing of knowledge with the market needs, which makes it challenging to reflect pure knowledge of this without capital interventions, and this affects the artistic work or the entire cultural system. According to Groys, today the field of art is often equated with the art market, and artwork is defined primarily as a commodity. Likewise, the fact that the context in which art performs its function is the art market, and that every work of art is a commodity is unquestionable¹⁷². Despite all this, the typical visitor to the exhibition rarely sees the displayed work as a commodity.

¹⁷⁰ Interview with the Palestinian businessman and director of the Banksy Museum, Wisam Salsa, June 16 and August 23, 2021.

¹⁷¹ Scruton, Roger. *The Great Deception*. Translated by Sharif Majdi. Al-Jumhuriya Magazine. (2018).

¹⁷² Groys, Boris. *Art Power*. Translated by M.F, Kulfat. (2020).

Contemporary art exhibits, according to Stallabrass, are dominated not only by the breaking down of national barriers, but by the constant innovation in industry and culture that dissolves old structures, traditions, and associations¹⁷³. This is reflected in the new artworks in the Banksy Museum, which are trying to break away from all that is old and stereotypical. This change is confirmed by Qupti, who says that the Hotel or the Banksy Museum left in him the impression of visiting a beautiful place for entertainment, and he felt the same feeling he had when he went to Disneyland, the place, without thinking, is just a show and entertainment place and a good place to be. Though when we look at the surrounding space in the museum, we see the reality reflected inside the museum in the form of artworks and souvenirs for tourists, made according to the European context¹⁷⁴. Added to this is the pleasure of enjoying great diversity, and this reflects the style of the contemporary entertainment industry.

Also, Al-A'ma assures that the existence of private spaces in museums is necessary because there are no budgets allocated to museums by the Palestinian Authority or the Ministry of Culture. This, in his opinion, allows the transformation of Palestinian art into a defining commodity that exploits and introduces the Palestinian cause abroad and at home. It is true that the Banksy Museum has exploited culture to make money, but it returns again to pump this money into culture through the exhibitions it holds. This is legitimate; because we do not have the culture of building companies that finance art projects and museums, and no one accepts to pour their money into the cultural sector, so without the commodification and promotion of art, it will not reach the public¹⁷⁵.

This commodification, which rhymes with the consumer lifestyle in general, has fostered the idea of imprisonment of revolutionary violence and not allowing it. According to

¹⁷³ Stallabrass, Julian. *Contemporary Art: A Very Short Introduction*. Translated by Marwa Shehata. Egypt: Hendawy Foundation for Education and Culture, (2014), 15.

¹⁷⁴ Interview with the Palestinian artist and Museum curator, Hanna Qupti, August 21, 2021.

¹⁷⁵ Interview with the Palestinian collector of antiquities and works of art, George Al-A'ma, June 17, 2021.

Marcuse, this is through multiple tools, one of which is the museum and artworks that promote isolation and self-salvation and are consistent with the idea of the end of ideologies because liberal thought pushes toward individualism. He also argues that art can be used as a force to penetrate the established reality and disrupt the ideological, rather stable, form of the present world.¹⁷⁶

This is reinforced by the fact that the museum serves as a site where the image of man is reassembled from the scattered fragments of this man. The isolation of man is no longer a self-evident thing; the Museum allowed that isolation to rebuild man as a project that must be completed with time¹⁷⁷, according to Bennett. This construction is in line with the idea of projecting and showing some events which museums perform according to the need. In Banksy's model, the idea of showing some events in a different form than what is usual and closer to a tolerant desire. For example, the art of work that portrays the child with roses, (attached in Appendix (20)), or the teardrop that emits fragrant smells, both reflect the depth of the orientation to please the other and convey a message of openness and the desire for coexistence and reconciliation, regardless of the dialectic of the surrounding violent scene in Banksy model. This leads to the idea of revolutionary imprisonment that I mentioned earlier. As a matter of fact, the production and consumption of artworks in the Museum, as Stallabrass poses, emerged from a long practice of breaking with tradition and carried with them a great deal of historical references. So these signs become completely historical and not completely dated at the same time. These signs refer to a huge number of patterns, but they do not mention any of them or the circumstances of their emergence, so history is crystallized into a pure history of patterns and extends like a table from which any combination of options

¹⁷⁶ Marcuse, Herbert. *One-dimensional man*. Translated by George Tarabishi. Beirut: Dar Al-Adab. (1988), 192.

¹⁷⁷ Bennett, Tony. *The Birth of the Museum*. Translated by Mohammed Al-Mubarak and Hassanein Hayat. Bahrain: Bahrain Authority for Culture and Publishing, (2019), 96.

can be selected¹⁷⁸. This falls within the scope of the industrialization of a selective culture that harmonizes with the contemporary approach immersed in the capitalist system, which extended its arms to reach every aspect of life, including the commodification reflected through some museums.

This culture, represented by the cultural industry, extended to the perimeter of the museum where the relationship between the Banksy Museum and the inhabitants of the surroundings turned into a material utilitarian relationship. Through the sample interviewed in the vicinity of the Banksy Museum, which numbered 46 respondents, 90% of the respondents from the surrounding of the Banksy Museum confirmed that their relationship with the museum is economic and the presence of the museum had a great financial impact and return on them. Despite this financial return, 96% of the respondents in the surrounding did not enter the museum, even though it is only a few meters away from them. This is because they believe that the museum, despite being open to visitors and free of charge, is an expensive place for them and limited to the elite category, and its existence is no more than a source of livelihood for them. This is also a product and extension of the commodity and capital system. Even if the museum sees itself as a means for revolution and resistance to colonialism, it is still, according to Adorno and Horkheimer, a product of a consumer system. This is confirmed by the connotations of the place and the artworks presented, which reflect the depth of the cultural industry in the model. This industry creates a kind of satisfaction and apathy for the consumer¹⁷⁹, which only feeds the human being with repeated patterns of artwork¹⁸⁰ drowned in the European approach that Banksy practices in his artistic career and which is not necessarily able to reflect the Palestinian reality. This not only does not achieve

¹⁷⁸ Stallabrass, Julian. *Contemporary Art: A Very Short Introduction*. Translated by Marwa Shehata. Egypt: Hendawy Foundation for Education and Culture, (2014), 21.

¹⁷⁹ Horkheimer, Max, and Theodor W. Adorno. *Dialectic of Enlightenment*. Translated by George Katrah. Lebanon: Al-Kitab Al-Jadid House for Publishing. (2006), 189.

¹⁸⁰ *Ibid*, 173.

goals except what is material but also, according to As-Saqa, it performs to introduce new concepts of hegemony that lead to a distortion of the lived reality as it is an "occupied" reality and not a colonial settler-replacement reality. That is, by rephrasing the situation that Palestinian society is experiencing as a state of occupation in line with the prevalence of national discourse and its vocabulary, the idea of the two-state solution, international law, and the classification of the West Bank and Gaza Strip as occupied areas¹⁸¹. The Banksy Museum model also invests in the existing present, based on an imaginary horizon of a future that is detached from it, and it transforms its products into generators of the imaginary meaning of the future with new concepts of domination based on the sentimental. It is an art that plays on emotions in a crude way, as it does not inspire you to feel something, but rather it brings you into a certain emotional state through the use of some clichés. This is what fake cultural production and deception cause; these fake and deception depend on a degree of collusion between the perpetrator and the victim to the point of losing the ability to distinguish the difference between the real and the fake. This is because both producer and consumer conspire to persuade each other that what they feel in and through a work of art is something deep, meaningful and true and is part of a high culture that works to hide undesirable facts¹⁸². An example of this is the artwork in Banksy's model, which reflects the fight between an Israeli soldier and a Palestinian youth with his pillow of feathers scattered around them, and through which he sees the way to peaceful liberation. Whereas, Fanon repeatedly emphasizes that only violent revolution is the way to liberation¹⁸³. That being the case, everyone must turn towards the revolution, including the intellectuals, who must fight with their people using power and muscles before endorsing them with excrements they call a literary, intellectual,

¹⁸¹ Elsakka, *a Palestinian Institute for the Study of Democracy (Muwaten)*. Social Sciences, Palestine: Birzeit University, 91.

¹⁸² Scruton, Roger. *The Great Deception*. Translated by Sharif Majdi. Al-Jumhuriya Magazine. (2018).

¹⁸³ Fanon, Frantz. *Wretched of the Earth*. Translated by Sami Ad-Droubi and Jamal Atassi. Cairo: Madarat for Research and Publishing. (2014), 47.

artistic or scientific production¹⁸⁴. This production crystallizes through cultural centres, museums, exhibitions, and others. The danger of this production lies in the fact that its owner, or those responsible for it, carried the mentality of the bourgeoisie, in which Fanon sees the mentality of brokers rather than the mentality of pioneers and innovators. With regards to this, their mentality urges them to act as agents, and so their mission is not to change the state of the nation, but rather to make themselves mediators between the country and disguised capitalism that today puts on itself the mask of contemporary colonialism¹⁸⁵, even if it is unaware of that.

The above argument leads to the fact that even the museum space or the artistic models, including the Banksy Museum, are among the tools of the resistance despite their exploitation as a commodity on the one hand, on the other hand, it is not considered a trigger for the revolution, because the notable manufactured artistic product inside the Banksy Museum, or rather imposed on it. The art created outside the circle of cultural and aesthetic tradition is on its way towards integration into the horizons of production, distribution and consumption, and towards responding to the culture of the image and the stakes of the economy under colonialism, not the revolution. It is reflected through this model that the universal, advertising, consumer, and cosmopolitan ritual¹⁸⁶ has replaced the religious, sacred, and revolutionary thought, and thus became dependent on the economy, the media, and the exchange value. This is an indication of a submissive understanding of the market and the mechanisms of mediating through exchange value. Within this transformation in the museum, Alwaleed emphasizes that art has, from the perspective of many, maintained a particular pattern based on the scheme of dissolving both art and man, but made them mere

¹⁸⁴ *Ibid*, 14.

¹⁸⁵ *Ibid*.

¹⁸⁶ Cosmopolitanism: as a thesis about identity also denies that membership in a particular cultural community is necessary for an individual to flourish in the world. According to that view, belonging to a particular culture is not an essential ingredient in the formation or maintenance of one's identity, and one can pick and choose from a wide gamut of cultural expressions or reject all such expressions in favour of other nonculture options.
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commodities or things at best to become slaves without their realizing it¹⁸⁷. And since slavery is not determined by obedience or by the force of toil, but by the person who is converted into a tool¹⁸⁸, according to Marcuse, and into something, through the structure of the system that contains them, including the colonizer and the authority in the Palestinian case.

Both Adorno and Horkheimer, who coined the term "culture industry", assert that mass culture does not mean that this culture originates from the masses, but that it has been produced and marketed to the masses with the aim of making profits at the expense of real culture. This commodification of culture makes profits, even for some creators, more important than artistic creativity. This is what artists such as Suleiman Mansour, Bashar Al-Hroub, Jawad Al-Malhi, Manal Diab, Ola Zaitoun, and others confirm during the interviews. Here, the cultural product becomes like any other commodity of consumption that is produced in the factory through typical production lines tossed with identical goods that lack the aesthetic spirit created by the artist, as Adorno and Horkheimer underline, because of their transformation into a commodity apparent contradiction. It is completely subject to the law of exchange, although it cannot be exchanged in itself. It is a commodity that blindly dissolves in consumption despite its inability to do so¹⁸⁹. Adorno and Horkheimer argue that capitalism has changed man into a greedy being striving for possession and transforming everything in nature into things to be bought and sold. For instance, the apartheid wall in front of the museum has also turned into a painting that attracts the public to the museum or hotel. In these circumstances, the creator becomes utilitarian and moves according to the compass of the market and not from the motives of artistic creativity.¹⁹⁰

¹⁸⁷ Al-Waleed, Yahya. *Min alfani 'iilaa allaafin dafatan thalithatan* [From Art to No Art", a Third Bank]. The Arab Cultural Forum, (2018).

¹⁸⁸ Marcuse, Herbert. *One-dimensional man*. Translated by George Tarabishi. Beirut: Dar Al-Adab. (1988), 68.

¹⁸⁹ Horkheimer, Max, and Theodor W. Adorno. *Dialectic of Enlightenment*. Translated by George Katrah. Lebanon: Al-Kitab Al-Jadid House for Publishing. (2006), 189.

¹⁹⁰ *Ibid*, 147.

Moreover, the global standard of value became dependent on glamour and on how much is spent on supplies.¹⁹¹ It is indisputable that when the world is transformed at both the material level and the intellectual level, its symbols, images and ideas also transform with it because society is being modernized through the dismantling of "organic" communities (the village, the extended family, etc.). This is done by passing the power of capital through culture, which has created a new type of subordination. That instead of the subordination of the slave to the master, it became a subordination that subjects the individual to a system of objective things (laws, market, and economy). This system is what created authority and its results which depend on the rationality, i.e. the rationality of a community that defends its hierarchy, according to Marcuse.¹⁹² The hierarchy was mirrored in this research through the museum, which is part of the means of mass communication that mixes art, religion, philosophy, politics, commerce and resistance. These cultural areas are attributed to a common denominator, which is the commodity form, and there is no consideration except for the exchange value, while the truth has no significance, as Anati poses, within these frameworks that were used within the Banksy Museum and filtered the knowledge¹⁹³ under the colonial reality and using the cultural industry.

¹⁹¹ *Ibid*, 145.

¹⁹² Marcuse, Herbert. *One-dimensional man*. Translated by George Tarabishi. Beirut: Dar Al-Adab. (1988), 181.

¹⁹³ Interview with a curator and general program manager at the Qattan Foundation, Yazid Anani, August 10, 2021.

Chapter VI: Museum and Authority

This chapter deals with the relationship between the museum and the authority in general. However, it specializes more in the nature of this relationship in Palestine, as an attempt to deconstruct the relationship between museums and the authority to know the form of this relationship on the one hand and to find out if the museum attempts fell into the trap of the authoritarian system on the other hand. And can you detach from the museum's attempts in their speech and tendency? If we are talking about the museum in the case of Palestine, which is still under colonization, did the occupying power play the same role as the authorities in other countries? Through these and other questions, in addition to the general discussion of the authority's interventions in the museum system around the world, I will try to find out and highlight the impact of the Palestinian Authority in museums.

So if we were to rely on museum theories as viewed by Bennett and other theorists, then it is as they see that the proliferation of museums is a general process of political inheritance that does its work¹⁹⁴. It is considered an extension of this policy through the content it provides, which is reflected in the museum's holdings, and its ideologies. What supports this view as well is the historical sequence of the emergence of museums, which was mentioned in a previous chapter and refers to the form of the existing relationship between the authority and the museum. This relation existed throughout its stages of development, but the form of this existence differed from one stage to another.

Furthermore, if we start to look at the relationship of authority with the museum through the museum's choice of location, we will notice that many, but not all, museums are located in the centre of cities. For example, the models of Palestinian museums that I

¹⁹⁴ Bennett, Tony. *The Birth of the Museum*. Translated by Mohammed Al-Mubarak and Hassanein Hayat. Bahrain: Bahrain Authority for Culture and Publishing, (2019), 170.

mentioned in the research, stand as physical and symbolic manifestations at the same time and have the ability to present and inform through their spread that they sought in the newly formed open and public space in a rhetorical manner¹⁹⁵ according to Bennett and others. This serves several purposes, including its closeness to the centre of power and decision-making, and the vital centres of all kinds, which are concentrated in the middle of cities. In addition, being in the centre of cities means an increase in the segment of people that can be integrated into the museum space. This was not only limited to the policy followed by the museum in choosing the place close to the centre of power, but it went beyond it to the educational policies followed by the museum. As it is in line with the educational policies of the state. This has been proven by theorists such as Bennett, Foucault, and Gramsci. Bennett believes that the museum is at the forefront of the cultural and educational institutions on which it relies on in applying the principles of modern education.¹⁹⁶ For example, in France, a provision was passed in 1902 stipulating that school children must be accompanied by their teachers to count visits to museums as an integral part of their curriculum; an early indication of government recognition of the educational potential of such institutions¹⁹⁷. Since that time, the museum has become a platform for civilization, a centre for scientific research, and a popular university for all within the framework and authority of the state. Museums are also considered as the mirror of society; a country that is educationally advanced is culturally and museumally advanced as well.¹⁹⁸

Bennett's point of view here is similar to Gramsci and Foucault, where Gramsci views state institutions, such as the museum, as pedagogic tools and as tools for the hegemony of the ruling class; it is, therefore, subject to cultural policy. He argues that the state must be

¹⁹⁵ Bennett, Tony. *The Birth of the Museum*. Translated by Mohammed Al-Mubarak and Hassanein Hayat. Bahrain: Bahrain Authority for Culture and Publishing, (2019), 187.

¹⁹⁶ Zuhdi, Bashir. *Almatahif* [Museums]. Damascus: Ministry of Culture Press, (1998), 79.

¹⁹⁷ Coombes, Annie E. *Museums and the Formation of National and Cultural Identities*. Oxford Art Journal: 11, no. 2 (1988), 57.

¹⁹⁸ Zuhdi, Bashir. *Almatahif* [Museums]. Damascus: Ministry of Culture Press, (1998), 101-102.

conceived of as an (educator), in as much as it tends precisely to create a new type or level of civilization¹⁹⁹. In fact, this is what I tried to confirm and prove through the museum models I presented earlier. As for Foucault's view, unlike Gramsci's, he views the museum as an instrument of discipline. According to him, Gramscian politics are institutionally indifferent in ways that a Foucaultian perspective can usefully temper and qualify²⁰⁰. Bennett tries to build on Foucault's approach of the prison by saying that the museum is nothing but a detention facility as well. Thus, the constituent institutions of this complex have changed the direction of the disciplinary bodies in their quest to make the forces and principles of the government visible to the public. That is, the public here has turned into people in the community. As for my approach through Banksy Museum, it combines the two proposals; Gramsci's proposal which reflects the educational approach that is evident through the information reflected through the artworks in the corridors of the museum, and Foucault's proposal about the monitor and control system that the visitors of the Banksy Museum feel through cameras, watchtowers and cement walls, that fill the inside and outside. These cement walls include what is considered as a work of art inside the museum, and some of it is a *fait accompli* imposed by the colonizer outside the museum. The same applies to the corridors of Yasser Arafat Museum and the Palestinian Museum; wherever you look, you will find security cameras installed. Not to mention the eyes of the staff and their follow-up of your movements, which involuntarily become more disciplined and tense.

All this creates a feeling in the individuals of the necessity of committing to the field of social behaviour prompting them to refrain from entering the museum. Also, if they did enter the museum, they would wear an outfit that fits the place because they feel in it that they are constantly being monitored and hence they have to show specific behaviours so that they

¹⁹⁹ Gramsci, Antonio. *Selections from cultural writings*. New York: New York University Press. (1985), 247.

²⁰⁰ Bennett, Tony. *The Birth of the Museum*. Translated by Mohammed Al-Mubarak and Hassanein Hayat. Bahrain: Bahrain Authority for Culture and Publishing, (2019), 194.

can be in this place. Moreover, their sense of being under monitoring forces them to commit to civil behaviour. This rational culture that museums created, according to Bennett, to tame the unruly mob, turned it into a tool for public education that forms a new culture²⁰¹. This extends till today but through the ruling regimes' use of the most hidden control and manipulation techniques. For example, according to what Marcuse points out, language has become a control tool, not through the matter, but through what it presents of information that suggests to the recipients that they have the right to choose, not obey and to have their freedom and not be submissive. It also practices censorship by imposing a reduction in linguistic forms and symbols of thinking, abstraction and development²⁰². Language is no longer the only element to play this role, rather, in the case of the museum, the museum's holdings have played the same role. This role affirms that the control that was imposed by the authority has become manifested in the form of management rather than control.

The museums, that I dealt with in the context of my research, reflect the depth of this tendency centred on the change in the way of management, with the bureaucratic pattern remaining, in one way or another, in the museums' discourse so that it is in harmony with the prevailing system approach. For example, although the Palestinian Museum is trying to appear in a sophisticated civilized look that harmonizes with the international museum style and to be a space that is open to all, this openness was not fully provided. In fact, it was not possible to meet the museum's General Manager despite numerous correspondences over the course of six months. Conducting an interview was denied and it was not possible to meet the museum's General Manager. However, after many interventions and attempts and after all meeting the required requirements, which were many the interview was agreed to interview two museum employees; the Director of Information and the Director of Research and

²⁰¹ Bennett, Tony. *The Birth of the Museum*. Translated by Mohammed Al-Mubarak and Hassanein Hayat. Bahrain: Bahrain Authority for Culture and Publishing, (2019), 66.

²⁰² Marcuse, Herbert. *One-dimensional man*. Translated by George Tarabishi. Beirut: Dar Al-Adab. (1988), 140.

Knowledge Programs. During the interview, they confirmed what contradicts the experience I had with them before obtaining permission for the interview, they said that the museum is open to everyone, that no government, private or foreign discourse is imposed on it, and that there is no interference either in plans, strategies, or activities. However, there are contacts with ministries such as the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Culture. Moreover, they confirmed that the museum's activities are keen to be acceptable to the community and in harmony with the context of the system²⁰³. In an interview with the Yasser Arafat Museum, the museum confirmed that it is like other establishments that maintain the unity of the national ranks, and that it has a board of directors, a board of trustees, and specialists who make decisions related to the museum²⁰⁴. In the same context, Mahmoud Darwish Museum affirms that its displayed theme is in harmony with the institutional system. It also asserts that its funding is from the National Fund of the Palestine Liberation Organization, so it is only natural that it is an extension of the same prevailing discourse²⁰⁵.

As for the basic model of this research, it states that the museum is not in harmony with the bureaucratic system of power. However, the facts I presented in the Banksy Museum chapter and my analysis of its work may suggest the opposite. This appeared through the presentation and dismantling of the political uses of heritage, whether existing, forgotten or trapped in the works of the museum, which seeks to re-establish the distant roots of the imaginary according to a revolutionary concept of time through which one knows what must be remembered from the past to prepare for the future, and what must be deleted, forgotten or destroyed if it is necessary²⁰⁶, this is what Nora presents, whether aware of the museum system or not. Furthermore, this role that museums played helped them play a pivotal role in

²⁰³ Interview with the Director of research and knowledge programs in the Palestinian Museum, Nabil Barham, August 25, 2021.

²⁰⁴ Interview with the Director of Yasser Arafat Museum, Ahmad Sobh, August 1, 2021.

²⁰⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁰⁶ Nora, Pierre. *The Global Rise of Remembrance*. Translated by Mervat Abu-Khalil. Tabayun. Vol. 33. (2020), 4-5.

the formation of the modern state and are fundamental to its conception as, among other things, a set of educative and civilizing agencies²⁰⁷, even in Palestine. In fact, the museum became one of the fundamental institutions of the modern state²⁰⁸, according to Bennett, in which the state relies on accumulating its national identity and nationalism and to achieve its interests. This is attested to by the development witnessed by museum buildings and their holdings, which changed over time to suit the dominance of power and knowledge. Also, as the architecture of museums is no longer built for sightseeing only, as is the case with lavish palaces, or to control the outer space, as is the case in the architecture of forts, but, according to Foucault, the architecture of museums was designed to allow detailed and elaborate internal control. This is to make those inside it visible, and in a general way, to be an architecture that constitutes a factor in changing individuals, influencing those who harbour them, controlling their behaviour, and carrying the effects of power to them²⁰⁹. This is done, as Bennett suggests, through the museum's set of practices and through its reproduction of the authenticated past and its representations in the form of a series of stages leading to the present²¹⁰. This reproduction is reflected in the research through the selected samples. For example, we find the Yasser Arafat Museum reflects the life of the late President Yasser Arafat from the point of view of the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Authority to reproduce the past from their point of view and present it to the public through the museum's holdings that emphasize one narrative that is presented that it is unbreakable, regardless of whether it reflects the truth or not. Usually, there is no place for the concept of "truth" except as it is monopolized by the authority. Truth in this sense is one of the authoritarian concepts that are always employed to serve a particular class. In Banksy's model, we find truth in its

²⁰⁷ Bennett, Tony. *The Birth of the Museum*. Translated by Mohammed Al-Mubarak and Hassanein Hayat. Bahrain: Bahrain Authority for Culture and Publishing, (2019), 146.

²⁰⁸ Bazin, Germain. *The Museum Age*. New York: Universal Press. (1967), 169.

²⁰⁹ Foucault, Michel. *Discipline and punish, panopticism*. London: Allen lane. (1977), 195-228.

²¹⁰ Bennett, Tony. *The Birth of the Museum*. Translated by Mohammed Al-Mubarak and Hassanein Hayat. Bahrain: Bahrain Authority for Culture and Publishing, (2019), 165.

authoritarian sense, arising in some places and disappearing in others. This place between the apartheid wall and the watchtower reflects the reality of an occupation that still exists, while we find this fact deconstructing and disintegrating inside the corridors of the place; through the corner of the restaurant, bar, and bedrooms, and music. All these scenes reflect the normal lifestyle of a population that is not subject to colonization. The same is the case with the institutions of authority that are in fact under occupation influence, but within these institutions and through their approach, it appears that they are independent state institutions, over which there is no occupation authority. This fragmented truth is used to accomplish certain goals, and in the case of the Banksy model, its purpose may be purely economic. In spite of this, the museum did not deviate from being part of the discourse of authority, which varies according to the era and shapes the lives of generations at the level of basic structures. This is the authority that connects and produces the identity of the human being through its various tools; the school, the mosque, the home, the houses of worship, the museum, the cultural centres, and the institutions in all their dual reflective forms. Moreover, authority is based on building and consolidating personal identity by merging and matching with the moral connotations of others, as well as with the images that these others draw about the individual man himself. This authority with its political system dominates its people through manipulation of the past, and it manages this past time and shapes its image according to its political and ideological interests as the case of the Yasser Arafat Museum.

If the past or historical knowledge can work in serving the social conservatism and the popular struggles where, according to Boutayeb, each chooses its past; this choice is not innocent, it deprives us of the right to think about our present from outside the production of our past, and about our past from outside the conflicts of our present. In other words, it

deprives us of our right to know²¹¹, because there are those who determine and control the form of knowledge that must reach us. This knowledge constitutes human consciousness through the social patterns produced by the human community over the years through the action of many political influences, ideologies and values. So the preaching and awareness, which is the approach that began with the history of museums and which I mentioned in the inception of the museum, is replaced by the creativity approach, and the artistic act has become more like a legal legislative act that is determined by the dominant group so that it can maintain the monopoly of control. All of this is reflected in the museum, as Kaplan indicates, in which social, ideological and cultural changes are displayed, and the representation and legitimacy of ruling elites are promoted politically²¹² by making museums politically charged locations. In this regard, the themes of power, citizenship, and democracy played a role in officially permitted representation spaces there. Bennett confirms that the museums have been analyzed either as governmental bodies embedded in a network of power relations that underpin dominant interests or as compensatory²¹³. In the Yasser Arafat Museum, for instance, the political power is reflected by narrating the stages of the struggle of the Palestine Liberation Organization, represented by the symbol of the late President Arafat and the history of his life, turning it into a site to the formation the collective memory through the personality of the leader who wields power while maintaining its connection to the sovereignty and legitimacy of the existing authority in the shared space even after he is gone. The solid sculpture representing the president remained as the leader and observer of the direct and symbolic public movement, which makes the museum symbolism a centre where citizens face an ideology that poisons the shared space with symbols of power after Oslo. As

²¹¹ Boutayeb, Rashid. *Turathuna hu alkawn* [Our Heritage is the Universe]. Tabayun Magazine. no. 33. (2020), 3.

²¹² Kaplan, Flora. *Museums and the Making of Ourselves*. London and New York: Leicester University Press. (ed.1994). "Mexican Museums in the Creation of a National Image of Tourism." In *The Role of Objects in National Identity*. London: University of Leicester Press. (1993), 103-124.

²¹³ Bennett, Tony. *The Birth of the Museum*. Translated by Mohammed Al-Mubarak and Hassanein Hayat. Bahrain: Bahrain Authority for Culture and Publishing, (2019), 233.

for the chronological scene in the Yasser Arafat Museum, it seems as if we are revolving around the same sacred symbol for generations, as if we are obedient to it and legitimizing its existence, i.e. as if we are not forced to submit to the temporal power of its symbols in our memory.

As for the Palestinian Museum, according to one of the specialists in the museum, it does not reflect a specific symbol that implicitly announces a new beginning in history, nor does it reflect a specific symbol that definitively reveals what was lived in the past. Rather, it is based on a new civilized pattern, and the mainstay of this pattern is digital presence due to its significance in reaching the audience. Despite the fact that the museum is relatively young since its emergence, it was able to reach different and remote places by ensuring the diversity of the organized programs for different groups, while making sure to communicate with the Ministry of Education to achieve systematic and extracurricular knowledge integration. The goal here is to fill in the gaps to create and build museum knowledge²¹⁴. This new context of the Palestinian Museum is interwoven with the institutions of the system, and it revolves in the same context of the system through the exhibitions that are arranged for it from time to time, despite the absence of any fixed pieces for the museum because its context is suspended and changing. This is due to the fact that the Palestinian situation is still suspended. But despite this, there is an attempt to build knowledge of the museum, and also build knowledge of the past and future. For example, the exhibition "Labour of Love"²¹⁵ sheds light on the past by displaying traditional women's dresses; each piece and stitch carried a story and significance linked to the memory of the land and the place. While the exhibition "A People by the Sea"²¹⁶ which was held in the museum, sought to generate an active Palestinian self from its history, in an attempt to preserve the remnants of the true image of the past, which

²¹⁴ Interview with the Director of research and knowledge programs in the Palestinian Museum, Nabil Barham, August 25, 2021.

²¹⁵ Exhibition: *Labour of Love*. Palestinian Museum, 17/3/2018. [Palestinian](https://www.pal museum.org/)<https://www.pal museum.org/>

²¹⁶ Exhibition: *A People by the Sea*. The Palestinian Museum, 29/9/2021. [The Palestinian Museum](https://www.pal museum.org/)

escape quickly, and can only be captured as a memory that flashes in a moment of danger. This flash threatens to disappear with every present that does not see a purpose of its memory in this false²¹⁷. This image, which would not have come without a reason or motive, is part of symbolic manifestations that serve to shape history and memory, and thus constructing the political community identity. As for the scene that the Banksy Museum imposes on its place and its holdings to appear as if it is desired by the public, is based on a symbolic drawing of memory between the monument's past and the leading authority, and the present of authority formed by the colonizer. This relationship is not an indication of the legitimacy of the authority, but a metaphor for a manifestation that fits the authority's claim of legitimacy. This manifestation forms the political structure of the public space and the management policy of the display to appear as if we adore its symbolism that we encounter without being exposed to it. That is because it is like history, which plays the role of permanent glorification of a specific past and summoning it to be a daily rhetorical emphasis that works on making the present time as an extension of a specific time in history in a single narrative that is in harmony with the authoritarian system. The artworks in the Banksy Museum play the same role that Theodor talks about, i.e. the role of a symbolic authority that builds reality and seeks to establish a knowledge system²¹⁸ through its connotations. It acts as a propaganda tool targeting memory and specifies what we must adopt from the breaks between epochs and specific incidents from the past that have formed our present to produce a single narrative structure that is reflected through the details of the museum; whether this is in the case of the Yasser Arafat Museum represented by the symbol of the president, or in the Banksy Museum and the symbolism of the child who throws roses instead of stones, and other works which I previously mentioned. Moreover, each of these models includes a sacred statue. The statue, erected for a long time, enhances the control of political discourse and its knowledge

²¹⁷ Walter, Benjamin, Eiland Howard, and Jephcott Edmund. *On the Concept of History*. Translated by Amira Masri. Cairo: Mada Masr. (2018).

²¹⁸ Bourdieu, Pierre. *Language and symbolic power*. Harvard University Press, (1991).

production about us and our history, as Melli expresses. It reinforces these historical aspects and visually connects them with the personality of the ruler in the view of our daily consciousness²¹⁹. Furthermore, what strengthens and serves this production and ensures its continuity is our human need for an alternative. It is a basic spiritual and psychological need without which we feel empty. And since every void needs to be filled, the museum and other institutions of the system perform this act. Thus, whether the museum plays the role of guardian of memory through cultural property or as a site for the production of knowledge, it cannot demand a position of relative independence away from the fluctuations of party politics and the intervention of the authority as it is part of it. No matter how much the artworks inside try to repudiate that, they are subject to the compulsions and conditions of the present because they are part of it. It is also part of the new systems of observation, as Foucault argues, whose tasks include mapping out the social body to make it knowable and submissive to social control. It means that it is possible to speak about the formation of a disciplined society within this movement that extends from closed disciplines, a kind of social quarantine to a mechanism of panopticism that can be generalized infinitely²²⁰ as potential sites for social change by virtue of its ability to represent the interests and concerns of minorities.

The museum was not only interested in influencing the visitors with the message of authority, but was also interested in including them in new forms of self-programming aimed at producing new types of behaviour and self-formation²²¹ as Bennett argues, and this is what the Banksy Museum seeks. This is evident from the theme of the exhibition, its discourse, and its location, where the recipients find themselves in the museum space, obligated, in a way they do not realize, to the nature of the clothes they wear and to monitor their movements and

²¹⁹ Melli, Renas. *Ma naht min hajr* [What is Carved from Stone]. Al-Jumhuriya magazine, (2019).

²²⁰ Foucault, Michel. *Discipline and punish*, panopticism. London: Allen lane. (1977), 195-228.

²²¹ Bennett, Tony. *The Birth of the Museum*. Translated by Mohammed Al-Mubarak and Hassanein Hayat. Bahrain: Bahrain Authority for Culture and Publishing, (2019), 111.

behaviours and how appropriate they are to the place. All these beliefs are brought with the recipients if the recipients are among the simple citizens who see the museum as a place for the elite. When they arrive at the museum, they find themselves in front of an authority that the artist establishes for them on one hand, and on the other hand, they are under the supervision of the museum's authority, despite the fact that they attended voluntarily. During the interviews that were conducted with some of the respondents in the vicinity of the museum, the majority of the sample members of the shop owners and the surrounding residents in the museum confirmed their reluctance to enter the museum because of the idea of appearance and economic cost, and their constant feeling that they are monitored.

This reflects the dominance that the museum scene imposes on the audience, as it is one of the state institutions, even if it claims otherwise. Hence, the need to develop the museum, as Bennett suggests, as an observing and organizing space so that the visitor's body can be controlled and constructed according to the requirements of the new standards of public behaviour²²², taking advantage of artworks and architecture, which provides an opportunity to merge the interests of art with the concerns of government²²³ to ensure the effectiveness of control. Evidence for this is the models of artworks and the holdings of the Yasser Arafat Museum and the Banksy model, in addition to their architecture. Yasser Arafat's Museum presents the scene of the colonial authority, which was established in a new way, based on the effects of the destruction, demolition and bombing that the Muqata' was subjected to during the various periods of the Israeli invasion. While the architecture and location of the Banksy model reflect the ongoing colonial scene represented in its location near the apartheid wall and watchtowers. These two scenes are interpreted through the museum, which Foucault views as an instrument of discipline²²⁴ represented as institutional

²²² *Ibid*, 65.

²²³ VIDLER, Anthony. .19-75 ,)1990(".The Languages of Character"

²²⁴ Bennett, Tony. *The Birth of the Museum*. Translated by Mohammed Al-Mubarak and Hassanein Hayat. Bahrain: Bahrain Authority for Culture and Publishing, (2019), 194.

manifestations emanating from the relations of power and knowledge. All of the above means that the museum is part of an institutional system that cannot be separated from the authority. This is confirmed by the mismatch between the stylized discourses that govern the declared objectives of museums, on the one hand, and the political rationality embodied in the actual patterns of their work²²⁵ on the other. The stated reason for any such authority is, as Kaplan proposes, to consolidate the establishment of the nation-state by having a national museum full of valuable artifacts that demonstrates the nation's ability to be itself²²⁶. This is confirmed by the example of the modern nation-states that began in the nineteenth century to unite themselves in Europe and different parts of the world through a set of tools; these tools are the product of intellectuals immersed in the system and often government officials, which would help create a sense of national cohesion. Benedict Anderson argues that nation-states owe their existence to modern literary cultural works²²⁷. This is what is processed in the Palestinian museums, where materials are chosen to represent national unity or ethnicity according to individual national needs that are in harmony with the goals of the authoritarian system, which is based on connecting a nation with a shared past that was seen as highly accomplished. This achievement should be in line with the authority's imaginary for the future, which is trying through this to delude its people into believing that it is creating democratic identities through museums as spaces in which the elites and competing social groups express their ideas and worldviews. That is done through presenting objects and elements²²⁸, according to Kaplan, whether in their complete cloned form from the past or through what they imagine or even through what they deliberately drop from the memory of

²²⁵ *Ibid*, 192.

²²⁶ Kaplan, Flora. *Museums and the Making of Ourselves*. London and New York: Leicester University Press. (ed.1994). "Mexican Museums in the Creation of a National Image of Tourism." In *The Role of Objects in National Identity*. London: University of Leicester Press. (1993), 103-124.

²²⁷ Anderson, Benedict. *Imagined Communities*. Translated by Thaeer Deeb. Cairo: The Supreme Council of Culture. (1999), 62.

²²⁸ Kaplan, Flora. *Museums and the Making of Ourselves*. London and New York: Leicester University Press. (ed.1994). "Mexican Museums in the Creation of a National Image of Tourism." In *The Role of Objects in National Identity*. London: University of Leicester Press. (1993), 103-124.

the present and the future. This is based on the idea that forgetting ancient tragedies is a necessity and a major contemporary civic duty²²⁹, as Anderson suggests. Moreover, it considers those who attempt to escape this duty to be subject to exclusion and marginalization. As a matter of fact, throughout history, artists have not been spared from that, and that is still the case. During the interviews conducted with some Palestinian artists, some of them confirmed that they were excluded from the Palestinian art scene due to their orientations that are not in harmony with the authority or the prevailing stereotypes of artworks. For example, the artist Jawad Al-Malhi says that he did not get any opportunity or appreciation in Palestine due to his lack of commitment to the prevailing tendencies of the authority. In fact, artists consistent with the approach required by the authority became the most appreciated and visible in the Palestinian art scene²³⁰. The reason for this is simply the logic of domination over art and culture imposed by legitimate formal institutions that have gained their legitimacy by being in positions that allow them to set standards appropriate to the nature of their social status. Ethnic, ethical, religious, cultural, and social criteria and even gender-specific logic are still present as criteria for evaluating artworks, even though scientific knowledge has reached a significant level. The purpose has always been to employ this art to perform a function, whether it is a religious or social function. The human being, as Claude Lévi-Strauss says, created symbols for himself and for himself. Also, the arts are able to carry these symbols and communicate them between individuals, generations, and groups²³¹. Although the purpose of art, in the end, is not to change what is usual and habitual, since these change by themselves all the time. Rather, the function of art is to display and show what is ignored in general, while preserving the aesthetic responsibility and trying to reveal the hidden sovereign dimension in the contemporary democratic system, which is the

²²⁹ Anderson, Benedict. *Imagined Communities*. Translated by Thaeer Deeb. Cairo: The Supreme Council of Culture. (1999), 183.

²³⁰ Interview with the Palestinian plastic artist, Jawad Malhi, August 1, 2021.

²³¹ Amayor, Muhammad. *Madkhal liqira'at 'iishamat biir burdiu* [An Introduction to Reading the Contributions of Pierre Bourdieu]. Al-Hiwar Al-Mutamadin, Issue 5550. (2017)

dimension that politics is trying to hide. All these attempts to reveal the hidden or evoke it are not done in isolation from the authority. Thus, the artistic structure, which the artist considers space to expose the veiled sovereign authority that is located in the misplaced and hidden behind the vague transparency of the democratic system, shows its fragility due to the interference of authority in all aspects of life, even in art. Through the artworks presented by Banksy Museum, the very diplomacy and pacifism pursued by power are reflected. This appears in several examples of works, such as the painting of the masked Palestinian and the soldier who fight with the feathers-stuffed pillows that are scattered around them. It also appears in the gas bomb in which roses were planted instead of poison gas, and the children happily on airplane seats hovered in the watchtower. In these and other works, the Museum and authority model seeks to occupy a wider section of the audience, or at least has the opportunity to breathe the fragrance of freedom that emanates from the artwork for a bit. The model also tries, whether aware of it or not, to reorganize the museum area according to the rules of the governmental logic and domination and in line with the authority and the presence of the colonizer through its keenness on the acceptable approach to the other through the presented works. This is because the museum does not show the crimes of the colonizer, but rather tries to bring the two sides of the conflict closer so that it is acceptable to the foreign or even the Israeli recipient. The same approach is followed by the Palestinian Authority which is eager to sustain negotiations and communications with the colonizer and to appear in a diplomatic suit acceptable to the world. Through this approach, the intersection between the relationship of authority and knowledge in the museum is evident, as demonstrated by Bennett. It is a relationship that was democratic in structure to the extent that it formed the audience to which it addresses²³². This formation, which Bennett sees as a democracy by the authority, is another form of controlling the public by forming it according to the whims of

²³² Bennett, Tony. *The Birth of the Museum*. Translated by Mohammed Al-Mubarak and Hassanein Hayat. Bahrain: Bahrain Authority for Culture and Publishing, (2019), 205.

authority. This control extends to the architecture, which is no longer centred on authority only but serves the purpose of controlling behaviour through new regulations for the relations between space and vision²³³. This relationship, according to Foucault, is controlled by a political authority, social classes, and daily relations in an attempt to achieve harmony between the city, its history, and its residents, despite the fact that it is still under colonialism. This harmony is crystallized through an attempt to reconstruct the past rhetorically and subject it to new discourses. This is demonstrated, for example, in Banksy's model, which attempts to assert, as Bennett suggests, that the size and scope of the national past have expanded significantly and its discursive characteristics have been significantly reorganized²³⁴. This is mirrored through the artworks on the one hand and through the emergence of the public museum into existence on the other hand. In this regard, the museum has performed two diametrically opposed functions, as Hooper suggests, it is considered a temple of art to the elite and it is also a utilitarian instrument of democratic education. A third function was added later when the museum was formed as an instrument of a disciplined society²³⁵. The three functions are closely related to authority. In addition to what I mentioned earlier, the control of the state does not impose itself on people, but rather uses the management approach with them to make them feel as if they are exercising their freedom. This freedom is completely shackled, but for them, this is their freedom. This freedom appears through the culture imposed by the authority without the realization of the people. This cultural domination through power imposed itself because the cultural monopolies are weak and not independent, so they do not allow themselves to neglect those who hold power,

²³³ Foucault, Michel. "The eye of power" *In Power/ Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings*. New York: Pantheon Books. (1980).

²³⁴ Bennett, Tony. *The Birth of the Museum*. Translated by Mohammed Al-Mubarak and Hassanein Hayat. Bahrain: Bahrain Authority for Culture and Publishing, (2019), 295.

²³⁵ Hooper- Greenhill, E. "The Museum: The Social- Historical Articulations of Knowledge and Things." Ph. D thesis, University of London. (1988), 63.

and thus expand their circle in the midst of the society of the masses²³⁶, according to Adorno and Horkheimer. This was noticed in the museum models presented in the research, such as the Banksy Museum and the Palestinian Museum, which, although it is still empty, with the exception of some annual exhibitions that are held in it, is firmly present within the museum scene due to its being an extension of the system. Adding to the previous two museums, the Yasser Arafat Museum, which has gained a high status and presence due to its close association with the authority and could not in fact break away from power and even if it claimed the opposite. Although Palestine is still under colonization, its museums, like the museums of other countries, are in many respects subject to the existing authority. In conclusion, this allows us to testify that there is an inseparable intersection between the authority and the museum, which coincides with the fact that the authority is the one with the greatest dominance in the scene, and all these interactions that I mentioned earlier have an impact on the national narrative and identity, including the changes or discourses that they carry. The source of the discourses or changes is the decision-makers in any authority, and this applies to the systems of authority in all countries around the world.

²³⁶ Horkheimer, Max, and Theodor W. Adorno. *Dialectic of Enlightenment*. Translated by George Katrah. Lebanon: Al-Kitab Al-Jadid House for Publishing. (2006), 144.

Chapter VII: Museum and Colonialism

Colonialism Impacts on the Emergence of the Museum

This chapter deals with the impact of colonialism on Palestinian museums, which is not isolated from the context and the global emergence of museums. This chapter aims to measure the extent of the impact of colonialism on museum attempts in Palestine, and the form and extent of this impact. What is the relationship between colonialism, authority and the cultural industry? Does colonialism affect the narrative and national identity through the museum from its relationship with the museum, its holdings, and its architecture? This analysis will be based on the theories of museums and colonialism.

In a previous chapter, I examined the museum's origin and emergence, which were not isolated from authoritarian regimes and even colonial regimes. In fact, colonial regimes played a role in the emergence and spread of the museum, even if it was a simple role. This role revolved around the establishment of some museums because the colonized nations sensed the danger and existential risk under the oppressive regimes. This purpose was clear since these regimes sought to spread their culture, element the presence of the colonized nations by imposing their hegemony by force. Thus, the nations were encouraged to establish museums in addition to other reasons, such as the desire to preserve their rich history, their present and their imaginary of the future in these museums. Moreover, it was an attempt and hope to preserve memory and identity, build narrative and discourse, and acknowledge what is valuable. This desire has become more urgent in the Palestinian case, given that it is still under colonialism and the feeling of the existential threat still exists. Therefore, according to Darraj, individuals are increasingly interested in proving their existence in various ways because they feel threatened. While the strong party does not care about its identity or proving

its existence because strength is its true identity,²³⁷ compared to the party that is under threat which is keen to preserve and strengthen its national identity and its narratives. Also, it may also be the strong party which needs to prove its existence, especially if all of its existence is a fake and false truth, as in the case of the Zionist colonizer, which I am not going to examine.

There are many examples of colonized countries that were exposed to various forms of obliteration attempts; such as Algeria, which was subjected to French colonization between 1830 and 1962 AD. French colonization imposed on Algeria the French language and culture encouraged the preaching of the Christian religion and carried out other attempts to obliterate Algeria's history, cultural heritage, and identities. Moreover, many other countries were exposed to supplantive colonialism attempting to impose their identity; such as Ireland and South Africa²³⁸ as well as Palestine, which is still under colonization. In this regard, these attempts have had a great impact on the social and cultural history of the Palestinian people, both at home and abroad.

This impact is the result of the various forms of domination of Palestine at various periods throughout history, such as the British Mandate for Palestine in 1917, which paved the way for the Israeli occupation that continues to this day. During that period, Palestinian intellectuals tried to deal with the huge changes in various aspects of life brought about by the British Mandate and the Zionist colonialists. This was executed by linking the new identity of the Palestinians with the past in a scientific and systematic way, through activities and cultural institutions and the establishment of museums such as the Museum of Islamic Art along with other activities, which I discussed earlier. However, even after these attempts, the hegemony of the orientalist movement remained dominant and the Zionist movement later

²³⁷ Darraj, Faisal. *qadaya filastiniat alsiyasat walthaqafat walhuia* [Palestinian Issues: Politics, Culture and Identity]. Ramallah: Al-Ayam Printing Company, (2008), 9.

²³⁸ Al-Mukhtar, Saleh. "Hurub 'adilat alhuayati" [The Wars of Identity Evidence]. Iraq: Wijhat Nathar Website. 10/21/2015, <https://cutt.us/xWupe>

relied heavily on them to strengthen its entity and build its institutions, in cooperation with the British Mandate government²³⁹. After the British Mandate, Palestine was ruled by Jordan between 1948 and 1967. Even though Palestine witnessed cultural prosperity but this did not last due to the Israeli occupation in 1967, which negatively affected various aspects of cultural life, such as seminars, exhibitions, museums, etc., which were subject to military laws. In addition, Palestinian archaeological and historical collectibles were exposed to theft and looting²⁴⁰. This cultural decline increased again due to the events of Nakba and Naksa the Palestinian people suffered from the force and control imposed by the occupier. This was also followed by the events of the First Intifada, all of which had a deep impact on the cultural industry in Palestine. In fact, all the above-mentioned cultural activities were prohibited, because the colonizer considered these cultural activities as means of resistance and thus will punish the people for using them.

As for the cultural industry in the museum, even though it is considered one of the pillars of culture, it did not play a significant role at the beginning in the Palestinian case and it was as the case with museums in other countries in my opinion. This was because of the series of successive colonial times on Palestine, and the conditions of instability imposed by colonialism. But in the period following the signing of the Oslo Accords, the cultural field witnessed a partial revival and an increase in cultural institutions. This is reflected in my research through the museum models that I presented according to the historical sequence which increased after Oslo. In my opinion, this is due to three reasons; the first is the desire of the Palestinian Authority to prove its existence and form its nationalism and identity through an institutional system, of which the museum is a part. The second reason is the desire to

²³⁹ Al-Jubeh, Nazmi. "Dawr althaqafat fi himayat alhuiat alfilastiniati" [The Role of Culture in Protecting the Palestinian Identity]. *Symposium on the Palestinian Cultural Project and its Future Strategy*. Cairo: The Higher Council for Education and Culture/Palestine, (2003), 154.

²⁴⁰ Shuqair, Mahmoud. *Qalat lana alquds* [Jerusalem Told Us]. Ramallah: Palestinian Ministry of Culture. (2014), 4.

catch up with contemporary museum developments around the world. As for the third reason, it may be based on considering the museum's attempts, including the works it contains, as a tool of resistance used by the colonized. These reasons came in a colonial context from which it is difficult to break. This is because colonialism, as Fanon suggests, cannot pass unnoticed because it deals with the existence and changes it fundamentally²⁴¹, in its various aspects. This change includes the Palestinian museum field, which is still trying to prove its presence as a medium of historical memory by displaying part of the holdings that witnessed events and tragedies, in an attempt by the museum to resist physical destruction and historical oblivion. This is what the contemporary Palestinian museum exhibitions investigated in this research have been keen on by presenting the past artistic events in a new style, displayed alongside traditional artworks. As is the case in the Banksy Museum, which displays a work of art depicting Arthur Balfour signing the Balfour Declaration a hundred years ago, and facing it we find a painting entitled "Sheep Of The Century" depicting a flock of wolves gathering around a sheep, and this is also an indication of the Deal of the Century concluded by Donald Trump. Moreover, this is an attempt to document an old event with a new event, so that what is new is attributed to this documentation²⁴² and gives it a new aura. Additionally, this aura added to the duties of the museum the responsibility of organizing and displaying events that coincide with the age of the spectators, even if it was at the expense of excluding some historical evidence that occurred between the two promises separated by a hundred years. On one hand, this modification or the act of exclusion changes the topology of our relationship with the museum in which we used to see a treasury to preserve the past we did not witness and not the present we live in, on the other hand, this changes our relationship with the past and forces us to forget because of the exclusion of some of its stations. In fact,

²⁴¹ Fanon, Frantz. *Wretched of the Earth*. Translated by Sami Ad-Droubi and Jamal Atassi. Cairo: Madarat for Research and Publishing. (2014), 78.

²⁴² Interview with the Palestinian businessman and director of the Banksy Museum, Wisam Salsa, June 16 and August 23, 2021.

this change has an effect on the recipient's awareness and memory, even if it is happening slowly, or not clearly visible yet. That is, there is no profound change in consciousness that does not, by its very nature, bring with it distinct forms of oblivion²⁴³, as Anderson points out, that affect the construction of the Palestinian narrative. The exclusion or replacement of parts of the symbols of the past in the Banksy Museum. For example, the stone children image, the gas bomb fragment, the demolition and destruction that spanned over decades of colonization, the disappearance of a symbol such as the martyr's monument, the replacement of the music associated with the popular zajal or yergul in the memory of the Palestinians with the piano that plays foreign pieces unrelated to the Palestinian musical heritage, and the transformation of the Panopticon²⁴⁴ from a watchtower to a play wheel around which children gather in one of the artworks at the museum, (attached in Appendix (21)). All of these transformations, though ironically reflected by Banksy, affect the shape of the existing narrative. In particular, if these modifications or transformations in the symbols are associated with encouraging the abandonment of the existence immersed in the past, which is clashing with the act of freedom, as it is seen as obsolete and we have to get rid of it to follow the development in the world. Therefore, abandoning the existence associated with the past becomes a necessity. This abandonment may be authorized and the right of generations in non-colonial countries which have their own nationality and existence. However, in the Palestinian case, this abandonment may become a threat to existence and a consolidation of the colonizer who is keen to poison the memory of the indigenous colonial population with slogans of freedom and democracy. This tendency reflects the extent of the deep connection with the colonial context, which is keen to poison the memory of the colonized indigenous people with slogans of freedom and democracy. Furthermore, this tendency considers and emphasizes that the "thing" which has

²⁴³ Anderson, Benedict. *Imagined Communities*. Translated by Thayer Deeb. Cairo: The Supreme Council of Culture. (1999), 186.

²⁴⁴ Panopticon: a circular prison built with cells arranged radially so that a guard at a central position can see all the prisoners. Panopticon Definition & Meaning - Merriam-Webster

been colonized becomes man during the same process by which it frees itself²⁴⁵, as Fanon presents. As for the Palestinians living under colonialism that created many crises and restrictions for them, their desire to be free from any constraint is a rebellion and reaction, even if it means is to be free from the past, as it will give them a sense of liberation and keeping pace with development. This is what the colonizer strives for by seeking to reify the colonized on the one hand, and on the other, it suggests to them that giving up some parts is liberation for them from the nonsense of the past. This is regarded as a kind of invisible control that the colonized do not sense or deny, and which is passed in different ways, not only through the reification of the colonized but also by transforming suffering into something materially benefited from. This was demonstrated through the Banksy Museum with its artworks, which were overshadowed by materialism. Actually, this was reflected in the site as it serves as a hotel for overnighting, a restaurant, and a museum. This shows the extent to which the museum has plunged into the process of cultural commodification that was discussed in a previous chapter which serves the colonizer before anyone. This process has made this model a marketing item par excellence, reinforcing the system of control and domination imposed by the colonizer through the capital that gives the public what it needs and wants to view. Meaning that, according to Anati, whoever wants to see the bright side finds it in the room of musical achievements, sporting successes and others, and whoever wants to see the tragedy, destruction and scenes of displacement find it in another opposite room, regardless of the way and place of presentation, all in order to achieve more gains and visitors²⁴⁶. This bypasses the reality of the colonial reality in favor of capital, through which the colonizer ensures the continuity of its domination. Moreover, the artworks that are displayed in the museum in a fragmented or imaginary way for a colonial era that is still

²⁴⁵ Fanon, Frantz. *Wretched of the Earth*. Translated by Sami Ad-Droubi and Jamal Atassi. Cairo: Madarat for Research and Publishing. (2014), 40.

²⁴⁶ Interview with a curator and general program manager at the Qattan Foundation, Yazid Anani, August 10, 2021.

extended, are nothing but a reinforcement of this reality. This is because it obscures the faith with any event or change that gives signs of hope in the disintegration of the colonial reality.

For example, the location of the Banksy Museum in front of the wall and the watchtower, as well as the idea of the artworks of watchtowers scattered outside and inside the Banksy model, and the children around the watchtower, all of these make the colonizer domination tools look normal, as if it is normal to live surrounded by watchtowers, cameras, and apartheid walls. These and other indications in the museum are reproduced and portrayed in an unequal space that witnesses an existing conflict, without giving faith in getting rid of it. Furthermore, in the continuity of this state of conflict and coexistence with it, a new reality is formed, even if it is artificial. This reality is based on the foundations of this stage that affects the form of narrative and identity, which arise from various elements and pillars. In the Palestinian case, these elements are the product of a system under colonialism that affected everything that is emerging or even existing. That is, it reproduced it according to the colonial context through many methods and tools that may not be visible. For example, the form of the relationship between disciplinary authority and evolutionary time has shifted from solid elements such as self-monitoring, which by the way has developed in the detention system or the Panopticon structure that exists inside and outside the museum, to appear alongside the delicate elements. Bourdieu points out that these delicate elements came with the role model and not through education and through entertainment instead of disciplined education by cunning and encouragement²⁴⁷. That being so, according to Foucault suggesting, carrying out discipline went from overt to covert over time, and the museum turned into a basic educational tool²⁴⁸ for the authority on one hand as I mentioned earlier, and a tool for colonialism on the other. This tool is used to help pass laws and regulations and spread

²⁴⁷ Pearson, Nicholas M. *The state and the visual arts. A discussion of state intervention in the visual arts in Britain, 1760-1981*. Open University Press, (1982).

²⁴⁸ Foucault, Michel. *Discipline and punish, panopticism*. London: Allen lane. (1977), 111.

nonviolent discourse, as in the case of the Banksy Museum, which tries to preserve the feelings of its recipients and attract them through it. This was previously reflected in my analysis of artworks that reflect this peaceful approach and tolerance in their content. Likewise, the art displayed in the museum became a weapon to resist the colonizer and is seen as an extension of the legitimate peaceful resistance approach that was used by the Palestinians before Hamas entered its bombing operations. According to Salsa, as Palestinians, we must stay away from revolutionary violence²⁴⁹ because it distorts our image and embarrasses us in front of the world. Also, if we want to preserve some of the advantages that we have now, we must stick to nonviolent discourse and diplomacy to resolve the crises that befall us because of the colonizer. This is a hint to exclude the idea of revolutionary violence towards the domination of the colonizer, which appeared in the works of art that I analyzed earlier. Moreover, if those in charge of the museum want to preserve its continuity, they must follow this approach away from the revolution. Hence, if they rebel and choose revolution, they will lose the privileges given to them. In this, Marcuse tries to reveal why the revolution has become unlikely, improbable, and even impossible to achieve²⁵⁰. It is because, on the one hand, we live in a world that fears losing its privileges if a revolution happened, on the other hand, Fanon sees that revolution is necessary for the colonized nations, it is possible and even inevitable in a world in which the colonized are conscious that there is nothing to lose but their shackles. In particular, since the history of the world is no longer what we imagine as one history. The world itself is no longer one world, we are facing two distinct worlds²⁵¹. Therefore, they cannot be dealt with by the same principle, as Marcuse suggests, even if the prescriptions for inhumanity and injustice are being administered by a rationally

²⁴⁹ Interview with the Palestinian businessman and director of the Banksy Museum, Wisam Salsa, June 16 and August 23, 2021.

²⁵⁰ Marcuse, Herbert. *One-dimensional man*. Translated by George Tarabishi. Beirut: Dar Al-Adab. (1988), 107.

²⁵¹ Fanon, Frantz. *Wretched of the Earth*. Translated by Sami Ad-Droubi and Jamal Atassi. Cairo: Madarat for Research and Publishing. (2014), 253.

organized bureaucracy, which is, however, invisible at its vital centre²⁵². Moreover, being invisible is part of the strategy of invisibility, which aims to construct things slowly and without being seen or felt, to ensure its success and the continuity of control over the public, and this is a kind of invisibility that we find all over the world. As for the Palestinian case, there is something that reinforces this invisibility, namely, the disciplinary manifestations of the social and cultural fields as they are more invisible due to the manifestations of colonial violence and the harmony and coexistence of the local authority with the violent colonial regime. In this context, the educational system forms an intersectional field in which the sovereign and disciplinary authorities overlap to make the “desired individual” politically through the educational and cultural system. According to Wade, if this system does not have actors who know the patterns and goals of emancipatory education²⁵³, these actors use tools such as the museum as a discipline tool and technology to manage behaviour²⁵⁴, according to Bennett, influenced by Foucault's definition of censorship. In other words, the individual is monitored by security personnel or surveillance cameras that monitor people's behaviour. In the Banksy Museum, a new form of monitoring was added to these forms, which is the eyes of diners in the restaurant, who observe the recipients as they wander.

This observing and observed museum form with its artworks and its location, and production through which Banksy tries to simulate contemporary art, to break away from the traditional art that lived in the arms of societies that had graded historically from the lowest to the highest, and merged with science, religion and community life, bearing the characteristics of each of them in form and spirit. This is one of the reasons why museum art gradually lost

²⁵² Marcuse, Herbert. *One-dimensional man*. Translated by George Tarabishi. Beirut: Dar Al-Adab. (1988), 107.

²⁵³ Wade, Francis. "The Follower Speaks Through Death". Translated by Abdul Rahim Sheikh and Rana Barakat. Bab Al-Wad Magazine. 12/7/2021. <https://2u.pw/OUGms>

²⁵⁴ Anderson, Benedict. *Imagined Communities*. Translated by Thaeer Deeb. Cairo: The Supreme Council of Culture. (1999), 201.

its ancient characteristics and features and transformed into its contemporary form²⁵⁵. The museum has become a site of discourse that is ready to participate strongly in creating reality and envisioning the future in line with the narrative and identity of the existing state. This is through its capital and acceptance from the other, given its cosmopolitan approach that is in harmony with contemporary museums. However, we find the Communist Museum, which was mentioned previously, is following an approach that tries to break away from these moulds and blow them up. This is by making the museum a shared and public space in the wide space. On the contrary, the Yasser Arafat Museum combines these qualities, as well as the Banksy Museum.

These types of museums are mostly based on decolonization, and according to Ross Parry, they focus on giving actors control over their cultural heritage²⁵⁶. This approach does not include the Palestinian case, even if it is reflected, in some aspects, in the model of the Palestinian Museum or Banksy Museum. This is because Palestine is still under colonialism and any form of cultural institutions, including the museums that are established, cannot escape from the invisible radical changes brought about by the colonizer. They are reflected in the museum's approach in multiple forms, whether invisible or visible, such as the Banksy Museum, whose collections bear witness, as well as the reality outside its closed space, to the violent colonial interventions imposed on the scene. It is enough for us to open the window to see the real passers-by, and similar natural and unnatural scenes, which reflect the scenes of constant colonial violence. In fact, the museum form reflected through Banksy's model, according to what Qupti indicates during the interview, is only a display of the existing situation and not a form of challenge and resistance. Seeing that the museum emphasizes the form of ongoing life with its basic facilities that are reflected in front of tourists and visitors,

²⁵⁵ Ar-Rawi, Nouri. *Muthaf alkhayal walhaqiqa* [Museum of Fiction and Truth]. Baghdad: House of Cultural Affairs, (1997), 19- 20.

²⁵⁶ Parry, Ross. *Recoding the museum: Digital heritage and the technologies of change*. Routledge, (2007)

represented by the restaurant, dorm rooms, and artworks present in the corridors²⁵⁷ and surrounding shops. This is also reflected in the visits arranged for tourists from the museum to the Aida camp, which is characterized by its clean, civilized, wooded nature, and it also includes infrastructure, educational and cultural institutions, and others. However, these visits do not take place on the side adjacent to the museum, Al-Azza camp, which reflects the nature of the narrow camp and contradicts the conditions of normal life. This camp does not have the infrastructure, educational, cultural, or entertainment facilities²⁵⁸. Arranging visits to Aida camp while turning a blind eye to Al-Azza camp has connotations that are keen to reflect the bright side and continuity to live in the shadow of the colonizer.

The Banksy Museum has also dealt with reality by recreating and introducing a non-national reality, as it welcomes the Israelis in its corridors, and they are among the targeted categories. Salsa believes that the display of Palestinian suffering in this place and in this way an effective tool of influence on the Israeli recipients as it is a means to let them know about their army's crimes²⁵⁹.

This approach that Banksy Museum pursues inside and outside the place, with its exhibition technique, expresses a part of the Palestinians' reality. However, despite this, it tries to make the Palestinian imaginary through its vision based on the other, as it relies on an audience from outside. In this model here, the shift from rallying around the true audience and citizens to pleasing the audience represented by the other appears. In this regard, the museum chose to adopt the most acceptable (diplomatic) approach, which commensurates with the aspirations and approach of the world, in order to attract that other audience. This approach, which is generally prevalent in the relationship of power with the other since the signing of

²⁵⁷ Interview with the Palestinian artist and Museum curator, Hanna Qupti, August 21, 2021.

²⁵⁸ This impression emerged through field research, interviews, and visits to the place over the course of 7/2021.

²⁵⁹ Interview with the Palestinian businessman and director of the Banksy Museum, Wisam Salsa, June 16 and August 23, 2021.

Oslo, is consistent with the desire of the colonizer who suppresses any attempt at armed revolution.

Besides, the scene of the domination imposed by the colonizer outside the museum is only one of its tools to suppress the colonized. Likewise, Sherwell stresses that the same scene is one of the components of the turmoil that the Palestinian experience under colonialism²⁶⁰. On top of that, the wall and the watchtower imposed by the occupation turned into a central location after the museum was built next to it. That is, the scene has become a museum extension available to the public at all times. This scene created by the occupation and which Banksy used as a place for the museum, reflects the visiting tourist that the life of the Palestinians continues despite the wall and the watchtower. For instance, the shop owner is working in peace, as is the case with the garage owner, and the surrounding hotels are teeming with tourists despite the manifestations of colonial violence in the surrounding. This may reflect a message to the recipient that there is an adaptation to the existing colonial situation, also the divisions within the museum with its galleries and works may enhance this adaptation. The past materially embodied in museums and heritage sites is inevitably the product of the present, according to Bennett,²⁶¹ which is regulated and ruled by the colonizer. Herein lies the danger to the imaginary of the future, as the museum or the exhibition models represented by the situation that was created next to the wall, is one of the means used in the process of inciting the imaginary to confront any kind of turmoil. This turmoil which was caused by the colonizer in the Palestinians' case, cannot be separated from the museum approach. An example of this is allowing the Israelis to attend the Banksy Museum in an attempt by the museum's administration to promote the idea of tolerance and peace; which would have been an acceptable and natural event if the Israelis were not the Zionists who sit

²⁶⁰ Interview with the assistant professor in contemporary visual art program at Birzeit University, Tina Sherwell, July 26, 2021.

²⁶¹ Bennett, Tony. *The Birth of the Museum*. Translated by Mohammed Al-Mubarak and Hassanein Hayat. Bahrain: Bahrain Authority for Culture and Publishing, (2019), 266.

on the watchtower pointing their weapon at the Palestinian and using it against these people without hesitation. These same Zionist colonizers build, change, extend and ramify the land, bodies and lifestyle of the indigenous population. According to Fanon's description that all aspects of our lives have been infused with it. Also, trying to escape from it needs to work to deconstruct this system in order to achieve independence and build the state.²⁶² This deconstruction that Fanon sees is achieved through the act of revolution and violence. This act contradicts the museum's approach, which considers itself a tool of resistance with the peaceful tools it presents. These tools may really be a way to liberate, or they may not. While the act of resistance for Fanon is the revolution because the colonizer cannot be uprooted by persuasion and negotiations, and liberation from it can only be achieved by violence and revolution only²⁶³. This view holds that as long as there is colonialism, there can be no elements for building an independent state with an institutional system that mimics nation-states, or states that have repudiated colonialism. This applies to all components of the state, including the cultural context, including the museum. Therefore, the construction of any independent cultural project that mimics the indigenous population will be truncated. The reason behind this, according to Fanon, that colonial domination, which is characterized as total and tends to oversimplify, very soon manages to disrupt in spectacular fashion the cultural life of a conquered people. This cultural obliteration is made possible by the negation of national reality, new legal relations introduced by the occupying power, the banishment of the natives and their customs to outlying districts, colonial society, expropriation, and by the systematic enslaving of men and women. All these matters were deliberately intended by the colonizer, and they allowed cultural eradication gradually²⁶⁴. National culture under colonial control became a contested culture whose destruction is sought in a systematic fashion. It will

²⁶² Fanon, Frantz. *Wretched of the Earth*. Translated by Sami Ad-Droubi and Jamal Atassi. Cairo: Madarat for Research and Publishing. (2014), 157.

²⁶³ *Ibid*, 287.

²⁶⁴ *Ibid*, 191.

very quickly become a culture condemned to secrecy because the colonizer sees in the persistence of the cultural forms that it denounces as a national aspect that it has to fight²⁶⁵ through its various tools. The evidence for this is the violence and target operations that the Israeli occupation was practising against the various cultural institutions in Palestine and their control over them. This is evidenced by the Rockefeller Museum, which is today under full Israeli control because it was seized under the control and domination of the colonizer.

Therefore, the colonized ones find themselves, whether they flee from the national culture or begin to glorify it, remain unable to make any impact because the analysis of the colonial situation is not carried out on strict lines²⁶⁶. However, contemporary museum models such as the Banksy Museum and other museum models that were mentioned in the research do not find themselves helpless in the face of the colonizer. This case and its attempts are contrary to what Fanon suggests. In fact, we cannot claim the absolute validity of either point of view as long as constancy is not possible in any case. However, if we look at these museums' attempts and the source of their ownership or financing from Fanon's point of view, we can see that they mostly belong to the bourgeois class. This class which the colonizer was eager, since the beginning of its reign, to win over, nourish and promote so that it would remain linked to its survival²⁶⁷. The colonizer considers that if the people awaken and believe in the necessity of revolution, this bourgeoisie is their refuge because they will collude with the executioner against the people in the stage of the liberation struggle. Even if its mission is to prevent the struggle from proceeding to its final extent, and to make it aborted in the middle of the road with a settlement that achieves the interests of two parties; one of which is colonialism and the other is the national bourgeoisie. This is because the interests of these two parties are united at the expense of the people, at the expense of national sovereignty and true

²⁶⁵ *Ibid*, 192.

²⁶⁶ *Ibid*, 191.

²⁶⁷ *Ibid*, 26.

independence²⁶⁸. This class, in turn, works to win over other groups, whether from the educated elite or those who claim they are intellectuals. This is so that the bourgeoisie can further legitimize its existence through them, and does not hesitate, according to Fanon, to reify everything available in the interest of achieving its goals, reaping more profits, and ensuring the continuity of survival. Therefore, this approach followed by the bourgeois class is also a product of colonial structuralism. In order to assimilate and experience the oppressor's culture, the natives have had to leave certain of their intellectual possessions in pawn. These pledges include their adoption of the forms of thought of the colonialist bourgeoisie. Among these pledges is that it presents the forms of thinking peculiar to the colonial bourgeoisie²⁶⁹. In view of the extended period of colonialism and its persistent use of various tools of domination and control, through which the native is forced to assimilate the colonizer's culture. This is done through soft means represented by privileges, or capital granted to those who are in line with its approach, or violent methods represented by killing, demolition, deprivation and barriers for those who refuse to submit. Also, the settler's work mentioned before makes even dreams of liberty impossible for the native²⁷⁰. Then, has the imaginary of liberation come to lie in trying to have a normal life, reconciliation with reality, and the exclusion of death, blood and destruction? Is this what is presented in the museum? And if so, then it completely contradicts Fanon's argument, who believes that the way to achieve any progress or change can only take place by getting rid of the colonizer. The conflict to get rid of colonialism does not change the colonizer only, but also changes the colonized and creates a new humanity²⁷¹. This is the new humanity that he sees through the revolution. Besides, the perspective of contemporary museums, especially the Banksy Museum, sees the new humanity through cosmopolitanism and tolerance.

²⁶⁸ *Ibid*, 14.

²⁶⁹ *Ibid*, 49.

²⁷⁰ *Ibid*, 82.

²⁷¹ *Ibid*, 198.

At the end of this chapter, it is noticeable that the colonial system cannot be dissociated from the museums in Palestine. Even if it appears that these museum attempts are tools of resistance for the colonized and that it exists in itself in different sites and with various narratives that lead in one way or another to the national identity. The reason behind this, as Marcuse believes, is that these attempts are not neutral or unplanned progress, rather, they have a purpose and a plan aimed at changing man by controlling the form of man's freedom. Besides, the freedom managed by an oppressive party can become a powerful tool of control²⁷². This tool has an impact on national narratives and identity.

²⁷² *Ibid*, 29.

Conclusion

The idea of research began in order to try to show the impact of museums on the Palestinian national identity and narrative. That is done by examining several museum models in Palestine, most of which are contemporary; the main museum that was elaborated upon was the Banksy Museum.

The research consisted of seven main chapters, through which I tried to confirm the hypotheses that I had put forward in this research. The introduction of the chapters came as follows; the first chapter consisted of the introduction and the related frameworks in the research. In the second chapter, I traced the history of the museum in general and the role of museums throughout history in the era of modernity and pre-modernity. Also, how the roles of museums changed based on the system of power that leads all state facilities. Then I moved to present the emergence of museums in the Palestinian case, which began in the days of the British Mandate, and which, with the succession of crises, their growth was slow. However, the growth of museums witnessed a fast growth after the signing of the Oslo Accords, as state institutions began to grow, as well as its museums. In this chapter, a summary of museum models was presented that extended from the Mandate to modern times. This presentation came with the aim of understanding the changes and developments that occurred in the museum form under colonialism.

The third chapter dealt with the case study on which the research was based, which is the Banksy museum, by analyzing the works of art in the museum in addition to its location. Banksy tried, through the works of art and the location, to disclose the multiple and disparate statements to institutionalize a tool for public dialogue between the various parties to the conflict, forgetting or neglecting how many torments the victim was subjected to in this conflict. Besides, as Banksy balances the two sides of the conflict, and through this balance,

Banksy's ignorance of the colonial system and his ignorance of Palestinian history is proven. He worked to reproduce the dependency and marginality of the Palestinian reality and at the same time the existing authority.

The fourth chapter of the research dealt with the definition of national identity and memory, their intertwining with the museum, and examined whether the museum has an impact on them, or not? And how does it affect them? This dismantling came with the aim of knowing the impact of museums and their impact on the extension of national identity.

The fifth chapter examined the impact of cultural commodification on the museum system in light of the colonial intervention in this system and its strengthening by the authorities and capital. So has commodification affected the museum's work and approach? And how did the commodification affect the work of the museum? Did commodification have an impact on Palestinian memory and identity? Does the surrounding public agree and accept the capital system or reject it? This chapter also attempted to reflect on the impact of commodification on the idea of living with colonialism.

The sixth chapter was devoted to the analysis of the impact of authority on the museum system in an attempt to answer the question of how museums were affected by the existing instruments of authority. Then, is the museum an extension of the authoritarian system? Can the museum detach from the authority in its approach, especially since museums were considered, according to Bennett, essential tools for achieving the new educational and moral role of the state with regard to the population in general? Also, it is true that it was directed to the people, but it was not from the people ²⁷³ because it is part of the cultural institutions that influence the creation of national identities in the country through its formation of narratives, symbols, and its display in the museum.

²⁷³ Bennett, Tony. *The Birth of the Museum*. Translated by Mohammed Al-Mubarak and Hassanein Hayat. Bahrain: Bahrain Authority for Culture and Publishing, (2019), 226.

The seventh chapter was dedicated to presenting the effects of colonialism on Palestinian museums, as this chapter tried to clarify the impact of colonialism on the museum and the museum's work. It also explained whether there is a possibility of decolonization during the creation of the museum or not. This chapter also examined the impact of colonialism on the bourgeois class, and what is the impact of this class on museums. Therefore, the research resulted in, and according to the hypotheses and research questions that were actually researched and tried to interrogate, that there is a new culture which was formed in the Palestinian museum attempts, in which the real suffering of the victim is hidden, from death, destruction, and blood. This is despite the continuation of this suffering, and this reproduces the colonial domination over the colonized Palestinian, which proved the first hypothesis.

The museum, especially the Banksy Museum, encouraged peaceful living with the colonizer and considered its existence inevitable, despite the museum's claim that it was a tool of resistance, and this proves the second hypothesis. The disappearance of memorials, some symbols, and images, as we have observed in the models of the museums presented, with the exception of the figures of individuals of a partisan nature, and the appearance of some images in a new light, all of this has reinforced the exclusion of the idea of revolutionary violence, thus proving the third hypothesis. Peaceful nonviolent discourse dominates the museum space as part of the power of political nonviolence discourse reproduced by cultural institutions. This includes the museum, which does not differ from the institutions of the system as a whole, and this is despite the continuation of the actual violence represented by the killing and destruction practised by the colonizer. Thus, the fourth hypothesis is confirmed.

The Palestinian Authority, Israeli colonialism, and the cultural industry, are entangled and connected to each other and each of them has an active role in influencing the museum system in its entirety, whether in terms of its tools, ideology, or the diversity of its forms and works, and this proves the fifth hypothesis. Through the reflections and interactions of these hypotheses, we note that this museum is in fact the product of a cultural transformation that has slowly accumulated in Palestinian society. And in which it appears that the predominance of the frame of reference is biased towards the global pattern, which is based on cosmopolitanism, the acceptance of the other, and the absolute freedom of man. This is opposed by Marcuse, who believes that man is not free and does not have non-alienable rights²⁷⁴. Moreover, the scenes that equate the victim and the executioner are responsible for the most obvious limitation in the museum's cracked discourse. Which undoubtedly will continue to carry infinite dimensions of interpretation. It will also undoubtedly carry other, more profound implications on the semantic and secondary levels in its discourse, which is sinking into cracks, with connotations more distant than the apparent colonial level. This is because the museums included in the research do not focus on signs and symbols only, rather, what is more than that is that these same places rise completely to reach the level of sign and symbol which imposes themselves strongly on the recipient's mind. This hypothesis proves the form, sound, and place with what they are loaded from the structuralism formed under colonialism. This is to reflect the significance of the continuity of the event, as the Palestinians were forced to reshape their traditional social life according to colonialism arrogance in the light of all the surrounding distortions and by trying to produce a stable space like the museum that Banksy created in the shadow of colonial space. This also reflects the state of fragmentation and unavailability of reality governed by the idea of becoming. This

²⁷⁴ Marcuse, Herbert. *One-dimensional man*. Translated by George Tarabishi. Beirut: Dar Al-Adab. (1988), 173.

means that there is no stability, but rather there is a continuous change that is forming and developing.

And the question today for the Palestinian active in the museum, in which I conclude my research, is, what are the mechanisms for creating an authority against the dominant colonial discourse and the economic commodification discourse that exists in the museum in an attempt to revive the power of Palestinian resistance action? How can a Palestinian Museum be built that carries national policies stemming from all Palestinians away from the dominance of colonial discourses of all kinds?

Appendix

Appendix (1)

Interviews questions with museum directors:

- 1- What is the vision of the museum?
- 2- What are the significant challenges in running a museum?
- 3- What distinguishes this museum from the others?
- 4- How does the museum establish its relationship with the community (i.e. the communicative relationship)?
- 5- What narrative does the museum display to the public?
- 6- Does the museum carry any controversy?
- 7- To what extent do the attitudes and ideas of the museum director influence the activities of the museum?
- 8- Are the activities of the museum planned after group discussions?
- 9- Can we connect the museum with current trends or events?
- 10- Who is the intended audience of the museum?
- 11- What is the average number of annual visitors to the museum?
- 12- What is the approach of the museum to attract the audience from different classes?
- 13- Are there any binding conditions determined by the supporters for the continuation of their support?

14- Does the closed museum space push us to imagine a new image of our identity and self?

15- Do the works displayed in the museum harmonize with the context of the institutional system in Palestine?

16- Do nations revive when they display and document their past?

17- Does the museum establish a new social culture with its artworks and displays?

18- Can a museum be considered an educational institution?

19- When you display something in a museum, does that make this thing a piece of art?

20- What does the philosophy of modern diverse museums reflect in comparison with the traditional form of international museums with their high halls and resonant sites?

21- Is there a reflection of popular culture inside the museum's holdings?

22- Is the museum trying with its works to produce new knowledge derived from the base to the pyramid or vice versa?

23- Where was the centrality concentrated in the museum? Was it given to the connected speech of the people or power?

24 - Is there a competition between museums in Palestine?

Appendix (2)

Interviews questions with art critics and museum curators:

1- What are the significant challenges in running a museum?

- 2- What distinguishes a museum from the others?
- 3- What is your thought of a museum established under colonialism?
- 4- Does the closed museum space push us to imagine a new image of our identity and self?
- 5- Do nations revive when they display and document their past?
- 6- Does the museum establish new cultural and social forms with its artworks and displays?
- 7- Can a museum be considered an educational institution?
- 8- When you display something in a museum, does that make this thing a piece of art?
- 9- What does the philosophy of modern diverse museums reflect in comparison with the traditional form of international museums with their high halls and resonant sites?
- 10- Is the museum trying with its works to produce new knowledge derived from the base to the pyramid or vice versa?
- 11- What can we call the museum form in Palestine?
- 12- Does the Palestinian reality create a new type of museum that the world has not known?
- 13- Do you consider it appropriate for the Palestinian situation to indulge in art projects and exhibitions and move away from the museum style?
- 14- Are modern museums trying to express new identities?

15- What is the influence of the cultural industry on the modern museum format? 16- Have museums fallen into the trap of industry?

Appendix (3)

Interviews questions with artists:

1- To what extent has the Palestinian situation affected your art?

2- Should the Palestinian artist reflect the symbols of national identity through works of art?

3- Does the artwork have a role in building or maintaining the national identity?

4- Are you trying through your art to dismantle the restrictions imposed by the colonizer and society?

5- Is art capable of penetrating the established reality and disrupting the ideological form of the world?

6- Does the artwork have to pass through the filter of the cultural industry?

7- Since the end of the seventies until today, to what extent has the commodity system influenced art?

8- Does placing your works of art in galleries or museums increase their artistic value?

9- What do you think about the museum? Is it healthy to create a museum system in Palestine, which is still under colonization?

10- Is it possible to build identities through museum spaces and works of art?

11- Does the new museum space push us to imagine a new image of who we identify ourselves?

12- Do nations revive when they display and document their past?

Questions about the Banksy art museum. (If you have not visited the Banksy Museum in Bethlehem, you can refrain from answering this section of the interview).

1- What is your thought of Banksy Museum?

2- Does the museum's speech talk about the victims or does it balance them with the executioners?

3- Inside or outside the museum, you are surrounded by a wall in front of you, a settlement from above, and a watchtower, so do you find yourself forced to re-identify yourself through this new form of reality?

4- Is the Banksy Museum trying to produce new knowledge derived from the base to the pyramid or vice versa?

5- Do works that reflect similar struggles and sufferings around the world help overcome fear and division in our world?

6- Did Banksy look through and presented the symbols of the past through the reality we live in?

7- Is Banksy trying to convey modernity in a way that suits the culture of the Palestinians?

8- Is there a reflection of popular culture inside the Banksy Museum's holdings?

9- Does Banksy reflect the very symbols of national identity through the artworks in the museum?

Appendix (4)

Interviews questions with the surrounding people at the Banksy Museum:

1- Have you ever visited a museum before?

2- Have you visited the Banksy Museum?

3- What is your thought of Banksy Museum?

4- What do you think of the museum, what catches your attention and attracts you to visit it?

5- Do works that reflect similar struggles and sufferings around the world help overcome fear and division in our world?

6- Do you think the Banksy Museum is familiar and close to the contents of other museums?

7- Is Banksy trying to convey modernity in a way that suits the culture of the Palestinians?

8- Is there a reflection of popular culture inside the Banksy Museum's holdings?

9- Does Banksy reflect the very symbols of national identity through the artworks in the museum?

Appendix (5)

Names of sample respondents:

1- The names of the respondents who were interviewed regarding the models of the selected museums:

- Wisam Salsa, Banksy Museum.
- Muhammad Halayqa, Yasser Arafat Museum.
- Hanin Saleh and Nabil Barham, the Palestinian Museum.
- Qais Rantawi, Mahmoud Darwish Museum.

2- Names of critics and specialists who were interviewed:

- Yazid Anani.
- Adaniya Shibli.
- Tina Sherwell.
- Hanna Qupti.
- Al-A'ma George.
- Jodi Faqusa.

3- Artists interviewed:

- Suleiman Mansour.
- Jawad al-Malhi.
- Maha As-Saqa.

- Manal Diab.
- Taleb Dweck.
- Bashar Al-Hroub.
- Vera Tamari.
- Ala Baba.
- Ola Abu Zeitoun.
- Afia' Nawasra.
- Ihab As-Saqa.
- Abdullah Abu Saud.
- Hanna Qupti.

Appendix (6)



Appendix (7)



Appendix (8)



Appendix (9)



Appendix (10)



Appendix (11)



Appendix (12)



Appendix (13)



Appendix (14)



Appendix (15)



Appendix (16)



Appendix (17)



Appendix (18)



Appendix (19)



Appendix (20)



Appendix (21)



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الملخص

تنطلق هذه الرسالة كمحاولة بحثية من داخل المتحف في نموذج الفلسطيني القابع تحت الاستعمار الإسرائيلي، هذا المتحف الذي يحفظ وقد يشكل جزءاً مهماً من بنية الهوية الوطنية والذاكرة الفلسطينية. لذا ومن منطلق هذه الأهمية، قامت محاولة قراءة المتحف في هذا البحث، وذلك من خلال فهم دور كل من الاستعمار الإسرائيلي، والسلطة الفلسطينية، والصناعة الثقافية على المتحف، الذين تم فحصها من خلال مكان، ومقتنيات المتحف، وآلية عمله وتفاعله مع المحيط، و المتلقي سواء في فلسطين أو خارجها. وتأتي محاولة التفكيك هذه لدور الاستعمار والسلطة والصناعة الثقافية من أجل محاولة قياس مدى تأثير الهوية الوطنية الفلسطينية والذاكرة من عدمه بكل ما يتم طرحه في المتحف، خاصةً في ظل هذا التشابك بين ثلاث مفاصل جدلية، صاحب السطوة الأكبر فيها الاستعمار الإسرائيلي الذي ما زال حاضرًا.

كما تأتي محاولة القراءة هذه من خلال تتبع وتحليل مقتنيات ومكان المتحف المأخوذ كنموذج في هذا البحث، وهو متحف بانكسي الذي يقع داخل فندق في بيت لحم، والذي يتم تناوله مدعماً بمتاحف فلسطينية أخرى، مثل المتحف الفلسطيني، ومتحف ياسر عرفات، ومتحف بنك فلسطين، ومتحف محمود درويش، والمتحف الشيوعي الفلسطيني، وغيرها من المتاحف التي يبلغ مجملها في هذا البحث عشرة متاحف. وقد تم الاستعانة بها لإثبات أو نفي بعض من فرضيات هذا البحث.

وقد ارتكز البحث على عرض تاريخ المتاحف في فلسطين، وفترات وأماكن تركزها، بالإضافة إلى التسلسل التاريخي لها. كل ذلك ليس بمعزل عن ميلاد المتحف العالمي وجدلياته وما أدخل عليه من تطورات؛ وذلك بغرض فهم التطورات التي تزامنت مع الفترات التاريخية المتعددة، وأثر كل مرحلة من هذه المراحل سواء ما قبل الحداثة أو الحداثة أو ما بعد الحداثة على تشكل المتحف بشكل عام وفي فلسطين بشكل خاص. بالإضافة إلى تحليل التداخل بين الهوية الوطنية، والذاكرة، والمتحف في سياقه العالمي؛ ويأتي كل ذلك كمرتكز لفهم المتحف في فلسطين ولمعرفة نوع الثقافة التي تعكسها المتاحف الفلسطينية، ومصدر إنتاجها، وما تعرضه المتاحف من رموز ذات قيمة وتأثير في الذاكرة والهوية الوطنية، وطريقة عرض هذه الرموز بأكملها أو بجزء منها، ونوع الخطاب الذي يطغى فيها، لمعرفة الأثر الذي تتركه على الذاكرة والهوية الوطنية الفلسطينية.

الكلمات المفتاحية: متحف ، بانكسي ، الهوية وطنية ، الذاكرة ، صناعة الثقافة ، السلطة ، الاستعمار .