Palestinian Diaspora in Transnational Worlds:

Intergenerational Differences

in Negotiating Identity, Belonging and Home

Ismat Zaidan

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Preface

This research stems from an interest in understanding the intergenerational differences in maintaining transnational migratory networks and the role of these networks in the formation of a Palestinian identity in exile. The main theme for investigation is how transnational activities of first and second generation of Palestinian Diaspora are related to the creation of transnational identities in the deterritorialized context of dispersal. The research attempts to fill significant research gaps identified in the context of diasporic communities. First, limited research has focused on inter-generational differences in terms of maintaining ties across borders through such transnational activism as travelling to the country of origin. Whereas first-generation diapsora have been explicitly addressed, more thorough investigations are needed in order to determine the significance of maintain ties with the country of origin for second-generation migrants, particularly their meaning for notions such as home and identity.

Reviewing the literature and research pertaining to the Palestinian refugee situation, one finds considerable amount but which is limited in scope. There isn't enough research to cover the Palestinian Diaspora issue inclusively, especially one to deal with the Palestinian refugees in exile. This is an unavoidable point of research, as the refugee issue seems to be the core of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Not only is research falling short in covering the details of the Palestinian Diaspora, but International conferences and the so called agreements such the Oslo adventure absented the issue by delaying the discussion of the refugees till a later stage. The neglect of the refugees that characterised the Oslo process had resulted in the emergence of a new movement for the right of return and had set the Palestinian leadership farther from the refugee population. Within the PLO itself, there was a conflict on discussing the right of return. The situation was not any better in the second Camp David talks and the Taba talks in the year of 2000. The parties did talk about the issue though. That's why there is a vital need to conduct research and case studies on the reality of Palestinian refugees and their suffering (Schulz & Hammer, 2003).

1.2 Overview

An absurdity that is on the ground is that the birth of the Israel state and the end of the Jewish Diaspora marks the tragedy and new Diaspora of the Palestinians. This is a creation of a state on the expense of another nation; this is how the Palestinians see it. To the Palestinian, the birth of Israel is re-

membered as the catastrophe, al-nakba, to mark the suffering caused by dispersal, exile, and denial that made the Palestinians a "refugee nation" (Siddiq, 1995, p.87).

There are shy statistics that estimate the Palestinian refugees to be around five million. The statistics of the United Nations relief and Works Agency for Palestine refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), even more conservative, estimate the refugees to be 3.9 million in 2008. The Palestinian Diaspora is geographically dispersed-in countries that neighbour Israel/Palestine, across the Arab world as well as in Europe and North America. The Palestinians were misled by assurances that their departure from their homes was temporary, and they would return to their homes very shortly. Some of them left the doors of their homes open. In the early years of their exile the majority of Palestinians persistently rejected to establish permanent links or roots in their host countries. Therefore, the Palestinian refugees did not settle in the these countries. They lived in temporary camps; they would not buy property or ask for employment there because they thought they were returning soon. Their minds were always focused on the return even after 60 years of being in exile (Mason, 2007).

Losing the rest of Palestine in 1967, the Palestinian refugees continued to live in diasporic refugee camps in several neighboring countries; this way they remembered their stolen/lost homeland. The many aspects of suffering the Palestinian refugees went through helped in promoting their identity. Experiences in exile have been key building blocks in shaping Palestinian identity. Fragmentation, loss of homeland, and denial promoted an identity of "suffering", an identification constructed by injustices occurring to the Palestinian diapsora because of external forces (Dorai, 2001). No wonder one could see then that the Palestinian refugees started to establish some kind of settlement in the host countries in trying to live the best lives possible in exile. This has made concepts such as identity, home and belonging "contrapuntal" (Said, 1984, p.55).

Such hard situation and the bitter feeling towards their lost land, the Palestinians managed to form a kind of resistance from exile to transcend the state of dispossession, denial and statelessness (Sayigh, 1997). Generations who were born in exile have become familiar to their lost homes and towns through vivid descriptions of memories behind by their parents and grandparents. For members of these generations their relationship to, and familiarity with, the homeland has been passed on for the most part through "acts of memory" (Khalidi, 1997, p. 153). Such memories began to be tangible in the minds of the younger generations where they could give detailed descriptions of how their homes looked like with minute details. Their understand-

ings of identity, belonging and home have been shaped within the interplay of these attachments to Palestine (Lindholm Schulz, 1999).

This research examines the means by which the first and second-generation Palestinian Canadians maintain ties with the homeland, including the transnational practices in terms of back and forth movement to Palestine. The social connections with the homeland facilitated by technological advances and how it have resulted in the transnational nature of Palestinian Canadians is analyzed, particularly the second generation who are more familiar with these technologies than their parents and who are also more enthusiastic about being more mobile.

1.3 Research Objectives

The research explores the means of maintaining relationships with the homeland of the first and second generation Palestinian Canadians and demonstrates the inter-generational differences in terms of the ways of maintaining their Palestinian identity and attachment to the homeland. It also examines the means by which first and second generation of Palestinian diapora constructed a transnational migratory networks and the role of these networks in the formation of a Palestinian identity in exile. The study further analyses how the maintenance of Palestinian identity and attachment to the homeland has remained central to the generation that experienced al nakba (al nakba generation), and the generations born into exile. The research also investigates the means of maintaining relationships with the homeland that have shifted for each generation and how this has resulted in contrapuntal notions of identity, home and belonging.

Using transnationalism as a conceptual framework, the research tackles the above issues by examining the case study of the Palestinian Diaspora in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA). It is very hard to reconcile issues of identity, links to homeland and belonging. For Palestinian in the exile, dispossession of their land meant that they have been living in ghorba, living away from homeland with emotions of homesickness, separation and isolation (Lindholm Schulz, 1999, p. 20). For the second generation, this resulted in "strategic hybridity" (Poynting et al., 2004), where they established strong ties with Canada and yet kept their dynamic links with their homeland by means such as transnational technologies.

1.4 Transnationalism as a Conceptual Framework

The growth of Diaspora communities in modern societies emphasizes the need to investigate more thoroughly their members' experiences of identity negotiations and the ways these immigrants maintain ties with the original country. This investigation is particularly important in the era of globalization as it dissolves the barriers of distance. Transnationalism is an evolving and promising construct for identifying and understanding these experiences. Transnationalism, according to Glick Schiller et al. (1992) and Portes et al. (1999) refers to the phenomenon of immigrants maintaining connections and social relations to their country of origin. Thus, the multiplicity of migrants' engagements in both original and receiving societies is a vital element of transnationalism (Glick Schiller et al., 1992). This definition requires using a dual frame of reference to evaluate their experiences and outcomes in the country in which they have settled (for example, Louie, 2006).

Transnationalism is, then, a sustained activity that links a group of people in one country with their counterparts in another (Metropolies, 2007). Glick Schiller et al. (1992, p. 8), in their description of the nation-state in the era of globalization stated that, "in contrast to the past, when nation-states were defined in terms of people sharing a common culture within a bounded territory, this new conception of nation-state includes as citizens those who live physically dispersed within the boundaries of many other states, but who remain socially, politically, culturally and often economically part of the nation-state of their ancestors". Rather, according to Levitt (2004), in the 21st century there will be an increasing number of people in the migration-receiving countries who belong to more than a single society. This is what many researchers in the Diaspora and migration literature refer to as "transnational migration" or "transmigrants". Transmigrants are identified by Glick Schiller et al. (1992, p. 1-2) as immigrants who "take actions, make decisions, and feel concerns within a field of social relations that link together their country of origin and their country or countries of settlement". Thus, transnational migrants perform different aspects of life in more than one context. Portes (1999, p. 464) viewed transnational activities as "those that take place on a recurrent basis across national borders and that require a regular and significant commitment of time by participants". Moreover, they suggested three types of transnationalism: economic, politic, and social. Levitt (2004) noted that some immigrants will establish roots in the country of settlement, sustain strong ties with the homeland, and even belong to religious and political movements that extend across borders. These allegiances are not opposing or hostile to one another (Levitt, 2004).

Unarguably, the concept of border-crossing social ties helps to improve the understanding the integration of the members of Diaspora communities in the new environment. Faist (2000) argues that transnationalization has far-reaching consequences in the way scholars consider immigrants' adaptation, global civil society, ethnic communities, identities, culture, and citizenship. With the growing emphasis on globalization, permeable borders, boundaries, "home" and "host" societies are progressively being viewed as overlapping. In fact, it is increasingly becoming possible to live within more than one spatial system on almost equal terms (Schulz & Hammer, 2003).

Thus, the concept of transnationalism challenges the old theories (Park, 1931, 1938; Gordon, 1964, for instance) that argue that assimilation of immigrants is a certain and unavoidable outcome of incessant interaction with the dominant cultural group in the host society. The canonical theories of immigrant assimilation and ethnic pluralism have overstated the container aspects of culture and politics (Faist, 2000). Thus, older research in immigration has been characterized by specific analyses concerning majority-minority relationships, local communities, and host societies. In the more global perspectives of diasporic and migration studies, migration is no longer viewed as a "one-way movement" from a sender to a receiving nation, with consequential efforts and struggles of integration and settlement into the host society (Mar, 2005). Nowadays, a new type of migrating population is emerging. Vertovec and Cohen (1999 qtd. In Salih, 2002, p. 52) identified four main features to the emergence of a new type of migrants: "the possibility of having multiple identities and multiple localities thanks to new technologies of travel and information, the globalization of kinship and network ties, the extraordinary growth of remittances and finally, and as a result, the disintegration of boundaries between host and home societies."

The technological innovations in long-distance communication and travel have increased the speed of the emergence of transnational social spaces. Advanced methods of communication and travel set the necessary stage for the development of transnational ties. The continuing communication and transport revolution has significantly decreased the cost of bridging long geographical distances (Faist, 2000) allowing immigrants, to a great extent, to maintain close contacts with their homeland and travel frequently between country of origin and country of settlement. Thus, migration is no longer framed within the perspective of receiving nations only through the classical theories of assimilation and acculturation, or ethnic pluralism and multiculturalism (see for these theories, Driedger, 1989; Glazer & Moynihan, 1963; Gordon, 1964; Park, 1931, 1938) that typically characterized older studies. Recently, research on migration has taken on a

new scope and scale, moving beyond the assumption that immigrants will live their lives in one place, conforming to one set of cultural norms, within solid national borders of the receiving countries. This assumption no longer holds in the era of globalization, with its multiple identities, diasporic communities, growing international mobility, and ease of transportation and communication. The following paragraphs explain why transnationalism is the best conceptual framework for understanding contemporary migration.

 First, despite the criticisms regarding the fragmented nature of transnationalism as a field of study (see for example, Portes et al., 1999), this construct offers both the conceptual and empirical ingenuity required to explore the formation of new and heterogeneous immigrant identities and communities. Transnationalism opens up an expanded purview of migrant practice, which enables scholars to engage with the multiplicity of migration networks and multiple forms of incorporation of individuals and groups at various spatial and governmental levels (Mar, 2005) while studying the dynamic nature of migrant groups as they change and evolve over time. It also provides a theoretical and empirical framework for a better understanding of the complex processes involved in the emergence of new immigrants in increasingly diverse global cities and modern societies.

Second, in order to completely understand immigrants' practices and identities, it is essential to investigate migration from a standpoint that is holistic (Al-Ali, Black and Koser, 2001; Koser, 2002; Al-Ali and Koser, 2002). The emergence of transnational activities will be affected by conditions both within the host and the sending country, and can vary over time and space (Al-Ali, Black and Koser, 2001). Third, transnationalism provides a wider perceptive on the construction of new immigrant communities as it enables the investigation of all the processes, both in the countries of origin and countries of destination, forming migrants' experiences and practices. Fourth, transnationalism permits the investigation of migration from the viewpoint of the state (from above) and also from that of immigrants (from below). Furthermore, transnationalism is helpful for bringing to light the complex interactions and relationships between processes "from above" and "from below" (Veronis, 2006). In addition, transnationalism, as a conceptual framework, provides the foundation for understanding new patterns of migrating in a global context (Schiller et al, 1992; McAuliffe, 2008). Fifth, transnationalism, with its notion of border-crossing expansion of social ties, also enhances the understanding of immigrant integration, particularly in the political and cultural domains. Nevertheless, the implications of transnationalization for citizenship and culture have not been thoroughly investigated. Although much of the transnational literature emphasizes either economic activities

of transnationalism such as remittances (Portes, 1999; Vetrovec, 2001), or political activities (Basch et al., 1994), few researchers have focused on social and cultural relations.

1.5 Research Methods and Design

A mixed methods approach is employed in this study. The underlying idea of mixing is that quantitative or qualitative methods by themselves are not sufficient to capture the details of the experiences of Palestinian Canadians, their transnational practices, issues of citizenship and belonging, and issues of identity and hybridity, and their meanings. With the combination of both approaches, the researcher can create a more comprehensive information base in order to pursue a more complete understanding of the research themes, involving both breadth and depth of insights. Moreover, the strengths of both quantitative and qualitative research can provide a better understanding of such phenomenon than would be the case of only one of these approaches was adopted in isolation.

1.5.1 Methods of Data Collection

This research employs quantitative (questionnaire) and qualitative (in-depth interviews and participant observation) research techniques. Major research methods that are employed in the research include key informant interviews, questionnaire surveys, in-depth interviews, and observation and field notes.

1.5.1.1. Interviews: In-depth and Key Informant Interviews
In-depth Interviews

The researcher employed semi-structured, face-to-face interviews based on consideration of the strengths and weaknesses of the different types and methods. In-depth interviews were conducted with Palestinian immigrants from different generations to acquire information about the negotiation of cultural and symbolic resources and, therefore, of the social and cultural significance of maintaining connections with homeland to the members from first and second generation. Primary data in this study were collected through semi-structured interviews with Palestinian Canadians living in the GTA area. Twenty seven interviews (including two follow-up sessions) were conducted with Palestinian Canadians in 2010. The interview instrument (Appendix A) was made up of closed and open-ended questions which had been developed based on the literature review. The study went on until the

theoretical saturation had been reached as no new insights were emerging. Twenty-five interviews were conducted with Palestinian Canadians living in the GTA, followed by two follow-up-sessions.

Key Informant Interviews

Leaders of Palestinian organizations in the Greater Toronto Area were identified as key informants. The following organizations were contacted: the Arab Palestine Association, Canadian Arab Federation, Arab Community Centre, Arab Palestine Association, Arab Immigrant Centre, and Palestine House. An interview was conducted with Dr. Esam Yamani, the leader of the Palestinian House, in addition to an interview with Maison Tabar, a Palestinian feminist activist working in an NGO. Semi-structured and face-to-face interviews were employed in this study. Persons in such relevant positions have appropriate experience and knowledge about Palestinian immigrants.

1.5.1.2 Questionnaire Survey

Questionnaires are used for this research in order to attain the required primary data taking into consideration the limited financial resources, time, personnel input, and possible language difficulties of many of the Palestinian immigrants in Canada. A self-administered survey was employed to collect data for this study. Respondents were selected based on a convenience sampling method. The frequenters of Palestinian events, social organizations, stores, travel agencies, coffee houses, clinics, churches and mosques in the GTA were targeted, as it was assumed that the majority of those people would possess the attributes of the population targeted in this study. In general, the questionnaire contains closed questions, such as multiple choices and scaling questions. A total of 240 questionnaires were filled out, 10 of which were discarded because they were not satisfactorily completed. The study is thus based on a sample of 230 respondents. The first section of the questionnaire focuses on the outbound travel patterns of respondents, their dominant destination, purpose of travel, and their travel experience and the length of stay. The second section focuses on respondents' country of birth, citizenship status, property ownership in country of origin, sense of belonging to the host and home countries, and their future intention for residence. The third section includes selected socio-demographic characteristics of the participants, for example, sex, age, educational attainments, occupational status, annual income, marital status, number of children, and duration of residence in Canada.

1.5.1.3 Observation and Field Notes

For this study, field experience was especially important in the early phases of the research where ideas were generated and questions were created. Direct field experience was combined with other quantitative and qualitative research methods in order to balance the strengths and weaknesses of different methodologies, leading to a more insightful study. Data from field work were drawn from many informal, unstructured, and unplanned conversations that were held with Palestinian immigrants from all ages, including young children, in a variety of Palestinian social events and settings which gave the researcher a fuller image about their lives and provided indicators of the ways they negotiate their cultural identity in the host society.

CHAPTER 2

**THE PALESTINIAN
CANADIANS IN THE
GREATER TORONTO AREA**

2.1 Introduction

From the refugee camps of Lebanon and Syria to the relative prosperity of life in Canada, the Palestinian Diaspora has been dispersed across the world. The Palestinians can be viewed as being a new group of migrants in the history of Canadian immigration. However, their history of immigration goes back to beginning of the twentieth century. They are also classified as new because they come from a territory that is classified as "non-traditional" in official discourses. Until the 1960s, most immigrants to Canada came from so-called "traditional" countries, i.e. the European nations such as the United Kingdom. However, throughout the 1960s and by 1967, Canadian immigration policy was modified whereby all restrictions on race and ethnic origin were no longer valid and, thus, Canada attracted immigrants from all countries of the globe, including the "non-traditional" countries (Veronis, 2006).

Although Palestinians trace their origins to Palestine, this country does not exist politically. The Palestinian Territories (the West Bank and Gaza) are governed by the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) and, thus, Palestinians who come to Canada are classified as stateless because their country does not exist as a distinct administrative entity. Historic Palestine was located along the eastern shores of the Mediterranean Sea. It forms a narrow strip of land between the Mediterranean in the west and the Jordan River and Dead Sea in the east, surrounded by Lebanon and Syria in the north, Egypt in the southwest, and Jordan in the east.

The majority of the Palestinians lives in the Diaspora and most are refugees. There are six major events in the Palestinian history that have resulted in increased emigration from Palestine. These events are described in detail in Table 2.1. The number of Palestinians in the world is estimated to be 7.7 to 9 million. In the absence of a Palestinian state to issue passports, Palestinians in the Diaspora carry refugee travel documents or passports of their host countries. As a result, reliable data on Palestinian demographics is scarce, yet, demographics are a significant factor in the political discourse on the right of return of the Palestinian refugee and, thus, demographics hold great symbolic weight (Gale, 2008).

2.2   History of Palestinian Migration

Palestinian migration from Palestine can be traced to the beginning of the twentieth century. Palestine had been one of the remote provinces of the Ottoman Empire, economically under-developed but influenced politically by ideas of Arab nationalism, which led to the emergence of a sense of Palestinian identity. The Ottoman Empire collapsed after the First World War, thus, Palestinians immigrated to Europe and the Americas seeking better employment and wealth, or higher education, particularly after being introduced to Western ideas and education through missionary schools (Gale, 2008).

2.2.1 Palestinian Diaspora Communities

Four main groups of the Palestinian Diaspora can be distinguished according to location:
• Palestinians living in Israel, in the West Bank and Gaza,
• Palestinians living in Arab countries,
• Palestinians living in Western countries.

It is not only those who were dispersed from their homeland in 1948 and 1967, or those who live outside the borders of Palestine who are defined as the Palestinian Diaspora. Some scholars, such as Schulz and Hammer (2003), have argued that the Palestinian refugees living in the West Bank and Gaza who were expelled from their homes in 1948, but were still living within the borders of the country, are also defined as belonging to Palestinian Diaspora community. Likewise, the Palestinians living within the borders of the state of Israel are part of the Diaspora because they were subject to "internal displacement" and they became a minority in the new state of Israel. This inner Diaspora has sentiment that should not be discounted and it has also shaped different expressions of Palestinian national and cultural identity. Table 2.2 explains more about the four main groups of the Palestinian Diaspora.

Table 2.1: Major events that increased emigration from Palestine (summarized from Gale, 2008)

The 1936–1939 Arab revolt.	The war of 1947 to 1948	The 1950s and 1960s economy depression	The Six-Day War of 1967	The first and second Intifada (1987, 2000)	The Gulf War of 1991
- The first event caused a larger emigration movement. - Protest against the British mandate and the increasing numbers of Jewish immigrants (supported by Britain), Palestinians were involved in armed clashes. - Thus subject to British persecution, while the economic situation deteriorated further and led especially younger males to seek employment, education, and fortune outside of the Middle East.	- This war resulted in the creation of the State of Israel, simultaneously experienced as Al-nakba (the catastrophe) for Palestinians, - This catastrophe created the Palestinian refugee problem, turning approximately 750,000 Palestinians (75 percent of the Palestinian Arab population) into refugees. - Many of them fled their villages in fear of massacres and battles; others were forcibly evicted or barred from returning to their homes. - Ultimately, most of them were prevented from returning to the territory that became the State of Israel. - They took refuge in the West Bank, Gaza Strip, Lebanon and Syria. - This was the beginning of the problem of Palestinian refugees. When an armistice was signed in early 1949, Israel controlled three-quarters of Palestine (much more than in the 1947 plan of the United Nations). - Arab countries and Palestinians shared political agreement in their refusal to permanently resettle Palestinians in any country other than Palestine.	- The economic situation was extremely depressed, further complicated by political oppression in Israel, where Arab towns and villages stayed under military control. - Palestinians left Israel, as well as the West Bank and Gaza, in search of employment - Some sought employment in the Gulf states, where the discovery of oil demanded skilled laborers and professionals. - On the political level, the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) was founded in 1964 by Palestinians outside of Palestine, in the Diaspora.	- In this war, Israel occupied the West Bank, East Jerusalem, and Gaza, and turned many Palestinians into refugees for the second time. - An estimated 250,000 West Bank residents and 75,000 residents of Gaza were driven from their homes between June 1967 and December 1968. - They fled to Jordan, Egypt, Lebanon, and Syria, often moving several times.	- The negative effects of these two major political events on safety, the political climate, the economy, and education, forced more Palestinians to leave the Occupied Territories and prevented many others from returning. - At other times, Palestinians in Arab countries were caught up in larger political and military conflicts, such as the Lebanese Civil War (1975–1990) and the first Gulf War (1991). - The civil war in Lebanon and the forced removal of the PLO and its military units from Lebanon in 1982 after the Israeli invasion was a major cause of migration. - During the war, Palestinians who sought safety and wanted to escape the volatile situation were accepted by Western countries as refugees or asylum seekers.	-This war resulted in the expulsion of a large number of Palestinians and their families from Kuwait, mainly as punishment for the Palestinian support for Iraq during the war. -Many attempted to settle into a difficult life in Jordan after losing their livelihood and savings in Kuwait. Some held the necessary documents to return to the Occupied Territories, and others sought a new life elsewhere in the world.

Table 2.2: Main groups of Palestinian Diaspora based on location (summarized from Gale, 2008)

Palestinians inside Israel	Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza	Palestinians in Arab countries (Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, Gulf countries)	Palestinians in Western countries
They are less than one million and constitute up to 20% of the total population of Israel. A significant number of the Palestinians in Israel are internally displaced and consider themselves internal refugees. Many of them have repeatedly attempted to return to their villages or resettle in close proximity to their place of origin; they live in unrecognized villages without access to Israeli health care, education, or social welfare services.	They are divided into refugees and non-refugees. In June 2005, the total refugee population of the West Bank (registered with the United Nations Relief Work Agency (UNRWA) was 690,988 with 26 percent (or 182,191) living in nineteen official refugee camps. The number of refugees who need UNRWA assistance has dramatically increased since the beginning of the second Intifada, which led to the Israeli re-invasion of Palestinian territories, economic isolation, and political violence. Since 2000, unprecedented numbers of Palestinian refugees in the West Bank and Gaza have been pushed into poverty.	**Jordan** The largest of the Palestinian Diaspora communities is situated in Jordan and numbers approximately 2.6 million. A significant number of Palestinians in Jordan carry Jordanian passports, have the right to vote and hold office, enjoy full rights to public services such as higher education, and can work in the government sector. The legal, economic, and social situation of Palestinians in Jordan can be considered to be far better than in other countries. **Lebanon** Their number is widely debated and the only numbers available are limited to registered refugees (401,071). Palestinians in Lebanon face the harshest socioeconomic conditions: their Lebanese travel documents are not recognized by most countries in the world, and they must obtain work and travel permits issued by the Lebanese authorities and are not allowed to work in the public sector and a long list of other professions. Changes in existing laws are closely linked to Lebanese domestic politics. Lebanon has rejected any permanent settlement or naturalization of Palestinian refugees. **Syria** The exact number of Palestinians in Syria is unknown, but 426,919 Palestinians are registered as refugees, 27 percent of whom live in the ten UNRWA administered camps. Most refugees enjoy rights similar to those of Syrian citizens, but they are not allowed to vote, hold office, or carry Syrian passports. The travel documents issued by the Syrian government are not recognized by most states. Other Arab countries: Saudi Arabia, the Gulf states, Libya, Egypt, and Iraq. Many of these Palestinians are work migrants who relocated after leaving their initial country of refuge in hope of finding better education and employment.	Their estimated numbers vary widely, but less than 6 percent of the Palestinian people live in the Western Diaspora communities. They are divided into European communities and those in the Americas. Many countries, such as the United States, Canada and Australia, have, because of their status as immigration countries, over the years provided Palestinians with work and residency permits and also citizenship. Others have been accepted as refugees and asylum seekers. European countries tend to accept refugees at times of acute crises, but do not generally favour integration or naturalization of refugees.

2.2.2 Palestinian Cultural and Intellectual Production

The Palestinian cultural and intellectual production is extremely significant in any discussion about the Palestinian Diaspora. Such production exists throughout the world to commemorate the events, such as the 1948 war, that resulted in the expulsion of the Palestinians from their homeland. However, in the absence of a state and national museums, and with Israeli restrictions on school textbooks, these collective memories have been represented by memoirs, oral history, and artistic expression. Palestinian writers, poets, musicians, and visual artists have contributed significantly to the preservation of Palestinian national culture and history (Gale, 2008). Examples of these Palestinian intellectuals and scholars are: Edward Said, Mahmud Darwish, and Fawaz Turki, who have not only shaped the field of Palestine studies, but also contributed to several fields within the social sciences without denying their Palestinian diasporic identities.

2.2.3 The Palestinian Diaspora: The Emergence of a Transnational Community

Diaspora /migration as a metaphor for a globalized world requires a critical approach (Schulz & Hammer, 2003). The term Diaspora is problematic. The term is further complicated by the fact that "Diaspora" has gradually come to be employed to indicate a global condition of mobility, in which immigrants are often viewed as the core (Schulz & Hammer, 2003). Diaspora entails multi-locality (multiple sites of attachment of diasporic members), post-nationality. It signifies a site where "new geographies of identity" are negotiated across multiple senses of belonging. The term is deployed from a transnational perspective in opposition to absolute approaches to migration. The term is often employed to refer to the transnational networks of immigrants (Atkinson et al., 2005). The main distinction between Diasporas and transnational communities is in the nature of relationship with homeland. While Diasporas often have a symbolic relationship with their homeland, transnational communities have real relationships and contacts with their homeland (Portes et al., 1999).

Burman (2010) notes that while the term "migration" is more conducive to the presentation of quantifiable data, the term "Diaspora" is overflowing with intemperate meaning due to its association with exile, loss, and remembrance. Diaspora requires a transnational existence - diffusion and spreading all over the world. There has been recently a shift in emphasis in the definition of Diaspora, from focusing mainly on geographical displacement to presenting diasporic communities as forms of social organization and as a type

of transnational community (Wahlbeck, 2002). Diaspora can be seen as an "overarching" term with a potential to include different and more particular concepts and notions of residing outside the boundaries of home such as exiles, migrants, and refugees (Schulz and Hammer, 2003). The central role of "homeland" is often accentuated in all definitions of Diaspora in the academic literature. The discourses of Diaspora indicate the sense of being part of a continuing transnational network that consists of the homeland, not as something merely left behind, but as a place of belonging and attachment in a "contrapuntal modernity" (Clifford, 1994).

 Thus, as the term Diaspora came to be used more widely for other groups of migrants in the later twentieth century, it has come to represent a specific field of migration studies, namely Diaspora studies. Within this field, there has been great debate concerning the criteria that should be used to define the term. The emerging identifies the following criteria for an immigration group to be considered as Diaspora: interrelated communities in at least two countries; a shared collective attachment to the country of origin; and a sense of collective history of displacement, a common identity combined with some uneasiness in integrating with the host societies. While some scholars require forced displacement or a cause related to a form of trauma, others argue that this, to a great extent, would restrict the definition of the term (Gale, 2008). Undoubtedly, the literature on the history and the present situation of the Palestinians reveal that many of these characteristics describe their case.

On the other hand, defining the Palestinian Diaspora is equally as problematic as defining Diaspora. One dilemma is political and moral. Many Palestinians believe that using this term signifies potential acceptance of their dispersal, and it implies the possibility of permanence and the denial of return (Schulz & Hammer, 2003). Thus, the terms exile and refugee are more prominent as these terms emphasize the forced nature of the dispersal and the necessity of returning home, regardless of how symbolic or realistic this return is. On the other hand, using the term Diaspora for the Palestinian experience allows one to evaluate the Palestinian experience in a global political, social, and cultural framework (Gale, 2008).

In general, the Palestinian Diaspora refers to the dispersal in 1948 and 1967, but not all members of Palestinian diasporic communities are refugees or descendants of refugees (Schulz & Hammer, 2003). After the partial loss of the Palestinian territories in 1948 and the complete loss in 1967, the relationship between members of the Palestinian diasporic communities and their homeland became symbolic. Their social and economic networks have been centered on neighboring countries in which they settled, such as Jor-

dan and Lebanon (Maison, 2007; Durai, 2002; Schulz and Hammer, 2003). However, after the beginning of the peace process and the Oslo Agreement, which led to the establishment of the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) on some territories of the occupied land, many who were left in the Diaspora have begun to focus their attention again on their homeland, Palestine. This transformation of the homeland has led to the emergence of a Palestinian transnational community, representing part of the Diaspora, particularly those who migrated to Europe and North America after the displacement of Palestinian people in 1948 and 1967. They gained citizenship in these host societies, which normally have provided them with increased international security and mobility. Thus, they have been able to maintain real ties and physical contacts with the homeland, while desiring to live permanently in countries such as Canada for a better quality of life (Dorai, 2002).

Building on the literature on transnationalism, the following paragraphs demonstrate that Palestinian immigrants in Canada possess many of the characteristics of a transnational community. The main difference between diasporic and transnational communities is in the nature of their relationship with the home country. The relationship is usually symbolic for diasporic communities and real for the transnational communities. On the other hand, under the definition of Glick Schiller et al. (1992, p.1) of "transmigrant" as people who "take actions, make decisions, and feel concerns" within social fields that cross geographic, cultural and political borders, Palestinian immigrants can be considered transmigrants. Based on the definition of Portes et al. (1999) of transmigrants, Palestinian Canadians are transmigrants as they lead dual lives and are bilingual. Furthermore, according to Dorai (2002), transnatioanlism for Palestinian members of diasporic communities minimizes the risks related to their unstable situation, while maximizing the advantages of the economic, legal and education spheres. Thus, their transnational practices are more likely to take place from a privileged situation. For Palestinian Canadians, "home country" might be taken to include both Palestine and neighbouring countries (Lebanon, Syria, and Jordan) from which they have later departed.

However, while the Palestinian elite (those who have the resources to respond) may be able to move relatively freely, on the basis of dual nationality and passports issued in Europe and North America, the movement of other Diaspora Palestinians is much more severely restricted. They need a visa to leave and to enter their country of settlement. In Lebanon, for example, many do not have passports; they have only travel documents issued by the Lebanese authorities and, as a result, many countries refuse to give them visas or even to let them transit through their territories (Dorai, 2002).

Transnationalism in its broadest sense entails increasing mobility of people. Olwig (1997 qtd. in Riccio, 2002, p. 69) stated that "mobile people often can be seen to develop an attachment to a specific place that plays a central role as a common source of identity in their global network of relations, but which may not be their place of residence". Within this context, the situation of restricted mobility of Diaspora Palestinians represents a prime debate about transnationalism and constitutes a significant challenge to this construct as many Palestinian Diasporas maintain links to their homeland only through memories and by preserving ties with family members. It is worth mentioning, however, that any progress in the Peace Process in the Middle East and the normalization of relations between Israel and Arab countries may enable more Palestinian diasporic communities to become transnational (Dorai, 2002). Transnationalism would enable them to establish effective relationships with their homeland and to engage in more visits and travel.

2.3 Palestinian Immigrants in Canada

Information in the form of published data on Palestinian immigrants in Canada and in Toronto area is not available. Because of their stateless status on entering Canada and dispersion in several Arab and non-Arab countries, it is hard to tell with accuracy the immigration of Palestinians to Canada or to create a precise profile of their economic, social, and cultural life.

Palestinians might enter Canada as holders of passports from a number of countries, including Egypt, Israel, Lebanon, and Jordan. This condition of statelessness leads to a considerable underestimation of the size of the Palestinian community in Canada. However, Dr. Esam Yamani, the leader of the Palestinian House, estimated the number of Palestinians in the Greater Toronto Area alone to be between 20,000 and 30,000.

According to data published by the Canadian government itself, the number of the "stateless" immigrants coming from the Arabian Gulf and other Arab countries in the period 1991–96 was more than 6,200. It is reasonably assumed that the majority, if not all, were Palestinians. This is further supported by considering the number of immigrants who have entered Canada from Jordan in 1991–96 which was 3,847 immigrants. As many Palestinians in Jordan have been granted Jordanian citizenship, it is likely that a good percentage of the Jordanian immigrants to Canada were in fact Palestinians. Moreover, the published data also show that there is a high number of immigrants from the countries of the Arabian Gulf, including Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Oman, and Qatar. It may be assumed that the majority of these immigrants are Palestinians as the Palestinian popula-

tion in those countries totals about three million. This assumption is further supported by the fact that the native citizens of these oil-rich countries are not easily tempted to migrate as they enjoy vast political power over other groups living within their boundaries, in addition to an incomparable standard of living which includes free education, free medical care, and government financial assistance for housing (Shuraydi, 2009).

Arab Canadians, including Palestinians, have prospered quite well in terms of associational life which is reflected particularly in the number of non-profit and voluntary organizations that the group has created in different cities. For example, there are nine organizations in the province of Ontario alone, including three in Toronto. Despite the relatively large number of associations, the Canadian Arab Federation (CAF) coordinates the work of the Palestinians through the Palestinian House in Mississauga (Shuraydi, 2009).

2.3.1 The Demographic Characteristics of Palestinian Canadians in the Greater Toronto Area

As mentioned earlier, Information in the form of published data about the demographic characteristics of Palestinian Canadians is not available. Their stateless status when entering Canada makes it difficult to construct an accurate profile of their characteristics. Thus, this study is the first that documents such demographic characteristics about the Palestinian Canadians in the GTA. Data are presented on sex, age, education, income, occupation, and family type.

Palestinians may enter into Canada as holders of passports from a number of countries, such as Jordan and Israel, or holding travel documents from such countries as Egypt, Lebanon and Syria where they were permanent residents. Accordingly, this situation of statelessness for the Palestinians immigrants results in a considerable underestimate of their actual size in Canada and in the research area, the GTA. However, the Arab and Palestinian Organizations in Toronto, the Palestine House, and the Canadian Arab Federation estimate that there are about 20,000 to 30,000 Palestinian Canadians in the GTA (Interview with Yamani, 2009).

It is helpful before presenting the demographic data collected about the Palestinian Canadians in the survey, to discuss the reasons that motivate Palestinians to immigrate to Canada. Based on the interview with Dr. Esam Yamani, the leader of the Palestine House in Mississauga, and with the Palestinian activist Maison Tabar, Palestinians were motivated to immigrate to Canada for different reasons. The most important reason is the search for a safe life for

their children and families; this is mainly because of the political instability in Palestine or the Arab countries they lived in. Thus, the main motivation is to escape persecution and discrimination in those countries. By immigrating to Canada, the Palestinians are looking for freedom, mobility, equality, justice and democracy. Their point of departure in many cases was not Palestine. After their displacement from their lands in 1948 and 1967, they lived in refugee camps in Arabic countries, such as Jordan, Lebanon and Syria, and then the elite moved to the Gulf countries looking for better jobs. Eventually, many of them migrated to Canada benefiting from the Canadian decision to accept potential investors and skilled workers as immigrants. Palestinians are looking to become citizens of a country that enjoys international credibility and whose citizenship provides international protection and increased mobility. However, Palestinians are also motivated to immigrate to Canada by other traditional reasons for immigration, such as to search for better financial opportunities, to join family members and relatives, or to obtain academic degrees in Canadian universities. The demographic characteristics of the Palestinian Canadians included in the sample are shown in Table 2.3.

Table 2.3: Demographic characteristics of the Palestinian Canadians in the sample.

Socioeconomic characteristic	Number of responses	Percentage
Gender:		
Male	129	56.1
Female	101	43.9
Marital Status:		
Married	148	65.8
Single	67	29.8
Divorced	6	2.7
Widowed	4	1.8
Age (years)		
18-30	67	30.4
31-40	59	26.3
41-50	50	22.3
51-60	34	15.2
61 and over	14	5.8
Number of Children		
0	69	30.9
1	12	5.4
2	36	16.1
3	41	18.4
4	57	25.6
More than 5	8	3.6

Sex Ratio

Table 2.3 shows sex ratios of 1.27, with nearly equal numbers of males and females (129 and 101 respectively), the sex ratio is close to being balanced. This may reflect the importance of family reunion and family migration for Palestinian immigrants in Canada. Each of the characteristics of the Palestinian Canadian respondents is discussed separately below.

Age

The age distribution of the Palestinians in the sample (Table 2.3) shows that Palestinian Canadians are mostly of young age groups as 30.4% of them are between the ages 18-30, while 26% are between 31-40 years old. This may reflect the Canadian immigration policy of attracting primarily young and educated workers and business investors whereby the country's demand for skilled and professional workers has been increasingly met by immigration. On the other hand, the smaller percentage of older Palestinian immigrants (5.8% are over 61 years old) reflects the family reunification policy of the Canadian immigration system.

Number of Children

The sample shows (Table 2.3) that 25.6% of respondents have four children, while 18.4 % have three children, and 16.1% have two children; moreover, there are only 3.6% of the families in the sample who indicated that they had more than five children. Overall, this is a good reflection of the extended family structure which is part of an Arab's tradition and family values. On the other hand, these results show that 69.1% of the respondents have children, while only 30.9% of respondents have no children, which may have implications for the Palestinian immigrants' travel patterns. First, it is more likely that the Palestinian immigrants' travel is family-oriented. Second, children may determine the time of travel and, particularly, the length of stay while visiting Palestine.

Education

Table 2.4: Education

Highest level of Education	Number of responses	Percentage
Primary school	3	1.3
Middle school	11	4.8
High school	58	25.4
University	128	56.1
Post-graduate university	28	12.3

In relation to education, Table 2.4 shows that the majority of Palestinian Canadians are well-educated. For example, 68.4% of the sample have at least a university degree (56.1% of the sample have at least a Bachelor's degree, 12.3% have post- graduate degrees), while only 31.5% of the sample have below college qualifications. These outcomes seem to be related to the fact that university qualification is one of the main immigration requirements for Palestinians to gain entry to Canada. On the other hand, Palestinian traditions do give high weight to educational attainment and often parents care significantly about the educational achievements of their children. This may explain the high percentage of Palestinian Canadians with academic degrees. On the other hand, these findings are consistent with the fact that Palestinians have the highest literacy rate in the Arab countries. The majority of Palestinian immigrants in Canada are well educated (Interview with Yamani, 2009). The high education of Palestinian Canadians, as represented in the sample results, may indicate that they may have high incomes. This, in turn, has implications for their propensity to travel, as high discretionary income may be used for overseas travelling or more frequent visits to their dominant destination of travel.

Occupational Status

Table 2.5: Occupation

Occupation	Number of responses	Percentage
Self-employed	37	16.2
Government employee	23	10.1
Company employee	30	13.2
Professional	64	28.1
Teacher	6	2.6
Student	23	10.1
Retired	27	11.8
Unemployed	11	4.8
Housewife	7	3.1
Other		

In terms of economic status, Table 2.5 shows that 16.2% of the Palestinians in the sample are self-employed, 28% are teachers, 13.2% are professionals, 10.1 % are students and only 11.8% is unemployed. This is related to the well-educated background of the Palestinians as discussed earlier, and only 7% of the 43.9 % of the females who participated in the survey, described themselves as housewives.

Future Intention of Residence

Table 2.6: Future Intention of Residence

Future intention of residence	Respondents' Count	%
Canada	135	58.7
Palestine	61	26.5
Other	30	13.0
Total	226	100

As Table 2.6 shows, only 26.5% of the respondents consider Palestine as their future place of residence. Thus, the question that can be raised here is why there is a low percentage of Palestinians who intend to leave Canada and make Palestine their future place of residence, even though 86.3% of them

indicated that they have strong and very strong belonging to Palestine. There are two main reasons for this response. First, the Palestinians Diaspora after the wars of 1947 and 1967 and its result i.e. the creation of the state of Israel that turned approximately 750,000 Palestinians into refugees and prevented them from returning to their homeland that became the state of Israel. Even after they are granted Canadian citizenship, they can only enter Palestine as tourists and not as citizens. According to claims of the Israeli authorities, the Palestinian Diaspora does not have any right of permanent residence in Palestine because they do not have Palestinian or Israeli citizenship. Thus, these authorities treat them as foreigners and they can enter Palestine only as tourists (visitors) after they get their visa on their Canadian passports. This visa is often issued to be valid for three or six months at the most and, after that, they have to leave Palestine. However, one Palestinian family that was interviewed indicated that they took the risk and stayed in Palestine after the expiration of their visas but they got caught at Israeli checkpoints, which are numerous in Palestine, and then they were directly forced to leave the country so they travelled back to Canada.

The second reason is that even those Palestinians who have Palestinian or Israeli citizenships are not willing to return to Palestine permanently because of the main political events that have taken place in Palestine, for example, the first Intifada in 1987 and the second Intifada in 2000. These events had adverse negative consequences on security, the economy, education and the political atmosphere. The deteriorated conditions prevailing in Palestine forced many Palestinians to emigrate from their homeland and prevented others from returning. Therefore, Palestinian Canadians opt to live permanently in Canada to have an enhanced standard of living for their children and to enjoy freedom and a better quality of life in their host country.

2.3.2 Palestine as a Destination for the Overseas Travel of Palestinian Canadians

As revealed from the survey, travel back to the home country is significant to many respondents. The survey results shown in Table 2.7 reveal that Palestine is the dominant destination for the majority of the Palestinian Canadians who travel overseas as 59.8% of respondents indicated that homeland (Palestinian Territories (West Bank and Gaza), Jerusalem, and the Arabic cities inside Israel) is the dominant destination in their overseas travel.

Table 2.7: Destination of Palestinian-Canadians overseas travel

Destination of travel	Respondents' Count	%
Palestine	135	59.7
Other	91	40.3
Total	226	100

A further observation regarding Table 2.7 is that the other outbound destinations for Palestinian immigrants are Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, UAE and Saudi Arabia. There is a clear evidence in this outcome that these and similar destinations are also related to countries as Syria, Jordan and Lebanon host millions of Palestinian refugees. As shown in Table 2.8 the journeys to Palestine are for the purposes of visiting friends and families as more than three-quarters (77%) indicated that the purpose of travelling is to "visit friends and relatives", which highlights the strong relationship between migration and tourism.

Table 2.8: The purpose of travel to Palestine

Why travel to Palestine	Respondents' Count	%
to visit friends and relatives	177	77
to maintain social and cultural ties	38	16.5
to measure changes and transformations	17	7.4
other	16	7

Furthermore, 16.5% of the Palestinian Canadians travel to Palestine for the purposes of maintain social and culture ties, while only 7.4 travel to measure changes and transformation that have taken place at homeland, and lastly 7% travel for other purposes which respondents indicated as participating in a political meeting or event.

2.4 Summary

The literature on Palestinian immigration history and Diaspora communities describes their experiences of dispersal and demonstrates the forced nature of their dispersal and the intent to return to the homeland. The history of Palestinian immigration to Canada is traced back to the collapse of the Ottoman Empire after the First World War. Palestinians immigrated to Europe and the Americas including Canada in search of better lives, opportunities and wealth and, in many cases, Palestinians sought higher education in Canada after being exposed to Western ideas and education introduced to them by missionary schools. Many major events have led to increased Palestinian

emigration from Palestine, and Palestinian Diaspora communities are classified according to their locations to four main groups as discussed earlier.

Because of their stateless status, it is difficult to describe with precision the immigration of Palestinians to Canada since Palestinians enter Canada as holders of passports from a number of other countries. Thus, this condition leads to a significant underestimate of the size of the Palestinian Diaspora community in the country. However, the Director of the Palestinian House estimates the size of the Palestinian community in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) to be 20,000.

This chapter has provided evidence of the suitability of the Palestinian community in Canada, particularly in Toronto, to be an appropriate case for investigation in this study. The Palestinian Diaspora represents "deterritorilaized communities" seeking identity in a territory which is their lost homeland and which is a focal point of this identity. The Palestinian case allows the researcher to investigate how transnational activities are related to the creation of transnational identities in the deterritorialized context of dispersal. Events in recent years emphasize the urgent need to study the situation of the Palestinian Diaspora have increased the emergence of transnational Palestinian communities, particularly in countries such as Canada. Thus, both the meaning and the function of the Diaspora have changed. Furthermore, the abandonment of the Diaspora case in the Oslo peace negotiations that resulted in a crisis between the Palestinian Diaspora and their Palestinian National Authority (PNA) was solved only after the extensive consideration and attention given by the Palestinian authority to the Diaspora issues throughout the Taba peace negotiations in Egypt in December 2000. However, the failure of these negotiations has, to certain extent, resulted in conflicted perspectives on how to deal with the Palestinian Diaspora case. Such circumstances emphasize the crucial needs to undertake studies and thorough research on the nature of` the transnational lives of the Palestinian immigrants and the significance of notions such as "homeland" and "identity" to them, as well as to shed light on the prospects or desires of Palestinian Canadians to integrate into the Canadian host societies to the extent that a return is no longer important. This study may be considered as a foundation for further research about the experiences, mobility and the nature of the transnational activities of the Palestinian Diaspora.

CHAPTER 3

RECREATING A PALESTINIAN IDENTITY IN THE DIAPSORA

This chapter discusses the social, cultural, and political meanings of the transnational activities of the Palestinian Canadians through which ties with homeland are maintained. After outlining both the conceptual background of transnationalism and diasporic communities in earlier chapters, as well as defining the Palestinian Diaspora, this chapter links these terms to tourism by examining the transnational activities and maintain ties with the country of origin of the Palestinian Diaspora in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA). The materials presented here are drawn from 27 interviews with Palestinian Canadians.

3.1 The Role of Family and Kinship in Shaping Palestinian Identity in the Diaspora

The loss of their homeland, partially in 1948 and completely in 1967, led to the dispersal of the Palestinian people, including the separation of family members. This geographical separation in many families involves more than four countries in the Arab world, North America, Latin America, Australia, and Europe. Despite this geographical dispersal, or maybe because of it, the emotional bonds between Palestinian family members remain strong and Palestinians are significantly connected to their families. The following sections discuss the extent to which family ties increase the propensity of Palestinian Canadians to travel, and the ways these ties connect places.

As identified in Schulz and Hammer (2003, p. 171): "Transnationalism as a social morphology is…first and foremost constituted through kinship ties". Thus, maintaining family ties is one of the most important transnational activities that take the forms of return visits, spending vacations, making phone calls, and sending gifts or remittances. All these are transnational activities that are considered by Palestinian immigrants in order to keep the family together despite the geographical distances that separate family members. As identified in Schulz and Hammer (2003), the family has been the main institution that has contributed vitally in creating a Palestinian identity and in re-establishing a Palestinian community in the Diaspora.

Based on the data obtained from the interviews, most respondents explained that family is very central to their lives and of prime importance to them. They consider that family means homeland and family represents the ties and the attachment they have to the country of their ancestors. They explained that despite the long and the hard journey to Palestine, the best part of their visit is staying with the family. Mariam, for example, explained how important the relation to the family was to her:

I love Palestine because it is my family's roots. I have a big family in Ramallah. Distance will weaken my relations to my family if I don't go visit so often. I always take my children with me because if I don't, my family may forget about them. I have three brothers who live in the US, a sister who is in Dubai. We made an agreement that every year all of us spend the summer with our parents and our older brothers in Ramallah. This is the least that we can do to defeat the distance between us and feel that we are still one family.

(Mariam, Missassauga, August 1, 2009).

Nancy mentioned that having family and friends in Palestine was what motivated her to travel there. She mentioned that it is her family and friends that have always made her attached to Palestine even though she has a good life in Canada. She said:

If I go there it's going to be for a visit not to relocate there again. I love there, it is part of my heart …. All the time I miss back home. I miss my family and friends.

(Nancy, Toronto, June 6, 2009).

On the other hand, Maher, one of the Palestinian Canadians who came to Canada from Lebanon, mentioned that he has never visited Palestine because he has no family there. His family is living in a refugee camp in Lebanon. He further explained that, family is the reason that makes Lebanon his dominant destination when he travels overseas, although he has no sense of belonging to this country that he was born in. This further suggests that family ties are strongly shaping the Palestinian Canadian travel patterns.

Furthermore, loss of homeland, diasporisation, fragmentation, denial, and social disintegration make the family the primary source of attachment, loyalty, and identity. To many Palestinian Canadians, home is family and family is home. Family is the source to which they turn for emotional support, encouragement, stability, and security. Many of the Palestinian respondents expressed that when they were in trouble, they could only depend on a relative to help them out. They indicated that they derive their security from their close association with family members. Aseel, who lives with her husband and four children in Etobicoke, described how she always had higher security and comfort with her sisters in Palestine, rather than her friends in Canada. She said:

Whenever things go wrong here in Canada or I feel sad, I have to call someone from my family; usually my mother or one of my sisters. Talking to them always makes me feel better. I am the youngest and they still worry about me as if I am still a child. I like it when they do that, at least I feel that someone cares about me. They always give me the courage and the strength to overcome the difficulties I face here. The same thing when I go visit them, the wonderful time I spend with then and the love and care they give me always makes me return to Canada with more strength. It is like a battery that needs charging, and for me it is only my family who can give me this power. I visit them almost every year or every two years. I have many friends here in Canada, Canadians and Arabs, but no-one understand me the way my family does. Sometimes I feel that feelings of people in this country are frozen like its snow in the winter, people here are nice but busy. Everyone has his own concerns and is busy with his own life and has no time to care about others. I am glad that my family always cares about me.

(Aseel, Etobicoke, August 22, 2009).

The significance of the family as the primary source for social security explains the importance of maintaining contacts with family to Palestinian Canadians. As Schulz and Hammer (2003) suggested, family and kin operate as a "social institution" for members of the diasporic and transnational communities, which helps them to manage the transformative experiences and adapt to their new lives and new societies. Some Palestinian Canadians even immigrated to Canada to join kin or family members who had successfully made Canada their new home and it was the relative or the family member who helped in their adaptation to the new life in Canada and assisted in finding housing and a job. Ahmad, a civil engineer, came to Canada as a landed immigrant with his wife and children in 2005 and it was his brother who was also an engineer who assisted him in finding a job and a house. He explained:

I came to Canada because my brother is here. He encouraged me to immigrate to Canada. I knew that I can rely on him if things go wrong. I stayed in his house for two months until I was able to find a job and rent a house. Living with him and his family made it much easier for me, for my wife, and for my children to adapt to our new life in Canada. My wife did not like Canada at the beginning but it is my sister-in-law who always encouraged her and told my wife that all the kids like living in Canada. My brother lives now in Windsor because he has got a new job there but I always go visit him with my wife and children. Without his support we never could make it here. We both miss our family in Palestine and we always travel back to see them.

(Ahmad, North York, June 20, 2009).

Whereas human capital is inside individuals' heads and economic capital is

in their bank accounts, social capital lies in the structure of their relationships. To acquire social capital, an individual must be connected with others, and it is not himself but those others, who are the real source of his/her benefit (Portes, 1998, p. 7). Ahmad's case represents the role of social capital in the Palestinian case. Whenever Palestinians are forced, because of the deteriorating conditions in their homeland, to immigrate to welfare states, they significantly need information and money from their transnational social network.

On the other hand, creating a Palestinian collective memory in the Diaspora is a family business. The family memories are passed on orally form one generation to the next. The family plays a main role in transmitting memories of the catastrophe and the image of the lost homeland, and the life in homeland before the catastrophe. Many Palestinian Canadians of the first generation whom I interviewed, particularly those who have grown up in refugee camps in Jordan, Syria, and Lebanon, told me that they have been always telling their children the stories that they heard from their parents, grandparents, and other elder people who were living with them. Thus, the first generation of Palestinian Canadians is educating their children, who were born or raised in Canada, about their homeland. Then, the younger generation, in turn, will become part of the process of the restoration of Palestinian history. According to Schulz (1999, pp.100-101), this reiteration of the experience of Palestine through "acts of memory" make Palestine tangible with a high degree of compassion. As a result, many children born in the Diaspora can describe the intricate details of their family's house, such as the texture of the bricks, the location of an olive tree in the back garden or the smell of a lemon tree in the spring. Abed, a recent immigrant described his childhood memories in Palestine before he became a refugee in Jordan. He even showed me on his computer, using "Google Earth", the land that used to belong to his family in an old village in Palestine called Ramla. He also told me how his old village was completely destroyed and an Israeli settlement was built there. Ramla is the name of an old Palestinian village that exists nowhere but in the memories of the Palestinian Diaspora, like Abed who was born there. He said:

I still remember everything about Palestine. I was 5 years old when my family left their home to live in a refugee camp in Jordan after the war. I still remember the orange gardens in Palestine, the houses, my father's store, even the taste of the Kharoob trees…. I still remember when the Israeli planes hit the bridge that we walked on to go to the other side of the river. I even remember the reflection of the moonlight in these holes in the bridge and how I was about to fall into one hole except my father held my hand at the last minute… Palestine is the "symbol" for home, Palestine is the dream, and

Palestine is the homeland…. I always tell my three daughters about Palestine and how their great grandfather refused to leave his land during the war in 1948 while we all ran away… he stayed on his land and died there… I am waiting to get the Canadian passport so I can visit my uncles in my homeland with my wife and daughters.

(Abed, Mississauga, June 13, 2009 emphasis added).

In conclusion, I can argue that family plays a vital role in the lives of the Palestinian Canadians in the GTA. Family and kinship are playing a considerable role in developing transnational practices through which Palestinian Canadians seek to solidify and rejuvenate these ties.

3.2 Maintaining an Active Social and Cultural Network at Homeland

Travel to Palestine allows the Palestinian migrants to maintain social and cultural connections in the natal home. Many respondents return periodically in order to rejuvenate their social relations and keep these relations alive. This, according to Duval (2003), seems to capture best the essence of the theme of maintaining social and cultural ties with the natal home. Maintaining ties with friends and family in Palestine by periodic return visits is considered critical and important so Palestinian immigrants will not be treated as strangers by their family and friends when they come back. For example, Layan, whose husband decided to return home to Palestine after living in Toronto for 15 years, explained in a follow-up phone interview, her pain when she was treated as a stranger, even by her family and relatives, when she returned to Palestine after 15 years of immigration in Canada without a single trip during these long years. On the other hand, her husband, Kareem, was totally welcomed because he used to visit every two or three years. She said:

I felt like a stranger, everything has changed. I guess 15 years is long. My family until now treats me as a stranger. Sometimes I feel that they are mad at me because I did not visit before. They don't say it but I can see it in their eyes. All my friends that I used to have before I left to Canada either left the country or are not interested anymore in my friendship. For them I am a stranger, a person that they never know. I was 25 years old when I left and now I am 40. I guess I am different.

(Layan, Toronto, June 20, 2009).

Layan's case may related to the issue of social capital where there is emphasis on the significance of face-to-face interaction. Social capital will wither away if investments in social relations cease. As Layan failed to visit her family and friends in the homeland during her lengthy absence, she felt like a stranger when she returned. On the other hand, her husband, who returned frequently during his absence and thus maintained face-to-face interaction with his social network, fitted in right away. However, there is a matter of gender that also plays role in Layan's case as explained later.

Duval (2004) discussed how return visits facilitate return migration. For those Palestinian immigrants considering returning to live permanently in Palestine, return visits are important. Some respondents, particularly recent immigrants such as Saher, Kanan and Khawla, explained how important it was for them to stay engaged in their societies in the country of origin in case they were not able to integrate into Canadian society and decided to return to Palestine. They all considered the best way to stay engaged is by making periodic return visits.

On the other hand, my respondents considered that maintaining ties with the natal home is significant to their children as well. Those who can afford it take their children with them on every visit so their family members can see the children. The importance of maintaining a connection between children and the extended family members in Palestine was illustrated by Maison as she said:

I visit my family and friends in Ramallah every two years. I take my children with me so my family and my kids get to know each other and can be familiar with each other. I have many relatives there… my mother is too old to travel, and my sisters and brothers do not come to visit us in Canada; they can't afford it and travelling for me with the Canadian passport is easier than their travel with their Palestinian passports, so I don't mind to travel to see them with my kids…. I always think of the future. I may die suddenly while I am living in Canada, then it is my family who would take care of my kids, and most likely my kids will be living with them in Palestine, so it's important that my kids be familiar with their family in Palestine and with their Palestinian society. That's why I keep this relationship alive.

(Maison, Missaussaga, May 16, 2009).

These findings that travel for ethnic and family reunion is motivated by a desire to maintain an active social and cultural network in the homeland are in line with other studies, such as Nguyen and King (1998) who examined the Vietnamese immigrants in Australia, Basch et al. (1994, p. 239) who ex-

amined the Caribbean nationals living in the Caribbean, Duval (2004) who examined the Commonwealth Eastern Caribbean Diaspora in Toronto. Thus, it is concluded here that the travel of Palestinian Canadians to their homeland is underpinned by a deep meaning that amalgamates the maintenance of social and cultural ties with their natal home, in addition to the desire for family and ethnic reunion.

3.3 Maintaining Culture, Traditions, and Language

The frequent trips of Palestinian Canadians to Palestine for the purposes of visiting family and friends are a vital attribute of the transnational social fields in which my interviewees and their families are embedded. The back-and-forth movements in these fields shape the transnational orientations among my Palestinian respondents. However, these trips are also used by Palestinian immigrants as a means to maintain their culture, traditions, and language. Most of my interviewees who have children indicated that it is very important for them, whenever the conditions in their country allow in terms of security and safety, to bring their children with them when they visit their families in Palestine. This is mainly to provide them with knowledge about the Palestinian identity and to create a sense of attachment to Palestine as the homeland. Therefore, many of my respondents explained that they visit Palestine to help their children maintain their culture and traditions, which they consider to be important. Aseel, for example, described her return trips to Palestine as maintaining the culture she grew up with in her home and she wanted her four children to grow up with the same culture. She said:

We have our own culture and traditions that I want my children to learn. The only way to do it is not only by talking about it. If they don't live it, feel it, they will never learn it. The only way to make them live it is to take them home and spend the summer vacation with my family. Back there in Palestine, they can see how children respect parents, love the family and care about them more than they care about their friends. The longer I live here in Canada, the more self-focused my children are. They are more and more caring about themselves and their happiness. For them, parents are only there to satisfy their requests and they never think of their obligations toward their parents, as love, care, and respect. I take them to Ramallah so they can see how much my nieces and nephews care about their moms and dads, brothers, sisters, relatives and how much family is important. Here, children care about their friends more than they care about their family.

(Aseel, Etobicoke, August 22, 2009).

Given the fact that many Palestinian Canadians travel to Palestine with their children, when it is safe to do so, summer is the most frequent time of the visits of Palestinian Canadians. Some of them even mentioned that they have siblings in the USA or in the Gulf countries and they visit in the summer so children can meet with their cousins and the family enjoys reunion. Furthermore, all the Palestinian children I met in my fieldwork indicated that they enjoy the summer vacations there, meeting cousins, being spoiled by uncles, aunts, and grandparents. They even told me stories about how their grandfather took them every day to a candy or a toy store to get something, and how grandmother cooked for them every day the kind of food that they like, and they also talked about spending great times with their cousins of the same age.

On the other hand, as mentioned in Chapter 6, children affect time of travel and, in the Palestinian Canadians' case, most families travel to Palestine in the school summer vacations. Regarding the duration of stay there, it depends on the political stability in the country as they leave the minute they feel danger to their children. However, in most cases, as indicated in the survey results, Palestinian Canadian families do not stay there for long periods, usually a month or less as a precaution to any risks. For example, the travel agent I interviewed mentioned that, whenever his Palestinian customers book a flight, they ask about the possibilities of changing the return date. He said that he is aware of the uncertainties prevailing in their homeland and these are reflected in clients' indecision about when to come back to Toronto. On the other hand, he mentioned that they usually book their trips for a month. He frequently receives phone calls from them to make changes in the return date, either making it later if the conditions are stable to allow an extended stay, or earlier if a crisis takes place.

Palestinian Canadians are living within two value systems which are not necessarily competing: the Palestinian and the Canadian. Many of the Palestinian respondents recognize that the behaviour of their children born in Canada is influenced by Canadian values and, as a consequence, they expressed their fear for significant weakening in their parental authority. To them, taking their children to their country of origin is a way of maintaining their culture so children will be exposed to the Palestinian traditions. The more the children become familiar with their Palestinian culture, the less conflict will arise between parents and children. Conflict often arises because of the two value systems as, for example, about pre-marital sex, which is totally unacceptable to Palestinian Canadians and contrary to their culture. Preserving culture through return visits also help the Palestinian Canadians to protect their children from undesired influences from their friends. Thus, in their struggle to define new behavioural norms for their children, they travel fre-

quently, or whenever they get the chance, with their children to visit their family and friends and spend some time with them.

Importantly, the more the children adopt "mixing and matching" from the Palestinian and Canadian norms, the more the decision to stay in Canada is enhanced. That is, Palestinian Canadians are willing to stay in Canada as long as their children are not totally assimilated within the Canadian culture. For example, Maison, the Palestinian activist who is the mother of an 18 year old daughter said:

I can't imagine that one day my daughter will approach me and tell me "Bye mom, I want to move out and live with my boyfriend". This will get me a heart attack. That's why, whenever I can go visit my family in Palestine, I take her with me so she will live our culture and know that we are different. This does not mean that I don't want her to learn anything from Canadians. They have so many good things to learn from, such as their honesty, their good manners and behaviour. Canadians are so polite, organized, and they don't interfere in your own life. Everyone in this country knows his limits, and the best thing about them is that they respect the rules and the law. Many of these good matters we miss in Palestine… see, did you got my point?, I want my children to learn the good things from the Palestinian culture and the good things from the Canadian culture so when they grow up they will be good Palestinians and good Canadians.

(Maison, Mississauga, May 16, 2009).

Furthermore, Palestinian Canadians, as do other Arabs living in Canada, have their concerns regarding authoritarian parent-child relationships. Because of these concerns, they do not want to take the risks associated with granting more freedom to their children in the Canadian context and taking a more liberal view of bringing them up. Most of the Palestinian respondents expressed their concerns about drugs, pre-marital sex, loss of culture, and violence. Some mothers complained about the times in Canada when they feel that their children are becoming their parents.

This is what Rumbaut and Portes (2001) discussed in their book Ethnicities: Children of Immigrants in America. They described this situation as role reversal which takes place in immigrants' houses when children may turn out to be, in a very real sense, their parents' parents. The reason is that children's acculturation often progresses much faster than their parents. Thus, information on which to build important family resolutions is sometimes dependent on children's understanding and knowledge. This is simply because they speak the language of the host society and know the culture better

than their parents, particularly mothers who stay at home and do not inter-act with the dominant group in Canadian society. For example, Khawla, a landed immigrant and a mother to three teenagers told me how sad she felt whenever her children told her what to do when she went out with them, she said:

Sometimes, because my children speak English much better than me and because they know more about the Canadian society than I do, they tell me what to do or what to say, for example, they say: "mom, this is the way you do this", or "mom, this is what you say". I totally hate it when they do that. They make me feel that I am the child and they are the parents. When I go with them to Palestine, I am the boss all the time.

(Khawla, Toronto, May 30, 2009).

Furthermore, Palestinian respondents who have children who were born in Canada expressed their concerns regarding the relative lack of emotional connectedness with their children. The Palestinian family usually has strong ties: parents take care of the well-being of their children so they expect their children to take care of them in their old age. However, in order to make these family ties stronger, the parents, particularly the mothers, elect to spend their summer vacation with their families in Palestine. Aseel told me how important it is to her to take her four children to Ramallah, when it is safe for her children to travel to Palestine, so her children can see how her nieces and nephews take care of their grandmother who was 78 years old. For example, she told me how upset she was one day because she was sick and she had to go to the hospital and her thirteen year old daughter did not show the care that she desired to have from her.

Based on the data obtained from the interviews, in the families that men-tioned that they frequently visit Palestine and stay there for the summer vacation, their children are able to understand and to speak the Arabic lan-guage much better than those families who do not take their children. For example, Mariam mentioned that, in her summer vacations she and her chil-dren spend time with her family-in-law and this was the main reason why her children, who were aged 14 and 16, did not lose their mother-tongue. She further highlighted that, because her children maintained the Arabic language, they never felt like outsiders when they visited Palestine and they were more able to understand everything happening around them, even the traditions celebrated at home. This is in consistent with Louie's (2006) con-clusion that maintaining the mother-tongue helps the second-generation immigrants to feel part of the home formed by their parents and facilitates their transnational practices.

Respondents expressed that the lack of English fluency of the parents and the lack of Arabic fluency of the children were key obstacles to family com-munication, particularly about complex issues. Aseel, for example, described the disappointment of her thirteen year old daughter because of her inabil-ity to express herself in Arabic. I got the chance to ask her daughter, Leen, about it and she told me that she understood Arabic but she could not speak Arabic so, on many occasions, she found herself facing extreme difficulties in communicating with her mother, particularly when she needed to ask about important matters which she described as "mother-daughter talk". This is simply because she did have the vocabulary and her mother would have a hard time understanding her in English. She then told me that she liked going back to Palestine so she can learn more Arabic from her cousins because even her Palestinian or Arab friends that she had in Canada always speak English with her. These outcomes are in line with Louie (2006) who discussed the dynamics of the parent-child relationship among Chinese and Dominican immigrants and concluded that the second-generation Domini-cans were able to maintain Spanish language because they were back-and-forth travelers.

Transnational migrants are less likely to experience cultural gaps when they return to live in Palestine. For example, Layan, who lived in Toronto for 15 years without a visit to Palestine, eventually returned to live in Ramallah in response to her husband's determination. During a follow-up interview by phone from Palestine, she discussed the difficulties she faced with the Pal-estinian culture after her return. She suggested that the transition was even harder than her experience in adjusting to the Canadian culture when she first immigrated to Canada 15 years ago. She mentioned that people always expect her to say what they like to hear, so if she criticizes someone, they get mad. She further explained:

Here (in Palestine) everyone is expecting you to give compliments and if you give a criticism they don't like it. Everyone here gives himself the right to interfere in my life, my family, my friend, my family in law, even my neighbor. No respect for private life here. If I go to the market with a short skirt every-one stares at me, although there are many women who are dressed like me. Here everyone stares at everyone. My husband is no longer willing to help me in the housework so his family and friends do not make fun of him. He helps me secretly when there is no-one in the house except me and him. My family always wants me to convey an image of being very successful in Canada. I speak freely that in my early years of immigration I worked as a waitress in a restaurant. My family gets mad when I do this. There is nothing to be ashamed of. Why do I always have to show off and pretend that I am rich while I am not? What's wrong with always saying the truth? Once we had

a party at our house to celebrate our return, my friends told me that I talk so freely to men and I should stop doing that because I am not in Toronto anymore. They said that I am more Canadian than Palestinian. I hear this ten times every day, from my family, my friends and my family-in-law…. I miss my life in Toronto so much.

(Layan, phone call, November 20, 2009).

Living in Ramallah, for Layan, involves a constant process of comparison with Toronto. This is mainly because gender relations have been changed by migration. The transformation of gender relations by migration to Canada is clearly noticed in the Palestinian Canadian case. Arranging and organizing the return visits are frequently a source of anxiety to women, as such visits entail much stress and tension. Husbands always remind their wives not to talk freely with men the way they do in the Canadian context as they may be misunderstood by the other gender and they may be criticized by their families, particularly their in-laws. Many Palestinian women mentioned that return visits often involve lots of quarrels with their husbands regarding the way they deal with the other gender during their visits in Palestine. Visiting relatives, and participating in weddings and other celebrations, are always associated with pre-departure discussions between couples about differences in gender relations between the Palestinian and the Canadian contexts which require Palestinian Canadian women (not men) to be more conservative with the other gender. Furthermore, discussions often arise between couples, since women prefer to spend more time in their parents' home rather than their in-laws. However, in the Palestinian context, it is socially required that women stay longer in their husbands' homes, where they traditionally belong. This is another source of anxiety to the Palestinian Canadian women, especially those who left Palestine soon after their marriage to follow their husbands in Canada. Thus, they did not get the chance to adjust into the acts and attitudes of the receiving family and consequently feel more like a stranger when they are in their in-laws homes. My interviews with the Palestinian Canadian women also revealed that many of them consider themselves fortunate as immigrants to Canada as they were able to develop a strong and open relationship with their husbands away from the control of their in-laws, especially the mother-in-law. However, visiting Palestine brings back some tension to this relationship as many men change their attitudes and become more strict and conservative under the pressure of their family. This is consistent with Salih's (2002) study of Moroccan women in Italy. Aseel, for example, mentioned that she prefers to live in Canada and never return to Palestine where she would be again under the interference and control of her mother-in-law. Furthermore, Layan mentioned that she got sick when her husband told her that

he decided to go back and live in Ramallah because she feels that men are being selfish by making such decisions as returning means much more stress for women than for men.

On the other hand, Layan never returned to visit Palestine. In contrast, her husband Kareem made periodic return visits and his relation with his family, friends and the Palestinian society were always maintained. For Kareem, it was much easier to fit again into Palestinian society than for his wife, Layan. This is consistent with Duval's (2003) argument that return visits facilitate return migration.

3.4 Traveling to Homeland as a Form of Resistance and as a Political Statement

While the researcher was examining the social and cultural meanings of return visits, she found that the travel of the Palestinian Canadians also has significant political meaning. Palestinians are making a political statement by their travel to their homeland. This is not surprising taking into consideration the politics of Palestine as a "place". The suffering caused by their diasporisation and dispersal, are significant to the Palestinian Canadians. Their fragmentation has "promoted an identity of 'suffering', an identification created by the anxieties and injustices" experienced by the Palestinian Diasporas because of their forced exile and some external forces (Schulz & Hammer, 2003, p.2). Cohen (1997) described the Palestinian Diasporas as "victim Diaspora s" to reflect the ways in which they have been created as a result of catastrophes occurring to them. Regardless of their vulnerability, Palestinians always describe themselves as people who resist and struggle, and who will never give up. In the construct of "resistance", there is an extraordinary amount of pride and self-acclaimed strength (Schulz and hammer, 2001). Resistance is a prime political principle and a challenge to the occupier as well as their generally undignified situation of being dispersed, restricted from returning home and, consequently, having greatly reduced mobility. With struggle and resistance as main ingredients of the Palestinian ideology, it is not surprising that many of the Palestinian respondents considered visiting family and friends as a symbol of resistance to the current separation and dispersal, and as a political statement indicating that Palestinian are not and will never be defeated.

The reunion of the family in Palestine, and nowhere else, is a strategy developed by Palestinian immigrants in the GTA to overcome their dispersal (al- shatat) and fragmentation. Travel for visiting family members and friends in Palestine has significant meanings, other than maintaining social and cul-

tural ties. Visiting homeland to the Palestinians is a political "symbol" for their ability to overcome their victimization and their dispersal (shatat). Respondents told how they felt proud of themselves after each visit to Palestine because they believed that they achieved a success. Visiting family and friends in Palestine is a dream to Palestinian Canadians. Hanan, a recent immigrant to Canada coming from Jordan, has a family in Palestine, but she has never visited them because she is a Palestinian refugee holding a Jordanian passport, so the Israeli authorities do not allow her to cross the borders to her country. She told me that she is waiting for her Canadian citizenship so she can go to visit her uncles and other relatives in Palestine and to see the village where her parents were born and to show it to her daughters. She described this as the dream of her life.

Palestinian immigrants who hold Canadian citizenship mentioned that they recognize that they are not welcomed, even as visitors, by the Israeli authorities existing on the borders, airports or even at the checkpoints. Many of my respondents talked about how bad they were treated despite the Canadian passports that they were holding, just because the Israeli soldiers knew that they were Arabs (Palestinians) visiting their homeland. Jennifer, a second-generation Palestinian who was born in Toronto told how she took this as a challenge, i.e., she wanted to return and visit her family in Nazareth because the Israelis did not want her to do that. She described her experience by saying:

My sister went to Palestine three years ago under the Canadian passport and they gave her a lot of trouble and I went last year with my parents…. It was upsetting at the checkpoints. We had to go through several checkpoints. It is very degrading… I just felt that they want you to hate being there…. One time we were on the highway in Israel, we were pulled over and we thought it would be smart to show them the Canadian passport, we thought Canadian passports are from a peace-making country…. As soon as we showed them the Canadian passports, they started to speak to each other in Hebrew. My mom said they were saying that: " They are Arabs, put them on the other side, tell them to pull over", so we had to stay there for an hour and they screamed and they hung their guns in our car; it was very uncomfortable and very degrading…. When my sister left on her Canadian passport and when my cousins left on the Canadians passports, they made it horrible for them. They make you feel that you don't want to be there. I feel it is a psychological trick because they don't want you to come back if you are Arab. So it is a kind of "dread "thing. I will not let them win. I will come back.

(Jennifer, University of Waterloo, June 5, 2009).

The Palestinian Canadians consider visiting homeland as a mean to relieve the "pain of separation" from family members, as mothers, fathers, brothers and sisters, that they experience in their Diaspora. I borrow this phrase, the "pain of separation", from Walton-Roberts (2009) to describe the state of emotion due to the separation of immigrants who left their families to work overseas and how the emotional scars of such separations remain intensely in their minds for years. Palestinian Canadians have suffered similar pains of separation from their families when they decided to immigrate to Canada searching for a safe and secure life, particularly for their children. Every Palestinian Canadian I interviewed mentioned, in tears, their own story of separation from a loved one, which could be a sister, a brother, a mother, a father, a grandparent, a friend or all of them together. They all mentioned the intense emotional pain they suffer and how difficult it is to overcome. They also mentioned how difficult the circumstances of separation were for them when they first arrived to Canada. This pain lasted for long time, but the return visits to see family and friends makes the separation much easier for them to handle. However, many of my interviewees mentioned that even the "goodbye" ceremony they had on the last night before they returned to Canada was no less difficult than the one they had when they first immigrated to Canada. Coping with separation for Palestinian Canadians is one of the hardest experiences.

3.5 The Process of Identification: Hybrid and Complementary Identities

Woodward (1997) argued that migration is producing plural identities, but also contested ones, in a process which is fraught with inequalities and uneven development. These new identities can be described as "unsettled" and "unsettling". Gilory (1997) argued that these identities are not positioned in one "home" and there is more than one source for such identities. Hall (1992, p.276) suggested that identity is formed in the "interaction" between self and society; it is constructed and modified in a "continuous dialogue" with the cultural world "outside" and the identities it offers. He also argued that "identity is formed through unconscious processes over time, rather than being innate in consciousness at birth" (p.287). It remains always "incomplete", is always "in process", always "being formed". Said (2002) suggested that all identities are situated in symbolic space and time. They have what he calls their "imaginary geographies".

Furthermore, Hall (1992) and Gilroy (1987; 1993) have challenged the view of identity as originating and embedded in kinship and a shared history. They both use the concepts of Diaspora and hybridity, where essentialism

and its political demands are challenged by a perspective on identity that encompasses notions of fluidity and hybridity, and suggest that identity is constructed in specific historical situations. In Canada, for example, as elsewhere, identity construction has been confronted by the forces of globalization. Liberal multiculturalism in such countries is transforming into "hybrid pluralism". Contemporary strategies of identity construction lead to a "hybridity" that is promoted by the emergence and rapid increase of diasporic communities for whom "lived-in places" are transnational social spaces (Osborne, 2006).

Transnational lives and attachment to Palestine and Canada affect the processes of identification of Palestinian Canadians. In this context, a construct like "hybridity" is very helpful. It refers to "the ways in which identities are formed anew in the process of meetings occurring through travels and movement" (Schulz & Hammer, 2003, p. 13). Forms of identity construction in Diaspora have become a symbol for the "hybridization" of identity (Hall, 1992). If "transnational" is about activities and linkages that are cross-border, then "hybridity" in contemporary literature has come to refer to the ways in which processes of identification are affected by transnational activities such as return visits to homeland to maintain social and cultural ties with the natal home. This is further confirmed by Schulz and Hammer (2003) as they suggested that maintaining social interaction means actual journeys to visit family, friends and members of same ethnic group in other parts of the world, mainly in the country of origin. Ghorashi (2004) suggested that the heterogeneous character of modern states overturns the old understanding of identity as linked to homogeneous national states or roots. He described these identities as "neither static nor monolithic, but rather dynamics, complex and hybrid" (p. 330). Based on this argument, it can be argued that the identity of the Palestinian-Canadian is not only hybrid, it is also transnational because it results from a process whereby cultural identity is de-territorialized from the physical boundaries of Palestine and undergoes the process of hybridization. In light of this, and by considering the multi-layered experiences of Palestinian Canadians, the concept of "hybridity" is helpful in understanding how Palestinian Canadians in the GTA negotiate the interaction of the diverse elements of their identities.

Based on the data obtained from the interviews, Palestine is a significant source for the identity of Palestinian Canadians, but not the only one. This has resulted in "strategic hybridity" (I borrow this term from Poynting et al., 2004 qtd in Mason, 2007) which implies that Palestinian Canadians are moving strategically between the various elements of their identity as they are able to maintain strong relations to natal home since Palestine is the dominant destination for their overseas travel, and visiting friends and family is

the dominant motivation for their travel and, at the same time, they are well integrated in the Canadian society.

Also based on my interviews, the concepts of "identity" and "belonging" are multifaceted and, in many cases, complicated. For most of my interviewees, these notions are a mix of belonging to both countries, Canada and Palestine, and, in many cases, they are not certain of exactly where their home is, except for the second generation who consider Canada as their home.

All of my interviewees have a strong longing for Palestine and that is why they make return visits whenever they can but, at the same time, they do not want to live there and Palestine is not where they want to construct their homes. Accordingly, Palestine is a home in their minds and hearts, but is not a real home because Palestine cannot provide them with security, freedom, justice and, most importantly, a decent and a safe life for their children. On the contrary, Canada is the place where they find what they are looking for to construct homes. This multi-layered identity and sense of belonging of Palestinian Canadians is making them live "in between" a Canadian and a Palestinian identity and they have multi-locality in terms of living between "here" and "there". This is illustrated by Mobeen, a 34 years old Palestinian immigrant who had lived in Canada since five years, he said:

I have my life in Canada and I am happy with it and I am planning to live and stay in Canada, so I am not planning to go back there.... Palestine is the memory, the family... One of the things that makes me move to Canada is because there is more freedom here than there. Here in Canada I still feel I am Palestinian. You can live a Canadian Palestinian type of thing because you don't need to remove your identity being Canadian.... I am very proud of being Palestinian. When I have kids I would love to go to Palestine and explain to them and show them where they are coming from... Palestine is part of me.... I am Palestinian and that place is part of me and something that you cannot forget - especially Palestine is not like other countries of the world. It is different because of the special things happening there... I choose to live in Canada but for my kids I want them to know that they have Palestinian roots and they come from this area and they are Canadians too, so they can decide what they want to be.

(Mobeen, phone-interview, July 18, 2009).

Many of my respondents explained that they enjoy a better living in Canada compared to Palestine and the other Arab countries that they lived in. This is demonstrated in the sample results where 59.7% of the respondents selected Canada as their future intended place of residence. My re-

spondents talked about a feeling of being a "visitor" when they travel back to Palestine to visit their family and friends. This is particularly after they have lived in Canada for a number of years. When my respondents were talking about the way they were looking at things in their homeland, it was obvious that they use a Canadian lens when they visit. For example, Aseel described how differently she saw things when she was visiting Palestine. She said:

The first time I visited Palestine was after 2 years of me living here, and the second time was in two years so I was living in Canada for 4 years. The longer I live here, the more feeling I have as a visitor when I go there. I don't think I can still fit there after living 8 or 10 or 12 years in Canada. There are more things that I used to accept or take it as norm before I immigrated to Canada but now I can't accept. For example, the interference of my family-in-law in the way I raise my children or in matters that are between me and my husband is no longer acceptable for me; friends visiting without calling or without appointment is not acceptable, neighbours annoying is not acceptable. When I visited last year, I found myself thinking a way totally different than the way Palestinians there think. It is me who has changed. Living in Canada has changed me and I feel like disoriented when I am there, but I love to visit there, I miss my family and that is why I go. I can't live without them.

(Aseel, Etobicoke, August 22, 2009).

This quotation emphasizes that the identity of the Palestinian Canadians is always hybrid and relational. This identity is often affected by the negotiations that Palestinian Canadians make "between cultures", the culture of home and the culture of the host society. The culture that emerges in their Diasporas is, therefore, the result of complex process of combining the positives of both cultures to form a "new" culture which is related to, but not exactly like, any of the original ones. Thus, this new culture is created by immigrants; however, whether this new culture survives after return migration requires further investigation. Aseel, Maison, Layan, and Nancy explained that they encouraged their children to learn the best of the Palestinian and the Canadian cultures so they can be a remarkable mix of both.

In another context, most of my interviewees explained that the saddest part of their visit to Palestine was to experience the hard lives of the Palestinians living in Palestine because of the checkpoints, the curfews, the siege, and all of the other Israeli measures that made the Palestinians' lives a misery. They said that they were pleased that they were only visiting and not living there, and that they were fortunate because they had a second choice.

Furthermore, my interviewees considered living in Canada is privileged compared to their lives in the Arab countries. Many of them experienced intermediate migration in the sense that they had lived in countries other than Canada and Palestine, such as Kuwait, United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia. They all confirmed that their life in Canada was much better than in the other Arab countries where they were treated as foreigners and they were never granted citizenship. In contrast, Canada provided for them a level of security, justice, and fairness that they had lacked for much of their lives. Kanan, for example, is a landed immigrant in Canada, and he lived for 13 years with his wife and children in Saudi Arabia. He explained how Canada was a much better place for them to live in than Saudi Arabia. He said:

I lived thirteen years in Saudi Arabia working so hard but never get a citizenship and never treated equally with my other Saudi Arabian colleagues. Saudi Arabia impose so many restrictions on us, they even determine what type of cars we are allowed to purchase. While when I came to Canada, from the very first minute I made landing, I enjoy all rights equal to the Canadian citizens… There is more transparency in Canada. Everyone knows his rights and his obligations… Even dealing with the Canadians is better than dealing with specific categories of people back home.

(Kanan, Toronto, July 4, 2009).

Most interviewees expressed that they are allowed to feel at home in Canada, unlike in other countries that they lived in, and this is one of the main reasons that strengthens their sense of belonging to this country. This strong sense of belonging that Palestinian have to Canada is affected by the paradigms of acceptance within the wider society. All my interviewees considered living in a multi cultural country, such as Canada, is making their integration easier. For example, Mobeen said:

Canada is very multicultural. I think what enriches it is that everyone brings his own culture and lives together with people with different cultures…. I am a 100% Palestinian and living in Canada and being happy and integrated here does not mean you lose your identity. Identity is what you are, it is just you are living with your own identity with other people coming from different places. Only Canada gives the opportunity that makes people coming from everywhere and integrates with each other and brings their own culture with them.

(Mobeen, phone interview, July 18, 2009).

The acceptance paradigm is significantly influencing the way Palestinian immigrants feel toward the place that they are living in. Reem is a 21 year old university student who came to Canada with her mother when she was one year old. She talked about how her mother and she were expelled from Kuwait after Iraq's invasion in 1991 and how she was not allowed to take anything from her house. She left all her money, jewelry, and clothes there and she came to Canada with three children and no money in her pocket. She further talked about the help her mother received in Canada and she illustrated the way her family was accepted and how she had a strong sense of belonging to Canada and no sense of affiliation to Kuwait, although she was there. She said:

Everyone in Canada has the same rights and freedom, nobody is higher than others, everybody can run his own life, and everyone is accepted… My mom came to Canada when I was one year old, she was a high–school teacher in Kuwait and then she was expelled because of Saddam Hussein. They took everything from her… that's why I believe that Canadians have rights and stuff. Look at the Palestinians; they always pay the price when the war happens… I belong here.

(Reem, University of Waterloo, June 22, 2009).

The feelings of security that Palestinians have during their living in Canada have strengthened the sense of belonging they also have to the country. All the first-generation interviewees explained that their immigration to Canada was a search for a secure and safe life, in particular for their children. Furthermore, 70.8 % of the respondents have a strong to very strong sense of belonging to Canada. More importantly, the sense of belonging is linked to the issue of identity. As identified in Said (1984, p. 53), The Mind of Winter, feeling belonging, "rooted", or "part of something" is one of the most fundamental components of our sense of being and influences every facet of our lives. The importance of belonging and feeling secure and having a future prospects strengthens the emotional sense of feeling "home" in Canada for the Palestinian Canadians. Ahmad, explained how his feeling that he lives in a safe place made him consider Canada as a home. He said:

I feel safe in Canada. It is a blessing to live in a safe and secure country. Ask us the Palestinians about that. I remember when we were in Ramallah, me and my wife could not sleep for so many nights especially during the Israeli army invasion to the city, big tanks everywhere, planes striking and shooting muscles everywhere, horrible sounds and we were living in fear. My children used to stick to us and cry and all we can do for them is hug them and pray

that God will protect us all. I can't even protect myself so how can I protect them, I felt hopeless. We were scared that our children could be killed in front of our own eyes. My wife had nightmares for years. She got depressed and I almost lost her. My kids also could not take it anymore. When we first came here to Canada, my children once heard the loud noise of thunder at night, they all ran to our room asking if there are Israeli tanks and planes in Canada, too [laugh]. Believe me, we are lucky that we could immigrate to Canada and enjoy living here. My wife and children love Canada, they don't want to go back and live in Ramallah again. We can go visit our families in Palestine, especially my mother every 2 years but we can't live back there again. What is the use of having "home" if you can't live in it peacefully. Home is where you feel safe. Canada is my home now and Palestine is in my heart and will remain in my heart until I die.

(Ahmad, North York, June 20, 2009).

These outcomes are in line with other scholars' arguments. Kondo (1996) suggested that an emotional sense of home as a "safe place" is essential for Diaspora s. Furthermore, Mason (2007) suggested that the relationship between the home of the homeland and the home of the lived reality is central to the feelings of belonging for Palestinians who live in the Diaspora.

3.5.1 Complementary Identities

As stated earlier, Palestine remains central in the identification and imagination of home for all my interviewees. They all considered that maintaining their identity and culture is important and they all want their children to maintain this identity. They said that they identified themselves as "Palestinian Canadian", however, I suggest that they are "neither-nor". Neither fully Palestinian, nor fully Canadians. The Palestinians found what they were looking for in Canada so it is Canada where they have established homes, friends, and jobs. They consider themselves as privileged by living in Canada; their children live in peace and have rights for education in schools and universities. They also they have rights to health care as do other Canadian children. Accordingly, concepts of home and belonging for Palestinian Canadians are multi-layered. These multi-layered understandings of home and belonging are emphasized by many of my interviewees who indicated that they have two homes: Palestine "their imagined home" and Canada their "real home". This multi-locality or living "in-between" is best manifested in one of my interviewees' answers to my questions regarding life in Canada and in Palestine. Nancy, a 35 year old recent immigrant, said:

For me Canada is a good country, it's not too bad but sometimes I feel like going back home just because I miss being around the family... The society there I believe,, or its not I believe, I am sure it's more difficult. There everybody will be watching you and interfering in your life but here I live my life and nobody is interfering in my life. How life is easier in Canada or back home… I believe each place has its advantages and disadvantages, and then you have to decide by the end which location is good for you to live in... I miss back home. I miss the city I used to live in, my house, my family. Sometimes, you feel that you are between two locations and cannot decide where to live. I like there but my kids don't like there, they want to stay in Canada. You feel that you are in between, you are not totally Canadian and you are not totally Palestinian. I am not totally adjusted to Canada and I am not totally away from Palestine. All the time you have this mix feeling... If we didn't have the occupation, our life would be much easier. Sometimes, I feel that we have advantages by living in Canada much more that we have back home but we have family there and friends there that all the time attract you to go to that part of the world.

(Nancy, phone interview, July 30, 2009).

Canada is their lived reality and is the place where the advantages are, while Palestine is the place to which they ultimately all belong, the place where their family and friends are. This negotiation of identity between "here" and "there" is not only creating a type of "hybrid" identity but also "complementary" ones. Palestinian Canadians cannot live without their family, friends, and the place that has all the memories, but, at the same time, they want to enjoy the security and the advantages that Canada is providing for them and for their children. Thus, the Palestinian Canadian is not able to live without Canada or without Palestine: these two places are equally important to the lives of the Palestinian immigrants. This has implications for their overseas travel as more VFR travel, particularly return visits to their country of origin, are expected.

It is suggested that, with the progress of any peace agreement between the Palestinian National Authority and the Israeli government and the consequent transformations that may take place in the Palestinian Territories, it is more likely that Palestinian Canadians will be more able than other Palestinian Diaspora to respond to these changes at home. This is mainly because they have the resources that facilitate their transnational activities. For them, transnationalism has provided other options and flexible solutions. For example, their transnational identities, dual citizenships, transnational networks and, most importantly, the Canadian passport (which is an element of the citizenship) will increase their propensity to travel back and forth between the home and host countries. The transnational activities of the Pales-

tinian Canadians are taking place from a privileged position because, unlike other countries that they lived in, Canada has granted them Canadian citizenship which eventually provided them with freedom of mobility, international security and protection, particularly while visiting Palestine. Thus, they are "elite" among other Palestinian Diasporas who face legal discrimination and have no rights in the host societies. The movement of the majority of the Palestinian Diaspora is severely restricted and they face restrictions on mobility and travel abroad. In contrast, the Palestinian Canadians may shuttle back and forth between Canada and Palestine while opting to stay in Canada for an enhanced standard of living, particularly for their children.

This is in consistent with Longva's (1997, p. 174) suggestion that, for Diaspora s, the country of settlement and the country of ancestors cannot "be dichotomous" and that they become "two facets of the same life". This also resonates with Mason (2007) who examined the Palestinian immigrants in Australia and found that home was a multi-faceted concept, and could not be defined easily because Palestinians in Australia had strong longing for Palestine while establishing a feeling of being at home in Australia. As Mariam, one of my interviews who had lived in Canada for 9 years, said: "I am part of the Canadian society... I feel at home because I have decided since I left my country to make Canada my home". In conclusion, the Palestinians view their past not as something that they want to go back to but, rather, as a background setting that shaped the basis of ongoing identity negotiations within their new homes in Canada. Thus, Palestine and the past are in their minds while they are living their present and thinking of their future.

3.5.2 Recreating a Palestinian Home in Toronto

In this section, I will discuss my observations during the field work, particularly through observing the Palestinian houses that I entered to do my interviews. My first observation is that there are many common things in the ways Palestinian Canadians decorate their houses, which may indicate a "symbolic' meaning that the Palestinian immigrants are trying to create inside their houses in the GTA to reflect a sense of belonging to the place that they originate from. For example, all Palestinian houses have a picture of Jerusalem hanging on the wall. Jerusalem is a sacred place for Palestinians, both Christians and Muslims. Jerusalem has key religious sites, such as the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, the Dome of the Rock and Al-Aqsa Masjid. Many of my interviewees mentioned that, whenever they visit Palestine, they go to visit Jerusalem. Furthermore, the city has special meaning to all Palestinians because it is viewed as being the capital of the future Palestinian State and because of the continuous extensive Israeli measures to control the city and

to push the Palestinian out of it. The other common decoration among the Palestinian houses in the GTA is a picture of the former Palestinian president Yasser Arafat who was poisoned by the Israelis.

By religious affiliation, most Palestinians are Muslim and there is a significant Palestinian Christian minority, so some houses have pictures showing Quranic writing and others have pictures of the Virgin Mary and the City of Bethlehem on the wall. All Palestinian houses display Palestinian embroidery (Tatreez) which is the most indigenous form of Palestinian folklore and art. Palestinians view the embroidery masterpieces as a language for expressing their identity and as a symbol of their folklore. Some of the Palestinian houses displayed pictures of women wearing the traditional dress which is a cross-stitch-embroidered dress. All these decorations are displayed along with modern pieces of furniture and vases purchased from Canadian stores. The most important part is that the Palestinian Canadians obtained all these decorations from Palestine through their return visits. These pieces have significant meaning to the Palestinians and their sustained transnational activates in the form of return visits facilitate the creation of a Palestinian house in the GTA.

In terms of food, houses also contained both Canadian and Palestinian items. For example, a mix of Canadian and Palestinian food and spices exist in the Palestinian Canadian kitchen. Spices are present as are the ingredients for special Palestinian meals and desserts that are mainly used in Ramadan and special events such as Eid Al-Adha, Eid Feter and others. These ingredients are brought back from Palestine are stored in the kitchen. The significance of food in forming a sense of belonging and creating identity has also been emphasized by Salih (2001) who examined the Moroccan immigrants in Italy. As identified in Salih (2001, p. 57), food "not only nourishes members of the group, but its consumption is also a sign of belonging and socialism". Furthermore, food is also a sign of solidarity in performing ethnic identity. In conclusion, my observations from my field work suggest that Palestinian Canadians have dual identities and belonging even in the ways their houses are decorated. The items displayed and the food in their kitchens reflects a mix of a Canadian and Palestinian social identity.

3.6 Summary

Palestinian Canadians from both generations are having strong transnational belonging and strong transnational participation. It has been argued in this chapter that strong transnational activities, such as frequent return visits to the homeland, stimulate strong transnational belonging to different places. However, ease of movement is an important element of being transnational.

The multi-layered identities of Palestinian Diasporas in Canada and the way they position themselves within the home and host societies has implications for travel as revealed in the movements that occur between the places of origin of immigrants and Diasporas (which become destinations) and the new places of residence (which become new origins). Examining how Palestinian Canadians are positioning themselves within their transnational social spaces leads to a consideration of what notions such as "home" and "belonging" ultimately mean. It was found that their "external homeland" was the central source for identification but not the only source, resulting in multi-layered identities that are "hybrid" and "complementary". Palestinian Canadians' identities are in flux, in a continuous condition of redefinition, re-creation and adjustment. Thus, the utilization of "strategic hybridity" allows the Palestinian Canadians to move fluidly between the different elements that form their identities. This is demonstrated in the dynamic relationships these immigrants are building with both Canada and Palestine.

Interviews with Palestinian Canadians suggest that the Palestinian Diaspora visit friends and relatives to maintain the strength of social ties, to sensitize their children to Palestinian values, to confirm the possibility of future social support, to avoid feeling as strangers, and to suffer with family members that remained at home. Ease of movement is a prerequisite to being transnational. However, many Palestinian Canadians are completely immobile internationally until they acquire their Canadian citizenship and passport. On the other hand, although at the borders they are Canadians, in the homeland they are not and this is particularly the case for men. As shown in this chapter, return visits are associated with anxiety for women who have been able to develop an open relationship with the other gender in Canada. Husbands always remind their wives not to talk freely with men as they do in Canada for fear of being misunderstood by the others or being criticized by their families, particularly their in-laws. Return visits in some cases highlight disagreements and tensions between couples as gender relations have been transformed by migration. Many Palestinian Canadian men change their attitudes and become more strict and conservative under the influence of their family during their visits to Palestine. Such gender complexities created by immigration deserve more thorough investigation by scholars.

CHAPTER 4

INTER-GENERATIONAL DIFFERENCES

4.1 Introduction

The term second generation immigrant refers to native-born children of foreign parents or children who were foreign-born but brought to the host country before adolescence (Portes and Rumbaut, 2001, p. 23). However, the standard definitions of first and second generations do not sufficiently reflect the complications of the lived experiences for some groups of immigrants (Mason, 2007). The Palestinian Canadians are one of these groups. For example, the second generation of Palestinian Canadians, in terms of the catastrophe (al-nakpa), is the third-generation born away from their homeland. Yet, the term "second-generation" is the one that is used in this research to refer to Canadian-born children of Palestinian parents or those Palestinian children who were born outside of Canada, but brought to the country before adolescence; the second generation term is used rather than third generation to minimize confusion.

This chapter explores the means of maintaining relationships with the homeland of the second generation Palestinian Canadians and demonstrates the inter-generational differences in terms of the ways of maintaining their Palestinian identity and attachment to the homeland. The chapter then examines the role of transnational activities as return visits to homeland in reinforcing the social and cultural relationship of these people with their country of origin.

4.2 The Development of Transnational Identity of the Second-generation Palestinian Canadians

While immigrants and Diasporas are likely to view the country they have settled in as their home, and their children undoubtedly do, the proposed research, within this context, will attempt to explore two important themes: the position of the ancestral homeland in their lives and the differences between the first and the second generations.

4.2.1 The Notion of "Home" to the Second-generation Palestinian Canadians

Palestinian Canadians who were born into the Diasporas had less or no lived experience of their homeland, Palestine. This is particularly the case for the second generation whose association and perception of Palestine have been mainly passed down to them and not lived or experienced directly. As Al-Barghouti (1998, pp. 60-61) noted:

"Now we even know less of our history. The occupation has created generations of Palestinians who are strangers to Palestine, generations who are familiar with every alleyway of their places of exile, but who are ignorant of their homeland…. These generations are condemned to love an unseen lover, a distant, difficult lover separated from them by guards and fences and sleek terror. The occupation has transformed us from the sons of Palestine into the sons of the idea of Palestine".

Second generation Palestinian Canadians have a strong sense of belonging to their roots in the parental country of origin but, at the same time, they feel that Canada is the only home that they actually experience. My interviews with young Palestinian Canadians revealed that there are ambiguities involved in the articulation of home. Home is understood as both the physical space and the symbolic conceptualization of the place where they belong. This multiple perception of home is reflected in their answers to questions about home and the place that they feel they belong to. For example, Maher explains:

From stories that we hear, Palestine is a beautiful place and… whether I would get back the right of return, would I actually go back and live there? I will feel like a foreigner because I would really feel like I am not really from there. I am more Canadian than Palestinian. That's how I would feel. The image says it's perfect and living there is perfect.

(Maher, phone-interview, July 21, 2009).

Some of my interviewees who had visited there said that they felt strangers in their own homeland because it is totally different context than the one they got used to in Canada. Some described how their return to Palestine was a heart-breaking experience and that their feelings of being home did not help. For example, they did not feel safe there because of the occupation and thus felt like strangers. Jennifer, a 20 year old university student in her second interview after she had visited Palestine for the second time, said:

I spent the first half of my visit in Jaffa, which is very close to Tel Aviv and thus in a very Israeli part of the country. In that sense, I felt very uncomfortable and like a stranger. It was very difficult for me to walk into a store and ask for a bottle of water and get a reply from the store clerk in Hebrew. Because of my five days in Jaffa, I was exposed to this different side of 'Israel' and was pretty uncomfortable. Even though I was with my Palestinian family and we spoke Arabic together, I was always tense when we went out to dinner or walking because people would hear us speak Arabic and look at us differ-

ently. I felt like a stranger or a 'weirdo' in my own homeland, which was very heartbreaking. I would not, however, say that this weakens my ties to Falasteen. If anything it strengthens it, because it gives me more of a reason to maintain a physical attachment to the identity that is at risk.

(Jennifer, University of Waterloo, June 5, 2009).

However, the understandings of the second generation of identity, belonging and home have been largely shaped within the interplay of the attachments to Palestine, the homeland of which they have no lived experience and attachment to Canada, the country in which they live and has offered them a home. Maher, for example, a young man in his early 20s said:

Ideologically, I think I belong to Palestine although I do not have real roots other than the father of me being Palestinian. I don't even have real documentation that says I am Palestinian but I belong to Palestine because of my roots… In Canada, I feel Canadian, I live Canadian every day. I am Canadian. With Palestine, it's something that is more in the background. I am not a Palestinian everyday living in Palestine or breathing Palestine but I think about it every day. I identify myself with the people there but it is something that I never touched, or breathed or experienced.

(Maher, phone-interview, July, 21, 2009).

He further explained:

We were stateless until we came to Canada… and Canada is a great country for us to grow up and I identify myself as a Canadian but I never forget Palestine because my parents grave it enough.

(Maher, phone interview, July 21, 2009).

Jennifer explained:

As much as I love to visit, I think I cannot live there. It is a very different lifestyle and it is hard for me, raised in the western world, to think about living in a country where Arabs are treated as second class citizens. It would hurt me too much. I do not see a future for peace and justice simultaneously, and would not want to settle down in such an unstable place. Furthermore, my entire family lives in Toronto, so it's hard for me to think about leaving them.

(Jennifer, e-mail interview, October 5, 2009).

Reem, a 19 year old university student who came to Canada from Kuwait with her mother when she was one year old, thinks similarly. She explained that Canada is her home because it is where she has lived all her life and that she feels that she no longer fits with the culture in Palestine and she is not thinking of going back to live there one day. She said:

I don't think I can live back there because it is uncertain, here it is more organized. It is a better environment for living, while over there it is like depression and hard.

(Reem, University of Waterloo, June 22, 2009).

In order to further understand the distinct ways in which family ties and ethnic reunion can both contribute to the development of Palestinian Canadian second generation transnational practices, it is useful to consider interviews with the Palestinian Canadians that focus on the family homes in which the Palestinian Canadians grew up, particularly, the representations of the parental country of origin, how they identify themselves, and their actual engagement (or absence of engagement) with these representations in terms of back-and-forth movement. My analyses reveal that Palestinian Canadians are significantly affected with the sad memories that create specific attitudes towards the upbringing of their children, particularly those from the first generation who experienced and lived the catastrophe, their dispossession from their homeland, and all its consequences as feelings of homesickness and loneliness. Many second-generation Palestinian Canadians whom I interviewed told me that they knew much about the history of Palestine and they were aware of the hard conditions that their parents and grandparents went through in their forced exile. Stories about the braveness and the dignity of their great grandparents who resisted the occupation of their lands and the forced exile were common among second-generation Palestinian immigrants. Surprisingly, whenever I asked Palestinian children during my field work about the place they originated from, they would mention not only the country, but also the name of the village where their parents or grandparents were born. Many of the villages whose names they mentioned were completely destroyed many years ago by the Israelis and they no longer exist on the map. However, they still exist in the memories of these young Palestinian Canadians. My second-generation interviewees mentioned that they know about Palestine from the stories they heard from their parents. For example, Maher noted:

The way my parents brought me up, they always talked about Palestine; they told me stories about my grandfather - how he lived in Palestine. My dad listened to stories from his parents and from older siblings; he passed all these stories along to us: about what our grandfather used to do in Palestine, what our house looked like, how we had all crops on our land, all these thing were engraved in us since we were kids.

(Maher, phone-interview, July 21, 2009).

Accordingly, many second generation Palestinians grow up with strong attachments to Palestine as a place to which they belong, to which they must return and in which they will ultimately feel at home.

However, Palestine is their imagined home, while Canada is their real home. Thus, they refer to Palestine as the primary home of origin and source of their identity, but they refer to Canada as the place where home is a reality. At the time I interviewed them, many had been born in Canada, like Jennifer, or brought up in Canada as had Maher, Reem, Ruba, Nadera, Masoud, Majdi, Omar, and Nabeel. Maher, for example, who came to the country when he was four years old, feels a strong part of his identity is Canadian but, at the same time, Palestine remains a core part of his self-identification. He said:

Canada is my only home. I have been here since I was 4 years old. I don't even remember what it was like before I am Canadian. This is the country I always lived in and I have been here since I can remember…. We are Palestinians, we're proud to be Palestinians.

(Maher, phone interview, July 21, 2009).

In view of that, the second generation of Palestinian Canadians is experiencing a multi-faceted thinking around identity and home. Similar to the first generation, notions of home and identity to the second generation are also contrapuntal. First and second generation Palestinian Canadians have multiple allegiances to several places. Accordingly, the meaning of home is more likely to be multi-dimensional and home is not necessarily tied to a definite geographical place.

4.2.2 Intergenerational Differences in the Means of Maintaining Transnational Ties

The emergent literature shows that, similar to the first generation, second-generation immigrants can practice transnational activities (Portes et al., 1999; Levitt, 2004; Louie, 2006; Mason, 2007; McAuliffe, 2008; Bhattacharya, 2008). However, the main difference between the first and second generations is in the means of maintaining the ties with homeland. The first-gen-

eration Palestinian Canadians, for example, mainly reinforce their ties with their homeland by means such as books, songs, poetry, memories and, in many cases, by physical contact such visiting friends and families at homeland. When travelling was not possible, it was largely replaced by telephone calls. As Al-Barghouti (1998, p. 61) noted:

"We Palestinians have become telephone addicts. We live for the voices transmitted from afar. The ringing of the telephone brings detailed news of those we love and signals reversals in their worldly fortunes - one ring for joy, another ring for sadness, and yet another for longing. For Palestinians, the ringing of the telephone ushers in quarrels, remonstrances, censure, and apologies, as well as joy and delight. There is no other sound that we simultaneously yearn and dread as much as the ringing of the telephone".

On the other hand, second-generation Palestinian Canadians are using different means for linking up with their homeland than those their parents used. For example, transnational communication technology facilitates developing "virtual" and "three-dimensional" relationships with homeland. It also enables young Palestinian Canadians to maintain a national discourse. Information technology brings Palestinians closer together and, thus, bridges the geographical distance. This global reach of information and technology, such as Arab satellite stations, has created a new possibility of linking with Palestine, since the landscape gets much closer through the presentation of actual pictures from the homeland.

Many young Palestinian Canadians I interviewed said that they practice many activities to keep linked with Palestine, such as being part of Palestinian chat rooms and e-mail groups, or accessing global media on-line as well as a number of Palestinian radio and TV stations, to keep themselves up-dated with events there. Many also mentioned that they are part of online Palestinian communities and online Palestinian and international organizations. Some also follow internet blogs from the homeland. Others are in continuous contact with their extended families through e-mail, Skype and Facebook. However, these practices bridge the geographical distance among Palestinian Canadians in Diaspora more significantly than with their friends and families in the Palestinian Territories. Despite the importance of the Internet to many Palestinians who are imprisoned in their cities, towns and villages, the number of Internet users in the Palestinian Territories is currently estimated at only 10-14% of the Palestinian population. This is mainly due to the Israeli restrictions imposed on the development of a Palestinian Information and Technology sector (Abudaka, 2010).

Some of the second-generation Palestinians who are students at Canadian universities mentioned that they are part of Palestinian organizations on campus, such as Palestinian Rights. These activities have opened their eyes about their responsibilities as Palestinians in raising awareness of their peoples' rights to live in peace on their lands. Reem, Jennifer, Ruba, Nadera, Kareema, Majde, and Masoud mentioned that they participated in every strike or rally that is taking place in Toronto as a response to Israeli violence against their people in Palestine such as, for example, the recent war on Gaza. Within this context, Maher explained:

Students in university get exposed to a lot of issues. Political issues are big things on campus. For me when I went to the University of Western Ontario, there were always events about Palestine, debates, celebrations, that really opened a lot of my eyes…. At the university you feel like a part of Palestinian organization, you feel more responsibility; you actually feel that it is like your duty to represent Palestine, to raise awareness about Palestine. I would encourage my kids to be involved in a lot of these student site events on campuses and in their school and I would pass a lot of stories for them and help them courage their identity.

(Maher, phone-interview, July 21, 2009).

In sum, the means of maintaining relationships with homeland have shifted for each generation. For the second generation, although the vast majority has no lived experience of homeland, Palestine has remained central to ideas of identity, home and belonging. However, their transnational relations have reinforced the sense of belonging simultaneously to the two countries; the host and the home country.

4.3 Transnational Ties of the Second Generation

Maintaining transnational ties with the homeland by transnational practices has, to a great extent, reinforced feelings of the second generation's closeness to their wider Palestinian community and, thus, reinforced feelings of greater solidarity within this community. This, in turn has its impact on their travel patterns to Palestine, particularly their travel for the purposes of visiting friends and family. Members of this generation have Canadian passports and many have been able to visit Palestine. Many of my interviewees of the second generation indicated that it is very important for them to visit their extended family in Palestine at least once every two years. Some of them even travel every summer to spend the school vacation with their cousins in Ramallah. For example, Nadera said that since she turned 14 year old, she has

been travelling to Palestine every summer by herself and her grandmother meets her at Amman airport so they can cross the border together to Palestine. She said that her parents have their own jobs in Canada and they cannot travel every summer, but it is really important to her to spend the summer in Palestine with her grandmother, aunts, uncles, and cousins. On the other hand, the second generation Palestinian Canadians originated from the villages that were occupied in 1948 and, thus, their villages no longer exist or currently are Israeli villages, and their extended families are living in refugee camps in Lebanon and Syria. Those young Palestinians are still motivated to visit Palestine, even with no family there. They want to visit the place of their roots. For example, Ruba and Maher, said that all their friends who do not have family there went to Palestine just to see the place where their ancestors came from. They even said that one day they will visit the village where they came from even it is not Palestinian any more. In this context, Maher explained:

Even though I am Palestinian and I love to travel to Palestine, until now I never had a reason to travel to Palestine because all my family left our land in Palestine so I don't have anybody there to travel to see… Usually if I want to go visit I want to go visit where we are originally from, although that village no longer exists for us. There is not much purpose of visiting it because it is an Israeli village right now, but I still would like to visit one day as a tourist and go visit Akko. But I really see myself more visiting the Arab areas of Palestine which is the West Bank because I relate too much to the West Bank… I love to go. I want to go. I want to go to Akko.

 (Maher, phone-interview, July 21, 2009).

This is consistent with a UK-based study conducted by Mason (2004) who examined the circumstances in which "physical co-presence" was considered the most efficient way to maintain kinship that extends across borders. She concluded that even where there are no immediate links with family and relatives return visits to the homeland still take place to search for "roots" in the country of the ancestors. On the other hand, other informants, such as Kareema and Reem, cannot visit even though the villages that they originated from and their families are still there. The reason is mainly because of political instability. Kareema, a 23 year old girl who was born to a Palestinian father and British mother, mentioned that she frequently visits her grandparents in Britain, but, since she left Palestine ten years ago, she has never visited her grandparents in Gaza because of the continuous violence there. She explained:

If I am able to go, I would go frequently…. I go visit my grandparent in Britain because it is more feasible and safe, but going to Gaza is not the same.

(Kareema, May 1, 2009, Toronto).

Similarly, Reem explained:

You can't forget where you came from… but I don't go visit so often because of the conflict between Israel and Palestine.

(Reem, University of Waterloo, June 22, 2009).

However, my interviews revealed that for the majority of the second-generation Palestinian Canadians, maintaining ties with Palestine by being physically there is significant. Travelling to visit families and friends is always perceived by them as an important accomplishment. Visiting Palestine is a dream and is something that they envy each other for. For example, Maher explained that he was more encouraged to visit Palestine after his friends actually visited and described their trip to him. He explained:

They went there stayed in a hotel, visited around and went to the villages. I was surprised. I can go there too. Before that it was an idea or a dream that I am going to visit there. I want to go to see the house of my grandfather and where my father was born.

(Maher, phone interview, July 21, 2009).

In some cases it is the young Palestinian Canadians who urge their parents to travel to Palestine. Jennifer, one of my interviewees, mentioned that her parents left Palestine thirty years ago and never went back to visit because they hated the pain of leaving home and, thus, they were scared of what they might find and frightened to see what they left. They had so much pain that they did not like to talk about the situation there; they just ignored it for many years. She also mentioned that they never addressed identity with her or nationality. They never mentioned "Palestine" in the house and never discussed the politics of it because they wanted her to stay away from it. They told her that she is part of the "Arab" world. Until she was twelve years old, she only knew that the name of her country was "Palestine". In her first year at the University of Waterloo, she saw the Palestinian Flag in the Student Life Centre on one of the doors inside, so she stepped in and she found that it was the Palestinian Rights Club She joined and became a very active member. In 2008, she begged her parents to take her to visit family in Palestine and they did and it was the first time for her to see her homeland. She visited again in 2009 and she was planning to go back there in May 2010.

Despite the strong sense of belonging to Palestine that second generation possesses, they consider that their home is in Canada and Canada is where they want to spend the rest of their lives. Yet, they all identify themselves as Palestinians and, thus, Palestine is still the main source of their identity. In the Palestinian Canadian case, it is not only the place but also the politics of Palestine that shape their identity.

4.3.1 Meanings Associated with Maintaining Ties with Homeland to the Second-Generation Palestinian Canadians

To many second-generation Palestinian Canadians, it is very important to visit Palestine (if possible). The return visits are perceived by them as essential to keep in touch with family and homeland despite the vast distance. Although return visits to Palestine were described by most of my interviewees as emotional experiences, they were not able to describe whether they were sad or happy while they were there. Most of them said that they were not sure whether they were happy or sad for most of the trip, they always had a mixture of both feelings. For example, Jennifer said:

I found myself feeling happy and sad at the same time during the whole trip - happy to meet my family and sad they use Hebrew words. Some of the kids don't know the Arabic meaning for a word. I saw settlements everywhere…. Going through checkpoints was really upsetting; it is very degrading, and they scream, they have their guns hanging in your car, it is very uncomfortable. It is something very sad but it is something that I don't want to neglect again for twenty years and I want my children to go too…. I don't want to hide my kids from any pain…. It is important to maintain ties to the place where your ancestors were born.

(Jennifer, University of Waterloo, June 5, 2009).

Similarly, Maher who had never visited Palestine, but was encouraged to go after his friends had travelled there, wondered about what his feeling would be when he visits the house where his father was born - but cannot go inside because it is occupied by an Israeli family now. Even the whole village no longer exists as a Palestinian village. He explained:

What kind of emotion is it; were you happy… It will always be a mixed emotion; you can't tell if you are happy or sad… I always wonder, are you happy… are you upset? This is the place where you could be, and what would be your life if you grew up there, because you did not grow up there, you never had the chance, you'd probably be different… I can probably go there and see

the house but I don't know how I am going to feel about that.

(Maher, phone interview, July 21, 2009).

Masoud, a high school student who came to Canada with his parents when he was six years old, mentioned that he visits Palestine every year with his mother and sister and he feels happy there because he enjoys being spoiled by aunts, uncles, and grandparents, and because he has the opportunity to socialize with his cousins. However, he also mentioned that he feels sad for his family there because there is always a siege around the cities and there is no place to go to for entertainment.

On the other hand, Maher mentioned that the overall impression after people come back would be the satisfaction of accomplishing something important. Moreover, all my interviewees mentioned that their return visits had strengthened their ties to Palestine and they all decided to go there regularly. For example, Maher explained:

My friends loved their visits, they felt very emotional about it, that they went and saw a lot of things… They enjoyed going there because they felt they accomplished something, they are now connected deeper with Palestine, with their identity because they went there and they stepped on the soil.

(Maher, phone-interview, July 21, 2009).

Likewise, Jennifer described her first visit to Palestine as very "emotional", particularly that she saw her parents going back and meeting their families after thirty years of separation. She loved visiting with her parents the places in which they were born. It was an experience that she says she will never forget; just being there and seeing where her family came from meant a lot to her. My interviewees revealed that although the return visit to Palestine reinforced their belonging and attachment to Palestine, it also reinforced their decision that it is Canada where they want to have their future residence. This finding is significant because it has implications for any discussion about the right of return of the Palestinian Diaspora to their homeland. Earlier research about immigrants concluded that return visits facilitate return immigration (Duval, 2003; 2004), but this is not the case for the second-generation Palestinian Canadians. My interviewees mentioned that, although they love to visit, they cannot live there. The reasons for this include not fitting into the culture, lack of a safe life and security, no opportunities, violence, and, very importantly, a feeling of being strangers because they have no lived experience there. Thus, despite all the transnational practices of second-generation Palestinian Canadians, such as their back-and-forth movements, most

of them indicated that they would willingly live in Canada and that was their intention. For example, Jennifer said:

As much as I love to visit Falasteen, I think I cannot live there. It is a very different lifestyle and it is hard for me, raised in the western world, to think about living in a country where Arabs are treated as second class citizens. It would hurt me too much. I do not see a future for peace and justice simultaneously, and would not want to settle down in such an unstable place…. Going to Falasteen makes me wish we had more Arab culture in Canada or a more vibrant Palestinian community, but I think honestly that there can never be an identity as the one that lives in the homeland. One thing I can say: this trip secured in me the sense that there will never be justice for Arabs in Israel and, as such, I could never live there. By default, it seems I have chosen that my life will be set up in Canada.

(Jennifer, University of Waterloo, June 5, 2009).

Maher also wondered about the differences that may exist between the image parents engrave in their minds about Palestine and the reality on the ground, and what he would do if the Israelis give the Palestinian Diaspora the right of return. He explained:

It is probably a better image than the reality on the ground. I always ask myself if we get Palestine back are we going to go back there. From stories that we hear, Palestine is a beautiful place and… whether I would get back the right of return, would I actually go back and live there. I will feel like a foreigner because I would really feel like I am not really from there. I am more Canadian than Palestinian, that's how I would feel. The image says its perfect and living there is perfect.

(Maher, phone-interview, July 21, 2009).

4.4 Summary

This chapter examined the means by which the second-generation Palestinian Canadians maintain ties with the homeland, including the transnational practices in terms of back and forth movement to Palestine. The social connections with the homeland facilitated by technological advances and the efficient means of travel have resulted in the transnational nature of Palestinian Canadians, particularly the second generation who are more familiar with these technologies than their parents and who are also more enthusiastic about travelling.

Social contexts, such as the family and ethnic union, can strengthen the sense of belonging of the second-generation to transnational social spaces that, in turn, facilitate the development of transnational practices. The family context is where the second-generation Palestinian Canadians first get a sense of who they are and from where they originated. This generation has been raised in households full of homeland influences. This implies second-generation Palestinian Canadians who themselves experience transnational orientations and practices, such as travel for the purposes of family and ethnic reunion. In some cases, the second generation's sense of transnational belonging and participation are stronger than their parents. To the second-generation Palestinian Canadians, maintaining social interaction with grandparents, uncles, aunts, cousins and other family members is important. Solidifying and rejuvenating these ties mean physical attachment and actual journeys to visit family, friends and members of same ethnic group in the country of origin. These findings are in line with the emergent literature (for example, Portes et al., 1999, Louie, 2006) that suggests that, analogous to the first generation; second-generation immigrants may experience transnationalism at the level of practice, for example, the back-and-forth movement, and at the same level as their parents.

The interviews with the second generation have revealed that young Palestinian Canadians frequently return to Palestine to visit families and the places where they originated from, as well as for solidifying the social ties with their homeland. Thus, it is concluded that second-generation Palestinian immigrants have strong transnational belonging and are keenly participating in transnational activities. These outcomes are in line with Louie's (2006) conclusion that second-generation immigrants with greater contacts within the family in the country of origin, ethnic language maintenance, and the very frequent number of trips they make to their country of origin, are more likely to adopt from both transnational and ethnic orientations, meaning they identify who they are within both origin and destination contexts. This particular finding of the research is significant since it implies that travel patterns to immigrants' country of origin necessarily influence the extent to which the identity of the second-generation is transnational.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

First-generation Palestinian Canadians who left Palestine considered their separation from their homeland to be only temporary, with intent to return to it at some stage. Therefore, their integration in the host society was not for the purposes of making the return smoother. However, as their return became increasingly more complicated and unlikely with the rapidly deteriorating conditions in their first homeland, they considered Canada as a "second home" and their future place of residence. Thus, they came to regard both the homeland and the host country, in varying degrees, as sources of identity. As a consequence, their identity became a "hybrid" of several components, including that of their ancestry and that of the host country.

Nevertheless, many aspects of their original culture were preserved and connections with the homeland were maintained by different means. Marinating ties with homeland is one significant means of maintaining such connections. It is also significant for reinforcing identities for the second generation, as informants indicated that it is important for them to travel with their children to Palestine to learn the language, the traditions, and the culture and preserve their identity. By investigating the Palestinian case, the study highlights the politics of mobility. Travel of Palestinian Canadians represents something much larger than maintaining social and cultural ties with the homeland; it is a source of pride, freedom, self-acclaimed strength, self-respect and a form of resistance. On the other hand, the study emphasizes that the country of ancestry is a key factor that influences Palestinian Canadian travel. This is consistent with the UK-based study of Hughes and Allen (2010) who found that the first generation made and prioritized visits to the country of origin (Ireland).

5.1 Transnationalism and Diaspora

A key characteristic of Diaspora is that their point of reference is a place other than the place in which they currently reside (Hughes & Allen, 2010). It was found in this study of Palestinian Canadians that transnational activities enhance connections with family and homeland. When physical contact is not possible, connection is maintained by other transnational means available through technological advancements as telephone, internet chats, Skype, Facebook, and web-based Palestinian organizations that bring together Palestinians from all over the world. These transnational activities create a network of relationships spanning the globe. Thus, Diaspora affects the process of identification and belonging in several ways. In other words, transnational activities for which mobility is a prerequisite, foster "hybrid" or" hyphenated" identities where members of Diaspora experience feelings of attachment, security, stability and belonging to more than one place (Figure 4.1). Within

this context, some scholars, such as Schultz and Hammer (2003) go further and argue that transnational activities not only reinforce family relationships but also boost nationalism in a cosmopolitan world, rather than making it obsolete.

As shown in Figure 5.1, globalization has led to increased human mobility and crossing international borders this in turn reinforces the social and cultural ties that transnational immigrants have with their friends and families. Such migrants are pulled by their homelands to make return visits to maintain the ties with their friends and relatives which in turn facilitates the formation of hybrid identities as the Palestinian identity has been de-territorialized from the physical boundaries of Palestine and then goes through the process of hybridization. Palestinian Canadians give a great significance to the enhancement of family and ethnic reunion, as well as the preservation of their Palestinian identity. All these in turn become the main motivation for their travel for their homeland "visiting friends and family".

The figure also demonstrates that both first and second generations are attached to Palestine as their homeland. However, for the first generation Palestine is the homeland as it is the main source of their identity but they are also attached to the country they live in, while for the second generation Palestine is one of places to which they belong. This reflects the fluidity of connections between places, host and home countries, which can be viewed through different lenses, all of which are considered as constitutive of the immigrant's life world.
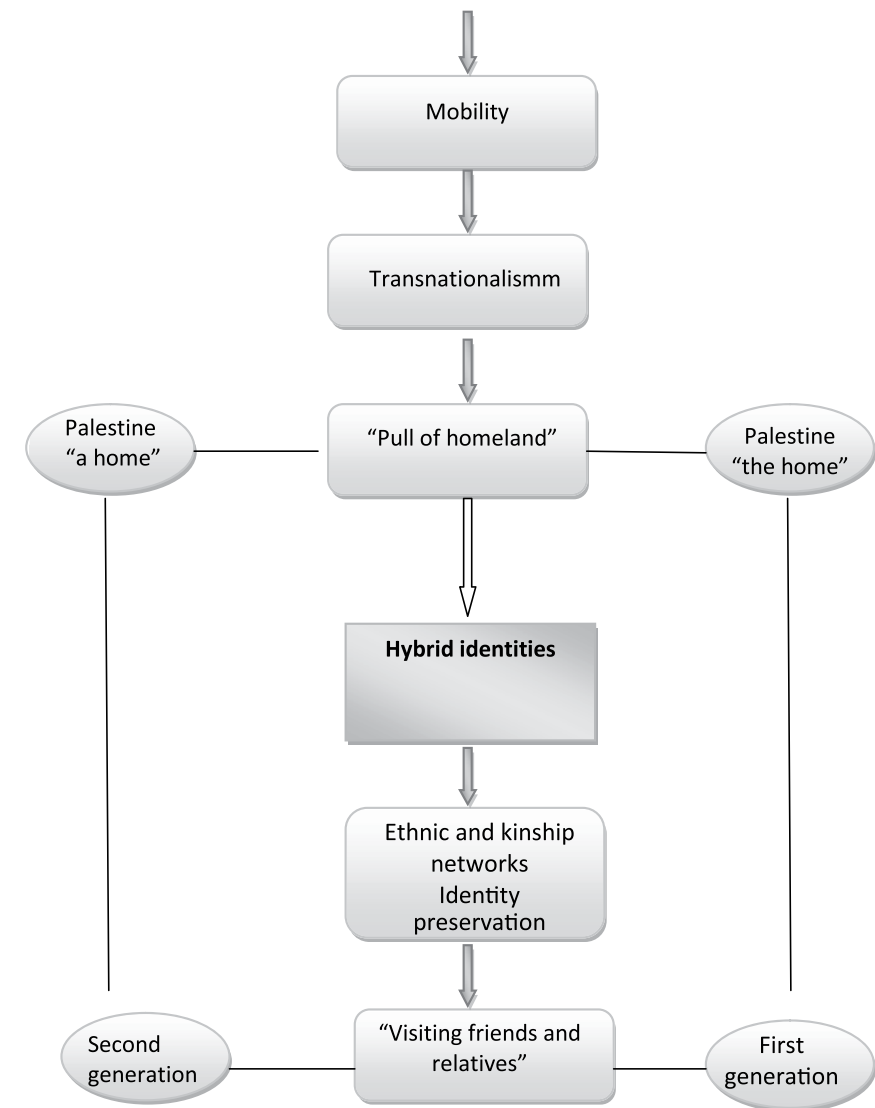

Figure 5.1: Conceptualization of marinating ties with homeland for first and second generations.

5.2 Intergenerational Differences

The violent nature of the dispersal of their parents and ancestors and the dispersal of their relatives have created a special bond between second generation Palestinian Canadians and their homeland. Young Palestinian Canadians demonstrate strong solidarity and sympathy with the Palestinians living under the occupation or in the refugee camps. Such bonds greatly enhance their Palestinian identity; however, the process of identification has altered, particularly for the second generation. For them, Palestine is a significant source of identity but, in Canada, they have espoused new ways of life, new cultural as well as social traditions and values and, as a consequence, they find that they no longer fit well within the Palestinian culture in their homeland. Thus, their identities can be referred to as "global identity". Their future place of residence is Canada so they are more fortunate than the majority of Palestinian Diaspora as they have been able to find a new homeland with citizenship rights.

In terms of travel to visit friends and relatives, there was always an emphasis on the part of the first generation that these trips should be family-based. However, few previous studies (for example, Stephenson, 2002; Stephenson & Hughes, 2005; Hughes & Allen, 2010) have focused on the meaning of these visits to the new generations. A Canadian study of Caribbean immigrants focused on the new generation only (Duval, 2004). Unlike the results of Ali and Holden (2006) who studied the Pakistani community in Luton, near London, where return visits were undertaken less "voluntarily" by young Pakistanis and, thus, a type of obligation was demonstrated, the second generation Palestinian Canadians demonstrated much enthusiasm for voluntarily undertaking such trips. Issues of marriage do not come up for the second generation Palestinians as for the Pakistanis.

The second-generation Palestinian Canadians demonstrated a desire to visit their extended family in Palestine where they get spoiled, to meet cousins of the same age and to interact with the Palestinian community and homeland. These visits certainly contribute to the identity formation of the second generation. These trips undertaken by young Palestinian immigrants may be described in many cases as roots-related trips. Travel to Palestine provides members of the Diaspora with opportunities to find answers to questions about their roots, their past, and their sense of belonging in the Palestinian context. These findings are similar to the findings of Stephenson and Hughes (2005) who examined Afro-Caribbeans, but are unlike those of Hughes and Allen (2010), who examined the Irish community in Manchester where such visits by second-generation Irish were suggested to be related to a desire to maintain emotional ties to the family and a "special place", rather than dis-

covering heritage or roots. In this situation, where the distance is short and access is relatively easy, both the first and second generations make frequent trips to the homeland.

This study also found that most first-generation Palestinian Canadians identify themselves as Palestinians; however, they do also have a strong sense of belonging and attachment to Canada. Thus, their visits to Palestine have been motivated by the "pull" of the homeland rather than the "push" of the host country. The second generation Palestinian Canadians also identify themselves as Palestinian Canadians and they are proud of being Palestinian but they perceive themselves as being more Canadian than Palestinian. Similar to the first generation, their visits to Palestine are motivated by the "pull" of the homeland. Both first and second generations describe their experiences of visiting friends and relatives in the homeland as positive on the personal level, but they were often saddened because of the deteriorating conditions in Palestine. They spend most of the time on their visit with their friends and relatives. However, the ways that the first and second generations perceive themselves through their visits are different. While the first generation consider themselves to be insiders or locals while they are visiting, the second generation feel that they are more like guests, but very special guests, and sometimes they act like tourists as they visit cities in Palestine, especially the sacred places in Jerusalem and Bethlehem. On the other hand, because of their frequent visits, they feel that they are perceived as insiders by their relatives and family in the homeland.

Neither the first nor the second generation consider Palestine as their future place of residence; however the first generation consider Palestine as "the home" while Canada will always be "a home". For the second generation, the orientation towards Palestine and Canada is similar; however Palestine is the ancestral homeland, that is highly politicized, which they will always belong, and from which much of their identity is drawn, even if they have only visited occasionally, if at all. On the other hand, Canada is the home where they see themselves as fitting in more easily socially and culturally, and where they want to live. Table 5.1 provides a comparison of the inter-generational similarities and differences.

Table 5.1: An inter-generational comparison

	First Generation	**Second Generation**
Identification	Palestinian	Palestinian Canadians
Orientation to Palestine	the home	the ancestral home
Orientation to Canada	a home	the home
Future place of residence	Canada	Canada
Sense of belonging to Palestine and Canada	strong sense of belonging to both	strong sense of belonging to both
Identity	hybrid	hybrid
Frequency of VFR travel	regular	regular
Significance of VFR travel	very significant	very significant
Perceive themselves while visiting	insiders and locals	very special guests and tourists
Experience of visiting	positive	positive
Priority of Palestine in overseas travel	prioritized	Prioritized but less so

This study has revealed that Palestinian Canadians greatly value the civil liberties and human rights that they enjoy as Canadian citizens. However, although they view Canadian citizenship as a source of political and social security, as Jennifer said in her interview, this is still a theory that has to be tested. The question that is raised here is: if things go wrong or if a Palestinian Canadian were to be detained while visiting Palestine, would the Canadian Embassy rescue them? If Jennifer did not get the chance to test her theory that the Canadian Embassy would rescue her if she needed protection, Raja did, as she was visiting her family in Gaza in the winter of 2008–2009 and got stuck by a three-week armed conflict that started with a surprise opening Israeli air strike against the Gaza Strip on December 27, 2008. Raja mentioned that she contacted the Canadian Embassy in Tel Aviv to help her get out but they did nothing.

The investigation of the Palestinian case has highlighted the politics of mobility. With struggle and resistance as main ingredients of the Palestinian ideology, many Palestinian Canadians consider that visiting family and friends in the homeland is a strategy to resist their current separation and dispersal, and as a political statement it indicates that Palestinians are not and will never be defeated. The real impact of their resistance may not be measured externally, but by its internal consequences. Travel to Palestine, despite all the difficulties it entails while crossing borders, facing checkpoints, and the

siege and the deteriorated conditions that prevail there, there is a source of pride, self, respect, happiness and freedom when they are confronted and hopefully overcome. Travel to a homeland where they are constrained from returning, is a political statement that indicates that Palestinians are not defeated, and will not succumb. Canadian citizenship breaks their immobility and enables them to visit their homeland. This has the significant meaning of being an active participant and not a passive victim.

5.3 Discussion

Globalization entails rapidly increasing mobility through which modern society is moving in the direction of "zero-friction" and, as a result, capital, goods, people, information and signs are moving increasingly freely around the globe. However, the investigation of the travel of Palestinian Canadians demonstrates a case of Diaspora with immense friction as people have difficulty in visiting their homeland. Their transnational activity is significantly restricted through visa protocols and check points. The study highlights the ongoing decisive role of states and governments in determining mobility and rights, in spite of the increasing rhetoric of borderless mobility.

Mobility takes place at a wide variety of temporal and spatial scales and, as such, it can be regarded as a continuum of movement that is becoming increasingly significant. As indicated in the preceding sentence it occurs in at least two dimensions, time and space, although the latter has both horizontal and vertical components, the former has been emphasized in this thesis. The latter is relevant to such movements as transhumance when people may move up and down the side of a mountain. Mobility includes short journeys such as to shop in the neighborhood, commuting, visiting nearby friends and families as well as longer movements as in some business travel, long distance commuting, study abroad, extended recreational travel, many vacations, travel for seasonal work, and so on. Such population movements may occur across hours, days, weeks, months and years, and take place at the local, regional, national and international scales.

Human mobility in term of people crossing national borders has also increased in association with globalization, which leads to large-scale movements of all kinds: temporary and permanent movement of labour; refugees; individuals and families; highly skilled specialists and manual workers, and so on. Human mobility, which maps the time-space geographies of everyday life, takes different forms in terms of frequency, distance, duration, and scale. Globalization is creating new forms of mobility. Mobility between places and the seeking out of new and former communities play a significant role in

identity formation. However, attempts to generate definitions of temporary, as well as permanent human mobility based on motivation are no longer successful. Both forms of mobility, short and the long-term, are characterized by mixed motivations: mobility can be undertaken for consumption or production purposes, or for a combination of both. As identified by Williams and Hall (2002, p.6), mobility is a "means to combine goals in space". Definitions of places of home, work, first home or second home, places of origins and destinations are becoming more complicated in the 21st Century as a result of increased mobility, and as a consequence distinctions between these categories are also breaking down.

This study has demonstrated, through the investigation of the Palestinian case, that although some borders have been broken down as a result of globalization, others have been reinforced. The investigation of the travel of the Palestinian Canadians who still face restrictions on their mobility has also demonstrated that not all people are free to be mobile and are living in a "zero-friction" society. Part of the problem for many Palestinian Canadians is forms of immobility that is linked to rights and documentation.

5.4 Conclusion

Due to the nature of their displacement from their homeland and their politicized exile, there is a huge need to go further than the conventional notions of "first" and "second" migrant generations in order to understand the complexities of the experiences of the Palestinian in exile. This study argues that experiences of Palestinian refugees are not connotated with which generation a group belongs to, but how many generations have been living in exile. The study shed lights on the shifts in the process of negotiations of concepts of identity, belonging and home for first and second generations of Palestinian Diaspora. The study answered questions as: how do members of Palestinian Diaspora make sense of notions of identity, belonging and home, and how does this differ across different exile generations?

For the second generation, it was found that because they have been raised in households full of homeland influences; they do experience transnational orientations and practices at a similar level as their parents. This includes travelling to the parental country of origin for the purposes of family and ethnic reunion. Second-generation Palestinian Canadians also maintained ties with homeland by means of transnational communication technology that facilitates developing "virtual" and "three-dimensional" relationships with Palestine, bringing Palestinians together and bridging the distances that separate them. These findings are in line with the emergent literature in transnation-

al technologies and Diaspora (For example, Hiller and Franz, 2004; Hanafi, 2005). It was also found that with greater contacts within the family in the country of origin, ethnic language maintenance and the frequent number of trips they make to their country of origin, young Palestinian Canadians are adopting from both transnational and ethnic orientations and, thus, their identity is formed within both origin and destination contexts.

The study also provides an overview of the social and cultural meanings behind the return visits - which are temporary physical sojourns to the home country and are conceptualized as a transnational exercise - of the Palestinian Canadians are fostered and rationalized to maintain family and social ties, and to maintain culture and language, particularly for the second generation. It is also a means of resistance of separation caused by forced dispersal and its consequences. The study also revealed that attachment to Palestine is a major driver of the international travel patterns, and perhaps even of the recreational activities, of the first and second generation of Palestinian Canadians in the GTA area.

This study adopted a qualitative approach by examining the meanings of "home", "belonging" and "identity" for first- and second-generation immigrants. The study has shown how the notion of transnationalism and transnational identities may play a role in recreating homes in the Diaspora. The study demonstrated the ways in which Palestinian Canadians construct their identity within different socio-spatial contexts through their travel insights and experiences. A distinct feature of the Palestinian community in the GTA area is a strong sense of belonging to the host country that provides them with security, rights and freedom and, simultaneously, a strong sense of belonging to a homeland that is often linked to a lost home and the hardships of living separated from its land and culture. The Palestinian community in the GTA area is characterized by strong intercommunity networks on many levels, such as family ties and global communication. These strong connections facilitate the preservation and negotiation of Palestinian transnational identities.

Palestine is one source, but not the only source, for identification of first and second generations of Palestinian Canadians in the GTA which results in the formation of multi-layered identities that are "hybrid" and are in flux, in a continuous condition of redefinition, re-creation and adjustment. Thus, the utilization of "strategic hybridity" allows many Palestinian Canadians to move fluidly between the different elements that form their identities. This is demonstrated in the relationships these immigrants have with both the host and home country, with implications for their travel patterns. The Palestinian case shows that Palestine, as a place that is highly politicized, remains central

to the Palestinian identity in the Diaspora. Being politically active can occur in an international realm. It may be concluded that the politics of a "place" may be not less important than the "place" in shaping the identities of Diaspora communities.

The process of identity formation of second generation Palestinians in Canada is a process that is facilitated by strong sense of belonging to Canada and Palestine. Thus, it is concluded that the temporary mobility of immigrants in the form of back and forth movement to the country of origin is influenced by their degree of their belonging and participation in transnational social spaces. Furthermore, this also works in the opposite direction in that immigrants' identities are modified through their mobility, particularly their travel to places where social and ethnic ties are significant.

The study highlights the significance of face-to-face connection with friends and families to the first generation of Palestinian Canadians, despite the danger of travelling to the West Bank and Gaza. The study shows the complexity of the Palestinian Canadian motivation for visiting homeland, including the sense of commitment to those who are left behind and still suffering, loyalty to their homeland, sense of obligation to an identity that is at risk, feelings of guilt, familial bonds, keeping the narrative alive and avoiding the feeling of defeat.

Because of their exilic experiences and the paradigm of Palestinian dispossession, concepts of identity, belonging and home are "contrapuntal" for Palestinian Diaspora. Homeland remains the key element in understanding notions as identity and home. However, the relationship with the Palestine has shifted across the first and the second generations as individuals have been born into successive exilic generations. In establishing new lives in the Diaspora, Palestinians have been also well integrated and increasingly developing roots in the countries in which they live. Despite the complexities in terms of concepts of identity, belonging and home that have been created by the broader social and political contexts, both first and second generation of Palestinian Diaspora were successful in creating transnational networks and social spaces that extends beyond the borders of the countries that they are living in. However, the main difference between the first and second generation is in the means through which such transnational networks are created and maintained.

The contemporary celebration of travel and mobility of transnational migrants with hybrid identities may be different for those stateless Palestinians who have terrifying experiences whenever they attempt to cross checkpoints in their country or try to enter another country at an airport. Such

Palestinian Diasporas experience significant restrictions on their movements and, thus, limited mobility. Browne (2005, p. 428) employed the notion "bordering" to indicate how particular bodies are made to be "outsiders" in the delineation of the state. He added that "bordering occurs through a variety of symbolic, discursive and material practices, of which classificatory identity/mobility documents such as passports play an important role". As some scholars (e.g., Schultz & Hammer, 2003) have argued, mobility is not equally distributed among the various members of Diaspora communities and not all immigrants have the same ability to cross borders. Thus, this study confirms the suggestion of Hyndman (1997) that transnationalism is one outcome of the "politics of mobility". The Palestinian case provided the context for innovative and theoretically valuable research on citizenship, mobility and human rights. This dissertation also highlights the highly politicized aspects of mobility/immobility, national identity and national autonomy in the Palestinian case, and emphasized the continuing role of states in determining mobility and rights.

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