



**Arab American University
Faculty of Graduate Studies**

**The Impact of the Palestinian Education on Palestinian
Culture; a Study Based on Freirian Approach**

**The 11th grade Palestinian Social sciences and
Languages School Books -A critical cultural study**

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**This thesis was submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the Master's degree in Intercultural
Communication and Literature**

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Thesis Approval

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This thesis was defended successfully on September 16, 2020 and approved by:

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Declaration

I Hanan Audeh, a student of the Faculty of Graduate Studies in the Arab American University in Ramallah declare and certify by my signature that this Master dissertation is entirely the result of my work, it is original, and does not breach any copyright law. I have accurately cited all my sources including books, journals, and interviews. To my best knowledge, this Master dissertation has not been accepted in any other previous application for a degree, in whole or in part.

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Abstract

For the first time in history, the Palestinians wrote their own school curriculum after Oslo Agreement, yet they missed the opportunity of a liberating education. This research explores to which extent three Palestinian 11th grade schoolbooks are designed to convey the liberating concept of education through analyzing the content context, the questions posed, and the praxis embodied within the texts. It uses the qualitative approach as methodology through content analysis and interviews to conclude that the Palestinian schoolbooks follow the banking concept of education, which creates a submissive cultural pattern of thinking, and generations of followers rather than creators, problem solvers, and critical thinkers.

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Chapter One

Introduction

1:1 Introduction and Theoretical Framework:

Culture is one of the most complicated terms, and is very difficult to comprehend, sometimes perhaps even tricky. It is most probably due to its development in meaning, its relationship to social, political and economic aspects of human life, and its plenty uses and abuses. The origin of the word Culture comes from the act of cultivating the land in the Feudal times, later in the 15th century the meaning developed to human development, and then in the 19th century it developed into cultivating the mind. To cultivate the mind would mean to use it for the purpose of the advancement of societies. The study of culture was incriminated and was perceived as a tool for the colonizers to subjugate non-western societies in order to maintain unequal relationships between civilizations. The word has also been abused when it is connected to race and racism. Additionally, culture gives value to social structure; it makes us understand as it studies, conceptualizes and highlights its impact of social structures. Despite its long evolution of meaning, and relation to other fields, the meaning is very well connected to the human mind. Culture is a human experience that enhances the humane feature in us. The inheritance of culture through a generation to the next is what preserves it. The continuity of culture is closely linked to the continuity of humanity, and this continuity cannot be achieved without education as a deliberate process within the context of human life. In any given modern state, the social, political, and economic functions are maintained and managed through governmental institutions. The educational system is one of the institutions that can be either a tool of liberation in the sense of allowing the students freedom to take various directions, or a tool of oppression if it is exclusively steered by the government to discipline and enculturate the generations in a manner that benefits the state and allows no freedom to students. The main aim of education must be to better the mind and make it skillful. Even though culture

includes signs as values, ideas, behavior, symbols, tradition, and practices, it is closely attached and influential to the human act of thinking that this research focuses on.

According to Bourdieu (1990), education plays an important role in social reproduction; it is used as a tool by the state to preserve the boundaries between social classes. Bourdieu even goes further to talk about education as a form of symbolic violence. It is a non-physical violence where state institutions like schools build representations of reality and impose them on the students to promote the dominant culture. "Bourdieu and Passeron suggest that what needs to be understood is the way in which the cultural capital transmitted by the family and cashed in in the school is then used to reproduce the power structure" (Bedro & Feinberg, 1979, p. 316). The educational system in this case is authoritarian, traditional, or what Freire (2000) refers to as "The banking concept of education". Opposite to the banking concept of education is what Freire (2000), named as "The Libertarian education" which is a problem-posing education that emphasizes pedagogy for the purpose of liberation, thus referred to as pedagogy of liberation.

The Libertarian approach may seem to be rebellious and to suggest emphasis on difference, when in fact it is all about the sameness. This engaged pedagogy stresses on sharing from the students and the teacher alike, not only information but also experience, and the experience of intellectual exploration and growth. When the teacher shows readiness to express his/her vulnerability, students tend to feel more comfortable in participating. The teacher does not present himself/herself as the source of knowledge, but a participant in inquiry. Sameness here stems from equality among students in expression of the mind, in addition to respect and tolerance, consequently embracing the different and empathizing with it in dialogue.

To liberate the mind in this research is not directly attached to the political meaning of liberation, but in an indirect or concealed manner, it is. Looking at education from a sociological point of view, the relationship between education and the state is seen to be interconnected, and as a result curriculum is designed to comply with the dominant ideologies, this is a hidden curriculum. It is necessary to study education within its context.

Henry A. Giroux, the American and Canadian scholar and cultural thinker, and one of the founding theorists of critical pedagogy who draws on Freire criticizes education in the United States and links it to its political context. Pinar & Bowers (1992) assert, "Both Apple and Giroux (Apple, 1990; Giroux, 1991) described how the content and the form of the curriculum were ideological in nature. Generally, the ideas and culture associated with the dominant class were argued to be the ideas and content of schooling". Additionally, Michel Foucault (1926-1984), the French philosopher whose theories address the relationship between power and knowledge and their influence on societies through societal institutions describes the relationship between knowledge and power;

He describes the ways in which knowledge does not simply emerge from scholarly study but is produced and maintained in circulation in societies through the work of number of different institutions and practices. Thus, he moves us away from seeing knowledge as objective and dispassionate towards a view which sees knowledge always working in the interests of particular groups. (Mills, 2005, p.79).

Education must play a crucial and vital role in providing students with the tools and methods to reach their highest intellectual potentials, and consequently in becoming productive and active adults within their societies. "Designated educators and licensed

educational institutions bear the most evident burden in the identification and training of young minds” (Gardner, 2008, p.12). The main tool teachers use for educating students are the books and the material set for them, the curricula. The curriculum is the totality of students' experience including all planned sources like school textbooks in addition to any other academic content. Palestine established its relatively autonomous educational system in the 1990's, from school construction to developing an educational system and implementing Palestinian curriculum. The Palestinian curriculum has been evolving for around thirty years.

This research explores texts from the Palestinian curriculum of 2018 in terms of whether the texts are designed to liberate the Palestinian young minds and influence the next generation's advancement. Advancement that our future generations chooses, and is not chosen for them. It is essential to note that this research emerges from a liberal or progressive perspective. Liberals see that freedom is the best strategy for creativity enabling individuals to find their own solutions, as individualism is one of its core principles. Liberalism is skeptical about power and it sees that social problems can be dealt with through civil society rather than imposed solutions by the governments. Therefore, this study departs from the liberal values of individual freedom, responsibility, human dignity, a just society, political and religious freedom, equality of opportunity and cultural diversity. Simultaneously, the term "liberating" in this research derives its meaning from Paulo Freire's theory of Libertarian Education. Liberating the mind takes the meaning of training it and giving it the opportunity to synthesize, analyze, pose questions and dare to challenge the conventional for the purpose of human advancement .

In his book *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, the Brazilian critical thinker and educator Freire (2000), introduces two concepts for education, the “Banking” concept of education and the “Libertarian” concept of education. The banking education occurs when the teacher makes

deposits, which the students obediently receive, memorize and repeat for assessment. This type of education fails to emerge the students in inquiry with each other and with the world, and it does not challenge the mind and consequently students become recipients who are not used to production of knowledge. On the other hand, the libertarian education encourages the students to develop critical consciousness, because the material is handed to the students for their consideration and reconsideration, it is provided within as large as possible context, and it is challenged. The relationship between the students and the teacher is dialogical or horizontal as an adequate setting for practice, inquiry, posing questions and unveiling of reality. This concept of education, the libertarian education is the key to producing innovative, problem solving, and productive generation .

Bell Hooks, whose real name is Gloria Watkins, corresponds with Paulo Freire's Libertarian approach. She is an American, who comes from a rural southern black experience and background. Her pedagogical standpoint is based on feminist, anticolonial, and critical studies. In her book *Teaching to Transgress*, she emphasizes insights, strategies and critical reflection on pedagogical practices that are inspired by Paulo Freire as well as a Vietnamese Buddhist monk Thich Nhat Hanh for the spiritual growth. Hooks (1994, p.11) sees that, "Teaching is a performative act and that it is that aspect of our work that offers the space for change, invention, and spontaneous shifts". Hooks (1994, p.21) adds that, "To educate is a practice of freedom".

Discussing the role of education in social reproduction. Bourdieu (1990) stresses on the fact that education has relative autonomy. It seems to be independent, but in fact, it is controlled by the state, and that control is easily concealed. Overall, both Foucault and Bourdieu agree that education is an institutional production, and that the state uses education to discipline the society according to what the state sees as necessary and in the benefit of those in power .

The Libertarian approach may suggest that the educational system must be independent from the state, but in fact, it is not an essential requirement at all. Students' intellectual growth should not threaten the state but better the conditions of their society.

Freire (2000, p.47) investigates the relationship between the oppressor and the oppressed, and he sees that "The oppressed, having internalized the image of the oppressor and adopted his guidelines, are fearful of freedom". To delve deeper into the meaning of freedom, and establish the connection with the Palestinian society, one can summon the German social psychologist Eric Fromm's theory on freedom. Drawing on Freud's work, Fromm (1941) in his book *Fear of Freedom*, explains that the theory of personality is based on two basic needs; the need for freedom, and the need for belonging. According to him, a grown man balances between freedom and security in different ways. He either becomes submissive because he fears freedom, and here he is in agreement with Freire referring to the oppressed. The second manner is becoming spontaneously engaged in society and productive work. He adds that a free society is the one that thinks independently and spontaneously. There is an overlap between the two theorists; both of them recognize the importance of external factors that restrict freedom. Lake & Kress (2013) state, "Fromm defines freedom as the ability to make decisions according to one's desires", and Freire (2000) sees that the oppressed are afraid of the risks associated to liberation. The Palestinian society is not familiar with freedom, as it has not been present in their historical context, nor the present, therefore freedom should start with the mind through education. The concept of libertarian education is a way to re-create knowledge in the sense that the oppressed become aware of their reality, and independence and freedom are initiated from within the person as a result .

The reason behind this research utilizing Paulo Freire's theory despite Brazil and Palestine's different political, historical, economic, and educational history is that

regardless of the reasons of oppression, the experience of the oppressed remains if not the same, then similar. Palestinians have been under occupation for many years, and Brazilians have experienced several military coups, poverty, high rate of crime, and discrimination. In addition to the fact that his book *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* does not take Brazilian education as a case study, but he speaks of the oppressed in general deriving his teaching and educational experience from his Brazilian context yet not specifically addressing it .

Theories of critical pedagogy are specifically important in the Palestinian context being a context of oppression. Silwadi & Mayo (2014) discuss that education is a critical way to resist occupation, and that in a context like occupied Palestine education is linked to politics. "Freire is a source of inspiration for education under siege" (Silwadi & Mayo, 2014). It is seen by them as a tool for resistance and survival, and a way to distance themselves from domestication, or acceptance of oppression. They stress on the "relevance of Paulo Freire's pedagogical approach to people engaged in struggle to affirm their dignity and identity in a situation characterized by the presence of an occupying force" (Silwadi & Mayo, 2014). Additionally, Pherali & Turner (2017) suggest that "Schools can promote positive peace by enabling social transformation", they also see that the young Palestinians perceive reality through the lens of their oppressor, and that injustice is internalized in them. Critical pedagogy offers an opportunity to the young Palestinians as an oppressed society to free themselves from the inner oppression first, in order to be able to seek social justice and stability, and consequently a form of liberation of their choice. Critical pedagogy and education for liberation is vital in societies engaged in struggle, because it helps young generations see outside of their traditional box, and tolerate and accept the different, and thus, connect with the world, and be active participants in acquiring the skills of the 21st century to adapt to the changing world.

1:2 Historical Background of the Palestinian Education:

To emphasize the Palestinian particularity regarding its historical and present political, social, and economic circumstances, education, and more particularly curriculum must not be studied in disregard of the context. Therefore, a brief historical background about Palestinian curriculum and education in Palestine is laid out, in addition to shedding light on the restrictions on the Palestinian curriculum today.

Palestine has been occupied for centuries, it was under the Ottoman Empire's rule, and then under the British Mandate, which led to more than seven decades of Israeli occupation. Palestinian education has undergone through long history under occupation. It was not until the late 1800 when the first formal educational system was established under the Ottoman rule, and education then was in very poor conditions. Nicolai (2007, p.31) in a research published by the International Institute and Educational Planning in addition to Save the Children asserts, "The educational formal system was created as an attempted imposition of Turkish culture". The official language of education was Turkish. "Under Ottoman rule education provision first emerged and was delivered in Turkish language to the overwhelming majority of Arabic speaking Palestinian population". Many villages were devoid of official schools, where Palestinian children were educated in so called *Kuttub*, which focused on teaching literacy and religion, more specifically Quran, Barakat & Brown (as cited in Ramahi, 2015). According to Nicolai (2007, p.32) "Only 10 per cent of school aged population was enrolled until the year 1913". During the British Mandate, the educational system in Palestine witnessed a slight improve. Nicolai (2007) "98 new schools were in place of which only 3 were secondary schools, and more than a quarter of school aged children were enrolled in schools. Cities and villages had their own public schools and Turkish was replaced with Arabic". After 1948, when Jewish leaders declared the State of Israel and 750 000 Palestinians became refugees after the *Nakba*, the system of

education changed again. The West Bank Schools followed the Jordanian curricula, and Gaza schools followed the Egyptian, all under strict monitoring by Israel (Al Sheikh, et al., 2008). The Palestinian students studied a curriculum that was not of their production. Palestine has a long history of occupation and oppression, therefore the Palestinian curriculum is relatively new. Around forty years later, in 1992 Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) called for the unification of the Palestinian curriculum, a voluntary work that lasted for two years involving 132 experts and Dr. Fathiyah Nasru as the project coordinator Barakat & Brown (as cited in Ramahi, 2015). After Oslo Peace Accords in 1993, the first Palestinian Ministry of Education was established in 1994, mainly relying on international sponsors. “The Palestinian Curriculum Development Center was established under the umbrella of UNESCO and PNA cooperation. It officially started work in 1995 by building a Plan of Operation introduced by the UNESCO and applied by the Palestinian Ministry of Education. The Italian Ministry of International Cooperation provided the first fund, \$ 300.000.”(Abu Lughod, 1997, p.11). The center functioned independently from the Ministry, Ibraheem Abu Lughod, a Birzeit University Professor at the time led the team, which produced a 600 page comprehensive plan for the development of the first Palestinian curriculum for general education, and the plan included details about the educational system as a whole. A year later, in 1997, a second plan was developed, and in 2000, the new textbooks were sent to classrooms. Before the development of the Palestinian textbooks, between 1994 and 2000 the Jordanian and Egyptian textbooks continued to be used. The new Palestinian curriculum was regarded as a success, and indeed, it was, considering the history of Palestinian education.

1:3 Restrictions Imposed on the Palestinian Curriculum:

This relatively short history of the Palestinian curriculum already lays out the idea of two main powers fighting to design the knowledge Palestinian young minds should be fed with. The Palestinian schoolbooks have been written, rewritten, and modified several times since the 1990s. The Palestinian Ministry of Education has been the key player because it directly hired and supervised the authors of the curriculum, Israel has meticulously studied the schoolbooks, and other international powers had their say too. Al Sheikh, Ed. (2008, p.226) asserts, "The Palestinian curriculum has undergone monitoring and meticulous studying by international institutions. It has been criticized and attacked in the American congress and the European Parliament". As another example to Israeli and International monitoring of the Palestinian curriculum is CMIP, Center of Monitoring the Impact of Peace, which was founded in 1998, based in Jerusalem, and its main role is monitoring the content of schoolbooks in the Middle East. Nicolai (2007, p.90) asserts, "CIMP's reports were circulated in US subcommittee and the European Parliament, reports that investigate whether Palestinian children are taught to accept the right of the other". International researches certainly do not study the Palestinian curriculum for the sake of improving the Palestinian quality of education, but to serve their own agendas and purposes, in addition to observing and influencing the Palestinian young generations who according to Israeli studies threaten Israel's future.

A recent Israeli study of selected examples from the Palestinian curriculum (2017) from the first to the twelfth grade has been published in 2018 by the Hebrew University in Jerusalem. The author is Eldad J. Pardo. The study's focal points are Israel and its disappearance, demonization of Israel, and the return to Palestine. The author claims that the Palestinian schoolbooks boost hate towards Israel, they are anti- American, and that they do not look for reconciliation with Israel, but spread revolutionary ideas. The

problems of this study are many. One of them is that the author's rationality is questioned. Pardo (2018) discusses the topic of tolerance and accepting the Other in the Palestinian schoolbooks by saying "The curriculum encourages selective acceptance of Others such as Christian minority, women, the elderly, and the disabled". During the age of the Enlightenment in the 18th century in Europe, the philosophers agreed on reasoning and toleration in the sense that all human beings are essentially the same. The author of the research, includes women, the elderly, and the disabled to "Others", in other words he excludes them from society. The author asserts that the Palestinian curriculum encourages tolerance and acceptance of women, the elderly, and the disabled while it does not call for accepting Israel. Another problem is that his argument is bias. Pardo (2018) translates only half of a paragraph selected from the 11th grade's history book about the first Intifada in 1987. He translates the sentence that mentions Palestinians martyrs' contribution in the Intifada ignoring the first part that speaks of the civil disobedience, organization, and secrecy. Not to mention that the martyrs did not die a natural death but were actually killed by the Israeli army. Therefore, topics are discussed out of context, the first Intifada was a reaction to occupation, and the author treats the Palestinian reaction out of the context of occupation, land confiscation, mobility restrictions and the killings committed by the Israeli army. These only few of many examples that are exaggeration of ideas, attempting to portray the Palestinian education as promoting violence. Despite of the irrationality, bias, and lack of context, this study derives its credibility from its publisher, the Hebrew University in Jerusalem. The purpose of such a study is to influence the international opinion that funds the Palestinian Ministry of Education, and consequently condemn the Palestinians for allegedly promoting violence .

The Palestinian National Authority, therefore the Palestinian Ministry of Education relies on foreign funding, and that is another issue. Even the Palestinian State does not

have autonomy; it must abide to the funding country's conditions in exchange for the financial aid, and here the Israeli output about the Palestinian curriculum plays its role. Nicolai (2007, p.65) " All aid agencies shared the objective of consolidating the peace process, aimed at a two state solution, there were donors with ready-made- projects in mind, and donors seeking to know what the ministry's priorities were, before releasing the funds". It was the reality when Israel showed an interest in a two state solution, after Oslo agreement, which does not apply today. Donors follow their own priorities, and their priorities change .

The Palestinian Ministry of Education and Higher Education issued an Education Sector Strategic Plan for 2017- 2022 in April 2017, whose purpose is developing schoolbooks in particular and education in Palestine in general. The plan lists material obstacles Israel poses on the Palestinian education. Some of the obstacles are the prohibition of school construction on area 'C' that covers 64% of the West Bank. There are 2074 schools in Palestine, 1782 of them are located in the West Bank, and 179 on area "C". Siege on Gaza Strip prevents rebuilding the demolished schools, and restrictions on the curriculum in Palestinian schools in Jerusalem, in addition to attempts of replacing the Palestinian curriculum with an Israeli one. These material problems facing Palestinian education effect the development of the curriculum. The Ministry of Education is required to provide education for each Palestinian student, ensuring that there is a spot for each child, in addition to safety especially in area 'C', Hebron, and schools that are located close to Israeli checkpoints and the apartheid wall. Therefore, the Palestinian Ministry of Education does not have the luxury of investing its resources on developing the curriculum, as it has to provide a safe spot for each schoolchild first .

1:4 Literature Review:

Amel (1991), referring to the Lebanese National University, suggests that the educational process is a social process that is indivisible from the political and economic status of the country.

Likewise, Mills (2003) stresses that Michel Foucault sees that knowledge and truth are produced by those in power. He describes the marginalized as objects who receive their knowledge from their oppressor's perspective, therefore the marginalized accept their law position within the hierarchy. Mills (2003, p.67), states, "Foucault is able to see that the production of information by the marginalized themselves can alter the status quo."

Freire (2000) is in agreement with Foucault. He believes that education cannot be separated from politics. Education is an act of politics as it feeds the young generation with certain ideologies and with a way of thinking. He presents the oppressed as spectators and as objects. He says that the oppressed live in an illusion of being outside of society, and he suggests that the oppressed have to unveil the world of oppression naming it critical awareness. The problem of oppression and lack of freedom is that it has become internal; the oppressed find it hard to allow themselves to be free, to challenge the conventional and change. Freire (2000) believes that both the teachers and the students should be aware of the political role of education. Swidler (1986), who believes that in unsettled lives, change is difficult to happen because societies under threat of existence tend to cling more onto preservation of their culture. "These explicit cultures might well be called systems. While not perfectly consistent, they aspire to offer not multiple answers, but one unified answer to the question of how human beings should live"(Swidler, 1986, p.279). The libertarian education as opposed to the banking concept of education is the key to freeing the oppressed. Freire uses the analogy "banking" education as a reference to the mainstream or

traditional approaches to education. The traditional kind of education where the teacher and the book own the truth and they pass it to their students. The students' role here is to receive and memorize. On the other hand, the libertarian education frees the mind of both the students and the teachers. They become able to reconsider the given, to build their own narratives, and to create. He sees that Liberating Education can be achieved through dialogical relations, praxis, and problem posing, all provided with a context. "It is impossible to read texts without reading the context of the text" (Freire, 1985, p.18).

What is meant by problem posing, is putting problems within large contexts. When problems and questions are placed into contexts, it evokes critical thinking, it leads the students into questioning the beliefs and practices that dominate, or are presented to students as unquestionable facts. Here comes the role of dialogical relations. Dialogical relations or horizontal relations between both parties, the students and the teachers, engage the students into the learning process, and makes learning more exciting, needless to mention that it motivates them and makes what they do meaningful because they are involved in discovery and production. Here, both parties are equal, and equally work toward the goal of learning. Praxis, the third method of applying Libertarian Education, is far from being modern. It is a term that has roots in Ancient Greece, and was later used by the Romans. Praxis is the process in which theory or a lesson is enacted, or put into practice. Learning is for the sake of doing. Overall, Libertarian Education can be recognized as a way of freeing the mind through placing problems into contexts, dialogical relations between teachers and students, and through praxis .

Additionally, Dorothy Heathcote's theories and practices realized the importance of context in education. She invented Mantel of the Expert as a method to use drama as learning medium during the early 1980's. "In drama teachers and students are busy with questioning and inquiry" (Morgan & Saksen, 2012). Using drama in education can be seen

as a form of libertarian education because it uses questioning as a main tool, and it allows both the teachers and the students to reconsider what is taken for granted. A wide context is not provided but it is explored during the educational process. Drama as learning medium depends on teacher training and not on the curriculum. This research focuses on the textbooks rather than teacher training because textbooks fall into the hands of every teacher.

Nicolai (2007) studies education in occupied Palestine, and asserts, "Schools are still seen as teacher and book oriented", she adds "Critics of Palestinian education say it does not do enough to promote active learning, with the Tawjihi being a classic example of testing". The question that arises here is what the role of the Palestinian textbooks is in encouraging traditional learning and ignoring active learning. The emphasis is on the how.

The Palestinian curriculum has been criticized and studied by Palestinian critics. Abdul Hamid (2019), criticizes the Palestinian curriculum used in 2017, saying that it is biased against scientific reasoning, and in favor of the religious. He disagrees with using religion as a reference for science, he also criticizes exclusions, and contradictions in the texts. When religious beliefs are used as references to science, it leaves no space for questioning and texts become devoid of objectivity. Abdul Hamid (2019) also criticizes the representation of women from a religious perspective, and the contradiction in the representation of the West. Parts of the curriculum criticize the Western individualism and attacks Western values of freedom, while other parts praise European development, reasoning, and the separation between the church and politics.

Rafidi (2019), in the same year studies the Palestinian history books, he notes that the romanticizing of history led to cancellation of key components of history, national, racial, ethnic, religious, and sectarian. He finds that the hegemony of the religious culture over the

author of history books, led to the dominance of religious terms in dealing with historical events. He also notes that the curriculum relies on the official version of the political authority. Rafidi (2019) suggests that rational thinking in education requires criticism of the popular culture, especially the beliefs that are not based on science. He also criticizes the presentation of texts as texts to memorize rather than to discuss and criticize.

Clearly, both Rafidi and Abdul Hamid find the State's blueprints combined with religion in the Palestinian books. This is the production of knowledge, or the production of truth, that is taught to young Palestinian generations. This knowledge only serves those in power, to remain in power. Mills (2005, p.74) discusses Foucault's input about how truth is produced by authority saying;

The true statements will be circulated throughout society, reproduced in books; they will appear in school curricula and they will be commented on, described and evaluated by others in books and articles. These statements will underpin what is taken to be common-sense knowledge within a society.

Those statements which are classified as false will not be reproduced .

Rafidi and Abdul Hamid's studies focus on the content, on what is written in the Palestinian schoolbooks and not on how it is presented, in other words the pedagogical aspect in relevance to sociology, and whether it provokes the student's mind to rethink, reconsider, and suggest something new, and that is the focal point of this research.

It is essential to add Najeh Shaheen's contribution into the field of Palestinian education and curriculum. Shaheen (2014) studies the thinking structure within the Palestinian educational system, for that he takes the 10th grade textbook of history as a case study. His analysis of the book as a representative sample of history books is to highlight the thinking structure in the textbook; to study the applied methodology in presenting the content of the

books and to which degree it accords with teaching students thinking skills in general and thinking about history in particular. Some of his findings are that the book is informational in style, it provides information, it lacks explanation of events, it lacks reasonable arguing, theoretical vision, scientific methodology, and does not challenge the reader's mind. He also finds that the book narrates historical events as facts using weak language. He comes to an important conclusion, which is that the book does not enhance thinking.

Mousa Khoury published a booklet and a chapter that include in depth criticism of the Arabic language books. Khoury (2014) focuses on reading, he believes that reading is approaching an issue while it is in motion; therefore, he sees that the reader must not have a passive role but an active one in order to contribute into the structure of the text. He sees that Palestinian education revolves around teaching recipients, which limits the students into an area of receiving information that does not transcend the level of recalling rather than higher skills like analysis, deconstruction, and reconstruction. He focuses his study on oral reading in classrooms and concludes that it prevents students from developing a critical mind, thus they end up repeating what had been said by those in authority, rather than taking the direction of different interpretations. Additionally, he stresses on the fact that focusing on lower skills serves the preservation of the dominant culture. Khoury (2018) draws on Paulo Freire's theory of libertarian education. He analyzes several Arabic language books and finds that the books utilize closed texts, and rigid language, and asserts that these texts follow the banking concept of education. According to him, following that pattern of education limits the learning of the four language skills and confiscates the students' ability of critical thinking.

This is the point from which this research departs. It explores the books taking in consideration the important findings of the previous studies, in addition to using other tools derived from Freire's theory, to measure the findings against the libertarian concept of

education, for exploring the cultural pattern of thinking that is emphasized in the students' minds through education.

The approach is set in the early beginnings. "The method of teaching takes the form of lecturing and the teacher looks at the students as if they were cups that need to be filled" (Abu Lougoud et al., 1997, p.35), which reflects that the planning of Palestinian education in the beginning was based on Freire's banking concept of education where the students are seen as recipients. The texts in the first edition of the Palestinian text books were described as "extremely simple and they depend on narration, which does not allow the students to academically interact with the texts, and they contribute in restricting the students' thinking within the text itself only"(Al Sheikh, et al.,2008, p.297).

The Education Sector Strategic Plan for the period 2017-2022, issued in 2017, stresses on the importance of transforming the curriculum from a memorization based and test driven curriculum to a student centered dynamic pedagogy. It stresses on the need to reform the curriculum, assessment, supervision, and teacher training. Most of the plans suggested solutions for the Palestinian education are material such as rebuilding schools, providing facilities, computers and labs; no adequate attention is given to developing the curriculum, only general suggestions. Relying on the Palestinian Ministry Plan, the Palestinian curriculum has undergone change, but there is a gap between the intended curriculums and the implemented one, although the plan addressed classroom and students' performance, the type of questions posed in classrooms, and the teachers' qualifications, but it still has not made a drastic change .

Overall, Rafidi (2019) and Abdul Hamid (2019) criticize the content of the Palestinian curriculum 2017/2018, so do authors in Sheikh (2008) targeting the first Palestinian curriculum. While other studies like Khoury (2018) and Shaheen (2014) look into the

pedagogy. This research does not undermine the importance of the schoolbooks content but it brings into attention the pedagogic method of organizing texts provided to both the students and the teachers, taking in consideration the context of Palestine as an occupied country, and the Palestinian culture as oppressed. Specifically based on Paulo Freire's theory of Liberating Education. Palestinian research and analysis for establishing curriculum that applies the liberating concept of education is crucial, for maintaining a steady development in education first, then consequently producing minds that are prepared for the future, the planned and the anticipated, the Palestinian curricula has to keep on maturing in order to meet its goals.

1: 5 Significance of Study:

This empirical research is a continuum of previously conducted research on Palestinian curriculum to explore the libertarian concept of education in the Palestinian curriculum linking it to the culture of the oppressed. It adds value to previous research by looking into components like the context of the texts in the books, the questions, and praxis in three books, thus it stems from a different perspective and is comprehensive. It analyses texts from three selected schoolbooks taking in consideration curriculum as a political text, Palestinian students as occupied society and linking their education to their cultural pattern of thinking, thus the possibility for change, new interpretations, and new possibilities. The selected books are published in 2018, and only little criticism has been conducted. The significance of this study also comes from the specific aspect of Palestinian schoolbooks' analysis, which is the exploration of the Freirian Libertarian pedagogic approach in the texts, taken within the sociological view of education in the Palestinian context. Developing a curriculum in Palestine involves groups of authors, who present their

finalized material to specialists within a workshop for feedback, then to book designers ending up in the ministry of education. "This connected cycle of procedures did not go according to plan, especially after the second Intifada, when it was impractical to arrange meetings. The discussions between the coordinator and the assigned member for developing the curriculum would be about the content while ignoring the pedagogic aspect" (Sheikh et al., 2008, p.223) .

Palestine, with its peculiar circumstances, being occupied, and as a country relatively new at preparing school curriculum, which has been monitored, criticized and supervised on both a national and international level, requires school curriculum that liberates the minds leading to productive students, thus a more promising future. This research contributes into developing the curriculum focusing on the pedagogic aspect, and utilizing a pedagogic theory that is compatible with the Palestinian reality .

According to Hooks (1994, p.21), "Progressive professors working to transform the curriculum so that it does not reflect biases or reinforce systems of domination are most often the individuals willing to take the risks that engaged pedagogy requires and to make their teaching practices a site of resistance".

1: 6 Problem Statement:

Despite the novelty of the Palestinian curriculum, the numerous restrictions imposed on the Palestinian educational system as a whole, whether internationally, or the lack of resources and experiences nationally, the Palestinian curriculum has been slowly developing over the last three decades. Most of the Palestinian critics focused their attention on the content of the schoolbooks, as to what the students are learning, but they failed in analyzing the pedagogical approach of the schoolbooks, which affects Palestinian culture and way of thinking. This research adds and tackles the issue of freedom of interpretation, and the possibility of stepping into new spheres that may be unconventional to past ideology.

Looking at the Ministry of Palestinian Education's Strategic Plan for 2017-2022, and the studies of the textbooks, one can depict the critics' and the states' awareness of the inefficiency of the pedagogic approach, yet it has not sufficiently been explored, nor tackled. In addition, Abdul Hamid (2019, p.9) lays out worrisome numbers concerning school education in Palestine in 2019. "Students spend 12 years in schools which are the equivalent of 8 years, meaning that 4 years go to waste". He also compares the percentage of students enrolling in the scientific stream today compared to 1960's, finding "24.4% today compared to 45% in the 60's" (Abdul Hamid, 2019). Abdul Hamid (2019, p.9) also stresses on "The general knowledge weakness, lack of research skills, the absence of higher thinking skills, and the poor use of both the English and Arabic language in schools ."

The Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) reported on the Palestinian education concerning the Arabic language and Math score average of 2004 and 2005. Moreno, Bannel & Jaramill (2006, p.29) found "Arabic language average score in

private schools is 69.8, in UNURWA schools is 54.05, and in the governmental schools is 51.9". Moreno et al. (2006, p.29) also found "The Mathematics average scores in private schools are 36.19, in UNURWA 26.2, and in the governmental schools 24.8". These scores are compatible with Abdul Hamid's findings, which reflect the poor knowledge of language, and the extreme lack and deterioration in mathematical skills of the Palestinian school students .

Yarrow, Abdul Hamid, Quota & Cuadra, E. (2014), report, "Students' performance in the Palestinian Territories showed improvement between 2007-2011 as measured by the respective rounds of TIMMS". The alarming outcome is that Palestinian students are far below the constructed average of the TIMMS, both regionally and internationally. Yarrow et al. (2014), add, "Student outcomes in the Palestinian Territories are at or below the lowest International Benchmark in math and science. Jordan, Lebanon, and the UAE have higher student performance, yet they also do not reach the average benchmark ." The TIMMS exams are an international indicator of certain skills; such as critical thinking, prediction and estimation, which are higher thinking skills. Therefore, these exams help position the Palestinian educational outcome in the international sphere, which is essential for bridging cultures and enhancing collaboration in the field of education.

The poor outcome of the Palestinian students is linked to several factors. The big number of students in classrooms, teacher's qualification, the schools' facilities, the curriculum, outdated evaluation system, and other. Hooks (1994, p.12), stresses that, "There is a serious crisis in education. Students often do not want to learn, and teachers do not want to teach". This research paper focuses exclusively on the curriculum, and the manner teachers use it, due to its vital role in the educational process, not denying the importance of the other factors.

As an English language teacher, for fifteen years, and the head of the English language department in one of Ramallah's Palestinian private schools, I noticed that our students lack the skill of critical thinking, and perceive studying as texts to memorize, they do not engage in a dialogue with texts, and they do not question the given, in other words learning for them takes the shape of banking education. The students do not attempt to explore their texts and think of different interpretations, they only take the path that was previously drawn to them. It has also been noticed that the teachers are closely attached to their texts, and their teaching process is almost entirely dependent on schoolbooks' texts as their main resources. The information these texts provide is regarded as "the truth". Therefore, there is a vital need for studying the Palestinian textbooks as both the teachers and the students perceive them as the most important tool for education. Due to Palestine's historic and present reality, and its oppressed society, the curriculum is researched from a libertarian education perspective, taking in consideration the content of the texts and the context of the Palestinian society being oppressed.

1:7 Research Question:

The main question :

1-Are the texts in the 11th grade social sciences, Arabic and English language Palestinian school books selected as texts to liberate the minds of the students, and make them challenge the conventional cultural thinking as an oppressed society?

The sub-questions:

1- Do the texts in the selected Palestinian schoolbooks provide a wide political, economic, and social contexts for the purpose of students' better understanding of the material ?

2- Are the texts in the selected Palestinian schoolbooks designed for the students to pose questions?

3 -Are the texts in the selected Palestinian schoolbooks designed as texts that would encourage the students and the teachers to put theory into practice (praxis) ?

4-Does the Palestinian curriculum prepare the next generation to synthesize, solve problems and create?

1: 8 Research Hypothesis:

Texts in the 11th grade social sciences, Arabic and English language Palestinian schoolbooks are not selected as texts to liberate the minds of the students and make them challenge the conventional cultural thinking as oppressed .

The texts in the Palestinian curriculum do not provide wide content contexts, which leads to taking information for granted rather than posing questions, application and problem solving or creation.

1: 9 Research Methodology:

This study researches texts from the Palestinian curriculum from a different perspective. It looks into the texts as a tool for liberating the students' minds by encouraging them to develop a critical awareness, a mind that questions and seeks inquiry. For texts to serve that purpose, they must be placed into a wide context, content context, the relationship between teachers and students must be dialogical, and theories must be put into practice .

This study uses a qualitative methodology due to the nature of the topic that is explored. Qualitative research focuses on language and words rather than numbers. Its methods are exploratory, and they seek to untangle opinions, thoughts, feelings and approaches. Content analysis focuses on language and ideas, and interviews generate valuable conversations throughout which the researcher can depict feelings and impressions that are not possible through a structured survey. Exploring curriculum requires a deep understanding of language in additions to the impressions of those who use it. The qualitative method is applied on texts from the schoolbooks, which are primarily analyzed based on Paulo Freire's theories of the Libertarian concept of education, including content context analysis, praxis, and posing questions. The primary sources are texts from the

Palestinian curricula, Arabic language, English for Palestine, and social sciences' 11th grade school books issued in 2018. These three subjects have been selected because they rely on texts for their material, and researching three subjects makes this thesis more comprehensive, thus more credible. Eleventh grade students are 16 and 17 year old, which is the age when they start testing and exploring their ideas about themselves and the world. Critical thinking and awareness is of no less importance for younger students, but it is crucial for this age group. The 11th grade in the Palestinian Educational System is the first year of a narrower specialization that is the year when the students have already chosen their path towards their future specialization, by choosing among two academic streams; the scientific and the social, and several vocational specializations.

Texts from the 11th grade schoolbooks are analyzed in a particular manner. First, the researcher looks into how wide the context of each topic is. Are topics presented from a singular perspective? Are there eliminations? If yes, what is eliminated and why? Are topics connected to their cultural, economic, political, historical and social circumstances? Do topics stress on a specific issue? Second, the researcher studies the types of questions the books pose. Are they open or closed questions? Do they encourage the students to search for answers? The third part of content analysis is praxis. How much do the content context and the questions encourage the students to form their own ideas and apply them?

The qualitative method is also complemented by empirical data, which includes interviews with eleventh grade teachers from both private and public schools in several cities. The teachers are randomly selected taking in consideration that they teach English language, Arabic language, and historical studies issued in 2018, and that they teach in several Palestinian cities and villages; most teach in Ramallah city and others in Nablus and Qalqilya, in addition to villages surrounding the three cities. The teachers' experience in education varies from five to twenty-six years, in one or several schools. The importance

of the teachers' interviews lies into their opinions about the material they teach, and in the manner the books are handled by them. Do teachers have freedom in the way they teach? Do they give freedom to their students to formulate various and unconventional opinions? In addition to interviews with teachers, there are interviews with experts in the field. The interviews take a semi- structured format, and the expert interviewees are academics and scholars who have considerable contribution in the field of education in the form of published studies, research, and books, in addition to their experience in the field of education. The interviewees provide their views about Palestinian textbooks and answer the researchers prepared questions that focus on the relationship between the government and knowledge, and schoolbooks as the outcome of that relationship.

My secondary sources are research papers, articles, reports, plans, and books previously done on the Palestinian curricula. In addition to Paulo Freire's socio-pedagogical theory, and other social theories addressing education, power, and freedom, like Bourdieu's, Foucault's, and Fromm's as a theoretical framework for the study .

The tools used are derived from Paulo Freire's book *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*; they are context, the type of questions posed, and praxis. These tools eventually determine whether the texts are libertarian, and how they affect the Palestinian cultural pattern of thinking; whether they are preserving the dominant culture or allow students to provide new interpretations and possibilities.

The researcher's analysis of the texts provides answers to the sub-questions by analyzing the content context in detail, answering how much context texts provide or lack, and relate the outcome to the libertarian approach of education. Similarly, the researcher explores the texts in term of how much they provoke questions, and are they organized to follow one

Chapter Two

2: 0 Results:

The results of this research are presented into three sections. Each section addresses a method, or a component that contributes into Liberating Education according to Paulo Freire's Pedagogy of the Oppressed. Each sections is directly linked to one of the of the sub- questions of the research. The first section focuses on the presence or lack of content context in the three Palestinian schoolbooks, the second section presents the type of questions in the books, and the third lays out the presence or absence of a linkage between the ideas and topics in the books and practical life through encouraging the students to share their input, what Freire refers to as praxis. The data is collected from three main sources. The first one is based on content analysis of three 11th grade schoolbooks, the first semester history book, the English Language book, and the first semester Arabic Language (reading comprehension) book, the second data source is the interviews with nine teachers from both public and private school .The third is interviews with experts in the field.

2:1 Content Context:

The researcher's content analysis of the Historical Studies' schoolbook has found that the book severely lacks content context. The content lays out general information about past political events from a single perspective, it also excludes the cultural, the social, and only briefly mentions the economic aspects of the events. It is presented through several examples from the book as representative samples.

Historical Studies schoolbook for the first semester consists of two units, seven lessons on fifty pages per unit. Both units discuss colonization, mostly in the Arab World in addition to two lessons discussing America and South Africa. The concept of colonization

is introduced for the first time to the students in the first lesson. The book chooses to teach colonization by presenting a paragraph as an introduction and both the literary and empirical meanings of the term, in addition to the relationship between the meaning of colonialism and imperialism, all in two pages. Three centuries of European history is summarized in few lines only as following:

Introduction: A political military expanding movement (The colonial movement) has spread since the 16th century, simultaneously with European geographic exploration led by Portugal, Spain, and Holland. This movement has evolved after industrialism in the 18th and 19th centuries. New countries emerged on the stage of Europe and the world, like Britain and France whose goal was to control nations and exploit their resources in Asia, Africa, North and South America, and Australia.

Historical Studies, Grade 11, 2018, p.4.

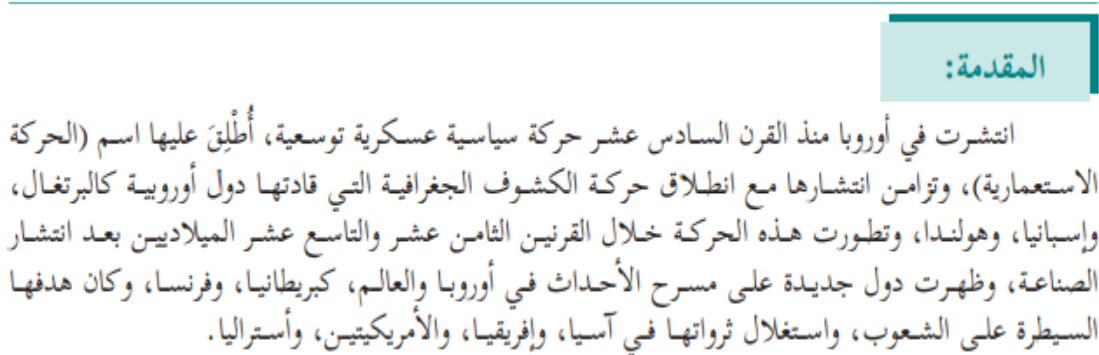


Figure 1. A caption of the history book (Historical Studies, Grade 11, 2018, p.4)

The situational context for a concept like colonialism upon which the rest of the book is constructed is minimal in the introduction. The first problem with context is the poor content. The introduction summarizes three centuries of European history by mentioning geographic exploration, mentioning the spreading of industry in the 18th and 19th centuries, and finally colonialism led by Britain and France. The content itself in this case is insufficient, needless to mention content context .

The context of the colonized is as important as the context of colonizer. The 11th grade history book focuses on the colonized Arab World, which prior to being colonized by France and Britain, was under the Ottoman Empire rule. The Ottoman Empire is not completely left out in the Palestinian historical studies, but it is never discussed in depth. The book mentions it four times throughout the whole book, three times very briefly, and one quiet elaborative compared to the first three. Each lesson starts with a line or two only mentioning that the colonized countries were under the Ottoman Empire rule, either directly like Palestine and like Iraq, or there were religious connections between them like Tunisia and Egypt, or the Ottoman's attempt to establish a representative in Morocco. The fourth time is under the title of The Historical Context of Imposing the French Mandate in Syria and Lebanon on page 30, which narrates how the Ottoman Empire in 1909 imposed a policy in Syria that aims to transfer Arab culture and language to Turkish, it imposed taxes, confiscated lands, and executed Arabs. It all resulted into the establishment of political parties and conferences to protect the Arab identity and to demand equality, freedom, and justice. These events preceded the initiation of Sharif Hussein's negotiations with Britain for establishing an Arab monarchy. This narrative context provides the political aspect but neglects the economic and social ones. For the students to understand the linkage between the colonizer and the colonized they must be exposed to all the aspects of both parties, the narrative is devoid of examples and details of the society and economy in Syria and Lebanon. The Ottoman Empire is previously introduced in the tenth grade book, but neither does it tackle the social aspect, nor the economic. The book utterly ignores the poor and primitive educational system during the Ottoman rule, and it only mentions few industries during the time .

The second problem within the texts is the form of narrativity texts are built into. The narrative form of texts in the historical studies textbook lacks content context as they are

based on a single perspective. The Palestinian history book offers texts that are situated somewhere between narratives and chronicles. Chronicles aspire to narrativize, they are organized by topic and they document events. Whereas a narrative sticks to a certain form, it provides the story in a frame, like a movie about a historical event. The combination of both amounts to events documented in a brief chronological story. As an example is the following paragraph;

The Palestinian national resistance started, taking various forms; conferences, uprising, armed resistance, and strikes. The Palestinians held the first Arab conference in Jerusalem in 1919, which rejected the division of Greater Syria based on the colonial interests and considering Palestine as part of Syria. It also called for the independence of Syria, and the establishment of a national Palestinian government in Palestine. Demonstrations and revolutions against the British occupation and the Zionist immigration to Palestine broke out, some of which are the revolution of Nabi Mousa in 1920, revolution of Jaffa in 1920, Al Buraq revolution in 1929, the revolution of 1935, and the Great Palestinian revolution of 1936.

Historical Studies, Grade 11, 2018, p.43 .

It is vital to note that the narrative events listed in the history book are in complete detachment from the cultural, social, and economic circumstances of the time. The events are only mentioned in chronological order without providing any details about them.

Another example from the 11th grade History book is lesson six (p.44-50). The lesson introduces the concept of Dependence during post colonialism. It touches upon the idea in a superficial manner as it defines the term and provides various forms of dependence without even offering examples to explain what cultural, economic, political and other dependencies are. The concept loses its meaning because it is not placed within a context.

Corporate capitalism is not introduced to be linked with economic dependence, neither is globalization.

The 11th grade Arabic language textbook consists of seven units. Each unit includes a reading comprehension text or more, and a grammar lesson. The focus of the research is on the texts. The seven texts are of various writing styles; starting with verses from the holy Quran, poetry, a letter, a travel story, short stories, an autobiography, and prose .

After content analysis of the textbook, it is found that each text is preceded by a brief summary of content context. Some situational contexts include brief background information about the author, the period of the piece, the political context, and the geographical setting. Some summaries provide information about the author and his works only. Most of the texts focus on human suffering, and shed light on political struggles .

Nine of eleven texts' setting is the 20th century, all in the Middle East, mostly in Palestine. Six out of eleven texts reflect the oppressed suffering from colonialism and occupation, and nine out of eleven address human suffering in general. Four out of eleven texts can be described as devoid of context. The autobiography in unit three is descriptive, where Ibn Batouta describes his journey to some Palestinian cities like Gaza and Hebron. This text focuses on descriptive language and provides geographic context, but on the other hand, the 14th century journey sheds no light at the political or social aspect of the time and place. The short story in unit four *The Cry of a Child* is completely devoid of content context and describes the crying of a neglected child. In unit five, the text entitled *Pollution* provide general information about pollution without a detailed establishment between modern human activity and the phenomenon. The fourth text that is poor in content context is in unit six. The short story *Bitter Bread* focuses on a child's suffering who is away from his mother, and the story is not provided with any type of a situational context .

The English language curriculum for the 11th grade consists of two books; English for Palestine and Reading Plus to be taught simultaneously throughout the school year. English for Palestine consists of ten units; grammar topics and reading texts that explore various topics. The second book provides additional texts, activities, and readings as complementary for the main book.

The provision of content context varies from sufficient to insufficient in the English language textbooks. Out of seven major topics, three topics; education and learning, adventure, sports, and safety, in addition to tourism, that are displayed throughout five units can be considered as sufficient regarding content context. Education and learning for example, is approached by using several perspectives presented through several texts; learning styles and practices, the mind map, two educationally successful stories of Finland and Taiwan, two opposite perspectives on the relationship between education and the economic growth of a state, Blooms Taxonomy represented in a pyramid and discussed, and finally the relationship between knowledge, skills, attitude, and ability. Four topics; modern food, animal life and biodiversity, reading and tales, in addition to political systems and news, which are presented throughout four units, lack content context .

The presentation of the books' content is closely linked to the manner the teachers deliver it. The teachers use the material of the books as their main source because they are acquired by their school administration and by the ministry of education to teach the complete material of the books to their students. Although most teacher's answers indicate a minimal knowledge of what context is, they find that the content itself is inadequate and scattered. Therefore, they attempt to compensate for that by turning to other resources like documentaries, assignments for the students to surf the internet to add meaning to the texts or connect them. Teachers also use activities that make memorizing the material easier for the students because eventually the exam material relies on the books' content. One

interviewee expressed her despair about the history book by saying, "The reason why the book is very problematic is that there is no connection between its paragraphs, it keeps jumping from one topic to the other, the other obvious problem which many history teachers agree on is the form of narration it takes which is extremely boring to both the teachers and students. May God forgive them; this is the worst history book to be taught, we protested more than once to the ministry of education about that. We sent official notes, and had meetings with them to protest mainly about the form of narrative presentation it's built into". (See appendix E). Another teacher noted that, "The book is designed in a way that the students only memorize what's written, and it doesn't attempt to develop their thinking skills" (See appendix H). To conclude, the teachers stress on the strong presence of memorizing, and mostly settle with the book's brief presentation of context, in addition to content enrichment.

2:2 Questions:

After content analysis of the history, Arabic and English languages' textbooks, it has been found that the questions posed in these textbooks are mainly designed to target the students' memorization, and for them to recall what is written in the texts, rather than to urge them pose their own questions, analyze, compare, rewrite, or create.

Despite the misleading questions' structure after each lesson and unit, in both the historical studies and Arabic language textbooks, that may seem to target students' higher thinking skills like analyzing, comparing, concluding, discussing, and elaborating, in addition to questions that ask for the students' opinion, they only require the student to go back to the text and find the answers. Almost all the questions urge the students no more than to recall. As an example to that is the following passage from the history textbook:

دوافع فرنسا وبريطانيا لفرض الحماية على تونس ومصر:

تملكت فرنسا وبريطانيا رغبة توسعية، وأطماع استعمارية نحو تونس ومصر، وكان وراء هذه الأطماع اعتبارات عديدة.

نشاط (٢): نقرأ، ونستنتج، ثم نجيب:

دوافع فرنسا لفرض الحماية على تونس:

توافر المواد الخام اللازمة للصناعة من حديد وفوسفات، إضافة إلى الإنتاج الزراعي من زيوت وقطن، كما أرادت فرنسا الحصول على تونس؛ من أجل التعويض عن إقليمي الألزاس واللورين اللذين سيطرت عليهما ألمانيا. وتزايد أصوات الرأي العام الفرنسي المطالبة بإبقاء مركز فرنسا كدولة استعمارية عظمى تقف على قدم المساواة مع الدول الاستعمارية الأخرى، كما أن فرنسا كانت تنظر إلى تونس على أنها امتداد طبيعي للجزائر، ولا سيما أنه لا يوجد حدود طبيعية تفصل بينهما.

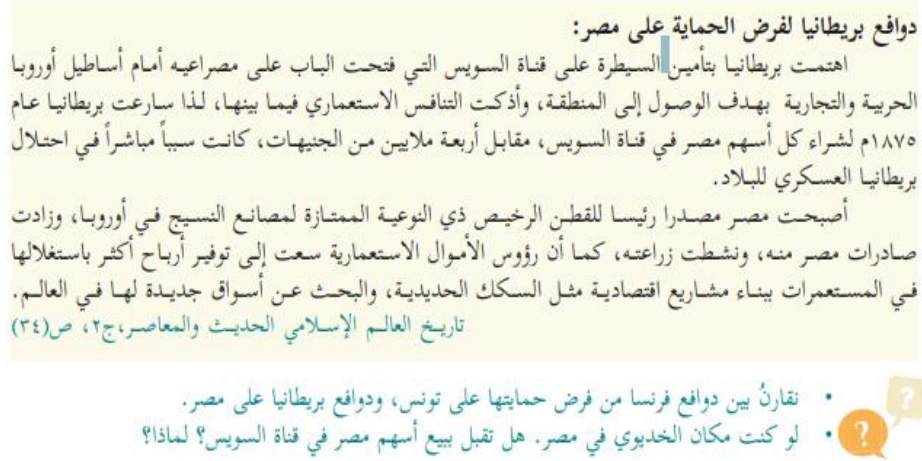


Figure 2. A caption of the history book (Historical Studies, Grade 11, 2018, p.23-24)

Read, conclude, and then answer:

French motives for protection over Tunisia:

The availability of raw materials like iron and phosphate needed for industry, in addition to the agricultural production of oils and cotton. France also wanted control over Tunisia as a compensation to territory of Alsace and Lorraine, which fell under Germany's control. France witnessed a rise in public opinion demand for keeping France a colonial power equal to other colonial powers. France also perceived Tunisia as a natural extension to Algeria especially because of the absence of natural borders between the two.

Britain's motives of imposing protection over Egypt:

Britain showed interest in colonizing the Suez Canal that allowed European military and commercial fleet to reach the area which increased competition among them. Therefore, in 1875 Britain bought all the shares of the Suez Canal ... Egypt became the main source for convenient yet excellent quality cotton for European market...

-Compare between France's motives for imposing protection on Tunisia and Britain's motives for imposing protection on Egypt.

- If you were Khedewi, would you sell Egypt's shares in Suez Canal? Why?

Historical Studies, Grade 11, 2018, p.23-24.

This is an example of the misleading questions that appear to target the higher thinking skills, yet to answer them, the student does not need to search, analyze, or use any other skill then to comprehend the text. Other questions are direct, starting with when, who, or where. Questions with the intention for the student to search, analyze, make a decision, and take a stand are nonexistent.

In the Arabic language book, each text is followed by a group of questions, categorized into three main sections; reading comprehension, discussion and analysis, and language and style. The questions listed under reading comprehension, require the students to be able to understand the text and find the answers in the text. The questions listed under discussion and analysis, often do not require but for the student to find the answer in the text, therefore the discussion and analysis title neither requires discussion, not analysis. As examples to the previous results are some of the questions on page 38.

المناقشة والتحليل

١ نستشف الدلالة المقصودة من قول ابن بطوطة في قبة الصخرة: «يقصر لسان رائيها عن تمثيلها».

٢ أبداع ابن بطوطة في إبراز محاسن الأماكن التي رسم ملامحها في زيارته فلسطين:
أ- نَصِفُ المسجد الإبراهيمي، كما جاء في وصفه.

ب- أفرد ابن بطوطة مساحة من رحلته لكل من المسجد الأقصى وقبة الصخرة، فيم تميّز كلّ منهما، كما ورد في وصفه؟

٣ شرف الله أرض فلسطين بعدد من الأنبياء، منهم مَنْ وُلِدَ فيها، ومنهم مَنْ دُفِنَ فيها، ومنهم مَنْ زارها، نسَمِّي خمسة منهم.

٤ تُعدّ رحلة ابن بطوطة سجلاً حافلاً بالأحداث التاريخية، والقيم الدينية، بناء عليه، نُجيب عمّا يأتي:

أ- هُدم سور القدس مرتين، نذكر سبب هدمه في كلّ مرّة.

ب- يعود نصّ رحلة ابن بطوطة إلى سبعمئة عام مضت ويزيد، نبين القيمة التاريخية والدينية التي يحققها.

٥ نتتبّع خطّ سير رحلة ابن بطوطة على خريطة فلسطين منذ دخوله أرض فلسطين حتّى وصوله مدينة عكا.

Figure 3. A caption from the Arabic language book (Arabic Language, Grade 11, 2018, p.38)

Some of the previous questions are:

Describe Abraham's Mosque as mentioned in the text.

Many prophets were born, buried, or visited Palestine, name five of them.

The wall of Jerusalem was demolished twice, what are the reasons behind it?

Arabic Language, Grade 11, 2018, p.38.

The answers of all the previous questions are presented in the text of Ibn Batouta's travel.

As a language book, some questions focus on literature. An example to that is the questions following the short story Bitter Bread on page 62 of the book. The questions listed under Discussion and Analysis focus on literary analysis. They require the students to explain metaphors, elaborate on the conflict and resolution, and find sentences that stress on certain emotions. These answers are not found in the text, but require the students' application of previous knowledge about the elements of a short story. The answers

required here are simple for an 11th grade student who has been learning about metaphors and the elements of a story since primary stage.

The English for Palestine book also poses recall questions, and focuses on finding vocabulary and filling them in spaces, that is application and language comprehension. The main text in unit four under the title of The step-on tour guides is followed by questions that require the students to find vocabulary from the text only. The following three paragraphs on eco-tourism are followed by questions that require reading comprehension and basic language skills. The group of questions is provided as an example:

- 3 Tell each other about the tour you read about and make notes on the other tour, using the same headings.**
- 4 Match words and phrases from the text with their meanings below. (The words and phrases are in the same order as in the text.)**
- 1 effect (section A) _____
 - 2 causing hurt or damage (section A) _____
 - 3 looking at famous things (section A) _____
 - 4 people who work on a ship or boat (section B) _____
 - 5 written details of what has been done (section B) _____
 - 6 at an earlier time (section B) _____
 - 7 money you pay to travel (section B) _____
 - 8 not like anything else (section C) _____
- 5 Now use the words and phrases from Activity 4 to complete these sentences.**
- 1 The boat sank but all the passengers and _____ were saved.
 - 2 You won't get the same feeling from any other activity. It's a _____ experience.
 - 3 Our _____ show that you have worked as a tour guide. Is that correct?
 - 4 Tourism can have a positive or negative _____ on a country.
 - 5 It is possible to have a holiday without _____ the environment.
 - 6 He only had enough money for the train _____, with nothing for other expenses.
 - 7 I don't enjoy _____. I prefer finding out about the history of places.
 - 8 At the interview they asked about my _____ jobs.

Figure 4. A caption of questions (English for Palestine, Grade 11, 2019, p.41)

On the other hand, the second English language book; Reading Plus encourages the students to use skills other than to recall or find answers in the text. In the sections of the writing skills of each unit, there are assignments that urge the students to use their higher thinking skills. On page 36 a situation is given to a group of students, each student is assigned with a role, and then has to prepare what to say in a hypothetical meeting from the perspective of his role. Another writing activity on page 62 is to write an argument about

human interference in nature, then come up with an argument somebody else may use against their opinion, and finally find a way to debate it. In short, English for Palestine focuses on reading comprehension and memorization through its questions while Reading Plus, in some of the units, addresses the students' higher thinking skills through role playing, constructing arguments, and writing.

The teachers' impressions about the questions listed in their books are that they are all to be answered straight from the text. One of the interviewees sees that "This curriculum is sterile, all the answers of the questions are to be found in the texts, and students are not required to add or analyze anything" (See appendix E). Students memorize the answers of the questions for their tests according to what their teachers and the book sees as correct. Some students lack interest in the topics of their books because they simply don't have a say, and other students do not fear to participate during classes because participation is within the frame of the ideas and directions presented by their books. However, a small number of students attempt to tackle issues that are unconventional, strange to the Palestinian culture, and that may open new possibilities or interpretations. These students are redirected by their teachers, especially if their ideas contradict religious teachings or social and cultural norms. Overall, it is clear that schoolbooks keep students within a particular frame, they do not allow them to unleash their ideas and questions, and the teachers guard the books' ideas.

2:3 Praxis:

In order to determine whether the texts in the three books encourage the students to put theory into practice. Revolutionary praxis, where freedom is allowed, rather encouraged, must be distant from power. For students to consider change of the conventional culture, they must not be directed towards specific destinations of thought, or restricted within a bordered area of possibilities .

It has been found that the historical studies book departs from, and leads the students to the Palestinian Authority's political approach. The book uses The United Nations General Assembly's resolutions, international agreements, and PLO statements 15 times via quotations and questions. The first example is a quotation that follows the introduction of colonialism;

وإذ تؤكد من جديد أن استمرار الاستعمار في جميع أشكاله ومظاهره، كما ورد في قرار الجمعية العامة رقم (٢٦٢١/٢٥د) في ١٢ تشرين الأول (أكتوبر) ١٩٧٠م، هو جريمة، وأن للشعوب المستعمرة حقًا طبيعيًا في النضال بكل الوسائل التي تعرفها ضد الدول الاستعمارية والسيطرة الأجنبية، ممارسةً بذلك حقها في تقرير المصير الذي اعترف به ميثاق الأمم المتحدة، وإعلان مبادئ القانون الدولي بشأن العلاقات الودية والتعاون بين الدول، وفقًا لميثاق الأمم المتحدة.

الجمعية العامة، قرار رقم (٣١٠٣/ الدورة ٢٨) بتاريخ ١٢ كانون الأول (ديسمبر) ١٩٧٣م.

Figure 5. A caption from the history book (Historical Studies, 2018, p.11)

The United Nations General Assembly in the resolution (2621/25D), October 12, 1970, assures that the continuum of colonization in all its shapes is a crime. The colonized have the natural right of resistance using all means known to them against the colonizing country and the foreign control, therefore exercising their right of self-determination according to the United Nations pact .

Historical Studies, 2018, p.11

Another example is the questions that require the students to discuss their lessons measuring them against the United Nations' resolutions as the reference for interpreting historical events .

-Elaborate on the aim of the Mandate system according to the United Nations. p.35

-Discuss the lack of the commitment by the colonizer towards the colonized, according to article 22 of UN. p.35

-Have the international laws succeeded in eradicating colonization? Why? p.57

-Evaluate the international views on the discriminating practices of the Zionist occupation in Palestine. p.71

Discuss the international resolutions of the United Nations and the General Assembly concerning the Zionist colonization of Palestine. P.86.

Likewise, the Arabic Language book does not allow students to explore possibilities, as praxis, due to the approach of the book that takes the shape of authoritarianism and imposes the atmosphere of negativity as mentioned previously .

The book starts with verses from the holy Quran discussing a scientific issue; the creation of the universe, which is not to be discussed or reinterpreted by the students. The negativity of the texts stems from the choice of topics that present the theme of human suffering, majority of the texts do so.

Teachers take an authoritarian role in their classrooms, they lecture, summarize, and help their students memorize. It is important to note that some teachers go the extra mile, they do include their students in the learning process, yet they have a notably larger role in their classrooms. Teachers also see that their books' material does not influence their students thinking or practices in any way, their students do not interact with their books. Praxis

means that learning is for the sake of doing; linking the book's material with reality, reflecting on it, and rewriting it according to various students' understandings. Teachers theoretically connect the ideas of their books with current issues and reality, but the connections made are superficial because they often are not delved into, analyzed, and rewritten. Therefore, there is lack of enactment.

The English language book on the other hand, precisely Reading Plus, contains several examples on urging the students to share their input, and to approach issues from several perspectives. For example in unit 5, students are required to engage in group-work to discuss the following question: How do you think science and technology will change lives 200 years from today? Think about developments in telecommunications, health, leisure, etc... p.70

English for Palestine is designed for less praxis, as its questions and tasks are oriented towards memorization, yet it cannot be denied that some texts present more than one perspective, and the possibility for comparison between different cultures is offered. An example to that are the two educational success stories on page 14, and the text ends with, "Can other countries learn from the Finnish and Taiwanese experience? There are usually some lessons that can be learnt as long as we remember that just applying one country's system to another isn't a simple solution to all problems" (English for Palestine, 2019, p.14). The book also offers some practical writing assignments like writing a CV on page 21, and several types of applications. The book, therefore aspires to engage the students, and prepare them for their academic future, but unfortunately not adequately. The inadequacy lies in texts about reading stories (Unit 9), rather than actually reading novels and articles, the writing is also limited to simple application filling rather than essays and reflections that the students will certainly need for their university education .

Despite the fact that the English books offer some space for freedom and practice, teaching in classrooms are not student oriented, their space for criticism, reconsideration, and critical awareness is often limited by the teacher. The teacher owns knowledge and directs the students to whatever he/ she thinks is "correct", they rely on their own experience. One interviewee comments, "I encourage my students to share their opinions, the purpose of teaching a language is to communicate, so even if a student's argument is not correct, we carry on with the discussion and the stronger argument prevails". He also adds, "The students do participate, they read, answer questions, and at the end of the class, I as a teacher summarize what had been discussed during the class and stress on the important points" (See appendix I). These classroom practices reflect the attempt for dialogical relationship with the students, yet when the teacher provides the students with the summary and the correct answer, the relationship is transformed into a horizontal one. When the topics of the book are applied by the teachers on the practical life of Palestinian culture, it is done in a superficial manner. Another interviewee describes how she turns theory into practice in her classroom, "I expand and connect the ideas in the book with the Palestinian culture. When our lesson is about genetically modified food, I ask my students to write the recipes of Palestinian dishes, similarly when our lesson is about folk tales, I ask my students to bring in and discuss Palestinian folk tales, and we compare education in Finland to education in Palestine, regarding the stages of schooling"(See appendix K). These activities are organized so that the students can practice the use of language, yet they are not engaged as they touch upon the surface of topics only.

2:4 Characterization of the Curriculum:

Palestinian education and particularly the curriculum is distant from being libertarian. Palestinian schoolbooks carry within their texts the voice of PNA's political views, ideologies, and aspirations, in addition to the voice of religion. One of the interviewees notes, "If we wish to talk about libertarian education, it would mean that we would raise generations for their futures rather than our present and consequently our past. This type of education would mean that we would offer a way out of our hypothesis, and offer them the means for creativity, posing questions, the opportunity to formulate their own future, and an education within a context rather than a dissected one" (See appendix Q). Arabic language schoolbooks' texts are religion driven, thus religious texts are not processed as cultural heritage but as ideology that is passed to the students. Additionally, the type of texts, and their rigid and serious language affect the students' language and vocabulary, therefore when they write, their production is situated only within the framework of struggle, and oppression. The same interviewee describes it as "A continuous chain of authoritarianism" (See Appendix Q).

Regarding praxis, two interviewees stress on the fact that the Palestinian curriculum is a political curriculum (See appendix O and P), another interviewee stresses on the fact that the formal Arabic language the students learn is a language specifically derived out of religious texts because they are considered to be the most sophisticated examples of formal Arabic, and as a result the language used in their writings is only placed within that frame which is not used for practical life. "Students do not want to invest their time in a language that will not be used in their lives later on, and that is praxis of language" (See appendix Q).

Schoolbooks are arranged into separate topics, or units, which are dissected and they serve the banking concept of education.

When Palestinian finally got the opportunity to develop their own school curriculum, they dismissed the idea of libertarian education. The three interviewed experts explain this paradox by emphasizing PNA's need to pass its ideology to the students, and they assert that its ideology is far from liberation of any kind (see appendix Q). One of the interviewees provides three reasons for Palestinians not following the libertarian: The first is that PNA is not willing to include the civil society into curriculum development, so that it possesses the complete power over the curriculum, and as a result be able to control. The second reason is lack of expertise in the field of education and curriculum development, as universities pass traditional education for teachers to be, which ultimately turns into a cycle of social reproduction, and the third reason is that the teachers lack the libertarian thinking (See appendix O). It is also seen that PNA's goal is not liberation and that is the reason why its curriculum does not take that direction, it is one directional. The history book provides only one perspective about Oslo Agreement, it excludes the other, it also excludes the Shiite, and Palestinian literature post Oslo does not include revolutionary language as opposed to the novels published in 1930's up until Oslo Agreement.

The curriculum is written under authoritarian control, religious perspective, and lack of expertise. One of the interviewees notes that, "During the beginnings of Palestinian curriculum development, University professors were involved in developing them. So again what is written is filtered, it is like the written content goes through a bottleneck, therefore you don't know what happens behind the doors of the closed rooms. There were experts with libertarian ideas who were graduates from The United States, Russia and other countries abroad, these committees broke up and other committees began to be formed out of teachers and supervisors. After the huge criticism, university professors left and the situation became more centralized with less social and experts' interference. Our schoolbooks are still experimental. The schoolbooks are sacred, they are also reinforced by

standardized governmental tests, and therefore the teachers have limited time to deliver the content of the book to their students so that the students can pass the tests"(See appendix O). Furthermore, he relates the Palestinian educational system to colonialism.

A participant reflects on his experience in curriculum development: "When the committee that writes the curriculum was established, and I was part of it as an academic and specialist, the authority meant to build a structure of the leftist stream, the Islamic, and the national. They sought various points of views. It is similar to Abu Lughoud's, where some points are scientific and other are religious; contradictory. The purpose is to please all streams"(See Appendix P). Contradiction lies in the insertion of religious texts to explain or support scientific topics or historical events. Social sciences or natural sciences follow material evidence, experiments, theories, and rules, in other words, scientific methodology and methods to look into a certain issue or study a hypothesis, while religious interpretations merely rely on belief. Therefore, the involvement of religious texts causes subjectivity and takes a way scientific integrity, consequently leading to perplexed minds. Abdulhamid (2019) remarks that the Palestinian curriculum is bias towards the religious identity, neglecting national identity, although the PLO's declaration of independence explained the democratic and scientific feature of the future Palestinian state.

Chapter Three

Discussion and Analysis

3:0 Discussion and Analysis:

This research aims at exploring the choice and design of the textual content of three 11th grade Palestinian schoolbooks in terms of textual content context, the type of the questions posed by the books, and application; which would consequently amount into the creation of a generation capable of problem solving, decision making, creation and innovation, rather than a submissive generation. This research answers these questions and explores the curriculum following guidelines derived from Paulo Freire's theory of Liberating Education discussed in his book *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. The main purpose of the Liberating Education as well as of this research is to liberate the minds of the students, enhancing their critical awareness, so that they become able to challenge the conventional cultural thinking as an oppressed society .

Data is collected through content analysis of the Historical studies, Arabic language, and English language schoolbooks published in 2018, and used in schools in 2019 and 2020. Additionally nine teachers were interviewed to depict their impressions of the curriculum, and to learn about the ways they use their books for teaching. Moreover, three experts are also interviewed.

3:1 The Creation of a Submissive Culture through Lack of Context.

The major and most significant finding is that the Arabic language book and the Historical Studies are designed for banking education. The English language books are mostly designed for the banking education, but with some exceptions .

It has been found by content analysis that the three books lack content context, as an adequate setting for students' inquiry. Lack of context leads to memorizing due to lack of multiple possibilities for interpretation. It also leads to a form of education that is one dimensional and one directional; the students are provided with one perspective and they

follow it, therefore they do not intervene, rewrite, or challenge in any way the cultural way of thinking .

For students to be active participants in the learning of history, and specifically colonialism in this book, they have to be provided by the context within which this concept emerged. Political, economic, and socio- cultural change in Europe pre colonization, which would constitute context, and that is missing. Enlightenment era (18th c) is an essential part to start emphasizing the change in Europe, The French Revolution (1789), and the Industrial Revolution (18th and 19th c) are too. Enlightenment era presents the beginning of the dramatic transformation from the divinity of Kings in Europe to republics' formation through reasoning, science, and valuing the individual. It was the birth of reason, empiricism (meaning that knowledge about nature and social world is based on empirical facts), science, universalism, progress, individualism, toleration, freedom, and uniformity of human nature (the belief that the principal characteristics of human nature were always and everywhere the same). Starting with the enlightenment would raise many questions in the students' minds, they would be able to see the future of Europe and question its practices as well. How was the enlightenment with these principles followed by colonization? It also involves some of the most influential scientists, artists, philosophers, authors of all times like Kant, Mozart, Newton, Rousseau, Adam Smith, and many others who used to secretly meet in French saloons and produced the Encyclopedie. "Encyclopedism was quite widely used at the time as a synonym for the refusal to accept anything uncritically" (Hall, Held, Hubert & Thompson, 1995, p.29). Teaching colonialism while skipping the intellectual movement that changed the world is nothing but lack of context. The French Revolution is an outcome of the enlightenment, and it profoundly alerted the course of modern history, causing a global decline of absolute monarchies. It is one of the most important events in human history. The industrial revolution represents

modern economy, it affected social structure in Europe, and it has affected world's politics, and international political, economic, social and cultural relations that we are witnessing today. Europe's growing industries demanded a larger market for their goods, in addition to raw materials, which was primarily the first reason behind the idea of colonialism. The first lesson in the book that introduced the rest is very poor in both content and content context. Similarly, the context of the colonized, as presented in the results chapter is lacking. Several resources and perspectives must be used to present the Ottoman Empire, the cultural, social, economic, and the political aspects of life during that time must be presented. Rafidi (2019, p.15) describes the presentation of the Ottoman Empire in the Palestinian curriculum to be a "romantic" one, excluding conflict from it. Abdulhamid (2019) also stresses on the exclusions when it comes to the Ottoman Empire. He remarks that in Palestinian history books, the fact that the Ottoman Empire enlisted 10-14 year old children in its army, it imposed taxes on farmers, took their children for army, committed genocide against the Armenians or confiscated peoples' lands in exchange of their children's freedom is not stressed on. Overall, the poor content and lack of situational context inflict the banking educational style. If the social, educational, and economic background of the colonized is kept into the dark, the meaning of colonialism cannot be understood, thus both parties, the teacher and the students, find no other refuge to deal with the content than memorizing. Memorizing information can hardly be considered as education that develops skills, enthusiasm for learning, and cannot trigger curiosity in students, which all consequently lead to raising followers rather than thinkers.

The interviewed teachers find that the historical studies book is scattered, in the sense that there is no connection between the paragraphs of information laid out in lessons. Another interviewee stresses on the fact that the lessons in the Arabic language book are "dissected"

(See appendix Q). Both the Historical studies and the English language teachers find that their books are lacking in content. In order to compensate for the missing parts, they turn to other sources. What is problematic in this case is that the teachers are obliged by their school's administrations, and by the Ministry of Education to deliver the complete content of their book to their students in limited time. Additionally, students' evaluation through tests depends on their knowledge of the book's material. This means that time and effort inside of the classrooms are spent in memorizing the content of the book, so that they become able to deliver it in their exams.

In this regard, one of the interviewees describes the Palestinian educational system as "A test driven program" (See appendix O), and he sees that to be the result of colonialism because the past Palestinian systems; the Jordanian and the Egyptian, were very traditional. Today we follow the same system only adapting it to the Palestinian context by adding a picture here, and a topic about Palestine there. He sees that it is a type of colonialism regardless of who is in charge. The outcome of such curriculum, and educational system is the creation of a submissive generation; a generation that is led by the system into a specific destination, where they do not have a say about.

The book contains knowledge, the teacher helps delivering it, and the students are the containers. "Memorizing" is emphasized here, due to the nature of the educational system and the content context free books. It is essential to note here that, "The more students work at storing the deposits entrusted to them, the less they develop critical consciousness which would result from their interventions in the world as transformers of the world" (Freire, 2000, p.73). This represents only the beginning of the argument that Palestinian students are taught to be submissive, as part of their cultural pattern of thinking. The views of the Arabic language teachers are similar; one teacher criticizes the texts in the Arabic language book by saying, "The book is designed in a way that the students only memorize

what's written, and it doesn't attempt to develop their thinking skills"(See appendix H). Another teacher also hopelessly asserts, "Students are used to memorizing, that is how they spent their previous 10 years of schooling, and therefore, they memorize the answers of questions, the interpretation of poems and texts, and use their memorized answers for their exams. It is hard to change their attitude towards learning". (See appendix F). Although content analysis of the Arabic language book has shown that each text is preceded with a brief context, it is not required by questions or a teacher's book to delve into the situational context any deeper, therefore, the social, cultural, political, or economic aspects of a certain event remain unknown to the students, and this constitutes a barrier for further inquiry. Moreover, the text remains devoid of meaning as the students do not interact with it in any way; they are not provided with the space and possibility to question and rewrite what is given. As an outcome, students memorize their lessons, and learn that the pieces of information handed to them in the form of a book are sacred and not to be questioned. Palestinian students are taught to take in knowledge without analysis, without comparison, without questioning, in other words they are taught to become followers rather than creators, innovators, critics, or analysts. That is the preservation of the popular culture; passing knowledge from one generation to another, and following the mainstream beliefs whether in the field of history, literature, sociology, environment, or any other topic the books discuss .

Moreover, the content of the Historical Studies lays out general information about past political events from a single perspective, it also excludes the cultural, the social, and only briefly mentions the economic aspects of the events. Although the first semester history book focuses on Colonialism, neither the context of the colonizer, not the colonized is provided. Context is an essential part in the construction of meaning.

Furthermore, only three out of seven topics in the English language books provide a sufficient context through laying out multiple perspectives and delving into several aspects of one topic. Thus, topics like education, sports, and tourism are more thorough comparing to the remaining five topics. Unit seven in English for Palestine, as an example, is under the title of Food on your table. The unit introduces the phrase Slow Food in two short paragraphs as opposed to fast food, and then presents a text under the title of Genetically Modified World on p. 70. This unit fails to relate the humans' postmodern eating habits to the economic and political systems of the world, and it also fails to tackle the impact of all of the previous on humans daily lives, health, and social systems. By failing to do so, the world is kept in the dark and not revealed to the students, and that is also reinforcing their passiveness rather than training them to become transformers. "The basic question in school is how not to separate reading the word and reading the world, reading the text and reading the context" (Freire, 1985, p.20). Freire here emphasizes the importance of the simultaneous existence of both the text and the context. He believes that in order for a student to understand the content of a text, a situational context must be provided, as a result, the student is exposed to understanding or learning about the world too. By providing students with sufficient information around the idea that needs to be conveyed, or the means to reach them, students are able to place themselves within that setting, to get involved, and actively interact with issues. They become part of what they are intended to learn, therefore the texts gain meaning and become valuable to them, and part of who they are. Hence, context enables students to actively interact with the text, with their classroom society, and with the world. Due to the lack of context in the Palestinian books, the students do not find meaning in the material they study, neither do they experience it, and that results into creating recipients, who are not able to make decisions especially ones that are not conventional, decisions that may come up with different results. The presence of

content context also has a significant influence on the teacher, as he/she becomes equally involved in the learning process. "The teacher cannot think for her students, nor can she impose her thought on them. Authentic thinking, thinking that is concerned about reality, does not take place in an ivory tower isolation, but only in communication". (Freire, 2000, p.77). The engagement of both parties, the students and the teacher in the learning process with a large context provided helps both to construct meaning and build knowledge as opposed to memorize information. In addition to all the previous, students feel free to conclude, and narrate from their own point of view based on their analysis and critical input. Freire (2000), suggests that "Reading always involves critical perception, interpretation, and rewriting what is read". The responsibility of rewriting internalizes into the students' learning, it becomes a crucial part of their educational process and the way learning gains meaning. They are not recipients anymore, they become producers, and that is the goal of education; to come out with productive young society. Here comes the liberated mind. A mind that does not take rigid educational texts for granted.

3:2 Reproduction of Cultural Oppression through Narrative Style and Internalizing the Image of the Oppressed:

The second factor that contributes into the creation of a submissive society through the Palestinian curriculum is the form of narrativity and the kind of topics chosen for the Arabic language texts. Freire (2000, p.77) believes that "Education is suffering from narrative sickness". He adds, "The teacher talks about reality as if it were motionless, static, compartmentalized, and predictable" (Freire, 2000, p.71). White (1990) sees a narrative to be problematic, despite history requiring a narrative, it also needs analysis of power and authority. He believes that history has a political ideology behind it, and that parties in power narrate their accounts of reality the way they perceived it. The Results

chapter of this research presents examples of texts from the Historical Studies that are built in narrative form, in addition to a clear and specific comment by one of the interviewed history teachers who asserts, "The other obvious problem which many history teachers agree on is the form of narration it takes, which is extremely boring to both the teachers and students. May God forgive them; this is the worst history book to be taught" (See appendix G). To narrate is to tell a story from a singular perspective, consequently perceived as is, no intervention from the students again, and no critical consciousness developed as a result. Abbot (2008, p.40) suggests, "A narrative is an instrument of power, everything written in a narrative contributes into how the reader finds meaning in it".

Nine out of eleven texts in the Arabic language book address the topic of human suffering, six out of eleven address colonization and occupation. On one hand, presenting the same concept in two school subjects offers a wider context for the concept, which provides a better understanding and a chance for multiple perspectives. On the other hand, stressing the feeling of being a victim to the students, and installing the feeling of helplessness does not contribute into encouraging them towards searching for new solutions. They consequently internalize the feeling of an inferior and act accordingly; they face the world as followers with internalized limitations and despair, and not as actants. It is also a form of cultural oppression where students are given a false belief of their worth and their place in the world. Students eventually grow with the idea of powerlessness and helplessness, and that they naturally lack the ability to become anything but oppressed, that is the role they take and live by, they install the feeling of the marginalized and they expel themselves from productive participation in their society; productive in terms of creation, innovation, and change. One of the interviewees explains how remaining within the frame of oppression as topics in the Arabic language books limits the students thinking by saying,

" I think that the curriculum developers believe that a person does not identify as a

Palestinian unless he/she is in the circle of those who struggle. They think that you cannot recognize the distinctive features of your identity unless you are one of those who lecture about struggling. In the language frame, it means that his vocabulary is placed within a limited space, therefore as I mentioned before, formal Arabic language becomes unfit for daily life, it becomes as failure in use. As a result to all that, we become unable of producing anything beyond that context. Our students have huge problems concerning writing; structured writing is a way of thinking, thus the student becomes unable of thinking out of that box and of critical thinking. The student knows how to repeat what he/she had been taught" (See appendix Q). Moreover, different times call for different measures, the Palestinian students must be offered an open field to experiment new possibilities and think of new ways instead of imprisoning them into past sorrows and approaches. Freire (2000, p.73), sees, that "The more completely they accept the passive role imposed on them, the more they tend simply to adapt to the world as it is and to the fragmented view of reality deposited in them." It is extremely dangerous to preserve the culture of the oppressed, of submissiveness, and the powerlessness, the reason is that the next generation is not equipped with the skills to change, to try new routes, and new approaches for bettering their society and their country.

3:3 Political Curriculum via Directed Questions and Absence of Praxis:

Both the teachers and the students become the legitimate transmitters of the educational institution in preserving the dominant culture and in adopting its political agenda, rather than the subjects launching new ideas. The questions of the three books have been analyzed in terms of which thinking skills they target to develop, and in terms of how much freedom to inquire and change direction they are, in other words, do they urge the students to pose their own questions? The more freedom the students have to express their

thoughts especially if they are unconventional ones the more they develop critical awareness. The three books include questions that directly ask the students to find the answers from the text already provided to them, these questions target reading comprehension skills and memorization for the test. The historical studies and the Arabic language book include misleading questions; questions that appear to direct the students towards discussion and analysis, but in fact the answer is also provided to them. In this regard, one of the interviewees remarks, "The questions in the book are directed questions, or questions of agenda. When students are asked to provide their opinion, the answer is previously presented in the book, and it's an issue presented from one specific perspective, therefore the students' answers must match the material and perspective provided to them by the book" (See appendix C). The book uses The United Nations General Assembly's resolutions, international agreements, and PLO statements 15 times via quotations and questions, it takes the government's point of view and leads the students to a hypothetical answer that the international resolutions are the cure for colonization and occupation. This method leaves little space for students for decision making or thinking of new possibilities, and they become integrated into a certain structure of thought rather than "beings for themselves" (Freire, 2000, p.74) .

The three interviewed experts unanimously see that the Palestinian curriculum is a politically oriented one. One of the interviewees explains that the Palestinian books are issued in a form of a political reaction of PNA. "From the year 2000 to 2016 all schoolbooks were restricted by Oslo Agreement, and there was a challenge posted by the donors and restrictions on the content regarding incitement against occupation, and as a result the denotations stopped, and the Palestinian Authority as a reaction to that created schoolbooks that were more challenging towards occupation in 2018. The books were still within the frame of the authority and a singular voice in addition to the religious voice that

is directed towards one religion which is Islam"(See appendix O). Another interviewee also provides an example in the History book that reflects the books' one-sided look that is through the presentation of Oslo Agreement. The agreement is presented as a positive solution, and not provided for discussion (See appendix P). Politically oriented schoolbooks leave no space for the students' interference to create different directions of thinking.

However, one of the English books; Reading Plus, does contain questions that urge the students to add their own input and look at issues from several perspectives. Some questions direct the students into role-playing where students adopt different opinions and defend them, and other questions look into both the advantages and the disadvantages of an issue, and other address student's opinions without being pre- directed. It is important to keep in mind that this applies to a section of one of two books, yet it is positive that thinking skills other than memorization are targeted, because that leads to praxis, and eventually transformation, and critical awareness. It is important to note here, that the English language books were written by foreign experts, and published in UK. That is also the reason behind the books' use of topics that do not target the Palestinian question, nor are they guided by the Palestinian political view.

The interviewees were asked whether their students fear to give the wrong answer or whether they fear to engage in classroom discussions especially if they have different opinions, interpretations or suggestions. Most of the teachers encourage their students for discussion and say that their students do not fear to provide a wrong answer or express themselves. Two teachers were specifically clear that the unconventional input from the students, especially if it addresses religious issues, are "straightened" by the teachers, they also rarely happen. It is vital to stress here, that students participate within a specific assigned frame imposed by the curriculum. This structured and limited participation leans

towards submissiveness more than freedom because students do not engage in inquiry and do not take unconventional directions, they rather follow. Fromm (1941) discusses the theory of personality in his book *Fear of Freedom*, and finds that it is based on two basic needs; the need of freedom and the need of belonging. In relation to Fromm's theory, the Palestinian student's structured, limited, and directed discussion feeds into the feeling of security and belonging. For a student it is safer to discuss ideas within the limitations imposed by the curriculum and the teacher, because eventually that is what is regarded as "correct". Clinging to the safe zone is the result of the fear of freedom. Bourdieu (1990) saw that the formal educational system is authoritarian and has relative autonomy, that is what Freire (2000) referred to as the banking concept of education, where the book and the teacher have the knowledge and they give it to the students who are only receivers. It is also the production of knowledge by the government that Foucault discusses (Mills, 2005).

The last factor that contributes into creating submissive students is the lack of praxis. Theory is not put into practice for the reasons mentioned above; the narrow context, the questions that are designed either for reading comprehension, or for memorization, the one directional narrative and the embedded authoritarian approach, the restricted freedom as all conclusions are pre-determined, and the focus on the idea of suffering that becomes a characteristic rather than a problem. It is vital to mention that the teachers attempt to link the material of the books through some activities that mainly aim to apply the material or the theory to the students themselves or to some material components of the Palestinian culture. The English language interviewed teachers gave examples like the students trying to recognize their own learning styles as an activity on the unit of education, or writing recipes of Palestinian dishes as an activity for another unit. These practices benefit language development, but only superficially touch upon the issue of praxis as there is no reflection on the material of the book, and consequently there is no transformation. It is

merely application. "Human activity consists of action and reflection: it is praxis; it is transformation of the world. Human activity is theory and practice; it is reflection and action" (Freire, 2000, p.125). In this regard, some teachers explicitly expressed either the distance between the material and the students interests, or their authority to teach what is "right" without being aware of it. One of the interviewed teachers asserts, "My students are very enthusiastic, they are revolutionary and have unconventional ideas, they do not agree with the idea that the father has the custody of a child, or a man has the right for a bigger share of inheritance, but I always tell them that we should abide by the religious laws" (See appendix G). Another teacher says, " My students do not like the Arabic language class, it is very obvious and they do not hide it, and I don't blame them, the book is very negative, it's all about suffering and national issues, they only memorize what needs to be memorized and that's it, there is absolutely no impact on their practices or thinking"(See appendix H). This is a clear evidence of the restrictions on praxis imposed either by the curriculum or by the teacher .

Freire (2000, p.179) clearly says, "Cultural action either serves domination (consciously or unconsciously) or it serves the liberation of men and women", he also adds, "Anti- dialogical action explicitly or implicitly aims to preserve, within the social structure, situations which favor its own agents" (Freire, 2000, p.179). The connection between the lack of praxis in Palestinian classrooms and Freire's cultural action possible outcomes, is in fact that culture is preserved through formal educational systems, and this research specifically stresses on the component of the culture that is the cultural identity and the manner of looking at oneself and the world. The interpretation and analysis of the results indicate that the Palestinian students are not adequately trained and taught to use higher thinking skills, as the focus is on memorization, and that eventually prevents them

from being who they want to be, and think what they want to think. Forming new ideas would lead to exploring new options and becoming transformers rather than followers .

To sum up, this discussion and analysis of the results indicates that the Palestinian curriculum utilizes, and is designed for the Banking Education concept. It answers the four sub - questions to prove that; there is an evident lack of context in the three books, most of the questions are designed for the students to recall information that they eventually memorize because they are meaningless to them, out of context and without their input and interpretation, and therefore praxis is non-existent. The fourth question is answered from this standpoint; the next Palestinian generation is not taught to make decisions, synthesize, or create, but the contrary; banking education produces submissive human beings, followers and not transformers of reality that the Liberating Education aims to produce. It also preserves the dominant culture, and preserves the students' thinking within a certain frame. These dangerous findings reflect the passiveness of the next generation that is far from social development or any other change within the Palestinian society that would lead to bettering the lives of the Palestinians on any level.

Palestine has had the opportunity to write its own Palestinian curriculum only after Oslo Agreement, and it is a golden chance to finally liberate the minds of its future generations from oppression and submissiveness, and launch them towards freedom, as the first step, and the most essential one towards freedom is the liberated mind and the inner freedom of a person. Yet, unfortunately that chance has been ignored, as much as paradoxical the idea is; a society under long occupation dismisses the chance of free minds. Several interviewees suggest that the reason behind that is the PNA's determination to control the future of the Palestinians through a political curriculum, lack of expertise in the field of curriculum establishment and education, which consequently ends up into cultural reproduction as universities reproduce the same teaching methods and curriculum, and

lastly lack of libertarian thought in those who teach. They also see that religious control plays an important role in cultural preservation, which is pushed into schoolbooks(See appendix O, P, and Q).

"If we wish to talk about libertarian education, it would mean that we would raise generations for their futures rather than our present and consequently our past. This type of education would mean that we would offer a way out of our hypothesis, and offer them the means for creativity, posing questions, the opportunity to formulate their own future, and an education within a context rather than a dissected one" (See appendix Q).

3:4 Limitations of the Study:

Due to schools lock down on March 7, 2020 as a first precocious step against the spread of COVID 19 , and only two days before the appointment taken by the researcher to start the first set of interviews with teachers in public schools in Ramallah, the researcher turned to other means for conducting the interviews. Eight of nine teacher interviews were conducted over the phone, and only one was done face to face. Eleventh grade teachers from Ramallah, Nablus and Jenin, some teaching in the city and others in villages, some in public schools and others in private ones were interviewed for around 20-30 minutes over the phone, which had its limitations. Facial expressions and body language couldn't be depicted by the interviewer, eye to eye conversation couldn't be established, and that resulted in weaker interpretation of their answers, in addition to the distance between the two parties which must have shortened the answers of the interviewed and prevented elaboration. On the other hand, two out of three experts in the field of education were interviewed in person when restriction imposed on movement were lightened.

Chapter Four

Conclusion and Recommendations

4:0 Conclusion and Recommendations:

As the research has demonstrated the Palestinian curriculum, specifically the 11th grade three books, which are taken as a sample, are based on the Banking Education; where the students are merely recipients who are not allowed the freedom to transform, neither does their critical awareness develop. The researcher has come to this conclusion by analyzing the content of the books, in addition to analyzing the interviews. The analysis has amounted into the discovery that the texts in the three books lack situational textual content context, their questions are recall skill based, and praxis is not part of the pedagogic approach, neither is it achievable due to the authoritarian approach of the curriculum and the teachers. The findings indicate that the Palestinian education is authoritarian; the opposite of the Liberating Education, it reinforces the system of domination by its narrative structure, and by dismissing inquiry through lack of praxis and the one directional questions.

These findings ultimately lead to reproduction of the oppressed culture, which is based on submissiveness. It means that our Palestinian educators whose main resources are their schoolbooks are producing students who do not allow themselves to step out of the conventional, traditional zone. The students, who are trained to be spectators in class, will end up into spectators in society. We are creating followers; individuals who do not question or seek to change certain social norms and individuals who inherit their beliefs and do not choose them.

The followers we are creating are not equipped to introduce new political, economic, or social solutions. They have an internalized image of themselves that bans them from acting like creators, innovators, and transformers who would be capable of communicating with different cultures, and understanding them. Today we live in a globalized, and connected world, our next generation must be connected too.

Due to submissiveness and reproduced oppression, these generations will not be able to question the given, and inquire, therefore, abused women and children will not find a way out of the socially acceptable, and crimes will not find a way out of tribal solutions. Young politicians will not be acceptable and new laws will not be passed due to the preservation of culture and lack of reflection. Economy will remain dependent on donations and import rather than production because they are not used to putting theory into practice (praxis). That is the type of generation we as educators are producing, a generation who is not allowed to step out of the past, a generation who is far from self-determination.

The findings correspond with earlier research that located problems in the content of the books, and with the poor outcome of the Palestinian students. The importance of the findings is attached to the future of the Palestinian society; to liberate the mind is to gain inner freedom, it is to be capable of solving problems, making decisions, and creation based on one's own independent being. A society that is an outcome of Liberating Education can certainly better its living conditions, because this society becomes a transforming one rather than a submissive one who is imprisoned in the past, and not seeking new possibilities.

This research is situated in the beginning of the road towards a better Palestinian curriculum and educational system. It is recommended more research is done; research that addresses teaching methods, teachers' university education, classroom physical environment, teacher- student relationship, and much more. It also constitutes a suggestion that should be taken in consideration by those in charge of writing the curriculum to look at the result of the schoolbooks; do we really want our schoolbooks to be designed for banking education? Or, do we prefer Liberating Education? The final note of recommendations is the establishment of an independent committee for curriculum building that constitutes of experts in diverse fields; the subject matter (history, languages,

geography and more), in addition to experts in education and pedagogy, all taking in consideration the feedback of teachers, students, and previous research and criticism.

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Appendices

Appendix A

List of Interviewed Teachers

1- - Najla Barakat, a history teacher at the Arab Evangelical Episcopal School in Ramallah (a private school). Work experience six years, a holder of MA degree from Birzeit University. The thirty minute- interview was conducted in person and recorded on March 8, 2020. The teacher's contact number is 0599039251.

2- An 11th grade history teacher in a boy's public school in Ramallah preferred to go under anonymous therefore, his personal information is not provided. The interview was conducted and recorded over the phone on March 11, 2020 due to the coronavirus quarantine at that time.

3- Khawla Shalhan an 11th grade history teacher in Aziz Shaheen Girls' School in Ramallah city who has 25 years of experience in teaching various curricula. The 25-minute interview was conducted and recorded over the phone on March 12, 2020. Her contact number is 0569444715.

4- Ala' Mitani an Arabic language teacher who teaches in Qalqilya district, in a public village boys' school of Habla. Mitani holds a Master's degree in Arabic literature from Al Najah University. The interview was conducted and recorded by a mobile on March 11, 2020, and it lasted for 35 minutes. His contact number is 0598210448.

5- Hanan Salman, an Arabic language teacher with 26 years of experience who works in Aziz Shaheen Girls' School in Ramallah, a public school. The interview was carried out and recorded on March 12, 2020 via a phone call. The interviewee's contact is 0599836256.

6- Raeda Hussein, an Arabic language teacher in the Arab Evangelical Episcopal School in Ramallah. She is a Master's degree holder in Arabic Literature and has 19 years of experience as a teacher in two different schools. The interview was carried out and recorded on March 14, 2020 over the phone. Her contact number is 0599997042.

7- Ma'moun Abu Ali, an 11th grade English language teacher in Nablus, Deir Al Hatab Boys' Public High School. The 20-minute interview was carried out and recorded on March 11, 2020 over the phone.

8- Shereen Salha, an English language teacher in the Latin private school in the village of Taybeh. She has 11 years of experience in teaching English language. The 25-minute interview was conducted and recorded on March 15, 2020 over the phone. Her contact number is 0568050809.

9- Areej Abu Mshamleh, an English language teacher is Aziz Shaheen Girls' Public School in Ramallah. She has 5 years of experience in teaching. The interview was carried out and recorded by a mobile on March 14, 2020. Her contact number is 0592448091.

Appendix B

Sample Interview Questions

Type: Semi-structured

1-Who speaks more during classes? Why?

This question reflects the approach the schoolbook material is taught to the students, it either focuses on the deposit of information from the teacher to the students, or the libertarian approach where students are involved in inquiry via a horizontal relationship with the students.

2-How much do you rely on the book for material?

This question depicts authoritarian education and the preserving of a specific culture.

3-Do you discuss different perspectives of the lesson offered in your books? Is the context required to be discussed or presented in the book? (Social, cultural, economic, political background for the text)?

This question looks into whether the context of texts is at students' disposal for deeper understanding of the texts.

4-Do you apply what you learn no real life situations and connect it to current issues? Are the texts in the book designed as relevant to real life situations?

This question addresses praxis.

5-Do questions listed in the book require students to add their own input? (Extra research, comparison, or analysis?)

This question helps content analysis for finding out whether the questions address students' higher thinking skills, or are they directed towards memorization.

6-Do the questions in the book have one specific correct answer?

This questions tackles the issue of preserving culture and authoritarian approach.

7-Do students surprise you with unconventional interpretations of texts?

This question explores the amount of freedom students are given as opposed to the banking concept of education.

8-Have you ever witnessed a texts' impact on the students' way of thinking or practices?

Elaborate.

This question looks at whether the students reflect and rewrite what they learn. It also tackles the possibility of freethinking.

9-Do you encourage students to give their own opinions during class? Do you encourage discussions?

This question tackles the issue of freedom, dialogical relationships and preserving culture as opposed to the banking concept of education.

10-Do students fear from giving you the "wrong" answer?

This question addresses the authoritarian educations as opposed to the libertarian.

11-Are the discussed ideas, and the extra-curricular classroom activities part of the student's evaluation?

This question reflects the purpose of education the students get, and value of freedom as a practical result.

Appendix C

History Teacher Najla Barakat's Interview Transcript:

- 1- Students speak more during classes through discussions, I introduce lessons by asking a question, and then I wrap up their answers and use them to introduce my lesson. The questions I pose are not questions from the history book; the discussion is based on my personal knowledge and experience.
- 2- I partially rely on the material from the textbook, as estimated %20 or 30% textbook material, additionally I use other resources for the rest. The schoolbook material is scattered, so in order to collect it properly it has to be supported by other resources. It is not well organized as well as lacking.
- 3- We cover the context of the lessons by using the part of the context that is there in the book, either I ask the students to cover the rest using methods like presentations, or I present the context to them during class.
- 4- We do, we discuss current issues.
- 5- The questions in the book are directed questions, or questions of agenda. When students are asked to provide their opinion, the answer is previously presented in the book, and it's an issue presented from one specific perspective, therefore the students' answers must match the material and perspective provided to them by the book.
- 6- During discussions, students are sometimes hesitant and they start with a phrase I don't know if my answer is correct. Discussions are open to all interpretations.
- 7- Only few students, I can remember two out of 25 students who provide unconventional interpretations. The rest of them follow the material and the interpretations provided by the book. The reason behind that is that the students worry about their exams, and they want to study in a manner to answer correctly during tests, It is how Tawjihi requires them to handle the material.

- 8- No, not really.
- 9- I do, students feel free to share their opinions during my class. All inputs are welcomed.
- 10- No, I call their answers "attempts" therefore, I say: we had one attempt here, let us see what other students think.
- 11- Students tend to memorize and rely on the books material for the exam.

Appendix D

Interview Transcript of the Anonymous History Teacher:

- 1- I ask students to prepare the lesson ahead, two or three different students present for the first 10 to 15 minutes, and then I speak for the rest of the class. Therefore, most of the class is run by me, and I am the one who explains the text .
- 2- I rely on the schoolbook as the material to be taught to the students, and that is because we are required to do so by our school administration, and the ministry of education.
- 3- (answers question 3 and 11) For wider context I present short movies and documentaries to the students, the material in the book is not sufficient, yet extra material is not required for the exams, the students end up memorizing the book material only.
- 4- We also always connect the lessons with our current situation especially in Palestine, when we talk about the liberating movements in India, we also speak of liberation movements in Palestine. These discussions are not evaluated, neither are they required as material for the exam.
- 5- All questions can be answered from the texts provided in the schoolbook. Students do not need any other resources or skills .
- 6- (answers 10 as well) Although the students sometimes share different viewpoints, the answer must be memorized as a correct answer to be used in exams .
- 7- (answers question 7 and 9) I do encourage discussions and different viewpoints, but at the end, the right answer is the only answer accepted.
- 8- No, it doesn't change or impact their lives, they simply gain knowledge.

Appendix E

History Teacher Khawla Shalhan's Interview Transcript:

- 1- We all take part in the teaching and learning process, my students and I. My students are often indulged in activities I assign to them because the book is designed in such a bad manner that makes it extremely hard to be taught as it is. The reason why the book is very problematic is that there is no connection between its paragraphs, it keeps jumping from one topic to the other, the other obvious problem which many history teachers agree on is the form of narration it takes which is extremely boring to both the teachers and students. May God forgive them, this is the worst history book to be taught, we protested more than once to the ministry of education about that. We sent official notes, and had meetings with them to protest mainly about the form of narrative presentation it's built into.
- 2- The book is our main source, but we also may use other resources to support the books material and to fill its gaps. We use visual means like videos and documentaries, and my students search for information by surfing the internet.
- 3- We simplify and summarize the material. I use interactive methods by assigning tasks to several students per lesson or by making them work in groups. We use cards, games, a game called the little journalist, and drama to revise the information. They are happy when they participate, I hear their laughs! My students end up knowing the material by heart, they memorize everything using these methods, and they understand it. I do my best to make the material bearable, I have been a teacher for 25 years and I no longer like the traditional methods, but I'm not sure if other teachers handle the material the same way.

- 4- (also answers question 7 and 9) My students are smart; they are able to make connections on their own, without me even asking them. When we discussed the lesson of Cuba they noted that Cuba is in good relations with Palestine, another example is when we discussed the liberation movements around the world they immediately connect and compare them to Palestinian liberating movements, they also relate to the Algerian revolution easily and start comparing the suffering of the two countries .
- 5- This curriculum is sterile, all the answers of the questions are to be found in the texts, students are not required to add or analyze anything.
- 6- (also answers questions 10 and 11) They memorize the material for their exams, yes; they must provide the right answers .
- 7- Answered with number (3)
- 8- No, at the end of the day, it is a material for school and marks.
- 9- They provide their opinions within the material in the book.

Appendix F

Arabic Language Teacher Ala' Mitani's Interview Transcript:

- 1- I speak at least 35 out of 45 minutes of the class, it also helps me for classroom management and discipline, if I didn't do so, the students would turn into a complete mess and I would lose control over them. The inspectors from the ministry of education ask me to use group work, but it is not practical, because the students refuse to learn, they perceive the 11th grade as a gap year to rest before the Tawjihi and the next year's ministry exams.
- 2- I rely on lot on my personal experience and knowledge, I am a master's degree holder in Arabic literature and a poet, and therefore I always bring in my classroom extracurricular material. For example if there is a poem in the book, I bring in to the students another poem written by the same poet.
- 3- (also answers questions 6 and 10) Students are completely free to interpret the texts the way they see it, after all there is the theory of the death of the author, and for me there are no right or wrong answers as long as they are well supported.
- 4- Some texts can be related to current issues and other texts cannot. The choice of the texts and content is bad; women for example are either portrayed as villains the mother who does not take care of her child, or the one who treats children brutally.
- 5- There are three set of questions following each text, questions that require the students to recall and find the answers from texts, question that require analysis, but these questions can also be answered relying on the text, and the questions related to literary style that we answer together.
- 7- Students do surprise me with unconventional interpretations, but bear in mind that I'm talking about five out of 30 students in class, the rest are not interested in learning, and

they are used to be given (spoon fed) with the answers, they go home memorize them, and come ready for their exam .

8- As I mentioned before, I have criticism on the choice of texts and content, some of the text impact the students negatively, we can't categorize and serotype women for example .

9- (also answers question 10) Participation is very much restricted in my classroom due to lack of interest the students show, thus they do not share their opinions.

11- Students are used to memorizing, that is how they spent their previous 10 years of schooling, and therefore, they memorize the answers of questions, the interpretation of poems and texts, and use their memorized answers for their exams. It is hard to change their attitude towards learning.

Appendix G

Arabic language Teacher Hanan Salman's Interview Transcript:

- 1- Both my students and I speak during classes, some classes take the form of a lecture and there are other classes where my students participate a lot in discussions. My students love long discussions, they also love to share their personal stories and opinions.
- 2- I rely on the book as the basic material and have to go through all the lessons, but I also add enrichment material.
- 3- For context, I use what is provided to me by the book. There is always a text before the main text that provides us with the context, and that is what I use. I also ask my students for more information to present or to hand as reports, but this is only for them to be exposed to.
- 4- My students are opinionated and like to share, sometimes I have to stop the discussions when they take up too much time, I have to deliver the book's material .
- 5- The answers of the questions in the book are all to be found in the texts .
- 6- I listen to their answers during discussion, but I tell them that religion for instance requires us to behave in a certain way and we have to abide, it also applies to questions during exams.
- 7- (also answers question 8 and 9) My students are very enthusiastic, they are revolutionary and have unconventional ideas, they do not agree with the idea that the father has the custody of a child, or a man has the right for a bigger share of inheritance, but I always tell them that we should abide by the religious laws. My students are not easily convinced.

- 10- They do not fear the wrong answer but they try and at the end, I provide them with the correct answer.
- 11- For their exams, they need to get ready by studying the material in the book.

Appendix H

Arabic Language Teacher Raeda Hussein Interview Transcript:

- 1- During the previous years, I used to speak for most of the class time, but starting from this year, I started including the students more because our school is stressing on the students' centered learning more. Therefore, I do speak a lot during classes but I also include the students and give them tasks.
- 2- The book is our main source, but I do not cover all the texts because I give them two novels per year, as the school requires us to do.
- 3- I ask the students to gather information to complete the material in the book, we do it in the form of presentations, and sometimes I add and support the texts with activities and information. We also invite various guests to our school, once we invited a freed Palestinian detainee in the occupation's prisons to give the students a clearer picture about the topic, and we also invited authors several times in order to discuss their work with the students, the school encourages us to do such activities. The book is designed in a way that the students only memorize what's written, it doesn't attempt to develop their thinking skills.
- 4- Not all texts can be applied on current issues, but some can, the book is designed to tackle practical issues about 40%, but I make it into 60%, it is my personal effort.
- 5- All the questions in the book require no effort from the students; all the answers are to be found the texts. Even the questions that are listed under "analysis" require no analysis, the answers are all found in the material previously provided.
- 6- (also answers question 7 and 9) My students do surprise me with unconventional interpretations, but you should note here, that I mean two or three students out of 25. I don't support their views, I am a religious person, so when they interpret religion in

various ways that are unacceptable to me, I let them know. Therefore, many times I avoid tackling details and keep some issues general.

- 8- The students do not like the Arabic language class, it is very obvious and they do not hide it, and I don't blame them, the book is very negative, it's all about suffering and national issues, they only memorize what needs to be memorized and that's it, there is absolutely no impact on their practices or thinking.
- 10- They don't fear to share, sometimes they doubt themselves and start by "I'm not sure about my answer", in addition to the fact that many students have no interest in the topics we discuss, thus they exclude themselves from discussions and don't participate.
- 11- They memorize the interpretations of poems and texts, the vocabulary and that is it. They do not remember anything the next year. The only skill they use is memorizing.

Appendix I

English Language Teacher Ma'moun Abu Ali's Interview Transcript:

- 1- The students do participate, they read, answer questions, and at the end of the class, I as a teacher summarize what had been discussed during the class and stress on the important points.
- 2- The book is our main source and material, but I use other resources to clarify and support the book.
- 3- Yes as I previously said, I provide them with the context by offering more information about the topic.
- 4- The way we put texts into practice is by giving them examples of how our supermarkets work, the prices of certain items known to them, and how they affect the customers' choice and consequently the value of the product. When teaching about genetically modified food, the book does not offer enough explanation, therefore we use the internet for more information. Topics like strategies that harm a product, or brand loyalty are not clear enough; the book addresses the students as if they have enough background in economy and industry. Therefore, I use examples on some products in the Palestinian market, like the change of price of the tuna can, and how it affects the product's value.
- 5- There is a variety of questions in the book, some of them require the students to find the answers in the texts and other questions that make them compare ideas, or argue an issue from different perspectives.
- 6- There are some questions with specific correct answers, and other questions that make the students write and that means that they create according to their beliefs.
- 7- The material in the book does not challenge the Palestinian culture, thus there is no space for the unconventional.

- 8- When we discuss table manners as an example, it affects the students' behavior, they learn the right ways, and it affects their values.
- 9- I encourage my students to share their opinions, the purpose of teaching a language is to communicate, so even if a student's argument is not correct, we carry on with the discussion and the stronger argument prevails.
- 10- They do not fear to share, and I teach them to accept different views, but at the end, I give my final assessment.
- 11- The exams do not include extra-curricular activities, but various questions are given to the students, to answer some, they need to recall, for other questions they apply; like using sentences in gaps, they also create when write, and evaluate when then answer the true or false statements.

Appendix G

English Language Teacher Shereen Salha Interview Transcript:

- 1- It depends on the abilities of the students. In classes of weaker students, I speak for the most of the class, while in classes where students' English language is enough to communicate I put them into groups, and they participate more.
- 2- The book is our main source, but working in a private school means that I have the liberty to bring in other resources, and I do.
- 3- The book is weak in my opinion, it provides us only with general ideas, the students do not understand what the text is exactly about until we use other resources. A good example for that is the text about genetically modified food, the students do not understand if that kind of food is healthy or not, so I support it with examples and pictures.
- 4- We connect some of the ideas in the book to real life situations. Our first unit is about the types of learning. I broke the class into groups and gave them an activity I designed so that each student can test himself/herself to find out what kind of learners they are .
- 5- All the answers of the questions listed after the texts are easily found in texts, students do not do any analyzing or research. I find some of the questions to be even confusing, the true, false, does not say- questions.
- 6- The questions of the book do have specific answers, they do not allow the students to be creative.
- 7- They do not surprise me with unconventional ideas .
- 8- The book does not influence the students' thinking or practices. The content is very basic; there is nothing new to learn, especially for students of private schools. They

only learn language, and even the language it teaches is very weak for the students' age.

9- (also answers 10) They do not fear the wrong answer, but I always stress on the importance of respect especially if a sensitive and controversial topic arises, like comparison between the two religions, the Christian and the Muslim. I do not allow details to be discussed.

11- The exams' questions address the material in the book mainly.

Appendix K

English Language Teacher Areej Abu Mshamleh Interview Transcript:

- 1- I have been teaching for five years. When I started the job I used to speak during the entire time of the class, but with experience, I found that it's crucial to involve the students. Today I can say that the students and I share the class.
- 2- I cover the material of the book, from the first page to the last. The book is the material I use.
- 3- (also answers questions 4 and 9) I expand and connect the ideas in the book with the Palestinian culture. When our lesson is about genetically modified food, I ask my students to write the recipes of Palestinian dishes, similarly when our lesson is about folk tales, I ask my students to bring in and discuss Palestinian folk tales, we also compare education in Finland to education in Palestine, regarding the stages of schooling.
- 5- The questions of the book can easily be answered as the answers are found in the text, the students do not have to add their own input, analyze, or use any other skill.
- 6- The answers are either right or wrong according to the text.
- 7- It depends on the students, some classes are very weak, they can barely communicate using English language, but I encourage my students. I start my classes with discussions.
- 8- It depends on the topic. When the topic is biodiversity, I can see that they care about the environment.
- 9- We do not discuss opinions as much as we discuss the material in the book and their activities.
- 10- They don't fear giving the wrong answer.

- 11- The material of the book is used for the exams, and other activities like the one I am very proud of, which was making a descriptive booklet about all the Palestinian cities, do affect their evaluation.

Appendix L

List of Interviewed Experts in the Field

1- Nader Wahbeh PhD, the director of A.M. Qattan Foundation, Doctor of Philosophy in Secondary and Continuous Education, a Fulbright Scholar, Educational Researcher, University Instructor, Practitioner in Education: (Science education, curriculum design and evaluation, information technology, science and early childhood, K-4 integrative-multidisciplinary approach in learning, ICT in education). He also has over a dozen of research papers, research presentations, and projects as a contribution to the field of education. The interview was conducted and recorded via call and not in person on Tuesday, May 5, 2020. His contacts are: nwahbeh@gmail.com, and the mobile number is 00970599292015.

2- Wisam Rafidi, currently a lecturer in Bethlehem University for over ten years. He also worked as a lecturer in sociology and cultural studies in Birzeit University for over ten years. Mr. Rafidi is a holder of two Masters Degrees one in sociology and the other in Contemporary Arab Studies both from Birzeit University. He was part of the Palestinian curriculum development team, and has published several papers and a recent book criticizing the Palestinian curriculum. The interview was conducted in person on May 4, 2020. His e-mail is wisamr@bethlehem.edu and his mobile number is 0599596123.

3- Mousa Khoury PhD in Modern Arabic Language. A five year head of Palestine and Arabic Studies program in Birzeit University (PAS) who also developed the curriculum of the program that is currently taught. He was the head of the Arabic Language Department in Birzeit University for three years, and is currently an associate professor in BZU. Mr. Khoury has contributions in the form of critical papers and books about the Palestinian curriculum. The interview took place on May 7, 2020 in person. The interviewee's contact mkhoury@birzeit.edu

Appendix M

Transcript of Interview Questions

The type of the interview is semi- structured.

- 1- Do you perceive the Palestinian education, specifically the schoolbooks, as libertarian? Elaborate.
- 2- Why have the Palestinians missed on the chance to design schoolbooks that would liberate their next generation's minds?
- 3- Who writes the Palestinian schoolbooks? How are they chosen? What are their qualifications? Are they provided with guidelines or restrictions to write the schoolbooks?

Appendix O

Nader Wahbeh's Interview Transcript:

To talk about the Palestinian curriculum and to which extent it is libertarian we must go back and look at the development of the Palestinian curriculum. When it was first written by Abu Lughod it did not only address the liberation of the land but also liberation of the society taking in consideration equality, social justice and pluralism, in general liberation from authoritarianism. When the Palestinian Authority took control of the curriculum it set up an outline that relies on separate units that are in complete disconnection from any kind of liberation. From the year 2000 to 2016 all schoolbooks were restricted by Oslo Agreement, and there was a challenge posted by the donors and restrictions on the content regarding incitement against occupation, and as a result the denotations stopped, and the Palestinian Authority as a reaction to that created schoolbooks that were more challenging towards occupation in 2018. The books were leaning towards violence more by using pictures of people resisting the occupation, yet the books were still within the frame of the authority and a singular voice in addition to the religious voice that is directed towards one religion which is Islam. The books are also filled with the stereotypical images of women, the farmer and careers in general. The books do not leave a space for thinking, the frame is very limited. These books are still not well criticized. Therefore, if we're talking about liberating the human being there is no successful experience of that so far. Because I specialize in science, I can tell you that the science books are also authoritarian regarding knowledge, they present knowledge as the definite truth and therefore, there is no space for questioning, and you know that science is always in development and change. This is what is missing, and I try to teach and train the teachers by providing them with methods of handling the schoolbooks in a more liberation manner.

The Palestinians did not design their books to liberate the minds of their next generation for three reasons: First, I believe that the Palestinian Authority is not willing to include civil society in curriculum development so that it possesses the complete power over education, and having education under their control means being able to control in general. Therefore, the authority did not allow the Curriculum Center to be out of the authority's frame, the Palestinian Authority was in charge of employment of hiring the teachers as well. The second factor is lack of expertise in the field of education and curriculum development. Although there are university specialization in curriculum development, they take a traditional approach, and libertarian education is not part of it. Universities do not provide teachers with adequate experience. It is a cycle of social reproduction which Bourdieu talked about. The universities reproduce the same teachers and the same methods. I know most of those who developed the first curriculum and they lack knowledge and expertise about developing libertarian education, therefore they followed the Jordanian pattern, adopted it to the Palestinian context, added some different pictures, and added some inquiry, yet it remained a traditional isolated curriculum that lacks praxis and integration. The most important factor is that those who write the curriculum lack expertise.

That is all projected on teachers as well. They follow the authoritarian education, and use it as a method for teaching. They view themselves standing in front of their students lecturing them; they do not see different patterns of teaching where more freedom is bestowed to the students to question and inquire. Teachers do take courses for developing their teaching skills but it has not paid off well.

The new curriculum is more limited than the previous one, the reason behind that is that the government challenges the occupation through curriculum, and it happens very fast. It is demonstrated through including pictures of boys carrying stones, and other pictures of

resistance to show that they are rejecting Oslo Agreement now. During the time of Sabri Saidam, the former minister of education, that reaction is clear. The third factor is that the people who teach the curriculum lack the libertarian thinking.

When curriculum is developed it passes through several stages, there is censorship about developing the curriculum. It is written in a certain way but afterwards it goes through another committee that adjusts the content.

During the beginnings of Palestinian curriculum development, University professors were involved in developing them. I can remember Fatin Masa'dDabeet. So again what is written is filtered, it's like the written content goes through a bottleneck, therefore you don't know what happens behind the doors of the closed rooms. There were experts with libertarian ideas who were graduates from The United States, Russia and other countries abroad, these committees broke up and committees began to be formed out of teachers and supervisors. After the huge criticism university professors left and the situation became more centralized with less social and experts' interference. Our schoolbooks are still experimental.

The Arabic language books and the social sciences books follow a one sided discourse. They try to develop a student centered learning, but saying is not like enacting in classrooms. Student centered learning is not posing a question in the book that the student will answer or adding a small project for the student to work on, it's not like that. The problem is that the questioning is all within the frame of the content of the book. There is what is seen as a taboo; Darwin's theory is not allowed to be approached, although it's a scientific theory, it is even used for detecting the development of viruses, students are not given the opportunity to question. There is also a lot of religious explanation within the schoolbooks, a verse from the Quran is found in the science book; it means that the students are not allowed to ask questions at all. Overall, there is no deep discussion

outside of the books frame. The student is cornered and asked a question or two, and they think its student centered learning, but it's not. The classroom teacher has a huge impact on the schoolbook, they may add other resources, but if the teacher is not knowledgeable and limited, it will lead to a disaster, and that is transforming the book in a pedagogy, we must be careful.

The schoolbooks are sacred, they are also reinforced by standardized governmental tests, and therefore the teachers have limited time to deliver the content of the book to their students so that the students can pass the tests. If you visit several schools in Palestine, you will find that the teachers of a certain subject are teaching the same unit at the same time. This means that there is centralization, control, and authoritarianism that prevent the teachers from being creative. It is all a result of colonialism; the system we used to live by in the past is a very traditional one, the one during the Jordanian and Egyptian curriculum. These test-driven programs are present today. It is a type of colonialism regardless of who is in charge. I do not generalize what I say because I am aware that there are schools with more freedom, like the private schools, yet they also remain under the rule of the authority.

Appendix P

Wisam Rafidi's Interview Transcript:

The Palestinian curriculum is not designed at all for the libertarian education. The reason behind it that education in any country is the outcome of the formal authority. The formal authority of any given country writes the curriculum that is aligned with political views, system, and ideology. When I teach my students, I always give them two examples; in the United States, students learn *This is my property*, and that is because the social system and the political system of the US is built on private ownership, while in Cuba students are taught that private property is evil according to Marx, the emphasis is only on public property. Governments teach in accordance to their views. Similarly, our authority's aspirations are far from liberty of any kind, it is working towards establishing a government, or at least that is what they have convinced themselves of. There are agreements, and negotiations, because they do not see themselves in a phase of national liberation, they do not establish Liberating Education. Occupied societies like the Vietnamese and the Chinese in the past, there used to be liberated areas with medical centers and education, which serve the goal of liberation. The normal situation of any occupied society is that all aspects of life, whether it is economy or education serve the purpose of liberation. That is the experience of Cuba, China, Vietnam, and Algeria, we are not inventing anything new, that is history.

We haven't wasted this chance only, we wasted a former chance as well when we misused the Somoud budget, tenths of billions of dollars were spent here in the West Bank in the 1970s and 1980s by the Palestinian Liberation Organization, yet nothing was spent on land reclamation, and what is occupation? It's the occupation of land. The budgets were spent on establishing the coming authority. To our authority, there is no

conflict with the occupier, it ended. Those are the reasons behind establishing a curriculum that does not raise a nation with views towards liberation. It is normal to raise young boys on the principles of liberation of its different types, not necessarily armed resistance but there are different types of resistance.

The Palestinian curriculum does not provide students with multiple perspectives; the previous history book had a lesson discussing Oslo Agreement, and that lesson provided to perspectives; the supporters of Oslo Agreement and the oppositions. It was a lesson that provided more than one point of view thus, the student is provoked to think and choose, teachers also sometimes direct students towards certain points of views. The new history book provides only one point of view, as if there is no opposition at all. There are also five wars in Gaza that are not mentioned at all in the book. What do these wars represent? The spirit of resistance. The Palestinian authority eliminates Gaza wars due to its opposition to Hamas party, although there are other political parties in Gaza as well. The history book discusses liberating movements in the world like in Algeria, Cuba, Vietnam, and China, but when it comes to our area, it doesn't mention Gaza, neither does it mention South of Lebanon although Huzbullah liberated lands that were occupied. That means that the book is teaching the students that not only liberating movements do not exist in our area, but also that they do not accomplish anything. In spite of all of that, the Israeli research shows that the Palestinian curriculum encourages resistance, and that is because Israel does not accept anything that is Palestinian not even a picture of Al Aqsa Mosque.

The narrative style of the history book implies that the narrative excludes and is one directional. As an example for that; 1500 years of conflict are summarized into one line *There was dispute between Muawiya Bin Abu Sufyan and Ali Bin Abu Talib regarding authority.* 70 thousand men died during this conflict. So the problem is not the

informative form of the book, it's that the information the book provides is selected. History narration is used for building national identity, and collectivism, and therefore it is built accordingly. As an example, in the Iranian history Salah Al Din Al Ayyoubi is negatively portrayed because he was against Shia. History is always narrated from the perspective of those who write it and write the school curriculum. In Lebanon too, it is very problematic for them to narrate their civil war. The newest method is to provide more than one narrative and to leave the decision making for the student. Let's take us the Palestinian as an example, it's impossible to provide the Zionist point of view, we teach our children our Palestinian point of view, but later in higher studies the other point of view can be provided. Likewise, in the United States it is impossible for their school curriculum to provide Communism as a way of life, and as opposed to Capitalism. Only the issue of identity is critical, but Sunni and Shia, man and woman, it should be all provided.

When the committee that writes the curriculum was established, and I was part of it as an academic and specialist, the authority meant to build a structure of the leftist stream, the Islamic, and the national. They sought various points of views. It is similar to Abu Lughoud's, where some points are scientific and other are religious; contradictory. The purpose is to please all streams. The committee is formed of specialists, academics, and also specialists in curriculum development or methodology. There was one person in our group who decided where a project must be added, a question, a visit to a museum, but he does not look into the content and the way the content is delivered to the student. The problem with our Ministry of Education historically is that they see that developing education lies in the development of teaching methodology and not the curriculum. That is a historical issue with our Ministry of education, all development is directed towards teacher trainings, I say that from my experience and work in Teacher Creativity Center,

every year ten to twelve workshops were organized for teacher training. The problem is not only in content writing, the four of us who wrote the content in 2001, were supervised by Omar Abu Humus who was at that time the head of The Curriculum Center, and the brother of the Minister of Education. The other factor is the donors, when I was within the team the Dutch donor did not accept any sentence that is relevant to religion. They do not directly dictate restrictions, but these restrictions are formed subconsciously within those who write the curriculum, just like the journalist who works for an international agency, or the proposal writers of NGOs. I faced another problem when I decided to include a declaration from the International Human Rights *Any occupied society has the right to use all means against occupation, including armed resistance*, but that wasn't aligned with the national authority's views, and as a result I resigned from the committee. So the restrictions are posed by both the PNA and the donors. The committee is formed of 80% of the Ministry's employees, teachers, inspectors and so, and 20% of experts and university lecturers. As a result, the curriculum does not target the student's thinking skills, because he would be able to question the curriculum itself, and all the contradictions it contains. The student is not supposed to question, or to search and research. In the Islamic history as an example there is romanticism of the characters, flaws are not mentioned. Therefore, if the student is taught to research, he/she will be aware of everything and the authority would not be able to feed the students with what they see fit. The contradiction within the committee of authors is clear in the books, the religious and the secular, therefore diverse explanations are included which results into contradictions. For example, the Intifada is sometimes as well referred to as revolution, or a peaceful revolution and here you sense the presence of the PNA's point of view. You can also sense lack of honest work, so books are approved without meticulous inspection of some details.

Appendix Q

Mousa Khoury's Interview Transcript:

I will speak out of my experience; I worked as an Arabic Language teacher for three to four years in the Arab Evangelical Episcopal School, and I also worked in Faisal Al Hussein School in Jerusalem for four years as an academic advisor, it was all beneficial to my research papers. I was also selected to be within the team that developed the 8th grade Arabic language schoolbook, but I did not see that through. I attended one session and resigned because I could not bear the general orientation of the team. Palestinian education and curriculum definitely follow the banking concept of education. If we wish to talk about libertarian education, it would mean that we would raise generations for their futures rather than our present and consequently our past. This type of education would mean that we would offer a way out of our hypothesis, and offer them the means for creativity, posing questions, the opportunity to formulate their own future, and an education within a context rather than a dissected one. To be specific; looking at the Arabic Language books, we will find that each lesson starts with a verse from the Holy Quran or parts of the Prophet's biography, it also applies to the sentences used for grammar practice, and that means that we are talking about restrained educations and not a libertarian one. This specific aspect also reflects that the most sophisticated model of the Arabic language is the Quran and the prophet's biography, and that excludes a group of students that may not be religious. To be clear, I am not against the inclusion of religious texts, but the question is how are these texts pedagogically processed? Are they used for the purpose of drawing the students minds towards religious belief? There could be religious texts and simultaneously all possible questions around it, but is that available? Are these texts included as the model that influences my beliefs? Or are the

texts included as part of the human heritage that I must be exposed to? Culture in anthropology includes religion, cooking, clothing, spices, and everything. Therefore, if the text is there as part of my inherited culture. It would make me happy to read them, and other texts from other Holy books. To give an example of modules that complement the previous, I would like to provide the skill of writing, or structure as examples; when students write they look up to the religious texts are their highest models. It good be a positive or a negative point, but it does not mean that holy texts are the most sophisticated models for language. It tremendously affects the students' language and set of vocabulary; when a student is required to write a text about how he fixed his bicycle, he cannot find the vocabulary to accomplish his/her task. On one hand, students easily write about the human struggling at the checkpoints or a composition about the martyr, these topics are the favorite for Arabic language teachers. On the other hand, if they were asked to write a descriptive paragraph about a boy who stole watermelon, and while eating it the juice is dripping down his arm, they would not find the vocabulary to express that. Since we were young children, we were taught that Arabic language is only used as a high standing language, and that is all linked to the "holy", therefore, it is not perceived as a language that can be used to jokes and joking, although the funniest jokes are in formal Arabic language. The students are convinced that this is a serious language I cannot use for jokes, and that is the reason why the formal Arabic is later abandoned by them, in addition to the fact that the student lacks active vocabulary for the mundane, and has no interest to keep writing about rigid topics. Students do not want to invest their time in a language that will not be used in their lives later on, and that is praxis of language. To conclude this point; this is a continuous chain of authoritarianism. If formal Arabic language is to be disconnected from the "holy", it will be revived, and I do not mean abandoning what is holy; I am speaking of the language practice. The Arabic

language books focus on struggling because it's seen as "holy" again, as a result we have loses in other areas of the language.

If we look at Palestinian literature beginning with 1930's it was closely tied to revolutionary language, the big turn of the Palestinian literature occurred post Oslo Agreement. A mother in a refugee camp was always depicted as one who pushes her children into the battle and towards death, she was stripped off her humanity, and people still have not put this narrative behind. The narrative of revolution, struggling, and oppression, the oppression consequently leads to change.

I think that the curriculum developers believe that a person does not identify as a Palestinian unless he/she is in the circle of those who struggle. They think that you cannot recognize the distinctive features of your identity unless you are one of those who lecture about struggling. In the language frame, it means that his vocabulary is placed within a limited space, therefore as I mentioned before, formal Arabic language becomes unfit for daily life, it becomes as failure in use. As a result to all that, we become unable of producing anything beyond that context. Our students have huge problems concerning writing; structured writing is a way of thinking, thus the student becomes unable of thinking out of that box and of critical thinking. The student knows how to repeat what he/she had been taught.

Who is responsible for writing the curriculum? That is a very important question. How are the curriculum developers selected? On what basis? These people and I know many of them come from a cultural and academic background that is reflected in the books. I will give you an example; in the Arabic language book of the 6th grade, there is a two and half page text about the city of Jerusalem, despite the diversity of the city, the text goes on about the two mosques and the martyrs, and two lines mention the Church of the Holy Sepulcher. That means that those who wrote the curriculum are not interested in

presenting the cultural diversity of the city. They meant to present the city in its Islamic frame only. Another example is the text of Ibn Batouta in the 11th grade book. You can notice that that text consists of only pieces of the original text, pieces that use descriptive language to describe the architecture of the mosques, and nothing else, it focuses on the religious dimension. Therefore, if we analyze the content of the text, we find out that the main theme is religious, and that it set up to send a clear religious message. That reflects the background of the people who set up the book. I discuss that specific text in one of my books focusing on the idea that it does not provoke critical thinking. Critical thinking serve the development of language, the more questions are posed into different direction with many possible answers, the more language is used, the richer it becomes. Closed questions lead to one answer, and a limited use of language. The question whose answer if found in the text suffocates all the possibilities of language use. As a result we have a victory for religion, but on the other hand language, higher thinking skills and production are limited.

The most important qualification of curriculum writers is that they are followers of the religious institution. Anybody who is not aligned with religion becomes out of the context. There is a close relationship between the government and religion. Let's take Jordan for example, I believe that the Muslim Brothers are the worst that happened to the Arab area, they started working silently from 1950s until they inhabited all that is related to education. You cannot expect the Palestinian Authority, as a formal political institution to have the ability to impose on the curriculum center the removal of the first lesson as a religious one. There is a relationship between the political and the religious authority, and they are the ones who control the curriculum.

I can say that the curriculum development team are followers of the religious institution, or at least unable to challenge it to bring in diverse texts for the purpose of the quality of

education. It is impossible to include a text that speaks of the liberation of women; women in the texts must be dominated by men. According to their belief, women were liberated at the emergence of Islam. Regarding the inclusion or exclusion of pedagogical experts in the groups that develop the curriculum, I can say that there is a wide variety of pedagogies, and it doesn't mean that these experts come from Paulo Freire's pedagogic school. At the end I can say that the more thinking is reinforced the better language outcome will be present. An additional important point is that if freedom is allowed, 100 years later the Quran will not be read, and that is the preservation of culture. Students reproduce the system by being kept within that given frame, and by limiting their freedom towards change.

الملخص

للمرة الأولى في التاريخ، وبعد توقيعهم اتفاقية أوسلو، حظي الفلسطينيون بفرصة تأليف مناهجهم الدراسية الخاصة. إلا أنهم، مع ذلك، أهدروا فرصة تحرير التعليم. يستكشف هذا البحث إلى أي مدى تمّ تصميم ثلاثة كتب مدرسية فلسطينية للصف الحادي عشر لنقل المفهوم التحريري للتعليم؛ وذلك من خلال تحليل سياق المحتوى، والأسئلة المطروحة، والتطبيقات الأدبية والعملية داخل النصوص.

يتبنى البحث النهج الكيفي منهجية له عبر تحليل المحتوى، والمقابلات بغية استنتاج أنّ الكتب المدرسية الفلسطينية تتبع المفهوم البنكي للتعليم، والذي يخلق نمطاً من ثقافة التفكير الخانع المذعن، وأجيالاً من التابعين، بدلاً من خلق أجيالٍ من المبدعين، والمفكرين الناقدين، والقادرين على حلّ المشكلات.